

**Pedagogical interactions and opportunities for literacy engagement in two South African
Grade R classes**

Nadia Lubowski
Student Number: LBWNAD001

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Supervised by Assoc. Prof. Ursula Hoadley and Prof. Paula Ensor

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I started studying at UCT in my honours year and felt privileged and excited due to my parents, aunt and uncle having studied there. During one of my classes I read a paper that was relevant to the particular field I chose to study. The paper simply blew my mind: it was relevant to the current South African education crisis and to my passion for education. I was in awe of the author who I discovered was based right on my doorstep – at UCT. I sought her out immediately because I wanted to follow in her footsteps.

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Any opinion, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the sponsors.

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Abstract

This study, embedded in a sociology of education framework, uses Bernstein's concept of framing to compare and contrast two Grade R classes in the Western Cape, South Africa. It seeks to answer the following question: What are the differences, if any, between pedagogic practices in two Grade R classes, particularly in the transmission of literacy. One Grade R class is attached to an early childhood development centre, the other to a formal primary school. Using a qualitative approach to investigate the transmission process between teacher and learners, it combines a deductive approach, derived from the work of Dickenson and Smith's studies on interactions during storybook reading, and an inductive approach, which develops categories for analysis from the data. First looking broadly at all tasks related to literacy development, the study narrows its focus to engagement with narrative tasks in order to make visible the nature of the transmission of literacy, particularly the degree of control that was applied by the teachers in both settings. It found that, despite their difference in location and formality, both classes offer remarkably similar pedagogic relationships within which learners receive minimal exposure to text, where the organisation of the tasks is communalised and the task requirements are restricted in nature. It concludes that the teachers in both settings exercise a strong degree of control (framing) over the learning process, resulting in limited opportunities for literacy engagement on the part of the learners.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction and locating the study

This study emanates from my long-standing interest in the optimal conditions for young children to learn most effectively, particularly children from low socio-economic status environments. Working for an NGO that provides support to ECD centres, and having been a principal of a school in these settings, my interest is grounded in the empirical world of ECD education and in an understanding of the particular challenges such children face in acquiring knowledge. The quality of education provided for South African children is heavily influenced by the gap that currently exists between the rich and poor classes of our society. Consequently, I feel it is vital to identify the opportunities that teachers in all settings can create for children to be intellectually challenged, nurtured and developed.

A growing understanding of the significance of education in the early years of life has formed part of extensive curriculum reform within South Africa over the 20 years since the end of apartheid, making the country a unique place to consider the transformative power of early childhood education. In 2001, the government introduced an optional reception year (Grade R), designed to be phased into the school system as an entry into primary school. The present study is a comparative analysis that seeks to answer the following primary question.

What are the differences, if any, between pedagogic practices in two Grade R classes, one in a formal and one in a community-based institutional setting, particularly in the transmission of literacy tasks?

This question focuses on the two components of the pedagogical process, the ‘what’ and the ‘how’, unpacking pedagogical interaction in order to recognise the relationship between teacher and learners and considering what impact this has over potential for children to engage with literacy. The primary question thus gives rise to a set of secondary questions:

- What is the frequency and exposure to texts and what are the task requirements for literacy learning in the two Grade R classes and what opportunities do they create for learner participation?
- How much control do teachers and learners have over pedagogic communication and how does

this influence opportunities for literacy engagement?

1.2 Locating the study

Understanding the effect of pre-school education on children's cognitive and social development has been of growing research interest since the 1980s (Sylva 2004). Educational policy worldwide began considering early childhood development as being important in a child's educational trajectory due to specific studies conducted in Europe and America began to show the effects (Melhuish 2004; Ramey and Ramey 1998; Schweinhart & Weikart 1993 & 1997). A South African policy decision to provide access to a year of school (Grade R) before beginning formal schooling (Grade 1) was based on these research findings, which confirmed the importance of quality intervention programs in the early years¹. The World Bank published information that intervening early provides children with opportunities to benefit from school. "What, how, and how much children learn later in school largely depends on the social and emotional competence and cognitive skills they develop in the first years of life" (Young 1996: 5).

Before considering the specific Grade R classrooms observed for this study, it is important to first understand the grade's placement in the South African education system. Limited research has been conducted around ECD in South Africa; still less research has investigated the impact the numerous curricular reforms and subsequent policy implementations of the post-apartheid era. Policy decisions have been taken to formalise learning earlier and earlier, with preschools mandated to address the "readiness" of children to go to school. The current CAPS curriculum, however, marks a shift away from this formality, stating that Grade R should take an integrated approach that is play-based.

It is important that the term "formality" be clarified in the context of this study, with a consideration of two distinct and separate issues: formality requires scrutiny firstly in regard to the locating of Grade R (early childhood education) within the larger (formal) school system through the National Curriculum Statement, and secondly, in regard to pedagogy which can be described as formal when

¹ The National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) recognised ECD as being important for the growth and development of the country. ECD is continually and increasingly being identified as vitally important in giving children the foundation for learning and preparation for developing skills needed to acquire knowledge. The White Paper of Education and Training (1995) mentions key commitments to Early Childhood Development. Some of these commitments have been in making pre-school programs available in the most disadvantaged areas, as well as in looking at a Primary School curriculum that states learning objectives and provides systemic assessment procedures. The White Paper is a "promised curriculum", which proposes what government intended. In 1996 the Interim Policy for Early Childhood development was released: this was an interim policy initiated by the Government of National Unity for South Africa (GNU).

the transmission of knowledge is predominantly controlled by the teacher.

Since the Grade R year is regarded as a strategic objective for the Department of Education (DoE), with accessibility to the most impoverished children of particular importance, the White Paper 5 identified early learning as a crucial component of educational development for South Africa. Targets were set to have one million children attending Grade R by 2010 (this deadline was initially extended to 2014 and then again to 2018), with 85% of Grade R provision directly linked with existing primary schools and 15% accessed through community sites (Bierstecker 2010).

Grade R began as an unstructured year provided by either preschools or informal home environments in order to prepare children for school. Based on the fact that not all children in South Africa had access to this type of focused and adult-aided “preparation”, the National Government took a policy decision to provide access to an optional year of schooling before being enrolled into Grade 1 (TAU 2008; Bierstecker 2010). Admission to Grade R year of schooling could be accessed via an informal or formal setting. The aim of this study is twofold: to establish if the pedagogy in the formal setting of a Grade R class in a primary school differs from that provided in an informal pre-school environment; and to consider what this may illuminate regarding an optimal learning environment for young children.

The progression from Grade R (2001) to the more formal school system caused extensive debate amongst ECD specialists in South Africa. Questions arose as to where Grade R should be positioned, both physically and pedagogically. From a pedagogical perspective the debate focused on whether learning should and could be play-based in both settings, and whether attaching a Grade R class to a primary school might impose formal teaching too early. The present study sets out to investigate this potential problematic and to examine how such positioning might affect different Grade R environments. It refracts the complexity of these issues by looking at pedagogy through the lens of literacy practices, exploring them in two different institutional settings—one formal and one informal. The first class selected for the study, attached to a primary school (for this study considered a formal institutional setting), was selected due to its role in the SPADE² project; the second, attached to a preschool (for this study considered an informal institutional setting), was selected because it had been classified as a centre of excellence by the Department of Education. This meant that both schools were relatively comparable as both could in some sense be regarded as high achieving or performing above the norm. Both will be described in detail in Chapter 3.

² Schools Performing Above Demographic Expectations The SPADE research project focuses on primary schools in poor communities in the Western Cape that are performing above expectations (given their socio-economic contexts) on the numeracy and literacy systemic learner tests (www.cssr.uct.ac.za/events/2011).

The original working hypothesis was that Class 1, due to the institutional setting being considered as formal, attached to a primary school, would be more structured and have fewer opportunities for play-based learning. Class 2, due to the institutional setting being considered less formal, attached to a community based preschool, would be less structured and have more opportunity to play.

The contested nature of Grade R positioning derives from “while from a curriculum perspective Grade R is the first year of primary schooling” (Bierstecker 2010: 13) and that the focus of the reception year is “school readiness” (ibid: 14). Grade R is meant to improve “efficiency in the education system” (ibid: 14) as well as to “facilitate the transition to formal schooling” (ibid: 15). From a pedagogical perspective the debate transpired whether learning would be formalised too early for children at this age. “It sits with one leg in the preschool and the other in the gateway to formal schooling” (Excell & Linington 2011:3). Therefore attaching it to a primary school may impose formal teaching too early. Rolling out Grade R was the government’s response to dealing with poor learning outcomes that our children get in schools. It was meant to deal with the backlog of children that have very little educational stimulation before entering Grade 1 (ReSEP 2014).

The general consensus in early childhood education is that learning needs to be play based. The new policy decision of providing up to 85% of children access to Grade R at a primary school into formal schooling (into Grade 1) threatened the understanding of maintaining a play-based curriculum for young children attending Grade R. Attaching Grade R to a primary school brings the danger of formalising children’s learning too early. The setting possibly influences the formalisation of the pedagogy due to external framing and classification elements. The latest research indicates that a play-based environment in conjunction with real learning situations are critical in a child’s educational development. The literature review in Chapter 2 discusses this in more detail.

The interest in the study, and therefore one of its limitations, is that the study is based on the premise that the institutional setting of the school influences the pedagogy conducted in each classroom in a particular way. The significance of the research was to ascertain if the setting had an influence or not. The findings show that the setting did not influence the pedagogical practices of the teachers. The findings open up areas for further research, such as the curriculum impact on teaching and the teachers’ personal dispositions to teaching styles and methods.

This study considers the teaching and learning of literacy in early childhood education (ECD)³. The purpose of the study is to identify the differences and similarities in literacy practices in two Grade R classes in the Western Cape, South Africa. Both classes are located in low socioeconomic status environments, one attached to a community-based preschool (an informal setting) and one attached to a primary school (a formal setting).

Adapting categories developed by Dickenson and Smith (1994) for the analysis of literacy tasks. It identifies task requirements, considering tasks in terms of time spent and whole class versus individual learning engagements, specifically in relation to engagement with narrative. These are aimed at recognising what opportunities are created for learners to actively participate. It then analyses the 'how' by applying a Bernsteinian framework to determine the degree of control (framing) the teacher and learners have over the learning process (sequencing, selection, pacing and evaluation) and draws conclusions about how this does or does not create opportunities for literacy engagement in both classes. Bernstein's concept of framing provides a useful analytical tool to investigate this pedagogical relationship with reference to variation of control. To recognise the relationship occurring in these two classrooms, a coding scheme (adapted from Hoadley 2005) is applied, specifically designed to code for the framing of educational knowledge transmission.

1.3 Motivation

The selection of literacy practices for particular consideration is prompted by Halliday's assertion that language forms the basis of all learning: "learning language, learning through language, learning about language" (Halliday 1993: 113). This resonates deeply with me, as it has become clear that literacy development is closely linked to children being able to succeed at school, across all subjects. The connection between what is taught and how it is taught is central to my interest in teaching and learning and explains why Bernstein's theory provided a relevant framework for my research. Young children are exceptionally vulnerable due to their development being so malleable; at the same time, this early stage of development represents a space of immense potential. The importance of using effective teaching methods and philosophies is therefore crucial, the focus of this study being the similarities or differences in teaching in a formal versus an informal setting, and the influence, if any, on opportunities for learning.

³ The White Paper (1995) defines ECD as "an umbrella term which applies to the processes by which children from birth to nine years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and socially" (p. 33, par. 73).

1.4 Ethical Considerations

The present study adhered to ethical rules set out by the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Humanities. I obtained ethical clearance from the SPADE project. For the particular study pertaining to the current dissertation permission was personally obtained by the principal of the school through correspondence via e-mail and telephone. The principal introduced me to the Grade R teacher, as a researcher. The school principal selected the Grade R teacher, as he considered to be an excellent example of good teaching practice in their primary school. I obtained access to the children in this way.

As research subjects both the teacher and children had very little opportunity to object to participating in the study. I assert that the children had little understanding of the intention of the project and their understanding of their role in the research was limited. The children could therefore not give their consent based on an informed decision. This put them in a vulnerable position. The teachers seemed curious yet did not ask interrogating questions. Their consent being given based on work obligations also puts them in a position of vulnerability. Their consent was obtained, despite it being obligatory, based on the relationship with the principal. Confidentiality and the use of pseudonyms was assured.

I felt it was important to talk about the consent issue to both teachers personally. I explained my research objectives to the teachers and told them they had a right to object if they did not wish to participate. Both gave their consent.

It was paramount for me to defuse any obvious tensions and develop a relaxed working relationship as soon as possible, as I only had one week of observation in each setting. It was important that the teachers did not feel threatened by my presence in the classroom.

I assured both teachers full confidentiality and promised to send them a copy or small summary of the findings. In the dissertation I dealt with their confidentiality, to minimise any chances of the participants being identifiable, by using distinguishable labels for the research subjects as Class 1 and Class 2 and Teacher 1 and Teacher 2.

1.5 Thesis outline and overview

Chapter 1: The introduction states the research problem and question, briefly summarises the research design and theoretical framework and provides an overview of the study, and the motivation for the research.

Chapter 2: The literature review begins with the history, policy implementation and current positioning of Grade R. It moves on to a review of international literature around early learning and South African studies conducted to investigate Grade R provisioning and implementation, finally describing the use of storybook reading in the teaching and learning of language development and literacy.

Chapter 3: This chapter describes the research design and method of analysis and the aspects of Bernstein's code theories that have been used for this study, along with a theoretical framework of language development. A description of the research method applying a phased approach of data analysis is provided, as well as the inductive coding categories created and examples of their application are described. The chapter provides a description of the data collection phase and explains the selection for criteria applied when extracting the literacy tasks from the entire data set (three-day, day-long observations of each of the two classes).

The findings are presented as: the 'what' and the 'how', providing insight into the degree of control the teacher has over the task requirements and the transmission of knowledge. In Chapter 4: The 'what' is described as two phases; quantifying the units of analysis according to text-based and non-text based literacy tasks, and analysing the task requirements as elaborated or restricted.

In Chapter 5: The 'how' is analysed and described as two phases; coding for the control the teacher held over the transmission of knowledge, and quantifying the amount of teacher talk versus learner and whole class talk.

Chapter 6: This chapter provides a discussion giving the interpretation of the data and concluding remarks on the findings of the thesis.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

To begin answering the research question regarding the differences or similarities in literacy teaching practices between two Grade R classes in two different settings, an understanding of the literature written on ECD provision worldwide and in South Africa is required. This chapter provides a context for ECD, looking particularly at research that suggests best practice for teaching young children. The development of Grade R as part of the public school system in post-apartheid South Africa is then considered, exploring literature that contextualizes the debate around where Grade R should ideally be situated. The chapter concludes by focusing on the research discussion of the national and international literature surrounding literacy development in the early years.

2.2 Studies on best practice learning in the early years

Learning in the early years is aimed at providing experiences and activities for young children in order to stimulate their cognitive maturation. “ECD” and “learning in the early years” are expressions that can be, and are, used interchangeably, but the latter has become more common recently due to the common association of ECD with specialised settings. Learning in the early years tends to be more all encompassing, describing not only the institutionalisation of learning and development, but also the process and timeframe. This study thus gives preference to the term “learning in the early years”.

The basis for this research on early years learning is provided by Siraj-Blatchford et al. (2006) who conducted a review of the literature on effective pedagogy for young children. The researchers highlighted three models of early learning provision (programmed approach, open-framework approach and child-centred approach)⁴ which they described as ideal types, particularly if applied in combination with one another. The strength of the three approaches is that they all aim to

⁴ ECD models they identified were: programmed approach, which is highly didactic, the open-framework approach, which supports the teacher with a strong pedagogic structure that she can use to assist the child in their explorations of the learning environment, and the child-centred approach, where the teacher follows the individual child’s interests and activities. (Weikart 1972, Kohlberg and Mayer 1972, Baumrind 1971).

provide: independence, self-expression, creativity and emotional intelligence (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2006). Conversely, the review problematises direct instruction programmes aimed at young children. The researchers state that the types of programmes which mimic formal schooling generally provided to children in later grades, cause young children stress, anxiety and “emotional impairment and disturbances” (Siraj-Blatchford et al 2006: 288). “Other studies have shown that ‘formal’ approaches to teaching young children are counterproductive and can hinder young children’s learning, generating higher anxiety and lower self-esteem” (Sylva et al. 2006: 288).

In taking a broad look at the literature that has informed early learning interventions (Hedges and Cullen 2011, Anning, Cullen, & Flear, 2009; Brooker & Edwards, 2010) particularly regarding pedagogy, a number of significant studies are identified, which will now be described. A study conducted by Schweinhart and Weikart (1997) assessed the relative effects of three different pre-school curriculum models of children aged three and four. The models used were: a direct instruction curriculum, a nursery school curriculum model and the High Scope model. In the direct instruction curriculum model, the child is taught distinct academic capabilities that specifically address the skills s/he is required to achieve on intelligence and achievement tests. The teacher provides guidance and the children mostly work in workbooks that are designed so that the learners can practice concepts addressed in the lessons the teacher conducts. In the nursery school curriculum model (which adopts a “child-centered” approach) the teacher plans organised class activities around certain themes and units that children are interested in. Children are taught how to cooperate, show good manners and care for others. The children can choose their own activities and are free to move from one activity to another based on their personal interest. The main difference between the two types of curriculum models described is that the direct instruction model has a strong emphasis on academic skills and the nursery school program has a strong emphasis on developing social skills.

The third model compared was the High/Scope curriculum model, which adopted the open framework approach to early childhood education. The curriculum was developed by Weikart and his associates in 1971 and is based on Piaget’s constructivist theory. Children are viewed as active learners and teachers engage the children in learning through well-equipped interest areas. “Each day, children planned, carried out, and reviewed their own activities: engaged in small and large group activities; and spent time outdoors” (Schweinhart and Weikart 1997: 118). Teachers facilitated intellectual, social and physical key experiences in the children’s development. The curriculum model described in the study used different theoretical approaches to early childhood education. The models differed significantly in the degree to which the child or the teacher initiated

activities and learning. The study tracked participants over time to analyse the effects of the model when they were aged fifteen and again at age twenty-three. The findings argue that “well-defined curriculum models based on child-initiated learning activities” (Schweinhart and Weikart 1997: 118) have greater benefits than models that apply direct instructional methods of pedagogy.

One prominent, large-scale UK study was identified as particularly relevant to my own concerns as it looked specifically at the effects of preschool on social and cultural reproduction. The study, *Early Childhood Matters – Evidence from the Effective Pre-School and Primary Education Project (EPPE: 2010)*, is one of the largest longitudinal ECD studies conducted globally to date. Together with a number of complementary subsequent studies⁵, it examined the effects of preschool on 3000 children drawn from various types of pre-school settings in the 1990s, along with children that stayed at home and did not attend a pre-school. It looked at the educational effectiveness that different types of pre-schools had on children, specifically in relation to pedagogy, and tracked the developmental progress of the children (Sylva 2010).

Siraj-Blatchford suggests that one of the main questions addressed in the studies mentioned above was “whether preschool experience could reduce social inequalities” (Siraj-Blatchford 2007: 7). One aspect clear to the researchers was that “the quality of the preschool centres was related to better intellectual/cognitive and social/behavioural development in children⁶” (ibid). The EPPE study considered the home learning environment to be a significant contributor to children succeeding at school. Activities that were found to be taking place in the home to complement school learning and which affected success were: reading stories to the child, visiting the library, painting and drawing at home, learning about letters and numbers, learning about the alphabet and singing songs and rhymes and the frequency with which these occurred. Taking into account a number of factors related to the home environment, the EPPE study found that children at risk (disadvantaged children coming from low socio-economic status homes) can benefit quite considerably from good quality preschool experiences. In other words the school environment has the potential to compensate for constraints within the home. It also found that the earlier children (from about 2 to 3 years old) from such backgrounds were exposed to quality learning environments, the better their chances for concentration, social and intellectual development (ibid: 13).

⁵ REPPEY: Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years was an extension of the EPPE project. The REPPEY study documented effective pedagogical practices in twelve settings that were extracted from the EPPE study as providing good to excellent services for young children.

⁶ The quality of the programs examined were assessed using the ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised) and ECERS-E (ECERS- E Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Extended)

Bernstein's theory is weaved through and evident as a background in her work, as well as the EPPE study described.

The major organising principles might therefore be better conceived in terms of pedagogy and curriculum. This would also be consistent with Bernstein's (1981) elaborate analysis of pedagogic codes and their modalities of practice. While comprehensive structural analysis of the various coding principles employed in early education lies beyond the scope of this paper, we can employ Bernstein's (1981) formulation of classification and frame to distinguish between the different forms of early childhood practice (Siraj-Blatchford 2002: 26) (Siraj-Blatchford 2008: 10).

The most significant contribution of the EPPE study was that it provided three key features of effective pedagogy. It identified these as "adult and child involvement in high quality dialogue, including episodes of sustained shared thinking between both adults and children and child peers; cognitive engagement or co-construction of learning in a careful juxtaposition of teacher initiated experiences; and the use of pedagogical techniques such as modeling, demonstrating, questioning and exploring" (Hedges & Cullens 2011: 935). Sustained shared thinking is defined as a moment that occurs between a teacher and a learner (or multiple learners) when they are working together to solve a problem or clarify a concept in an intellectual way (Siraj-Blatchford 2010: 157). The definition of sustained shared thinking is "an effective pedagogic interaction, where two or more individuals work (often playfully) together in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate activities, or extend a narrative" (Siraj-Blatchford 2008: 7). The essence of sustained shared thinking is that all parties participate and contribute in order to extend thinking. Siraj-Blatchford's work based on the concept of sustained shared thinking and her use of Bernstein's work is fitting and relevant to the dissertation. Sustained shared thinking is well suited for combining the importance of play and developing critical thinking in children's development. The research described above raises a related key issue—that of the 'crucial mix' of pedagogic approaches to support effective learning.

2.3 'Crucial mix' in early learning pedagogy

A highly debated topic within the relevant literature is the desired degree of intervention teachers should have on children's learning. Thus, a significant amount of the literature around early years learning hinges on the debate between play-based learning versus structured teaching⁷.

⁷ A new term that has recently been coined is "structured play" which alludes to the fact that play needs to be structured such that the most learning is gained by the child. Structured play is where the learner selects the task. The tasks have been structured by the teacher to promote learning and designed according to the children's sensitive or critical periods. They have a clear and distinct

According to Siraj-Blatchford et al (2006) there is “widespread agreement that ‘early years education should be play-based’” as well as “non-directive” (ibid: 286). However some researchers raise a concern that the quality of the learning experience could be compromised if such a pedagogical approach is applied. Siraj-Blatchford (2009) argues that teaching is as important in the early years as in any other stage of the educational spectrum. She maintains that teaching is vital in pedagogical interaction. She writes that “those who restrict their work to facilitation are neglecting their civil duty to teach in a society where there is a social injustice and inequality” (Siraj-Blatchford 2009: 148). Widespread literature supports the importance of play—something that has been known since Aristotle’s time and which has since been taken up by a long list of theorists including Froebel, Pestalozzi, Vygotsky, Piaget, Montessori, Malaguzi and Flear. However, there is “a constant tension between, on the one hand the need for holistic development through play-based learning, and on the other the demands of a formal school curriculum” (SAIDE ECD Report 2010:38). This tension creates the need for a ‘crucial mix’ of pedagogic approaches (play-based and teacher-directed learning) in the transmission of knowledge. An understanding of the level of control and the framing of the communicative context, illuminate the pedagogical relationship and offer the basis for solutions that allow for getting the ‘crucial mix’ right. This is a key issue of concern in my study.

