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**AN EXAMINATION OF CLASSROOM PRACTICES
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING IN
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN A
MALAWIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of Master of
Education in Applied Language and Literacy Studies**

**Faculty of the Humanities
University of Cape Town**

2008

Ivy Jeb Nthara: NTHIVY001

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

**This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part,
for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant
contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work,
or works, of other people has been cited and referenced.**

Signature:

Date:

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Thanks to Jehovah, God Almighty, for making possible your will for me: to attain this height in education. I will always honour you! May your name always be glorified. AMEN!

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all English teachers in primary and secondary schools, teacher trainers, policy makers and curriculum specialists who are involved with the teaching of English as a second language in Malawi and in other bilingual settings. I hope you will embrace the insights from this piece of writing.

I cannot forget Eunice, Limbani and Chrissie for surrounding me with ‘goodies’ during the time of writing this thesis; and my spiritual parents: Rev. Dr. Joseph Ansah and mum, Rev. Dr. Jane Ansah, Pastor Alex & Mrs. Namagonya, and Pastor Felix Zalimba for nurturing me spiritually and always covering me with fond prayers.

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ABSTRACT

This study arises out of an awareness of the history of Malawi's language in education policy from the era of British colonialism to the present multilingual era. English is given a high status in schools despite the fact that many more teachers and pupils speak local languages. Malawi's new language in education model stipulates that "English should be offered as a subject from Standards 1 to 3; English should be offered as medium of instruction from Standards 4 to 8" (MOE, 1996). The Malawi in education bilingual model is thus subtractive, which impacts negatively on second language learning.

I discuss various theories that underpin the teaching of literacy in a second language, namely bilingualism and cognition, social learning, and theories with an educational or classroom orientation to establish a framework for my empirical investigation. However, the discussion of Cummins' (1981) theories of bilingualism and cognition most strongly inform my study. Eddie Williams (1998) proposes that approaches to teaching English ought to be modified to suit local conditions. Teaching approaches employed in the UK assume that the learner already knows the language, whereas in Malawi that is not the case.

The aim of this study is to examine the teaching approaches for the development of writing in English as a second language, using three ethnographically-oriented case studies in Standards 4, 6 and 7 in one Malawian school. I use the literature review, with readings that apply to various bilingual settings, to inform my analysis of the classroom approaches used by the three teachers. I use data from lesson observations, questionnaires and interviews to examine teaching methods and strategies that the three research teachers use. Interviews with the three teachers were conducted to explore the assumptions and views that motivate their teaching practices. Selected learners' English notebooks were analysed in order to identify their writing practices in relation to the teachers' writing approaches.

There are two dominant views of literacy, namely the 'autonomous' view and the 'social practices' view (Street, 1984). Through the data collected from interviews with teachers, questionnaires with teachers and learners, classroom observations, and learners' notebooks, it is evident that the three research classes used the 'skills-based' approach which characterises the autonomous view of teaching literacy outside any meaningful and specific contexts

(Street, 1984). This is unlike the 'social practices' approach which links the teaching of literacy to people's cultural and social practices or, more simply, to their daily lives (ibid.). This study follows the New Literacy Studies' view of literacy as a socially situated practice.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

| | |
|---------------|---|
| BICS | Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills |
| CALP | Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency |
| CUP | Common Underlying Proficiency |
| DEMs | Division Education Managers |
| DOE | Department of Education |
| EFA | Education for All |
| ESL | English as a Second Language |
| FPE | Free Primary Education |
| MIE | Malawi Institute of Education |
| MIITEP | Malawi Integrated In-service Training for Education Programme |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| MSCE | Malawi School Certificate of Education |
| OBE | Outcomes Based Education |
| PCAR | Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform |
| PRAESA | Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa |
| STD | Standard |
| SUP | Separate Underlying Proficiency |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |

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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

1. Introduction

In Malawi, research on literacy development reveals that the majority of children fail to reach a desirable level of literacy by the time they reach Standard Four (Std 4). The teaching and learning of writing in English as a second language requires urgent attention in many schools in Africa and other countries. This is because many pupils fail to write as well in English as in their mother tongue at primary school level, as Chilora (2002) observes. International comparative studies show that only 22% of Malawi's primary school children reach a minimum level of literacy by the time they reach Standard Six (ibid.). This is a matter for concern since English is the main language in all areas of the curriculum in Malawi's schools. English is the main language of literacy in Malawi's proposed bilingual model for language in education policy and for the new Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR) syllabus. Therefore, teaching pupils writing in the mother tongue only is not enough; the model stipulates that:

- English should be offered as a subject from Standards 1 to 3.
- English should be offered as a medium of instruction from Standards 4 to 8 (MOE, 1996).

Children who cannot write in English are therefore disadvantaged during the process of learning.

Because of its perceived value as a global language, English is given a high status in schools despite the fact that most primary school teachers and pupils in Malawi speak local languages. The majority speak Chichewa, followed by Citumbuka and Ciyao and three further Malawian languages. A further 4.6% and 4.4% of teachers and pupils, respectively, speak other languages, including English. This shows that the school population is multilingual, and that there is therefore a need for relevant approaches to teaching second language literacy. (See Table 1 for the linguistic profile of Malawi's primary schools according to Education Basic Statistics Malawi, 1999:55.)

TABLE 1: HOME LANGUAGE PROFILE, MALAWI PRIMARY SCHOOLS

| Home Language | Teachers (%) | Pupils (%) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chichewa | 57.8 | 58.7 |
| Citumbuka | 18.7 | 15.8 |
| Ciyao | 9.6 | 9.3 |
| Chilomwe | 3.6 | 5.2 |
| Citonga | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Chisena | 2.6 | 3.4 |
| Other | 4.6 | 4.4 |

Malawian languages are concentrated by region. For instance, Chichewa is widely spoken by both teachers and pupils at the research school, which is located in the central region where Chichewa is the lingua franca.

The ability to write in a world language even in our multilingual contexts is important for stronger global integration and job opportunities. It is therefore imperative that an examination of the classroom practices with regard to writing in English is conducted with the aim of determining their effectiveness for second language teaching and learning.

1.2 Research Problem

1.2.1 Historical background

In order to contextualize the present study it is necessary to review Malawi's language in education policy from the era of the British colonialism to the present multilingual era. The following account draws mainly on Moto (2004).

The Colonial Era

The introduction of English as a medium of instruction and as a subject goes back to 1891 when Malawi became a British protectorate. According to Moto (2004), Britain ruled multiethnic and multilingual Malawi from 1891-1964. English was the language of the colonial masters and a few educated Malawians. As early as 1891, attempts were made to accord Chichewa, Malawi's lingua franca, official status alongside English; English was used in public sectors, including education. During this era, Malawians were deliberately made to

look down upon their own languages in deference to English, the hegemonic power of which can hereby be traced back to 1891.

Dutch Reformed Church missionaries introduced education and literacy to village schools. It is important to note that the missionaries' main purposes for teaching literacy in Malawi were for trade and religion. Therefore, my assumption is that these functions must have influenced the teaching and learning of literacy in the schooling system, although there is no record of classroom approaches for second language literacy teaching. What is similar between Malawian education then and now is that the educational system is a bilingual one.

The Post-colonial Era

In 1968, four years after Malawi gained independence, Chichewa was elevated to the position of a national language with English as the country's official language (Mchazime, 2003a). This made the two languages the only targets for literacy in Malawi's school system.

There has been a process of educational reform in Malawi since 1966. During this era, as Mchazime (2003b) notes, English was taught using a structurally-based pedagogy. That is, structures were carefully graded and basic English patterns were provided. The accompanying materials for teaching English were based on Skinner's behaviourist psychology. In this pedagogy, learning was seen as habit formation in which the principle of stimulus-response was applied. Thus, learning involved constant practice, repetition and memorization of the basic sentence patterns to be mastered.

Mchazime (2003b) reports that in 1989, Malawi went through educational transformation. The major reforms in English included changes in materials for teaching and learning. In addition, in 1991, a new syllabus for teaching was introduced using materials for teaching English that were in line with communicative pedagogy. This pedagogy (ibid.:85) gave emphasis to collaborative learning and the functional use of language, meaning that a child only learns a language by doing things with it.

By that stage linguists' perceptions had changed and consequently they drew on theories of communication, knowledge and insights from functional linguists such as Halliday and sociolinguists such as Hymes (Mchazime 2003b). According to the Malawi Institute of Education (1991), the new syllabus differed from the old in some other ways. The old

syllabus consisted mainly of structural and sentence patterns, while the new syllabus in its organizational framework included the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, functions and grammar were provided together with suggested learning experiences, teaching and learning materials and activities for pupil assessment (ibid). In this syllabus, writing was integrated with the other language skills. For example, in Standard 4, after an analytical reading involving recognizing main ideas and topical sentences, pupils would use information obtained to produce paragraphs of their own.

In 1991, Malawi participated in the world conference on 'Education for All (EFA)', where the need for the acquisition of literacy skills was emphasized (Mchazime, 2004). Following this conference, Malawi declared Free Primary Education (FPE) and made basic education a priority. This brought into the schooling system a large number of children who spoke a range of different local languages at home. For many, both Chichewa and English, the languages of literacy, were new languages. EFA also resulted in the recruitment of untrained teachers who formed 43% of the total primary teaching force in Malawi, that is, those who did not have the minimum qualification of a Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) (Mchazime, 2003b). This group of teachers taught literacy skills in English, in addition to other learning areas. Although these unqualified teachers have now received training through the Malawi Integrated In-service Training Programme (MIITEP), their competence in English is still questionable because of their poor academic background (Kishindo 2003). Since then, various research findings have indicated that

the majority of children in Malawi fail to reach a desirable level of literacy by Standard 4 and that only 22% of the children in primary schools reach a minimum level of literacy by Standard 6. (Nyirenda, 2003)

Language in Education Policy Directive

In 1996, the Malawi Government issued a language in education policy directive which declared the following:

In the first four years of primary schooling, pupils should be taught in their mother tongue and English should be taught as a subject. From Standard 5, English takes over as a medium of instruction and continues as a subject (MOE, 1996).

The language policy directive followed the 1953 original UNESCO directive, which resulted from the understanding of ‘mother tongue or vernacular education’. According to Legère (2003), the recommended languages were, first of all, the mother tongue then, secondly the national language, if the mother tongue differed from the national or official language and then thirdly, one or more foreign languages. However, Bamgbose (2000) reports that the use of African languages in education still faces some challenges. Some of these pertain to the limits that are set for the use of the African languages as media of instruction.

Another challenge is linked to the continued dominance of a foreign language from early primary through higher education levels. The 1953 UNESCO directive sought to counter the view that if learners start learning in the foreign medium early, their performance will be better because they will be exposed longer to the medium. Bamgbose (ibid) considers this to be a myth since there are other factors that determine success in language learning. In any event, the additive bilingual model is advantageous to the development of second language literacy (to be discussed in Chapter 2).

The early-exit bilingual model (three or four years of mother-tongue education before the transition to English) cannot assist much in the development of second language literacy in junior and senior classes. It merely promotes the imposition of the hierarchy of languages and increases the already uneven power relations between teachers and pupils, and puts pressure on both (cf. Arthur, 1996).

The 1996 MOE directive was also based on Articles 26 and 30 of the Malawi Constitution which state that:

Every person shall have the right to use the language and to participate in the culture of his or her choice. (MOE, 1996)

Mchazime (2004) reports that the language education policy was received with mixed feelings by most Malawians. He also adds that since then it has brought unwarranted fears about the detrimental effects of mother tongue on their ‘cherished English language’. Although the mother tongue policy directive has never been withdrawn, the proposed language in education policy has not yet been approved by parliament. The extent of its implementation in schools is therefore unknown.

Although the Malawi Government proclaimed the language in education policy twelve years ago, there has not been any training for primary school teachers, the key implementers of the new policy, except for six teacher trainers (including me) and two curriculum specialists who were trained in 2003 at the University of Cape Town in Multilingual Education. Chatry-Komarek (2004:30) argues that the quality of bilingual education is mostly based on the performance of a European language, and pupils are put under pressure to learn a foreign or second language. Therefore, ESL teaching requires competent teachers who are equipped with specialized and suitable pedagogy for literacy in bilingual contexts.

New Language-in- Education Policy

The PCAR's (as yet unapproved) new language in education policy recommends use of the pupils' familiar language for literacy development for Standards 1-3 only, which represents an early-exit bilingual model. As will be discussed more fully in Chapter 2, the early exit-bilingual model does not facilitate development of second language literacy acquisition. The proposed model of language in education will be a huge challenge for the development of literacy skills in Malawi's schools, even if the government changes a language policy that accords official status to Chichewa and English as the only languages of teaching.

Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

Malawi's primary school curriculum is currently undergoing reform. It was agreed by policy makers the Ministry of Education (MOE), the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) and others that the new curriculum should use an outcomes-based approach. In this approach, there is a shift from teacher-centred approaches to learner-centred/participatory approaches. Pupils are expected to attain specific outcomes in each learning area. For example, in the teaching of writing in English, under the core element of writing in Standard 6, individual pupils must achieve the following outcomes:

- copy sentences correctly
- punctuate sentences correctly
- plan content of formal and informal letters, speeches and invitations from a title
- draft, edit and revise informal and formal letters, speeches and invitations (Malawi Primary School Syllabus, 2004:56).

This type of approach has been challenged by genre theorists such as Rose (2004), as will be discussed in Chapter 2.

English as a Second Language in Malawi

The term second language generally refers to any language besides the first language. Ellis (1987) explains that in other settings, the term additional language may be used. In the South African context, for example, English is as an additional language for the majority of learners. In Malawi there are sixteen local languages (as already stated) which people speak as their first language at home. English is the language of learning at school and the language in which government and business transactions are conducted. It is also a language of communication amongst some Malawians, but not the majority. This means that English is not a majority language and it cannot replace local languages. Since English is Malawi's target and official language used in all sectors, it is appropriate for it to be regarded as Malawi's second language.

Since English is a second language, literacy should be developed in a professional way to facilitate second language acquisition. However, as Chatry-Komarek (2004) notes, most African countries do not have teachers with a sufficient level of knowledge and skills to do so.

The myth that mother tongue education is detrimental to the learning of the European languages may seem true if teachers use traditional methods. The 'New Literacy Studies' emphasize the teaching of writing as a meaningful and socially located activity (Gee, 2000). This requires re-orienting literacy teachers and teacher trainers to enable them to teach second language literacy more effectively.

There has been a concentration of research on the development of reading, participatory learning and materials in English in Malawi schools (Mchazime, 2003b; Chilora, 2004). However, there is no research in Malawi on how writing in English in primary schools is developed.

Viewed against the background of of recent research findings, especially new literacy pedagogies, this study seeks to examine the appropriateness of the teaching and learning classroom practices and methods used by teachers for the development of writing in English

as a second language in the junior primary and senior primary school classes. The Malawi primary school structure is shown below in table 2 below:

TABLE 2: PRIMARY SCHOOL STRUCTURE

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Infant classes | Standards 1-2 |
| Junior classes | Standards 3-4 |
| Senior classes | Standards 5-7 |

(Reasons for the choice of Standards 4, 6, and 7 for this study are discussed in Chapter 3.)

1.3 Research Question

This study seeks to investigate the development of second language literacy, and in particular the writing approaches used in Standards 4, 6 and 7, through the following research questions:

Main Research Question

What are the teaching and learning approaches used for the development of writing in English as a second language in Malawi's primary schools?

Secondary Research Questions

1. What techniques and strategies do English teachers use to teach writing?
2. What assumptions do English teachers have about teaching learners how to write in English?
3. Which teaching and learning practices are reflected in learners' existing written work in their English notebooks?

1.4 Rationale

English is the main language of literacy as well as the language for access to knowledge in written form in Malawi's education system. This is because English is introduced as a subject in primary school and becomes the medium of instruction from Standard 5 through to tertiary education. Although English is introduced early in Malawi, there is research evidence that learners do not develop literacy levels to a satisfactory level by Standard 6 (Kamangira & Nyirenda, 2003). The reasons for the low literacy levels in English are not yet known. Hence

there is a need for research that specifically examines Malawi's bilingual classroom teaching, and the development of writing in English as a second language. The findings from this study should help to locate the causes of the low levels in the teaching of second language literacy (writing in particular), and to find an effective pedagogy for its development. Most studies on early literacy development have concentrated on reading and have neglected writing, without which reading cannot take place (Mchazime, 2003b; Nkumba, 2000).

Since the proclamation of the mother tongue policy and PCAR's new outcomes-based syllabus, primary school teachers have not been trained to teach literacy in the mother tongue or in the second language, something which requires specialized pedagogy. Consequently this study endeavours to specifically examine the methodologies that are used for teaching and learning writing in English in Standards 4, 6 and 7. This cross-section of cohorts will permit a quasi-longitudinal view of writing approaches and practices.

1.5. Limitations of the research

This study has two key limitations. First, it targets only one primary school; the findings from this case study can therefore not be generalised to primary schools across Malawi. Second, the research investigates only the approaches that teachers use for the development of writing in English. It does not explore other factors that may explain how writing in a second language is developed, such as learners' background, lack of resources, large classes, and environmental and socio-economic factors.

1.6. Overview of the dissertation

Chapter Two discusses the theoretical framework and literature review, focusing on the work of Cummins, Vygotsky, Barton, Rose and others. It also discusses the two main approaches to literacy pedagogy, namely the 'autonomous' and 'social practices' view. Chapter Three discusses the research design and methods of data collection, and presents three case studies influenced by an ethnographic research orientation using qualitative data-gathering methods such as interviews, a classroom observation schedule, and questionnaires for teachers and pupils. Chapter Four analyses the collected data, and discusses the findings. Chapter Five discusses the conclusions and possible implications for primary schooling in Malawi.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter discusses some of the theories and classroom approaches that underpin the study of teaching writing in second language settings. The chapter is supported by a discussion of a number of research studies in bi/multilingual settings, both locally and internationally, on teaching writing in second-language contexts. The theories discussed are on bilingualism and cognition, society and learning (in general), broad literacy teaching and learning, and on educational and classroom orientations.

The various theories and approaches discussed in this chapter set the parameters for this study. However, this study mainly uses Cummins' theories of bilingualism to illuminate how second language literacy (with a focus on writing) development occurs in bilingual settings, which is the intent of this study. This study examined the approaches to teaching English in a Malawian school which uses a subtractive bilingual model.

2.1 Bilingualism and cognitive theory

This section discusses Jim Cummins' (1981) theories on bilingualism and cognition, which informed the understanding of second language literacy development in this study.

