

**THE USE OF TEACHING PORTFOLIOS IN THE IN-  
SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
SCHOOL EDUCATORS**

**XOLISWA MTOSE**



**THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MPHIL IN EDUCATION  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH**

**STUDY LEADER: PROF E M BITZER**

**MARCH 2002**

## DECLARATION

**I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

## ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to critically evaluate the use of portfolios as a basis for reflection in an in-service education programme for school educators. In this context the study had the following objectives: to establish a theoretical background for the use of teaching portfolios; to provide a rationale for teaching portfolios as tools for professional development of teachers; to investigate the use of teaching portfolios as tools for reflection in an in-service teacher education programme and to provide guidelines for utilising teaching portfolios as reflection tools for professional development of in-service teachers.

The Diploma in Education (DE) formed the basis of the case study. This undergraduate Diploma in Education is at level 5 (b). According to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) it is the level at which upgrading teachers who are regarded as 'unqualified' access the bachelor study. The DE is a typical case, because the findings from this case might be used to inform other undergraduate diplomas in Education accredited by the NQF in South Africa. Six in-service teachers were targeted for the research. At the time of analysis the teachers were in the first year of a two-year diploma in Education (DE) programme. The unit of analysis of this study was teachers' portfolios. The purpose of analysing portfolios was to find out how the portfolios portray the professional development of the teachers through their reflections. The data generating techniques employed included document study, interviews and observations.

The constant comparative method was used for data analysis. The categories derived from the data analysis were the following: Portfolios are tools for learning from experience; Self assessment strengthens commitment to competent classroom practice; Portfolios provide opportunities for professional development. Concerns about portfolio development dissipate with time and Teachers were able to reflect more deeply.

The teaching portfolio in this study has been identified as a vehicle for both self and collaborative evaluation. Guidelines for implementing portfolios in an in-service teacher education programme have been offered by this study, and recommendations have been made for further research.

## OPSOMMING

Die doel van die studie was om die benutting van portefeuljes as 'n basis vir refleksie in 'n indiensopleidingsprogram vir skoolopvoeders te gebruik. Binne hierdie konteks het die studie die volgende doelwitte gehad: Om 'n teoretiese basis daar te stel vir die benutting van onderrigportefeuljes; om 'n rasionaal te verskaf vir die benutting van onderrigportefeuljes as 'n professionele ontwikkelingsinstrument; om die benutting van onderrigportefeuljes te ondersoek as instrumente in 'n indiensopleidingsprogram vir skoolopvoeders, en om riglyne daar te stel vir die benutting van onderrigportefeuljes vir die professionele ontwikkeling van skoolopvoeders.

Die Diploma in Onderwys (DO) het as basis vir die gevallestudie gedien. Hierdie voorgraadse diploma in Onderwys is gelys op vlak 5(b) van die Nasionale Kwalifikasieraamwerk (NKR) en bied aan "ongekwalifiseerde" opvoeders toegang tot graadstudies. Die DO is gesien as 'n tipiese geval, aangesien die bevindinge van hierdie geval moontlik vir ander voorgraadse diplomas wat op die NKR geregistreer is van waarde mag wees. Ses opvoeders wat indiensopleiding ondergaan het, het die teikenpopulasie van die studie uitgemaak. Ten tye van die navorsing was die opvoeders in hul eerste jaar van die tweejarige DO. Die eenheid van analise was die onderrigportefeuljes van die opvoeders. Die doel met die analise van die portefeuljes was om vas te stel in watter mate dit die professionele ontwikkeling van die opvoeders vergestalt deur hul eie reflektiewe aktiwiteite. Die tegniese waardeur die data gegenereer is het dokumentstudie, onderhoude en observasie ingesluit.

Die konstante vergelykingsmetode is benut in die analise van die data. Die analisekategorieë wat vanuit die data afgelei is, het die volgende ingesluit: Portefeuljes is instrumente vir ervaringsleer; Selfevaluering is versterkend in die verbintenis tot kompetente klaskamerpraktyk; Portefeuljes is geleenthede tot professionele ontwikkeling; Die ontwikkeling van portefeuljes is tydrowend; Opvoeders het die vermoë om in diepte te reflekteer.

In die studie is die onderrigportefeulje geïdentifiseer as 'n instrument vir beide self- en samewerkende evaluering. Riglyne vir die implementering van portefeuljes in 'n indiensopleidingsprogram is voorgestel en aanbevelings vir verdere navorsing is deur die studie gemaak.

## ACKNOWLEDGE MENTS

I would like to express my gratitude and sincere appreciation to all those who assisted to make this study a success.

The DE students of year 2000-2001 at Rhodes University. Without their cooperation and understanding this study would not have been successful.

My supervisor, Professor Eli Bitzer for his guidance and support.

The lecturers and colleagues of education Department, Rhodes University (East London Campus) for their encouragement and motivation when it was most needed.

To the Rhodes University (East London Campus) Librarian, Tembisa Mafanya for all her help and assistance.

Ms, Pamela Maxakato, Ms Carol Carter Ms Monica Hendricks and Mr Sean Coughlan for their encouragement and advice on this study.

To my dear children Vuyokazi, Cwayita and Lubabalo for their unwavering support. They instilled in me strength to believe in myself.

Finally to my husband Monde Mtose this work owes far more than any formal acknowledgement can convey. I thank you for your constant encouragement throughout. This work would never be completed without you having been at my side.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
<b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1    ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY	2
1.2    STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	2
1.3    RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	3
1.4    AIM OF THE STUDY	3
1.5    OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	3
1.6    CONCEPTUALISATION	4
1.7    FURTHER PROGRESSION OF THE STUDY	5
<b>CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1    INTRODUCTION	6
2.2    PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	6
2.3    AIMS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	8
2.4    FACTORS ENCOURAGING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH	10
2.5    AN INDIVIDUALISED STAFF DEVELOPMENT APPROACH	13
2.6    MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	14
2.7    PORTFOLIOS IN RELATION TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	19
2.8    SUMMARY	27
<b>CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>28</b>
3.1    RESEARCH ORIENTATION	28
3.2    DATA GENERATION	28
3.3    RESEARCH STRATEGY	29
3.4    DATA GENERATING TECHNIQUES	34
3.5    ANALYSIS OF DATA	40
3.6    SUMMARY	42

<b>CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA</b>	<b>43</b>
4.1 INTRODUCTION	43
4.2 DATA ANALYSIS	43
4.3 INTERVIEW DATA	50
4.4 FIELD NOTES	51
4.5 PORTFOLIO DATA PRESENTATION	52
4.6 INTERVIEW DATA PRESENTATION	58
4.7 FIELD NOTES DATA	64
4.8 SUMMARY	
<b>CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS</b>	<b>71</b>
5.1 INTRODUCTION	71
5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	73
5.3 PROBLEMS AND WEAKNESSES	83
5.4 SUMMARY	85
<b>CHAPTER 6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION</b>	<b>87</b>
6.1 INTRODUCTION	87
6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PORTFOLIO IMPLEMENTATION	87
6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	94
6.4 CONCLUSION	94
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES</b>	<b>96</b>

## APPENDICES

- APPENDIX A: ROLES AND COMPETENCES OF A TEACHER
- APPENDIX B: LETTER OF CONSENT
- APPENDIX C: PORTFOLIO DATA
- APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW DATA
- APPENDIX E: TEACHING OBSERVATION FORM

## ANNEXURES

- ANNEXURE A: A WORKSHOP MODEL ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
- ANNEXURE B: AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE CLASSROOMS LOOKED LIKE INSIDE
- ANNEXURE C: CO OPERATIVE LEARNING FACILITATION
- ANNEXURE D: AN EXAMPLE OF AN ARTIFACT  
LESSON PLAN WITH REFLECTIONS AND AN  
EXAMPLE OF LEARNER'S WORK

## LIST OF TABLES

- TABLE 1 PORTFOLIO DATABASE AND INTERVIEW  
DATABASE CATEGORIES AND SUB  
CATEGORIES
- TABLE 2 QUESTIONS THAT PROMOTE STUDENT SELF  
SELF REFLECTIONS
- TABLE 3 "MEDIATION SKILLS"
- TABLE 4 "INSTRUCTIONAL PARADIGM"
- TABLE 5 "CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT"
- TABLE 6 "CLASSROOM PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT"
- TABLE 7 "INTERPRETER AND DESIGNER OF  
LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND MATERIALS
- TABLE 8 TABLE OF CATEGORIES AND SUB  
AND STATEMENT OF OUTCOMES



**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

DE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION  
M+2 MATRIC PLUS A TWO YEAR PRIMARY TEACHER'S CERTIFICATE INSET  
INSET IN-SERVICE TRAINING

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The goals of teacher education are driven by the vision of a flourishing democracy that is able to provide quality education and training for all citizens. The education and training that is proposed in higher education and teacher education, is aimed at bringing about a community of competent and reflective teaching professionals who can organize systematic learning and help to establish and sustain peaceful learning environments (Department of Education and Training, 1996b: 9).

Rhodes University believes in contributing meaningfully towards the realisation of the higher education vision, that of providing quality education and training to all citizens (DE, Student Handbook, 2000). Therefore it strives to develop teacher education programmes that are relevant and effective. Among the programmes offered in the Faculty of Education at Rhodes University is an undergraduate Diploma in Education. As the course was to be accredited, the curriculum, the duration of the course and the teaching time had to satisfy the Norms and Standards as set for Educators. The underlying principle of the design of the course required that teachers not be removed from the classrooms during the course, it was planned that teaching would take place on Saturdays and during school holidays. The plan called for forty contact days, each of six hours duration, thus totaling 240 hours (an example of a workshop, see attached Annexure A). In addition to these teachers had to form study groups consisting of between five to eight participants. These study groups had to meet after each course meeting and collectively work on assignments set for this purpose.

The in-service teacher education curriculum at Rhodes University focuses not only on ways of improving the quality of education in primary schools but it also provides a vehicle for the issues being promoted at the national level, Outcomes Based Education and Curriculum 2005 (Government Gazette, 2000). One of the objectives of the course is to meet the standards for national accreditation and thus provide the teachers completing the course with recognition as qualified educators. The substance of the teacher education qualification and learning programmes is provided by the seven roles and competences as set by the Norms and

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The goals of teacher education are driven by the vision of a flourishing democracy that is able to provide quality education and training for all citizens. The education and training that is proposed in higher education and teacher education, is aimed at bringing about a community of competent and reflective teaching professionals who can organize systematic learning and help to establish and sustain peaceful learning environments (Department of Education and Training, 1996b: 9).

Rhodes University believes in contributing meaningfully towards the realisation of the higher education vision, that of providing quality education and training to all citizens (DE, Student Handbook, 2000). Therefore it strives to develop teacher education programmes that are relevant and effective. Among the programmes offered in the Faculty of Education at Rhodes University is an undergraduate Diploma in Education. As the course was to be accredited, the curriculum, the duration of the course and the teaching time had to satisfy the Norms and Standards as set for Educators. The underlying principle of the design of the course required that teachers not be removed from the classrooms during the course, it was planned that teaching would take place on Saturdays and during school holidays. The plan called for forty contact days, each of six hours duration, thus totaling 240 hours (an example of a workshop, see attached Annexure A). In addition to these teachers had to form study groups consisting of between five to eight participants. These study groups had to meet after each course meeting and collectively work on assignments set for this purpose.

The in-service teacher education curriculum at Rhodes University focuses not only on ways of improving the quality of education in primary schools but it also provides a vehicle for the issues being promoted at the national level, Outcomes Based Education and Curriculum 2005 (Government Gazette, 2000). One of the objectives of the course is to meet the standards for national accreditation and thus provide the teachers completing the course with recognition as qualified educators. The substance of the teacher education qualification and learning programmes is provided by the seven roles and competences as set by the Norms and

Standards for Educators by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and COTEP (Government Gazette 2000) (see Appendix A).

The curriculum for the programme adopts the following format; Education Studies, Professional Studies, Primary Curriculum Studies, Computers In Education and Professional Classroom Practice. In the first year of the programme the teachers are registered for Education Studies, Primary Curriculum Studies and Professional Classroom Practice and in the second year Professional Practice is carried over and Computer In Education and Professional Studies are introduced. Professional Classroom Practice becomes important part of this course and although the teachers that come on the course have considerable experience of teaching and managing schools, it is felt that they should be encouraged to implement changed teaching strategies in response to the curriculum 2005 inputs.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

As teacher education strives for excellence in the production of educators who are able to “Demonstrate the ability to apply, extend and meaningfully synthesize various forms of knowledge to develop skills” (Department of Education and Training, 1996a: 5), the question that arises from Rhodes University lecturers is whether the teachers in the programme are motivated enough to commit to the task of being excellent teachers?

The greatest challenge for Rhodes University in-service teacher lecturers of the programme had been assessing the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of teachers’ professional growth on completion of the course. Although the teachers as learners in the programme are assessed through written assignments, examinations and teaching practice, these could not be used as the only means to measure teacher effectiveness. The assignments and examinations provide direct evidence of understanding of the content, while teaching practice through observation of teaching provides evidence of the skill of teaching and indirect evidence of understanding the context (Department of Education, 1997).

In the current professional climate, reflection upon practice and self evaluation are increasingly gaining respect as a means of teacher evaluation, and educators are increasingly

being expected to demonstrate their personal plans for professional development (Department of Education, 1997). In the light of this method of evaluation, the teacher education programme at Rhodes University appeared to be incongruent.

### **1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

To address this incongruity for the group of teacher learners registered for the Diploma in Education in year 2000, the lecturers began to explore the potential value of teaching portfolio development and how it might contribute to bridging the perceptible gap between current practice and the more desirable shared evaluation. The researcher wanted to focus on a form of authentic assessment and evaluation that reflected professional growth particularly within the classroom context. The researcher wanted the process of development to be the prime focus, and evaluation of professional practice in its traditional sense to be secondary.

In this study the researcher aimed at exploring the potential of teaching portfolios, because, in ways that no other assessment method can, portfolios provide a connection to the contexts and personal histories of real teaching and make it possible to document the unfolding of both teaching and learning over time (Wolf, 1991).

### **1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The main aim of this study was to critically evaluate the use of teaching portfolios as a basis for reflection in an in-service education programme for school teachers.

### **1.5 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this study were in particular:

- To provide a rationale for using teaching portfolios as tools for reflection in the professional development of teachers;
- To establish a theoretical background for the use of teaching portfolios;
- To evaluate the use of portfolios as tools for reflection in an in- service teacher education programme;

- To provide guidelines for utilising teaching portfolios as reflection tools for the professional development of in-service teachers.

## **1.6 CONCEPTUALISATION AND CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

It is necessary to clarify some of the key concepts at this point in the study.

### **1.6.1 Professional development:**

Oldroyd, Smith and Lee (1985) define Professional development as a process or processes by which competent teachers achieve higher levels of professional competence and expand their understanding of self, role, context and career. Professional development means the same in this study. One of the key issues in the Norms and Standards for Teacher Education Training and Development is the focus on professionalism. This concept has been highlighted to provide teachers with a high level of skills, knowledge and flexibility, and the social awareness needed to prosper in the complex transitional context in schools and to cope with challenges posed by the process of globalization.

**1.6.2 Diploma In Education (DE):** According to NQF, the DE is a level 5 qualification. In this study the teachers come into the course at NQF level 4 which is either M + 2 or Standard 8 + 2. They bring more or less than 20 years teaching experience into the programme. The DE is an in-service teacher education programme because it serves teachers that are already in the field and it is a qualification that allows for a flexibility and competence. It provides a focused system of ongoing professional development.

**1.6.3 Study group:** “Study group” in this teacher education programme means a group of about six to eight teachers that worked together to provide academic support for each other in professional and academic development. Proximity to both school and home was a major factor in determining study groups. Teachers registered for the DE, who were at the same school, naturally formed a study group.

**1.6.4 Reflective practice:** In this study reflective practice / teaching meant searching for patterns about one's thinking about classroom practices and interrogating the reasons for labeling some lessons as successes or failures (Schulze, 1994).

## **1.7 FURTHER PROGRESSION OF THE STUDY**

In the second chapter of this study the literature relating to research done on professional development and use of portfolios in teacher education is reviewed.