2.4 Context of South Africa’s Grade R

A number of studies have been conducted in South Africa pertaining to policy and implementation of a year of preparation before entering the formal school system: Grade R (SAIDE 2010; Excell & Linington 2011; Girdwood 2012; Richter 2012; PETS 2011; ReSEP 2014). Contemporary debates as well as the literature reflect a tension around the ideal approach to early years learning in the South African context. The central debate lies between the need for a holistic community-based approach to learning and a demand for the inclusion of early learning into more formal school settings (SAIDE 2010). Access to Grade R⁸ was based on the idea that all children should at least receive one enriching year before formally entering the schooling system. In 2001, the White Paper on Education and Training aimed to link early learning more distinctly to the rest of a child’s school career, bridging the existing gap between pre-primary and primary school (SAIDE 2010). While

purpose and the child has an aim or outcome to achieve. In contrast, free play is described as when a child selects tasks, equipment, or activities on his own, with no interference from a teacher or adult.

Grade R was initially the final year of preschool it was subsequently re-envisioned, becoming the first year of formal schooling in the foundation phase (TAU 2008: 9). Beyond the stipulated curriculum, the policy documents provide little input and guidance about what constituted a good quality-learning program. They referred to teachers needing to “develop and expand their own knowledge of concepts and to improve their verbal language skills to enable them to promote higher order thinking skills in children through the use of incidental learning opportunities and by asking children well-formulated open-ended questions” (GET 2009: 187).

The research literature on Grade R also raises the question of the ability of government to implement relevant policy decisions. In 2008, National Treasury and the Technical Assistance Unit (TAU) wrote a diagnostic report on early learning and Grade R in order to investigate quality provision, focusing particularly on these aspects related to play-based learning. It stated that the Department of Education (DoE) has to provide a comprehensive understanding of what play-based learning for Grade R is, “including being explicit about the importance of structured play for this age group, the expected methodologies to achieve Grade R learning outcomes, and a number of measures and indicators that can be used to judge the quality of provision. Without such clarity it is likely that the focus will continue to be on numerical targets – children sat on chairs, with desks in classrooms in the site of primary schools. Unfortunately, these measures do not equate to quality”. (TAU 2008: 9). Policy documents suggest that guidance is required for teachers and that teacher’s personal philosophy on teaching has significant influence on her ability to meet desired outcomes and whether or not she adopts a constructive pedagogy (GET 2009: 131). Little is articulated for teachers about *how* quality ECD education is to be achieved (GET 2009: 139). The report summarises a number of early learning theories, consistently referencing whole child development and child-centeredness, both of which “foreground the importance of play in the optimisation of learning opportunities presented to young children” (ibid:143).

Both the international and the local literature point to the importance of play, however the international literature (due to having a larger empirical base) is better able to provide a significant body of research findings that describe pedagogical best practice in different settings, and a description of the ideal ‘what’ and ‘how’ of teaching. South Africa’s literature (largely policy documents) has lacked this empirical evidence of what is considered best for young children, particularly those coming from low socio-economic status environments. My study was envisioned to consider optimal learning environments for literacy practices for young children, in particular with regard to the pedagogic relationship, and the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of teaching.

As indicated above, language development is key to education, especially in the early years: the literature concerning this area therefore demands review.

2.5 Language development in the early years

There is a significant body of literature on language development in young children, mostly grounded in one of two theories: *emergent reading* versus *reading readiness*. Emergent reading can be traced back as far as 1920, when researchers began considering that learning to read and write could begin before children went to school (Teale and Sulzby 1986). Clay (1972), whose research showed that children acquire literacy skills before entering school, coined the term ‘emergent literacy’ in 1966. Despite her findings, most educationalists continued to operate on the previously held understanding of how best to teach reading and writing skills, focusing on the idea that literacy development only begins when a child enters the schooling system through a formalised process of ‘reading readiness’ (Teale and Sulzby 1986).

The CAPS curriculum in South Africa advocates a play-based emergent reading paradigm in the policy statement, yet it also promotes a prescriptive and technocratic approach towards teaching language in the early years. The policy statement makes reference to emergent reading and literacy in the introduction, yet it includes indications that the learners readiness needs to be measured and tested before s/he can progress to the next level. ‘Reading’ is therefore not projected as an emergent skill that occurs with endless engagement with text, narrative, and language. This dissertation does not dissect and interrogate the CAPS curriculum in detail, yet an in-depth and extensive reading of the curriculum was undertaken to understand its approach. It is clear that the intention is for the teacher to follow a play-based emergent reading paradigm, but in the prescriptive activities that follow reverts to being a reading readiness paradigm.

Teale and Sulzby (1986) provide a useful history of the development of teaching literacy to young children within the two schools of thought of reading readiness and emergent reading. Their description of the two paradigms has been adapted and summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: An adapted summary of the differences between reading readiness paradigm and the emergent literacy paradigm

Readiness Paradigm	Emergent reading paradigm
Children need to acquire a specific set of prerequisite skills for reading before being able to progress to the next stage.	The development of literacy understanding begins long before formal instruction. Children use and acquire reading and writing behaviours during informal settings at home or within the community.
The area of concern is reading. The instructional process is based on children learning to read first before they can progress to learning how to write.	A child develops as a reader and a writer. It is a misconception that reading precedes writing or that writing precedes reading. All aspects of language, both written and spoken, develop concurrently and not sequentially.
Reading is taught as a sequential mastery of skills that form the basis of reading, and the instructional process focuses exclusively on the formal aspects of reading and ignores the functional uses of reading.	Literacy develops in real-life situations. Children learn to read and write through active engagement with their environment through social interactions with adults. Children tend to explore these opportunities on their own, often modeling themselves on influential adults around them.
Any learning that has taken place before a child enters the formal instructional teaching method is ignored, based on the assumption that a logical sequence of reading needs to be presented at school.	Children’s cognitive ability is critically developing from birth to six years, and includes the acquisition of language and literacy development.
Children pass through a sequence of readiness and reading skills and this hierarchy needs to be followed, carefully monitored, and tested formally.	Although children’s literacy development can be described in stages, each child will progress through them in their own way, at their own pace and at different ages. The scope and sequence of language development is not universal.

(adapted from Teale and Sulzby 1986)

While it is important to clearly understand the background and history of both of these schools of thought, due to the South African curriculum (CAPS) advocating the emergent literacy view, the focus of this particular study is on this paradigm, the stages of which are described in the following section.

2.5.1 Stages of emergent literacy learning

A number of theories about language acquisition and emergent literacy break the process of learning to read and write down into stages or levels (Clay 1972; Goodman 1986; Ferreiro 1986;

Kaderavek 2009). These theorists all make explicit that the process is not linear and that each child does not develop at the same pace and through the same stages. For some children it is a concurrent process that is interrelated (various stages happening at the same time or overlapping), whereas for others it can be sequential.

Clay's work (1972) shows that guidance in learning to read takes the child through five stages. Clay embeds her theory in a concept she calls "talking like a book" (ibid). During the first stage the child equates print with the spoken word. A child of about five years old will invent a sentence that describes a picture or a drawing. The representations of this description will mostly be ungrammatical but give the child an opportunity to begin understanding the correlation between printed text and pictures. The second stage Clay labels as "a special type of talking", where the child uses specific language structures to express him/herself, which are only found in books. In the third stage the child starts using the picture as a guide to "reading" the text or story. The delivery of the exact text may not be correct, but the child is using the pictures to retell the story s/he is "reading". The fourth stage involves the memorisation of the sounds and words that s/he has heard to remember the text. A child's auditory memory will prompt the "reading" of the text and the pictures will prompt the child's memory. In the fifth stage some sentences get repeated, almost word for word (ibid), hence the notion of "talking like a book".

The exposure that a child receives to book reading experiences contributes significantly to learning to read. By the fifth stage the visual representations of the letters and words become cues for the child. "He is learning a vital link in early reading, to search, check, reformulate, correct, and obtain some confirmation that he is right. He is not reading, but he is learning how to process language information" (ibid: 31). Children who have vast exposure to books and stories will begin to understand language forms and structures in an appropriate manner that enable reading and writing later in their lives. Clay advocates the use of children's own stories and compositions to assist in the reading and writing process.

Kaderavek, Cabell and Justice (2009) maintain that children's writing and spelling development is a "multidimensional construct that includes spelling, composition, and handwriting", and that the development thereof progresses through four levels⁹.

⁹ Level one is generally encountered in children aged four. During the first level the child will scribble mock-letter-like forms; start to learn that drawing and writing are different yet both carry meaning; recognise environmental print; and sometimes even pretend to read. However during this first level the child does not yet understand letter-sound correspondence. Level two is encountered in children during the late pre-school period when they are about five years old. The writing that is being produced is writing that the children can read themselves; they can recognise their own name in different contexts; they start using letters to make words and begin to control letter sizes; and begin to use cues to read words. During level three, which is around the age of entry into first grade,

Ferreiro (1986) writes about literacy development in children as a process of psychogenesis, where children interpret the systems of language as alphabetic representations. Ferreiro's research focuses on the evolution of literacy development in young children. In interpreting children's written productions she distinguishes three main levels of writing development. During the first level children learn to distinguish between two modes of graphic representation, namely drawing and writing (Ferreiro 1986). During this level, children learn to distinguish between the iconic mode and the non-iconic mode of graphic representation. They start to consider that letters are substitute objects that represent meaning. Therefore drawing and writing are understood as distinct from one another, with the child beginning to understand that they relate to one another but do not say the same thing. Once they have gained this understanding, they will comprehend that writing is outside the iconic domain.

When concluding the first level, children begin the process of identifying two distinct domains of interpreting meaning in writing: qualitative and quantitative (Ferreiro 1986). The quantitative domain poses the question: how many letters are required to form a word that can be "read" and maintain meaning. In the qualitative domain the consideration of what variations and combinations of letters is required. The second level in children's writing is where children gain more control over the qualitative and quantitative variations. Children want to be able to show graphic differences in their varying intentions of communicating. The third level builds on the second by adding the phonetic aspect of letters, and the combination of these elements into words. The hypothesis that Ferreiro (1986) presents is that children go through the stages of syllabic, syllabic-alphabetic, and alphabetic phonetical awareness to acquire the ability to read and write¹⁰. Children begin to write "pieces of sound" (ibid: 21) when they write. The exploration of how these "pieces of sound" form words that carry meaning is where the process of learning to read and write begins. Through this process, children assimilate their own learning.

Ferreiro argues that if one takes the psychogenesis development of children's literacy learning seriously, then putting the child's "assimilation schemes at the centre of the learning process" (ibid) is vital. Children tend to face different challenges at different points of their development. However, learning is not a process that takes place in isolation; it occurs rather as a social construct. The

children begin to grasp the concept of representing speech and thoughts in a way that others can read. The child is now starting to grasp the concept of story and sentence; is able to recognise most letter sounds; builds a repertoire of sound words; and starts to decode simple words (Kaderavek, Cabell and Justice 2009: 107 - 120). Level four is relevant to the end of the first grade and entry into second grade, which is beyond the scope of this research.

¹⁰ Her hypothesis is based on Spanish speaking children because in 1986 the syllabic stage of English speaking children was less explored.

development of learning as a social construct is central to a number of theories concerning pedagogy. Ferreiro also argues that schools should become places that are arranged and set up as literacy environments, and not simply as places where teaching methods are imposed upon children. This is particularly the case in developing countries where the family and home environment are often unable to provide the kind of literacy exposure that children require (Ferreiro 1986).

Each theory described makes a similar claim, namely that children regard print as having meaning or having a function (separate to graphic or verbal), and that children “write” before they read.

A universally accepted model of how children acquire language does not exist, nor a universal explanation of how a child’s emergent literacy contributes to literacy learning. In order to be able to read and write, young children require various component areas of oral language development. Wasik et al (2006) discuss longitudinal studies showing that oral language is vital in learning to read and write. The component areas are: phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics (Rhyner, Haebig and West 2009). It has not been determined how the various skills required for effective literacy development are connected or how they relate to one another.

Rhyner, Haebig and West (2009) have attempted to clarify the different viewpoints and opinions of emergent literacy development into three distinct frameworks that they developed to close that gap. The frameworks have been divided into three main perspectives namely the developmental perspective, the components perspective, and the child and environmental perspectives.

The model that is relevant for this study is the environmental perspective. The approach that emphasised reading readiness on environmental factors began as a social revolution that recognised the disadvantage that children coming from low socio economic environments face due to the lack of exposure to reading and writing in the home environment, “condemned them to educational failure” (Teale and Sulzby 1986: xii). Most educational practices have adopted the reading readiness program approach which includes activities such as: auditory discrimination and memory; visual discrimination and memory; letter names and sounds; and word recognition (ibid).

Clay (1972), on the other hand argues that if we want to counteract the effects of poor language backgrounds then we need to expose children to more than group work with one individual teacher or spontaneous free play. Another study supports this claim:

“Even though we need to learn more about how we can help at-risk children develop language and early literacy skills, research on the frequency of book sharing, dialogic reading, and the use of inferential language input in book sharing conversations provides an important framework for interventions” (Vander Woud, Kleeck & Vander Veen 2009:61).

When looking at intervention principles and guidelines for narrative discourse instruction “young children learn best through active exploration, meaningful experiences, and interactive participation with materials that sustain their interest” (Roth 2009: 174).

A consistent theme in the literature is the evidence that children prefer using their own work to devise strategies to assimilate new knowledge (Clay 1972; Snow & Goldfield 1983; Ferreiro 1986). Another theme that is consistent is the impact of the home environment on language development (Painter 2005; Vander Woud, Kleeck & Vander Veen 2009; Teale & Sulzby 1986; Siraj-Blatchford 2007). There is a general consensus that parents reading books to their children unmistakably contributes to their language development (Dickenson and Smith 1994). Dickenson and Smith identified a gap in that minimal research has been conducted that looks at patterns of interaction during *engagement with narrative*. My study looks at interactions during book reading episodes and engagement with narrative in order to begin understanding the pedagogical interaction that exists in two Grade R classrooms.

2.5.2 Book-sharing as an activity to develop literacy skills

Research conducted by Snow and Goldfield (1983), which investigated situation-specific language acquisition using book sharing activities between a mother and child as its sample, identified the usefulness of routines in language acquisition for children. The exposure to recurring and routine situations is highly beneficial to children’s language acquisition and for them to become effective communicators. According to Snow and Goldfield (ibid), the appearance of recurring opportunities for a child to engage and discuss topics, pictures, or text will enable them to acquire a strategy to absorb new information or learning techniques. Snow and Goldfield (ibid) use book reading as the ideal routine to explain the strategies acquired. “We have analysed successive discussions of particular pictures...in order to demonstrate how recurrences of the situation enable the child to exploit his strategy of saying what he has previously heard, producing incremental growth in his language ability” (Snow and Goldfield 1983: 553). The striking finding in their research, which is

supported by numerous other authors mentioned in their paper, is that children prefer to segment and analyse their own utterances rather than the ones they are hearing from others. It is in this finding that play-based/child-initiated learning becomes relevant.

Dickinson and Smith (1994) examine story understanding after a narrative has been told. Comprehension of a story is closely related to literacy development: the aspect relevant to this study is the component of their research that they call “decontextualised language”. Understanding a story contributes to decontextualised language development, which is related to the concept of context independent meanings.

Dickinson and Smith (1994) use a sociocognitive conceptual framework and divide their data into three categories: cognitively challenging talk, talk without cognitive demands and task organisation talk. Their work forms part of the theoretical framework of the current study and is discussed in further detail in chapter 3. Their research asked two specific questions: are there distinct and identifiable patterns that teachers employ when reading stories to children, and are the effects of children’s language and literacy development detectable one year later? A number of other studies have been developed using a similar framework to analyse storybook reading episodes as the one by Dickenson and Smith (Martinez and Teale 1993; Dickenson and Keebler 1989; McGill-Franzen, Landford & Adams 2002)

Reading stories to a child can assist him/her thinking beyond the parameters of their immediate life and surroundings and developing an understanding of the world outside their direct experience. An adult reading (decoding or discussing) a story helps a child develop an ability to think beyond his/her immediate environment if the adult uses decontextualised language. The discussions that occur in story reading episodes require context independent cues and prompts. “The content of parental book sharing conversations consist of four aspects: 1) attending to the child’s interests and experiences; 2) focusing on establishing meaning first, then later separately on print form; 3) framing books as unique contexts; and 4) using progressively more inferential language” (Vander Woud, Kleeck & Vander Veen 2009: 52). This exposure to reading stories is crucial for literacy development, and some homes provide these opportunities. Research shows that children can catch up at school if the opportunities at home are inadequate.

McGill-Franzen et al (2002) examined book-sharing conversations in classroom settings. The study compared five different programs aimed at five/six year olds (McGill-Franzen et al 2002), focusing not on assessing literacy development in young children, but rather examining the opportunities that

were made available to children to further literacy development. The study identified the gap in research that looks at how books, stories and print are made understandable to young children; it also identified the lack of research conducted that examined the nature of the pedagogic discourse that constitutes book-reading interactions. In this regard, research conducted in the South African context is minimal. Very little work has been done that examines the interactions that occur inside Grade R classrooms.

During the study of comparing five different preschools by McGill-Franzen et al, three general characteristics of the book reading episode were attended to: “a) the quantity of talk and whether it occurred before, during, or after the book reading; b) the teachers’ use of informing and/or questioning strategies as they initiate talk and/or respond to children’s talk; and c) the content of the talk” (McGill-Franzen et al 2002: 449). They found that the way in which the teachers involved learners in analytical talk about the narrative made a longer lasting impact in children’s literacy development (McGill-Franzen 2002).

McGill-Franzen et al (2002) examined the functions of literacy that each preschool adopted. The functions of literacy that were identified in the preschool environments were: personal everyday (to convey information, to express emotions, to provide personal entertainment); school function (to develop English fluency and print knowledge); imaginative (to participate in fictional characters and create imaginary lives for them); and a social function (to appreciate diversity in language, gender, culture, race, and to understand environmental issues).

The findings of the study found distinct segregation and inequalities of literacy opportunities by social class and race. The segregation was sustained by “a narrow view of children’s literacy development among low-income parents, teachers and children themselves” (McGill-Franzen et al 2002: 461). The study recommends that “fully developed and culturally relevant pedagogical and curricular frameworks for teaching literacy need to be in place” (McGill-Franzen et al 2002: 462) in preschools in order for children to develop a meaningful ability in literacy that enables them to read and write.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has given an overview of the literature relevant to the current study. The chapter began with a description of early years learning, contextualizing formal approaches to learning in

juxtaposition to well-defined curriculum models based on child-initiated learning activities. It outlined the conditions identified by researchers as optimal for young children. Both the international literature reviewed and the South African literature reviewed pointed to play-based learning in early years as vital to complement, but not replace, direct instructional teaching. That the best opportunities for literacy development occur during activities such as book reading, painting and drawing (as well as exposure to pictures), and unstructured conversation (oral language and meaningful dialogue). The South African literature points out that little guidance has been provided for teachers on 'how' to teach in a meaningful way. The concept of sustained-shared thinking is discussed and in combination with direct instruction is termed the 'crucial mix' in this study. Lastly, international literature was reviewed to provide an understanding of how children acquire skills for reading and writing, looking particularly at how engagement with narrative can assist in the language acquisition process. Book sharing episodes where the teacher creates opportunities for a decontextualised language approach appear to be of the highest value. The following chapter provides an overview of the theoretical framework and research method adopted for this study.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework and Research Design

3.1 Introduction

The current chapter sets out the theoretical framework and research design employed for this study. The chapter is divided into three sections: The first describes the theoretical framework used in this study. The second describes the research design, including the method used to analyse the data. The third describes the analysis of that data, structured in a series of phases. The theoretical framework is further subdivided using two central theories, Bernstein's theory of pedagogy and control, and Dickenson and Smith's theory of literacy development, specifically story comprehension.

Bernstein's theory is extensive in that it encompasses relations internal and external to educational discourse. However only his concepts of framing and the hierarchical rule as they relate to the overall role of the school in cultural reproduction are addressed within the context of this study to recognize the degree of control held by teachers and learners. Dickenson and Smith's literacy development theory leverages extensive empirical research with literacy development in young children with regard to storybook interaction. For this study the concepts they developed around patterns of talk during engagement with narrative (story book reading and comprehension) are used to recognize and categorise the specificity and frequency of individual task requirements.

3.2 Theoretical framework

3.2.1 Bernstein

Bernstein uses a sociology of education perspective to decipher the education system and its role in cultural reproduction. He admits to an *obsession* with trying to “understand the origins and consequences of different modalities of control” (Bernstein 1975: 5). His work identified schooling as a central site of control that uses three message systems in the transmission of educational knowledge: curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation (Bernstein 1975). A curriculum is specified content knowledge that is required to be covered in an allocated time and is packaged in such a way that the teacher is able to deliver on its requirements. Bernstein defines curriculum as “what counts as valid knowledge” (ibid: 85). Pedagogy, on which this study focuses, is the method by which the teacher transmits the knowledge stipulated by the curriculum. According to Bernstein, pedagogy

refers to the way the teacher makes available the specified knowledge that needs to be transmitted to learners. Evaluation tests the validity of a given educational activity, and it signals to teachers and learners what knowledge is valued and rewarded. All three are equally important parts of acquiring school knowledge, but this study focuses predominantly on pedagogy and the control implied therein.

My research sets out to answer the research question: what are the differences, if any, between pedagogic practices in two Grade R classes, one in a formal and one in a community-based institutional setting, particularly the transmission of literacy tasks? This study uses Bernstein's framework to understand the nature of the pedagogy, and moreover the particular pedagogic relationship, occurring within two Grade R classrooms with regard to both the 'what' and the 'how' of teaching. He explained that "a pedagogic practice can be understood as a relay, a cultural relay: a uniquely human device for both the reproduction and the production of culture" (Bernstein 1975: 64). He distinguishes between 'what' is relayed – the contents, and 'how' the contents are relayed. In this study the 'what' is considered in relation to the specific literacy competencies being transmitted, and the 'how' is considered based on the relative strength of the control between teacher and learners. The latter is accomplished using Bernstein's concept of framing to recognise the strength of the framing, which is vital in establishing the degree of control the teacher utilises, thus to illuminate the nature of the pedagogic relationship and what kind of literacy teaching is taking place. Once this is determined, comparisons between the pedagogic practices in formal and more informal environments can be made.

a) The 'what' and the 'how'

When analysing pedagogy two distinct aspects of the transmission of knowledge can be distinguished: the 'what' and the 'how'. The manner of transmission, in other words the 'how', is crucial to understanding an educational modality, since the way content is transferred and regulated is decisive in maintaining a specific learning context. The content itself that is being transmitted and regulated makes up the 'what'. The 'what' and the 'how' relevant to this study can essentially be described using Bernstein's two elements of pedagogic discourse, made up of the instructional discourse (the what) and the regulative discourse (the how). The rules (instructional rules and regulative rules) that govern these two interdependent components define the discourses of competence. The instructional rules determine the discourse that transmits specialised competencies, and the regulative rules determine the discourse that transmits specialised order

(Bernstein 1990). Thus a given pedagogic interaction does not have preexisting rules of its own, but is determined based on the teacher's interpretation of the curriculum, of what constitutes legitimate knowledge or behaviour, and of how legitimate knowledge is recontextualised and transmitted to learners. The school, the wider community, background and the teacher's own training or personal philosophies can dominate the principles of the interpretation, which explains why Bernstein explained the instructional discourse as being embedded within the regulative discourse. The regulative rules decide what is translated and delivered (Bernstein 1990). The moral regulation of behaviour, manner, and conduct – the 'how' – provide the condition for the transmission of specific competencies – the 'what'. Figure 3.1 illustrates the transmission of knowledge, breaking it down into 'the what and the how' of pedagogy.