2.1.1 What is bilingualism?

The term 'bilingualism', according to Cummins (1981), refers to the ability to use two or more languages. He explains why bilinguals may have different levels of proficiency in the four language skills. Thus, one learner may be more proficient in reading and another in writing. These different learner abilities are significant and may affect the learners' education and socio-economic status, as observed by Rose (2004). There are two types of models found in bilingual education, according to Cummins (1981).

2.1.2 Types of Bilingualism

Additive / Subtractive bilingualism

Cummins (1991) draws the distinction between additive bilingualism, in which the first language continues to be developed and the first culture to be valued while the second

language is added on, and subtractive bilingualism, in which the second language is introduced at the expense of the first language and culture, which diminish as a consequence. Cummins (1981) points out that students working in an additive bilingual environment succeed to a greater extent than those whose first language and culture is devalued by their schools and by the wider society.

An example of an additive bilingual model is the well-known Six-Year Primary Project in Nigeria (see Bamgbose, 2000). The introduction of this bilingual model showed that when learners continued learning in their mother tongue (Yoruba) for six years, they performed much better than the learners who switched to English medium after only three years of mother-tongue education.

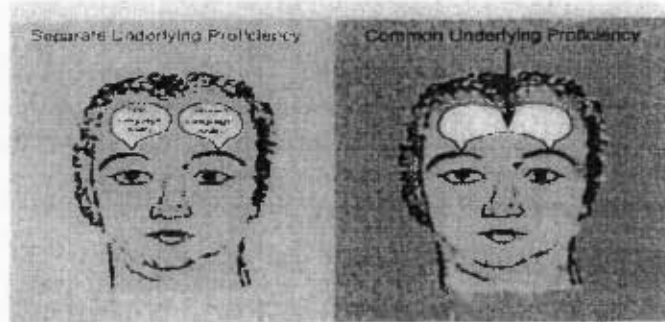
Cummins (1994) expresses the dangers of subtractive bilingualism for ESL speakers in the schools. Cummins suggests that ESL teachers should encourage learners to value their cultures and languages because they are form the basis of all learning, even though English may dominate school life. ESL teachers should explore the possibility of integrating the different cultural backgrounds of ESL learners into their daily teaching and curricula.

Malawi's model of bilingual education falls into the subtractive category. Due to the early departure from the use of mother tongue, research as outlined above suggests that learners' bilingualism will not develop fully and hence not benefit learners.

The Common Underlying Proficiency

There are several misconceptions about the concept of bilingualism. One is that it is not possible for a bilingual to build proficiency between two languages because the brain cannot facilitate the transfer between the two languages, a misconception expressed in Cummins' (1981) Separate Underlying Proficiency (SUP). The Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) theory of bilingualism was developed to account for the fact that language attributes are not separated in the cognitive system but transfer readily and interactively (see Diagram 1).

DIAGRAM 1: Common Underlying Proficiency



The CUP theory is the direct opposite of the SUP. The CUP also supports the idea that concepts, once understood in one language, readily transfer across languages – provided that the term is known in both languages.

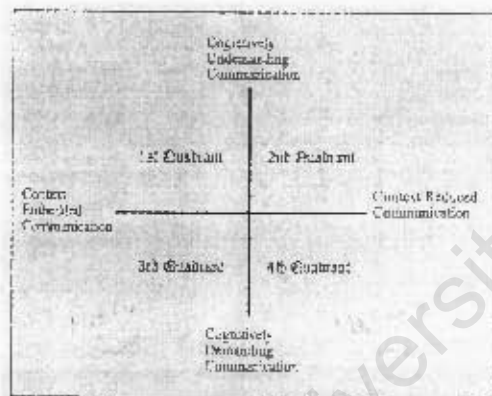
BICS/CALP

In addressing the issues of language development, Cummins (1981) distinguishes between two types of second-language proficiency. Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills, or BICS, refers to surface skills of listening and speaking that are quickly acquired through interaction with native speakers of the language. BICS, the level of communication in everyday contexts, is often reached within two years. It develops quickly because there are contextual supports and props for language delivery. BICS is contrasted with Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which is the basis for a learner's ability to cope with the academic demands of the curriculum. In the North American context it takes an average of 5 to 7 years' exposure to the second language for immigrant students to approach grade norms in academic aspects of English (ibid.). CALP is required for coping with context reduced academic situations that are cognitively demanding and where there is little support for the learner. Cummins suggests that pupils' competence to function in the second language to the level of CALP is dependent upon their competence to function at the CALP level in their first language. Proficiency in the home language is thus a necessary condition for successful second language and literacy development.

In response to various criticisms (see below), Cummins elaborated the BICS/CALP distinction to the 'four quadrants' model (Diagram 2). Cummins (as summed up in Baker 2000) shows how second-language communication can be placed in one of four quadrants, made up of two intersecting continua: from cognitively undemanding to cognitively

demanding, and from context-embedded to context-reduced. Thus, a context-embedded task provides a range of additional visual and oral cues, such as questions. An example of a context-reduced task would be to read a dense text for which a learner would have no sources of help other than the language itself (ibid.), and few clues for working out meanings of difficult words. This means that a task in the 4th Quadrant – cognitively demanding and context-reduced – will be difficult for non-native speakers during their first years of learning English. This is the place for English teachers to scaffold second-language learners in developing skills that will enable them to work on difficult tasks without frustration and failure (cf. Rose, 2004 and Barton, 1994). Teachers need to make these tasks accessible by providing visual or other support. Once students are comfortable with these kinds of activities, they can be gradually exposed to tasks that are both cognitively-demanding and context-reduced.

DIAGRAM 2: THE 4 QUADRANTS



Criticisms of Cummins

Cummins' theories are not without criticism. The first criticism concerns the conversational/academic language distinction. Critics such as Edelsky (1996) and Wiley (1996) allege that it reflects an autonomous perspective on language that ignores its location in social practices and power relations. The second deals with the notion of CALP, that it promotes a "deficit theory" in so far as it attributes the academic failure of bilingual/minority students to low cognitive/academic proficiency rather than to inappropriate schooling (Edelsky, 1996).

In responding to some of these critiques, Cummins & Swain (1983) pointed to the elaborated sociopolitical framework within which the BICS/CALP distinction was placed, within which

underachievement among subordinated students was attributed to coercive relations of power operating in the society at large and reflected in schooling practices.

Although Cummins' bilingual and cognitive theories were developed for second language immigrant learners in Canada, they are also applicable in other bilingual settings. Despite bringing their home language to school, immigrant learners are immersed in a second language, which is a situation similar to the context of this study. One difference, however, is that the immigrant learners have interaction with native speakers of English, whereas Malawian children do not. A second difference is that the immigrants amongst whom Cummins originally conducted his research spoke high status languages such as French and Spanish. In cases like Malawi, local languages have a low, minority status and are not as well developed. If Malawian children are to learn successfully through English, therefore, they will need more time to develop their English proficiency to the level where transfer from the home language is possible.

If CALP level is what is required for literacy development in the second language, Malawi's early-exit model of language in education needs to be revisited and the country needs to adopt an additive bilingual model.

2.2 Theories of society, learning and language

Although social learning theories do not offer complete knowledge on how literacy develops in ESL classrooms, they illuminate some crucial parts for teaching and learning literacy which are normally neglected in classrooms (see Barton, 1994, and others). These theories emphasize that second language learning is complex and interacts with many factors. Some of these include: support from the learners' environment, the individual learner, teacher talk, the hegemony of English, and the teacher's views on teaching approaches. Barton's belief that literacy is embedded in oral language and the child's interaction with his environment seems to be at the hub of the theories.

2.2.1 *The Vygotskian Social Theory*

Barton (1994: 131) reports that the social learning theory was influenced by the ideas of a Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, whose work dates back to the 1920s and 1930s. His theory has insights into how to link society and the individual, which unfolds the notion of

ecological learning¹. The theory also recognizes that a child learns by being actively involved in an activity (which runs counter to the nativists' innate theories), and that learning does not take place in classrooms only, but is a component of all activities. The process through which a child gets this support from the environment is called scaffolding.

2.2.2 Scaffolding

Barton likens scaffolding to the support that parents give to children when learning how to do tasks. Since learning always has a context, Barton (1994) explains that scaffolding is provided by the situation, and that the crucial part is what the adult gives as support to the child. Parents, teachers and others can act as support and the child is an active hypothesis maker. Children are aware, can think, plan, recreate the world and reinvent it (ibid. 134). Thus, the learner/child who at birth is completely looked after by the adult gradually takes over more control and the adult relinquishes control.

Vygotsky put forward the concept of the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) where there is a need for scaffolding as learners gradually engage in various activities that are slightly beyond their abilities, but which they could accomplish with some assistance. Barton (1994) explains that the ZPD is the gap between what a child can do unaided, and the abilities exhibited when supported by social scaffolding (ibid.:135). Developing learners' competence to express their thoughts in literacy in a second language is both difficult and abstract, just as it is for a child to communicate effectively.

In western mainstream culture, young children are attached to an adult who initiates the child into their culture. Similarly, language has a context with norms and values. Through the notion of scaffolding, teachers can assist the learner with complex literacy skills such as writing, by linking them to meaningful literacy practices and events. This is similar to the support that adults give to a child's activities; the support acts as a framework within which the child acts. This support is gradually removed as the child develops (ibid. 133).

The pedagogic implications of such a scaffolding approach are discussed in 2.4.3, below. The section immediately below illustrates how some bilingual settings become vehicles through which the society's language values are expressed.

¹ Barton (1994) describes the ecological approach of literacy as an approach that seeks to explain how literacy is part of peoples' lives and their daily activities.

2.2.3 Language and Power Relations in the Classroom

Jo Arthur's (1996) ethnographic study of interaction between teachers and Standard (Grade) 6 pupils in Botswana illustrates that there are societal values which are placed on languages. In Botswana, English is a prestigious language that is used as a language of education beyond Standard 4. Setswana, the national language, is the medium of instruction for the first four years. Minority languages which are spoken by 20% of the population are dominated by the big two, and are not accorded any role in the classroom.

According to Arthur (1996), power issues are linked to a hierarchy of language values, which reflect a social order in which the dominant elite have the greatest access to the dominant language. Elites are concerned about maintaining their privilege. Symbolic domination, which Arthur (citing Bourdieu) interprets as the consent of subordinated groups to the legitimacy of those in power, is normally secured and reproduced through the institution of the state, primarily through schools. The social order is also embodied and reinforced by the internal classroom order, in terms of both the languages in which the interaction is encoded, and of the differential discourse rules that govern participation by teachers and pupils (ibid.).

Arthur observed frequent use of codeswitching by both teachers and learners in Botswana classrooms. She alludes to the fact that codeswitching was a helpful tool in the learning of ESL writing, despite a ground rule of discourse that both teachers and learners were not free to switch from English to any local language (ibid.). Thus, ESL teachers and learners operated under institutional tension in order to adhere to the ground rule on the exclusive use of English in the classroom. This ground rule stands in the way of teachers' personal instinct to codeswitch, in response to the communicative needs of learners. Arthur (ibid.) lists various ways in which codeswitching was used during teaching and learning: to give encouragement, praise or reproof to individual learners; get learners' attention when moving to the next stage of a lesson, the central agenda, and also to provide contextual clues to learners for understanding meanings.

2.2.4 The Role of First Language in the Second-Language Classroom

Research findings further suggest that the first language may be used in the classroom to enhance second language learning (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). The investigation took place within a sociocultural framework in which ESL learners' interactions were examined in

cognitively demanding second language activities. It was within the same framework that when learners used the first language, they did so by using it as a psychological tool. Use of first language provided learners with the opportunity to access additional support, to reason with, and allowed them to analyze language and work at a higher level than they would if they had used a second language (ibid.). In the example given, English-speaking adult learners in a Spanish immersion classroom used their first language to scaffold assistance and learn Spanish as a foreign language (ibid.). Other functions for using the first language in second language learning and literacy include the following: enlisting and maintaining interest in a task, developing strategies and approaches to make difficult tasks more manageable, focusing on goals of a task, working out ways of addressing specific problems, creating a 'social and cognitive space in which learners are able to provide each other and themselves with help throughout the task' (ibid: 760, citing Wood et al.). In addition, they note that the adherence to the exclusive use of the target language creates a communication gap between teachers and learners' classroom needs. They suggest that the first language should be used in the ESL classroom to enhance second language learning.

Adding to the functions stated above, the first language may also serve the following functions in the learning of second language literacy: for metatalk, that is, the use of first language by learners on the use of the second language; to establish a joint understanding of a task and to formulate the learners' goals (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003).

Vesely (2003) states that power issues are linked to the hegemony of English, and manifest themselves in second language classrooms and impact on pupils negatively in many different ways: discriminating against pupils with low proficiency, more directed teaching by the teacher than interactive learning, high regard for the dominant language, teachers favouring middle-class children associated with high proficiency in the dominant language, and in many other ways.

2.2.5 Safetalk

Hornberger and Chick (2001) carried out a study amongst Zulu-speaking learners in Durban, South Africa and the Quechua-speaking language minority group in Peru. These learners had experienced all their schooling through a medium of instruction different from their mother tongue. The study focused on how Grade 2 and 7 teachers and pupils confront the language issues pertaining to learning. They found evidence of 'safetalk', a practice in which teachers

and learners preserve their dignity by hiding the fact that little or no learning is taking place; they co-construct practices “that create a space where teacher and learners know more or less what to expect and how to behave in class”. The authors attribute this practice to the social and policy context of language minority education in their countries, and the influence of society’s language values on classroom practices. Through safetalk practices class teachers neglect crucial pedagogies that promote successful learning. Language policies and practices that neglect the use of the mother tongue prevent learners from reasoning and transferring knowledge from their rich language and cultural repertoire to their L2 learning. In this way society impacts negatively on literacy development in second-language learners.

2.3 Broad Literacy Theories

Literacy plays different roles for different people; similarly different cultures have different functions for literacy (see Baker, 2000). For example, a Moslem learns to read the Quran without necessarily understanding it. Baker describes three functions of literacy, namely functional skills, construction of meaning, and sociocultural, and links them to broad literacy learning approaches. He explains that literacy approaches have different emphases and impact on learners in different ways. They can be combined in literacy teaching and learning. However, teachers’ views play a significant role in the choice of teaching approaches. This is because teachers guide pupils’ learning (Wright, 1987). Prinsloo (2005) and Edelsky (1996) explain that there are two views of literacy which may motivate the choice of literacy approaches by teachers: the ‘autonomous’ and the ‘social practices’ view.

2.3.1 The Autonomous View

The autonomous view regards literacy as a singular thing and an independent ability which does not engage with any social or political context (Wiley, 1986; Bloch, 2002). It assumes that “literacy on its own contains transformative power over people’s lives irrespective of social and economic conditions that gave rise to their particular situation” (Brian Street, cited by Bloch (2006)).

The Skills-Based method of teaching literacy falls under the autonomous view which appears to be hegemonic in literacy classrooms across Africa (ibid.). This view supports approaches characterized by teaching sets of literacy skills in isolation, ignoring social factors that could assist second language literacy learning become real and practical. Literacy learning, from the

autonomous perspective, entails that cognitive abilities only follow once the child has learnt how to use print. Skills have to be taught in sequence, and include: teaching children to read and write from simple to complex, from part to whole and to read and to write with emphasis on phonics, letter formation and neat handwriting (Bloch, 2006).

Literacy has several functions (Baker, 2000), and language teachers employ various types of literacy methods and strategies² which help to achieve these functions. Bloch (2002) points out that behind the Skills-Based approach is the concept of functional literacy, as in the UNESCO (1953) definition, whose main assumption is that literacy is the simple ability to read and write. As a result, teachers assist pupils to write in correct spelling and grammatical sentences, and learners should be able to comprehend the written word. Bloch (ibid.) explains that this approach assumes that literacy is a technical skill, neutral in its aims and universal across languages; and that the skill of writing can be broken down into vocabulary, grammar and composition. Teaching sounds and letters, phonics and standard language (in early literacy classes) become the important focus. Baker adds that with the skills-based approach, errors incur keen attention, alongside a concern with achieving scores on tests of reading and writing. Such tests tend to assess decomposed and decontextualized language skills, eliciting superficial comprehension rather than deeper language thinking and understanding (Baker, 2000:323).

Prinsloo (2005) reminds us that the autonomous approach influences the view of writing, on the assumption that literacy, as an autonomous entity, affects other social and cognitive practices. Street (1995) concurs, stating that the autonomous model understood particular socio-cultural practices (in western, essay text literacy) as being socially neutral and universally applicable manifestations of literacy. Also, literacy was associated with major technological advances that were assumed to make modernity possible (Prinsloo, 2005).

This approach is what many educationists and researchers are encouraging teachers to depart from. Bloch (2002:1) explains that what is wrong with this approach is that teachers believe that pupils can use reading and writing for meaningful and real reasons only after they have mastered the basic sets of technical skills. This view is congruent with the traditional pedagogy described in the last part of this chapter.

² A strategy is an interpretation, through which a method is achieved (see Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia: March, 2007).

2.3.2 The Ideological or Social Practices View

The alternative perspective on literacy has been termed the ideological or social practices view. Gee (2000) explains that it denotes a paradigm shift from the autonomous view of teaching and learning of literacy in ESL. The social practices view arises from the 'New Literacy Studies' (NLS) which emphasise that literacy is part of peoples' cultural life, and is a set of social practices applied to different situations (Gee, 2000; Street, 1995). The NLS view, unlike the 'autonomous' view, emphasises that literacy is a situated social practice that is socially constructed and rooted in peoples' attitudes. This means that literacy is not separate from peoples' everyday lives; reading and writing are meaningful only in relation peoples' social contexts. There are many routes to literacy; and literacy skills are acquired in the process of doing something meaningful (cf. Heath, 1983). In other words, literacy as a set of social practices is contextually embedded and situationally variable. This differs sharply from the autonomous approach, which assumes that the forms, functions and effects of literacy do not change and remain neutral across social settings (Street, 1995).

According to Gee (2000), the NLS have examined people's everyday experiences in order to gauge the instances in which communication and the use of print occur. Some routes to literacy emerge from the home while others from the school, in which literacy is developed through a formal and structured manner, unlike the home. Since there is no single route to becoming literate, second language literacy must endeavour to utilize both home and school literacies, which are part of the second learners' social practices (ibid.). Conventional literacy programmes are preoccupied with cognitive outcomes but do not focus on how the literacy process works for the participants and how it adapts to its surrounding culture (ibid.).

Heath (1983) contends that the NLS have spawned two important concepts, namely 'literacy events' and 'literacy practices'. Literacy events refer to real occasions in which the written language is connected with the nature of participants' interventions and their interpretive processes and strategies. Literacy practices expand on these events to include cultural models and events that further shape how behaviours and accompanying meanings are related to actual uses of reading and writing (Street, 1995). Learning to write in the second language should therefore incorporate both school and home culture, which may contribute towards teaching literacy skills in a meaningful way.