The case study as a research strategy is described in the third chapter. The research methods were explained in relation to the research approach followed in this study and the rationale for following this approach was discussed. Methods of data collection as well as the process of data collection were explained.

In the fourth chapter the data was presented and analysed. The process was as follows:

- The three sets of data (i.e. portfolio data from teachers, interview data and observation data) will be presented. The purpose and the manner the researcher went about collecting it will be explained;
- The last step is the interpretation of data within the context of this study.

The research findings and interpretation of these findings are given in chapter five.

The sixth chapter is a concluding chapter in which conclusions and recommendations of the study were made. Some recommendations for future research on the topic were made with the intention of forming guidelines for implementing portfolios in an in- service teacher education programme.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a review of literature on professional development of teachers focusing on the use of teaching portfolios as tools for reflective practice. Professional development<sup>1</sup> is reviewed with specific reference to reflective practice. Literature on teaching portfolios and the value of teaching portfolios for professional development is also reviewed.

#### 2.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Before proceeding with the different aspects of professional development which are to be dealt with, it is necessary to establish a clearly defined framework for the concept of professional development. The term professional development can be also be referred to as staff development, or teaching development, as they partly encompass similar ideas.

Ashworth and Harvey (1994) point out that staff development is about investing in people. Staff development is focused on the individual and takes his/her individual characteristics, strengths and weaknesses into account and promotes development or movement towards a goal of showing greater skill, competence and confidence than before.

Webb in Bitzer and Kapp (1998) writes that staff development is normally considered to include the institutional policies, programmes and procedures which facilitate and support staff so that they may fully serve their own and their institution needs.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this study the terms, *professional development*, *staff development* and *teaching development* will be used interchangeably.



Bayne-Jardine (1986:76) describes staff development as a “learning process”. In spite of the fact that teachers are intensively prepared for the task while at university or college, it is when they are faced with classroom realities, that they all realize that the needs of the learners cannot be catered for. Lambert (1984:34) says that

*“Staff development is a process designed to foster personal and professional growth for individuals with a respectful, supportive, positive organizational climate having as its ultimate aim better learning for students [pupils] and continuous, responsible staff renewal for educators and schools”.*

This definition implies and highlights a number of important issues related to the concept of staff development. Firstly, it refers to the personal and professional growth of the teachers, because staff development is an adaptive learning process for adults. Its design takes into account the nature of adult development, learning, school context and the dynamics of change (Lambert, 1984: 38). The personal growth process also includes cultivating and strengthening individual teacher competencies, efficiencies and effectiveness as a professional in her job in the school.

Secondly, the definition indicates that staff development will take place within a particular supportive environment, that being the school itself. *“Basing the activities in the school can encourage a sense of ownership by the participants as well as a sense that they are job related thus increasing a staff's commitment to them”* (Oldroyd, Smith and Lee, 1985:14). Staff development within a school is designed to meet not only the individual teacher's needs but also the needs of individual schools in particular. It is often assumed that the urgent needs of individual staff will be the needs of the school, or vice versa.

Thirdly, the environment in which staff development is to take place is made supportive by the collegiality of other members of staff. This encompasses expectations and structures for shared work and shared responsibility (Griffin, 1983:106). It also incorporates the idea of teachers and their trainers / facilitators working together in partnership to serve the needs of the individual teacher and school (Ashton et al., 1983:16).

when teachers' and organisational needs have been met, the learners will learn better. The ultimate aim of INSET is, after all, improving the situation at school and in classrooms.

Having accepted this definition of staff development, the basic framework for staff development can be established. It comprises three important components:

- Firstly, people at different developmental stages, with different learning patterns and different personal and professional needs;
- Secondly, interactions and
- thirdly, context (Griffin, 1983: 229- 240).

These will be found on many levels (individual, school, regional and national). Staff development will thus incorporate all major programmes and initiatives operating in schools "*all coordinated and targeted to meet learner needs*" (Lambert: 1984:95).

Staff development is an ongoing process, appropriate to the ideals of education. Genck (1983:237) says, "*Strengthening of staff development represents the most practical and significant opportunity for increasing teacher effectiveness*". That is why it is essential to understand the aims of a staff development programme.

### **2.3 AIMS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Generally, the aims of staff development could be regarded as a manifestation of the broadening and deepening of teachers' knowledge of their subject and of teaching and education, as well as the understanding of attitudes, values and general expertise in respect of their professional working environment and task. Fullan (1990:3) defines the aims of staff development as those activities designed: "*... to improve teachers' knowledge, understanding and performance in present or future roles*".

The primary goals of staff development are identified by Zumwalt (1986:170) as follows:

- To support teachers, individually and collectively, in becoming  
Autonomous and in charge of their own professional development
- To support teachers, either individually or collectively in developing

a more effective programme for their students.

- To make the “familiar” problematic and assist in becoming more reflective and analytical as they learn from their own teaching.
- To expand the ways teachers think about teaching and to provide the means to alter it by exposure to concepts and findings from research and theoretical literature in education.

These goals have an underlying common denominator and that is the conception of teachers as active, reflective professionals concerned about growth of their students and themselves and who view their work as involving professional deliberation and problem solving .

What the writers largely ignore is the importance of building relationships among colleagues, between teachers and learners, as well as between teachers and other stakeholders.

Staff development could be seen to fulfil two primary objectives. As Schreuder et al. (1993) argue one of these objectives is the correction of professional shortcomings, while the other is creation of opportunities for development. The approach taken will depend upon the needs of the staff of a particular school.

If only correctional development programmes are embarked on, such sessions can become very negative, as the staff involved is constantly being made aware of their failings. It can also create the faulty impression that incorrect behavior can be rectified through instant solution. Teachers can also resist this type of programme, as it very often does not meet their individual and collective needs.

Developmental programmes, on the other hand, create opportunities for growing professionally, and are generally accepted much more positively by the teachers. Such programmes are based on the assumption that teaching is a complex occupation, and one which can never be said to be complete. Practical experience and professional development is the means by which a teacher can be broadened and improved and guided towards his/ her knowledge and skills. Schreuder et al. (1993:2) make the following important statement: *“Research shows that teachers prefer to develop from this perspective. It offers them the*

*opportunity to determine their goals, to plan their new development and to achieve greater self- fulfillment in their careers*". The important emphasis here is that of offering teachers the opportunity, and giving them the freedom, to be involved in the design and development of their own improvement goals and strategies, and of contextualizing their development within their own, individual experience and perceptions.

Wildman and Niles (1987:4) summarize the goal of staff development in its essence as follows:

" We hear a great deal about what good teachers should know and do, but relatively little about how teachers become good teachers". This suggests that "becoming" a good teacher, i.e. the process, encompasses the definition of and the purpose for the professional development of teachers.

Teachers do not automatically grow professionally, but could do so. This is a question of motivation, hence factors that encourage professional growth deserve serious consideration.

## **2.4 FACTORS ENCOURAGING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

What appears to be necessary for the growth of individual teachers in their working lives is the provision of educational conditions which enable teachers to continue to grow academically, professionally and socially. They need opportunities to increase their competence by sharpening their skills whilst updating, widening and deepening their knowledge of what to teach. They should strive towards an increased awareness of why they are doing whatever it is they do in the classroom. They also need to develop an effective way of dealing with other members of staff in order to generate new and feasible proposals for improving teaching and learning. In addition they also need a supportive environment in which they are free to make mistakes and receive helpful, non-threatening, corrective feedback including that from carefully documented observations of their teaching colleagues. This is important, considering that the teachers seldom see each other in action and have little idea about their levels of teaching competence (Dounoghue, 1981).

Brundage & Mackeracher (1980: 95-96) believe that professional development can only occur when there is personal stability. Inexperienced teachers are found to need more structured assistance with less reflective discussion, and more relevant teaching techniques. Furthermore, they contend that teachers as learners need “self assessment accompanied by activities that encourage differentiating and integrating”.

Lambert (1984: 132- 136) feels strongly that every teacher should be required to have a personal plan and programme for professional development. This plan should include aims and objectives, activities and strategies for monitoring whether objectives have been met. Nothing negative should be included in the personal plan, because it should be written around improvement and growth: there should be risk-taking and deliberate creation of that which is new or original.

McLaughlin & Marsh (in Lieberman & Miller, 1979:92) agree that there should be a more personal approach to professional development, especially with experienced teachers. They believe that the personal approach should emphasize new cognitive frameworks for looking at teaching practice and their effectiveness as teachers. This will mean putting aside time for reflecting upon present teaching practices, challenging familiar assumptions and exploring new ways of acting in accordance with how a teacher then sees the reality of the classroom situation (Easen, 1985:71).

Teachers are, however, not always in the best position to define their needs, especially when continuing professional development is associated with the deficiency model, or where there are no incentives, or where stating personal opinions could be misinterpreted (Leiter & Cooper in Lieberman & Miller, 1979: 122).

A special kind of support for personal growth and professional improvement has to do with giving recognition and rewards to those who make an effort and, in particular, to those who succeed and can serve as models or examples for others (Lambert, 1984:155).

Financial and/or promotion incentives do not, however, always prompt teachers to be involved in their own professional development, especially when intrinsic motivation is

absent (McLaughlin & Marsh in Lieberman & Miller, 1979:75). The reluctance to become involved in personal and professional growth is often overcome by exposing the teachers to alternative methods and strategies which will produce sufficient disequilibria to encourage some to change and experiment with different strategies (Lambert, 1984 :28). Teachers should, *“as responsible professionals, be consciously seeking to improve their practices. That is what being a professional should mean”* (Henderson in Dounoghue, 1981:244).

The most important feature of continuing professional development seems to be to encourage teachers to personally commit themselves to professional growth using all resources at their disposal. This will involve encouraging teachers to accept that their main responsibility for satisfying personal and professional needs is neither to their employer nor to the children they teach but to themselves (Taylor in Hoyle & Megarry, 1980: 336-337). The choice of what, how, where and when such in-service education takes place is the teacher's (Edelfelt in Massanari et al., 1978:77).

The employer does, however, have a responsibility towards the teachers, because continual professional development is an important element in retaining competent teachers in the profession (Department of Education, 1998). This is a challenge to professional education to become organised, to the extent that the activities promote personal and professional development in individual teachers. Hoyle and Megarry (1980:16) plead for combining personal and professional development rather than setting them up as opposites and seeing them as two separate issues.

It can, [thus] be concluded that each member of the school personnel must be provided with an opportunity for consistent integrated, personal and professional development throughout his/her career (where initial training would only be a starting point), enabling both his/ her own training needs and those of the changing educational system to be met as closely as possible (CERI, 1982:77).

In South Africa a similar act has been introduced, known as Skills Development Act, 1998 and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999. The levy grant scheme aims to expand the

knowledge and competencies of the labour force resulting in improvements in employability and productivity (Labour Department, 1997).

## **2.5 AN INDIVIDUALISED STAFF DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

A staff development programme should also consist of a personal development plan for each individual teacher. Any staff development programme that is to be effective must recognise individual characters and the need for differentiation (Genck: 1983). A mentoring system would accommodate this need quite satisfactorily.

Also to be borne in mind is that there is differentiation between levels of teacher development that can be vitally important to staff development, especially regarding the planning, designing and drawing up of programmes (Genck: 1983). This points to the importance of individualization in the planning of programmes as well as variations in the implementation of the programmes. This observation is vitally important in staff development programmes. A programme which is drawn up and designed to meet the needs of individual members of staff should, according to (Hole and Megarry, 1980: 35), take the following actions into account :

- Identification of individual needs which could be addressed by staff development.
- Evaluation of the individual's classroom skills and classroom organization.
- Structuring a personal (individualized) development plan for each teacher on the staff.
- The use of a mentor system and a portfolio system, where the teacher is helped to identify needs, set goals, select strategies and collect materials, achievements and keep records of courses, meetings and the like, compiling them in a portfolio.

However in this study the portfolio could be used as a means of structuring both personal and professional development. In this programme activities could be organized for:

- Self development of individual teachers;
- Professional development of teachers in a group context.
- Evaluation of the success of professional development programmes

through feedback and self- assessment of personal goals achieved.

The implementation of such a personal development plan for each individual teacher as a part of staff development offers each member of staff an agenda according to which he / she can strive towards personal development goals. According to (Martin, 1994: 38) successful personal professional growth plans often include a mentor system, the mentor being the person with whom an open and honest professional relationship can be nurtured, to the benefit of both parties.

Burden (1986) strongly believes that teachers must accept the results of the evaluation of their progress, as they are themselves responsible for the extent of their progress or lack of it. He states that they should be given a chance to respond to the programme, to enter into discussion and participate in drawing up a plan for development, that is, to take ownership and responsibility of their professional development, as is the case in this study.

## **2. 6 MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Psychologists exploring the subject of adult learning in the 1970's began to uncover aspects of adult cognitive development, that have a bearing on the teaching and facilitation of learning in adults. The following discussed models will also be applied to the discussion of findings in chapter 5.

Knowels (1994) presents a model that highlights the distinctiveness of adult learning in four key areas :

- As a person matures, there is a shift away from a self concept of a dependent personality towards one that is self- directed
- Accumulated experience becomes a resource of learning
- Readiness to learn becomes increasingly orientated towards the developmental tasks of social roles
- Time perspectives change from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application – thus learning moves from



subject-centered to problem-centered.

The implications of adopting these characteristics of adult learning are significant when considering how professionals in training might engage in their own learning development in the most effective way.

Knowles (1994) expands some of these implications in terms of appropriate models for the facilitation of learning. These include such aspects as the learning climate, diagnosis of needs, the planning process, conduct of the learning experience, and evaluation of learning. Central to each of these is the fact that adults enter into any undertaking with a background of experience and learning from their experience. Therefore, teaching (or facilitating) techniques that build experiential learning may be perceived by learners as an extension of everyday life, and are based on the assumption that learning from experience is as valid as other forms of learning.

However, there is another model of initial and continuing professional development based on the assumption that learning from experience can emerge from attendance at lectures or workshops. It requires that teachers engage in such activities for a specified number of hours, providing proof of an identifiable increase in learning. Under these circumstances the learner continues to be seen as dependent, participating in someone else's agenda of desirable learning; individual histories and experiences are not embedded in the learning process and application of the anticipated new learning is not necessarily related to the everyday roles of the participants.

Knowles's work resonates with the notion of deep and surface learning originally developed by Gibbs (1992). Gibbs contends that the quality of the outcome of learning is crucially affected by the way in which individuals approach their learning. Surface approaches are characterized by the rote learning of facts and their regurgitation (frequently under formal examination conditions). Deep approaches involve individuals attempting to understand underlying principles, ideas and concepts and to interpret these in personally meaningful ways. Gibbs emphasizes that the two approaches are not mutually exclusive. What

determines whether the learner adopts a surface or deep approach is primarily a mix of prior educational experience and the nature or structure of the particular task at hand.

Gibbs describes the key characteristics of a model of facilitating learning which leads to a deep as distinct from a surface approach to learning. These characteristics are those:

- which recognize that a learner's motivation is intrinsic, and that she experiences a need to know something;
- where learners are actively involved in their own learning, rather than remaining passive;
- which offer the opportunities for exploratory talk and interaction with others;
- where knowledge is approached as a series of integrated wholes, and related to other knowledge, rather than presented in small separate pieces.

While in certain circumstances surface learning is appropriate, and even desirable, it does not lead to the type of engagement with the subject or process of learning that will facilitate personal and professional development. For this to take place, deep learning is necessary.

Kolb (1984) explored the principle of experiential learning by describing it as a cycle that explicitly incorporates and builds on the experiences from which learning is derived. According to Kolb experiential learning is a cyclical process of "*organising and constructing learning from observations that have been made in some practical situation, with the implication that learning can then lead to action or improved action*" (Moon, 1999:20). This cycle is demonstrated in the following diagram (figure 2.1).

determines whether the learner adopts a surface or deep approach is primarily a mix of prior educational experience and the nature or structure of the particular task at hand.