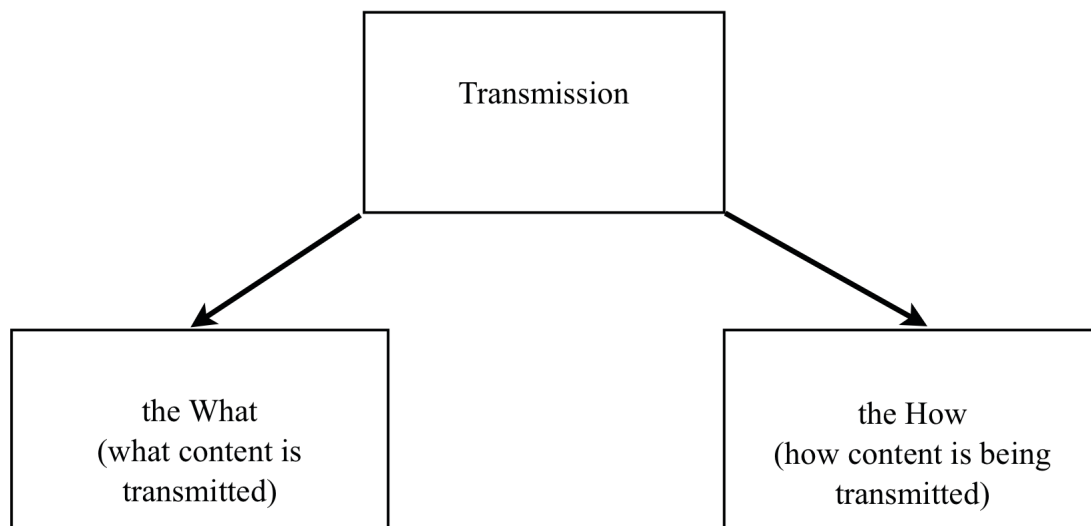


Figure 3.1: The what and the how of the transmission of knowledge.

Bernstein's theory allows for analysis of both of these in conjunction with, and holding influence over, one another. These two separate aspects of the transmission of knowledge are inextricably linked, which means the direct relation between them produces what we consider pedagogy. In order to maintain focus for this study and to allow for a detailed answer to the research questions, the method applied was to separate the data into 'what' is taught and 'how' it is taught, to form a fuller picture of the pedagogic practices taking place. This structure continues through the analysis chapter, where the 'what' and then the 'how' of the pedagogy in the two classes are identified and the findings are presented. In the concluding chapter the 'what' and the 'how' are discussed in relation to one another, reinforcing their empirical interrelatedness.

b) Classification and framing

Bernstein's theory around pedagogy considers two sets of boundaries, namely classification and framing. Classification refers to the relationships between contents, "to the nature of the differentiation between contents. Classification thus refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between contents" (Bernstein 1975: 88). "Frame refers to the form of the context in which knowledge is transmitted and received. Frame refers to the specific pedagogical relationship of teacher and taught" (ibid: 88). In this study frame is used to compare and contrast the pedagogical context of two different classrooms, through an analysis of the degree of control that exists in each of their pedagogic relationships and specifically in relation to literacy development. "The social relations with which we are concerned are the pedagogic relations between transmitter and acquirers. We use the concept of framing to refer to the location of control over the rules of communication. Thus strong framing (+F) locates control with the transmitter, whereas weak framing locates control more with the acquirer" (Bernstein 1990: 100).

"Classification and framing refer to the organisational and interactional aspects of the transmission" (Bernstein 1975: 85). Largely, classification and its boundary maintenance is that between school subjects, and thus relates to curriculum, whereas frame and its boundary between teacher and taught, and the control they each hold, refers to classroom interaction and the pedagogic relationship. Only the latter was a conceptual feature in this particular study, since the control over the rules of communication was key to understanding the transmission of knowledge in the two classrooms being analysed.

Strong or weak frames determine the aspects of what, when, and how a learner receives the knowledge that is being transmitted, and can be recognized in four different forms of pedagogic practice: selection, sequence, pace, and evaluation. Essentially these refer to what knowledge is transmitted, in what order, at what speed, and how its validity is made explicit and tested for. The level of control exerted by the teacher and the kind of opportunities for learning that she provides in the continuum of pedagogic practice- between play-based and teacher-directed learning is of interest here. These are indicative of the nature of the pedagogical relationship between a teacher and learners. The nature of the relationship is evidenced by who initiates topics for learning and who regulates them, which determines how important the learners interests are, and to what extent topics, either provided by the teacher or extracted from the learners' contributions, are used to advance their learning. All opportunities for learning are either weakly or strongly framed by the

teacher. The more the teacher holds control over these the stronger the frame; the greater the control held by learners the weaker the frame. In the instance of this research, the CAPS curriculum states that Grade R is to be taught using a play-based and integrated approach to learning, which in Bernsteinian terms implies a weakly-framed approach. The reason the concept of framing is used in this study is to provide a lens through which to view the power relations taking place as literacy is being developed, and to observe whether the formality of a learning environment (the institutional setting) impacts this development. Significant literature around literacy development speaks to children's preference to use their own work to assimilate new knowledge as well teachers allowing learners' talk, questions, and interjections to contribute to the learning space. Therefore, who holds the control during learning interactions is pertinent to understanding the nature of the teaching (and by extension the learning) taking place in each class. This insight into the 'how' of the transmission of knowledge of these two contexts allows for consideration of whether the different environments (formal and community based institutional settings) result in a difference in the degree of control between teacher and taught. The method with which the concept of framing is applied in this study is described in the research design section.

c) Hierarchical Rules

The hierarchical rules govern the behaviour or conduct in the classroom: the regulative discourse. A social relation exists between a transmitter and an acquirer. Bernstein calls these rules "a prerequisite of any enduring pedagogic relation" as they "establish the conditions for order, character, and manner" (Bernstein 1990: 66). He explains the pedagogic relationship as "one of subordination and superordination" (ibid: 67) and thus the hierarchical rules dictate the way in which power informs that relationship. He states that this power can be hidden or overt, who maintains the control over expected manner of behaviour can be implicit or explicit.

The fact that the instructional [discourse] is embedded in the regulative [discourse] means that the hierarchical relation between transmitter and acquirer regulates the selection, sequencing, pace and evaluative criteria of the instructional knowledge. Pedagogic discourse is defined as the rule which embeds a discourse of competence (the instructional, including specific skills) into the regulatory discourse (regulatory of character, conduct and manner) and of theories of pedagogy (Hoadley 2005: 53).

In relation to this study, the literature around successful early learning suggests that an early childhood development setting which allows learners a certain degree of control is considered to improve the effectiveness of the pedagogy. South Africa's CAPS curriculum recognizes this by

emphasizing the need for an integrated, play-based curriculum. This study uses an analysis of the realisations of the hierarchical rules to establish the degree of control over classroom conduct, and thus order, character and manner. This allows for a thorough understanding of whether one or the other learning environment (formal or community based) has an impact on the rules for classroom conduct and thus, the regulation that determines “their selective transmission and acquisition” (Bernstein 1990: 183).

3.2.2 Dickenson and Smith

Research conducted by a number of theorists around the process of developing literacy conclude that “the storybook reading experience has greater impact on children’s literacy development than any other literacy-related activity” (Martinez and Teale 1993: 197). Martinez and Teale (1993) point out that a teacher’s own interpretation of what constitutes legitimate knowledge will result in variation in experience from classroom to classroom, including the degree to which storybook reading is integrated and encouraged.

This can be seen in the variation in a teacher’s style of reading stories and the requirements of the tasks she assigns to learners based on what is being or has been read. The manner in which she imparts knowledge through storybook reading, and the clarity with which she defines expectations have a significant impact on a child’s literacy development. One such requirement is comprehension, in other words, how to make sense of internal aspects of the story. The teacher can ensure learners understand a given story by asking questions during storybook reading, or requiring that they recall or retell the story later in their own words.

Dickenson and Smith’s (1994) study made a significant contribution to the understanding of literacy development, zeroing in specifically on storybook reading. They use a multistep analytical procedure that isolates three distinct approaches of storybook reading interactions: a co-constructive approach, a didactic-interactional approach, and a performance-orientated approach. These all look specifically at oral language skills, particularly the link between vocabulary, story understanding and literacy development. According to their theory, learners first understand words, and then stories, which eventually facilitates learning to read on their own. They found that children with a limited vocabulary base, especially children from low-income families, have greater difficulty learning to read and have a slower acquisition of literacy skills across their school years.

Conversely, children with a substantial vocabulary base, especially those who understand decontextualised language, acquire literacy more quickly and easily (1994: 2).

Dickenson and Smith's study applies a coding scheme, which they call 'utterance level analysis', where each spoken expression in an observed teacher/child interaction of storybook reading is considered a unit of analysis. The scheme codes for three different levels: if the talk happened before, after or during the storybook reading; the actual request in the talk (requests for information, responses to requests, or simply offering information); and specific content. Dickenson and Smith categorise the specific content as cognitively challenging, less cognitively challenging, and task organization. These categories are similar to those used in related studies (Dickenson and Keebler 1989; Martinez and Teale 1993; McGill-Franzen et al. 2002). In this study task requirements (specific content) were divided based on the degree to which they required context independent thinking; into elaborated and restricted tasks. This draws on work by McGill-Franzen et al (2002), to describe and understand the specialisation of the task requirements. These categories are further described in the method section.

Having established the theoretical framework applied to this study, built on a combination of concepts from both Bernstein and Dickenson and Smith, the next section of this chapter outlines the overall research design and specific methods used to analyse the data based on the context of this framework.

3.3 Method of analysis and data capture

3.3.1 Sample

This study draws on theoretical concepts from Bernstein (framing) and Dickenson and Smith (literacy engagement through storybook reading) to compare and contrast pedagogical strategies used in two Grade R classes. The sample of two classrooms is small in scale, with one based in a community preschool and the other in a formal primary school. The two schools in which the classrooms are situated were selected to make visible certain distinct features of the South African socioeconomic context.

Class 1 was chosen because it had been identified by a larger scale project, SPADE¹¹, as being a

¹¹ Schools Performing Above Demographic Expectations.

school that performs better than expected given the surrounding circumstances, and achieving results better than other low socioeconomic status schools. Class 1 is attached to an Afrikaans-speaking primary school with Grade R being offered to the community based on the policy plan, and is therefore funded by the education department.

Class 2 was chosen because the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) identified the Grade R class as a model site. The WCED classified it as a centre of excellence. The class is attached to an English/Afrikaans-speaking preschool that provides early childhood services to farm workers in the area. The families working on the farms are of low socioeconomic status. The WCED funds the Grade R class of the preschool.

Both classes were observed for three full, consecutive days. Video recordings were captured, transcribed and translated from Afrikaans as required. The videos were transcribed and translated verbatim and therefore may contain grammatical errors.

3.3.2 Data collection and analysis

The data collection, extraction and analysis for this study is conducted in six phases:

Phase 1: data (lessons and interviews) is captured using video recording. Recordings are transcribed and translated as required.

Phase 2: description of the whole day to understand how the teacher divided the literacy learning facets and when the transmission of literacy tasks took place. The criteria for selection of what constituted a literacy task were determined during this phase.

Phase 3: the unit of analysis is a 'task', defined as: “a segment of the transmitter text which is constituted around a single goal or theme” (Ensor 1999: 128). Based on the definition of a task, 8 categories emerged in all. Next tasks are divided into text-based and non-text based and time spent on each category is quantified.

Phase 4: task requirements, defined as the demonstrable skill or knowledge needed for a learner to have successfully completed a task, were broken down into either an elaborated task or a restricted task, with indicators formulated for both.

Phase 5: all the tasks are coded according to the relative strength or weakness of the framing during the transmission process of literacy development.

Phase 6: context is further provided to the strength of the framing by quantifying the amount of teacher talk versus learner or whole class talk.

These phases are detailed further in Table 3.1. For clarity, the following are definitions of the terms used to conduct the full-day analysis:

- Task: an activity that is designed around a specific goal or outcome.
- Task requirement: the aim, goal or expected outcome of a specific task.
- Organisation of the task: the way in which the learners are mobilized to carry about a particular learning activity, be it in small groups, as a whole class or one-on-one.

Table 3.1 Data collection and analysis

Phase 1: Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video recording of 3 consecutive full days of teaching in one class per school, conducting detailed field notes during observations. • Conducting running observational notes¹² • Semi-structured interviews with two teachers whose whole classes were observed.
Phase 2: Criteria of Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of a full day in each setting and the time allocated to different literacy tasks. • Determination of criteria for selection. Segmentation of units which met the criteria as literacy practices into sets of task categories (engagement with narrative, general knowledge, emergent reading, emergent writing, manual tasks, free play, singing and chanting and other).
Phase 3: The What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraction from the video recordings all examples of literacy practices (one activity or instruction = one unit of analysis). • Categorising the tasks into text-based and non-text-based and calculating the time allocated to each category.
Phase 4: The What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codifying engagement with narrative into 3 sub-categories: frequency, exposure and task requirement. Subdividing task requirements according to two distinctions: restricted versus elaborated (and further identifying 7 varieties of restricted tasks and 6 varieties of elaborated tasks).
Phase 5: The	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of framing relationships using an adapted version of Hoadley's

¹² Running observational notes is a method used in educational methodologies where the note taking is continuous, accurate and objective. It is a purposeful informal observation strategy to take continuous (running) notes that are objective and informal and have the possibility of capturing arbitrary aspects that at the time do not seem important, but might serve a purpose later.

How	instruments – selection, sequencing, pacing, evaluation and hierarchical rules.
Phase 6: The How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantifying the amount of time spent on talk and questioning.

3.4 Phase 1 and 2: Data collection and consideration of the whole day

A day in a Grade R classroom in South Africa is intended to include multiple facets of the learning process. According to the CAPS curriculum, based on principles of integration and play-based learning the teacher is required to mediate the learning experience in such a way that she integrates the various learning areas into a structured day. The curriculum document does not elaborate on what integrated or play-based learning entails, nonetheless the current study assumed both classes would enact a play-based and integrated learning environment seeking evidence of this approach. To allow for a reasonable scope of the study, only literacy activities are extracted for analysis. Coupled with literature around literacy development specifically these portions of the days analysed can provide a description of the nature of the knowledge transmission and the pedagogic relationship in the two classes. Once these are established a comparison of the two classes is made.

Two sets of coding were applied to whole day data sets around literacy engagement. The process of dividing the entire day into text-based and non-text based activities is described in the section titled Phase 3. The 8 subsequent categories were used to determine the criteria for selection – essentially which tasks or activities were related to literacy development. From the whole day opportunities for literacy and how they are transmitted were extracted and are described in Phase 4. Both sets of codes, including examples of each, are described in detail in the analysis chapter.

3.4.1. Selection for criteria: Definition of categories

Three full days were observed in each class and due to the integrated nature of a early learning classroom culture and practice, various lessons and activities pertain to literacy engagement throughout the day. Each unit of analysis (a single activity or task that presented an opportunity for engagement with literacy) was coded as belonging to one of the following groups of tasks:

- Engagement with narrative
- General knowledge
- Emergent reading

- Emergent writing
- Manual
- Free Play
- Singing
- Other (non-literacy engagement).

Engagement with narrative

Engagement with narrative is broadly defined as any occasion for telling a story or narrative, either by the teacher or by the learners, as well as unstructured conversation that provides a narrative. An example of these tasks is any time that learners participate or are occupied with narrative, conversation or stories. Story time is a perfect example of this type of task. Engagement with narrative is subsequently sub-divided into frequency, exposure, and task requirements.

General knowledge

General knowledge tasks are defined as the tasks in which the learners are provided with new knowledge, such as various themes and types of weather. General knowledge tasks incorporate life skills such as knowing the days of the week and months of the year. Discussions and topics about a specific theme are included in this category. General knowledge is developed through weekly themes that expand children's knowledge about social, environmental, scientific, and geographical knowledge. An example drawn on from the data is morning circle time when the weather or the days of the week are spoken about.

Emergent reading

Emergent reading is defined as engagement with text that begins to introduce the concept of "reading". This can involve identifying or recognising letters or words, or 'reading' words by sounding out letters in sequence to form a word being read. Examples of emergent reading include any instances where children handle books on their own.

Emergent writing

Emergent writing is defined broadly as any scribbling, captioning of text, 'pretend' writing, practicing letter formation or writing words such as the child's own name. Examples from the data are when children are taught to write by following the line on a worksheet or writing their own name. Other examples of emergent writing are when a child copies text,

either from books, posters, till slips, magazines, or newspapers, or when a child “writes” their own story.

Manual

Manual tasks include all activities that involve working with material or equipment. Manual tasks include playing with play dough, ‘cut and paste’, painting, building puzzles, or playing with building blocks in early childhood development. They are intended to develop fine motor control, fine motor strength, gross motor control, dexterity, and coordination. These also include classification and sorting activities, matching pictures or objects, and developing memory.¹³

Free Play

Free play is when learners are given the opportunity to play on their own without any interruption or direction from an adult or teacher. For the analysis, the free play opportunities that were observed are distinct from what the literature describes as structured play. Examples from the data are when children have completed their manual tasks and are given the opportunity to play on their own. The learners play with blocks, play in the fantasy area, build puzzles or read a book on their own.

Singing

Tasks that involve singing were separated from the above categories due to the nature of the singing tasks in both schools. These tasks involved singing songs and saying rhymes that the children were familiar with. Singing and learning rhymes and poems can assist in language development, such as learning vocabulary.

Other

Other is comprised of the portion of the day spent on breakfast, lunch, snack time, toilet routines, outside play and numeracy lessons, and do not form part of the analysis.

¹³ A number of these types of tasks can and should be classified as emergent handwriting and writing rather than manual tasks because of the potential skills that are being developed, such as motor skills. However, the examples in this study have been categorised as manual tasks: because the impact of the tasks in general is more extensive in scope than simply to develop skills for writing. Therefore even though these tasks include skills to develop emergent writing, the examples categorised as manual tasks in my study are all tasks provided for learners such as playing with playdough, painting, drawing, or cut and paste activities, which assist in developing a number of skills.

3.5 Phase 3: Text and non-text based literacy engagement

The purpose of dividing the data into text based and non-text based is to discern the transmission of literacy tasks in both classes, in order to understand the specialization of the knowledge that is required of learners. Text-based literacy engagement is sub-divided into text and graphic (for example a book that has text and pictures both of which are shown to the learners as it is being read), text with no graphic (for example visible words being used in a lesson), and graphic with no text (pictures being used while telling a story). Non-text based activities are sub-divided into structured and unstructured activities where unstructured activities consist of conversational interactions (for example when the teacher and a learner have an informal discussion about a topic) and structured activities consist of retelling a story (when the teacher or the learners retell a story that has already been told, without a planned outcome), revising a story (for example when the teacher revises a story from the day before), theme discussions (when a topic or theme is being discussed informally) or singing and chanting.

Text-based and non-text-based tasks are then quantified according to the time the class spent engaged with each. The portion of the coding sheet used to categorise all of these factors when analysing the data is displayed in Figure 3.2 (the entire coding sheet is presented in Appendix 1).

Text Based tasks			Non-Text based tasks		
Text & Graphic	Text No graphic	Graphic No text	Structured		Unstructured
			Retelling a story	Revising a story	Conversational
			Theme discussion	Singing/chanting	

Figure 3.2: Text-based and non-text based tasks categorized.

3.6 Phase 4: Coding the sub-categories within engagement with narrative

In order to narrow the focus more distinctly to the ‘what’ of pedagogy, only tasks coded as engagement with narrative, which are text-based, are extracted for further analysis in Phase 4. Next, engagement with narrative tasks is further divided into three sub-categories: frequency, exposure and task requirements. The sub-categories frequency and exposure allow for a quantification of the instances where the children have the opportunity to engage with narrative. Three questions were considered to determine these quantities: How many stories were read on each day? What was the

duration of the book reading tasks each day? What exposure to text did learners have? The last was a measure of the number of times individual learners handled or read books on their own.

The third sub-category, task requirements, establishes the specialization of knowledge the tasks placed on learners. It considers the desired outcome or expectation (implicitly or explicitly indicated by the teacher). The task requirements give insight into the ‘what’ that the teachers enact in the transmission process. Coding for the task requirements gives the observer an indication of what the teacher values and considers valid knowledge. Figure 3.3 provides an example of the task requirements relating to engagement with literacy.

Task requirements					
Restricted			Elaborated		
Chiming	Naming and labeling	Skill Routines (counting, ABC's)	Extended recall	Text-reader links and connections	Text Vocabulary
Immediate factual recall	Pictorially explicit		Making inferences	Text prediction	Text analysis

Figure 3.3: Engagement with narrative: task requirements

The tasks were divided into elaborated and restricted tasks. The restricted task requirements consist of chiming, naming and labeling, immediate recall, skill routines, pictorially explicit and performing actions. Elaborated tasks require extended recall, text-reader links, talking about vocabulary, making inferences and predictions and text analysis. An example of how the task requirements were coded for is provided later in this chapter. Book-reading interactions and text-reader links provide children with opportunities for making connections to their own lived experience and allow for dialogue about the text. Using text-reader links the teacher needs to answer questions the learners have, and scaffold the link between the story and the child’s own world. Any difficulty that may lie in the text can be eradicated by a discussion that mediates the child’s comprehension of the narrative. Providing text-reader links for the children makes challenging books more available and accessible to children.

In total 74 tasks, from all 8 literacy development categories, were coded across all 3 days for both classrooms into text-based and non-text based to establish the entire initial data set coded as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Literacy development tasks.

	Class 1 – Grade R school setting	Class 2 – Grade R ECD setting	Total
Engagement with Narrative	8	12	20
General Knowledge	11	6	17
Emergent reading	5	4	9
Manual Tasks	3	1	4
Emergent Writing	2	3	5
Free Play	2	3	5
Singing	5	9	14
Total	36	38	74

3.7 Phase 5: Development of coding scheme to capture framing relationships

Once the data had been categorised the next phase of the analysis was to distinguish the degree of control the teacher held during the transmission process. The framing relationship of the transmission process (communicative context and principles of communication) was analysed using a coding scheme adapted from Hoadley (2005).

For each aspect of the framing relationship – selection, sequence, pace and evaluation – specific indicators were devised in order to provide a language of description. A descriptor is devised for each indicator relevant to the framing categories being analysed.

3.7.1 Indicators given to each framing category

Indicators were devised for each category of framing on the coding scheme. Selection considered the degree to which the teacher or learners control the selection of the task, the narrative content of the task, and how much of the learning content was based on learners’ interests and questions. Sequencing assessed the degree of control the teacher or learners have in determining the sequence

of transmission of knowledge in the course of a task. Pacing examined who has control over the time spent on lessons, activities or tasks and who controlled the pace while learners were working on their own tasks. The evaluative rules consider the extent of control over what constitutes legitimate content and to what degree the teacher guides the task and answering process. The evaluative rules also examine the level to which the teacher makes the criteria for evaluation explicit to the learners in her introduction, conclusion or throughout the question and answer process that exists in the learning environment. Framing of the hierarchical rule was categorised into three indicators: the physical interaction between the teacher and learners, the manner in which the teacher disciplines the learners, and the extent to which the teacher interacts with learners. Descriptors were devised to analyse the data. A full account of the indicators and descriptors are provided in Appendix 2.

3.7.2 Analysing the strength of the framing relationship

The indicators were devised in order to distinguish the degree of control the teacher has in the transmission of knowledge. Each indicator is further divided into framing values and given a descriptor. The descriptors and coding value for the indicators selection and pacing are illustrated in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 to provide extracts from the coding scheme used in the analysis. A coding sheet was then devised to capture the framing relationship in each class. Extract provided in Figure 3.3. Each unit of analysis, for each class, was coded using the coding sheet. A total of 74 units were analysed in this manner.

The method of assigning a cumulative value to each teacher was derived from Hoadley (2005). The final value assigned was obtained from numerical values assigned to each indicator and an average assigned to the teacher for each category of framing. Figure 3.4 is an example extracted from the coding scheme to illustrate the method in which values were assigned to each teacher. Using Class 1: values are assigned to each category of framing: $F^{++}= 4$; $F^{+}= 3$; $F^{-}= 2$; $F^{-}= 1$. A cumulative value was assigned to each category based on the average of the different indicators of each category. The final coding value allocated to each teacher is depicted in the analysis chapter.