Research drawing on the NLS has shown that individuals possess a variety of communicative skills, and that familiar activities, values, and patterns of time and space influence individuals' responses to written texts across societies and institutions (Heath, 1986). For this reason, English teachers in Malawi should engage learners in literacy events in order to help them acquire meaning in the context of cultures of performance and symbolic display, as well as in extensive literacy practice for increased competence.

To sum up: the New Literacy Studies show that there are many literacies, including school and home literacies, and that there are many routes to literacy. School literacy should, in this view, enable learners to tap into their home experiences and cultural backgrounds.

2.4 Literacy approaches in the classroom

The broad literacy approaches outlined above have been interpreted in a variety of ways for purposes of literacy pedagogy in the classroom.

2.4.1 Whole Language

The 'Whole Language' approach emphasizes developing reading and writing naturally, for a purpose, for meaningful communication and inherent pleasure (Baker, 2000). It represents a holistic, integrated view of reading and writing, spelling and oracy. What is stressed in this approach is communication. Phonics is taught contextually in early literacy learning. The teacher uses a variety of texts and storybooks to stimulate pupils' power of imagination, for their enjoyment and literacy development (Baker, 2000:324). Whole Language teachers believe that grammatical and spelling errors can demotivate the pupil if these are emphasized in the teaching process. Corrections are said to concentrate on form and not on function, the medium not the message.

However, the approach may not be empowering to the learner if concentration is on his/her customary, normative beliefs. Simply tapping into their cultural repertoire potentially disempowers ESL learners from critical writing.

2.4.2 Construction of Meaning Approach

The Construction of Meaning approach is an elaboration of the Whole Language approach and it is a concept of constructivism. The emphasis is on pupils' bringing their own meaning

to the text. Writing therefore is essentially a construction and reconstruction of meaning (Baker, 2000:326). This idea is derived from the Russian psychologist; Vygotsky who says that meaning is constructed by the teacher's moving the pupil's capability. The stretching of the pupil is done by allocating a zone of proximal development (see discussion above) where the new understandings are possible through collaborative interaction and inquiry. Writing is therefore regarded as meaning sharing.

The major problem with this approach is that pupils without relevant background knowledge may fail to construct much real meaning. It depends more on the pupil's culture and not just that of the second language. Therefore, the teacher's role should be that of a mediator in the pupils' construction of meaning ; teachers should assist pupils to learn to write in English by stretching the pupil's ability through scaffolding.

2.4.3 Socio-cultural Approach

The sociocultural literacy is related to Construction Meaning and accents the enculturation aspect of literacy. A new requirement is that in the teaching programme, the child is fully socialized and enlightened in the heritage culture (Baker, 2000:328).

2.4.4 Critical Literacy Approach

The "Critical Literacy" approach sets out to develop pupils' critical faculties when engaging with print. The approach allows learners to be actively involved in asking questions and working cooperatively, offering their own interpretations of texts and evaluations of one another's work. The critical approach to ESL literacy learning is essential to academic study to the extent that it helps learners to be critical of writers, but also critical readers of texts such newspapers, propaganda texts, and advertisements. Good literacy learning should therefore assist pupils to become empowered as good citizens in a stable society (Baker, 2000:338).

2.4.5 Eclecticism

Eclecticism is another approach to teaching ESL writing that involves combining a number of strategies for teaching literacy, including the teaching of grammar (see Baker, 2000). This approach is potentially ideal in multilingual classes as it addresses learners' diverse needs in the classroom. However, it calls for expertise on the part of the teacher, who has to know how to use it.

2.5 Grammar teaching and the four skills

2.5.1 The Place of Grammar

Ellis (2006) argues that the way in which second language acquisition is understood determines how grammar is taught in ESL settings. L2 research in America indicated that grammar was neglected in writing instruction in the belief that comprehensible input was sufficient for language acquisition. Hinkel (2006) also points out that curriculum design in L2 writing has to include grammar and vocabulary teaching in order to enable ESL learners to develop effective and meaningful communication skills. She adds that developing an effective facility with language, grammar and writing, can assist learners to achieve social access and inclusion. Learners require explicit pedagogy in grammar and lexis, without which they will be disadvantaged in their vocational, academic and professional careers (Hinkel, 2006: 124).

There are many debates in the teaching of grammar. In addressing these controversies Ellis (2006: 84) first challenges the definition of grammar that defines traditional grammar teaching as presentation and practice of discrete grammatical structures. He argues that this definition sidelines the grammar lessons which do not consist of this. He claims that some lessons may just be presentations, or practice while others may be used for corrective feedback. Ellis (2006) supports a descriptive grammar orientation that helps to explain meanings of functions performed by grammatical forms and structures. This includes lists of common errors that second language learners make. In addressing the question on what grammar should be taught, he argues for teaching that focuses on structures that are problematic to learners. He suggests that grammar should be taught to learners who have a proven ability to use the language; it should be offered as a form of feedback to learners who have started to demonstrate an ability to use it proficiently. Ellis (2006) proposes that the teaching of grammar in second language learning can take the form of separate lessons and be infused in communicative activities, depending on the classroom situation.

For Malawian schools this might mean that the teaching of grammar should be integrated with writing lessons as part of the scaffolding process; alternatively that grammar be taught implicitly in separate lessons, especially in the senior classes. The decision to do this will depend entirely upon the teacher's knowledge of these issues and the classroom situation.

2.5.2 Language Skills in ESL

Hinkel (2006) outlines recent research developments that pertain to the teaching of the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. For the purposes of this study, I will concentrate on writing.

According to Hinkel (2006), each era is marked by theories of second language learning, which are based on research findings in search of the best L2 teaching methods. She observes that this trend is still unfolding. What has brought about this resurgence of research is the recognition of diversity of teachers' roles and the diversity of learners and their corresponding needs. This then has led to the disregard for the use of any one single method in order to address the diverse learning needs of L2 classrooms. Based on research on the role of cognition in L2 learning, accuracy and fluency are important. Research findings demonstrate that, without explicit and form-focused instruction, exposing ESL learners to meaning-based input does not lead to development of syntax and lexical accuracy. What is captured in current teacher education textbooks is the idea of how to address bottom-up and top-down abilities (ibid.).

Hinkel (2006) also touches on analyses which show that there are variations of language features in both spoken and written English language corpora and across many types of genres. These genres include academic or journalistic prose, formal or conversational speech. The importance of these findings is to guide which patterns of syntactic, morphological, lexical and discursal features occur in particular kind of texts and instructional materials.

Another factor that is relevant to ESL teaching is the integration and multiskill instruction recommended by Hinkel (ibid). This includes models with integrated teaching, those that have a communicative focus, those which are content based, discourse based, genre based. The teaching of L2 writing requires special and systematic approaches that take into account the cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic differences between L1 and L2 writers. There is a need to integrate grammar into the L2 writing pedagogy curriculum, and to use readings from a wide array of genres, such as narratives, exposition or argumentation. It is useful to focus specifically on grammar structures and contextualized vocabulary. The integration of grammar within a genre approach would help learners understand texts such as e-mail messages, news reports, and academic prose. Such developments should guide teachers in L2

literacy teaching. Knowing a diversity of grammar teaching approaches is necessary, considering the diversity of needs in ESL classrooms.

The final section discusses literacy approaches for L2 writing development based on Vygotsky's social learning theory of scaffolding. The genre approaches outlined below were developed at the Koori Centre for the Aboriginal and Torres Straights Islanders in Australia, and at the University of Reading in the UK, respectively.

2.6 Genre Approaches

2.6.1 Scaffolding Academic Reading and Writing

'Scaffolding' is a term associated with the support teachers give to learners to enable them to learn at a higher level than is possible on their own. According to Lui-Chivizhe, McKnight, Rose (2004), the term originates from Ninio and Bruner (1978) who used the term to relate to how learning takes place in families, following the Vygotskyan (1978) social model of learning. The scaffolding literacy methodology was designed to support a marginalized grouping of people in Australia, the Aboriginals. Since the call to go for further studies, the Koori centre saw the need to equip this group with academic literacy skills. This realization came about to enable the Aboriginal students to be able to study independently at a higher level and also be able to write essays coherently. The methodology has been developed through action research with teachers through early primary to tertiary across the curriculum (Rose, 2004).

Lui-Chivizhe et al. (2004) explain that the scaffolding methodology focuses on recognition and use of patterns of language and the meanings they express in texts. The language patterns referred to are 'dense abstract academic concepts and technical terms that are part of academic fields unlike the language patterns that we use in everyday communication' (ibid.:3). The idea resonates with Cummins' BICS/CALP distinction, which was discussed in 2.1.2.

Lui-Chivizhe et al. explain that the teachers' scaffolding that is offered to the students involves three levels of processes. The first level requires learners to recognize, comprehend and use meanings. The second level requires learners to interpret meanings in terms of the academic field under study as well as of their own experience. The third level causes learners

to critically analyze how authors construct meanings and to choose how to construct such meanings themselves. The scaffolding provided allows the integration of reading and writing, learning academic fields and analysis of texts. The integration of multilanguage skills has already been recommended by Hinkel (2006) as being beneficial to L2 writing.

The scaffolding methodology (Lui-Chevizhe et al. 2004: 4) also allows a general discussion of the meaning of the text as well as more focused ones in which learners may apply their experiences and understandings in interpreting their academic field. The methodology provides learners with a strong basis for taking on more complex information locked away in academic language. This practice of teaching and learning also relates to the social practices approaches in which literacy is linked to the environment in which one lives. This allows ESL learners to draw on their rich cultural repertoire which is advantageous for literacy development.

This, then can be an ideal pedagogy for writing where English is not the learners' first language. The scaffolding strategies will support learners to build up proficiency in particular fields and be able to engage with writing in a meaningful and competent way.

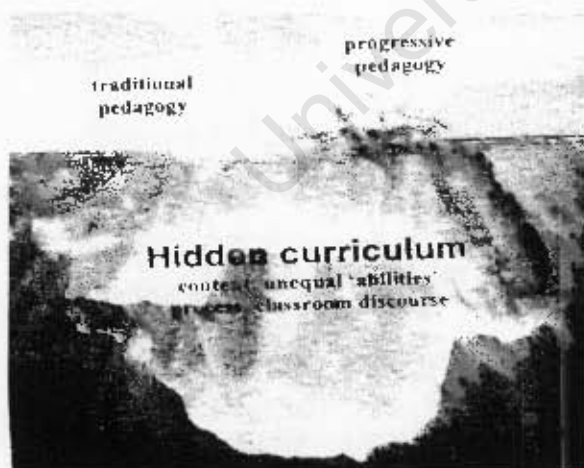
2.6.2 Learning to Read: Reading to Learn

Rose (2004) explains that the 'Learning to Read: Reading to Learn', methodology was designed to meet the literacy needs of the marginalized and other indigenous groups of people in Australia. It involves democratizing classroom practice so that it targets all learners in the classroom. Through the methodology all learners are able to read and write the texts expected of their level and area of study. The Learning to Read: Reading to Learn methodology has been developed from an integration of Bernstein, Vygotsky's and Halliday's theoretical bases (ibid.). It seeks to address unequal relations in the classroom arising from practices that ensure that one group of learners is often unsuccessful in doing tasks. The consequence of these unequal relations between learners, Rose suggests, is that they affect occupational strata in developed economies (ibid:3). The causes of the low learner outcomes are embedded in the ordinary discourse which includes the 'triadic dialogue' of question-response-feedback in classroom interaction. Traditional and progressivist practices of teaching literacy which include learner-centred vs. teacher centred methods have failed to change the outcomes because they share the same hidden curriculum, the same content (unequal 'abilities') and the

same process (classroom discourse). This failure then, is what has attracted the attention on school literacy and efforts to force improvements.

The 'Learning to Read: Reading to Learn' method draws on Vygotsky's notion of the ZPD (ibid:6). Through the support that teachers provide during teaching and learning, learners operate at a high level no matter what their independent levels of ability are. This provides a way of dealing with the socio-cognitive needs of learners for literacy development for both communicative and abstract tasks. The Hallidayan influence in the 'Learning to Read: Reading to Read' methodology helps in the actual teaching of reading and writing across the curriculum. What is central in this model is the notion of 'realization'. Rose (ibid.:7) describes realization as a process where meaning is expressed as wording, and wording is realized as sounding or lettering. This model starts with graphemes for teaching writing through the teachers' support and the early meaningful discussions. In each successive stage, the complexity of learning tasks increases and the gap between the most and least successful learners decreases. Eventually, learners produce equitable outcomes as represented in Diagram 3:

DIAGRAM 3: SUPERFICIALITY OF PROGRESSIVIST / TRADITIONAL PEDAGOGIC CONFLICT.



I end this chapter with another example of a genre approach to the teaching of writing that makes explicit use of writing frames in order to offer support to ESL learners.

2.6.3 Genre and Writing Frames

According to Lewis & Wray (2002), the genre approach to writing dates back to the 1990s. The term 'genre' refers to language in context and also to the different types/kinds of language with special reference to writing. Teachers can offer specific support in ESL writing lessons through the genre approaches which build on the concept of scaffolding (ibid.). There are several types of genre, some of which include: narrative, personal, argumentative or discursive. These types manifest through the following texts: drama, novel, friendly or business letter and short stories. In addition, genre is reflected in writing by the register, tone, diction and style of writing (ibid.). Teachers should encourage learners to undertake a wide range of writing and be supported in planning so that on their own, they can produce texts that are purposeful in the society (ibid.)

The genre approach was tried out by the Exeter Extending Literacy (EXEL) Project at the University of Reading in the UK in order to address the issue of non-fiction writing, which is problematic to many young learners. The problems that young learners experienced in this project were mainly due to linguistic features such as use of specialist vocabulary, structures and connectives. The Project developed 'writing frames' which acted as a form of scaffolding. The researchers developed six non-fiction genres, namely: recount, report, explanation, procedure, persuasion and discussion. This approach has been trialled across learners with various needs in both primary and secondary schools using the writing frames (see Appendices 7 and 8 for sample frames).

This model of teaching writing is summarized thus (Lewis & Wray, 1995):

Teacher modelling/demonstrating



Joint activity



Scaffolded activity



Independent activity

The model above is based on Vygotsky's (1978) social theory of how children learn from the environment. This model shows that learners initially observe the expert (teacher), who does

most of the cognitive work. Gradually, the responsibility is passed on to the individual learner. Writing through the genres is located in meaningful experiences. This is the connection to the literacy as social practices view, which informs this study's theoretical framework. Some frames offer a wide range and type of text in curriculum areas such as mathematics, science and technology, planning and stories. This inclusion facilitates learners' writing in curriculum areas, each of which has its own distinct purposes and forms of writing. This model also supports learners in planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

Chapter summary

The main concern of the discussion in Chapter Two has been to examine the approaches that have been used for developing writing in some ESL settings. The literature review and theoretical framework discussed are mainly based on Jim Cummins' theories of bilingualism and cognition; language proficiency and the key concepts of *BICS* and *CALP*. Cummins' main argument is that proficiency in the home language is a prerequisite for second-language and literacy development.

In addition, the chapter has highlighted broad approaches to literacy that highlight its social and situated nature (Vygotsky, 1978; Barton, 1994), and the application of these approaches to second language and literacy development. The range of the issues discussed in regard to bilingualism and literacy development illustrate the complexity of second language literacy development.

The following chapter discusses the research orientation followed in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design, methods and processes which I used from the conceptualization of the study onwards. The design was influenced by ethnographic research, which is identified as the most common type of qualitative method used in educational and psychological research (Mertens, 1998). An ethnographic approach is followed in the three case studies, of Standards 4, 6 and 7, respectively.

The chapter first explains the reasons for choosing the qualitative research orientation and the ethnographic approach, with the case study as a research method. This is followed by detailed accounts of research instruments used for collecting data, methods of analyzing data, research ethics and time-lines.

3.2 Choice of research method

3.2.1 The qualitative method

Qualitative research views reality as socially constructed and therefore as something that differs according to one's perspectives or the context from which phenomena are viewed (Creswell, 2003). Hence the study investigates views of a social phenomenon (teaching approaches) with the aim of gaining insights into the relationship between teaching approaches and the development of writing. The study uses a qualitative methodology in that it focuses upon gathering data using a variety of methods. Data are analyzed and interpreted from a theoretical basis, using a 'thick' description.

3.2.2 Ethnographic orientation

This study used an ethnographic-type orientation suited to investigating the culture of members of various social groups such as teachers and learners in a school. The relevance of the ethnographic approach to this study is that it sought to answer some of the questions related to:

- the culture of the approaches
- how the participants define successful approaches

➤ whether their approaches are congruent with effective or exemplary approaches, or programmes (Rossman & Rallis, 2003:132).

3.2.3 The case study method

The case study, according to Mertens (1998) is one type of ethnographic (interpretive) research that involves an intensive and detailed study of one individual or of a group as an entity. In addition, it uses observation, self-reports, amongst other means. The case study is also an ideal research orientation because it prescribes ‘why’ and ‘how’ research questions. Since this research intended to investigate and analyze (in detail) views of social phenomena (teaching approaches), using case studies was relevant. The case study of Standards 4, 6 and 7 aimed at observing the progressive development of the phenomena over time. In case study research, theory³ development is one essential part of the design phase (ibid.).

3.3 The Research context

3.3.1 The research school

The research school lies in the central part of Malawi. The school has a population of 1,345 learners. The majority of these learners and their teachers speak the national language, Chichewa, which is a medium of instruction in all of Malawi’s primary schools (See Table 1). This language policy is an example of an early-exit bilingual model. English is offered as a subject from Standards 1 to 3 while Chichewa is the medium of instruction (MoI). From Standards 4 to 8 English is offered as MoI and is taught as a subject, while Chichewa is taught as a subject only.

The school illustrates the problems expressed in Chapter 1. During the sensitization activity, parents and guardians (the research subjects) voiced their concern that their children “could not read and write as expected”, and they had no explanation for this failure. At that stage I did not attempt to address their concern. The study school is annexed to a Teacher Training College where teacher trainers and primary school teachers have regular collaboration regarding issues of teaching practice in all curricular areas. This situation made it possible for me to examine the actual teaching practices at the study school.

³ Yin (1994) defines theory as an understanding of what is being studied. He also points out that theory may be sourced from a literature review which has appropriate theories to guide a case study.

3.3.2 The classes

There were three classes chosen for this research, namely Standards 4, 6 and 7, which are exposed to English as a medium of instruction in all subjects except for the Chichewa lessons. The second reason for this selection was to be able to observe the progressive development of the phenomena over time. The third reason for this was for the researcher to assess the learners' achievements with regard to the OBE expectations at different levels, within the current early-exit bilingual model. This is important since it will show how much the syllabus prescriptions are impacting on the development of second language literacy.