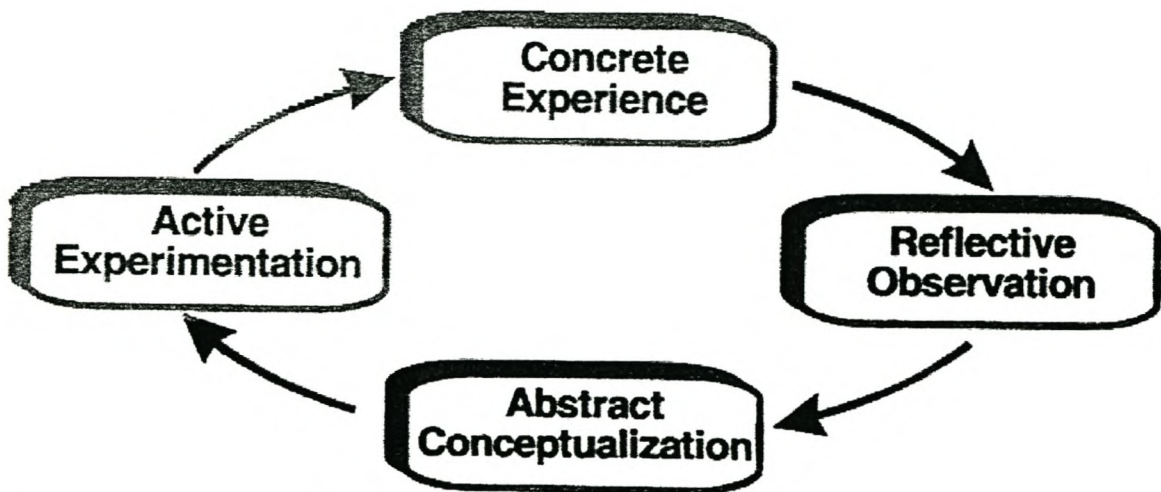
Gibbs describes the key characteristics of a model of facilitating learning which leads to a deep as distinct from a surface approach to learning. These characteristics are those:

- which recognize that a learner's motivation is intrinsic, and that she experiences a need to know something;
- where learners are actively involved in their own learning, rather than remaining passive;
- which offer the opportunities for exploratory talk and interaction with others;
- where knowledge is approached as a series of integrated wholes, and related to other knowledge, rather than presented in small separate pieces.

While in certain circumstances surface learning is appropriate, and even desirable, it does not lead to the type of engagement with the subject or process of learning that will facilitate personal and professional development. For this to take place, deep learning is necessary.

Kolb (1984) explored the principle of experiential learning by describing it as a cycle that explicitly incorporates and builds on the experiences from which learning is derived. According to Kolb experiential learning is a cyclical process of "*organising and constructing learning from observations that have been made in some practical situation, with the implication that learning can then lead to action or improved action*" (Moon, 1999:20). This cycle is demonstrated in the following diagram (figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Experiential Learning Cycle



Source: Adapted from Yorke, 1981

Kolb (1984) presents the experiential learning circle in the following manner:

- The circle begins with the learner's personal involvement in a specific experience.
- The learner reflects on this experience from many viewpoints seeking to find its meaning.
- Out of this reflection the learner draws logical conclusions (abstract conceptualization)
- and may add his or her own conclusions to the theoretical constructs of others (these conclusions and constructs guide decisions and actions) (active experimentation)
- That leads to new concrete experiences.

To engage effectively in all stages of this learning process, learners need four different kinds of abilities: the ability to engage in a concrete experience; to engage in reflective observation; to conceptualize or draw abstract generalizations; and to apply concepts to new situations (Moon, 1999). Mezirow (1981:136) has described andragogy as an “organised and sustained effort to assist adults to learn in a way that enhances their capability to function as self-directed learners”. He suggests that it may be achieved through a progressive decrease in dependency on the educator, using a range of learning resources and engaging in individual goal setting, problem posing and problem solving. Integrated with this process is the ability to value, reflect on and learn from experience.

Reflection, as well as being the crucial stage in Kolb’s learning cycle, is seen by many to be a key concept in professional development and has been particularly highlighted by Schon (1983,1987) and Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985). Schon (1983) highlights the difference between ‘reflection in action’ and ‘reflection on action’. The former, when applied by an experienced practitioner, may be almost at the level of intuition. He believes that the ability to interpret and develop concepts within a sphere of professional expertise enables the individual to learn and grow.

He also proposes a model of reflection on action, which involves revisiting an experience after the event, in order to extract principles and effectively ‘bank’ these for future use in reflection in action. It is this form of reflection that Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) have explored further. The authors identify the key components of reflection. This relates to the initial experience(s), including aspects of behavior, ideas and feelings. These then feed into the reflective processes, which involve returning to the experience, attending to feelings in relation to the retrospective perception of the experience and re-evaluating the experience. The outcomes of those processes will then result in new perspectives on experience, a change in behavior, readiness for application and commitment to action.

Boud , Keogh and Walker (1985) believe that a significant issue in encouraging learners to engage in such a process of reflection is the role played by others in supporting reflection.

In this study the process of reflection is carried out through the use of portfolios. The process of portfolio-based learning encapsulates the principles of adult learning, but at the same time offers an effective means of facilitating and recording learning and valuing the individual's unique experiences. It also of reviewers and assesses that learning.

## 2.7 TEACHING PORTFOLIOS IN RELATION TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### 2.7.1 WHAT IS A TEACHING PORTFOLIO?

The following are the examples of definitions of a teaching portfolio<sup>2</sup> by various authors:

Hall (1997:81) contends that “ *A professional portfolio is a collection of material, made by a professional that records and reflects on key events and processes in that professional's career*”. Some definitions include the following:

- A collection of materials documenting teaching performance that is useful for documenting teaching as an institutional priority (Seldin, 1991).
- A collection of documents that represents the best of one's teaching and provides one with the occasion to reflect on his or her teaching (Zubizarreta, 1994).
- Is a collection of work produced by a teacher ... designed to demonstrate the teacher's talents (Doolittle, 1994).
- Barton and Collins (1993: 201) explain that “*For teachers a professional portfolio is a thoughtfully organised collection of artifacts that illustrates professional status, pedagogical expertise, subject matter knowledge, knowledge of learning process and professional and personal attributes that contribute to teaching. The professional portfolio itself is the product of, and*

---

<sup>2</sup> The term teaching portfolio in this study is referred to as a professional portfolio or a portfolio.

*cannot be separated from, the reflection and assessment processes required to produce it”.*

- To Farr and Tone (1994) a professional portfolio is a record of goals, growth, achievement and professional attributes developed over time and in collaboration with others. A portfolio illustrates goals and development over time and supplies the highest level of achievement.

The concept of a “teaching portfolio” as used in this study implies that portfolios were used as a mechanism for reflective practice for the professional development of teachers.

## **2.6.2 WHY USE PORTFOLIOS IN TEACHER EDUCATION?**

During the past decade, portfolio use in teacher education has rapidly expanded and continues to do so with increasing credibility as an alternative form of assessment of professional growth in both pre-service and in-service contexts. Romano in (Winsor and Ellefson, 1995).

Barton and Collins (1993) best articulate the reasons for the use of a portfolio in teacher education by contrasting it with the comprehensive exam, another method commonly used to evaluate success of graduate students in a programme. Farr and Tone (1994) argue that portfolios focus on, and expose the real evolving professional thinking, skills and actions in the classroom context, rather than some intermediate learnings within the confines of the university.

The portfolio is a tool for self-evaluation and self-reflection. “ *The very process of collecting and sifting documents and materials that reflect a professor’s teaching, gets them thinking about what worked and what did not in the classroom, and why they do what they do. It forces them to review their activities, strategies and plans for the future*” (Seldin, 1991: 13). The portfolios lead to the improvement of teaching, which in turn increases student learning. The teaching portfolio “*can promote growth by providing a textured picture of teaching and learning as they unfold over time, enabling teachers to examine, discuss, and reflect on their performance*” (Wolf, Whinery and Hagerty, 1995: 125).

A portfolio is a tool for long-term, ongoing, authentic evaluation. In this respect Wolf (1991:129) says that “ *in ways that no other assessment method can, portfolios provide a connection to the contexts and personal histories of real teaching and make it possible to document the unfolding of both teaching and learning over time*”.

Many reported implementations of portfolio development, especially within American teacher education programmes, involve their employment within specific courses, frequently courses related to language learning (Ford and Ohlhausen, 1991; Winsor, 1994). In these, portfolios portray one aspect of a teacher’s development such as literacy skills and interests. Other implementations are more general (Bird, 1990; Wolf, 1991; Cole, 1992; Winsor & Ellefson, 1995), in that the portfolios are used to frame an evaluative process, including both self- and collaborative evaluation. In some programmes, portfolios are specifically used as a means of evaluating students’ preparedness for admission to their student teaching semester. In programmes such as these, the portfolios (the products) themselves are evaluated, whereas, in others the evaluative process they frame is more highly valued than the product (Winsor and Ellefson , 1995).

Barton and Collins (1993: 201) say “... *the ongoing nature of the portfolio development process gives both student and faculty an opportunity to reflect on the student growth and change throughout the course of the programme*”. Valencia, McGinley and Pearson (1990) comment on the inability of static assessment instruments to capture all of the student’s knowledge at the middle school level. This is equally applicable to teacher education programmes.

Barton and Collins (1993) say the development of a portfolio shifts ownership of learning onto the student. Portfolios will normally be integrally related to a personal or professional learning plan. This constitutes the framework within which portfolio development takes place, and provides a statement of the outcomes that the portfolio seeks to demonstrate.



### 2.7.3 PURPOSES OF TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

A portfolio can serve many different purposes. It can either be summative or formative in nature. Doolittle (1994) sees the teaching portfolio as an educational tool which is primarily used in two ways: firstly, as means of authentic assessment in evaluating the effectiveness of a teacher for possible employment or promotion purposes and, secondly, as feedback to teachers so that they may improve their teaching and level of professionalism (thus summative as well as formative). He also emphasises the important role of the teaching portfolio in pre-service teaching programmes for the purposes of reflection and the provision of an ongoing record of the teacher's growth.

This is similar to Jarvinen and Kohen's (1995) description of the use of the portfolio in evaluating the professional development of new staff in higher education institutions during a yearlong induction programme. In particular these authors point to the valuable role of this tool in self-assessment and professional growth. Seldin (1993) is in favor of the collaborative collection of portfolios as a collegiality as well as providing opportunities for peer review. A climate of co-operation and trust, however needs to prevail.

Gibbs (1995:141) has outlined the following purposes for portfolios:

- to judge a wide range of student's work to gain a rounded overview of achievement over a period of time;
- to assess process as well as outcome in learning by including evidence of learning and achievement at several stages of development;
- to provide a flexible vehicle through which students' development can be plotted, reviewed and reflected upon in order to guide future learning;
- to ensure that the students engage in a wide variety of learning activities; to provide a vehicle for collecting evidence from past experience that competencies have been achieved ;
- to provide documentary evidence of the ability and experience of students to show employers or clients.

Moreover, according to Herman and Winters (1994:48) well-designed portfolios represent complex thinking and expressive skills. As vehicles of educational assessment they provide an equitable and assertive portrait of what a student knows and is able to do. Portfolios play a significant role in encouraging teachers and informing practice at every level of an educational system (ibid).

The purpose of a portfolio in this research is to promote teacher reflection and ownership over the learning process.

#### **2.7.4 THE VALUE OF TEACHING PORTFOLIOS**

A teaching portfolio has value as both a process of assessment and evaluation and as a product of that process (Calfee and Perfumo, 1996).

*Process:* Developing a teaching portfolio is a complex, thought provoking process of self evaluation and reflection, decision making, and goal setting that takes place over time and in an authentic context (Farr and Tone, 1994). It has potential to be a vehicle for career-long professional development and a source of unrivalled personal satisfaction. For teachers, self-evaluation begins with reflection. Reflection helps teachers to learn who they are as teachers and to be aware of how they teach. Over time, reflection significantly affects and directs professional choices and directions (Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985). The portfolio process can prompt teachers to reflect on themselves and their practice on a regular and continuing basis (reflective practice will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter).

By means of their portfolio it is possible for teachers to demonstrate the knowledge, skills talents and interests that contribute to their unique teaching qualification. Conscientiously prepared portfolios that illustrate teachers' competencies enable assessment and evaluation that is fair and meaningful, and grounded in authentic teaching activity. Seldin (1993) argues further that portfolios also facilitate personal and collaborative goal setting. By good goal setting, striving to meet those goals, recognizing achievement and subsequently revising those goals or setting new ones, portfolio development can ultimately lead to improvement in teaching and generally advanced professional development. In addition, the combination of

engagement in self-reflection and shared evaluation facilitated by portfolios can be a cornerstone of career-long professional development (Wolf, 1991).

*Product:* Additional value is attributed to the portfolio itself, as the product. As Seldin (1991: 136) observes “*Portfolios can give teachers a purpose and framework for preserving and sharing their work, providing occasions for mentoring and collegial interactions, and stimulating teachers to reflect on their own work and the act of teaching*”. Each teacher’s portfolio is a display of individual goals, growth and achievement as well as a testimony of acquired knowledge, professional and personal attributes.

Portfolios are unique as a valuable means of communication between the teacher and others (Seldin, 1991). Two most important instances for using this means of communication are during teaching practice and professional employment interviews. At these times, portfolios can stimulate thoughtful discussion about teaching, motivating others to engage in compelling discourse regarding many aspects of their professional development.

While portfolio presentation is not yet mandatory during employment interviews, portfolios are increasingly being welcomed and there is reason to believe that they may be requested in the future.

A portfolio also has a value as a source of self-satisfaction and pride. Like all symbols of growth and success, portfolios help stir feelings of accomplishment (Seldin, 1993).

In summary, the value of teaching portfolios is both actual and potential. They are credible vehicles of reflection, assessment, evaluation and a yet under-utilized means of communication. As their development in the educational community becomes more widespread, and other forms of evaluation that they facilitate become better understood, their value will probably escalate.

### **2.7.5. PORTFOLIOS AND REFLECTION: MAPPING THE RELATIONSHIP**

As already mentioned above, portfolios can be used as vehicles for reflection. That means it forms part of reflection when folders or collections are transformed into portfolios. Reflection is lauded as a valuable practice. Two major themes regarding portfolio reflection are the need to practice it and the need to foster it by means of questions. Camp (1992) makes the comment that reflection has to be learned and practiced.

Creating a portfolio requires systematic self-assessment and sharing, allowing the writers to experience the power of reflective thinking. Thoughtfulness may not come naturally when teaching in a busy classroom, but making a conscious effort to reflect on what one knows and can do may cause one to search for new and better ways of teaching (Camp 1992). He believes that learners need to be led by questions to reflect, and to explain themselves to others in order to understand themselves.

### **2.7.6 DEFINING AND CHARACTERISING REFLECTION**

Reflective practice is the kind of practice in which people recapture their experience, think about it, ponder over it and evaluate it (Schulze, 1994). Reflective practice is the key to competence and effective learning. Teachers who take a surface approach to learning, (meaning those who are learning without being cognitively involved, not thinking about what they are learning and how they are learning it) cannot be aware of the real demands of their profession. Whenever student teachers think about what they have taught and how they have taught it, they are likely to develop an awareness of their own behavior which will enable them to take charge of their teaching even in highly constraining circumstances (Gibbs, 1988). Gibbs states that reflection can be particularly critical in the context of professional courses that involve work placement. This means that, since students are in a real school environment, they are able to reflect on their actual experiences in relation to what they have learned in the teacher education programme. In this way reflection can help teachers to bridge the gap between theory and practice and thus turn experience into learning.

In explaining the important role that reflection plays in teaching, Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck (1995) regard reflection as an exploratory process that refines and develops intellectual and emotional activities. This definition suggests that when reflecting, one either feels good or bad about what one has experienced. It is this kind of feeling that stimulates thought and determines how one handles such an experience during a future performance. Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck (1995) further maintain that there are three stages of reflection on teaching. The first stage being the experience of presenting a lesson, the second stage attending to the feelings connected with that experience, and thirdly re-evaluating the experience through recognizing the implications and outcomes. It can be concluded that reflective practice helps promote self-assessment which is crucial when one desires to improve one's teaching. It becomes important to think carefully about such questions as "What did I teach?" "How did I teach it?" "Did the learners learn?" "How best could I have taught the lesson?" If the ultimate gain of reflection is improvement, then reflection does not merely involve thinking about issues, but it requires the collection of evidence that is analysed in order to establish appropriate and principled actions (Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck, 1995).