Assigning a final coding value for each teacher in terms of framing allows for a summary statement of the pedagogy in each case, as well as a concise basis for comparison. Coding using summary coding values in this way does mask to some extent variation in the practices of an individual

teacher across different pedagogical acts. They do, however, describe the teachers' general pedagogic practice in relation to the dimensions described across the three days analysed.

Looking at the selection rules, taking one example coded for the teacher in Class 1, a numerical value is assigned to each indicator and then divided by the total number of instances, which provides a cumulative value for the teacher. Therefore the example can be illustrated in this manner. The teacher would get a value of F^- . $F^- [1] + F^+ [3] + F^- [1] + F^+ [3] / 4 = 1$. The framing value for the teacher in Class 1 is therefore F^- . Figure 3.4 shows the

3. In the selection of participation	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher Teacher selects learners to participate in reading a story or participating in an activity, whole class, small group, one on one or individual	Mostly controlled by the teacher The selection of participation in tasks, activities, songs, stories, and knowledge in the classroom is determined by the teacher most of the time. On few occasions teacher allows for variance according to learner initiative.	Learners have some control Learners have the opportunity to vary their participation in stories, songs, tasks, activities, knowledge some of the time. Learner participation is encouraged and teacher alters her selection according to learners' productions, for instance child requests to read a story on his/her own.	Learners have substantial control Learners have control of their own participation. The choices are available for them to engage in tasks, activities, songs, stories, and knowledge in the classroom (individual reading, small group reading etc)

Figure 3.4: Example of coding scheme: for selection.

8. Who has the control over the time spent on the lessons/ activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher The pace at which the teacher works through the daily programme, lessons, tasks and activities is done according to her planning. The teacher controls and determines the time spent on a topic/task/activity, learners have no influence on the timing, and pace. Teacher has the allocated time for activities or lessons, and learners cannot deviate from the program.	Mostly controlled by the teacher The teacher mostly determines the pace of the activities and how much time is spent on the learning tasks or lessons. Teacher has considerable control over the intended program.	Learners have some control Learners have some control over the time they can take to complete a task of how long a lesson takes. If a learner has a topic or interest he wants to explore, and results in a task the teacher allows for these alterations in the time allowance.	Learners have substantial control The timing and pace is determined by the learners. Pacing and time alterations are made based on the extent to which learners ask questions, time they take to understand a topic, or to finish an activity or task.

Figure 3.5: Example of coding scheme: for pacing

1. Framing of the discursive rule

1	Selection	In the selection of a task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
2	Selection	In the selection of narrative content	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
3	Selection	In the selection of participation in task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
4	Selection	Selection of questions (who asks the questions and when)	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
5	Selection	The extent to which teachers engage in the learners conversations	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
6	Selection	Opportunities for talk	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
7	Sequence	In the course of the task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
8	Pace	Who has control over the time spent on the different activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
9	Pace	While learners are doing activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
10	Evaluation	In the introduction / explanation / exposition to a topic/task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
11	Evaluation	In the course of telling stories or discussions about stories the extent to which the teacher controls the evaluation of legitimate communication and meanings	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
12	Evaluation	The level or extent the teacher guides the answering process	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
13	Evaluation	In the course of learners conducting an activity or task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
14	Evaluation	When learners answer questions	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
15	Evaluation	At the conclusion of the task/activity	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻

2. Framing of the Hierarchical Rule

16	Teacher/Learner	In the physical interaction between teachers and learners	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
17	Teacher/Learner	When the teacher disciplines a learner or learners	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻
18	Teacher/Learner	The extent to which the teacher interacts with individuals	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻

Figure 3.6: Coding Scheme

Class 1: Unit 6

1	Selection	In the selection of a task (reading story/singing songs/saying rhymes)	F++	F+	F-	F--
2	Sequence	In the course of the task	F++	F+	F-	F--
3	Pace	Who has the control over the time is spent on the lessons/ activities/tasks	F++	F+	F-	F--
4	Evaluation	In the introduction/ explanation/ exposition to a topic/ task	F++	F+	F-	F--
5	Evaluation	At the conclusion of the task / activity	F++	F+	F-	F--
6	HR - Teacher/Learner	In the physical interaction between teachers and learners	F++	F+	F-	F--

Figure 3.7: Extracts from the coding sheets for the coding of a task in Class 1 to illustrate the calculation of the framing value

3.7.3 Hierarchical rules: Organisation of the task

Organisation of the task establishes among and with whom tasks are conducted, be they as a whole group (class), as small groups, or as one-on-one interaction with the teacher. The quantity of each sort of organisation can then be quantified based on how the task gets coordinated.

3.8 Phase 6: Quantifying the amount of time spent on talk and questioning

To determine the amount of teacher versus learner talk lessons are categorized by subject, and those which are likely to present the most significant opportunities for interaction and dialogue (coded as either engagement with narrative, general knowledge or emergent reading) are quantified according to teacher talk. In particular, it is noted how the teacher responds to talk initiated by the learners. Each unit of analysis in these particular lessons is categorised as either teacher talk, learner talk or whole class. The rationale for quantifying the amount of talk, teacher versus learners, is to further identify the ‘how’ of the pedagogical interaction by recognising the degree to which opportunities were present for children to ask questions, indicate their interests and evoke discussions during literacy engagement. Talking, communicating, and questioning are integral in developing literacy skills. “Studies conducted with preschoolers have shown effects on sentence-level language skills (e.g., syntactic forms) resulting from enhanced levels of teacher-child talk” (Dickenson and Smith

1994: 107). This view on language skills is substantiated by a number of other studies (Arnold & Whitehurst, Karweit 1989; Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst 1992).

The amount of teacher talk was also applied in this study as another indicator of the nature of the pedagogic relationship: of how much control the teacher held in the transmission of knowledge, and to what degree she was directing the learning.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a thorough explanation of the theoretical framework and research design, establishing the basis for this study, and allowing for an understanding of how framing and control in early learning environments as well as theories of literacy development allow for a consideration of the research question. Having defined the relevant concepts and demonstrated how they have been adapted to generate particular research methods, the findings they are able to elicit can now be presented. The next two chapters present the analysis of the ‘what’ (or instructional discourse) and the ‘how’ (regulative rules) of knowledge transmission taking place in these two Grade R classrooms. The ‘what’ is considered through an analysis of learners’ engagement with narrative tasks. These are compared in both classes, specifically in relation to frequency, exposure, and task requirements. The ‘how’ (or regulative discourse) of the pedagogic relationship is analysed through determining the degree of control or strength of the frame the teacher has over the learning context, including the classroom conduct and the quantity of teacher versus learner talk.

Chapter 4

Analysis of results: Phase 3 and 4 – the ‘What’

4.1 Introduction

The data collection process, detailed in the previous chapter, involved three day-long observations of the two Grade R classrooms. To review, I use translated, transcribed video recordings of the whole day to capture all instances of teacher/learner engagements and then extracted all of those instances (or rather the unit of analysis: task) related to literacy learning. In this chapter I consider the ‘what’ of each classroom’s pedagogic practice by narrowing the focus, in line with theory from Dickenson and Smith (1989), to consider storybook reading in particular detail, discussing it and a few other text-based learning activities which together make up a task category I call *engagement with narrative*. This understanding of the ‘what’ will allow for the next chapter to conduct a consideration of the ‘how’, and finally in the last chapter the ability to answer the question of what differences, if any, exist between pedagogic practices in two Grade R classes, one formal and one community-based, particularly in the transmission of literacy tasks. To do so, a thorough understanding of the ‘what’ needs to be established. The ‘what’, in other words the elements of the instructional discourse, are presented across this chapter in order to answer the secondary research question, introduced in Chapter 1, what is the frequency and exposure to texts and what are the task requirements for literacy learning in the two Grade R classes and what opportunities do they create for learner participation?

In order to analyse this interaction process and to begin answering the research question, this chapter begins with a section that summarises the daily program of each class. A typical day in both Class 1 (formal) and Class 2 (community based) is provided and illustrated by activity in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. These tables indicate a typical day in both settings. The next section provides an overview of the time spent on different tasks throughout the school day, broken down and quantified into amount of time spent on text-based versus non-text-based tasks. Next, graphs for both classes are provided that illustrate the amount of time spent on each of the 8 literacy-specific categories extracted for selection and described in the research design portion of Chapter 3. Lastly, it becomes possible to present an overview of the opportunities arising for engagement with narrative specifically (largely storybook reading) in the course of a typical day in these classrooms.

4.2 A day in each Grade R class

This analysis begins with a description of the classes in a global context, providing an understanding of the manner in which the entire day in the two Grade R classrooms is structured. This is marked in the CAPS curriculum to be achieved through a ‘daily programme’ comprised of three forms of pedagogic interaction: teacher-guided activities, routines and child-initiated activities or free play” (CAPS: 20). A day in a Grade R classroom is organized according to a structured and routine schedule, a concept that is relatively standard in early learning settings. The central purpose of the approach is to establish routine and provide order for both teachers and learners. In Bernsteinian terms, the teacher has the discretion to either strongly or weakly frame the timing of the program and control the distribution of the form of pedagogic interaction between teacher directed, child-initiated, and free play activities. My study seeks to understand the extent to which the teacher or learners control this process, particularly pertaining to literacy tasks and whether this is distinguishable between a more and a less formal learning environment. To do so, a thorough understanding of the ‘what’ needs to be established. The ‘what’, in other words the elements of the instructional discourse, are presented across this chapter in order to answer the secondary research question: What is the frequency and exposure to texts and what are the task requirements for literacy learning in the two Grade R classes and what opportunities do they create for learner participation?

4.2.1 Description of the whole day in both classes

In Class 1 the learners are at school from 7:45 until 13:00 each day, a total of 5 hours and 15 minutes. There are no apparent differences in the contents explored and the manner in which they are organised over the three days observed. During all three days, each aspect of the daily program occurred at more or less the same time, allowing for some assumptions about a ‘typical day’. Table 4.1 illustrates such a typical day.

Table 4.1: Class 1 – typical day.

07:45 – 08:05	Arrival, bible songs and bible story
08:05 – 08:15	Toilet routine
08:15 – 08:45	Numeracy
08:45 – 9:00	Morning Ring
9:00 – 10:00	Activities
10:00 – 10:30	Snack Time
10:30 – 11:00	Story Time
11:00 – 11:40	Talent Show practice ¹⁴
11:40 – 12:20	Outside Play
12:20 – 12:45	Literacy
12:45 – 13:00	Selling sweets
13:00	Home Time

In Class 2 the children attend the pre-school any time between 7:30 – 17:00, meaning some are at school for nine and a half hours per day. Not all learners attended for the entire period¹⁵. There was considerable variation in timing across the three days of Class 2 observed. On each day, aspects of the daily program occurred at slightly different times during the day. During day 2 there were no literacy tasks, and the discussion in the morning was longer than the other two days. The amount of time spent waiting for learners to arrive on the school bus varied from one to one and a half hours. During this time the learners present participated in free play, unstructured by the teacher. Table 4.2 illustrates a fairly typical day as observed over the three- day period, making consideration for variation.

¹⁴ A day in class 1 does not consistently include talent show practice. The school was hosting a talent show during the observation period, therefore the three Grade R classes practiced every day, sometimes for more than an hour. It is included in the breakdown above because it occurred every day during the data collection period.

¹⁵ Class 2 is located in a pre-school that serves children coming from the surrounding farming community. Due to its location the school has a bus that fetches learners from the farms. Not all learners are collected by bus; some have their own transport to and from home. The amount of time that an individual learner is present at pre-school varies, depending on which farm he or she lives on or if the child arrives at school with their own transport.

Table 4.2: Class 2 – typical day.

07:30 – 08:00	Arrival at school (and breakfast)
08:00 – 09:00/9:30	Free Play (waiting for others to arrive with school bus)
9:30 – 09:40	Toilet routine
9:40 – 10:00	Bible Story/Discussions
10:00 – 10:30	Morning Ring (includes numeracy)
10:30 – 11:00	Activities
11:00 – 11:20	Snack Time
11:20 – 11:40	Outside Play
11:40 – 12:05	Story Time
12:05– 12:30	Literacy
12:30 – 13:00	Lunch ¹⁶
13:00 – 15:00	Sleep/rest Time
15:00 – 16:00	Outside play
16:00 – 17:00	Home time

Comparing the daily routine of both classes to the recommended CAPS daily program reveals that both classes follow the basic structure required. The whole day is conducted in a routine and similar fashion. The central difference between the classes, with regard to the routine of the day, is in the pacing of the daily program. The teacher in Class 2 follows the daily program less consistently and therefore does not pace the tasks as uniformly and predictably as the teacher in Class 1. The teacher in Class 1 spends her time consistently on allocated activities over the three days. Both teachers pace the learning and spent time on different tasks, although the extent to which the teacher in Class 1 does so is strongly framed.

This section has discussed the school day in its entirety for the purpose of providing context, however the interest of this study was the portion of the day spent on literacy development in particular. The proportion of time spent on literacy tasks is calculated and quantified as a portion of the whole day and the nature of its contents are described in the next section.

4.3 Text- based versus non-text based literacy engagement

The portion of the day that is spent on literacy tasks was lifted out of the data set as described in the previous chapter, allowing for these to be distinguished as separate from other instances of teacher/learner engagement. These include any spontaneous opportunities that arose for literacy learning during the school day. The instances, or units, relating to literacy development, having been extracted, can be divided into text or non-text based tasks and quantified by calculating the

¹⁶ For consistency in the research all activities after 13:00 of class 2 are not included in calculations.

amount of time spent on each. This quantification is a useful way to understand which areas of literacy development dealt most with text and thus would best suit an analysis using Dickenson and Smith’s theory of literacy engagement through storybook reading. Table 4.3 depicts the amount of time spent on each category, and the portion of time being spent on either text-based or non-text-based literacy engagement.

Table 4.3: Time spent on text-based and non-text-based activities in total over the three-day observation period.

a) Class 1

		Text	Non-Text
1.1	Engagement with Narrative	1:03:03	0:08:52
1.2	General knowledge	0:32:46	0:09:13
1.3	Emergent Reading	0:50:06	00:00:00
1.4	Emergent writing	0:01:48	00:00:00
1.5	Manual Tasks and Free Play	00:00:00	3:17:26
1.6	Singing/Chanting	00:00:00	0:23:47
	Total	2:24:33	4:05:44

b) Class 2

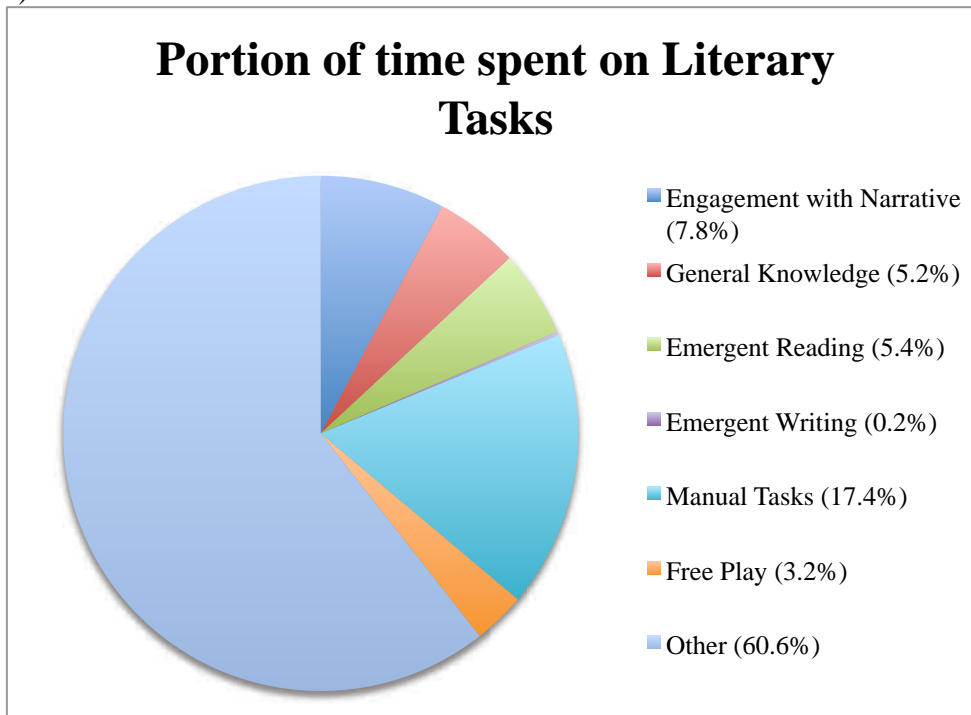
		Text	Non-Text
1.1	Engagement with Narrative	1:01:42	0:12:17
1.2	General knowledge	0:05:00	0:56:48
1.3	Emergent Reading	0:18:35	00:00:00
1.4	Emergent writing	0:30:47	00:00:00
1.5	Manual Tasks and Free Play	00:00:00	04:52:00
1.6	Singing/Chanting	00:00:00	0:28:46
	Total	1:56:04	6:29:51

In both classes engagement with narrative is predominantly spent on text-based tasks, with slightly more time spent on non-text based tasks in Class 2, mostly in the form of unplanned spontaneous conversations. The next chapter looks at how weakened framing provides more opportunities for this type of non-text-based tasks through conversations and dialogue.

4.3.1 Comparison of time spent on literacy engagement per class

Figure 4.1 illustrates the percentage of time spent on each category of literacy tasks throughout the three days of observation in each class.

a) Class 1



b) Class 2

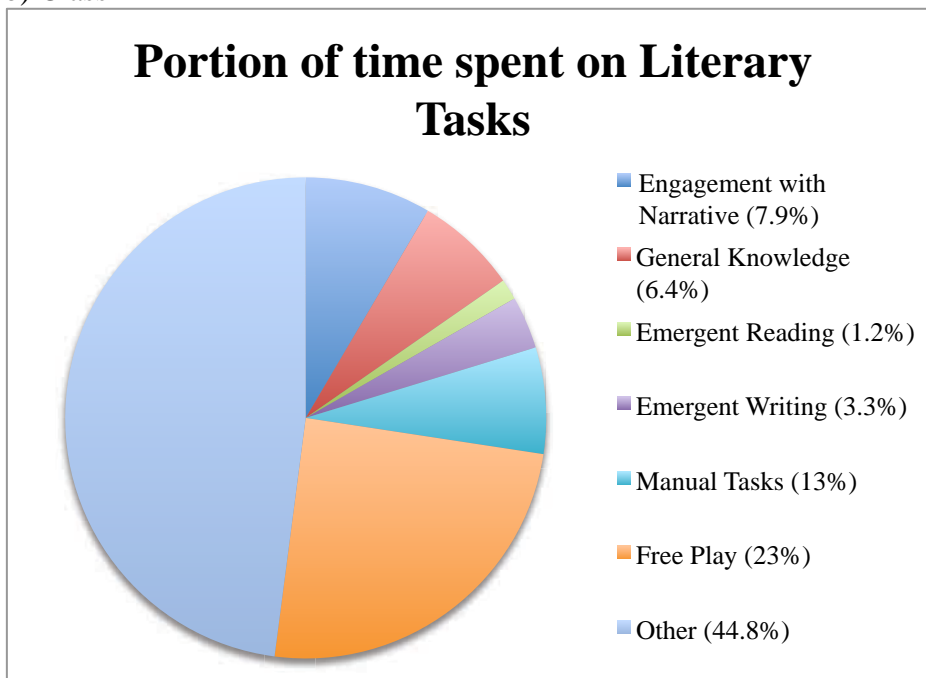


Figure 4.1: Duration of time spent on literacy tasks during three-day observation period.

In Class 1 engagement with literacy tasks throughout the three-day observation period amounted to 39.4%. Time spent on the 'other' category of tasks during the daily program is 60.6%. In Class 2 the time spent on literacy tasks equaled 55.2%. Time spent on other aspects of the daily program is

44.8%. The only reason that the percentage is higher in Class 2 is due to the extensive period of free play in the morning (waiting for the bus) where some children read books on their own.

The amount of time spent on engagement with narrative tasks is similar in both settings. Class 1 spent 7.9% of the three days on engagement with narrative tasks and Class 2 spent 7.8% of their time on this category of tasks. In conjunction with percentage of time spent on engagement with narrative (presented in Figure 4.1), the data analysed confirms, on both accounts, that the classes are similar. The difference, however, is in the execution of the task.

The significant differences in the two classes are emergent reading and emergent writing. Class 1, spent 5.4% of the three days on emergent reading tasks, whereas Class 2 only spent 1.2% of their time on these tasks. In the emergent writing task category, Class 2 spent 3.3% of the three days doing writing tasks, and Class 1 only spent 0.2% of their time practicing writing. In both classes the amount of time spent on these tasks is extremely low. This is despite understanding that the vital component of literacy teaching is having explicit conversations about written and spoken language. A child needs to be exposed to explicit instructions about the nature of language and be presented with opportunities to recognise the structure of spoken words in relation to print (Reeves et al. 2006). The exposure to language skills as an ‘experience’ in early childhood is required for a child to gain the necessary assimilation in order to read and write later in his life. “Children need to attend schools that provide effective reading instruction and opportunities to practice reading” (Reeves et al. 2006). However, the data shows that this type of exposure to literacy is minimal in both of the classrooms observed for this study.

The free play category is also significant. In Class 1 only 3.2% of the time observed is spent on free play, and 23% of the time is spent on free play in Class 2. The largest portion of the day in both classes (Class 1: 60.6% and Class 2: 44.8%) was spent on the last category of ‘other’¹⁷, which were all the non-literacy tasks captured during the data collection period.

4.4 Engagement with narrative

Having described the time allocated to different kinds of tasks, I now want to probe the ‘what’ in more detail, in particular with regard to encounters with stories, conversations, and discussions about text. These are all distinctive features in developing literacy skills (McGill-Franzen et al.

¹⁷ the ‘other’ category refers to time spent on breakfast, lunch, snack time, toilet routines, outside play and numeracy lessons

2002) and are considered here specifically related to engagement with narrative. This engagement is measured in two ways: through frequency and exposure of opportunities to engage with texts, and through exposure to texts and the task requirements applied to a learning activity. Frequency refers to which learners have opportunities to engage with narrative (books, stories, and storybook-reading) episodes such as read-alouds and task requirement refers to the nature of the expected outcome.

With regard to the environments in each classrooms and how this may facilitate or limit opportunities to engage with texts, the following was observed about their books and designated reading spaces. Both classes have a designated book area in the classroom that is accessible to the children. The books are within children's reach, and are not locked up or put away. Class 1 has a book area that is relatively large, with 20-30 books. The book area is located in a corner of the classroom, with a carpet, a desk with an unusable computer on it, and an alphabet freeze on the wall. The book area is cornered off from the rest of the classroom with dividers. The books are in both English and Afrikaans and are in good condition. Class 2 has a bookshelf with about 90 books on it. It is not a designated "book area or reading corner". The books are stacked up against each other and only take up one shelf. The books are in both English and Afrikaans, vary in size, and are on average in a good condition.

4.4.1 Frequency and exposure of engagement with narrative

The frequency and level of engagement with narrative, books, and print affects a child's foundation and ability to read and write. Some children gain exposure to book-reading experiences, story telling, and narrative from their families and homes, whereas others do not. A review of emergent literacy research by Mason and Allen (1984) found that children entering school with sparse literacy engagement usually suffered academically at school, and were almost surely 'left behind'. However, research by McGill-Franzen (2002) suggests that the school is able to assist in compensating for children who have few book-reading experiences at home by providing frequent exposure to texts in the classroom. Thus for this study, to gain understanding of the 'what' of the pedagogic practice in these two classrooms, the frequency with which the teacher facilitates opportunities for learners to relate to text was quantified. Table 4.4 illustrates the amount of book reading taking place, including how many stories are read per day, the duration of these book reading activities, and the amount of times children 'read' or at least handle and explore books on their own.