3.3.3 The learners

The three classes comprised 45 learners who participated in the lessons that were observed. Notebooks from five strong, five average and five weak learners were collected for analysis from each of the three classes. Selection of learners was done by the teacher and me according to their performance in the examination at the end of the second term. Learners from both genders were selected.

3.3.4 The class teachers

The three teachers chosen were prominent class teachers of the study classes and also taught English. There were two female teachers and one male teacher.

3.4 Collection of data

Before collecting data I carried out some preliminary procedures. Some of these included: identifying the study setting, determining the research subjects, and identifying suitable methods of data collection as well research instruments.

I collected data using the processes which are specified in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3: DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

| DATE | DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES |
|-------------|--|
| 10.07.2007 | Sought permission from authorities such as Ministry of Education and other stakeholders such as parents/guardians and Principal for the school. |
| 24.09.2007 | Pre-tested data collection instruments at a Demonstration School. |
| 20.10.2007 | Sensitized some of the stakeholders: Ministry of Education, Primary Education Advisor, Head teacher and Principal of the Teachers' Training College. |
| 27.10.2007 | Sensitized class teachers, parents and guardians, and the research subjects in Standards 4, 6 and 7 signed consent forms. |
| 29. 10.2007 | Made the first classroom observations. |
| 31.10.2007 | Made the second classroom observations |
| 2.11.2007 | Made the third classroom observations. |
| 4.11.2007 | Fourth classroom observations. |
| 6.11.2007 | Conducted interviews with Standard 4, 6 & 7 teachers. |
| 10.11.2007 | Administered questionnaires to Standard 4, 6 & 7 class teachers. |
| 12.11.2007 | Administered questionnaires to Standard 4 learners, and collected them. |
| 13.11.2007 | Administered questionnaires to. and collected them from, Standard 6 learners. |
| 14.11.2007 | Administered questionnaires to. and collected them from, Standard 7 learners |
| 16.11.2007 | Examined 15 Standard 4 pupils' English notebooks. |
| 18.11.2007 | Examined 15 Standard 6 pupils' English notebooks. |
| 20.11.2007 | Examined 15 Standard 7 pupils' English notebooks. |
| 21.11.2007 | Video-taped lessons and noted classroom displays. Returned pupils' notebooks. |

Table 3 above shows the activities followed during the data collection phase of the research.

3.4.1 Data Collection Procedure

As indicated above, I sought permission from the various stakeholders. Data collection started at the beginning of the third term in October and ended at the end of school year, end November. My aim was to collect data in the third term, being the final term in the school year, to enable me to examine the phenomena at their fullest development.

3.4.2 Research questions

The study was designed to answer these questions:

Main question

- What teaching and learning approaches are used for developing writing in English as a second language in a Malawian primary school?

Secondary research questions

The secondary research questions are:

- What teaching and learning techniques and strategies do English teachers use for teaching writing?
- What assumptions do English teachers hold about teaching learners how to write in English?
- Which teaching and learning practices are reflected in the learners' existing written work in their English notebooks?

3.5 Data collecting instruments

Data collecting instruments were developed to enable me to conduct the study. The instruments included crucial indicators that assisted to identify teachers' techniques and strategies, their assumptions, and pupils' writing practices. In addition, the data collecting instruments were based on the expectations of the OBE curriculum, as explained in Chapter 1. The instruments were pilot tested at one school in Blantyre District in order to revise the questions and guidelines in terms of clarity, level of difficulty, number of questions and suitability.

I used the following research instruments to collect data for the study:

3.5.1 Classroom observation checklist

I used a classroom observation checklist to identify the three teachers' techniques and strategies they used for teaching the literacy skill of writing. In addition, my role was to understand the behaviour and patterns exhibited by the 'insiders', the classroom teachers, to render an account of their worldview regarding approaches of teaching writing in English as well as policies governing such teaching practices. I developed this instrument based on literature review and OBE expectations from the syllabus. The purpose for observing lessons was to pay specific attention to teaching techniques and strategies, for example social learning practices.

I was mainly interested in identifying the techniques and strategies that the teachers used for developing writing. Classroom observations were carried out for a minimum period of one week. I looked for broad literacy approaches and teacher-learner interactions. Each class was

observed four times to ensure that the required data was collected. Before the actual data collection commenced, I did preliminary visits to the research site in order to build a friendly atmosphere and to arrange for data collection schedules.

3.5.2 Structured interviews

I used another ethnographic-type method, interviews with the three class teachers, as a source of data. Thus, although I had prepared questions for the interviews, both researcher and participants had the freedom to ask for clarification and to inquire beyond what was stipulated for the interviews. Rossman & Rallies (2003) state that “interviewing takes the researcher into participants’ world at least as far as they can (or choose to) verbally relate what is in their minds.” I used the interviews in order to find out the teachers’ assumptions about the approaches that they used for teaching writing in English lessons. Other reasons for using interviews included: to understand individual perspectives, to probe or clarify, to deepen understanding, to generate rich descriptive data, to gather insights into participants’ thinking, to learn more about the context as (ibid.).

The reasons stated above formed the purpose for using interviews in this study. I identified domains discussed in the literature review and used my own experience to develop questions to elicit participants’ perspectives, practices and approaches to teaching English in the context of the three research classes. The interview questions were conducted in the language of choice of the participants, and were transcribed by me. The language of choice for all three interviewees was English.

The interviews also aimed at collecting what was not captured during the lesson observations, and to note body language, behaviour, and attitudes that reflected power relations.

3.5.3 Questionnaires

I developed two questionnaires, one for teachers and the other for learners. The aim was to consolidate the findings obtained during the interviews and classroom observations. The questionnaire for the teachers was written in English. My assumption was that since they were English language teachers, it would be appropriate for them to respond to the English version. This would also serve to validate the sense of teachers’ English language proficiency that I had gained during the interviews. For the learners, the questions were available both in

English and Chichewa⁴ in order for them to choose the language they were comfortable with. Although there were differences in question formulation, the questionnaires covered the same issues, namely: approaches to, and beliefs about, teaching and learning writing in English; use of OBE syllabus guidelines; use of phonics; environments for teaching writing; genres used for writing; forms of writing; correctness of sentences/grammar; uses of writing; links between home and school practices; phonics; the OBE syllabus; meaningful writing versus copying teachers' written work; spelling; sentence segmentations; critical writing; and language skills, amongst others.

3.5.4 Pupils' notebooks

Eight pupils' notebooks were analysed. These were from learners that the class teachers had identified as strong, average and weak, respectively. The reason for this selection was to get a good sense of how the teachers' methods impacted on the full spectrum of learners in regard to the development of writing in English as a second language. I used the notebooks to find out the learners' literacy practices and events, since language is socially situated. Apart from this, the learners' written texts were used to find out if they were meaningful, had purposes for writing, and tapped from learners' cultural and social experiences. I also looked for evidence of predicting, of planning and editing, of different genres, of the teachers' markings and reflections, and of collaborative and critical writing, amongst other indicators. In general, I collected data from the pupils' notebooks that would help to describe how learners write, what approaches they use for writing, evidence of the OBE curriculum expectations, and evidence of power relations within the classroom setting.

3.6 Method of analysis

In this research study, I used qualitative methods of data analysis which, according to Mertens (1998), involve coding, categorizing, making links and triangulation. Mertens explains that data analysis in qualitative studies is an ongoing process which requires constant re-reading, selecting, coding and categorizing, linking data and interpretation of data. The type of analysis used is what is called 'holistic analysis'⁵ of the entire case, unlike the 'embedded

⁴ Chichewa is a lingua franca in the central region of Malawi where the research study is based. Most of the class teachers and pupils use it class and at home. Chichewa is also a medium of instruction in Malawi's early primary school and it is taught as a subject in senior classes (STDs 5-8).

⁵ Holistic analysis of data involves the entire case unlike 'embedded analysis' which is of a specific aspect of a case.

analysis' that focuses only on an aspect of a case (ibid.). Through the data collected, detailed descriptions of the case emerged and an analysis of themes or issues followed. I then interpreted the findings. This guided me to narrate the study through techniques such as a chronology of major events followed by a detailed reflection on a few incidents and work out their meanings. Finally, the researcher reported on the lessons learnt from the case.

3.6.1 Reading and re-reading

According to Dey (1993), reading data paves the way for analysis. The kind of reading that I used was the interactive one which makes use of questions like: Who? What? When? Where? Why? I used this type of question and made annotated notes (also called memos) before breaking them into subgroups or parts. This led into the second stage below.

3.6.2 Selecting

During this activity, I chose some of the data that was considered more important and less important in relation to the purpose of the study. This was done in readiness for the creation of categories.

3.6.3 Data coding and categorization

This process helps to analyze data by grouping or creation of categories (Dey 1993). I divided up items in a pile into separate sub-piles for further differentiation. Thus, I used codes and categories on the data collected through interviews, such as teachers' views on teaching methods, teachers' language proficiency, power relations, use of L1, and learners' literacy practices and events.

3.6.4 Linking data

After creating and assigning categories, I considered ways of refining and refocusing the analysis. Tesch (1990) calls this process recontextualization. In this process, Dey (1993) explains that we view data in different contexts from the original. Using the example of the learners' literacy practices, I arranged data differently from its original connections. Thus, I sorted data according to their similarities and differences in the three study classes.

3.6.5 Procedures of verification

To verify the credibility of this qualitative research, I used two procedures of verification.

- **A rich thick description**

I developed a thorough and comprehensive description of the phenomena under study through thick descriptions of information about the context of the phenomena, the study intentions and the process in which the phenomena were embedded see Dey 1993).

- **Triangulation**

I used standard triangulation procedures throughout the study to ensure validity of the findings (Mertens, 1998). Triangulation in qualitative research has been defined as the collection of data on each topic of interest from a variety of data sources and using several different data collection methods such as interviews, observations, document reviews etc, for consistency of evidence (ibid.:190). I used several different sources of data collection, namely interviews, questionnaires, non-participant lesson observation, video filming (although I used it only as a support facility to lesson observation) and pupils' notebooks. These sources of data and the various data collection methods helped to substantiate and validate the research findings.

3.7 Hypotheses

My main hypothesis was that second language literacy skills can develop effectively only in settings where learners have developed their proficiency well in their mother tongue through additive bilingual contexts.

I also hypothesized that pupils' writing development is likely to be lower than the expected OBE curriculum standards because of an over-concentration on the use of methods reflecting an autonomous view of literacy. Such methods prevail due to teachers' lack of appropriate skills and knowledge of second language literacy development.

Chapter summary

This Chapter has highlighted the research design and its methods and processes used from the conceptualization of the research through the data collection, data analysis and interpretation stages. The study took the form of a quasi-longitudinal investigation of Standards 4, 6 and 7 using ethnographically-oriented research methods that elicited qualitative data. The human subjects involved are mentioned and the reasons for their inclusion in the research are discussed. The different data collection instruments are discussed. These include interviews, a

classroom observation schedule, questionnaires for teachers and learners, and learners' notebooks.

The following chapter presents and discusses the findings.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed presentation and discussion of research findings regarding classroom approaches that are used for developing writing in English as a second language in a Malawian primary school. These findings are based on the data that I collected from three English teachers and their respective learners in Standards 4, 6 and 7. The sources of data that I collected include: interviews with teachers; questionnaires for teachers and learners; lesson observations; and learners' notebooks.

The results suggest that the approaches used by the three English teachers belong to the autonomous view of literacy, which impacts negatively on the development of learners' writing in English. In the next section, I will briefly comment on the findings. The section is organized by research subjects and the data collection instruments that were used.

4.2 Teachers

Since teachers are instrumental in guiding learners in the development of literacy skills, as Wright (1987) claims, I collected a lot of data regarding teachers' use of home language, academic and professional training, language proficiency in English, classroom interaction, and teaching and learning methods and strategies. In addition, I interviewed the three class teachers to discover the assumptions underlying their teaching techniques and strategies for teaching writing in English. Findings from the pilot study which I carried out at a demonstration school in Blantyre enabled me to revise some of the questions for the teacher interviews. I also developed additional questions which helped me to solicit the targeted information. (These are indicated in the appendices.) These changes to research instruments are well supported in the literature (cf. Mertens, 1998).

4.2.1 Teachers' background

Firstly, I present a brief language profile of the three research teachers from Standards 4, 6 and 7, which I obtained through the teachers' questionnaire.

TABLE 4: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

| TEACHER | GENDER | AGE | TEACHING EXPERIENCE |
|---------|--------|-----|---------------------|
| Std 4 | Female | 38 | 8 Years |
| Std 6 | Male | 47 | 10 Years |
| Std 7 | Female | 36 | 7 Years |

The findings show that the three research teachers' ages range from 38 to 47. The sample includes two female teachers and one male teacher. They were all trained in Malawi's teacher training colleges after completing their schooling. They have all taught English in primary school for at least seven years, and can therefore be regarded as experienced teachers.

4.2.2 Teachers' home language use

The research teachers' home language use is presented in Table 5. These findings were collected through the teachers' questionnaire which I had constructed in English. Teachers' home language use will be compared with the learners' home language use (Table 13) in order to understand the language environment in which writing as a second language is taught in the three research classes.

TABLE 5: TEACHERS' HOME LANGUAGE USE

| TEACHER FOR | BEST SPEAKS | MOST LIKES TO SPEAK | LIKES TO SPEAK WITH OTHERS |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Std4 | Chichewa at home | English and Chichewa at home and school | Likes to speak in Chichewa |
| Std6 | Chichewa and Citumbuka at home | English and Chichewa at school | Likes to speak in Chichewa and Citumbuka |
| Std7 | Chichewa and Citumbuka at home | English and Chichewa at school and home | Likes to speak in Chichewa. |

Findings in Table 5 above indicate that all the three research teachers report local languages such as Chichewa and Citumbuka as languages that are dominant and are also widely spoken at home, at school and with others. The Standard 6 and 7 teachers' findings reveal that both teachers are multilingual since they speak an additional language Citumbuka at home and with others, in addition to English which they speak at home and at school.

The findings reveal that the research teachers have a preference for speaking local languages. English is preferred only at home and at school, and then always together with Chichewa. This shows that local languages such as Chichewa and Citumbuka are dominant and have more vitality than English. These teachers who are mostly communicating in Chichewa and Citumbuka are expected to work in strict and tense environments in which they must teach in English.

Table 6 is on the research teachers' self-reported English language proficiency. I asked the teachers to rate their own English language proficiency with regard to the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing, using a four-point scale: "Excellent", "Good", "Average" and "Below average". I used this scale because the teachers already have a command of the English language. This was done in order to have a clear picture about the classroom situation.

The teachers' responses for their English language proficiency are summarized in Table 6, below:

TABLE 6: TEACHERS' SELF- REPORTED PROFICIENCY

| | UNDERSTANDING | SPEAKING | READING | WRITING |
|-------|---------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| Std 4 | Good | Good | Good | Good |
| Std 6 | Excellent | Good | Good | Good |
| Std 7 | Good | Good | Excellent | Good |

The findings show that the Std 4 teacher rates herself as 'good' rather than excellent in all four language skills. The Std 6 teacher reports being excellent in understanding and reading. The Std 7 teacher is reportedly excellent in reading. There is no teacher who claims excellence in speaking and writing English, and only one claims to understand English excellently.

Since the findings suggest that teachers have problems with speaking and writing skills in English, it is to be expected that learners in their classes would have similar problems. Goodman & Goodman (1979) state that there is similarity in the way that we learn to speak and write a language. This requires teachers to be retrained in methods that build language proficiency levels for both conversational and higher skills like writing (as in Cummins,

1981), ranging from context embedded, cognitively undemanding communication to context reduced, cognitively demanding communication theories.

The next section presents the teachers' views and assumptions about the methods and approaches they use for teaching writing in English as a second language.

4.2.3 Teachers' views and assumptions about their literacy approaches

My intention in interviewing the three research teachers was mainly to find out the assumptions and beliefs that motivate their teaching of literacy. This is significant because some teachers may not practise what they are trained to do or may change their ideas and practices in teaching literacy, for their own reasons (Bloch 2006). Further, my intention was to assess whether teachers' assumptions about the teaching of literacy are in line with what second language research recommends. Prinsloo (2005) and Edelsky (1996) describe two approaches to literacy, namely the 'autonomous' and the 'social practices' approach (the latter also called the 'ideological' approach in the New Literacy studies).

I used questions from the teachers' interview guidelines, some of which I had modified during the pilot phase (see Appendices). These questions were instrumental in helping me to determine whether the teachers' views and beliefs represent an autonomous or an ideological approach to teaching literacy.

In the interview schedule for teachers, the focus was on methods and strategies used in English lessons for teaching writing, with the aim of revealing the teachers' views and assumptions about teaching literacy. I used the following findings to generate this:

Question 2.11: How do you introduce a topic for writing in English?

TABLE 7: LESSON INTRODUCTION

| STD | TEACHERS' RESPONSES | | | |
|-----|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 4 | Do games | Do spellings | Read word cards | Discuss picture and picture charts |
| 6 | Explain topic | Discuss topic orally | Ask oral questions | |
| 7 | Do spellings | Discuss topic | Do dictation | |

The findings in the Table 7 show that in Std 4, the most common ways of starting the lesson are by conducting spelling tasks or games or reading lists of words or discussing pictures. In Std 6 and 7, the teachers normally begin lessons by discussing topics orally. The similarity is that in Stds. 4 and 7, both teachers use spellings. The difference is that in Std7, the teacher conducts dictation. However, from my lesson observations, these activities were also the only and most common forms of writing that learners undertook in the lessons. They formed the writing lessons.

The findings from the interviews above reveal that the three teachers' assumptions and views about literacy teaching are centred on the autonomous view model whose views for teaching literacy are that it is taught outside meaningful contexts. Examples of activities are teaching of spelling or phonics by means of word cards.

When asked each how they proceed with teaching the concept of writing after introducing the English lesson, the teachers said:

I ask learners to copy words or sentences in neat handwriting from the chalkboard. I frequently give them words to write in correct spelling in their notebooks. After I mark their work, they correct wrong spellings. (Extract from the Standard 4 teacher's interview).

I assign learners to do tasks such as: joining sentences, defining new words, answering questions, rearranging words, writing sentences in grammatical sentences such as tenses. They also fill in missing words in sentences and paragraphs. I ensure that they correct all work that they have not done correctly after marking their notebooks. (Extract from the Standard 6 teacher's interview).

I ask learners to answer comprehension questions individually or in groups and write the answers in their notebooks. After a grammar presentation, learners practice using the grammatical items learnt by making sentences, and filling in gaps in sentences and paragraphs. They write a composition after we have developed it together on the chalkboard and they also write words in correct spellings. (Extract from the standard 7 teacher's interview).