Calderhead and Gates (1993) maintain that the process of becoming reflective is developmental. Students each need to be assisted to develop the skill of reflection. This skill should be developed gradually.

Since reflection develops over a period of time, it is also a skill in which competence develops. Lang, Mcbeath and Hebert (1994:12-13) suggest ways in which one can become competent at reflection. Some of these include the acquisition of a broad working material world (diverse experiences), using teaching skills that provide meaningful learning experiences for students and learning how to promote positive learning environments. This means creating a classroom atmosphere where learners are able to communicate their views and express their opinions freely and confidently without the fear of being ridiculed by their teachers or by peers.

As much as reflection is recommended for effective and quality teaching by many researchers, Calderhead and Gates (1993) point out that reflection can be deconstructive

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 RESEARCH ORIENTATION**

In everyday life what we define as the goal of a certain action usually determines the choice of means to attain that goal. Similarly the choice of the most appropriate methodology is largely determined by the epistemic ideal or goal that is set for the research (Mouton, 1996). The aim of this study is to investigate how teaching portfolios are used for professional development of educators in an in-service teacher education programme. The central focus of the study is to analyse reflective practice and professional development of practicing teachers in a teacher education programme, and this has led to the choice of the case study as the research strategy. The data generating techniques employed included document study, interviews and observations. These techniques place this study in the qualitative paradigm. The data analysis techniques employed was descriptive.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) state that qualitative research is based on the phenomenological position. This study fits within the phenomenological position because the focus is in on understanding the meaning events have for the teachers being studied (Patton, 1991 in Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). This places this study under positivism philosophy. The study seeks to understand the professional development of teachers as they engage themselves with portfolio development. An integral part of teaching portfolios is the element of reflection. The study therefore examines teachers' words and actions in a descriptive manner to analyse their classroom practice as it is portrayed in their portfolios (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The truth in this research is achieved through the verification and replication of observable findings concerning directly perceivable processes.

#### **3.2 DATA GENERATION**

The unit of analysis in this study was the teachers' portfolios. The aim in analyzing the portfolios was to find out how the portfolios portray the professional development of the teachers through their reflections. The researcher conducted interviews with the teachers and the aim was to add a detailed and an in-depth understanding of the teachers about their

professional development through their experiences of portfolio development. To compare and contrast the portfolio and interview generated data, classroom observations were conducted.

### 3.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY

The research strategy employed was a cross sectional case study. The cross sectional case studied comprised of the following;

- in-service teachers at an undergraduate diploma in education in a teacher education programme and
- teaching portfolios illustrating the teacher's competences through the demonstration of knowledge, skills, talents and interests in their teaching qualification.

#### *Basis for the selection of a case study*

A combination of a set of related ideas and preferences give a case study a distinctive character and the following are the rationale basis for selection of a case study (as in this study and as defined by Denscombe, 1998);

**Spotlight on one instance** According to Denscombe (1998), the defining characteristic of the case study approach is its focus on just one instance of the thing that is being investigated. The use of teaching portfolios in this case provides one instance of reflective process. Teaching portfolios could have been used in this programme as a means of evaluating the teachers' preparedness for their second year in the teacher education programme, whereas in this programme the teachers, through portfolio development, had an opportunity to reflect on their professional growth and change throughout the course of the first year of the programme.

**In- depth study** Denscombe (1998) argues that when a researcher takes the strategic decision to devote all the efforts to researching just one instance, there is obviously far greater opportunity to delve into things in a more detailed manner. In this case concentration had

been on professional development of teachers in the programme. The use of teaching portfolios for in-service teachers offered teachers an opportunity to document and highlight some important ideas they have learned in the teacher education programme.

**Focus on relationships and processes** According to Denscombe (1998) a case study offers sufficient detail to unravel the complexities of a given situation. The focus of this study was the relationship between portfolio development and reflective practice. Portfolios are recommended as one of the new assessment strategies and research has highlighted the great potential of portfolios for reflectivity. The portfolio in the teacher education programme was proposed as a collection of carefully selected pieces of work (i.e. teachers' lesson plan plans and evidence of learners' work) in the three Learning Areas that are in the curriculum of the programme (See Attached Annexure D). A goal statement of each Learning Area and reflection statements and evidence of their learners' work accompanied the selected pieces of work. The idea was to allow teacher learners to reflect on their strengths and weakness. If they identified any weaknesses they had to come up with a plan of action on how they would overcome that weakness. In the case of their achievements they had to provide the evidence as well how and why the achievement had been made.

**Natural setting** According to Denscombe (1998), 'the case' that forms the basis of the investigation is normally something that already exists and is not artificially generated specifically for the purpose of the research. A shift toward reflective practice has become part of the alternative assessment strategies promoted in the new curriculum, Curriculum 2005, based on an Outcomes-based model of education (OBE) (Department of Education, 1997). In this teacher education programme the researcher explored the potential value of teaching portfolio development and how it contributes to reflective practice as a means of teacher evaluation.

**Multiple sources and multiple methods** According to Denscombe (1998), one of the strengths of a case study approach is that it allows the researcher to use a variety of sources, a variety of types of data and a variety of research methods as part of the investigation. Multiple methods were used in this study namely; document study, semi-structured interviews with the teachers and observations of the teachers' classroom practice. It has



been necessary for the researcher to do portfolio reviews so as to understand the professional development of the teachers as they were engaged in the process of portfolio development. However the teachers were to take a leading role in talking about how their behavior had changed over the period of time, their level of motivation etc. The portfolio review and interview were followed by classroom observation in which the researcher observed the teachers selected for this study teaching in their classrooms. This was followed by a second semi structured interview.

### **Basis for selection of this case**

The case was selected on the basis that the undergraduate Diploma in Education (DE) is the level 5 (b) according to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and is the level in which upgrading teachers who are regarded as ‘unqualified’ enter the University. The teachers’ level of competence in the course is measured by seven roles and competences as set by Norms and Standards for Educators by the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the Committee on Teacher Education Policy (COTEP). This made the Diploma in Education a typical case because the findings from this case can be generalised to other under-graduate Diplomas in Education accredited by NQF.

The boundaries of the case were clear. The diploma is a two-year teacher upgrade programme. One of the objectives for teacher upgrade programmes is to meet national accreditation and provide teachers completing the course with recognition as qualified educators.

### *Generalisability*

The value of this case lies in the evaluation of teaching portfolios as a basis of reflection in the Diploma in Education programme. No attempt was made to draw generalisable conclusions based on this case study. However useful lessons could be learnt and ideas for further research generated. The findings on professional development in this case should be useful in providing guidelines for utilising teaching portfolios as reflection tools for professional development of in-service teachers.

The findings might be useful to other teacher education programmes in South Africa. The programmes might have similarities because the Norms and Standards set the exit level outcomes for educators by the NQF and COTEP.

#### *Validity and reliability of case studies*

A case study approach allows the use of multiple methods in order to capture the complex reality under scrutiny. Validity and reliability were considered for the individual techniques that were used in this study. This was based on the assumption implicit in the above quotation that if individual techniques were reliable and valid then so too was the case study. Merriam (1991) describes six strategies that can be used to ensure internal validity.

*Triangulation.* This means to find ways of getting alternative and divergent viewpoints on research findings or research process. This entails the use of multiple investigators, multiple sources of data or multiple methods to confirm the emerging data (Merriam, 1991). Multiple methods were used in this case study to collect data on professional development of teachers through reflective practice. Each could look at professional development from its own distinct perspective as a means of comparison and contrast. In this case study, the participants submitted their portfolios to be formatively assessed by the researcher. In this formative assessment the researcher used the seven roles and competences as determined by Norms and Standards for educators as the criteria for assessment of professional development and as a means of feedback to the teachers. The researcher gave the participants feedback on their professional development according to their goal statements (the teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning of the Learning Area), the reflective statements (self assessment, critically assess own teaching) and evidence of learners' work as evidence of effective teaching in the classroom. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with participants so that the participants could share their experiences on professional development as they engaged with portfolio development. This data was comparable to that gathered through the study of portfolios. This process had been conducted three times in the process of this research over the three Learning Areas of the Primary Curriculum Studies. To validate the data gathered through the study of portfolios and interviews, class visits were

conducted. The data from classroom observations was compared and contrasted to the portfolio data and interview data.

The combination of interviews and observations from the field along with a review of relevant documents increased the validity of data collected (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The major theme in this study is evaluation of teaching portfolios as a basis for reflection which was evident in the data from portfolio reviews, interviews and the site visits, lending strong credibility to the findings.

*Member checks.* Lincoln and Guba in Maykut and Morehouse(1994) use the term “member checks” to refer to the process of asking research participants to tell you whether you have accurately described their experiences. In this study, after the interviews, the teachers were given an opportunity to endorse the written notes of the researcher as to whether they were accurate in what they were saying.

*Long-term or repeated observation.* This would not have contributed to the validity of the findings of this cross sectional study as the professional development of teachers was to be studied in conjunction with Primary Curriculum Studies, which was covered in one year of the two year programme. It would have been possible to transform this study into a longitudinal collaborative action research exercise but again, this is beyond the scope of this limited study.

*Peer examination.* It would have been possible to approach colleagues to ask them to comment on the findings of this study. However, this is beyond the scope of this limited study.

*Action research:* It would be theoretically possible to involve a variety of stakeholders cooperating together to explore questions of interest through cycles of action, experiences and reflection in order to develop insights into the professional development of teachers, create frameworks for understanding and suggest actions to improve practice and inform the policy. This would again be beyond the limited scope of this study.

*Working with a research team.* Maykut and Morehouse (1994) believe that a researcher can increase the trustworthiness of his/ her work if the researcher works with others. Again theoretically it was possible in this study for the researcher to work with other lecturers at Rhodes University who were also using portfolios with the teachers in the programme besides the six teachers studied by the researcher. To use them as ‘peer debriefers’ keeping the researcher honest as (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 in Maykut and Morehouse, 1994) would say, was beyond the scope of this study.

### **3.4 DATA GENERATING TECHNIQUES**

Case studies are not linked to any particular type of data or data generating technique (Yin, 1989). Techniques used in this particular case study were document study, interviews and observations.

#### **3.4.1 DOCUMENT STUDY**

Documents are defined by Merriam (1998: 113) as “*the umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual and physical material relevant to the study at hand*”. In the instance of this study portfolios were studied by the researcher. The phenomenon of interest is professional development of teachers in this study, and that makes the portfolios primary sources because the teachers themselves are recounting firsthand experiences in their professional development (Merriam, 1998). The portfolios in this study are personal documents and can be classified as “*edited biographies*” (Merriam 1998). They are used to demonstrate the self-reflection about teachers’ activities in various roles as educators.

According to Burgess, in Merriam (1998:121) document studies are “*edited biographies in which researchers serve as editors and commentators*”. In this study the researcher read the portfolios each time the participants submitted them (three times in the process of the study) and gave them feedback in highlighting the competencies and roles achieved by the participants.

- Are the interviews viable in terms of the costs in the time and travel involved? (Denscombe, 1998).

In this study the interviewees were teachers in an in-service teacher programme. All the teachers in the programme attended a brief orientation meeting where they were provided with an overview of the objectives of the research. Each participant was provided with a Portfolio Guide. The guide provided the participants with an introduction to portfolios as vehicles for monitoring and documenting professional growth. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with one study group which consisted of six teachers. The criteria for selection of the study group was as follows:

- The study group was composed of six teachers, three teachers in each of the two schools.
- The study group was in the geographic area of the schools and the venue of the meetings for the study group was in East London District to ensure convenience.
- Teachers in the study group were to teach either in the Foundation or Intermediate Phase. In this study one pair was teaching in the Intermediate phase and two pairs of teachers were in the Foundation phase.

*Types of interviews.* Interviews can be classified under three categories, i.e. structured, semi structured and unstructured (Merriam, 1998; Denscombe, 1998). In this study semi structured interviews were used.

Semi-structured interviews are halfway between structured and unstructured interviews. The format of the semi-structured interview becomes less structured, which assumes that the individual respondents define the world in unique ways (Denscombe, 1998). In this instance the respondents took a leading role in portraying the results of their enquiries into their development rather than responding to questions posed by the researcher. Reflective practice issues which were explored guided the largest part of the interview.

*The form of the interview.* Denscombe (1998) mentions three forms of interviews, which are one-to-one interviews, group interviews and focus groups. In this stance one-to-one interviews were conducted, which involved a meeting between the researcher and one

- Are the interviews viable in terms of the costs in the time and travel involved? (Denscombe, 1998).

In this study the interviewees were teachers in an in-service teacher programme. All the teachers in the programme attended a brief orientation meeting where they were provided with an overview of the objectives of the research. Each participant was provided with a Portfolio Guide. The guide provided the participants with an introduction to portfolios as vehicles for monitoring and documenting professional growth. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with one study group which consisted of six teachers. The criteria for selection of the study group was as follows:

- The study group was composed of six teachers, three teachers in each of the two schools.
- The study group was in the geographic area of the schools and the venue of the meetings for the study group was in East London District to ensure convenience.
- Teachers in the study group were to teach either in the Foundation or Intermediate Phase. In this study one pair was teaching in the Intermediate phase and two pairs of teachers were in the Foundation phase.

*Types of interviews.* Interviews can be classified under three categories, i.e. structured, semi structured and unstructured (Merriam, 1998; Denscombe, 1998). In this study semi structured interviews were used.

Semi-structured interviews are halfway between structured and unstructured interviews. The format of the semi-structured interview becomes less structured, which assumes that the individual respondents define the world in unique ways (Denscombe, 1998). In this instance the respondents took a leading role in portraying the results of their enquiries into their development rather than responding to questions posed by the researcher. Reflective practice issues which were explored guided the largest part of the interview.

*The form of the interview.* Denscombe (1998) mentions three forms of interviews, which are one-to-one interviews, group interviews and focus groups. In this stance one-to-one interviews were conducted, which involved a meeting between the researcher and one

respondent. This form was preferred because each respondent in the interview was expected to express his/ her opinion about professional development which requires that people should have a right to express their opinions or views without being influenced by members of the group.

*Recording the interview.* The researcher wishing to capture the discussion that happened during the interview could not rely on memory alone (Denscombe, 1998; Merriam, 1998). In this study the instrument used to record interviews was note taking. This process was followed by the interviewees' endorsement of the notes taken. The interviewees checked that what was written was what they had said. This was to ensure the validity of data collected. The data from interviews as already mentioned was combined with data from the two other methods used to collaborate facts.

### **3.4.3 OBSERVATIONS**

Observations, like interviews are a primary source of data in qualitative research. To distinguish observations from interviews Merriam (1998: 94) says the following:

*First observations take place in the natural field setting instead of a location designated for the purpose of interviewing; second, observational data represent a firsthand account of the world obtained in an interview.*

In this study observations took place in the classroom, instead of the office where the first interview was held. This time the researcher saw what was going on in the classroom compared to what was said in the interview as well as in portfolios. Merriam, (1998) believes that fieldwork and field study usually connote both activities (observation and interviews). In this study the researcher took notes of what she saw as the participants were teaching, using the instrument in Appendix C.

In observations the researcher can assume one of several roles while collecting information as an observer. Merriam (1998) offers the following for possible roles:

- *Complete participant.* The researcher is a member of the group being investigated and conceals his or her observer role from the group so as not to disrupt the natural activity of the group.
- *Participant observer.* The researcher's observer activities, which are known to the group, are subordinate to the researcher's role as a participant.
- *Observer participant.* The researcher's observer activities are known to the group; participation in the group is definitely secondary to the role of information gatherer.

In this study, the involvement of the researcher was similar to that of a *participant observer*: it included coordinating the teacher programme, which means planning the curriculum and facilitator's Guides as well as the Teachers' Reading Materials. The researcher had a close relationship with other lecturers working in the programme as well with the teachers participating in the study. Merriam (1998) believes that, in using this method, the researcher may have access to many people and a wide range of information, but the level of the information revealed is controlled by the group being investigated. The researcher conducted an orientation meeting, to provide an overview of the objectives of the research for all the teachers registered for the programme. Although the researcher had access to six portfolios, (criteria for selection of six teachers, as explained earlier in this chapter under 3.4.2) the close working relationship with the rest of the teachers and the other lecturers gave the researcher access to information about professional development of other teachers in the programme.