Table 4.4: Frequency of engagement with narrative

a) Class 1

		Day1	Day2	Day3	Total
1	How many stories are read on each day	2	2	2	6
2	Duration of book reading activities per day	19:24min	19:29min	21:35min	1h28min
3	Amount of times individual children handle/"read" books on their own	1	0	0	1

b) Class 2

		Day1	Day2	Day3	Total
1	How many stories are read on each day	3	3	2	8
2	Duration of book reading activities per day	28 min	20 min	15:13min	1hr26min
3	Amount of times individual children handle/"read" books on their own	3	2	0	5

The number of stories read in each school is similar, with slightly more books read in Class 2 than in Class 1. During the observation period, Class 1 read six stories in total and Class 2 read eight. The duration of read-aloud story telling is comparable in both classes. Class 1 is consistent with spending on average 20 minutes on read-aloud tasks per day. Class 2 is more inconsistent ranging from 15 minutes to 28 minutes per day on the activity.

The number of opportunities that individual children get to read or handle books on their own is low in both classes. Over the three-day period, in Class 1 only one child handled a book on her own, and in Class 2 only five children read books on their own. The one instance observed in Class 1 (an episode that lasted 1:03 minutes) illustrates the degree of control the teacher has over the content that is relevant to the learning process. In this instance the teacher has an agenda to assess the learners (she explicitly reminds the learners that she is assessing them) and that looking at books is not part of her planning for that period. The teacher allows the learner to engage in an activity she had not formally planned for. Due to the fact that the learner is not part of the class register and therefore not being assessed formally, she is not required to do the activity that was planned. The teacher therefore allows for this learner to engage with a book, while another registered learner was forbidden from doing so.

One reason that learners in Class 2 have more opportunity to engage with books independently is because a large amount of time is spent in the morning waiting for learners to arrive with the school bus. While the teacher and learners are waiting for others to arrive a period of "free play" is observed. This period lasts between one hour and one and a half hours each morning. The teacher

uses this time to prepare for her day (she displays the correct date and the minimum and maximum temperature for the day, and hangs up relevant theme posters). The teacher manages the above on her own while the learners are given the opportunity to choose how to spend their time. Some learners build puzzles, some play with games or picture cards, on one occasion a learner washes the dishes, and others read books.

4.4.2 Task requirements

Experiences with books provide children with a good foundation for school success, impacting a number of language achievement predictors and assisting with eventual reading and writing (McGill-Franzen 2002). “Analyses of story recall and probe questions showed substantial differences among children's story recall as a function both of early reading ability and of the teacher's approach to story reading. The most effective approach was that used by a teacher who read the story through once and then went through it again, helping children see the connections among the key ideas” (Mason and Allen 1986). Much of the literature on joint book reading supports this practice and indicates that the process that occurs during the storybook interaction itself is important, and that there is a direct correlation between teachers’ storybook reading style and their young pupils’ literacy development¹⁸ (Martinez & Teale 1993; Mason & Allen 1986; Wasik, Bond & Hindman 2006; Marrow 1985; Dickenson and Smith 1994; Snow 1991).

This is particularly relevant in regard to how the teacher stipulates the expected aims and outcomes to the learner, and to what degree each task provides opportunity for thinking beyond it – for what Siraj-Blatchford calls sustained shared thinking. To recognise how this was taking place my study categorises task requirements as either extended or restricted tasks.

a) Elaborated tasks

Elaborated tasks are complex tasks that require mental effort from children. This type of task requires focus and attention. An elaborated task can demand novel and unfamiliar responses to problem solving, extending a child beyond his or her comfort zone. Elaborated tasks are context independent, requiring the learner to consider knowledge beyond its grounding in everyday

¹⁸ Allen (1985) found that “primary-grade children performed better on inferential comprehension tasks when the texts were closely linked to their oral language. Seventy children varying in reading ability read three kinds of stories: their own dictated stories, peer-written stories, and textbook stories. Even the least able readers inferred well when reading their own texts, and they inferred somewhat better on peer stories than on textbook stories” (Mason and Allen 1986: 15).

surroundings. In Piagetian terms it can be described as *reaching disequilibrium* before gaining assimilation. The task is carried out in a systematic manner with a purposeful aim in mind to teach new skills or improve established ones. The task can vary in its complexity and can involve a number of creative, imaginative and productive aims and goals (Siraj-Blatchford 2002) that require mental effort and focused attention from the learner.

Elaborated tasks have a higher range of combinatory possibilities and therefore have more context-independent requirements. A child's ability to distinguish concepts from a specific local context is a skill that requires development to enable problem solving and critical thinking. The development of this skill therefore needs to be fostered and embedded in various tasks. The teacher is required to provide the realization conditions for such thinking. In pedagogic terms, Vygotsky coined the term "the zone of proximal development" which is the knowledge and understanding that can be gained with the help of an adult or more competent peer.

To achieve this, links need to be drawn between exposure to texts and the learners' own experiences. This is referred to as *life-to-text interaction*, which Teale (1984) described in relation to joint book reading between parents and their children. "Such interactions help story listeners use their knowledge of the world to make sense of the text. Through the types of questions they ask or the responses they encourage, certain parents involve children by bringing their life experiences to bear when attempting to understand text. Thus, a type of higher-order reading strategy is promoted through social interaction when the parent reads to the child" (Teale 1984: 118). The interactions that arise from high order engagement with narrative hold the potential to become a teaching opportunity as it is the teacher's job to combine the child's interests with the learning requirements of the task. The teacher transmits knowledge and presents the requirements for educational achievement, and ideally she does so in a way that is relevant to the child and includes their own insights.

Learning engagements between teacher and learner are coded as elaborated tasks when they required:

- Extended recall
- Learning new vocabulary
- Text-reader links
- Making inferences
- Text prediction and
- Text analysis.

This coding scheme was built on concepts employed by existing research in the field of literacy development, particularly in relation to tasks that are cognitively challenging. **Extended recall** requires the learners to solicit extended portions of a narrative. This could be retelling a whole story or recalling large sections of the narrative. The recall requires learners to interpret the literal text accurately, describe events, and remember explicit meaning about the text (Dickenson and Keebler 1989). When **learning new vocabulary** is introduced and explained, a learner is expected to have open-ended discussions about the words or recollect the new vocabulary in a different context. When **text-reader links** are made the teacher talks about links and connections between the narrative and reality. These links provide opportunities for learners to make their own connections about narratives and themes. These links require any comments that link directly to previous experiences (Dickenson and Keebler 1989). **Making inferences** requires learners to understand information that was not explicit in the text. Elaborated tasks require learners to predict (**text prediction**) upcoming events and sequence in the narrative. The teacher can activate expectations of the narrative and the children are required to predict upcoming events or, by looking at the front cover of the book, predict the theme of the story. **Text analysis** “examines characters or the connections between events” (Dickenson and Keebler 1989). Text analysis requires learners to understand the setting of the story (time, place, characters), discuss the theme (when the main characters of the story state a goal, face or solve a problem) and discuss the resolution (conclusion questions, did the main characters solve their problem, or achieve their goals?).

b) Restricted tasks

Restricted tasks are less complex and require less mental effort from the learners. The tasks are not aimed to achieve a challenging goal or improve a skill (Siraj-Blatchford 2002). The tasks can be familiar and repetitive, and limited attention or focus is required. Restricted task requirements are generalized, particularistic, local, and context dependent. The performance requirements for these tasks are particular and predictable. The thinking demanded is local to the task and is dependant on the context in which it is embedded.

Two kinds of restricted task requirements were established, one deductively and the other inductively. The deductive categories for the restricted task requirements were compiled before the data was analysed, based on the literature review. The inductive category emerged during analysis when it was found that a teacher restricted a number of the elaborated task requirements herself.

These are referred to as potential elaborated tasks because, although they remain restricted, they represent a missed opportunity for context independent inquiry.

Restricted task requirements

Learning engagements between teacher and learner were coded as restricted tasks when they required:

- Chiming
- Naming and labeling
- Skill routines
- Immediate recall
- Simple visual identification
- Unstructured conversation and
- Performing actions or sounds.

These categories were achieved through my own deductive engagement with the data set, where they were coded until saturation. All task requirements relating to engagement with narrative had been recognised as one of the following. **Chiming** and **skill routines** require learners to repeat answers to questions in unison and repeat well-established patterns or familiar routines (counting or saying ABCs). **Immediate recall** requires learners to answer questions about information just delivered. **Simple visual identification** is when the learners are required to answer questions of the pictures/graphics in the story. The teacher points to a picture and the learners are required to answer the questions posed. **Naming and labeling** entails learners naming characters, items, and events as depicted in pictures. **Unstructured conversations** occur during these tasks and is when a conversation emerges that is unrelated to the text read or story told. **Actions and sounds** are when learners are required to make actions and sounds that occur in the story. The categories of restricted tasks are inter-linked and often overlap. On occasion the task will require learners to look at the pictures to answer questions, but the requirement is for learners to chime the answers in unison. Examples of restricted task requirements are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Examples of restricted task requirements

<p>Class 1</p> <p>It is story time, T starts the lesson by saying "Kom ons leer. Ons leer mos van gesonde kos. Kom ons kyk wie gaan mooi onthou die storie"¹⁹, connecting it to the theme. She reads learners the story and asks questions while she is reading it. Questions like: "Wat is hy busig om to doen?"²⁰ While looking at the picture. T says the characters name, and then immediately asks: "wat is sy naam?"²¹ Sometimes she asks learners to make actions, like stirring the pot. The character in the story is making a "moderige maaltyd"²², so she asks learners what is mud made out of? Learners answer sand and water. A number of ingredients go into the meal, once she has read the list of 4 items, she immediately asks the learners the sequence of ingredients that went into the meal. The teacher asks a number of questions where learners have to name and describe the pictures. One of the items is a watermelon. Teacher asks a learner (that she chooses) "hoe lyk 'n waatlemoen?" "waneer eet ons waatlemoen"²³ Does not elaborate. One part of the story is about the sister in book does not want to eat her vegetables, yet she can only get chocolate pudding if she eats her vegetables. Teacher asks the learners if the sister is naughty? Learners say yes. T asks why are vegetables good, Ls answer that it makes you strong, and it makes you grow.</p> <p>Class 2</p> <p>Story 2: Learners initiate the reading of another story: "en die ander eine juffrou"²⁴. Learners ask again if she can read them another story... because it is a double sided book, they saw the pictures of the other story and they want to hear it. The teacher says that she is only meant to read one story, but ends up reading the second one anyway. The children love the story, keep getting up to see the pictures. The teacher does not ask comprehension questions during the story nor extended recall questions. She reads in English and then repeats in Afrikaans. The learners ask a lot of questions, there are a number of interruptions by the learners, and conversations start due to the questions. Part of the excitement during the story telling episode is caused by the learners being asked to make the sound that a tiger makes. A lot of roaring occurs. They end up getting rowdy - so the teacher says she is no longer going to tell the story and puts it away and stops reading the story. No comprehension questions asked.</p>

In the example in Table 4.6, Class 1 demonstrates a task requirement to chime, name and label the pictures in the story, which makes the interaction pictorially explicit. The teacher recites the list of ingredients and the learners have to repeat in unison. The learners are asked immediate recall questions, and asked to conduct actions to parts of the story. For instance, the story talks about the mother stirring the pot with a big wooden spoon, so the teacher asks the learners to mimic the action of "stir" with their hands in the air.

The example from Class 2 in Table 4.6 requires immediate recall, where learners must restate facts that have just been read to them. The story is pictorially explicit and the teacher refers to the pictures a number of times to ask immediate recall questions. The teacher in Class 2 also asks learners to use their hands in actions and make tiger sounds while reading the story.

¹⁹ Translation: Teacher says, Come we learn. We are learning about healthy food. Let us see who can remember the story well.

²⁰ Translation: What is he busy doing?

²¹ Translation: what is his name?"

²² Translation: muddy meal

²³ Translation: what does a watermelon look like?" "When do we eat watermelon"

²⁴ Translation: "and the other one teacher"

Potential elaborated task requirements

When analysing task requirements, a third category emerged. There are instances identified where the teacher begins the questioning with an elaborated task requirement but does not complete the task with the demands that classify it as elaborated. Therefore this category was identified when the task had the potential to be an elaborated one. Examples were found in the data when the teacher did not extend the learners' engagement in such a way that they began to grasp or understand the nature of an elaborated task requirement. Table 4.7 below illustrates an example of this kind of missed opportunity occurring in both classes.

Table 4.7 Example of potential elaborated task requirements

Class 1

The teacher begins telling the learners a story, she first reads the title of the story, "Twee miesies wat nie wou opstaan nie"²⁵. She starts off by asking questions while she is reading the story and then changes her mind and says she will only ask questions once she has finished reading the whole story. When she is finished reading, she turns back to the beginning of the story and asks questions showing the learners the pictures. The questions she asks: "wat het die twee miesies toe gedoen? Waar het die twee miesies hom begrawe? Hoekom het hulle hom dood gemaak? Wat dink julle Skyla was die rede dat hulle hierdie bruin haan doodgemaak het?"²⁶ Then she tells them the answer, which is that they must behave otherwise they will be punished.

Class 2

Teacher reads the story "The Gingerbread man". It is a Big Book. Teacher starts the task by saying: "So the story that I will read to you now is the..." Teacher reads the story while showing the learners the pictures and words. The teacher asks the learners questions while reading the story. They talk a little about the Ginger Bread man - because the old lady and a man make a cake instead - because the cake has no legs it cannot run away. The teacher asks them a few questions. Where did the man put the gingerbread man? In the oven. Why did she put it in the oven? The teacher refers to their mothers, and why does their mother put food in the oven? So that it cooks. A learner asks to read another story.

Teacher: Ore. Toe hulle nou klaar die gemmerbroodmanneltjie, luister vir my – toe hulle die gemmerbroodmanneltjie klaar gemaak het – hulle het nou klaar die deeg mos nou in die pan gesit, toe wat doen hulle met die deeg?

Learner: Toe maak, toe maak hulle hom plat, toe sit hulle in die, in die pan, toe maak hulle, toe maak hulle, toe blaai, toe

Teacher: waarin het hulle die, die, die pan gesit met die gemmerbroodmanneltjie?

Learner: (inaudible)... kant

Teacher: ja, okay in die oond, ja die stoof, oond. Waat het die, die, die mannetjie in die oond gemaak? Hoekom het hulle hom in die oond gesit? Wat moet gebeur?

Learner: Warm raak

Teacher: Net warm raak? So dat dit kan...

Learner: Hulle moet dit eet

Teacher: as, as, as jou ma kos maak en sy sit dit in die oond, hoekom sit sy dit daarin? Sodat die

²⁵ Translation: (Title of the story) "Two girls that did not want to get up"

²⁶ Translation: "What did the two girls do? Where did the two girls bury him? Why did they kill him? What do you think, Skyla, was the reason that they killed the brown hen?"

kos.... wat moet met die kos gebeur? Die kos moet?
 Class: gaar
 Teacher: ja, die kos moet gaar raak, ja die kos moet gaar raak. Nou het die, die mannetjie in die oond gesit dat dit kan gaar bak en toe wat gebeur?²⁷

The questions that were asked by the teacher in Class 1 were classified as elaborated task requirements, yet she does not scaffold the conversation accordingly to allow for further elaboration. The questions the teacher asks require the learners to make an inference and analyse the text, yet when the learners do not answer the questions the tasks ends. Instead the teacher shifts away from the story content, rather using the story to reiterate a regulative rule, namely that the children must behave. In the example for Class 2, the teacher asks extended recall questions, yet she scaffolds the process until the children recall the entire portion she had asked them to recall. The teacher prompts the answering process until the children answer correctly. No dialogue occurs about the narrative that could begin to expand the learners’ thinking beyond the context of the story.

All the tasks for engagement with narrative were coded to quantify the complexity of the task and what its requirements were. The table below illustrates the total amount of time the task encompasses elaborated requirements and the extent to which it has restricted requirements. The last column provides the percentage of tasks that begin as an elaborated task requirement and conclude as a restricted task.

Table 4.8 Summary of coding value assigned to both teachers in all categories (cumulative value).

	Total Elaborated tasks	Total Restricted tasks	Total Elaborated - Restricted
Class 1	26.6%	64.4%	8.8%
Class 2	25%	60.7%	14.3%

²⁷ Translation: Teacher: Ears. When they were finished with the gingerbread man, listen to me, when they were finished making the gingerbread man, when they were finished making the dough, they put the dough in the pan, what did they do with the dough?"

Learner: They made, they made him flat, then they put him in the pan, they made, they made, they turned him, then..."

Teacher: Into what did they put the the the pan into with the gingerbread man?

Learner: (inaudible) side

Teacher: yes, ok in the oven, yes the stove, oven. What did the the the man do in the oven? Why did they put him in the oven? What must happen?

Learner: Must get warm.

Teacher: Just get warm? So that it can...?

Learner: They must eat it

Teacher: if, if, if, your mother makes food and she puts it in the oven, why does she put it in the oven? So that the food... what must happen to the food? The food must...?

Class: cook

Teacher: yes, the food must cook, the food must cook. So did the, did the man put the in the oven for it to bake and cook, and then what happened?

4.5 Conclusion

The learners in both Class 1 and Class 2 were exposed to minimal opportunities to engage with narrative, either text-based or non-text-based. In both settings there is little exposure to text, and very few opportunities for learners to handle books on their own. In order to develop emergent reading skills, individual engagement with text is required for discerning graphics from text and understanding the connection between oral language and text. Despite the fact that both classes were allocated time to read stories and engage with story telling, the amount of time that learners were given to engage with texts and build upon the narrative were limited.

The importance of the nature of the required outcomes for each reading task is critical in understanding the kind of pedagogy practice in place in these classrooms, and the possibility they present in regards to having an impact on the children's literacy learning. Engagement with narrative has the possibility of generating extensive learning opportunities that go far beyond literacy. A story-reading task has the following potential:

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- Analysis
- Prediction of future events
- Imagination
- Talking and listening skills.

Yet due to the limited frequency and exposure to texts as well as the predominately restricted task requirements (or potential elaborated text requirements), neither class went beyond the basic skills in engaging with narrative and such opportunities were dramatically limited.

Having established the 'what' across the two classrooms being analysed, the next chapter turns to the 'how'. The two come together in the final chapter to form an understanding of the particular pedagogic practice occurring in these two settings and consider what differences exist between them.

Chapter 5

Analysis of results: Phase 5 and 6 – the ‘How’

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter’s description of literacy development as it relates to frequency of instances of exposure to texts and those instances’ associated task requirements was vital to establishing ‘what’ is being relayed during the transmission of knowledge between teacher and learner in the two classrooms. I now move on to describe the relay itself, in other words *how* knowledge is being transmitted, to inform the secondary question posed in Chapter 1: how much control do teachers and learners have over pedagogic communication and how does this influence opportunities for literacy engagement? The ‘how’ of each classroom’s pedagogic practice is analysed in this chapter using three measures: the relative strength and weakness of framing (selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation criteria), the organization of the tasks, and the ratio of teacher to learner talk.

5.2 Phase 5: Framing of the pedagogical relationship

This Chapter deals with the ‘how’ of the pedagogical interaction. Analysing this relationship can best be described using Bernstein’s code theory, particularly the concept of framing. The extent to which the teacher controls the pedagogical discourse of knowledge transmission is described. The framing of the pedagogical relationship is discussed with regard to selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation, and the control over conduct, manner, and behaviour is described using hierarchical rules. The amount of teacher talk is contrasted with individual learner talk, indicating who is predominantly directing the conversations. This chapter concludes with an analysis comparing the differences and similarities in pedagogy between the two Grade R classes based on themes that emerged from the findings. From three days of observation in each class a total of 74 tasks from seven of the eight literacy engagement categories are extracted and analysed. Each category developed for the analysis is discussed individually in the sections that follow.

5.3 Framing of selection and sequence

The framing of selection determines the control the teacher or learners have over the selection of legitimate knowledge. The six indicators devised for this study (found in Appendix 2) are used to

accurately describe the pedagogical relationship in regard to selection and sequence of valid knowledge transmission.

Two categories are described as examples to illustrate the framing over selection in both classes. The categories 'engagement with narrative' and 'manual tasks' are chosen to illustrate the 'how' of literacy teaching that the teacher mediates throughout the day. The findings show the degree to which she controls these.

5.3.1 Engagement with narrative

Eight tasks in total are analysed in the engagement with narrative category. In Class 1, for each task the teacher selected and sequenced the learning experience. The teacher chose the type of task that would be conducted or knowledge that would be imparted. The teacher selected the organisation of the task, the narrative content, the choice of who would participate in the activity, the questions asked, and the extent to which she engaged in the learners' conversations. In each case (as discussed under hierarchical rules) the task took place as a whole class. Therefore Class 1 was coded as strongly framed (F⁺⁺). The sequence of the task was framed strongly by the teacher as she always or almost always determined the sequence of transmission of knowledge in the lessons. Any interjections from the children that could potentially disturb the order of learning were dismissed or ignored by the teacher. All examples in Class 1 for sequence were coded as F⁺⁺: in all instances the teacher determined the sequence of the activities, as well as the sequence of the whole day (which part of the a specific task took place).

The framing relationship for Class 2 is different to the one in Class 1. Only examples for Class 2 are illustrated in Table 5.1 because they so accurately depict the overall framing relationship and how it was weakened in certain instances.

In extract A the teacher selects the task: the whole class is going to listen to a story that she reads to them. The teacher also selects the narrative content: which story she is going to read. Despite the teacher in Class 2 strongly controlling the selection criteria the reason that it has not been assigned the strongest coding value is illustrated in extract B. During the observation period, instances where the learners showed substantial control were found in the data.

However, the control over selection is predominantly sustained by the teacher, and is illustrated in Extract C. In the coding the value assigned to the teacher for framing over selection therefore remained strong. The variation shown between Extract B and Extract C is evident throughout the data. The coding for Class 2 is varied, with some cases of strong framing and some examples of weaker framing. In total the coding for Class 2 was F⁺ for selection and sequencing, and the example, as in Extract B, in Table 5.1, are what weakened the framing to F⁺.

Even though the framing for selection and sequence is coded slightly weaker for Class 2 than Class 1, the similarity is that in both classes the teacher mostly selects the narrative content, the type of activity, who asks questions and how much she engages in learners' interjections. The examples for Class 2 show how the strength of the control sometimes varies:

Table 5.1 Extract from classroom data.

<p>Extract A: Class 2 The teacher reads the learners a story out of one of the Big Books she has in her class. The teacher starts the task by saying: "So the story that I will read to you now is the...The Gingerbread man". Teacher reads the story showing the learners the pictures and words. The teacher asks the learners questions while reading the story. They talk a little about the Ginger Bread man. Once this story is finished the learners beg the teacher to read the second story from the same book.</p> <p>Extract B: Class 2 Ls come back from their toilet routine. Child starts looking for the bible story. T says that they need to sit and wait for the other Ls to arrive. The L who had been looking for the bible story book has found it and sits on the Ts chair and announces that she will read them a story to her classmates. She spends most of the time trying to get the others to sit down and listen, to the point of fetching a stick to accomplish her goal. (T only intervenes when L ends up not telling much of the story due to her trying to get her classmates to listen. T then asks another child to tell the story). The L says: "Ek is die juffrou nou. Ek gaan vir julle 'n storie vertel. Gaan sit. Sit stil."²⁸</p> <p>Extract C: Class 2 A learner asks the teacher if she can please read the story that they have been trying to tell (Extract B). The teacher starts telling a story, but not the one the learner had just asked for. The teacher tells the story in English. She reads the title and tells them where the story comes from in the bible. After she has finished reading the story she asks the learners if they listened to the story.</p>

²⁸ Translation: Learner: I am the teacher now. I am going to tell you a story. Go sit. Sit still.