The responses seem to indicate that three teachers' English lessons were mainly spelling work, answering comprehension questions, filling words in sentences and paragraphs and copying model compositions. There is also emphasis on correction of errors. These are attributes of the autonomous view of literacy.

Question 2.13: What actions do you take when you find errors in the writing lessons?

I sum up the three teachers' responses as follows:

TABLE 8: ACTION TAKEN ON ERRORS

| STD | ACTION | | BY | TEACHER |
|-----|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| 4 | Give individual help | Assign more work | Group slow learners with fast learners | Underline all errors |
| 6 | Give individual help | Involve fast learners | Use mixed ability groups for support | Show markings |
| 7 | Learners make corrections | Fast learners assist slow learners | Mark learners' work. | |

The findings indicate that the research teachers gave keen attention to learners' errors by marking and giving support to slow learners by correcting their work, either by peers or by the teachers themselves.

The responses reveal the assumption, held by adherents of the autonomous view, that teachers are attracted to errors that learners make (cf. Edelsky, 1996).

Question 2.3: How do you integrate the other language skills in the English writing lessons?

TABLE 9: INTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

| STD | INTEGRATING LANGUAGE SKILLS |
|-----|--|
| 4 | Start with oral work, then reading, and finish with writing. |
| 6 | Start with oral work through pair work, or role play, reading, and then writing. |
| 7 | Start with oral work e.g. games, story-telling, reading, and then writing. |

Thus all three teachers started with oral work (which was normally conducted as pair work or role play or games or story-telling), then moved on to reading and finished with writing.

These findings reveal another facet of the assumptions and beliefs connected to the autonomous approach, which often encourages teaching from simple to complex. In this case, oral work is done mainly to engage learners in repetition activities. Repetitive oral work is much simpler than reading and writing because it does not demand as much cognitive processing.

Question 2.9: Do you allow your learners to write about political or critical matters in your English lessons? What are your views on this? Give examples of topics used on this.

The three teachers' responses are presented in Table 10 below:

TABLE 10: POLITICAL/CRITICAL WRITING

| STD. | TEACHERS' RESPONSES |
|------|---|
| 4 | No, learners are too young for politics. |
| 6 | No, I discourage them. |
| 7 | No, we do not teach politics at primary school. |

The Standard 4 teacher answered that her learners are too young to write on political or critical matters. The Standard 7 teacher said that he did not because they do not teach politics at school. The Standard 6 teacher's response was that he discourages them from writing about political matters.

The above findings reveal another view which is held by practitioners of the autonomous model, which runs counter to teaching with reference to any meaningful or critical contexts (Wiley 1996). It is clear that the research teachers do not apply critical approaches when teaching literacy.

4.2.4 Teaching methods and strategies

I will proceed by highlighting some teaching methods and strategies which I identified during the lesson observations. I observed a maximum of four lessons in each class. My aim was to find out what methods and strategies were used by the teachers for teaching writing in English lessons, in order to determine whether they fell under the autonomous or social practices view

of literacy. I observed the lessons using an unstructured checklist attached to the appendices in table 6.

4.2.4.1 The Standard 4 Teacher's Lessons

I observed four lessons in this class. The most striking feature was the form or presentation of the lessons. That is, the lessons consisted mostly of listening and speaking activities such as speech work, phonics, games, spelling, role playing, listening to teacher's story-telling, answering oral comprehensions, and discussing questions in groups. The form of writing that took place was mostly copying corrected work (error free), in good handwriting which was written on the chalkboard by a few selected learners or the teacher, and working out correct spellings of words. It was all copying; there was no creative writing.

I include the following lesson extracts:

Lesson Extract 1:

Teacher (inviting two learners to the front): Ask your friend, "What will you do on Saturday?"

Learner 1: What will you do on Saturday?

Teacher (tells learner 2): Answer, "I will go to the market".

Learner 2: I will go to the market.

Teacher: Class, do the same in pairs. After this... Class, read the words written on the word grid in your groups.

(Teacher then asks a few learners to write the correct words on the word grid. She instructs the rest of the learners to copy the words into their notebooks in good handwriting. She marks their work, giving marks on the basis of correct spelling, legible and neat handwriting.)

WORD GRID

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| C | Atch |
| H | |
| P | |
| Th | |
| M | |
| 1.Catch | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |

The lesson extract is evidence of the use of the phonic method to teach writing. The lesson shows that the teacher deals with words in isolation of context, and emphasizes technical skills such as handwriting. These are a feature of the autonomous view of teaching literacy.

Lesson Extract 2

The other Std 4 lesson started with a guessing game in which the teacher asked a learner who was blindfolded to name an object found in the classroom, such as a chair. Then the teacher provided the first letter of the object for the learner to guess its name. The teacher repeated this process with several objects. Then the teacher asked learners to spell these words: money, chair, and tap, and a few selected learners wrote them on the chalkboard. After this, the teacher read a story and asked learners to answer some oral questions as a whole class. Learners were then given sentences from the story and asked to fill in the missing words.

One notable feature of this lesson was in the way in which the teacher was directing all activity. Learners were not given much support on how to write the words in meaningful ways. Learners' tasks for writing required them only to label or name the selected objects, and to fill in missing words. The lesson lacked tasks that required learners to show higher order thinking skills in writing.

Like the previous lesson, this lesson was also not linked to any functions or real life contexts. Thus, learners did not use the skills taught in this lesson in personally useful and meaningful ways. All these are characteristics of the autonomous view of teaching literacy.

In another lesson, the teacher involved learners in rearranging sentences in order to create a paragraph through groupwork. Learners supported each other in groups in order to do the task. Learners interacted in Chichewa in order to clarify and understand their task. However, the teacher reprimanded learners for speaking in Chichewa during the English lesson, since use of the familiar language in L2 lessons in these classrooms represents a gross breach of school language policy.

The teacher's use of groupwork was in line with the new OBE curriculum. However, in this lesson, writing was not a meaning-making process, mainly because the learners' tasks were highly text- and word-bound, and did not seem to apply inferencing strategies to textual

relations and word meanings. The use of group work did not engage learners in tasks which take the learners into cognitively demanding levels where much information is challenging and demands processing quickly (cf. Baker, 2000). Outlawing the use of a familiar language in the lessons shows how schools operate as institutions linked to the state, and become spaces that legitimate specific languages and linguistic practices (Martin-Jones, 2005).

4.2.4.2 The Std 6 teacher's lessons

I observed four lessons in Standard 6. I had access to the teacher's lesson plans in order to verify unclear areas. I wanted to understand the objectives of the lesson (which are indicated in the lesson plan section called 'success criteria') in order to capture the methods and strategies that he used for teaching the lesson. These are some of the examples of the success criteria that were indicated in his lesson plans. Learners must

- join sentences with comparatives such as: "*more*", "*than*"
- work out meanings of difficult words from "Mayamiko's Visit to London"
- fill in missing parts (syllables) of words in sentences.

The extract from the teacher's lesson plan shows an element of integrating writing with grammar (a lesson on comparatives was a grammar lesson). The learners' writing tasks were the fill-ins, joining sentences as well as completing words. The lesson plan had also indicated that the teacher would assist learners to write in grammatical sentences, but it lacked descriptive details that would assist in explaining meanings of functions performed by the grammatical structures. All this is typical of the Skills-Based model of teaching literacy (cf. Ellis, 2006). The combination of grammar and writing forms an eclectic approach which may address learners' diverse needs in the classroom (ibid.). However, in this lesson eclecticism did not benefit the learners much as the lesson was deficient in promoting cognition that would assist in developing the learners' writing proficiency in English (Cummins, 1981).

Most of the writing lessons started with oral questions or spelling exercises. After this, the teacher read a passage (as a model of good reading), followed by learners' chorus reading of the passage, which was available in the learners' English books.

In only one lesson did the teacher use groupwork to conduct interactive activities in readiness for a writing activity which required learners to fill in missing words in sentences. Learners

did not interact much during groupwork since their discussion was limited by the teacher's promptings to stop them from interacting in Chichewa, such as: "Don't speak in Chichewa when holding discussions in your groups" (Chichewa is the learners' shared language). However, some learners disobeyed and spoke in Chichewa in their groups when they wanted to access additional support to reason with (cf. Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). This reveals that the teacher subscribed to the legitimacy of valuing one language, English, over the learners' home language, a common practice in bilingual classrooms which advocate the exclusive use of English (cf. Arthur, 1996). In this learning environment, which prohibits learners from using their shared language, learners are discouraged from making contributions to learning, due to the language barrier (English).

To build vocabulary for writing, the teacher read the words and learners read after him as a whole class. From the story that he read, "The Piccadilly Station in London", he failed to pronounce the words '*circus*' and '*squeal*' correctly. He could not explain what Piccadilly Line was to the learners. His concentration was on the new words. Then he gave learners the writing task to arrange the sentences depicting the events of the story in a chronological order. Many learners could not answer the oral questions on the events of the story, and they produced a paragraph that lacked coherence and was not comprehensible.

The teacher lacked skills to teach the new words meaningfully and with application to what was available in the learners' environment and culture. Hence, writing the new words alone could not facilitate a meaningful writing activity in their daily life. There was a need to link the story to the mode of transport that was familiar to the learners, and to engage them in a writing activity that was context reduced and cognitively demanding, using support for writing such as paragraph markers.

The teacher actively directed the lessons and asked the learners a lot of questions. In only a few cases did the learners ask him questions. When learners asked the teacher to clarify how to carry out assigned group tasks for reading and writing, I observed that their spoken English was not good. They seemed to be operating under a lot of stress when speaking, and the teacher frequently used 'yes/no' questions to ease the learners' responses, or he allowed chorus answers. These mostly assisted learners to answer the questions correctly and gave the impression that the lessons were successful, which is similar to the 'safetalk' practices recorded in Hornberger & Chick (2001).

When it came to writing activities, there was a lack of creative work and learners were not given writing tasks that required originality or much reasoning. The teacher frequently code-switched during lessons. He did this in order to help learners understand the task or to get their attention, to guide them in doing tasks. For example:

Lesson extract 3

Teacher: Turn to page 67 in your reading books. What can you see? I think there is a young man in a strange country? What kind of transport has he used? Osalongolora! (Keep quiet!) Have you ever seen it? Who knows it?

Pupils: No.

Teacher: Is that country in Africa? What are the indicators that the place is not Africa? Answer me class? Kapena simukumva? (Maybe you can't understand me?) Kodi ku Africa kuli zomwe zikuoneka pa chithunzi po? (Do we have those things that are depicted in the picture here in Africa?)

Pupils: No.

Teacher: Can you all read the story a loud after me. Now, write all the difficult words in your notebooks. We will define their meanings together.

What is the meaning of Piccadilly Line? Muone pa chithunzi cho. (Look at the illustration?). Billy?

Pupils: No idea.

Teacher: Is it not a train? Who can write this on chalkboard? Write it in your note books. Mulembe mokongola. (In beautiful handwriting, please).

Another feature in his lessons was the way the four language skills were integrated in teaching. The teacher normally started with oral activities (the simplest skill), then proceeded with reading and finished with a form of a writing (the most complex skill) activity. This is a characteristic of a method based on the autonomous view of literacy.

What follows are findings from the Standard 7 lesson which I observed using a checklist (see Appendices).

4.2.4.3 Std 7 teacher's lessons

The Standard 7 teacher's lessons displayed similar features to the Standard 6 lessons, possibly because both are senior classes and they cover similar content, while differing only in scope. To avoid repetition I will present only a few findings from the lesson observations.

Lessons mainly started with oral work, which was followed by reading of new words, reading texts using skills such as dramatized reading (i.e. reading aloud coupled with supporting actions), before doing tasks for writing such as writing words using the correct spelling.

Two lessons that I observed featured grammar work. One lesson was on 'Direct' and 'Indirect Speech' in which the teacher explained how to change direct speech into indirect speech. The learners' task was to change statements and questions from direct to indirect speech. A lot of grammatical and spelling errors were displayed in the learners' work, which became evident when a few learners wrote on the chalkboard. The rest copied the corrected work into their notebooks. The errors attracted the teacher's keen attention and she corrected them instantly. Ellis (2006) supports descriptive grammar presentations that help to explain meanings of grammatical forms and structures. He also advocates the teaching of common errors that second language learners make (ibid.), but emphasises that grammar in second language teaching should be infused into communicative activities.

This grammar-writing lesson was not linked to any meaningful context in which the taught concepts could have been used. It showed some characteristics of the autonomous view of skills-based teaching approaches, which give more attention to errors and less to communication (see Baker, 2000:323).

In one of the lessons in the Standard 7 class, the teacher wrote jumbled sentences from a story. She then drew a framework for learners to re-write the sentences logically so that they would form a story (see framework below). She assigned numbers to each sentence on the framework. She then presented several jumbled sentences from the story for learners to read in groups and to decide on a meaningful sequence.

A Framework for Writing Sentences in Std 7

| |
|----|
| 1. |
| 2. |
| 3. |
| 4. |
| 5. |
| 6. |

Below are the jumbled sentences which learners had to rearrange and write in the framework above:

- We washed our hands at the sink.
- Phakamisa cooked nsima on the stove.
- We ate it quickly.
- Tamandani and Khumbo neatly laid the dinner table.
- Florida prayed for the food.
- Then we left for the bus depot.

The idea of introducing a framework for writing the story was ideal for an L2 literacy learning setting. However, the framework lacked connectives and markers of cohesion between the sentences, which is the scaffolding support that would assist the learners to produce a meaningful version of the story. The scaffolding strategy for teaching writing has been recommended because it leads learners into meaningful experiences and provides support to produce different types of texts or genres, which are usually problematic for learners (Rose, 2004; Lewis & Wray, 2002 – see Appendices for samples of writing frames). In this lesson the experience of dining may have been familiar to many of the learners. In this way the teacher captured very effectively a home life experience which the learners were familiar with. This is an example of a text in which sentences have been used in a meaningful context.

In this lesson, it appears that the learners mainly depended on contextual cues like the eating experience and the numbering of the sentences, in order to enable them to arrange the sentences correctly. The task was of a context embedded, cognitively undemanding nature since learners only had to sort the sentences meaningfully. Thus the learners could have been

given an opportunity to operate in a context reduced and cognitively demanding environment which helps L2 literacy learning (cf. Cummins, 1981). The teacher did not create a situation for the learners to connect the sentences into a well connected and meaningful paragraph, without using conversational cues. Aligning the sentences in the frame work was done in groups and it was a simple writing task for the learners. She needed to challenge learners with a writing task requiring a higher order language skill which does not simply tap from the conversational or environmental cues. For example, the teacher could have asked the learners to write a cohesive paragraph by guiding them to use connectives.

Teachers' questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was formulated in a way to help me consolidate the findings from the teachers' interviews and lesson observations. In it, there were questions that requested the three teachers to state their assumptions or views about teaching English, and the methods and strategies that they used. In addition, some questions targeted the teachers' responses to the nature of writing tasks that they gave to learners in the English lessons. The findings from the three teachers' questionnaire are presented below as follows:

Teaching methods and strategies

On the question of how teachers dealt with the four language skills, the findings indicate that all the teachers followed a pattern of starting with an oral session, before moving on to reading and finally writing. They also indicated that they taught each language skill separately, in isolation of context.

Based on my observations of teachers' writing activities, the findings are that the teachers mostly engaged learners in copying teachers' model work, handwriting, phonics, spellings, filling in missing words and writing short stories as the main forms of teaching writing (which were mostly fill-ins).

The two paragraphs above seem to agree with the perception that the teachers used teaching methods and strategies that are skills-based, which are characteristic of the autonomous view of literacy. In this approach there is a concentration of teaching skills devoid of meaningful contexts.

Teachers' views and assumptions

The findings on the topics that the three research teachers used for teaching English show that teachers gave learners topics which included both school and home life, and local and western experiences from the prescribed class readers. One teacher discouraged learners from writing about politics in English lessons.

An analysis of the writing tasks observed shows they were done merely for their own sake. Learners wrote simply for writing practice; tasks showed no link with their communicative needs.

The questions about the incorporation of grammar topics, spelling tasks and marking learners' work drew positive responses from teachers in the questionnaire. The findings showed that most of the lessons in Std 6 and 7 were grammar and spelling oriented. In Std 4, lessons were mostly about spelling and handwriting. The findings also indicated that all three teachers viewed the learners' written tasks in the English lessons as opportunities to grade the learners. Grading was mainly based on correct spelling and neat handwriting. Such practices reflect the firm belief in the autonomous view of literacy.

Literacy practices and events

Findings on the literacy practices and events show that the teachers engaged learners with print, but that this engagement was limited to events done in class and not linked to functions that were personally meaningful to learners. These events were tailored to suit the narrow aims of the English lessons.

The findings also indicate that learners did not engage much with print at home. At school, the teachers selected the topics for the learners to write about. In addition, it emerged that teachers did not facilitate the process of writing, planning and making provision for drafting. According to Lewis & Wray (2002), through the genre approach, teachers can offer specific support in ESL literacy settings, such as language in context with special reference to writing. This support is what Lui-Chivizhe et al. (2004) refer to as 'scaffolding'.

The results from the teachers' questionnaire indicate that the approaches used by the three teachers in the English lessons fell under the autonomous view of literacy. As already pointed out, the autonomous view leads to the use of skills-based approaches, phonics and teaching

outside any meaningful contexts. Emphasis is placed on technical skills such as correct spelling, neat handwriting and phonics.

The next section is an account of findings with regard to the learners from Stds. 4, 6 and 7. The learners answered a questionnaire and were observed during English lessons; and their English notebooks were examined.

4.3 Learners

Learners' background

Data pertaining to learners from the three classes are summed up in the following Tables. The information was sourced from the two language versions of the questionnaire (in Chichewa and English).

TABLE 11: LEARNERS' DEMOGRAPHIC DATA: GENDER

| | No. of Boys | No. of Girls | Total No | Average Age |
|-------|-------------|--------------|----------|-------------|
| Std 4 | 25 | 20 | 45 | 9 |
| Std 6 | 25 | 22 | 45 | 12 |
| Std 7 | 25 | 17 | 42 | 13 |

The average age of the Std 4 learners is 9 years. There were 25 boys and 20 girls. There were 25 boys and 22 girls in Std 6 learners with an average age of 12 years. There were 42 Std 7 learners with an average age of 13 years.

Table 12 shows the learners' choice of questionnaire version (Chichewa or English).