#### *Sampling and observation*

Denscombe (1998: 144) points out that “*When deciding what thing is to be observed, the researcher also needs to make a strategic decision concerning the kind of sampling to be used*”. In this instance the researcher decided to spend two hours in the classroom. The first hour was to observe the teacher teaching a lesson, and the second hour was used to give feedback and support to the teacher in the classroom. These time blocks were chosen to avoid any bias and to incorporate a representative sample of reflective practice, which is in question



here (Denscombe, 1998). The researcher visited the participants during the week at suitable times during the day.

Observation can involve the selection of people to be observed (Denscombe, 1998). For this study the people to be observed by the researcher were the six teachers in the study group that the researcher was working with. The researcher could not collect data from all the DE level teachers because it would not be feasible for the size of this study to include such a large number of examples. The criteria used for the selection of the sample were as follows;

- The teachers were to be either Foundation Phase or Intermediate Phase specialists
- Two or more had to work in the same school to support each other in professional development
- The schools of the teachers had to work in the East London district, for manageability of the study because the researcher resided in East London.

In this study, the sample comprised of four Foundation Phase teachers and two Intermediate Phase teachers.

The limitations of choosing six teachers as a sample was that the DE teachers in the programme did not stand an equal chance of being included in the study due to the following reasons:

- None of the teachers were teaching in a rural environment, one set of three was in a Township school and the other set from an Urban school. This means the sample could have excluded the experience of rural are schools if it happened to be different from the two covered environments and
- All six teachers in the sample were female teachers with between ten and up thirty years teaching experience. The sample excluded male teachers; the two teachers that were teaching in the Intermediate Phase happened to be female teachers, whilst in most schools male teachers teach the Intermediate Phase. However this does not imply that male teachers would have experienced anything differently from the female teachers.

The other limitation of the study was the use of the Teaching Observation Form (see Appendix E) during classroom observation. Denscombe (1998) is of the view that the use of observation schedules has a tendency to decontextualize the things it records. In this study the researcher had insisted on collecting information about the relevant background matters whenever the schedule was used (this is evident in the way classroom observation data had been presented at Tables 3 - 7 under 4.7).

### **3.5 ANALYSIS OF DATA**

Phenomenological analysis is a recursive, cyclical process of coding statements based on their key concepts clustering those coded concepts into themes, and revising themes several times to delineate and refine them (Merriam, 1998). The constant comparative method was used for data analysis in this study. This method has been used to derive themes from transcripts and to ensure a continuous examination of data as new data are gathered (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

#### **3.5.1 PROCEDURES FOR PREPARING RAW DATA**

*Preparing the data for analysis.* This is a challenging task of making sense out of the accumulated piles of field notes, interviews and documents (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). In this study the researcher had to type all the handwritten portfolio Goal Statements and Reflective Statements of Learning Areas, and the two interviews' transcripts. This has been done to ensure that the raw data is readable and also to ensure that the font is the same in the study.

*Coding data pages to their sources.* Maykut and Morehouse (1994:127) say “*data come from one or more sources such as interview transcripts, field notes or documents*”. In this instance data came from the documents i.e. the portfolio reviews where portfolios were studied by the researcher with specific reference to the Goal Statements and Reflective Statements of the three Learning Areas in the Primary Curriculum Studies; the interview data (one interview conducted after the document study and the other after classroom observations) and the data from field observations (which in this case was classroom

observations). The researcher did not use the participants' real names but chose a pseudonym for each participant; they were named 'Teacher 1' up to 6 (coded as T.1, then the number allocated throughout the study). The coded data set was given for each, for example in Numeracy the code given was N, for Language, Literacy and Communication the code was L and for the Life Skills the code was LS.

### *Unitizing the data*

Unitizing data is about identifying the chunks or units of meaning in the data. As recommended by Maykut and Morehouse (1994), in this study the data were photocopied and the original data were set aside.

The researcher to capture the professional development of the participating teachers studied the documents, which were portfolios in this instance. The portfolio artifacts (reflective statements, goal statements and evidence of learners' work) were studied to identify skills and competencies that the teacher had achieved in each learning area. The data from the interview transcripts was also unitized. This was followed by cutting apart the units of meaning as identified by the researcher and putting each onto separate index cards.

### *Discovery*

Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 122) offer their experience in saying the following: “ *The discovery process is a beginning search for the important meanings in what people have said to you in interviews or what you have observed in the field, in documents, etc*”. In this instance the researcher started by giving meaning to what people were saying in the interviews and what had been observed in the classroom observations and these were analysed as initial themes that dissipated and themes that persisted.

The data interpretation and how the interpretations were used to come to findings are discussed in chapter five of this study.

### **3.6 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the research approach, method and process of data collection were described, as well as the method of analysis.

The results of the case study will be presented and analysed in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 4.**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the usefulness of a portfolio as a mechanism to facilitate reflective practice and the techniques used for generating data for this purpose were document study, interviews and observations.

#### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is described by Merriam (1998: 178) as “ the process of making sense out of the data”. Making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing and interpreting what people have said as well as what the researcher had seen and read. As already mentioned under section 3.5, the constant comparative method was used for data analysis. This method involves the construction of categories or themes and sub- themes, derived from data, which are continuously compared with one another. The method is characterized by a search for recurring patterns in the data (Merriam, 1998:179). Merriam (1991:151) is of the view that in qualitative research, data collection and analysis should be done simultaneously. This view is supported by Maykut and Morehouse (1994:123) who claim that data analysis should be conducted early, as an ongoing research activity. The advantage of this is that the researcher did not have to deal with large volumes of data to be analysed at the end. In the case of this study not only themes from one database were compared but the comparison of recurring themes were also between the portfolio database and interview database. The ongoing analysis of the data has been an advantage for the researcher because it provided an opportunity for the researcher to identify problems. This would mean that the researcher, if necessary could address problems in between portfolio reviews and interviews.

The researcher used what Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 148) described as the “ hands on approach” when analyzing the data personally instead of using computer programmes. After the first portfolio review the portfolio data was typed. That means that the goal statements

and the reflective statements were typed. The portfolio data was coded indicating the teacher's name (pseudonym) and learning area to which the reflective statement linked. For example T.5/ N refers to the portfolio data from Teacher 5 from the Numeracy learning area. The interview data was coded as I.1/ T.5 meaning the data from the first interview with Teacher 5.

The researcher started the process by reading for example through the portfolio transcripts from Teacher 5. As the transcripts were read through for the third time, the researcher began to unite data, by looking at "units of meaning". The units of meaning were separated, one unit of meaning from the next by drawing a line with a pencil, and writing a word or a phrase carrying the essence of this unit of meaning in the margin. Teacher 5's Numeracy reflective statement on what she has learnt from the Teacher Education Programme was as follows:

*We had a workshop on Number sense and I would like to start with the good lessons I have learned and I would like to comment on what I have experienced in my classroom. I think many of us isolate Maths. I think that the reason why educators and learners have a problem with Maths. I have learnt something very interesting and that is to bring Maths nearer to the child, relate to daily living. Life is after all about number, shapes, problem solving, money and colour,*

This statement was extracted as a unit of meaning and phrased "what the teacher has learnt from the programme/ subject integration to real life situations". The code T. 5/ N was also written to mark that this unit of meaning was the portfolio reflective statement from Teacher 5 from the Numeracy learning area. Each unit of meaning was then cut out of the original portfolio statements and pasted onto a card to facilitate further handling. These units of meaning were transferred to the discovery sheet, and that was the beginning of the process of linking the emerging words, concepts and ideas to find recurring themes that could form the bases of the provisional categories.

From the first portfolio review of Teacher 5 about 12 provisional categories emerged. These categories can be summarized as follows:

- Bridge the gap between theory and practice
- Turning experience into learning
- Change in professional practice
- Promotes planning
- Change of teaching philosophy
- Increased realization of the value of own teaching experience Ability to reflect on teaching practice
- Recorded teaching strategies
- Articulation and documentation of concerns
- Articulation and documentation of challenges
- Observations about self as a teacher
- Gained insight into professional practice
- Exploration of intellectual and emotional development.

Having prepared a list of provisional categories, the researcher then placed each coded unit of meaning under provisional categories, using the “look/feel-like criteria” as described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 137). The process of comparing data using the “look/feel-alike criteria” continued and the data that did not seem to fit into a particular category were tentatively named to present a new provisional category.

When a category contained approximately six to eight unitized data cards, then a “rule of inclusion” was drawn. According to Lincoln and Guba (in Maykut and Morehouse, 1994: 139) a rule of inclusion should be written in the form of a prepositional statement which conveys the meaning contained in the data cards collected under a category name. All the remaining data cards were then included on the bases of the rule for inclusion.

The rest of the portfolio data and interview data were analysed by the same process of data analysis as described above. Data displays of categories and sub categories were made of each database and patterns were noted in each one and then across them. **Table1** is a display of the portfolio database and interview database categories and sub categories.

**Table 1: Portfolio database and interview database categories and sub categories**

Portfolio database	Interview database
<p>Reflections on learning and teaching</p> <p>Experiences</p> <p>Goal setting</p> <p>Marking achievements</p> <p>Recorded teaching experience</p> <p>Gained insight of integrating learning areas</p> <p>Exploration of intellectual and emotional development</p> <p>Equipped to deal with behavioral problems</p> <p>Supportive and empowering environment for learners</p> <p>Confidence in teaching</p> <p>Marked weaknesses</p> <p>Problem posing and problem solving</p>	<p>Promotes reflections.</p> <p>Discover self, recognize your strengths and weaknesses</p> <p>Changed teaching style</p> <p>Recorded challenges and concerns</p> <p>Awareness of teaching context</p> <p>The personal nature of teaching</p> <p>Dynamic nature of portfolios</p> <p>Weaknesses seen as challenges to make a change</p> <p>Promotes planning</p> <p>Group work: encourages deep thinking about what you are doing, builds trust, freedom of expression, supports, not afraid to make mistakes.</p> <p>Helps with classroom organization</p> <p>Learners become problem solvers</p> <p>Takes too much time</p> <p>Confusing</p> <p>Can be used as an assessment in the programme</p> <p>Gives opportunity for self evaluation</p> <p>It is like a mirror</p>



#### **4.2.1 PURPOSES FOR THE SETS OF DATA COLLECTED**

In chapter 3 the research techniques used in this study were discussed as document study, interviews and observations. The purpose of portfolios was to collect data on the professional development of teachers through reflective practice. The interview data generated was designed to gather information to supplement the written statements on professional development of teachers. Field notes were collected to validate the data gathered through the portfolios and interviews.

#### **4.2.2 PROCEDURES ADOPTED FOR PORTFOLIO USE**

The in-service teacher education programme at Rhodes University used portfolios for the professional development of teachers. In this teacher education programme portfolios were used to help develop reflective practice and teacher professionalism. The in-service teachers were expected to draw on their teaching practice to demonstrate their competence in teaching and reflective practice relevant to the aims of the three learning areas taught in the Diploma in Education programme, i.e. Language, Numeracy and Life Skills. The modules on these three learning areas aimed at providing teachers with principles and strategies that would enable them to make appropriate practical decisions in teaching and learning activities of the classroom. Portfolio data is based on reflective statements made by the teachers on completion of the task of each learning area.

The writing of portfolio reflective statements in this study has been identified as a means to empower the in-service teachers. In their portfolios they were to tell all about their growth, achievements, interests and needs; connect what they are learning in the programme; and reflect on their classroom practice.

The teachers were to take a school term (a period of six to seven weeks) to work with each learning area. They were to analyse their learning through this period. The participants were asked to focus on incidents of personal importance occurring during their practical experience, describing and analyzing each incident in terms of their own understandings,

feelings and actions and discussing the implications of the incident for their teaching practice and professional development.

Suggestions of what could be included were outlined in the Student's Portfolio Guide. The teachers were to work with their study groups to discuss their progress about teaching portfolios. The portfolio data took the form of written documents. The researcher to understand the teacher's learning experiences in Primary Curriculum Studies in the Foundation used this data or Intermediate Phase (participants were Foundation and Intermediate phase specialists) as discussed under 3.4.2.

Through the process of self-reflection, the teachers reflected on their own accomplishments, evaluated their work, planned revision, set goals and developed positive perceptions about their competence. The process of self-reflection was a new skill for the teachers in the programme and required gradual incorporation into the process. At the early stages of the research, it was noticed by the researcher that the teachers needed extra support in terms of reflections. This is in line with Brundage and Mackeracher 's (1980) view that teachers who are inexperienced with reflection need more structured assistance, as discussed under 2.2. In response to the problems the teachers were encountering, the researcher gave the teachers questions to promote reflections. Questions to promote student reflections were adapted from Camp (1992) and are outlined in **Table 2** below.

**Table 2: Questions that promote Student Self Reflections**

<p><b>Analysis of Skills and Processes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes this a good piece of work?</li> <li>• What makes your most effective piece different from your least effective piece?</li> <li>• What problems did you encounter?</li> <li>• What goals did you set for yourself ? How well did you accomplish them ?</li> <li>• Why did you select this piece of work ?</li> <li>• If you could work further on this piece, what would you do?</li> <li>• How does this relate to what you have learned from the DE course?</li> </ul>
<p><b>How skills and the way you do things have Changed Over Time:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is your work at the end of six weeks different from your work at the beginning?</li> <li>• Has the way you plan changed over the six weeks? If so, how?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Affective and other Areas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your work show that you are persistent (self- confident, motivated, etc...) How?</li> <li>• Has persistence (motivation, self- confidence, etc...) changed since the beginning of the six weeks ? How?</li> <li>• What do you find most challenging? Why?</li> </ul>

*Source: Adapted from Camp (1992)*

The teachers were advised that these questions were not a prescription of how they should reflect but were to be treated as a guide or support for those teachers who found it difficult to reflect.

Another form of support was ‘ mutual’ mentoring where the small groups met to support each other (in this study known as a study group) as discussed under 3.4.2. The study group mentoring system was put into practice based on the principle that the support is non-judgmental. Its purpose was to enable the teachers to develop the portfolio that met their needs and explore means to achieve this. The study group could offer opinions and add

issues based on personal experience, but were not to take responsibility for developing the portfolio. That was an individual responsibility.

As mentioned earlier, the teachers had a period of six to seven weeks to work on their portfolio development. At the end of the first term the teachers submitted their portfolio on Numeracy for review as discussed under 4.2.2. At the end of the second term Language portfolios were submitted and reviewed and in the third term Life Skills portfolios were submitted and reviewed with the exception of the six teachers working with the researcher. Their submission for review was accompanied by a classroom visit at the beginning of the fourth term.

The portfolio review consisted of detailed feedback on roles and competences that teachers had achieved according to the Norms and Standards for Educators (Government Gazette 2000). The feedback incorporated positive reinforcement and suggestions on teaching strategies to improve teaching practice.

### **4.3 INTERVIEW DATA**

As discussed under 3.4.2 the data for interviews was collected to explore the respondents' experiences as they engaged with writing portfolio development.

The first interview was conducted in weeks 10-14 April and 17- 21 April 2000. The interview was conducted in the Teacher Resource Center which was a neutral venue for both the researcher and the participants. This was done to allow space for privacy and confidentiality and also as it was away from the department where the teachers held their workshops. The second and last interview was to be conducted at the beginning of the fourth term in weeks 2- 21 October 2000. These interviews were in fact conducted later in the year when teachers had the opportunity to reflect on all three learning areas.

The data from both interviews was compared to identify whether there had been any changes as the teachers gained experience with portfolio development. The interview database was

compared and contrasted with portfolio data using a constant comparative method, to be discussed later in this chapter.

#### 4.4 FIELD NOTES

Field notes were collected so as to triangulate the portfolio data and the interview data as discussed under 3.3 under triangulation. This means that the data collected through classroom visits was used as a contrast to the portfolio and interview data. The researcher visited each of the six teacher's classroom for an hour. In that hour the teacher was expected to teach the prepared lesson and the researcher wrote notes about what she observed in the lesson. The outcomes for the professional practice were as follows;

During the classroom visit the teachers should be able to:

- Plan and programme effectively
- Use the language of instruction to communicate clearly and effectively, both in oral and written forms, in a range of roles and contexts relating to teaching and learning
- Establish a classroom learning environment which is orderly, interesting and challenging; conducive to learning.
- Develop a wide range of teaching strategies by; effective structuring of learning tasks; motivating and engaging students; evaluating the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of a teaching programme and its delivery.