5.3.2 Manual Tasks

It is necessary to depict the manual tasks in Class 1 and 2 because they are an excellent example of the extent to which the teacher controls the selection of instructional knowledge. In an integrated play-based curriculum, the manual tasks are one of the amenable components where the teacher can weaken the control and allow the learners choice over selection.

In Class 1 the teacher selects the learners and then assigns them to a task. The learners are divided into ‘houses’ and a specific house is allocated to a table. The teacher sets parallel tasks by having a different activity available at each table.

The learners allocated to the table with play dough were instructed to make ‘klanke’ and ‘getale’ (sounds and numbers). The teacher even demonstrates how the numbers should be formed, namely by using thin rolled pieces of play dough. The teacher selected the materials, the type of task, and the learners who participated in the task. The observation data was coded as strong for selection (F⁺⁺) in Class 1.

In Class 2 the teacher set parallel activities at the four tables and the learners were allowed to choose which table they wanted to work/play at. They were not given any instructions and were able to draw, paint or construct (with the play dough) anything they wanted to. The observation data was coded as weak (F⁻) for selection in Class 2.

Table 5.2 Example of relative control (framing).

	Class 1		D1/U12	D2/U14	D3/U15
1	Selection	In the selection of a task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺
2	Selection	In the selection of narrative content	F ⁻	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺
3	Selection	In the selection of participation	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺
4	Sequence	In the course of the task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺⁺

	Class 2		D1/U11	D2/U12	D3/U13
1	Selection	In the selection of a task	F ⁻⁻	F ⁻⁻	F ⁻⁻
2	Selection	In the selection of narrative content	F ⁻⁻	F ⁻⁻	F ⁻⁻
3	Selection	In the selection of participation	F ⁻⁻	F ⁻⁻	F ⁻⁻

4	Sequence	In the course of the task	F--	F--	F++
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The similarity in both classes is in the selection of resource materials and the pacing of time spent on manual tasks. The teachers selected the type of tasks and the materials that will be used for them. The teacher controlled the amount of time that learners were given to complete their tasks. Pacing is discussed in more detail in Section 4.5.2. The differences are the amount of control the teacher has in selecting who participated and how the learners executed the tasks provided.

In both classes the teacher sequences the transmission of knowledge during the course of the day. Chapter 4 illustrated the daily program of both classes and the teachers sequenced each day similarly. There is no example where the learners interject in a way that prompts the teacher to alter the sequence to suit the learners' needs and interests.

5.4 Framing of pace

Building on Hoadley's coding schema (2005) the framing of pacing examines the extent to which the teacher or learner has control over the pacing of instructional knowledge. The coding sheet that was adapted consists of two separate categories pertaining to pacing. One category looks at who has control over the time spent on the lessons, activities or tasks, while the other is specifically relevant to manual tasks. It considers whether the teacher or the learners have control while the activities or tasks are being completed, and who has control over the time spent on them.

"In Bernsteinian theory, pacing refers to the regulative aspect of the pedagogy and to who has *control* over the expected rate of acquisition. Framing of pacing, therefore, is concerned with the extent to which teachers do or do not vary the pace in relation to interjections by the learners" (Hoadley 2005: 116). The teacher said various things indicating the degree to which she was pacing the learners according to a time schedule. The teacher said things like, "'Is jy klaar? Sit jou goed weg'"²⁹ and "dan moet julle klaar maak. Dankie. Kom jy is mos nou klaar, nog twee ronde sirkles hier en dan gooi jy sand en dan sit jy dit weg"³⁰.

²⁹ Translation: The teacher said things like: Are you finished? Put your stuff away.

³⁰ Translation: then you must finish up. Thank you. Come, you are finished right, just two more round circles here and then you throw sand and then you put it away

The teacher, in Class 1 controlled the selection and pace of the manual tasks and determined when learners were required to move to another task. She did not differentiate between learners who completed tasks with ease and at a faster rate, and those who did not.

Class 1 is embedded within a formal primary school setting and therefore the pace is largely determined by a “timetable” and by bells that ring. Even though the bells are not meant to be for the Grade R classes, they serve as a time indicator and often determine the teacher’s pace of an activity. Hoadley (2005) noted a similar determination of pacing, “the length of time given for the completion of tasks often appeared to be moderated by the timetable, bells, or getting through a number of subjects rather than being based on an expected rate of acquisition for a particular topic or task” (Hoadley 2005: 116). Even though Grade R does not have classified or specified subjects, according to the teacher’s planning of the curriculum she has a number of “working topics” to get through within one school day. In the three-day observation period the teacher was committed to getting the talent show practice complete, which determined the pacing to be strongly framed for the other parts of the day. The talent show can be replaced by concerts, and equivalent instances can probably be illustrated as similar examples in other pre-school and primary school settings. The talent show is therefore not an unusual occurrence. The pacing for Class 1 is therefore strongly determined or controlled by the teacher, and the reasons for her pacing are largely determined by external factors such as bells ringing and concert practice rather than based on the learners’ ability to be able to complete a task within the required time.

In Class 2 the teacher strongly frames the pacing of the learning experience. She determined when certain tasks were presented and when they should be completed. The example for Class 2 that can be illustrated is when learners had to complete a writing activity (learning to trace the letter M on a dotted line). A number of learners were not complete, yet lunch was being served so the teacher concluded the task.

The overall framing for the teacher in Class 1 and Class 2 is coded as F⁺⁺ for both categories of pacing that were coded: the control over the time spent on the lessons, activities or tasks and while the learners were engaged with manual tasks. The pacing of the manual tasks is framed strongly by both teachers.

5.5 Framing of evaluative rules

Each unit of analysis, where applicable, was coded according to six indicators in order to provide an insight into the extent to which the evaluative criteria of the tasks were made explicit to the learners. The six indicators are described in more detail in the research design chapter (Chapter 3), and can be found in Appendix 2.

In Class 1, a few instances of the teacher notifying the learners that she will be assessing them occurred throughout the data. One example is illustrated in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 (a) Class 1

Teacher: Presies wat hulle daar vra is presies wat jy daar neer pak. Juffrou kom om to kyk wie doen dit presies so, kyk of jy geluister het dan gaan ek vir jou 'n puntjie gee. So jy loos jou maatjies³¹.

It is unclear in the above example if the teacher is assessing the learners on how well they listen (regulative rule) or if she is evaluating them on their ability to repeat the pattern accurately (instructional rule). In the above example the teacher regulates the learners' behaviour by reiterating that they need to listen and leave their friends alone. During an engagement with narrative task, the teacher tells the learners twice that she is giving them a "point" and that they must practice. It is unclear throughout the transcription and video recording what she is assessing. Another example found was during a discussion about healthy food, where the teacher says that she will evaluate them on what she is teaching them later, described in Table 4.12.

Table 5.3 (b) Class 1

Teacher: Né daar's die woord. Jy moet plat sit. Ek het vir jou hier laat kom sit dat jy plat sit, jy moet luister Akiel. Groenboontjies, kyk na die naam. Netnou gaan juffrou sê, 'n groepie vat en juffrou gaan vir jou vra om te kom wys wat is wat, waar hoort die woorde nê. En dan het ons?³²

³¹ Translation: "Precisely what you ask is precisely what you put down there. Teacher is going to come around to see who is doing it correctly to see if you have listened and then I will give you point. So leave your friends alone"

³² Translation: Yes, there is the word. You must sit flat. I have instructed you to sit here so that you sit flat, you must listen Akiel. Greenbeans, look at the name. Just now the teacher is going to ask a group of you to come and show what is what, where do the words belong. Then we have it?

The above example occurred on the first day of the observation period and the “assessment” of the scenario was not seen. The teacher did not do any group learning. She said that she will do the assessment with a small group and for this reason the learners should listen. The group work and assessment of their work was not observed during the rest of the data collection period. Three examples have been shown from the data where the teacher talks about assessing the learners, and is possibly using the statement “ek gaan vir jou ‘n punt gee” as a regulative method to try and control and manage the children’s behaviour, reminding them to concentrate. Even though the teacher says she is assessing them, she does not always make the evaluative criteria explicit. The regulative criteria are almost always made clear and highlighted.

Class 1 had formal instances of assessment, where one could argue that she was making the evaluative criteria visible. Overall the teacher scored F⁺, which implies that the evaluative criteria are quite clear and explicit.

There were no formal evaluation or assessment occasions observable in Class 2. There are no examples that can be illustrated where the teacher makes explicit to the learners what she expects from them. In the exposition to a manual task, she did not give clear instructions, nor give them an indication of what constitutes an appropriate performance or product. The overall coding value for the teacher for Class 2 was F, which means that the evaluative criteria are unclear and often implicit. In example A the learners were not told what they were meant to do at the activity tables, nor were they shown an appropriate product. In example B, the learners were never told what was expected of them. Throughout the activity the children seemed confused and disruptive.

Table 5.4 Class 2

<p>Example A: In an exposition to a task she does not tell them what she expects from them and does not indicate what constitutes an appropriate performance or product: Teacher: “julle kan na die tafels toe, ah ah ah, julle gaan stap, niemand gaan hardloop na die tafels toe³³”.</p> <p>Example B: During a general knowledge task, the teacher discussed a theme doctors and nurses. Towards the end she takes out some doctors coats. The children get very excited, as they seem to know they can put them on. The interaction goes as follows: Teacher: “Who wants to put this on? Who wants to be a doctor?” Learners: (in unison) “me me me”. Teacher: “No no no, only one” (some talking and organising of the task, most children laughing and playing) later, teacher: “come here nurse” Teacher: “this is the doctor and this is a nurse. You are taking your child to the clinic. Come mommy bring your child to the clinic. What will you say to the Nurse?”</p>

³³ Translation: Teacher: you can go to the tables, ah ah ah, you are going to walk, no one is going to run.

5.5.1 Appropriate realisation of knowledge

The indicators for the coding of the data attempted to discern to what extent the teacher and learners had the control over the evaluative criteria of the instructional knowledge pertaining to the meaning of concepts and principles and their appropriate realisation (Hoadley 2005). The component “and their appropriate realisation” as part of the coding scheme was particularly interesting and became important while analysing the data. There are examples (illustrated in Table 5.5) where the information provided by teachers is incorrect, and therefore it becomes questionable what “appropriate” realisation means, because in a didactic, normal school environment the teacher possesses legitimate knowledge and is required to transmit that knowledge to learners. The examples below illustrate two issues. The evaluative rules are weakened by the teachers’ own knowledge on the one hand, and the closing down of learner initiated discussion on the other. This is what Siraj-Blatchford referred to as sustained-shared thinking.

Table 5.5 Appropriate realization.

<p>Class 1</p> <p>The teacher is reading the learners a story, and in her introduction of the story while looking at the front cover of the book and discussing it, the following discussion arises:</p> <p>Teacher: (learner 1), die donkie is 'n skaduwee, die boekie se naam is Die donkie se skaduwee.</p> <p>Learners: Skaduwee.</p> <p>Teacher: Wat is 'n mens se skaduwee.</p> <p>Learner: As die son skyn.</p> <p>Teacher: Wag, (learner 3) gaan verduidelik.</p> <p>Learner: As die son skyn maak die skaduwee maak op die pad.</p> <p>Teacher: As die son skyn dan is ons skaduwee daar op die pad, dit is darem maar 'n baie mooi illustrasie daai, dit is darem baie oulik Taylian dankie.</p> <p>Learner: Juffrou en in die nag?</p> <p>Teacher: Ons kry nie 'n skaduwee in die nag nie, dink.</p> <p>Learner: Die maan skyn in die nag.</p> <p>Teacher: Die maan skyn in die nag, maar hoekom kry ons nie 'n skaduwee in die nag nie?</p> <p>Learner: Want dit is donker.</p> <p>Teacher: Sê vi die maatjies dit is donker, dit is pikdonker. Hoe lyk jou skaduwee.</p> <p>Learner: Is swart.</p> <p>Teacher: Swart nê. So as dit, luister as dit donker is kan ek nie my skaduwee sien wat so kan word nie, dit is te donker. Nou kom ons kyk gou die prentjie en luister ³⁴.</p> <p>Class 2</p> <p>Teacher: In jail yes and when Paul was on his way to Demaskus, he saw a what?</p> <p>Learner: A light.</p> <p>Teacher: What type of light.</p> <p>Learner: White.</p> <p>Teacher: No, what type of light. It was a ?</p> <p>Learners: Blue.</p> <p>Teacher: Bright light. Julle sien net my mond maak 'n b dan is dit sommer blue. He saw a bright light.³⁵</p> <p>Learner: Nou hoe kan mens 'n bright light kry, jy kan net 'n wit light kry.</p> <p>Teacher: Jy kan, jy kry nie net wit light nie mense. Jy kry lig, luister hier. 'n Lig is altyd bright, maar jy kry 'n globe wat miskien colours is. Jy kry nie 'n witte nie. Jy kry 'n witte, maar hy gaan nie wit skyn nie. Wat is daai.</p> <p>Learner: 'n Lig.</p> <p>Teacher: Maar hoe lyk die kleur van die lig?</p> <p>Learner: Blou.</p> <p>Learner: Bruin.</p> <p>Learner: Groen.</p> <p>Teacher: Oe nee lyk my julle is colour blind.</p> <p>Learner: Bruin.</p> <p>Teacher: Dit is wit maar dit skyn nie wit nie, dit skyn bright.</p> <p>Learner: Is dit.</p> <p>Teacher: Ja, if you get a blue light it is only colour of the glass Lukhanyo, dit skyn nie blou nie. So he saw the bright light and what happened to his eyes.</p> <p>Learner: Sy oë was verblind.</p> <p>Teacher: Ja, the bright light blinded his eyes. So when he was on the ground he hear something.³⁶</p>

³⁴ Translation: Teacher: (Learner 1), the donkey is a shadow, the title of the book is: "The Donkey's Shadow".

Learners: Shadow

Teacher: What is a persons shadow?.

Learner: When the sun shines.

Teacher: Wait, (learner 3) is going to explain.

Learner: If the sun shines, make the, the shadow make it on the road

Teacher: When the sun shines, then our shadow is on the road. That is a very good explanation, that is very good (learner 3), thank you.

Learner: Teacher, and in the night?

When looking at “their appropriate realisation” the information that the teacher has given learners is vague and non-descriptive. Learning about light, the sun’s movements, and shadows are scientific concepts that children of this age can gain a lot of knowledge from, yet the teacher does not expand on the concepts or interrogate the questions together with the learners. The learners could learn about the movements of the earth around the sun. Instead, in both examples the teachers provide the answer allowing no further exploration. In all probability expanding on the questions the learners were asking would be more effective than chanting the days of the week and months of the year countless times each morning.

5.5.2 Implicit or explicit evaluation criteria

The framing of the evaluative criteria are weaker in Class 2 than in Class 1. The teacher in Class 2 is not explicit about what is important and not important, and what is expected and not expected.

Evaluative criteria, and the extent to which a teacher makes these rules explicit, is critical in the acquisition of educational knowledge. The evaluation of learning is considered to be the realisation of valid knowledge. In the interpretation of the data, two aspects are discussed: the control the teacher has over the evaluative process and the appropriate realisation of the knowledge being transmitted.

Teacher: We don’t get shadows in the night, think.

Learner: The moon shines in the night.

Teacher: The moon shines in the night, but why don’t we get a shadow in the night?

Learner: Because it is dark.

Teacher: Tell your friends that it is dark. It is pitch dark. How does your shadow look?

Learner: It is black.

Teacher: Black hey? So, if it, listen, if it is dark I cannot see my shadow. It is too dark. Now let us look at the pictures quickly and listen.

³⁵ Translation: Teacher: Bright light. You just see my mouth make a ‘b’ and then you just think it is blue. He saw a bright light

³⁶ Translation: Learner: How can you get a bright light?, You can just get a white light.

Teacher: You can. You don’t just get a white light people. You get light, listen here. A light is always bright, but you get a globe that maybe has colours. You don’t just get white ones. You get white ones, but it doesn’t only shine white. What is that?

Learner: a light.

Teacher: But what is the colour of the light?

Learner: Blue.

Learner: Brown.

Learner: Green.

Teacher: Oh no, looks to me like you are colour blind.

Learner: Brown.

Teacher: It is white, but it does not shine white, it shines bright.

Learner: Is it?

Teacher: Yes. If you get a blue light, it is only the colour of the glass. Ja, if you get a blue light it is only colour of the glass (learner 1), it does not shine blue. So he saw the bright light and what happened to his eyes.

Learner: His eyes were blinded.

Teacher: Yes, the bright light blinded his eyes. So when he was on the ground he heard something

The interpretation leads to the discussion that the degree of control is critical in framing the “appropriate realisation” in the learning context. It is one thing in an educational context to evaluate the learning; it is another (just as important) to relay the correct information. Due to the strength of the framing (hierarchical and other), and the control the teacher has, there is no relaxing of the transmission of knowledge that needs to be relayed. The teacher does not consider analysing the answers in order to use it as a learning opportunity; instead she rather answers the learners directly insisting she is right.

Class 1 mainly uses evaluative criteria as a regulative rule. The data shows that she is ‘assessing’ the learners by ‘ticking’ their abilities.

In Class 2 there is no formal evidence of assessment or evaluation. The process is not visible and the coding scheme shows that the teacher frames the evaluative rules weakly. However, she tends to use the importance of learning as a regulative rule, not as an evaluation criteria.

The teachers in both classes have control over the evaluative process. Any adult (or educator) in a learning context naturally holds the evaluative control over the learner (educant) (Bernstein 1975). It is in the degree to which it is made explicit to the learner that the control is important. In both classes the evaluative rule is being used to regulate the learners’ behaviour. The teacher in Class 1 makes those criteria more visible for the learners than the teacher in Class 2.

5.6 Framing of Hierarchical Rules

As defined in Chapter 3, the hierarchical rules establish the conditions for order, character, and manner. To define the hierarchical rules in each class, four indicators for the hierarchical rule were devised to analyse the data:

- The physical interaction between teacher and learners
- When the teacher disciplines a learner or learners
- The extent to which the teacher interacts with individuals
- Organisation of the narrative tasks.

In the **physical interaction** between teacher and learners, in Class 1 there are a number of instances where the teacher hugs learners or is physically affectionate towards them. In one example the teacher hugs a learner for her birthday and the whole class sings to her. There is another example

that shows the learner's fondness of the teacher as well as the teacher's affection to the learners. After the bible story reading of day one a learner gives the teacher a picture (that she had drawn herself) and the teacher hugs her affectionately and says thank you. In Class 2, there were no examples of the teacher hugging the learners or being physically affectionate towards them – the learners and teacher are physically distant.

The **teacher disciplining** a learner or learners is similar in both classes. The teacher spends a lot of time talking about the regulative rules and reminding the learners of what the expected behaviour is. In Class 1 the extent to which the teacher disciplines a learner is to make him stand throughout a lesson. The teacher in Class 2 at some point ends a lesson abruptly due to behavioural issues by the whole class.

The extent to which the **teacher interacts with individuals** was slightly different in each class. In both classes the lessons and tasks took place as a whole class and the teacher communalises the learning, expecting it to be appropriate for all the learners. In Class 1 there are more examples of the teacher individualising the learning by calling out learner's names to answer and by assigning them to tasks. Overall the framing value assigned to Class 1 was F⁻, and for Class 2, F⁺.

The teacher in Class 1 conducts whole class tasks, but sometimes addresses learners individually. When addressing expectations of behaviour she addresses learners both as a whole class and individually. In Class 2 the teacher mostly interacts with the learners as a group. She rarely expects them to speak individually and almost all the interactions are conducted as a class. When the teacher is maintaining behavioural expectations she mostly addresses them as a whole class. During the data collection period, the **organisation of the narrative tasks** was observed to a whole group activity in both schools. There were no instances observed where small reading groups formed, nor did the teacher engage with any learner one-one-one. Learners were not found in the reading corner handling books on their own. There were few instances where individualising occurred, but usually the teacher communalised the activities by conducting the tasks as a whole class. Throughout the data collection period the entire daily program was coordinated as a whole class.

Three categories were specifically applied in this study to engagement with narrative: whole class, one-on-one, and small group. These indicate whether each class is organised as communal or individualised. When a teacher addresses and works with the whole class it is considered to be communalised. When she works with learners on their own or in small groups, or when she assigns group work amongst the learners, it is individualised.

Neither teacher made use of small group or one-on-one interactions to optimise their engagement with the children. Furthering their understanding of each child's level of cognition to provide differentiation of tasks and activities presented to learners did not occur.

In both classes access to narrative tasks was a whole class learning activity. All activities throughout the day, whether engaging with narrative, doing tasks, talking about the weather or theme or even going to the toilet or eating a snack, were done as a whole group. This shows a strong framing relation over selection, and that the teacher controls the transmission of knowledge as a communalised experience. No individualising of activities was observed during the observation period. The extract in Table 4.5, which occurred in Class 1, illustrates the extent to which the teacher conducted tasks as a whole group. Visual recognition and discrimination is an emergent reading and writing skill; building and playing with puzzles is a task that can contribute to reading and writing development.

Table 5.6 Example of the organisation of narrative tasks.

<p>Class 1</p> <p>The teacher asks the learners to build a puzzle that is relevant to yesterday's story and the revision of the story that was done prior. She says they are now going to build the puzzle she promised earlier. The teacher says to learners: "Net as julle stil is kan julle met my speel"³⁷. She gives one learner a turn. She asks him to count the pieces first. He proceeds to do so, and counts nine pieces. He builds the puzzle. There are two pieces he is unable to complete, because it is a double-sided puzzle and the wrong side is showing for the puzzle he is busy building. The teacher leaves him for a while to allow him to figure it out for himself. Another learner desperately wants to help him, after sometime the teacher lets the other learner help. The learner is unable to help him, but while the learner is helping him the child that was busy building the puzzle sees the picture on the bottom of the piece, and sees he needs to turn it around. He is able to finish the puzzle. Only one learner ends up being able to build the puzzle while others watch.</p>

Table 5.6 is a good example of how the teacher selected the type of task (they would be building a puzzle), and selected who participated in the task (the whole class). The narrative content was chosen by the teacher: the puzzle she chose to build. What was evident is that the puzzle belonged to the teacher; it was not displayed in the class for learners to build at a later stage. Instead, the teacher put it back in her basket and it was not displayed in the class subsequently. It is interesting that she chose to build a puzzle with the whole class, given that puzzle building is usually an

³⁷ Translation: Teacher: Only if you sit still can you play with me

activity you conduct with individual children or in a small group. In this example the other learners are left as passive onlookers and it is questionable what they gain from the interaction.

The above scenario illustrates the organisation of the task being a communalised one. It is also a good example of the strength of the teacher’s control (strong framing). However, the example portrayed here is a good example of an occasion where the task requirements for the learners was unclear and the relevance in acquiring knowledge or skills is debatable. Table 5.7 depicts the final coding value assigned to both teachers in each category.

Table 5.7: Summary of coding value assigned to both teachers in all categories (cumulative value).

			Class 1	Class 2
All Categories of tasks	1	Selection	F++	F+
	2	Pace	F++	F+
	3	Sequence	F++	F+
	4	Evaluation	F+	F-
	5	Hierarchical	F-	F+

5.7 Phase 6: Quantity of Talk and Questioning

During the three-day observation period in each class it was significant how much the teachers spoke in both classes, and how little the learners spoke. The difference is vast. However, more noticeable are the few instances of silence: moments when the teacher could have kept quiet and left the learners to think. The scenario occurred in both classes. This section scrutinises the amount of talk that occurs in both settings – teacher talk versus learner talk. This is important to quantify because talking and communicating are integral to developing literacy. Distinguishing the amount of talk occurring between the teachers and the learners is another indicator of how much control the teacher held in the transmission of knowledge, and the degree to which she was directing the learning. In order to provide an accurate description of the amount of talk that occurred, transcriptions of selected tasks are quantified.