TABLE 12: LANGUAGE CHOICE: QUESTIONNAIRE

| Std | In Chichewa | In English |
|-----|-------------|------------|
| 4 | 35 | 10 |
| 6 | 23 | 22 |
| 7 | 6 | 36 |

The findings above show that in Std 4, 35 learners preferred to answer the questions in Chichewa, while 10 preferred to answer the questions in English. In Std 6, 23 learners responded to the questions in Chichewa, and 22 in English. In Std 7, only 6 learners responded in Chichewa while 36 responded in English.

These results suggest that the majority of the Std 4 learners were not comfortable with reading in English. Almost equal numbers of Std 6 learners were unable to comprehend and write in English and Chichewa. In Std 7, by far the majority chose to answer in English rather than in Chichewa. This has classroom implications for teaching and learning literacy. The learners in Std 4 have very low proficiency levels in English, unlike the Std 7 learners. The Std 6 learners are somewhere in the middle. The Std 4 learners require more time to build proficiency and confidence in English. This may be developed from a gradual, rather than an abrupt, withdrawal of the use of the learners' first language in the English lesson, and across the curriculum. The too-early exclusive use of English in the English classroom will clearly not aid learners to develop literacy in the second language.

Learners' home language use

Below, in Table 12, is a presentation of findings on the learners' home language use which were derived from the learners' questionnaire.

TABLE 13: LEARNERS' SELF-REPORTED HOME LANGUAGE USE.

| | TOTAL NO. PER CLASS | BEST SPEAK | NO. | MOST LIKE TO SPEAK | NO. | LIKE TO SPEAK WITH OTHERS | NO. |
|------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| Std4 | 45 | Chichewa at home; Citumbuka | 45 7 | English and Chichewa at school | 10 | Like to speak Chichewa & Citumbuka with others | 7 |
| Std6 | 45 | Chichewa at home. Citumbuka | 45 7 | English and Chichewa at school. | 18 | Like to speak Chichewa & Citumbuka with others | 7 |
| Std7 | 42 | Chichewa at home; Ciyao | 42 3 | English and Chichewa at school. | 18 | Like to speak Chichewa & Ciyao with others | 3 |

The findings from the learners' questionnaire indicate that all the learners use local languages such as Chichewa, Citumbuka and Ciyao more widely and predominantly than English. Thus,

the findings show that learners speak in the local languages at home, at school, and with others. English is mostly spoken at school. Learners reportedly speak English in the classroom, possibly because they are under strict orders to use the language exclusively.

There is a mismatch between language use at home and at school. Most communication and reasoning take place in the local languages. There is therefore a need for a language policy in education that can facilitate the development of second language literacy learning. As already discussed, an additive bilingual model would be suitable, in which the first language continues to be developed and the first culture valued while the second language is gradually added. Cummins (1981) points out that learners working in an additive bilingual environment succeed to a greater extent than those whose first language and culture is devalued by their schools and by the wider society.

In addition, English teachers may require an orientation in teaching methods and strategies that would help in building learners' cognitive/academic proficiency in the second language. Classroom observations showed that learners had low proficiency levels in all the language skills, with writing the lowest.

English teachers should engage learners in literacy practices that are functional and meaningful, since literacy is socially situated and embedded in peoples' everyday activities (see Gee, 2000; Barton, 1994). Some social practices are linked to learners' culture, history, politics, values, attitudes, and feelings that may enrich and make writing meaningful (Barton, 1994). Thus, teachers should be encouraged to engage learners in literacy events which show the function and context of literacy such as writing recipes, writing budgets and writing invitation letters for a birthday.

The next section presents and discusses findings, from the learners' questionnaire, about learners' self-rated English proficiency levels in the four language skills.

TABLE 14: LEARNERS' SELF-RATED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

| Std | Tot. | Understanding | No. | Speaking | No. | Reading | No. | Writing | No. |
|-----|------|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------|-----|
| 4 | 45 | Excellent | 5 | Excellent | 5 | Excellent | 15 | Excellent | 7 |
| | | Good | 15 | Good | 10 | Good | 15 | Good | 15 |
| | | Average | 15 | Average | 10 | Average | 10 | Average | 10 |
| | | Below average | 5 | Below average | 15 | Below average | 5 | Below average | 13 |
| 6 | 45 | Excellent | 20 | Excellent | 22 | Excellent | 10 | Excellent | 9 |
| | | Good | 18 | Good | 20 | Good | 30 | Good | 20 |
| | | Average | 7 | Average | 3 | Average | 5 | Average | 10 |
| | | Below average | - | Below average | - | Below average | - | Below average | 6 |
| 7 | 42 | Excellent | 25 | Excellent | 16 | Excellent | 27 | Excellent | 18 |
| | | Good | 16 | Good | 23 | Good | 13 | Good | 20 |
| | | Average | 1 | Average | 4 | Average | 2 | Average | 4 |
| | | Below average | - | Below average | - | Below average | - | Below average | - |

Table 14 shows learners' self-rated English language proficiency, which I obtained through the learners' questionnaire. In Std 4, only 5 out of 45 learners report excellent proficiency in understanding and speaking; 15 and 7 of the learners report excellent proficiency in reading and writing respectively, which is less than half the class. In Std 6, the findings indicate that 20 and 22 learners consider that they have an excellent proficiency in understanding and speaking, respectively, while 10 and 9 have excellent proficiency in reading and writing, respectively. In Std 7, some 25 and 27 learners report excellent understanding and reading; 16 and 18 report excellent speaking and writing ability. The majority of learners in the three classes fall within the range of good to average, across the English language skills.

The findings indicate that the majority of learners report low English proficiency across the four language skills. Many learners have more difficulties with writing than understanding, speaking and reading. This is probably because the learners lacked the ability to operate in context reduced, cognitively demanding situations in the classroom because they were given no cues for writing, as noted during lesson observations.

Table 15 sums up what learners said about where they do most of their writing.

TABLE 15: PLACES WHERE PUPILS WRITE

| | Total number of learners | Wrote most at school | Wrote most at home |
|-------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Std 4 | 45 | 37 | 8 |
| Std 6 | 45 | 39 | 6 |
| Std 7 | 42 | 36 | 6 |

The findings reveal that the majority of learners reportedly write more at school than at home. A total of 37 of 45 Std 4 learners wrote most at school; 8 wrote most at home. In Std 6, 39 learners out of 45 wrote most at school, while 6 wrote most at home. In Std 7, 36 learners wrote most at school, and 6 wrote most at home. Similar numbers of learners also indicated that their writing practices were influenced more by teachers than by parents, friends, self, television (TV) or others (Table 16).

TABLE 16: SOURCE OF WRITING INFLUENCE

| | Teachers | Parents/ Guardians | Friends | Others |
|-------|----------|-----------------------|---------|----------------|
| Std 4 | 37 | 4 | 2 | - |
| Std 6 | 39 | 4 | 2 | - |
| Std 7 | 36 | 3 | 2 | brother/mother |

The findings reveal that learners' literacy practices are mostly shaped at school rather than at home. It is evident that in the research classes learners were mainly engaged in school literacy. Teachers were the main influence for writing, followed by parents, then friends and lastly television. Parent involvement in influencing learners to write could be a great support towards learning, and could be emphasized so that learners are engaged in literacy practices and events which are socially and culturally meaningful in their day to day life. In this way literacy could also be shaped at home: there are many routes to literacy apart from the school setting (Heath, 1983).

Learners enjoyed reading books written in English as well as in other languages. There are no libraries at in the classrooms and my assumption was that the only books they have access to are the prescribed books. When I asked them about the benefits of reading, learners gave the following responses (Table 17):

TABLE 17: BENEFITS OF READING

| READING BENEFITS | TO KNOW MANY WORDS | GET IDEAS | FOR REASONING | NO BENEFIT |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| Std 4 | 18 | 9 | 7 | 1 |
| Std 6 | 27 | 10 | 8 | - |
| Std 7 | 31 | 7 | 4 | - |

The findings show that learners recognize the value of reading, especially storybooks and folktales. This was supported by the findings from interviews with teachers that they used storybooks and folktales in the English lessons as sources of reading. Using supplementary reading books in class would be a necessity in order to support these learners in building their English language proficiency. This would have cognitive advantages for learning, as wide reading would give more opportunities to interact with the printed word and learn how print is processed.

The findings about the learners' purposes and expectations in the English writing lessons are indicated in Table 18.

TABLE 18: LEARNERS' EXPECTATIONS ABOUT THEIR WRITING

| | Good hand writing | To get marks | To entertain themselves | To relate To others |
|-------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Std 4 | 13 | 25 | 2 | 4 |
| Std 6 | 11 | 30 | 3 | - |
| Std 7 | 5 | 33 | 1 | 2 |

The findings indicate that learners' expectations from what they wrote in class were, firstly, to get good marks; secondly to improve their handwriting; and thirdly and fourthly either to entertain themselves or to relate to others.

The learners' responses above show that their motivation for writing is mainly to obtain marks and write in good handwriting, and not for their daily lives. My view is that these learners are influenced by their teachers' values and attitudes as observed during their lessons. Thus, all the research teachers expressed keen attention to technical skills such as correct spelling and neat handwriting, which are reflective of the autonomous view of literacy teaching.

Table 19 records the topics about which learners wrote in English lessons, and to what extent

a process approach to writing was followed.

TABLE 19: TOPICS AND WRITING PROCESSES

| | Topics | Types of Topics | Planning | Drafting | Editing | Publishing |
|-------|------------------|-----------------------------|---|----------|---------|------------|
| Std 4 | Given by teacher | From both western and home. | Done by teacher | Done | Done | Not done |
| Std 6 | Given by teacher | From both western and home. | Through a framework. or questions | Done | Done | Not done |
| Std 7 | Given by teacher | From both western and home. | Teacher prepares questions or we fill words in gaps | Done | Done | Not done |

The findings from the learners' questionnaire above indicate that topics that learners wrote in the English lessons were those given by their teachers. The topics include those that concern both the home and western experiences. Learners indicated that their work was mostly planned by their teacher; they drafted and edited their own work. They reported that none of their writings were published. This finding was also confirmed during my lesson observations: there were no published items of learners in the classrooms.

The implication of these findings is that since writing requires higher order skills, learners require support from their teachers to enable them to engage in meaningful writing. This support could be made available to learners through scaffolding practices (Rose, 2004; Lewis & Wray, 2002).

Other findings from the learners' questionnaire indicate that teachers obliged learners to speak in English during the English lessons. However, some of the learners overlooked this restriction and spoke in their first language. Findings from the learners' questionnaires indicated that learners spoke in their first language in the English lessons under the following circumstances (Table 20):

TABLE 20: USE OF FIRST LANGUAGE BY LEARNERS

| | Total No. | To discuss a task | To assist slow learners | Not to make mistakes | When used by teacher in addressing them | To think through a task |
|-------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---|-------------------------|
| Std 4 | 45 | 15 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 10 |
| Std 6 | 45 | 15 | 5 | 10 | 5 | 10 |
| Std 7 | 42 | 16 | 6 | 12 | 3 | 5 |

These findings show that in Std 4, learners mostly used their first languages to discuss tasks and think through them. In Std 6, learners used their first language in similar ways, and also to avoid making mistakes. In Std7, learners used their first language to discuss a task and to avoid making mistakes.

The findings indicate that learners found their first language of use in learning the second language. However, learners used their first language on pain of being reprimanded, and under very restricted circumstances, as indicated in the discussion of lesson observations, above. English teachers need to appreciate their learners' low proficiency levels and allow them to use their first language at crucial moments to assist with performing tasks better. The trend of using a first language persistently by second language learners is common in second language classrooms (Martin-Jones, 2005:42). The reason she gives is that learners do this because they have differing conversational abilities.

Given the learners' varying English proficiency (as noted from the learners' responses to the questionnaire), the teachers needs to use strategies such as scaffolding (integral to the genre approach) to offer support to learners, in order to build their English language proficiency.

Learners from all the classes indicated in the questionnaires that there were a limited number of displays in their classrooms, most of which were written in English. All of the displayed work was produced by their teachers; none of these displays included the learners' writings.

Creating displays in the classrooms would help to form the learners' world of print. By reading the print from the displays, the learners would observe how written language develops, and would begin to practise this in their writing. Learners would also develop their English proficiency levels and reasoning skills so that they could use to write meaningful texts.

4.4 Learners' notebooks

For the analysis of learners' notebooks, the three teachers and I made selections from 5 strong, 5 average and 5 weak learners in each of the three research classes. The selection was based on the previous end of term performance in the English test, and was representative of

each class since it covered a wide range. In total, I assessed 45 learners' notebooks, i.e. 15 for each of the three Standards.

From each learner, I analyzed eight pieces of writing. My aim was to identify the characteristics of learners' written work in relation to approaches used by the respective class teachers concerning the following: learners' writing practices and events, handwriting, types of genre. The examination of the learners' notebooks revealed the following:

Literacy practices and events

The term 'literacy practices' refers to the frequency of interactions that learners have with print, while 'literacy events' refers to any event that involves print (Heath, 1983).

All learners reported that the form of activities that mostly shaped their literacy in English were the literacy events they had with their English teachers in their classrooms. They said they wrote mostly at school, and continued at home with what the teachers had assigned them to do; they did little other writing at home. Their main influence on engaging with print came from their teachers. Parents or guardians had very little influence on their writing development.

There was a significant amount of the learners' writings in their notebooks; much of this included the teachers' corrections. Most of the learners' writings were graded in terms of spelling, missing words and handwriting.

Handwriting

Generally, the learners' handwriting was legible and neat. This appears to be an outcome of the teacher's emphasis on neat handwriting, which is a technical skill and characteristic of the skills-based approach.

Type of genre

The most common type of genre, the one that dominated learners' writing, was (guided) story-writing and narratives. This was mostly based on copying and filling-in of what the teachers had written as a model for the entire class. A genre that was less prevalent in the learners' writing was letter-writing. This also followed a similar trend of copying what the teachers had originally written on the board, and filling in the gaps. There was no evidence of

planned work to suggest that these were the learners' own constructed pieces of work. I also observed that teachers did not guide the learners to plan for any written work as preparation for individual writing. Scaffolding approaches by contrast, guide ESL learners to write for specific functions (see Lewis & Wray, 2002). Learners ought to engage in writing on their own, with planning support by the teacher.

Content in learners' notebooks

The Std 4, 6 and 7 texts were mainly characterized by spelling exercises, grammar, comprehension and sentence completion.

This shows that the teachers were mostly concerned about teaching learners the mechanics of writing and neglected directing learners to the discovery of constructive writing that would have engaged their faculties in emergent writing and reasoning. Their approach is characteristic of the skills-based approach to teaching literacy, which Ellis (2006) criticizes. Instead, he recommends the use of the 'social practice' approach that uses meaningful contexts.

The Std 6 and 7 learners' English notebooks mostly featured grammar tasks. In some cases, there were grammar notes which were followed by written exercises. In some cases, there were only practice exercises.

The notebooks confirm that the lessons took the form of a presentation followed by practice, which is characteristic of what Ellis (2006) describes as traditional grammar of discrete grammatical structures. What Ellis recommends for L2 language grammar teaching is the descriptive grammar orientation that assists in explaining the function performed by grammatical forms and structures.

The common genre type was the narrative. However, the frameworks consisted mainly of numbered sentences that learners had to rearrange into logical single sentences. There were no connectives to make the sentences cohesive. An example of this was given in the description of the Std 7 observed, above.

Chapter summary

The findings from each data collecting instrument were presented in this Chapter. Together, they have shown that the approaches used for teaching writing in a second language at the research school fall mainly under the autonomous view of teaching literacy.

The final chapter contains conclusions and recommendations based on the findings discussed in this chapter.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study are potentially significant to the current situation in Malawi's bilingual primary schools in view of the new proposed language in education policy. PCAR's new language in education policy prescribes that from Standards 1 to 3, children learn in their local languages and from Standards 4 to 8, they switch to English as a medium of instruction. The early shift from use of the first language is what is problematic for second language learning. The challenges that the new language in education policy is likely to create in the classrooms are linked to low proficiency levels in the English language. That is, due to the early departure from the use of their first language, (a language in which learners can reason, think, imagine and tap from), learners' development of both their first and second language proficiency may be impeded. This is because a second language is learnt only when the first language has sufficiently developed (Cummins 1981).

This chapter provides a brief overview of the major findings which have emerged by triangulating the various data sources used in this research. The last part of the chapter comprises my conclusions and, following these, makes some recommendations on the way forward for Malawi and identifies some research gaps.

The aim of the study was to examine the approaches that teachers use for teaching writing in English as a second language in one primary school in Malawi. To this end, I used various data collection instruments to discover the methods and strategies that teachers use in English lessons; and the assumptions teachers have and the views they hold about their literacy approaches for teaching English in Standards 4, 6 and 7.

5.1 Teachers' interviews

From the interviews with teachers, it is clear that their assumptions about literacy fall under the autonomous approach which regards literacy as a singular thing and an independent ability. The three English teachers taught sets of discrete skills from simple to complex, starting with listening, followed by speaking, reading and writing. Cognitive abilities were assumed to follow after learners had mastered how to use print; and literacy was to be taught outside any socio-cultural and political contexts (cf. Wiley 1996; Bloch 2002).

The interviews with the teachers also shed light on the hegemony of English. Teachers used English even when there was a lack of understanding of concepts and problems with interaction. The teachers said they preferred interacting with learners who were fluent in English (a kind of discrimination – see also Vesely, 2003). I confirmed this during the lesson observations: during activities teachers interacted more with learners who were fluent in English than with those who were not.

These findings show that the teachers place a lot of value on communicating with learners in English, even when learners do not comprehend. Only on a few occasions did the teachers acknowledge that they used codeswitching to aid understanding by learners. Teaching was mainly teacher directed, rather than interactive. Teachers acted as models and learners had to copy their example. Copying is a concept that is central to the skills-based approach.

5.2 Questionnaires

Findings from teachers' and learners' questionnaires indicated that there was a mismatch in home language use between teachers and learners, mainly regarding English. Thus, many learners made less use of, and had less exposure to, English than did their teachers.

This condition requires teaching strategies that can help to build learners' proficiency in English, such as scaffolding, genre writing, good interaction strategies and codeswitching.

Learners' activities were mostly done in groups as a way of facilitating participatory methodologies, which are part of the OBE syllabus. Both teachers and learners reported that they found this strategy helpful. The teachers mostly used it for clarifying fuzzy issues with learners, while learners used it in order to do assigned tasks faster and to assist slow learners.

Learners also reported that most writing activities were done at school not at home, and that their writing was influenced by the teacher rather than by their families. In relation to this, teachers often directed or prescribed learners' writing, evidence of unequal power relations which may impact negatively on second language learning.

Since there are many routes to literacy (Gee, 2000), the new literacy studies recommend that

second language literacy should also utilize home literacies which are part of the second language learners' social practices. This is because learners can and should use literacy in personal and meaningful contexts.