*Adapted from: Rhodes University, DE Professional Practice Guide (2000).*

The researcher whilst observing the teacher in the classroom ticked what the teacher seemed to be able to do and wrote some comments about the level of competence of the teacher. These comments were written to support the records made during the observation. This data was used together with the literature in chapter two to support the discussion on findings from the portfolio database and interview database.

The classroom observation was followed by the second interview as discussed earlier in this chapter, under 4.3.

## 4.5 PORTFOLIO DATA PRESENTATION

The portfolio data from the six teachers' portfolio data are referred to as T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6. Their portfolio data is presented thematically according to the skills acquired from engaging with portfolio in all learning areas. To support the themes that the researcher presents in this chapter are direct extracts from the reflective statements from the portfolios. These statements are unedited and will appear in Italics. The rest of the portfolio data is presented as raw data in Appendix D, which is composed of Goal Statements and Reflective Statements as prepared for review by each of the six participants in this research.

### 4.5.1 THEMES EMERGING FROM THE DATA

The purpose of this section is to describe some of the themes that emerged from the portfolio data. The focus of the description is on specific skills the teachers acquired through portfolio development.

#### 4.5.1.1 REFLECTIONS FROM LEARNING EXPERIENCE

From the portfolio data the teachers seemed to be involved in attempting to interpret the concepts and ideas of professional development in meaningful ways. This approach to learning fits with what Gibbs under 2.5 refers to as deep learning approach. An example is the following;

T6:

*In the beginning I had to tell my learners everything, the new way, learners have to discover for themselves and discuss, I as a mediator asked questions and observe how they interact with others in answering the questions.*

The teachers seemed to be reflecting on their actual experiences of what they had learnt in the teacher programme. In the way they reflected there was evidence of change in behaviour, and thus taking charge of their learning.

From the analysis of portfolio data, all six teachers reflected on their actual experiences in relation to what they have learned in the teacher education programme. It seemed that the teachers' learning experiences emerged from attendance at lectures and workshops. Examples are the following excerpts across the two learning areas:

i) Numeracy

T2:

*The activity the facilitator used to make us aware of number sense was refreshing our minds by using the number plates of the cars in the streets. It shows that you must start with what the learner knows before you go deeper and broader.*

T5:

*We had a workshop on number sense and I would like to start off with the good lessons I have learned and I would like to comment on what I have experienced in my class. ...I have learned something very interesting, and that is to bring maths nearer to the child, relate to daily living. Life is after all about numbers, shapes, problem solving, money and colour.*

ii) Language

T4:

*Since I learnt at Rhodes University that language includes vocabulary and reading, literacy is speaking writing and understanding. I made a great effort to write on the chalkboard some statements with punctuation marks.*

T 2

*Story telling is to me very important because it is the focal point of learning a language by listening to a person. It is vital component of learning language as I have said before the children learn to express their feelings and to put them into words when they tell a story.*

It seemed that, the teachers were reflecting from the learning experiences that emerged from the attendance of lectures and workshops. This learning experience fits in with Knowles' model of continuing professional development discussed under 2.5 in this study. The

engagement of teachers in a series of workshops seemed to have provided proof of an identifiable increase in learning.

As the teachers were gaining experience with reflections they seemed not to be reflecting from the desired outcomes of the programme only. From the Language learning area onwards, the teachers' reflections showed evidence of interpreting the concepts and on language teaching in a meaningful way. This approach is advocated by Gibbs under the deep learning approach, discussed under 2.5. An example is as follows;

*T 3:*

*Using the framework of a story is very useful when introducing new concepts or a language. Through story telling you develop their communication skills they will need in the future.*

The teachers were showing evidence of becoming aware of their professional demands.

All six teachers seemed to have gained insight into exploration of their intellectual and emotional development. From what they were saying there was evidence that they were open to discuss the good and bad experiences from their classroom practice as discussed under 2.6.6 by Foreman-Peck (1995). They made claims that their change of approach in classroom practice was a result of their organized and constructed learning from their own observations. Examples are the following excerpts;

*T 3:*

*I am motivated, because I will persist in changing my techniques if the learners do not understand. My persistence has changed, because I will only go to the next stage when I am sure that the learners understand. The video on problem solving was enlightening, because the learners were free to express their thoughts. The experiential activities, because in doing, you remember more. The portfolio is more challenging to me, because I have to reflect on my teaching practice and improve on my weaknesses.*



T 6:

*I struggled because the children did not understand the group discussions and reporting back. I was frustrated. However because I was determined to make it work, I persisted and now I see with practice it will come right. Many children are still afraid to talk while others talk freely. As a mediator I have to ensure that all the learners are involved.*

It could be observed that the teachers were increasingly interested in creating more productive classroom environments.

#### **4.5.1.2 GOAL SETTING**

All the teachers reported an increased realisation of the value of their own experience in contributing towards the achievement of their goals. They all seemed very committed to achieve the goals they had set up. This is evident in the way they reflected on their teaching strategies and how they had to change their teaching styles to accommodate their goals. An example is the following excerpt:

T 1:

*The goals I have set for myself encourage learners to solve their own problems. To accomplish this goal, I decided to change my method of teaching to the aspect of problem solving by giving them more oral exercise before they do the written work.*

It seemed as if the teachers were becoming independent in the way they were learning. From the Language and Life Skills portfolio data there was evidence that the teachers had capacity to function as self-directed learners.

#### **4.5.1.3 SELF REFLECTION**

From the portfolio data there was evidence that the teachers were thinking about what they had taught and how they had taught it. It seemed as if the teachers were developing an awareness of their own behavior and were making decisions about their teaching. An example is in the following comment:

T 3:

*But what I still do not understand, is for an example, I teach learners in a language that is new to them. It is not their mother tongue. It is crucial that their communication should be developed well, but I am not sure how to help them. I would like you to help me on this regard. I realize that I need to plan my story properly to get most out of the story.*

There was evidence that as the teachers were engaged in their practical teaching and learning they were capable of evaluating their performance and identified areas for improvement. For example:

T 2:

*I feel it is important to make the children part of the activities I present to them because when I reflect on the task done, I am able to assess my growth and the growth of the learner. I am able to work on my weaknesses and develop the children to their full potential when reflecting on the work or task I have completed.*

From the portfolio data it became evident that the ultimate goal of reflection was improvement in the classroom practice. When reflecting the teachers seemed not to be merely involved in thinking about issues but collected and analysed evidence to establish appropriate and principled actions, an issue discussed by Foreman-Peck (1995) under 2.6.6.

All six teachers in their writings communicated freely on changes in their classroom practice. One of the areas that were considered to have changed by the teachers was their planning. An example of a comment follows:

T 5:

*There is a change in the way of presenting activities to the children as well as preparing the activities for children. I must plan and manage and the activities the children do effectively and do not work on the day of the workshop or when I go to school.*

They proclaimed that their involvement with portfolios had forced them to think carefully about what they are going to teach, why they were teaching the way they do and how they

teach? Seldin (1991) under 2.6.3 claims that, the process of reflection forces teachers to review their activities, strategies and plans for the future.

From the teachers' reflections they communicated their realization of the benefits of self reflection. In all three learning areas T4 seemed to be concerned with the future of the learners not only as they were in her care but what would happen in the next level of their learning. An example is

T 4:

*If I could work further on this, I would let pupils to work on their pace because that promote the learning of the children I would work hand in hand with parents of the pupils. I would visit the pupil's home as I noticed pupils have many problems as they came to school late, without having food before they going to school.*

This reflective statement demonstrates an ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner and responds to the needs of the learners collaboratively with parents.

#### 4. 5.1.4 DOCUMENTATION AND ARTICULATION

From the portfolio data all six teacher recorded their challenges and concerns they experienced in their classroom practice. An example is the following comment

T 5:

*Problem solving sums can be a nightmare, I am struggling with it. I have really tried every thing. Do you know what I have realized and was a solution to my problems? I have noticed that, now that I concentrate on story telling problem-solving became easier. The problem is that they don't see the beginning and the end of the story. They look at numbers. It is only when I told them that, this also a story I could see the difference. This had really helped a lot. Their attitudes also changed. They are doing it much more different, this had really helped a lot. Their attitudes also have change. They are doing it with much more confidence. At this stage it is not all of them.*

In the reflective statements the teachers were seen to be able to extrapolate their teaching strategies used in different subject areas. They could record their teachable moments.

#### **4.6 INTERVIEW DATA PRESENTATION**

As already discussed under 3.4.2 interview data was collected to explore the respondents' experiences as they engaged themselves with portfolio development. Two issues were raised from the experiences of portfolio development namely: *Concerns about teaching portfolios and benefits of portfolio development.*

##### **4.6.1 CONCERNS ABOUT PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT**

From the first interview data, the teachers raised three concerns about the portfolio development, namely; portfolios take time, confusion about artifacts and attributes of best work.

**4.6.1.1 Portfolios Take Time.** During interview 1, the teachers were concerned about the portfolios in that they consume time. But at first they indicated concern seeing it as time not spent on lesson preparation. It seemed that as time went by, the teachers saw the personal, professional benefits of portfolios; the problem of time became less of an issue and they saw the need to make time for their development. This is evident from the second interview as none of the teachers were concerned about the time spent on developing portfolios.

**4.6.1.2 What should I put in?** The second concern was for selection of artifacts.

Although the six teachers had a Portfolio Guide that offered examples of what is expected, the teachers were still not sure of what to put into their portfolios? Teachers 2 and 4 explained this problem as relating to a lack of skills to integrate theory and practice. T1's area of confusion was different because she was confused about what to reflect on. An example is the following excerpt:

T 2:

*Well I was not sure whether the reflections should include my remarks about the workshop or purely my own teaching.*

#### **4.6.1.2 What represents my Best Work and Attributes?**

The teachers' third concern was the selection of the best piece of work. An example is the excerpt from Teacher 2.

T 2:

*It is a difficult thing to do because I am not sure what to put in. My biggest problem has been what to choose from my work, what is the best work ?.*

In fact, the initial problem of what to include was reversed. It became an issue of what to take out rather than what to put in!

While it may not be entirely accurate to say that concerns for time and selection of artifacts truly dissipated, the researcher noticed that teachers stopped worrying and talking about these issues as they gained appreciation for the portfolio process.

#### **4.6.2 BENEFITS OF PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT**

The themes that emerged from the data from two interviews indicated that teachers benefited from the process of portfolio development. The teachers claimed that the portfolios had a major impact on their teaching. The portfolios, according to the teachers, provided occasions for mentoring and collegial interactions and stimulated teachers to reflect on their teaching. The teachers related their reflections to self evaluation, which they claimed led to reflection and it is through reflection that teachers learn who they are as teachers.

#### 4.6.2.1 PORTFOLIOS HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON TEACHING

The experience of constructing a portfolio was seen to have a major impact on teaching. All the teachers expressed the view that the portfolio impacted on the development of their classroom teaching skills. Examples of the teachers' responses:

T 6:

*Portfolios helped me to develop a better parent-teacher relationship. In the past I was only responsible for assessing the learners' work, which was very time consuming. My teaching aids were largely always my own charts or drawing but in using portfolios I made more use of the learners' own examples. It saved time and effort and boosted their self-esteem. The learners' self assessment helped me in my preparation because I noticed what they enjoyed most. Portfolio development helped me to do more research into what I was preparing for my learners. I was always concerned about the large numbers of learners in my class but in using co-operative learning groups my task was made easy, as I merely facilitated while the learners discussed and communicated with each other in trying to solve problems to them.*

T 3:

*My teaching is different, I use to talk all the time and now I get the learners to talk. I taught and find time to observe how much they understand what I have taught. I feel fulfilled in the way I do things now that my learners can participant and I learn from them as well.*

#### 4.6.2.2 PORTFOLIOS HELP TO VIEW THE TEACHING ROLE IN A NEW WAY

The teachers saw reflections as helping to make a link between teaching experience and learning experience. From the first interview only three teachers indicated this process as having an impact in their planning. With the second interview all the teachers confirmed that the experience of constructing a portfolio promoted planning. This was a significant change for these teachers, because they had a history of using previous years' s lesson plans. An example is the following response:

T 5:

*The portfolio has helped me in the sense that it challenges me to plan in advance with the same pace I need to know where I am with my group of learners to plan for the future. I felt challenged by the development of portfolio to be up to date with my work.*

All the teachers showed confidence in that the portfolio construction changed their teaching philosophy. The teachers reported their change from being teacher-centered to learner-centered. They claimed that they were no longer concerned about time lines or rushing the syllabus but their concern was where the learners are when they teach. For example:

T 3:

*I value their contributions in my lesson than being the main speaker who thinks knows it all.*

All the teachers claimed that their teaching experience changed as a result of preparing their teaching portfolios. Most teachers (T1, T3, T4, T5) from the first interview claimed this experience whilst the other two (T2, T6) seemed to be aware of such experience on the second interview. They all believed that the portfolio development had made them develop a conscious motivation to research the topics that they were teaching.

The teachers were asked in both interviews whether the portfolio should remain part of their Diploma in Education Programme (DE). All the teachers felt strongly that it should continue as part of the programme. From the first interview all six teachers reported that the process of portfolio development promoted self-assessment. An example of a response:

T 4:

*Yes, a portfolio should continue in the programme because it is helpful. Through reflections that you write when you develop your portfolio you recall what and how you have done well and not well. You begin to realize your strengths and weaknesses in your teaching practice. It gives you an opportunity to evaluate yourself and your teaching strategies as well. You work in ways of working out your weaknesses, you don't leave problems unsolved. Actually I believe it takes away the fears of*

*discovering your weaknesses but you concentrate on finding solutions and you see them as challenges.*

T1 reported that as much as the portfolio could be used as self-assessment, she claimed that a portfolio was one way of assessing educators in the programme. From interview 2 all the teachers were reporting on more complex issues of teaching. They began to report portfolios as being able to capture the intellectual substance and situatedness of teaching in ways no other methods of evaluation could. An example of a response:

T 6:

*Portfolios must continue being part of the DE programme, everyday with portfolios you grow, your understanding about classroom practice and more especially about yourself as a teacher. It broadens your understanding about the curriculum and the process of learning, discovering new things.*

#### **4.6.2.3 SELF EVALUATION LEADS TO REFLECTION**

In response to the question about how and why the teachers' experiences differed as a result of preparing a portfolio, all reflected on the skills they developed through the experience of portfolio development. All six teachers reported that self evaluation led them to reflect on their teaching practice.