The quantity of talk shows how much the teacher is dominating the learning environment with her own talking. It is evident that the teacher in Class 1 does not like it when learners talk. Her expectation of the learners’ behaviour and manner is that they should be quiet. It portrays the regulative discourse that she instills in the classroom. An example is extracted from the data where the teacher explicitly discourages talking in order to reiterate the behaviour expected from the

learners. Table 5.8 is an example of the teacher explicitly stating that talking liberally and too often is punishable.

Table 5.8 Transcript of talk being punishable.

<p>Class 1: Teacher: Hulle het vir ouma gejoj. Toe ouma sê waar is die haan het hulle nie vir ouma die waarheid vertel nie en toe word hulle gestraf. Nou kan (learner 1) mos nou sien nê (learner 1) mens moet somtyds gestraf word³⁸. Learners: (onduidelik 00:22:26). Teacher: Ja en juffrou straf ook mos nê. Juffrou straf as jy so praat, praat, praat. Dit is nie altyd lekker nie. Kyk Gogo dit was nie vir haar lekker om te sê kom staan op nie, maar Gogo wou vir hulle leer dat hulle moet soet wees. Dit is dieselfde met (learner 2) gister, sy luister nie, kom (learner 2) gaan staan bietjie buite en vandag is (learner 2) baie beter nê (learner 2) , jy is nie stout vandag nie nê ja, okay. Kom ons doen dit later, ja dit is nou vir my straf wat ek kan uit doen. Meisietjies moet nie hardloop nie, loop gou, gou, staan in jou ry³⁹.</p>

Not all 74 tasks coded are depicted in the graphs illustrated: only 32 of the 74 tasks are counted and quantified. A number of lessons are transcribed in order to get a deeper insight into what is being said. The reason only certain units were quantified and counted is because they occurred as opportunities for interaction and dialogue. Both graphs from both classes show the number of words spoken during engagement with narrative, general knowledge, and emergent reading units of the data collection period. From all the categories derived for the analysis these three were most likely for discussions to arise where the teacher can weaken the framing. Thirteen units amounting to 2:02:26 (two hours, two minutes and twenty-six seconds) were transcribed and counted for words spoken in Class 1, and nineteen units equaling 2:23:45 (two hours, twenty-three minutes and forty-five seconds) for Class 2.

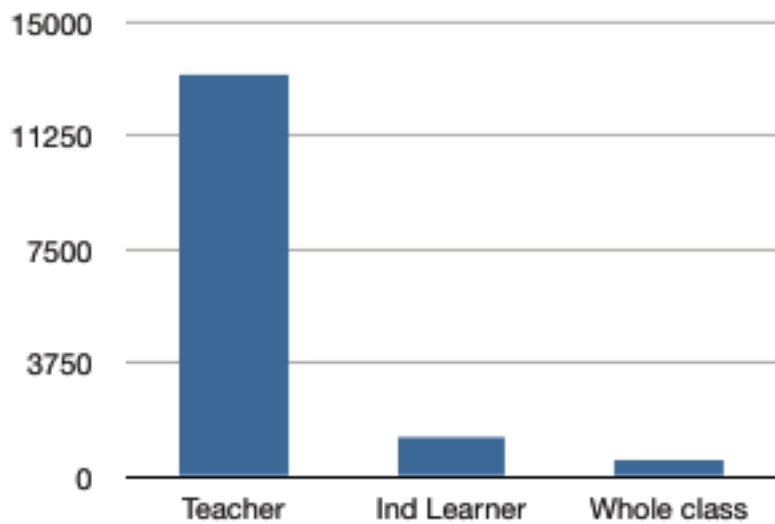
The graphs in Figure 4.2 depict the amount of teacher talk versus individual learner and class talk. Expressed in percentages, in Class 1 the teacher spoke 87.7% of the time, the learners 8.63% and as a whole class 3.64%. In Class 2 the teacher spoke 80.1% of the time, the whole Class 15.35% and individual learners 4.54%. Both are similar, with slightly more talk from the teacher in Class 1. The

³⁸ They lied to the grandmother. When the grandmother enquired about where the hen was they did not tell the truth and so they were punished. Akiel can see that sometimes one needs to be punished.

³⁹ Yes, and teacher also punishes hey? Teacher punishes if you talk, talk, talk. It is not always nice. Look, it was not nice for the grandmother (Gogo) to stand up in the mornings but she wanted to teach them how to be good children and behave. It is the same with (learner 2) yesterday, she did not want to listen, so she had to stand outside, and today she is much better hey? Today you are not naughty hey? Yes, ok good. Come we do that later. Yes it is now punishment for me. Girls, don't run, walk fast. Fast, in your row.

graphs show that there is more individual learner talk in Class 2 (15.35%) compared to Class 1 (8.63%).

a) Class 1



b) Class 2

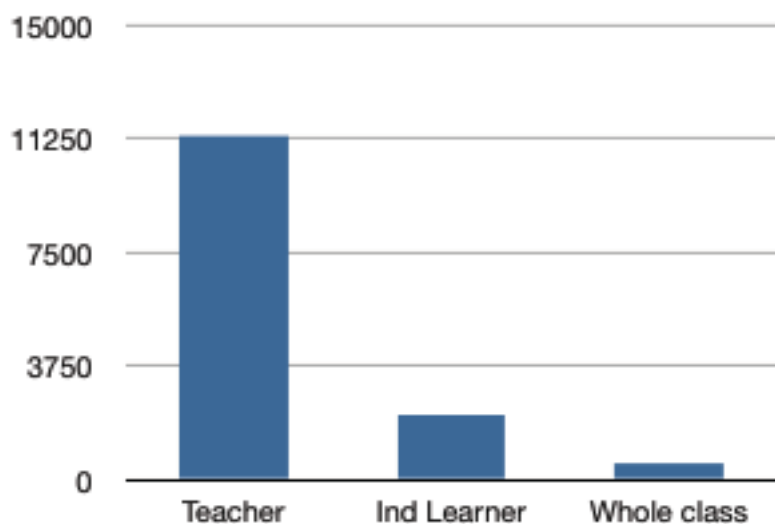


Figure 4.2: Teacher, individual learner and whole class talk.

The figure clearly shows the variance of teacher talk versus learner talk. Quantifying the amount of talk is simply an additional indicator to substantiate the findings on framing. The coding scheme for selection included three indicators to interrogate the control over who asked the questions, to what extent learners questions were considered, and the amount of opportunity that learners were

allowed to ask questions (or answer questions from other learners). The data showed that neither teacher engaged with learners' questions, nor did they provide opportunities for learners to talk.

This section illustrates the level to which the teachers controlled the dialogue that happened in the classes during the various engagements. It also shows that few opportunities arose for sustained-shared thinking, because the teacher holds the control over what is spoken about. Classifying the pedagogical relationship in terms of framing provides an accurate description of the degree to which both teachers control the learning environment.

The findings show that the degree of control varied slightly between the two classes and therefore more opportunities arose in Class 2 for learners to ask questions and to interject. However, neither teacher engaged with questioning in such a way as to expand the learners' knowledge base (as shown in the task requirements section of the analysis).

In Class 1 the data shows that even though the teacher engaged in some of the questions the learners asked, she did not expand on them or use them as opportunities for learning (or sustained shared thinking). rather, she answered the learners directly (and in some cases she answers the question incorrectly, illustrated in Section 4.5.3).

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter showed the finding with regard to the degree of control the teachers held over the learning context. Having established both the 'what' and the 'how' across the two classrooms being analysed, the discussion and conclusions of the entire study are drawn in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

Discussion and conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The overall aim of the study was to answer the question: *what are the differences, if any, between pedagogic practices in two Grade R classes, one in a formal and one in a community-based institutional setting, particularly in the transmission of literacy tasks?* I have outlined the findings in the two preceding chapters, which provide the basis for answering the two secondary questions:

- What is the frequency and exposure to texts and what are the task requirements for literacy learning in the two Grade R classes and what opportunities do they create for learner participation?
- How much control do teachers and learners have over pedagogic communication and how does this influence opportunities for literacy engagement?

It is now possible to answer these questions and present the insights I gained into the pedagogic practice in these two classrooms. This chapter will present some of the differences, and more significantly the similarities, in the pedagogical interactions of each class as they indicate the manner in which the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of the transmission process influence literacy engagement and learning participation. Of particular consideration was the degree of control the teacher or learners have over ‘how’ the transmission of knowledge takes place, as well as ‘what’ is valid knowledge. Looking at if this was influenced by the formality, or lack thereof, of the learning environment was also of interest (in a formal school versus a community-based preschool).

As stated in Chapter 1 the initial hypothesis was that Class 1, based on the institutional setting being a primary school, would be more formal, more structured and have less opportunities for play-based learning and that Class 2, attached to a preschool, would be less formal, less structured and have more opportunity to play. This hypothesis was based on the literature review, and in particular on a number of studies which identified less formal environments as preferential for early learning wherein children have significant influence over the method and content of their own learning. Therefore, the expectation was that the ‘how’ in Class 2 would be marked by a weakly-framed pedagogy that allowed for more play-based learning and thus greater literacy engagement generally and more engagement with narrative specifically. Thus the expectation was that Class 2 would be marked by literacy tasks that engaged teachers and learners in co-construction of knowledge where,

“literacy concepts are acquired through shared adult-child participation in reading and writing activities” (Mason & Allen 1986: 32). From their review of numerous emergent literacy studies they concluded that developing good literacy skills (speaking, reading, and writing), require “language-rich social interactions and the use of meaningful tasks” (ibid), such as those likely to be provided in a weakly-framed learning environment where learners have significant influence over the method and content of their learning.

After completing the data analysis (a three-day, day-long observation of the two classes) and presenting the findings in Chapter 4 and 5, it became evident that my hypothesis was incorrect. I concluded that despite their different institutional settings the two classes are remarkably similar. Both classes were strongly framed (although more instances of weaker framing were observed in Class 2), with teacher talk dominating discussions and most time being spent on priorities determined by the teacher. This led to limited opportunities for learner-led engagement or play. Learning was largely characterised by weak framing, restricted task requirements (content which did not challenge the learners’ cognitive development), limited frequency and exposure to texts, interactions that took place almost exclusively as a whole class, and teacher talk which dominated class discussions and lessons.

Despite anticipated focus on integration and play-based learning stated in the CAPS curriculum as required pedagogy in Grade R (supported by the international research presented in the literature review), such an approach was not observed in either class. Wood (2009) warns that teachers who are to implement integrated approaches to learning require in-depth understanding of pedagogy. A discussion of the absence of such an approach follows in this discussion, first in a description of the similar ‘what’ of the infrequent and limited exposure to text and the restricted task requirements in the two classes, followed by their consistent strong framing, whole class organization and dominant teacher talk – the ‘how’.

6.2 The ‘what’

In both classes the ‘what’ of the transmission of knowledge was analysed to answer the secondary question of what the exposure, frequency and task requirements were, and what influence this had over opportunities for learner engagement.

The central conclusions were:

- The learners had limited and infrequent exposure to text

- Individual learners had few opportunities to handle books on their own
- The task requirements were restricted.

6.2.1 Limited and infrequent exposure to text

With regard to literacy development, in both classes learners had very limited exposure to text, particularly on an individual basis (where a learner might have the opportunity to sit on his or her own and page through a book). Throughout the observation period few instances (all of which were described in Chapter 4) of individuals engaging with books were noted.

This is problematic because, as noted in the literature review of emergent literacy, learning to read and write hinges on a child's opportunity to spend time engaging with texts and to begin developing literacy on their own. A child's emergent development progresses and advances daily and in a non-linear way. A number of language acquisition and emergent literacy theorists acknowledge certain commonalities or best practices, which provide guidance for teachers on how to promote literacy, one central feature of which is through exposure to texts and storybooks (Clay 1972; Goodman 1986; Ferreiro 1986; Kaderavek 2009).

In the two classes, both marked by strongly framed pedagogic relationships, the teacher controls opportunities to engage with books and other literacy tasks and in doing so creates limited opportunities for learner participation.

6.2.3 Restricted task requirements

The transmission of knowledge in the two classes observed was formalised and required a very low level of cognitive demand, mostly occurring as restricted tasks. In Class 1, the majority of the tasks (64.4%) were restricted and 26.6% were elaborated. The remaining 8.8% started off with an elaborated task requirement, but concluded as a restricted one. These were referred to in the analysis in Chapter 4 as potential elaborate tasks. In other words, the requirements of the task were not extended to be sufficiently demanding on learners or to require context independent thinking and thus failed to enhance literacy development. In Class 2, the majority of the tasks (60.7%) were also restricted tasks while 25.0% were elaborated. The other 14.3% had the potential to be

elaborated, but the opportunity was lost. The cognitive demand on the learners was low, and thus did not demand thinking beyond the context provided.

The literature indicates that children of all ages should be exposed to literacy, but that it is particularly important in early years where the foundation of the ability to read and write is established. As indicated in the literature on emergent reading, opportunities to engage with literacy in a meaningful and constructive way begin before formal schooling. “No daily ten-minute period of mental gymnastics is going to work miracles in developing intellectual competence, but when the teacher knows how to reinforce the learnings of the directed periods *throughout the day*, as children paint, set tables, build with blocks, play house, etc., she increases the likelihood that generalisation of the concept will occur and that transfer of training will be possible” (Lavatelli 1973: 47). Yet, in the two classes observed, the majority of the tasks do not reinforce learning, challenge the learners or demand they learn a new skill. The thinking expected remains context dependent and does not elaborate or create complex extensions of problem-solving skills. The tasks do not provide combinations of text analysis, predicting events or discussions on text-reader links. The events are not socially interactive where the transmitter of the knowledge, the teacher, is not mediating the process of extending into orientation to learning that expands on critical thinking.

Overall, significantly limited opportunities for learner participation with regard to literacy learning, specifically engagement with narrative, were provided in both classes,

6.3 The ‘how’

In both classes the ‘how’ of the pedagogic practice was analysed to answer the secondary question of how much control teachers and learners had over pedagogic communication, and how that influenced opportunities for literacy engagement. The central conclusions were:

- Framing relations are strong, generally formal and predominantly teacher directed
- The tasks are almost exclusively organized as a whole class activity, with limited or no differentiation
- There is a dominance of teacher talk compared to learner talk in both classes.

6.3.1 Strong framing relations

The teacher in Class 1 managed her daily program quite consistently, while the teacher in Class 2 did so slightly less. The structure of the day allowed for more opportunities to play in Class 2 than in Class 1, thus Class 2 provided more occasions for incidental learning opportunities than Class 1. The central similarity was the degree of control the teacher exercised over her programme, both of which were teacher-led. The central difference was that the teacher in Class 1 used structured planning for her lessons throughout the week.

In regard to time spent on text-based and non-text-based engagements with narrative, the degree to which spontaneous, unstructured conversations occurred in Class 2 compared to Class 1 was notable. It is thus possible to conclude that the degree of control (strong framing) that the teacher employs determines the extent to which learners feel free to engage in conversations with the teacher. The unstructured conversations that occurred in Class 2 varied from topics of interest, topics to be shared, and topics that refer to the knowledge being transmitted. In Class 1 all interactions pertaining to engagement with narrative are focused on the lesson or topic at hand; conversation did not diverge from the theme. For conversations to take place the teacher would have needed to weaken the framing and allow for interruptions. However, despite the presence of greater teacher-learner dialogue in Class 2, these interactions largely failed to generate meaning through elaborated task requirements, or context independent thinking that could extend the cognitive demand placed on the learner.

The framing over selection (indicators 4, 5 & 6, Appendix 2) shows that, especially in Class 1, the teacher strongly framed who could participate in tasks and the extent to which they engaged with learners' questions and interests. The teacher in Class 1 is collectively coded as F++ (over 3 indicators pertaining to participation), and the teacher in Class 2 as F+ and F-. All selection was controlled and directed by the teachers.

Neither teacher optimised or used opportunities for incidental learning, meaning, "spontaneous opportunities for intellectual stretch are therefore constrained and at least underutilised" (GET 2009: 159). The instances of weaker framing found in Class 2 were slightly less formal and less structured (planned), and therefore opportunities arose for children to ask questions and get opportunities to play. However, these were not followed through to become elaborated or context independent. The strong degree of framing that occurred in both classes results in lost opportunities

for learning and limits the learners' exposure to cognitively challenging literacy tasks. Goodman (1984) points to the importance of learner engagement and interest:

Many things remain unnoticed if we do not have the possibility of making sense of them. Literacy development is not a matter of sounding out the letters, repeating again and again the same strings of letters on a page, or applying reading readiness tests to assure that literacy instruction begins with the guarantee of success. When teachers understand this, they begin to think differently and respond differently to children's answers, to children's questions, to children's interactions, and to children's productions. Teachers begin to discover that children are as intelligent, active, and creative in the domain of literacy as they are in math. (Goodman 1986:23)

In both classes few learner led activities occur. Due to the control that the teacher holds, the 'space' does not emerge for learners to ask questions and extend learning topics according to their interests. In both settings there was a lack of opportunities to learn through structured play wherein the teacher would have been able to link learner-led activities to the conceptual development of the child. Thus, neither teacher bridged the learning gap (or the zone of proximal development).

6.3.2 Communalised learning

The organisation of the tasks is almost totally communalised, creating very few opportunities for learner participation in the two Grade R classes observed. According to Siraj-Blatchford (2009) it is the combination of instructed (teacher led) and co-constructed teaching which results in effective pedagogy, and that instructed modalities of pedagogy are particularly important for a society that deals with social injustice and inequality – as is the case in the South African context. Reinforcing learning can happen in various ways: within different sized groups, in one-on-one interactions, through different types of tasks, by engaging in further questions, and through extending the task requirements.

Both of the classes were distinctly organised as communalised learning environments, with the vast majority of lessons taking place as a whole class. Such a lack of differentiation is identified as non-ideal as it fails to offer learners diverse opportunities for learning. Differentiation complements literacy development in two primary ways: it allows for the needs of learners who acquire language differently to be met, and it provides varied opportunities for more in-depth engagement, most often

provided through the use of small group or one-on-one teaching. Such opportunities are not provided in either of the two classes observed.

One difference noted between the two classes was that there were instances in Class 1 where the teacher differentiated the learning, while there were none in Class 2. The examples found in Class 1 were rare but they did occur, suggesting that the teacher was aware of the concept of learning differentiation.

6.3.2 Dominance of teacher talk and questioning

The degree of control and the level of authority exercised by the teachers were quantified by calculating the ratio of teacher versus learner talk and whole class talk. A number of studies (Dickenson & Smith 1994; McGill-Franzen et al. 2002) have analysed utterances and type of questioning during story-reading episodes occurring before, during, or after the task. Other studies have investigated the extent of conversations that begin to bridge the link between oral language and literacy development (Wasik et al. 2006). They all are built on the concept that children learn to talk, read, and write by engaging in conversation. The analysis found a dominance of teacher talk and classrooms where learners experienced very few moments of silence, and hence very few moments of limited 'interference', as well as very few opportunities to talk or ask questions. This resulted in a lack of individual child interactions where the teacher and the learners could engage in discussions that could generate the following:

- Learning
- Vocabulary (Dickenson & Smith 1994)
- Sustained shared thinking (Siraj-Blatchford 2009)
- Story comprehension (Wasik et al 2006)
- A link between oral language and written text (Wasik et al. 2006)
- An opportunity to develop general communication skills (CAPS 2012).

The curriculum explicitly states the importance of talk to develop communication skills and refine a language. Yet the opportunities for learners to talk were minimal in both classes. Thus children were not expressing individual ideas and sustained-shared thinking was not occurring.

Overall the teachers, in both classes, hold control over the manner in which learning is conducted, with very limited input from learners. Control in these two classes lies almost entirely with the teacher as both are strongly framed in relation to selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation.

Discussions are conducted almost exclusively as a whole class and they are dominated by teacher talk. This dramatically inhibits opportunities for literacy engagement.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The study was small in scope with limited time and parameters, and had to be constrained accordingly. Additionally, the CAPS curriculum on which the two Grade R classes were based could not be analysed in depth due to the scope of the study. The premise is that the CAPS curriculum is an integrated approach to learning (Appendix 3).

6.5 Areas for further research

The aim of the research was not to tarnish the image of the schools and teachers but rather to reveal the type of teaching practices learners are exposed to in Grade R classrooms. The curriculum claims to privilege integration, where the teacher is required to integrate learning areas and themes with free play and teacher-directed activities. This makes the teacher one of the strongest factors in recontextualising the requirements and enacting them in the classroom. This study did not specifically code for classification of the learning areas (subjects), but the assumption is that these classes are being contextualised as a collection code, and therefore mimic a formalised education modality.

While this study provides insight into what is occurring in Grade R classes, further research is required in order to gain a wider perspective of whether this is occurring elsewhere, and to what extent it is impacting the conceptual development of learning for young children aged 5 and 6 before entering the formal school system. The suggestion for further research is to code for in depth internal and external classification, as well as internal and external framing, in order to understand how much the wider school and community have an impact on the learning context.

Since teachers are a central component of the recontextualisation of the curriculum they require a deep theoretical and practical understanding of the requirements for early education, especially in low socio-economic environments. Teachers' personal dispositions to teaching styles and methods would provide further insights into the pedagogical interactions that occur in Grade R classrooms. They require an understanding of the 'crucial mix': the relationship between the 'how' and the

‘what’. In particular this study was conceptualised and conducted with the purpose to inform other researchers and policy makers of any environmental particulars in regard to learning settings that may contribute to or limit teacher training and teaching strategies designed to improve early education in South Africa, especially in our underprivileged pre-primary and primary schools.

6.6 Concluding Remarks

For this study, the degree of control, the ‘how’, that the teachers had over the learning process influenced the ‘what’. The degree of control the teachers held over opportunities for learning provided limited expansion on the ‘what’ being taught. Both teachers possess all the control, which in turn limits the organisation of the task being communalised, and the task requirements being predominantly restricted. The fact that both teachers enacted a dominant control over the learning environment showed the extent to which the ‘how’ influenced the ‘what’, and that these can only be loosely separated in theory but never in practice. The degree to which the teachers chose to elaborate on children’s questions and queries showed that the teachers held most of the control. The instances shown where queries were not elaborated upon, or were in fact even answered incorrectly, raises concern. Weakening the framing and engaging in a more query-based learning would have allowed for the learners to expand their knowledge.

The analysis found that the differences between the formal and the informal setting are minimal. Both teachers conduct a strongly framed, restricted, and communalised pedagogy. There were very few moments that learners had little or no interference from an adult, which results in little meaningful and constructive child-led activity that could aid in the development of learning how to read and write. This pedagogic relationship results in limited opportunities for children’s participation, and subsequently limited opportunities for genuine literacy engagement.

The ‘crucial mix’ required for early learning education is a balance between structured teaching and play-based learning. That means combining elaborated task requirements with weakly-framed opportunities for learning. This combination is the entry into the specialisation of knowledge and the acquiring of necessary skills to learn to read and write and ultimately succeed at school. In its closing remarks the Gauteng study (2009) reports that:

In addition, most of the theories we have considered foreground the importance of play in the optimization of learning opportunities presented to young children. Yet, as

we have consistently argued, many practitioners and policy makers do not appear to view play as a valuable and integral aspect of the daily programme. Neither, we would suggest, does the NCS and other policy documents related to Grade R sufficiently acknowledge the value of play in ensuring quality Grade R provisioning. This has resulted in the majority of schools observed implementing a 'mini Grade 1' that failed to optimize appropriate teaching and learning opportunities (GET 2009: 144).

This study identified many lost teaching and learning opportunities. However, I would argue that an understanding of using play and children's own interests, in other words weakly framing one's pedagogy, is not widespread. The teachers for both classes do not appear to strongly frame the pedagogical interaction deliberately in such a way that it decreases the opportunities for learning. A great deal of pedagogical expertise is needed to utilise the opportunities that arise during the teacher/learner interaction – expertise that these teachers are unlikely to have acquired through training and professional development. Questions that the children asked about shadows or the colour of light were lost opportunities, potentially valuable learning opportunities that require appropriate action from the teacher to lift them off their context. Yet the teachers, in both classes, do not utilise these moments to transform them into learning opportunities. The framing in such settings needs to be weaker for the opportunities of sustained shared thinking and open-ended questions to arise. The combination of these more structured, play-based learning moments can then be complemented with direct instruction to allow for the establishment of the 'crucial mix'.