Both teachers and learners indicated that the English lessons were dominated by grammar and spelling activities. Teachers gave keen attention to errors and neat handwriting. The most common form of activities for writing were answering retrieval comprehension questions, filling in words and rearranging words.

The lesson observations confirmed that the writing activities were mostly taught outside meaningful contexts; and there was no application to personal functions. As pointed out by Ellis (2006), grammar can be taught descriptively but should be linked to meaningful contexts. Similarly, spellings could be taught in meaningful contexts in which learners could at the same time develop these technical skills. Working on tasks such as neat handwriting are cognitively undemanding. What was lacking were tasks that could challenge learners, so that through strategies like scaffolding, learners could develop higher order skills for developing literacy in context reduced, cognitively demanding and meaningful contexts, as recommended by Cummins (1981).

Learners indicated that teachers did not display many items in their classrooms that learners could read and learn from. The few items that were displayed were mostly from other teaching areas like science. Most of these were written in English. The displayed items were all constructed by the class teachers. Learners' written work was not displayed at all. The lack of displays for teaching English in the classrooms was backed up by the fact that the teachers said that resources were scarce at the school and also that the new curriculum was very demanding, and that teachers spent much time on lesson preparation.

Hudelson (1994) points out that print-rich environments written in both home and second language print, facilitate possible transfer of literacy skills from one language to another with much comprehensible input because learners learn how print is processed.

Learners indicated that they were not allowed to use their home language in carrying out tasks during English lessons. However, they felt that it helped them to understand difficult tasks much more easily whenever they used the home language.

In addition, use of L1 can assist learners in giving explanations in order to better clarify interactive tasks. Arthur (2001) notes that the use of L1 can close the communication gap in language classrooms. Similarly, Storch & Wigglesworth (2003) suggest that the first language may be used in the ESL classroom to enhance second language learning.

5.3 Lesson observations

The lesson observation showed that teachers used the skills-based approaches to English literacy which fall within the autonomous approach to literacy. English teachers taught language skills from the simplest to the complex and from oral through reading to writing. There was concentration on error correction, and teaching discreet skills in isolation of meaningful contexts. Most of the composition writing was based on the teachers' models which were discussed and copied, with a few word gaps to be filled in by learners. This kind of teaching was mostly teacher directed. All these are characteristics of the autonomous view.

5.4 Learners' Notebooks

There was also evidence of a skills-based approach in the learners' notebooks. Learners wrote mostly in legible and neat handwriting, did fill-in tasks, spelling (especially in Std 4), and answered comprehension questions. There was no evidence in the tasks which learners did that it was done collaboratively with their class teacher. Most of their work had markings and grades. Errors that learners incurred in their written work were the only basis for assessing marks.

There were no drafts or plans for compositions in the learners' notebooks, except for one frame for a task in the Std 6 class. There were a good number of texts that were written by learners in their notebooks, which shows that learners are engaged in some form of writing. However, none of their work was published. The most popular genre was narrative story writing which teachers might have been emphasizing in the English lessons.

Teachers ought to vary the types of genre in teaching English over the years so that learners can be well prepared to use language in different contexts.

5.5. Conclusion

The results from the data collection used in this study show that the three class teachers used a skills-based approach to teaching writing in English lessons. Such an approach impacts negatively on the development of learners' second language writing. Therefore, it is my view that English teachers in Malawian schools should use the social practices approaches which could aid the development of literacy in the primary schools. This is because literacy in the second language has socio-economic benefits (Rose, 2004) which may contribute towards the improved socio-economic status of the Malawian nation.

Secondly, English teachers in Malawian schools need to be oriented to the New Literacy Studies approaches for teaching English in primary schools. so that our bilingual learners can learn English in more meaningful contexts and thus be able to use it in personally useful situations. Although this would have financial implications for training teachers and material development, this should not stop the country from taking this step. Malawi ought to prioritize investing in the education sector to avoid a high proportion of failures, repeaters and drop outs in schools, and the lack of employment opportunities due to poor performance in literacy.

5.6. Recommendations

1. There is a need to reconsider the language in education policy in Malawi's schools; it should be additive and not subtractive.
2. There should be more research on how best to teach second language literacy in order to linguistic proficiency in bilingual settings, using current knowledge.
3. Once these have been identified, teachers should be retrained in specialized literacy teaching methods that are suited to bilingual settings, such as the Social Practices Approach, in order to improve second language literacy performance in Malawi's schools.
4. Since most of the lessons were led by the teachers who used codeswitching as a way of bridging communication gaps with their learners, and since learners persistently used their L1 in groups to make contributions and interactions, I recommend that use of the L1 in the L2 lessons should be tolerated.

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APPENDICES

Appendices 1-8 are summarized below as follows:

- 1. TEACHERS' INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
- 2. LESSON OBSERVATIONS GUIDE**
- 3. TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**
- 4. LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH VERSION)**
- 5. LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE (CHICHEWA VERSION)**
- 6. GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINING LEARNERS' NOTEBOOKS**
- 7. A RECOUNT GENRE FRAMEWORK :COMPARISONS**
- 8. A RECOUNT GENRE FRAMEWORK: KNOWLEDGE & REACTION**

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STANDARD ----- TEACHER.

(To be used for data collection on a research study titled 'An Examination of Classroom Practices on the Development of Writing in English as a Second Language').

1.0 Particulars of Class Teacher

1.1 How long have you been teaching this class?

2.0 Approaches to Teaching Writing in English

2.1 Which language skill do you find most interesting to teach? State reasons for your choice

2.2 Which language skill do you find most difficult? Give your reasons.

2.3 Do you integrate the language skills with teaching writing in English? If yes or no, explain how it is conducted?

2.4 Describe your pupils' proficiency in English language. Do they struggle with when speaking, reading or writing? Specify their writing problems if any.

2.5 How do you assist pupils who have writing problems?

2.6 Do you assist slow learners so that they catch up with fast learners? What strategies do you apply if it is done?

2.7 Do you allow your pupils to speak in any local language during the writing lessons? If yes, state which languages they use and how they use them.

2.8 If yes to 2.7, how do your learners benefit by using the local languages in the English writing lessons?

2.9 Do you allow your pupils to write about political or any critical matter? What are your views on this? Give examples of the topics your pupils have written on this.

2.10 Do you include issues of culture / beliefs in your pupils' English writing tasks? Are these issues embedded in the syllabus? Is it significant to include these issues for pupils to write about? What are some of the topics?

2.11 How do you introduce a topic for writing in English?

2.12 Explain how you handle difficult or new English words during the English writing lessons.

2.13 Do you correct pupils' grammar errors? If yes, how is it done?

2.14 Do you allow your pupils to learn grammatical items on their own (without teaching them)? How do you do it? 2.15 Do pupils' background and attitudes affect their learning to write in English? If yes, explain.

2.15 Do you encourage your pupils to write items for publishing? What role do you take on this?

2.16 How do you use pupils' published written work used in your lessons or school?

2.17 Are there any selected written texts by your pupils for publishing?

2.18 Do you find the OBE curriculum prescriptions easy or difficult to achieve in the teaching of writing in English? Which areas are problematic?

2.19 Do the participatory approaches in the OBE curriculum assist you to teach writing in English? Relate your experience on using them in your lessons.

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APPENDIX 2

LESSON OBSERVATIONS

To be used for data collection on a research study titled 'An Examination of Classroom Practices on the Development of Writing in English as a Second Language'.

LESSON OBSERVATION GUIDE

| ITEMS | REMARKS |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| 1.0 Success Criteria | |
| 2.0 General Introduction | |
| 3.0 Participatory Approaches | |
| 4.0 Introducing a writing lesson | |
| 5.0 Techniques and strategies | |
| 5.0 Teacher's Activities | |
| 5.1 Pupils' Tasks | |
| 5.2 Teacher's Behaviour | |
| 5.3 Pupils' Behaviour | |
| 5.4 Print Environment | |
| 5.5 Availability of Resources | |
| 5.6 Print environment | |
| 5.7 Use of language | |
| 5.8 Power relations | |
| 5.9 Use of Codeswitching | |
| 5.10 Teaching of grammar | |
| 5.11 Use of L1 | |
| 5.12 Genres used | |
| 6.0: Conclusion | |

APPENDIX 3

A QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLASS TEACHER FOR STANDARD _____ AT SCHOOL X

To be used for data collection on a research study titled 'An Examination of Classroom Practices on the Development of Writing in English as a Second Language'.

Dear Teacher,

Please note that the information that is collected for this study will be used solely for the purposes of finding out the approaches that are used by teachers for the development of writing in English as a second language in Malawi's schools. However, the personal information collected for this study will be treated confidentially. Hopefully, the findings will help to improve writing in the teaching and learning of English as a second language.

Except where otherwise indicated, questions should be answered by ticking the applicable block(s).

1.0 Particulars of class teacher

1.1 Age: _____

1.2 Gender:

| | |
|------|--------|
| Male | Female |
| | |

1.3 Teaching class: _____

1.4 Highest level of education:

| | Secondary School | Tertiary Education | Other (Specify) |
|-------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Grade/Level | | | |

1.5 In which year did you graduate for your teaching qualification?

Year _____

1.6 Have you ever attended a specialized course for teaching English as second language? If yes, answer the following:

Where? _____

When? _____

Course title _____

1.7 Which languages do you speak?

| | First Language | Second Language | Third Language |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Citumbuka | | | |

| | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|
| Ciyao | | | |
| Chichewa | | | |
| English | | | |
| Chisena | | | |
| Other | | | |

1.8 What is your assessment of your own English language proficiency with regard to?

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------|---------|---------------|
| | Excellent | Good | Average | Below average |
| Understanding | | | | |
| Reading | | | | |
| Writing | | | | |
| Speaking | | | | |

1.9 Which languages do your pupils speak at home?

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| | Most pupils | A few pupils |
| Citumbuka | | |
| Ciyao | | |
| Chichewa | | |
| English | | |
| Chisena | | |
| Other | | |

2.0 Approaches to Teaching Writing in English.

2.1 How many periods do you teach English? Per day? _____ Per week?

2.2 How many of your pupils experience difficulties with the following?

| | | | |
|-----------|------|-------|------|
| | Many | A few | None |
| Listening | | | |
| Speaking | | | |
| Reading | | | |
| Writing | | | |

2.3 When do you ask your pupils to write?

- A. After teaching writing
- B. Before teaching writing
- C. While teaching writing.

2.4 How do you teach your pupils English language regarding the following skills?

| | Deal with the skill in isolation | Deal with the skill using a meaningful context |
|-----------|----------------------------------|--|
| Listening | | |
| Reading | | |
| Writing | | |
| Speaking | | |

2.5 Which strategies do you employ for teaching your pupils how to write in English?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Copying the teacher's written work | | | | |
| Creative writing | | | | |
| Writing in neat handwriting | | | | |
| Writing for a purpose | | | | |
| Other (specify): | | | | |

2.6 Indicate how often pupils are required to do each of the following:

| | In each lesson | Three times per week | Once per week | Once per month. |
|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Note-making | | | | |
| Spellings | | | | |
| Summary-writing | | | | |
| Dictations | | | | |
| Narratives | | | | |
| Short stories | | | | |
| Creative writing | | | | |
| Filling-in gaps | | | | |
| Sentence writing | | | | |
| Definitions | | | | |
| Plays | | | | |
| Other (specify): | | | | |

2.7 Are these goals important in teaching writing in English for your pupils?

| | Yes | Not Sure | No |
|---------------------------------|-----|----------|----|
| Writing from simple to complex | | | |
| Knowing the purpose for writing | | | |
| Neat handwriting | | | |
| Writing in correct spelling | | | |
| Writing in correct grammar | | | |

2.8 Do you encourage pupils to use first language sharing ideas about writing?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Not at all |
|---------------------|--------|-------|-----------|------------|
| Chichewa | | | | |
| Ciyao | | | | |
| Citumbuka | | | | |
| English and another | | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | | |

2.9 Do you encourage pupils to write about issues of culture / beliefs? 'Yes' or 'No'.

2.10 If Yes to 2.9, does this motivate your pupils to write regularly about their culture/beliefs? Yes or no.

2.12 Do you teach phonics to develop pupils writing? Yes or no.

2.13 If yes to 2.10 above, how do you teach it?

- A. Using a meaningful context.
- B. Using alphabetic letters in isolation

2.14 How often do you refer to topics for teaching writing in connection with life at?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|-----------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| School Only | | | | |
| Both home and school | | | | |
| Home Only | | | | |
| Western settings | | | | |
| African settings | | | | |
| Both home and African | | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | | |

2.15 What is your view about pupils who may write critically on political issues?

- A. Would encourage it.
- B. Would discourage it.

2.16 Is it important to engage pupils to attach anything they write for a purpose? Yes or no.

2.17 Select any purpose(s) that your pupils write for in your lessons:

- A. To persuade
- B. To inform
- C. To question
- D. To exercise imagination
- E. To clarify
- F. To pass tests and exams.

3.0 The OBE Curriculum.

3.1 How much do you follow the OBE syllabus prescriptions for teaching writing in English?

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| | | | |

3.2 Do you achieve the syllabus goals for writing? A. Easily or
B. Not easily

3.3 Which is your main goal for teaching writing lessons in English?

- A. to achieve the syllabus goals
- B. to enable pupils to write in English
- C to pass examinations

3.4 What is the main objective for assessing pupils' written texts? For them to write

- A. legibly
- B. for a purpose or
- C. to obtain a grade.

4.0 The Role of L1

4.1 What do the curriculum guidelines for English specify about the use of familiar language during English lessons?

- A. Can use it
- B. Not specified
- C. Prohibited.

4.2 How often do you use the first language (orally) to teach your pupils to write in English?

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Use of first language | Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| | | | | |

4.3 Which is the best occasion for you to use first language in your English writing lessons?

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| | Best |
| To correct errors | |
| To give instructions | |
| To demonstrate an item | |
| To instill discipline | |
| When pupils hold discussions | |
| To clarify issues | |
| To stimulate in- active pupils. | |

4.4 When assessing pupils' written work, what is important?

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| | Very important | Fairly Important | Not Very Important |
| Neat handwriting | | | |
| Writing for a specific purpose | | | |
| Correct spellings | | | |

4.5 How often do you use the items below when marking your pupils' English written work?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|------------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Grammar | | | | |
| Spellings | | | | |
| Meaning | | | | |
| Handwriting | | | | |
| Purpose | | | | |
| Other (specify): | | | | |

5.0 Print environment.

5.1 Have you displayed any writings in your classroom? Yes or no.

5.2 If yes, state the languages in which the displays are written.

| | Most of the displays | Few of the displays | None of the displays. |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Ciyao | | | |
| Chichewa | | | |
| English | | | |
| Other (specify) | | | |

5.3 Who are the authors of the classroom displays?

- A. Pupils only
 B. Pupils, teacher and others
 C. Teacher only
 D. Other writers only.

5.4 To what extent do you refer to the displays in teaching pupils to write in English? Tick your responses.

| All the Time | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | | | |

5.5 When do pupils have time to interact with the displays?

- A. At break only
 B. During writing lessons
 C. At any possible time.
 D. No time at all.

6.0 Grammar. Circle applicable answer(s).

6.1 Do you teach grammatical items in the English writing lessons? Yes / No.

6.2 Is it important for you to teach grammar in the English writing lessons?

- A. Very important
 B. I don't know
 C. Not important

6.3 Is it good for pupils to learn grammar naturally (on their own) in your English writing lessons?

- A. Very good
 B. I don't know
 C. Not good.

7.0 Oral Language

7.1 Do you drill vocabulary items with your pupils prior to writing in English?

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|

7.2 Do you use stories to assist pupils to write in English lessons?

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|

7.3 Do pupils tell their stories during the lessons?

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|

7.4 Have you ever engaged pupils to do the following in the writing lessons?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|-------------|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Games | | | | |
| Video Plays | | | | |
| Stories | | | | |
| Other | | | | |

7.5 Do you discuss illustrations as an activity in the writing lessons?

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|

7.6 Who has more speaking time during the writing lessons?

- A. The teacher
- B. The pupils.

7.7 Do you entertain input from pupils during the writing lessons?

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|

7.8 Which pupils do you involve most in the English writing lessons? You may circle more than one answer.

- A. Pupils from rich families
- B. Pupils from poor families.
- C. Pupils who speak good English
- D. Pupils who understand your first language.
- E. Other (specify).

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX 4

A QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY LEARNERS IN

STANDARD ----- AT SCHOOL X.

To be used for data collection on a research study titled 'An Examination of Classroom Practices on the Development of Writing in English as a Second Language'.

INSTRUCTIONS: You are free to answer the English questionnaire.

Dear,

Please note that the information that is collected for this study will be used solely for the purposes of finding out the approaches that are used by teachers for the development of writing in English as a second language in Malawi's schools. However, the personal information collected for this study will be treated confidentially. Hopefully, the findings will help to improve writing in the teaching and learning of English as a second language. Please feel free to answer me these questions.

Except where otherwise indicated, questions should be answered by ticking the applicable block(s).

1.0 Particulars of Pupil.

1.1 Age: -----

1.2 Gender: -----

1.3 Standard -----

1.4 Which languages do you speak?

| At home | At school | With friends | Others (specify) |
|---------|-----------|--------------|------------------|
|---------|-----------|--------------|------------------|

Citumbuka

Chichewa

Ciyao

English

Other

(specify)

2.0 Pupils' writing practices

2.1 Describe your writing competence in the following languages:

| Language | Write very well | Write fairly well | Do not write well |
|----------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|----------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|

Chichewa

English

Other (specify)

2.2 How often do you write in these languages per week?

Many **Few** **Not**
times **times** **at all**

English

Chichewa

Other

(Specify)

2.3 Where do you write this?

- A. At home
- B. At school
- C. Somewhere (specify).

2.4 In which languages do you enjoy writing?

- A. Citumbuka
- B. Ciyao
- C. English
- D. Other (specify)
- E. Chichewa.

2.5 Who influences you to write in these languages?

- A. Teacher
- B. Friends
- C. Parents
- D. Self
- E. Television
- F. Other (specify).

2.6 In which language do you know many words?

- A. Chichewa
- B. English
- C. Other (specify).

2.7 Do you read books written in other languages? Yes / no.

2.8 In which languages are the books written?

- A. Chichewa
- B. English
- C. Citumbuka
- D. Ciyao
- E. Other (specify).

2.9 Does reading books written in languages (other than English) help you to write in English? Yes / No.

2.10 Describe the benefit of reading these books?

- A. To know many words
- B. To learn ideas for writing
- C. Assists me in reasoning
- D. For enjoyment
- E. No benefit at all
- F. Other (specify).

2.11 Would you find the following things useful learn to write in English?

- A. Story books (in any language you can understand)
- B. Writings by your fellow pupils
- C. Language games
- D. Folktales
- E. Other (specify).