Some of the views were expressed as follows;

T 1:

*You look at yourself and see what you need to change ... you begin to see things that you do not know about yourself. For instance I was doing a section in Numeracy and trying to use group work and they were in groups of 4, but it came up as a disaster because they all talked at the same time and those that were quite did not have time to say a thing, there was chaos in my classroom. Now I think seriously on how I have missed it. I wondered whether the activity was meant for group activity? Were my learners ready for a group activity? Was I ready for this kind of activity or should I do research on group work and understand group dynamics? These were the kinds of questions that occurred in my mind when reflecting on that lesson, which is something I has never done before I was engaged with portfolios.*



It is evident that as the teachers were evaluating themselves they reflected on their performance. They claimed that their engagement with portfolios led them to being reflective which directed their professional choices. This fits well with what Boud et.al (1985) say about portfolios under 2.6.4, as they see portfolios with a potential to prompt teachers to reflect on themselves and their practice on a regular and continuing basis. As teacher 6 explains:

T6 :

*... it goes on and on because all the time you are examining, what went well what did not go well and what plan for making up for what did not go well.*

#### **4.6.2.4 THROUGH REFLECTIONS TEACHERS LEARN WHO THEY ARE AS THEY TEACH**

All the teachers expressed that through the reflection process they discovered themselves as teachers. The following are examples of teachers' expressions:

T 4:

*It inspires me to give more lessons because each time I reflect I discover myself. Sometimes when I teach I become uncertain about how the lesson went but now I am developing a portfolio I feel that I am doing research about myself.*

T5:

*Portfolio is like a mirror and it challenges you to consider what you are doing ... it goes on and on because all the time you are examining " the what you teach, the what went well, and what did not go well and what plan for making up for what did not go well?*

#### **4.6. 2. 5 Portfolios provide occasions for mentoring and collegial interactions**

All the teachers' ideas about working in the study group remained unchanged through the research. All six of the teachers expressed their pleasure at working in study groups. The teachers claimed that the process of reviewing their portfolios with peers was beneficial to their portfolio professional development. They all claimed that they were free to express

themselves amongst their peers because they were a small group and it was therefore easy to build trust. These are the examples of the teachers' responses;

T 2:

*Working in a group is beneficial for me. The fact that we can share our experiences helped me to develop professionally, you can learn from one another and when you are working alone you can relate to what was said in the group and try to explore the new ideas you have learnt from other people. Group discussions to me meant learning from each other and solving problems that one encounters alone in the classroom. It also encourages you to evaluate yourself and your teaching strategies.*

T 6:

*I enjoy being in a group. I feel free to express myself with my own language and get better insights as to how other people deal with issues in their classrooms, it is not like at my school where everyone is working within a closed doors and everything seems fine. In the study group you honestly share your achievements and your failures and people try.*

#### **4.7 FIELD NOTES DATA**

The researcher used a classroom evaluation form to collect data from the observations (as discussed under 3.4.3). These data are presented according to these categories in the form of tables and for each category sub categories are identified and marked with a  $\checkmark$  if it was felt that the teachers had demonstrated a particular skill.

Table 3 is the Mediation Skills table. The researcher looked at the introduction of the lesson, the learner participation, questions asked in the lesson, teacher explanation about the lesson and teachers' speaking skills.

**Table3: “ Mediation Skills” section of the Classroom Evaluation Form**

1. LESSON INTRODUCTION	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1.1 Arouse learner’s interest			√			√
1.2 Link with learner’s previous experience		√	√	√	√	√
1.3 Explain the purpose of the lesson				√	√	
1.4 Have a clear relationship with the main lesson	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. LEARNER PARTICIPATION						
2.1 Engaged in activities	√	√	√	√	√	√
2.2 Have opportunities to ask questions	√					
2.3 Questions from learners are well handled	√					
3. QUESTIONS						
3.1 Clearly formulated questions	√	√	√	√	√	√
3.2 Probing and prompting questions		√		√	√	
3.3 Redirecting questions	√					√
3.4 Questions used to develop the lesson	√	√	√	√	√	√
4. EXPLANATION						
4.1 Clear explanations	√	√	√	√	√	√
4.2 Explanations relevant and appropriate for the learners’ level	√	√	√	√	√	√
4.3 Examples used are appropriate			√	√	√	
5. SPEAKING SKILLS						
5.1 Teacher speaking clearly and fluently	√	√	√	√	√	√
5.2 Teacher uses voice effectively	√		√	√	√	√
5.3 The diction appropriate for the class level	√		√	√	√	√

*Source; Adapted from DE Professional Practice Guide,2000)*

All the teachers introduced their lessons in such a way that there was a clear relationship with the main lesson. Five observed lessons sought some way to connect with learners’ previous

knowledge. Two teachers were found capable of arousing the learners' interest within the lesson introduction (T3 and T6). Teacher 4 and 5 did explain the purpose of the lesson.

For most of the teachers (five) the learner participation was found limited to engagement in activities only. Teacher 1 was the only one that was found to be encouraging learners to ask questions as she was proceeding with the lesson.

All the teachers were found to be using questions to develop their lessons. All the teachers formulated their questions clearly. Only three of the teachers (T2, T4 and T5) were found to be able to ask probing and prompting questions, and the other 2 teachers (T1 and T 3) were asking redirecting questions.

The teachers' explanations were clear and relevant to the learner's level of understanding. Only three of these teachers used examples in their lessons. These were not just examples for the sake of making examples, but were appropriate to give further explanation.

All teachers spoke clearly and fluently. Five out of the six teachers used their voices effectively except for Teacher 2. Teacher 2's voice was soft spoken for the noisy Grade one class she was teaching.

The second observed category was the Instructional Paradigm. The researcher looked at how the subject matter was delivered, strategies and techniques used, didactic flexibility and also how the lesson was concluded. Table 4 illustrates what the results of the observation.

**Table 4: “Instructional Paradigm” Section of the Classroom Evaluation Form**

2.1 SUBJECT MATTER	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1 Accurate	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Suited to the class	√	√	√	√	√	√
2.2 STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES						
1. Suitable and effective	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Lesson outcomes reached		√	√	√	√	√
2.3 DIDACTIC FLEXIBILITY						
1 Teacher responsive to the classroom circumstances	√		√	√		
2. There is evidence of continuous assessment	√	√	√	√	√	√
2.4 CONCLUSION						
1. Subject matter revised	√	√		√		√
2. Integration of pre- matter and new matter	√	√		√		√
3. Tasks given ascertaining the achievement of lesson outcomes.		√	√	√	√	√

*Source: Adapted from DE Professional Practice Guide, 2000)*

One of the roles of a competent teacher, according to the Norms and Standards for Educators, is to be a Learning Area / Phase Specialist (see Appendix 2). All six of the teachers were found to be learning area and phase specialists. The subject matter was accurate and suitable for the level of learners they were teaching. They were found to use strategies that were suitable and effective that ‘unlocked’ the learner’s talents. All tasks were given to ascertain the achievement of lesson outcomes by the teachers, with the exception of teacher 1, who in one of her activities seemed to misunderstand group work activity. The activity she gave to the learners was an individual activity but she asked the learners to work as a group. Even though the seating arrangement was conducive for the group work the activity she gave was found to be irrelevant and as a result she could not achieve the lesson outcomes. The activity was a ‘cut and paste’ and each group had one pair of scissors, one magazine and newspaper

and a pritt stick. Only one learner from each of her groups was able to work at any one time. The rest of the group members had to watch and practically had nothing to do.

The third category that was observed was Classroom Management. The focus of observation was on general classroom management skills, teacher activity and media use. All this is tabulated in table 5 below.

**Table 5: “Classroom Management” Section of the Classroom Evaluation Form**

3.1 GENERAL CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1. Lesson delivered with confidence	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Time line realistic for each part of the lesson		√	√		√	
3. Steady pace maintained through out the lesson	√		√		√	√
<b>3.2 TEACHER ACTIVITY</b>						
1. Non- verbal cues used			√		√	
2. Classroom atmosphere conducive to effective learning	√	√	√	√	√	√
3. Evidence of discipline plan	√				√	√
<b>3.3 USE OF MEDIA</b>						
1. Effective use of blackboard work	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Effective use of other media resources like magazines, charts newspapers and artifacts of everyday life	√	√	√			

*Source; Adapted from DE Professional Practice Guide,2000)*

All six of the teachers seemed to have good classroom management skills. There was evidence of good planning and as a result the lessons were delivered with confidence. They all maintained a steady pace through the lesson. The problem that seemed to exist was time

management. Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 seemed not to be realistic with the time line for each part of their lessons. Teacher 1 took a longer time with her introduction of the lesson because she allowed the learners to ask her many questions and then that forced her to rush her conclusion to the lesson. Teacher 4 spent most of her time on learners presenting their work which also made her to rush her conclusion.

All the classrooms were conducive to learning and the teachers were 'warm' and friendly towards their learners. For discipline purpose the teachers had a set of ground rules of the classroom on the wall. These involved aspects such as listening to others, punctuality, and so on. These were displayed in the form of a poster (See attached Annexure B and C).

Only one teacher did not use the blackboard during the teaching and the five that did the blackboard effectively.

The fourth category was the physical environment of the classroom. The researcher had to observe whether the classrooms were arranged for group work as teachers claimed to be using co-operative learning. It was also important for the researcher to see if the learners' work was displayed on the walls, not only for show but to be sure that the learners could interact with it. This is presented in table 6 below.

**Table 6: "Classroom physical environment" Section of the Classroom Evaluation Form**

1.CLASSROOM PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1. Classroom is arranged for co operative learning	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Learners' work displayed and learners can interact with it.	√	√	√	√	√	√
3. Learning aids available for learners to use	√		√	√	√	

*Source; Adapted from DE Professional Practice Guide, 2000)*

All teacher classrooms were arranged for co-operative learning. On the walls learners' work was displayed. All teachers had user-friendly teaching aids for the lessons that were taught.

The last and the fifth category that was observed in the classroom visit was the teacher's ability to interpret and design learning programmes and materials. This was evident in the way they plan their lessons, in the way lesson content was presented, the choice of content related to the instructional activities and their appropriateness to the level of the learners. Table 7 represents what was observed in this category.

**Table 7: “Interpreter and Designer of Learning Programmes and Materials” ” Section of the Classroom Evaluation Form.**

1. INTERPRETER & DESIGNER OF LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND MATERIALS	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1. Planning contains essential details	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Lesson content presented in logical sequence	√	√	√	√	√	√
3. The choice of content and selected instructional activities are appropriate to the level of learners	√	√	√	√	√	√

*Source; Adapted from DE Professional Practice Guide, 2000)*

As illustrated in Table 7 all teachers' lesson plans were detailed and the lesson content was presented logically. All the teachers were successful in designing activities appropriate for the level of learners they were teaching.

#### 4.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter the process of data analysis had been discussed, accompanied by examples of categories that emerged from the data generated. The purposes for the three sets of data collected were discussed and the procedures followed generated data were explained. Each data set was then presented followed by interpretation.

The following chapter will be a discussion of the findings.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this study was to critically evaluate the use of teaching portfolios as a basis for reflection in in-service teacher education. To arrive at the conclusions about the effects of the portfolios portfolio data was used as a means to capture the complex reality of portfolios as tools for the professional development of teachers (see 4.2.2). Interview data (data in which teachers were sharing their own experiences on their professional development as they engaged with portfolios) was compared to that gathered through the study of portfolios using constant comparative analysis as discussed under 4.2. Throughout the discussion the data was supported by the relevant literature on the professional development of teachers focusing on the use of teaching portfolios as tools of reflective practice (see 2.1).

As indicated under section 4.2, the categories and sub categories of the data are listed with outcomes statements in Table 8, as derived from the rule of inclusion.

Table 8 below is a display of excerpts of provisional categories and includes the rules of inclusion, the applicable units of meaning and notes to assist in further exploration.

**Table 8: Table of Categories and Sub categories and the Outcomes Statements as derived from the process of data analysis.**

Categories and Sub- categories	Outcome Statement
<p><b>1. Portfolios are tools for learning from experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection on the programme</li> <li>• Integrate practice and theory</li> <li>• Development of knowledge of the subject matter</li> <li>• Learning a cyclical process</li> <li>• Focused reflections</li> </ul> <p>Active learning</p>	<p>Using portfolios in the teacher education programme resulted in teachers learning from their experiences. Through the portfolio process the teachers are situated in the center of the learning process as interpreters of their experiences and agents of future change .</p>
<p><b>2. Self-assessment strengthens commitment to competent classroom practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation</li> <li>• Self directed</li> <li>• Self evaluation</li> <li>• Promotes critical thinking</li> <li>• Value based decision making</li> <li>• Attentive to the cycle of goal setting</li> <li>• Development of interpersonal skills competence to problem solving</li> </ul>	<p>The process of portfolio development provided the teachers with many opportunities to become decision makers; develop various instructional repertoires; to create productive classroom environments; to reflect upon teaching practice; to transform interpersonal relationships and to form a culture of inquiry and self review within the school.</p>
<p><b>3. Portfolios provided opportunity for professional development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to intellectual competence</li> </ul>	<p>Portfolios integrate theory and practice about teaching, learning, knowledge, learners and the school milieu</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers become problem solvers and decision makers</li> <li>• Increased awareness of classroom performance</li> <li>• Assessment of progress</li> <li>• Changed teaching style</li> <li>• Address learner needs</li> <li>• Address learner disabilities</li> <li>• Changed plans</li> <li>• Increased student learning</li> <li>• Facilitated collegiality</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Concerns about portfolios</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time constraints</li> <li>• Confusion about what to put in</li> <li>• Not knowing how to choose best work.</li> </ul>	<p>Teachers at the beginning of portfolio development were concerned about time spent on the portfolio rather than on classroom practice. These concerns seemed to disappear as their understanding about portfolio development increased.</p>

## 5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Each of the categories and its sub-categories which appear in Table 8 above, portfolio data and interview data are discussed in the next section. Excerpts from portfolios and interviews and literature are used to support the discussion.

### 5.2.1 PORTFOLIOS FACILITATED LEARNING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

As already mentioned the participants in this study were in-service teachers, using portfolios for their professional development. The findings in this category consider how the portfolios facilitated learning for professional development of the teachers in training.

#### **Portfolios tools for learning from experience**

All the teachers in their portfolios showed evidence of reflecting on what they had learnt from the programme. The teachers expressed their learning experiences through reflections in their portfolios, for example Teacher 2 wrote:

*The activity the facilitator used to make us aware of number sense was refreshing our minds by using the number plates of the cars in the streets. It shows that you must start with what the learner knows before you go deeper and broader.*

This kind of learning fits in with Knowles's model of initial and continuing professional development (as discussed under 2.6). The teachers' reflections according to this model were based on the series of workshops that the teachers attended. This was more evident when the teachers were reflecting in their portfolios for the first time (Numeracy learning area). All the teachers' reflective statements were expressing what they learned from the programme and displaying how that learning had been implemented in the classroom, Teacher 6 wrote:

*Our workshop on number sense was implemented in a very interesting way , because I learnt that in using numbers for example , a car registration number plate, I could do subtraction , addition and multiplication sums as well as vocabulary... After the workshop I implemented some of these ideas e.g. counting on the calendar.*

The teachers' reflective statements provided proof of an identifiable increase in learning. Thus their approach to learning is similar to Gibbs' description of deep learning, in which he contends that the quality of learning is crucially affected by the way in which individuals approach their learning (for further discussion see on page 15- 16). From all the teachers' reflective statements in the portfolios, the teachers were actively involved in their own learning. In the three learning areas' reflective statements, the teachers showed evidence of engaging with the subject matter they were teaching (see Appendix E). Teacher 5 wrote:

*Many of us isolate maths. That is the reason educators and learners have problems with maths. I have learnt some things that very interesting, and that is to bring maths nearer to the child, relate to daily living. Life is all about numbers, problem solving, money and colour.*

All the participants' reflective statements in the portfolios revealed that the teachers understood the underlying principles of the concepts they were teaching. Schon (1983) believes that the ability to interpret and develop concepts within the sphere of professional expertise enables the individual to grow.

In their portfolios all the teachers portrayed their learning as a cyclical process of organizing and constructing learning from the observations that had been made in some practical situations, and they indicated that these led to improved action. Kolb (1984) explored the principle of experiential learning by describing it as a cycle that explicitly incorporates and builds on the experiences from which learning is derived (as discussed on page 17). In this study all the teachers in their portfolios showed the ability to engage in a concrete experience; to engage in reflective observation; to conceptualize or draw abstract generalizations and to apply new concepts to new situations.

All the respondents during the interviews reinforced the notion that, attention and reflection are the key components in converting experience into a source of learning. All the teachers during interviews expressed this feeling of being conscious about their experience. As

Teacher 5 said:

*Portfolio is like a mirror and it challenges you to consider what you are doing ...it goes on and on because all the time you are examining "the what you teach, the what you teach, the what went well, and did not go well and what plan for making up for what did not go well?"*

The model of Kolb (1984) makes it clear that little or no learning takes place without conscious attention to one's experiences. Indeed Dewey (1933) advocated that learning from experience requires purposeful engagement with the experience. Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985) emphasise reflection as the necessary companion to attention.