Three key findings emerged from this research. The first is that tasks made available for learners had limited and restricted requirements, and were therefore insufficient to advance the development of literacy learning. The second is that the free-play opportunities were not integrated into the learning context and appear as isolated instances. They were not being structured in such a way that they advanced the development of emergent reading and writing skills. The third finding is that the pedagogic discourse was not adequately mediated to link learners' interests with the intended educational outcomes provided by the curriculum. All of these findings mean that opportunities for co-constuction of knowledge or sustained-shared thinking opportunities were lost (or never created) in these classes. Instead the children had very limited opportunities to deeply engage with literacy.

The central finding of this study, however, is that the institutional setting can be ruled out as a possible factor in determining the sort of pedagogic practice of literacy engagement. Despite the significant differences in their environments (formal school versus community-based preschool) both the 'how' and the 'what' of the pedagogy was notably similar in both.

This study identified the need to get the ‘crucial mix’ between play-based learning and structured teaching right in early childhood development. This is key to generating opportunities for extending opportunities for learner participation and literacy development to learners across the socio-economic spectrum. If the right mix is achieved we will not only have cognitively-challenged, intellectual learners in the early years, but also learners that have received the ideal foundation to serve them throughout their school career and their lives.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Coding Sheet

School: _____ Unit code: _____ Daily program: _____ Duration: _____

Lesson description:

Text Based			Non-Text based		
Text & Graphic	Text No graphic	Graphic No text	Structured		Unstructured
			Retelling a story	Revising a story	Conversational
			Theme discussion	Singing/ chanting	Activities

Example of an instance that describes either F⁺⁺ or F⁻⁻:

1. Framing of the discursive rule

1	Selection	In the selection of a task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
2	Selection	In the selection of narrative content	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻

3	Selection	In the selection of participation in task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
4	Selection	Selection of questions (who asks the questions and when)	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
5	Selection	The extent to which teachers engage in the learners conversations	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
6	Selection	Opportunities for talk	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
7	Sequence	In the course of the task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
8	Pace	Who has control over the time spent on the different activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
9	Pace	While learners are doing activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
10	Evaluation	In the introduction / explanation / exposition to a topic/task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
11	Evaluation	In the course of telling stories or discussions about stories the extent to which the teacher controls the evaluation of legitimate communication and meanings	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
12	Evaluation	The level or extent to the teacher guides the answering process	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
13	Evaluation	In the course of learners conducting an activity or task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
14	Evaluation	When learners answer questions	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
15	Evaluation	At the conclusion of the task/activity	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻

2. Framing of the Hierarchical Rule

16	Teacher/Learner	In the physical interaction between teachers and learners	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
17	Teacher/Learner	When the teacher disciplines a learner or learners	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
18	Teacher/Learner	The extent to which the teacher interacts with individuals	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻

3. Extension of engagement with narrative:

What are the task requirements?					
Restricted			Elaborated		
Chiming	Naming and labeling	Skill Routines (counting, ABC's)	Extended recall	Text-reader links and connections	Text Vocabulary
Immediate factual recall	Pictorially explicit		Making inferences	Text prediction	Text analysis

Appendix 2: Coding Scheme

SELECTION (F⁺⁺)

The extent to which teacher and learner have control over the selection of instructional knowledge

1. In the selection of a task (reading story/singing songs/saying rhymes)	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
	The selection of tasks, activities and knowledge in the selection of stories, songs and rhymes is always or almost always determined by the teacher. Learners are rarely able to disrupt the selection to suit their own interests and needs. Their interjections are generally dismissed or ignored or they are not seen to make any interjections. The teacher selects the story to be read or song to be sung.	The selection of tasks, activities, songs, stories, and knowledge in the classroom is determined by the teacher most of the time. On few occasions is selection varied according to learner intervention or production.	Learners have the opportunity to vary the selection of stories, songs, tasks, activities, knowledge some of the time. Some learner suggestions are accepted, or the teacher alters selection according to learners' productions.	Learners often make decisions around the selection of stories, songs, tasks, activities, and knowledge. Learners can choose stories to be read, and share interests in topics. The teacher alters the selection according to learners' productions, interjections, suggestions, and interests.
2. In the selection of narrative content	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
	The selection of tasks, activities, narrative content, books to be read, and knowledge in the selection of stories, songs and rhymes is always or almost always determined by the teacher. Learners are rarely able to disrupt the selection to suit their own interests and needs. Their interjections are generally dismissed or ignored or they are not seen to make any interjections. The teacher selects the story to be read or songs to sing.	The selection of tasks, activities, songs, stories, and knowledge in the classroom is determined by the teacher most of the time. On few occasions is selection varied according to learner intervention or production.	Learners have the opportunity to vary the selection of stories, songs, tasks, activities, knowledge some of the time. Some learner suggestions are accepted, or the teacher alters selection according to learners' productions.	Teacher allows learners interjections, usggestions and choice of narrative content and direction of discussion. The teacher alters the selection according to learners' productions, interjections, suggestions, and interests.
3. In the selection of participation	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
	Teacher selects learners to participate in reading a story or participating in an activity, whole class, small group, one on one or individual	The selection of participation in tasks, activities, songs, stories, and knowledge in the classroom is determined by the teacher most of the time. On few occasions teacher allows for variance according to learner initiative.	Learners have the opportunity to vary their participation in stories, songs, tasks, activities, knowledge some of the time. Learner participation is encouraged and teacher alters her selection according to learners' productions, for instance child requests to read a story on his/her own.	Learners have control of their own participation. The choices are available for them to engage in tasks, activities, songs, stories, and knowledge in the classroom (individual reading, small group reading etc)
4. Selection of questions - who asks questions, when questions are asked	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
	The selection of questions during tasks, activities, songs, stories, is determined by the teacher. Teacher selects and initiates questions that are asked during the activity, little allowance for learner interruptions.	The selection of questions during tasks, activities, songs, stories, is determined by the teacher most of the time. On few occasions teacher allows for variance according to learner initiative by questions they asked.	The selection of questions during tasks, activities, songs, stories are sometimes controlled by the learners. Learners sometimes have the opportunity to ask questions, tell their stories or make comments.	The selection of questions during tasks, activities, songs, stories are mostly controlled by the learners. Learners have substantial opportunity to ask questions, make comments or tell their stories. Teacher allows interruptions for learners to ask questions and tell their stories.

5. The extent to which teachers engage in the learners conversations	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
The teacher selects and chooses the extent to which she engages in learners talk and comments. When learners talk she mostly ignores their interjections and interruptions if it is not relevant to topic being discussed or knowledge expected to be acquired.	The extent to which learners interruptions and comments intervene during lessons, tasks, activities, songs, stories, is determined by the teacher. Teacher is in control as to how often she engages and to what extent	When learners make comments or interrupt the teachers lessons, the teacher only sometimes controls the level at which she engages in these conversation. Learners have some control over redirecting the conversation based on their comments and experiences.	The teacher has little control over the amount she engages in learners talk and comments. These little talks can redirect the topic or knowledge to be acquired. Learners have substantial control of being able to engage the teacher into conversations.	

6. Opportunity for talk	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
The teacher has control over the extent of talk. There are very few opportunities for learners to talk, or to ask questions. The selection of who talks is strongly determined by the teacher.	The teacher has substantial control over the extent of talk. The control over who talks is predominantly maintained by the teacher. The teacher talks a large portion of the time with little intervention by the learners.	Learners have some control over the amount of talk. Opportunities to talk and speak are	The opportunities to talk, speak and to ask questions is available. The learners have substantial control over the talk that occurs. Learners make a lot of comments. Teacher has very little control.	

SEQUENCING (F⁺⁺)

The extent to which teacher and learner have control over the sequencing of instructional knowledge

7. In the course of the task	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
The teacher always or almost always determines the sequence of transmission of knowledge in the lesson. Any interjections potentially disturbing the order of learning are dismissed or ignored.	The teacher more than half of the time determines the sequence of transmission of knowledge in the lesson.	Learners sometimes make decisions around the sequence of tasks and activities in the lesson. They are regularly given options regarding the order in which to do things.	Learners have the opportunity to vary the sequence of the transmission often. The teacher at times responds to learners' interventions by varying the sequence of the learning.	

PACE (F⁺⁺)

The extent to which teacher and learner have control over the pacing of instructional knowledge

8. Who has the control over the time spent on the lessons/ activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
The pace at which the teacher works through the daily programme, lessons, tasks and activities is done according to her planning. The teacher controls and determines the time spent on a topic/task/activity, learners have no influence on the timing, and pace. Teacher has the allocated time for activities or lessons, and learners cannot deviate from the program.	The teacher mostly determines the pace of the activities and how much time is spent on the learning tasks or lessons. Teacher has considerable control over the intended program.	Learners have some control over the time they can take to complete a task of how long a lesson takes. If a learner has a topic or interest he wants to explore, and results in a task the teacher allows for these alterations in the time allowance.	The timing and pace is determined by the learners. Pacing and time alterations are made based on the extent to which learners ask questions, time they take to understand a topic, or to finish an activity or task.	

9. While learners are doing activities/tasks	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	Mostly controlled by the teacher	Learners have some control	Learners have substantial control
The pace at which learners work through tasks is always or almost always strictly controlled by the teacher. Injunctions to 'jy is nou klaar' or 'pak weg' and mention of time are frequent, and the teacher doesn't vary the pace according to learners' productions.	The pace at which learners work through tasks is always or almost always strictly controlled by the teacher. Injunctions to 'hurry up' or 'work slowly' and mention of time are frequent, and the teacher doesn't vary the pace according to learners' productions. While tasks are being done the teacher always or mostly defers or ignores learners' questions and learners have no influence in speeding the process up or slowing this process down	Learners work at their own pace. The teacher exercises some control over pace, but remains open to its variation. The teacher has set different activities that the learners can move between, and they are allowed to do this predominantly at their own pace.	Learners work at their own pace. The teacher places no pressure on them to finish in a stipulated period. She may give them opportunities to redo or continue on another day if they did not finish. Learners decide when they are ready to move on to other work/activities. Teacher accepts the pace of the individual learners.	

EVALUATIVE RULES (F⁺⁺)

The extent to which teacher and learner have control over the evaluative criteria of the instructional knowledge pertaining to the meaning

10. In the introduction/explanation/exposition to a topic/task	F ⁺⁺ Evaluative criteria very clear and explicit	F ⁺ Evaluative criteria quite clear and explicit	F ⁻ Evaluative criteria quite unclear and implicit	F ⁻⁻ Evaluative criteria very unclear and implicit
	Teacher always or almost always makes the evaluative rules available through description or explanation. Teacher provides an introduction to the activity/lesson. Explicitly defines and explains the meaning of concepts, addresses key aspects of the knowledge or theme under discussion through questioning and explication. She makes it clear in a lesson exactly what learners should be able to do or in a task how it should be completed. It is clear, based on the explanation the teacher has given, what the learners need to do and what is expected of them.	Most of the time the teacher makes the evaluative rules available in an explicit and clear manner through explanation and discussion. The teachers explanation of what is required of the learners is generally clear, a few aspects of the explanation remain implicit and unclear	The concepts and principles being addressed in the introduction are sometimes unclear. Attempts are made to make the requirements for the successful production of an activity available to learners, but these are often unclear or not articulated adequately to the learners. Some ambiguity as to what should be done and how it should be done exists. At times an introduction is provided, but no clear instruction as to what is expected of them.	Generally the teacher does not draw out the knowledge principles in her lesson or in her explanation of a topic or lesson. No instruction is provided. The emphasis of instruction is focused on regulative rules regarding expectations of behaviour. Very little or no attempt is made to make the requirements for the successful production of an activity, task or interaction available to learners.
11. In the course of telling stories or discussions about stories the extent to which the teacher controls the evaluation of legitimate communication and meaning	F ⁺⁺ Always or almost always controlled by the teacher	F ⁺ Mostly controlled by the teacher	F ⁻ Learners have some control	F ⁻⁻ Learners have substantial control
	Teacher directs and proposes legitimate meaning in the exposition to a learning activity (such as storytelling etc). Teacher steers and directs the conversation and explains moral and meaning.	The selection of relevant meaning and legitimate communication is mostly determined by the teacher.	Learners have the opportunity have some control over the selection of meaning and legitimate communication. Some learner suggestions are accepted, or the teacher alters discussion and meanings according to learners' productions and questions.	Learners often interrupt, make interjections, generate discussion opportunities and steer the conversation with their own interests and questions.
12. The level/extent to which the teacher guides the answering process	F ⁺⁺ Evaluative criteria very clear and explicit	F ⁺ Evaluative criteria quite clear and explicit	F ⁻ Evaluative criteria quite unclear and implicit	F ⁻⁻ Evaluative criteria very unclear and implicit
	The teacher prompts learners answers and provides comments about what is expected. Teacher guides the process of arriving at the correct or expected answer.	The teacher makes a few points about what is expected when answering questions or recalling information. Occasionally the prompts the learners to arrive at the expected answer.	The teacher interacts and makes only a few comments during the course of the interaction, however this is not sustained and the criteria for what is expected of the learners are not explicit to all. Teacher will mainly prompt the answers, but never reveal what the expectation is.	The teacher allows considerable freedom to what learners answer when answering questions or recalling text/stories/information or completing tasks. Teacher does not prompt or intervene in the learners delivery of the answer or product at all.
13. In the course of learners conducting an activity or task	F ⁺⁺ Evaluative criteria very clear and explicit	F ⁺ Evaluative criteria quite clear and explicit	F ⁻ Evaluative criteria quite unclear and implicit	F ⁻⁻ Evaluative criteria very unclear and implicit
	Teacher tells the group, or an individual learner at the activity table repeatedly what constitutes an appropriate performance. Sometimes even providing an example of what is expected. Teacher even makes comments or provides encouragement such as "yes, that is right, or yes, that is wonderful".	The teacher makes some points either to the group busy with the task or to individual learners to clarify what is expected of them in the task.	The teacher makes a few comments during the course of the task and looks at some of the learners work, or attends to learner productions, however the teacher does not sustain her intentions and the criteria for a successful production are not made explicit. Teacher sits with individual learners and discusses what they did, rather than what is expected	Teacher looks at a few learners' work when it is brought to her attention. She rarely mentions what is expected of them and does not attend to their productions. Evaluative criteria are not mentioned to individual learners nor extended to the whole class. Not much encouragement is provided for learners to decipher what constitutes a correct response or production.

14. When learners answer questions	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Evaluative criteria very clear and explicit	Evaluative criteria quite clear and explicit	Evaluative criteria quite unclear and implicit	Evaluative criteria very unclear and implicit
	When learners answer questions correctly or incorrectly the teacher makes it explicit what the correct answer is. If the answer is correct, the teacher will acknowledge that it is correct, and possibly even elaborate. When the answer is incorrect the teacher will ask further questions to elicit the correct response. Teacher will always acknowledge explicitly when an answer is correct or incorrect.	The teacher sometimes acknowledges when an answer is correct or incorrect. In an incorrect response the teacher often says why the answer is incorrect. The teacher often elaborates on a correct answer, or asks the other learners to clap.	Not all correct or incorrect answers are acknowledged. In incorrect responses the teacher sometimes shows why the answer is incorrect. The teacher does not elaborate on a correct answer. Teacher ignores incorrect answers, and hardly ever requires learners to extend or elaborate in order to find out why the child is answering incorrectly.	The teacher looks only for yes / no answers, or for learners to repeat what she has just said, or learners must chime as a whole class. Incorrect answers are generally ignored, or the reasons for them are not sought. Correct answers are accepted and may be praised, but are not elaborated on.

15. At the conclusion of the task / activity	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Evaluative criteria very clear and explicit	Evaluative criteria quite clear and explicit	Evaluative criteria quite unclear and implicit	Evaluative criteria very unclear and implicit
	The lesson/theme/ discussion ends with teacher encapsulating the knowledge just provided, and the end of lesson is indicated. Learners have all maintained their attention and are ready to move on.	The lesson/theme/ discussion/ story ends with the teacher providing concluding remarks to indicate the lesson is finished. Teacher repeats what the expectations of such an activity are.	The lesson/theme/ discussion/ story ends with no conclusion. The teacher chooses it is the end, and they move onto the next part of the daily program. At the conclusion of a lesson/task it is unclear what the relevance of the lesson was or how it tied in with theme/lesson. Learners started to lose their concentration and became restless.	The lesson/theme/ discussion/ story ends abruptly due to behavioural issues, or children become restless. Teacher does not conclude the lesson with a clear end or relevant task or discussion to encapsulate the knowledge for the learners. The lesson ends abruptly or with prayer.

Hierarchical Rule TEACHER - LEARNER (F⁺⁺)

The extent to which teacher and learner have control over the order, character and manner of the conduct of learners in the relation

16. In the physical interaction between teacher and learners	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Positional or imperative	Positional	Mostly personal	Mostly personal
	The teacher does not interact with learners physically affectionately. She may push or shove learners, or threaten them with a ruler, with her hand or body movement.	The teacher seldom interacts with learners in a physically affectionate manner. The learner and teacher are physically distant.	The teacher will at times embrace a learner, especially when the learner is distressed. The teacher is generally openly affectionate with the learners.	The teacher embraces or gently touches learners. Learners will sometimes embrace the teacher in greeting, or randomly by approaching her on their own.

17. When the teacher disciplines a learner or learners	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	Positional or imperative	Mostly positional	Personal or positional	Mostly personal
	The teacher becomes angry and admonishes the learner based on positional control and threatens further action (physical or non-physical). Rationales for actions are not provided by the teacher.	The teacher admonishes the learner using positional control. Rules and control are generally based on formal status of teacher. Rules are generally stated, not explained, and when teacher states these rules she talks in a stern and irritated manner.	Teacher listens to learners' reasons for their actions and reproves them based on personal or implicit positional control. Rules may be stated but the implications of the behaviour is drawn out as well.	Teacher consistently reminds the learner/learners how to behave based on her expectations of behaviour using personal control, "you must listen because I like children that listen". The teacher emphasizes the implication of the learners actions for themselves and for others.

18. The extent to which the teacher interacts with individuals	F ⁺⁺	F ⁺	F ⁻	F ⁻⁻
	The teacher interacts with the learners in the class as a group. She rarely calls the learners by name or expects them to speak individually. The interaction between teachers and learners is conducted as a group/class. Teacher addresses the learners as a class, using words such as "julle" and "hulle".	The teacher mostly interacts with the learners as a whole class, on occasion an individual interaction will be initiated by a child (the learner actually approaches or addresses the teacher). When maintaining behavioural expectations she mostly addresses the whole class.	The teacher often interacts with learners on an individual basis, when addressing expectation of behaviour she addresses the learners individually, only occasionally addresses them as a class.	The teacher consistently interacts with learners individually. The teacher addresses the learners by their names and when asking questions the teacher expects learners to speak individually. Teacher mostly interacts with individual learners.

Appendix 3: CAPS for Grade R showing integration and play-based learning

2.8 GRADE R

The Grade R organisation of language learning is based on principles of **integration and play-based learning**. The teacher should be pro-active, a mediator rather than a facilitator. A mediator makes the most of incidental learning opportunities that arise spontaneously through a range of child-centred activities, such as free-play in the fantasy corner or block construction site, and teacher-directed activities such as a story 'ring' or other 'rings'. Issues relating to language as well as social, emotional and other forms of development such as fine and gross motor present themselves naturally in the routines and activities of a quality Grade R daily schedule. All these settings could provide opportunities for a teacher to purposely intervene and 'mediate' incidental learning that promotes emergent literacy. A traditional, formal classroom-based learning programme that is tightly structured and 'basics bound' should be avoided as it does not optimise literacy acquisition for the Grade R child. Grade R should not be a 'watered down' Grade One. It has its own unique characteristics based on how children in this age group make sense of their world and acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will allow them to maximise the opportunities afforded in the formal learning years.

Focus on informal and spontaneous learning in various 'rings' during the day. Also develop a daily programme that allows optimal time for free play and is coupled with an acute awareness on the part of the teacher of what could be called 'teachable moments', moments that arise in many instances out of the children's own interests and creativity. The entire school day should be viewed as possibilities for enhancing literacy learning; either because of the direct intervention of the teacher, through planned mediated moments, including teacher-guided activities or because of the numerous incidental learning opportunities that occur during the day and enable the teacher to promote learning through utilising the 'teachable moment'. Such moments most frequently occur during routine periods and, of course, free play.

From a **literacy perspective**, teachable moments will afford the teacher the opportunity to ask, for example, open-ended questions or to offer an alternative suggestion to the child and so instil in the child the desire to further his/her own learning. It becomes a question of the teacher knowing when to intervene in the learning process and when to stand back and allow the child the opportunity of providing his/her own solution to the problem at hand.

In the Grade R year the time table is called **the daily programme** and it comprises three main components, namely **teacher-guided activities, routines and child-initiated activities or free play**. Specific teacher-guided literacy learning opportunities are offered during the morning language ring (for example, theme/topic discussion/language ring; daily weather discussions; telling 'news'; show and tell rings and story time). Depending on the choice of focus (i.e. the teacher must have a clear idea of what learning s/he wants to promote) creative art activities, perceptual rings, movement, music and dramatisation rings can have a very specific literacy focus especially in refining the perceptual-motor concepts and skills which underpin formal reading.

Routines provide excellent opportunities for incidentally promoting various literacy skills. For example, instead of letting the children stand in a queue and wait to go to the bathroom, the teacher can use this time to promote phonemic awareness. All children whose names begin with the letter/sound 'S' go to the bathroom, now children whose names begin with the letter/sound 'N' etc. The other children could be playing word games such as 'I spy with my little eye' or having vocabulary reinforced, for example, what rhymes with dog; what do you think dogs like to eat? Snack time and tidy up time provide similar learning opportunities as the teacher encourages the children to play fun sound and word games.

During **free-play** the teacher can promote literacy in two ways. Firstly, through the structuring of the free play area. The teacher provides choices based on the types of learning opportunities she/he would like to promote. Outdoor free play such as climbing on a wooden climbing frame or riding on the cycle track might promote spatial awareness

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behaviours such as crossing the midline (one of the important perceptual-motor behaviours for acquiring both reading and writing skills) and encourage letter/word recognition by providing opportunities for children to 'read' road signs. Indoor free play activities should provide similar literacy learning opportunities. A memory game encourages visual memory and a fantasy corner promotes speaking and listening opportunities. The second way of promoting literacy during free play is through purposeful intervention. This can be done through, for example, the asking of thoughtful questions which extend thinking and enlarge vocabulary. By making helpful suggestions and inviting a child to think about alternative answers and ways of problem solving, a teacher can encourage a child to think more deeply about an issue and find good reasons for the choices they make. In this way not only literacy but holistic development is addressed.

In a **balanced, flexible language rich daily programme**, literacy learning opportunities are offered throughout the day. At the same time, important principles underpinning early learning are reinforced, namely, that young children learn best through movement (kinaesthetically) and then through interacting with concrete materials (three dimensional learning) before engaging with table top and paper and pencil activities (two dimensional representational activities).

Assessment practices in Grade R should be informal and children should not be subjected to a 'test' situation. For this reason Assessment Activities have not been included in the Grade R Curriculum and Assessment Policy Document (CAPS). Each activity used for assessment should be carefully planned so that it integrates a variety of skills. In Grade R most of the assessment takes place through observation with the teacher recording the results of the assessment using a checklist. Thus, as the year progresses a full picture of each child complete with challenges and strengths is gradually built. This allows for challenges to be addressed and strengths to be maximised.