2.12 Which ones does your teacher use to teach you to write in English from the list in 2.11 above?

- A. D.
- B. E.
- C.

2.13 Which ones do you like most from the list above?

- A. D.
- B. E.
- C.

2.14 For what purposes do you write? To:

- A. Get marks
- B. Improve your handwriting
- C. Establish a relationship with other people
- D. Please your teacher
- E. Inform the masses
- F. Entertain yourself
- G. Entertain yourself

2.15 What are the topics you often write about in English?

- A. Concerning politics
- B. About things you do at home
- C. About western countries
- D. Those chosen by your teacher
- E. Those written in your home language
- F. Concerning your culture.

2.16 What writing activities do you do in the writing process?

Always Sometimes Not at all

Planning

Drafting

Editing

Predicting

Publishing

Other

3.0 The Role of First Language.

3.1 Which languages do you speak during writing?

- A. English
- B. Chichewa
- C. Citumbuka
- D. Ciyao
- E. Other (specify).

3.2 Do you find it helpful to use the other language during the writing lessons? Yes / No.

3.3 When do you use the other languages in the writing lessons? When:

- A. afraid to make a mistake
- B. discussing the writing task
- C. the teacher uses the language
- D. assisting a slow learner
- E. other (specify).

3.4 In which language do think through your writing task?

- A. English
- B. Chichewa
- C. Ciyao
- D. Citumbuka
- E. Other (specify).

4.0 Print Environment.

4.1 Do you have displays of written work in your classroom? Yes / No.

4.2 In what languages are they written?

- A. Citumbuka
- B. Chichewa
- C. English
- D. Ciyao
- E. Other (specify).

4.3 Who are the authors of the writings displayed in your classroom? Yes / no

- A. I do not know them
- B. Pupils in your class
- C. Your teacher

4.4 Do the displays include information from other subjects? Yes / No.

4.5 Which subjects are they?

- A. Mathematics
- B. Chichewa
- C. Science
- D. Social Studies
- E. Other (specify).

5.0 Oral Language.

5.1 Do you do some oral activities before any writing task in English? Yes / No.

5.2 Which ones from this list do you do in relation to the writing tasks?

- A. Telling stories
- B. Building vocabulary
- C. Singing songs
- D. Discussing illustrations
- E. Other (specify).

5.3 In which languages are they told?

- A. Ciyao
- B. Citumbuka
- C. English
- D. Chichewa
- E. Other (specify).

5.4 Are you always told to speak in English in your lessons? Yes / No.

5.5 What happens when you speak in a different language apart from English?

- A. Your teacher smiles at you
- B. Some pupils laugh at you
- C. You receive a punishment
- D. Nothing happens.

5.6 Does your teacher speak to you in his/her language during lessons? Yes / No.

5.7 Does your teacher's language appeal to you? Yes / No.

5.8 Whose culture do you write about?

Many times Sometimes Not at all

Teacher's

Your own

Others (specify)

Thank you very much for your cooperation. I promise to treat this information confidentially.

APPENDIX 5

A TRANSLATED PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE INTO CHICHEWA LANGUAGE

MAFUNSO AWA AYANKHIDWE NDI OPHUNZIRA A SITANDADE -----
PA SUKUKULU X.

To be used for data collection on a research study titled 'An Examination of Classroom Practices on the Development of Writing in English as a Second Language'.

Tamverani Ophunzira,

Ndiri nkulemba kalata iyi ndi cholinga chokudziwitsani kuti mayankho anu pamafunso awa adzathandiza kufufuzira njira zimene aphunzitsi a pulayimale amaphunzitsira ophunzira kuti adziwe kulemba chizungu ngati chilankhulo chachiwiri ku sukulu za ku Malawi. Ndikukutsimikiziraninso kuti zinthu zokhudza inu sizidzaululidwa kwa anthu ena ndipo zimenezi zikhala za chinsinsi. Ndikhulupilira kuti kafukufuku ameneyu athandiza kupititsa patsogolo kaphunzitsidwe ndi kuphunzira kwa kulemba mchizungu. Khalani omasuka pakuyankha mafunso otsatirawa.

Pokha- pokha mutauzidwa, chongani mayankho anu onse mmalo oyenera. Mutha kuchonga mayankho ambiri ngati kuli koyenera.

1.0 Mbiri ya wophunzira.

1.1 Dzina la wophunzira: -----

1.2 Zaka: -----

1.3 Jenda: Mwamuna----- kapena Mkazi-----

1.4 Sitandade -----

1.5 Mumalankhula zilankhulo ziti pa izi?

| Kunyumba | Kusukulu | Kunyumba | Ndi ena (lembani) |
|----------|----------|----------|----------------------|
|----------|----------|----------|----------------------|

Citumbuka
Chichewa
Ciyao
English
Chilankhulo
china

2.0 Njira zimene ophunzira amagwiritsa ntchito polemba.

2.1 Kodi kulemba kwanu kumakhala kotani mukamalemba mzilankhulo izi?

| Chilankhulo | Ndimalemba bwino kwambiri | Ndimalemba bwino pang'ono | Sindilemba bwino. |
|-------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Chichewa | | | |
| English | | | |
| Chilankhulo china | | | |

2.2: Kodi mumalemba kangati pasabata mzilankhulo izi?

Kwambiri Kochepa Sitilemberako.
zedi

English
Chichewa
Zina

2.3 Mumalemba kuti zimenezi?

- A. Kunyumba
- B. Kusukulu
- C. Kwina (lembani).

2.4 Ndimzilankhulo ziti zomwe mumasangalala kuti mulembe?

- A. Citumbuka
- B. Ciyao
- C. English
- D. Chichewa
- E. China (lembani)

2.5 Ndi ndani amene amakupangitsani kuti muzilemba motero?

- A. Aphunzitsi
- B. Anzanu
- C. Makolo
- D. Nokha
- E. Televizyoni
- F. Ena (lembani).

2.6 Kodi ndi muchilankhulo chiti chomwe mumadziwa mawu ochuluka?

- A. Chichewa
- B. English
- C. Chinenero china (lembani).

2.7 Kodi mumawerenga mabuku olembedwa mzinenero zina?

2.8 Kodi mabukuwo ngolembedwa mzinenero ziti?

- A. Chichewa
- B. English
- C. Citumbuka
- D. Ciyao
- E. Zina (zitchuleni).

2.9 Kodi kuwerenga mabuku a mzinenero zina kumakuthandizani kuti mulembe mchizungu.

2.10 Ngati mwavomera sankhani phindu lake mmunsimu:

- A. Kutu mudziwe mawu ambiri
- B. Kuphunzira njira zina za kulemba
- C. Kutu muzitha kulingalira
- D. Kungodzisangalatsa
- E. Palibe phindu
- F. Zina (tchulani).

2.11 Sankhani zinthu ziri mmunsimu zomwe zingakuthandizeni pofuna kuti mulembe muchizungu?

- A. Mabuku amene muli tinkhani mchilankhulo chomwe mungamve
- B. Zolembedwa ndi anzanu a mkalasi mwanu
- C. Timagemu tophunzitsa chilankhulo
- D. Nthano
- E. Zina (lembani).

2.12 Pazinthu mwa sankhazo, ndi ziti zomwe aphunzitsi amagwiritsa pokuphunzitsani kulemba kwa chizungu?

- A. D.
- B. E.
- C.

2.13 Ndi zinthu ziti pazimene mwasanga pa 2.12 zimene zimakukondweretsani?

- A. D.
- B. E.
- C.

2.14 Sankhani zifukwa zimene inu mumalembera. Kuti:

- A. Aphunzitsi akupatseni malikesi
- B. Kuti muzilemba mwa luso
- C. Kuti mumange ubale ndi anthu ena
- E. Kuti muuze anthu zinthu zofunikira
- F. Kuti mudzisangalatse nokha

2.15 Kodi mumakonda kulemba pa mitu yotani mkalasi la kulemba mchizungu?

- A. Zandale
- B. Pa zimene mumachita Kunyumba chanu.
- C. Zokhudza miyambo ya azungu
- D. Yomwe aphunzitsi anu akusankhirani
- E. Pa zinthu zolembedwa mchilankhulo
- F. Zokhudza miyambo yanu.

2.16 Kodi mukamalemba ndi zinthu ziti pazimene ziri mmunsimu zimene mumachita?

Nthawi Zonse Nthawi Zina Simuzichita.

**Kulemba
pulani
Mumalemba
dirafuti
Kuchotsa
zolakwika
Kulotera
(Predicting)
Kusindikiza
Zina**

3.0 Ntchito ya Chilankhulo Chomwe Mumalankhula m'dera lanu.

3.1 Ndi zilankhulo ziti zomwe mumalankhula pa nthawi yolembe mchizungu mkalasi?

- A. English
- B. Chichewa
- C. Citumbuka
- D. Ciyao
- E. Zina (lembani).

3.2 Kodi mumapeza phindu mukalankhula mchilankhulo china mukamalemba chizungu? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi.

3.3 Ndi nthawi yanji Yomwe mumatha Kulankhula mzilankhulo zina panthawi yakuphunzira kulemba chizungu? Tika:

- A. machita mantha kulakwitsa poyankha funso
- B. tikamakambirana pazoti tilembezo
- C. the teacher uses the language
- D. pothandiza amene akukanika kuti alembe
- E. zina (lembani).

3.4 Mukamachita tintchito takulemba, mumalingilira mzilankhulo ziti?

- A. English
- B. Chichewa
- C. Ciyao
- D. Citumbuka
- E. Zina (lembani).

4.0 Zolembedwa Zopachikidwa Mkalasi (Print Environment).

4.1 Kodi mkalasi mwa muli zopachika zolemba lemba? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi.

4.2 Zidalembedwa mzilankhulo ziti pa izi?

- A. Citumbuka
- B. Chichewa
- C. English
- D. Ciyao
- E. Zina (lembani).

4.3 Kodi eni a zolemba zopachikidwa mkalasi mo ndi ndani?

- A. Sindiadziwa
- B. Ophunzira a mkalaso mo
- C. Aphunzitsi athu.
- D. Ena (alembeni).

4.4 Kodi zopachika pachika pachikazo zimakhudzana ndi maphunziro ena omwe mumaphunzira? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi.

4.5 Tchulani dera la maphunziro lomwe zopachika pachikazo zimapezeka?

- A. Mathematics
- B. Chichewa
- C. Science
- D. Social Studies
- E. Zina (lembani).

5.0 Kulankhula (Oral Language).

5.1 Kodi musanalembe kanthu ka mchizungu mumayamba mwa kambirana? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi. .

5.2 Kodi inu mumachita zinthu ziti pa zimene ziri mmunsimu mukamaphunzira kulemba kwa chizungu?

- A. Kunena nthano
- B. Kutanthauzira mawu a chilendo
- C. Kuyimba nyimbo
- D. Kukambirana zithunzi za pa peji pomwe pali nkhaniyo
- E. Lembani zina.

5.3 Kodi zinthu zomwe mwasankha pa 5.2 zo, mumazichita muzilankulo ziti?

- A. Ciyao
- B. Citumbuka
- C. English
- D. Chichewa
- E. Zina (lembani).

5.4 Kodi aphunzitsi anu amakuuzani kuti muzilankhula chizungu kukamaphunzira kulemba mchizungu nthawi zonse? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi.

5.5 Sankhani zomwe zimakuchitikirani akakupezani mukalankhula chilankhulo china osati chizungu.

- A. Aphunzitsi amakusekelerani C. Amakupatsani chibalo
B. Ophunzira Anzanu amakusekani D. Sipachitika kanthu.

5.6 Kodi aphunzitsi anu amakulankhulani muchilankhulo chawo akamakuphunzitsani kulemba mchizungu? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi.

5.7 Kodi chilankhulo cha aphunzitsi anu chimakupatsani chidwi? Yankhani Eya kapena Ayi.

5.8 Kodi mumalembako pa zokhudza miyambo ya anthu awa?

Kawiri - Nthawi Sitilemba
kawiri zina

Aphunzitsi

Inuyo

Ena

Zikomo kwambiri chifukwa cha mgwirizano wanu!

University of Cape Town

APPENDIX 6

GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINING PUPILS' NOTEBOOKS IN STANDARD -----AT SCHOOL X.

To be used for data collection on a research study titled 'An Examination of Classroom Practices on the Development of Writing in English as a Second Language'.

NOTE THAT:

(I collected eight note-books from each of the 15 learners who were selected as: 5 weak; 5 average; and 5 strong per class. I sought permission from their parents through a consent letter). I ticked the appropriate response(s) in the indicated space(s) unless specified.

1.0 Pupil's Particulars.

1.1 Pupil's Standard: 4, or 6, or 7.

2.0 Approaches Used.

2.1 Do the texts show that pupils copied their teacher's written work?

- A. All of them C. Some of them
B. Most of them D. None.

2.2 Is there evidence that the written work only comes after doing other language skills?

- A. Yes B. No

2.3 Is the main goal for writing by pupils to demonstrate form or meaning?

- A. Yes B. No

2.4 What form of writing is available in the pupils' notebooks?

| | More than | Between | None |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|------|
| A. Spellings | | | |
| B. Grammar | | | |
| C. Creative Work | | | |
| D. Sentences to be Transformed. | | | |
| E. Filling in gaps | | | |
| F. Other (specify) | | | |

2.5 What is the important focus in the written texts?

- A. Neat handwriting
B. Scores
C. Correct spelling
D. Meaning
E. Errors
F. Other (specify).

2.6 Do written texts portray writing for?

- A. Meaning
- B. Purpose
- C. Pleasure
- D. Other (specify).

2.7 Do the texts show purpose for writing? Yes or no.

2.8 Can writing therefore be regarded as meaning sharing?

Yes or no

2.9 Does pupils' written work exhibit scaffolding?

Yes or no.

2.10 Do pupils' writings reflect their heritage culture?

- A. Many times
- B. Few times
- C. Not at all.

2.11 Is it evident that what pupils write about was first learnt in their first language? Yes / No.

2.12 Which purposes do pupils write for? To: Yes / No.

- A. persuade
- B. inform
- C. query / question
- D. establish contact with others
- E. express individuality / personal experience
- F. explore
- G. communicate information
- H. evaluate and appraise
- I. Other (specify).

2.13 Are their plans and drafts for creative writing seen in the pupils' texts? Yes or no.

2.14 Is there evidence in pupils' notebooks about writing done outside the classroom? Yes or no.

3.0 The Role of L1

3.1 Are some words written in the pupils' first language? Yes or no.

3.2 In which languages do the pupils write?

- A. Chichewa
- B. Ciyao
- C. Citumbuka
- E. Other (specify).

4.0 The OBE Curriculum

4.1 Are the assessment standards of the curriculum being achieved by the pupils?

- A. To a smaller extent
- B. To a greater extent
- C. Not at all.

4.2 How do you rate the pupils' achievement in 4.1?

| Good | Average | Weak |
|------|---------|------|
| | | |

4.3 Do the pupils' texts show that the pupils strictly follow the curriculum prescriptions?

- A. In many aspects
- B. Not at all
- C. In some aspects.

4.4 Is there written work by the pupils which is outside the curriculum? Yes or no.

4.5 How often does the teacher mark pupils' written work?

- A. Every written work
- B. Once a week
- C. Once a fortnight
- D. Once a month
- E. Does not mark at all.

4.6 How are the teacher's markings indicated as?

- A. Crosses and ticks
- B. Underlining
- C. Insertions of corrected versions
- D. Positive comments
- E. Negative comments
- F. Grades or Scores
- G. Other (specify).

4.7 Which topics (from the syllabus) are reflected and not reflected in the pupils' note books)?

What about from home or other sources?

Reflected

Not Reflected

From Home and Other Sources.

5.0 Print Environment

5.1 Do some of the written texts form part of the displayed work in the classroom?

- A. Not at all
- B. Most of them
- C. Some of them.

5.2 Are they displayed in a way that pupils can reach them to read?

- A. Too high
- B. Too low
- C. Fine.

5.3 Do the displayed pupils' texts contain teacher's corrections? If yes to 5.2, in what form are the corrections made?

- A. Spellings
- B. Grammar
- C. Positive comments
- D. Negative comments
- E. Other (specify).

6.0 Grammar

6.1 Do the pupils write activities to develop grammar? Yes / No.

6.2 Are there corrections for grammatical errors in pupils' written work?

- A. In most cases
- B. Not at all
- C. In few cases.

6.3 How do the written grammar tasks appear?

- A. Follow-up of comprehension
- B. Writing activity
- C. Conclusion
- D. Other (specify).

7.0 Oral Language

7.1 Are there lists of defined words related to topics that pupils write about in their notebooks?

- A. Not at all
- B. Many words
- C. Few words.
- D. Other (specify).

7.2 Are the following examples of oral work available in pupils' texts? Yes / No.

- A. Folktales
- B. Songs
- C. Riddles
- D. Pictures
- E. Other (specify).

8.0 Power Issues

8.2 Do topics written by pupils show that they are prescribed by the teacher?

Tick against the answer below:

- A. In most cases
- B. In few cases
- C. No at all.

8.3 Whose culture does the pupils' written work reflect?

- A. Pupils'
- B. Teacher's
- C. Western
- D. Other (specify).

8.4 Whose culture do the topics written by pupils reflect?

- A. Pupils'
- B. Teacher's
- C. Western
- D. Other

8.5 What remarks does the teacher give for pupils' work that is good?

- A. Good remarks
- B. No remarks
- C. Bad remarks.

8.6 What remarks does the teacher give for pupils' work that is of poor quality?

- A. Encouraging comments
- B. Discouraging comments
- C. No comments.

8.7 Who corrects pupils' written work?

- A. Individual pupils
- B. The teacher
- C. Group leaders
- D. Other (specify).

8.8 What is emphasized during marking in 8.7?

- A. Spellings
- B. Handwriting
- C. Grammar
- D. Form
- E. Meaning

APPENDIX 7

A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND REACTION.

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| WRITING EXAMPLE 17 | name | |
| | date | |
| | title | |
| | Although I already knew that | |
| | I have learnt some new facts. I learnt that | |
| | I also learnt that | |
| | Another fact I learnt | |
| | However the most interesting thing I learnt* was | |

Recount genre

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE AND REACTION FRAME

RECOUNT GENRE: (Lewis & Wray, 2002)

APPENDIX 8

A FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING COMPARISONS (GRAMMAR)

WRITING FRAME 25

name _____

date _____

title _____

Report Genre

COMPARISON FRAME

Although and are different they are alike in some interesting ways.
For example they both

They are also similar in

The is the same as

The resembles

Finally they both

University of Cape Town

REPORT GENRE: (Lewis & Wray, 2002)