Given that the teachers were provided with questions that promote self-reflection (as set under Table 1) during their portfolio development, it is not surprising that all the teachers were consciously reflective on their practice. Camp (1992) advocated that reflection has to be learned and practiced. During interviews all the teachers articulated that their experiences of the systematic self-assessment in a portfolio allowed them the power of reflective thinking. Three of the teachers said a portfolio was like a "mirror" because they discovered themselves through portfolio development. In expressing the perception of reflective thinking Teacher 1 said;

*You look at yourself and see what you need to change ... you begin to see things that you do not know about yourself.*

### **Self-assessment strengthens commitment to competent classroom practice**

Three of the teachers during interviews expressed that, as they exercised self- assessment in their working settings, they experienced a strong desire to continuously improve their work and contribute to their schools. To express these feelings teacher 3 said:

*I believe that every teacher should develop a portfolio because it is evidence of your experience, successes and weaknesses in your practice and when you record those,*

*you can build your future in becoming a better teacher because you will be working towards perfecting your weaknesses.*

Dewey (1933) advocated that, portfolios can cultivate a way of thinking that consists of turning a subject over in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration.

All six teachers reported becoming more motivated to monitor their attitudes and behaviors and to identify areas for improvement. Assuming this kind of responsibility for the teachers' work involves the complex capabilities of being self-initiated, self-corrective and self-evaluating (Mezirow, 1981) (as discussed under 2.6).

The improvements the participants claimed to have made in their interpersonal relations, in setting and achieving goals and in monitoring their work performance are indicators of increased behavioral complexity (Kolb, 1984). All six teachers found self-assessment to be the gauge for initiating, evaluating and correcting their performance.

All the participants during interviews repeatedly voiced the view that classroom teaching skills were developed or refined through self-assessment. The skills involved goals, interpersonal relations, critical reflection and value-based decision making.

With regard to goals, all the participants' reflective statements in their portfolios portrayed that self-assessment made them more attentive to the cycle of setting goals, monitoring progress toward them, evaluation of goal achievement and establishing the next goal or set of goals.

All the participants during interviews expressed that self-assessment had assisted them in the development of interpersonal skills. Their interpersonal skills were evidenced in how they valued the feedback from their peers on their progress on portfolio development. All the participants indicated that working in study groups made them view their mistakes as stepping stones to continuous learning. All the teachers during interviews expressed this view. Teacher 2 said:

*Working in a group is beneficial for me. The fact that we can share our experiences helped me to develop professionally, you can learn from one another and when you are working alone you can relate to what was said in the group and try to explore the new ideas you have learnt from other people. Group discussions to me meant learning from each other and solving problems that one encounters alone in the classroom. It also encourages you to evaluate yourself and your teaching strategies*

All the participants during interviews reported that they were interdependent with others as co-learners in the workplace.

All the six participants indicated in their portfolios that self-assessment contributed to their competence as problem-solvers and decision-makers. For example, during interviews all the teachers claimed that their self-assessment helped to sharpen their skills in critical reflective thinking and heightened their awareness of their values. They attributed becoming more adept at problem-solving and decision-making to incorporating values in their reflective thinking process, T4 said:

*It gives you an opportunity to evaluate yourself and your teaching strategies as well. You work in ways of working out your weaknesses, you don't leave problems unsolved. Actually I believe it takes away the fears of discovering your weaknesses but you concentrate on finding solutions and you see them as challenges.*

The participants indicated their increased self-esteem. The sense of competence heightened through self-assessment was evident in their increased confidence in their abilities to communicate with others, make decisions, and pursue realistic goals. They spoke of feeling more in charge of their personal and professional lives.

## **5.2.2 THE BENEFITS OF USING PORTFOLIOS AS TOOLS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Another category in the findings of this study is that portfolios provide teachers with many opportunities in their professional development. As already indicated under 3.4.2 the



respondents during interviews took a leading role in portraying the results of their enquiries into their professional development. It was during interviews that the participants explored their reflective practice thus highlighting the benefits thereof. The benefits of the process of developing portfolios provided teachers with opportunities to, become decision makers about curriculum; to develop various instructional repertoires; to create productive classroom environments; to reflect upon ones' teaching practice; to transform interpersonal relationships; to form a culture of inquiry and self-review of the whole school.

### **Portfolios helped teachers to become decision makers about the curriculum**

All the participants in their portfolios and during interviews indicated that the reflective practice of portfolios contributed to their intellectual competence as problem solvers and decision makers. In their portfolios the teachers wrote statements that provided evidence of problem solving skills and decision-making; Teacher 3 wrote:

*It is important for the learners to identify the problem and then propose a solution. You cannot give a solution without identifying the problem. I would like them to give details on the steps that they have taken to get the answer. I have developed their listening skills and thinking skills. ... because children will have to solve problems for the rest of their lives*

In essence portfolios integrate theory with practice about teaching, learning knowledge, students and the school milieu.

### **Portfolios help teachers to develop various instructional repertoires.**

Through the writings of reflective statements in the portfolios, all the participants portrayed their awareness of their performance in the classroom. All the teachers' voices from these reflective statements legitimized classroom experience and wedded teaching to relevant instructional inquiry, Teacher 2 wrote;

*I have learnt that cooperative learning learners are actively involved, they enjoy doing things for themselves. It also encouraged individual development. During the lesson the children were participating in group discussion, putting learners in groups*

*can make them feel that they have been offered the opportunities for success and challenges.*

During interviews the teachers claimed that, the process of thinking about their classroom practice made them assess their progress. Seldin (1991) advocated that the very process of collecting and sifting documents and materials that reflects teacher's teaching, gets them to think about what worked and did not work in the classroom (as discussed under 2.7). As Teacher 1 put it:

*My way of teaching has changed because I reflect on my practice. I think about what I am to do and once done it in line with how well have I done it and what to improve, which make me grow and develop as a professional.*

### **Portfolios help teachers to develop productive classroom environments**

All the teachers during interviews were convinced that their 'changed teaching style' created an environment that is conducive to learning. Teacher 4 said the learners were not "in fear" of the teacher.

During interviews all the teachers claimed that the portfolio approach provided them with an opportunity to assess their teaching performance as well as the performance of the learners. In expressing these feelings, Teacher 5 said;

*The portfolio has helped me, in the sense that it challenges me to plan in advance with the same pace, I need to know where I am with my group of learners to plan for the future. I felt challenged with the portfolio to keep up to date with my work.*

All the teachers in their portfolios expressed this view of being reflective in their practice particularly in terms of critiquing the effectiveness of instructional methods in addressing individual learner needs. To express her feelings on this matter Teacher 3 said:

*I will persist in changing my techniques if the learners do not understand ... I will go to the next stage when I am sure that the learners understand.*

This statement from Teacher 3 carried a message that the teachers were adjusting their teaching strategies to match the developmental stages of their learners. To that extent, Teacher 1 during interviews expressed a view that the portfolio gave her opportunities to address learner disabilities, because it made her think carefully about what she was doing in the classroom.

Four of the teachers in their portfolios mentioned that it was important to connect what they were teaching to 'real life'. They claimed that they did this by eliciting learner's own experiences related to the topic under focus, by asking learners to bring artifacts from home, which illustrate or relate to the subject. They also used real life cases to get learners to problem solve issues they might encounter in the outside world. It was evident during classroom observations, (see Table 3) that the participants sought some way to connect with the learner's prior knowledge and in this sense real life experiences. However the researcher realized that with two of these of participants (out of the three) 'the real life experiences' was related to a secondary source, such as pictures or posters on display rather than learners' own real lives. It is very hard to generalise about this; it might be useful to say that some teachers went to great lengths to make sure that the learners made tangible connection to their real lives. One example here is of a teacher who brought in real everyday samples of products from a cow; leather shoes, belts and bags, butter, yoghurt and meat. Language and literacy activities, as well as Numeracy and Lifeskills were integrated most successfully, as learners fully engaged later in a shopping game, with 'real money'. Not only did the learners enjoy this lesson, but also it was also clear that active learning and application of their knowledge was taking place.

During interviews the teachers claimed that, the portfolio process challenged them to be more committed in their classroom practice, as a result of that they were committed to planning of learning programmes. All the teachers claimed that they were planning differently than before, using new formats and new various resources. Teacher 1 said:

*It gets you focused in the work you do in your classroom because you are to reflect on what happened which you cannot do if you do things without planning. It helps you to*

*plan ahead, to reflect on what you have done and that makes you to improve your achievements and develop the skills that are still lacking in your teaching.*

Amongst the artifacts that were in the teachers' portfolios the researcher observed that a variety of formats of lesson plans were included in their portfolios such as webs and grid formats.

In the portfolios all the teachers indicated that cooperative learning as a new teaching strategy improved the learners' level of understanding. The teachers highlighted the benefits of cooperative learning. For instance Teacher 6 said:

*In co-operative learning learners are actively involved, they are enjoying themselves. It also encourages their individual development. Putting learners in a group can make them feel that they have been offered opportunities for success and challenges.*

Two teachers out of the six indicated in their portfolios that their changed teaching style had an impact on their questioning skills. These teachers expressed the view that they had changed in the way they ask questions. Teacher 6 said:

*I have changed by asking open-ended questions, that will allow the learners debate among the group. The questions helped me to develop other questions that will help me get answers from them.*

During interviews they confirmed that the portfolios provided them with an opportunity to evaluate their performance through reflections on practice. In this regard Teacher 3 said:

*When constructing a portfolio, you reflect on your teaching, the how and what you teach. The portfolio is a means of measuring your own development.*

All the teachers reported during interviews that the reflections on portfolios helped them to learn who they were as teachers and to be aware of how they teach.

During interviews all the teachers reported that portfolio development led to improvement in teaching, which in turn increased the student learning. Teacher 3 confirmed this:

*My teaching is different, I use to talk all the time and now I get the learners to talk. I taught and find time to observe how much they understand what I have taught. I feel fulfilled in the way I do things now that my learners can participant and I learn from them as well.*

In their portfolios and during interviews all the teachers claimed that the experience of reflecting on their practice resulted in a change of their teaching style. The most valued shift reported by all the teachers was that of being learner-centered as the key shift in their classroom practice. This perception was expressed by all the teachers during interviews. Teacher 2 for instance:

*Now I don't impose the knowledge on the learners but I take prior knowledge into consideration and allow their perceptions in the classroom.*

### **Portfolios build relationships amongst peers**

During interviews all the teachers claimed that working with the group was found to be useful amongst the study circles. All the teachers expressed the benefits of sharing work experiences in the study group, thus helping them to grow. Teacher 4 for example said:

*The group support has given me courage and confidence to develop my portfolio. It is good to work in a group than working all by yourself. The discussions and sharing of ideas makes things easier and you turn to understand better. People in the group are willing to give you support. Through this support you trust one another and assist each other more than the facilitators would.*

The claims made by the teachers indicated a climate of co-operation and trust that prevailed when they work in the group. Seldin (1991) is in favour of this approach that colleagues should work together in collecting portfolios (as discussed on page 23).

### 5.3 PROBLEMS AND WEAKNESSES

The findings in this study identified many benefits in using portfolios as a basis for reflection by teachers. This does not imply however, that the study went smoothly. There were problems and weaknesses encountered in the study that need to be highlighted.

The major problem that occurred in the study was that of over-documentation and under-documentation of portfolios (As raised by the teachers from the first interview that they were not sure of what to put into their portfolios). According to Farr and Tone (1994) over-documentation is as unwise as too little documentation. They believe that over documentation leaves the readers drowning in data whilst under documentation keeps vital information about teaching from being considered. This was found to be the case with the first reflective statements of the Teachers (see Appendix D). For example T5's portfolio was over documented, especially her Language learning area. Teachers 1 and 3 were examples of under-documentation with specific reference to their reflections on Numeracy learning area (see Appendix D).

The problem of over-documentation can be related to the concerns that the teachers raised during interviews of being unsure of what to put in. Whilst the problem of under-documentation can be related to lack of confidence of the teachers.

If the teachers' problems were about documentation of the portfolios, the researcher had to find strategies to overcome the problem. To start with, the researcher reinforced the course requirement that the assignment of the portfolios be done in the study group. Thus the writing of portfolios was not to be done in isolation. Zubizarera (1994:325) suggests that *"writing one's first portfolio in isolation does not produce high quality work, collaboration is essential and mentors indispensable"*.

The teachers during the interviews did not relate as to how the mentoring system was useful in deciding what documents to include or to exclude. They did claim that it encouraged them to work with critical friends. Dounoghue (1981) advocated that professional development is

encouraged by a supportive environment. He defines a supportive environment as an environment in which teachers are free to make mistakes and receive helpful, non-threatening corrective feedback including that from carefully documented observations of their teaching colleagues. In this study the researcher played the role of mentor and was therefore responsible for formative assessment and goal setting during interviews. The feedback that the researcher gave to the teachers aimed at providing an opportunity for the teachers to increase their competence by sharpening their skills whilst updating, widening and deepening their knowledge of what to teach.

The other problem encountered in this study was that the teachers at the beginning were not competent at reflection (see 4.2.2. for further discussion on this problem). Calderhead and Gates (1993) highlight the process of becoming reflective as being developmental and that students need to be assisted to develop the skill of reflection. The researcher assisted the teachers to be competent in reflection by giving them questions that promote self-reflection (see self-reflective questions tabulated in Table 2). Camp (1992) advocated this view that learners need to be led by questions to reflect and to explain themselves to others in order to understand themselves.

The evaluation of portfolios in this study was seen as cyclical but the dynamic and cumulative nature of portfolios was missing. This explains why the teachers could not show advancement through their professional development in the process, because they had an opportunity to reflect on their development through in the first year of the programme.

The other weakness was the lack of portfolio development experience amongst the teachers. Even though the climate of cooperation and trust was increased the teachers were limited in terms of knowledge. The researcher worked together with each of the teachers to support them in the process of portfolio development in terms of setting goals for their portfolios.

Working with one group of students within a limited time frame can be identified as another weakness of this study. As already discussed under 1.1 that the research was conducted over a period of two years, which was the duration of the programme.

## 5.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter the findings of the research have been interpreted. It was noted that teaching, learning, reflection and assessment are intimately related in a portfolio model as shared in this study. The teachers recognised the portfolio as the most valuable tool for their professional development. The teachers also commented on how the developing of their portfolio and the use of reflection has helped them to improve their teaching practice. They stated that the process helped them to discover personal qualities they were hitherto unaware of. The process gave them a new perspective of both themselves personally and the learning processes they had experienced during the programme. It helped them to discover who they were, what they knew, what they could do and what they were like as individuals and as professional teachers. They perceived portfolios as a true union of assessment and learning.

It appears that using portfolios is a viable option for assessing students' (i.e. teachers in this case) skills and achievements, and are also tools for authentic assessment. Overall this study indicates that portfolios are useful tools for the professional development of teachers.

The following chapter will suggest implications and recommendations for implementing portfolios in an in-service teacher education programme. This will be followed by guidelines for future research.



## **CHAPTER 6**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION:**

The use of teaching portfolios in teacher education as a basis for reflection has been raised and discussed in the foregoing chapters. In this final chapter, the implications of the study are discussed and recommendations on implementing portfolios in in-service teacher education programmes are given. This will be followed by suggestions for future research.

#### **6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PORTFOLIO IMPLEMENTATION**

The following recommendations are deduced from the analysis of the study. The recommendations could be used as guidelines by practitioners who do not have experience of using portfolios as the basis for reflection in a teacher education programme.

These guidelines might be more suitable for facilitators and student teachers in a Diploma in Education (DE) Teacher Education Programme.

From the experience and insights gained in conducting the study, the following elements in implementing portfolios were identified to be problematic: the definition of a teaching portfolio; the value of a teaching portfolio; the teaching portfolio as means of evaluation; the development of a teaching portfolio within a teacher education programme; the role of the facilitator/ lecturer in process of developing a portfolio, the mentoring system within the process of teaching portfolio development; linking teaching portfolios to the teacher education programme; the “what to include” in the portfolio and the organization of the teaching portfolios.

The researcher could arrive at firm recommendations on all of these problems. A number of suggestions, derived from the study, might be offered as practitioner’s guidelines.

### **6.2.1 THE USE OF A TEACHING PORTFOLIO AS A MEANS OF EVALUATION**

In this study the portfolio has been identified as a vehicle for both self and collaborative evaluation. Through studying the complex processes that the teachers underwent in this research it seems important to conceptualise the process and offer clear steps. This does not suggest that portfolio development is simple and linear, but these are just guides that teachers interested in developing portfolios can use, and are deduced from the steps that the teacher participants and the researcher in the study seemed to have followed in their professional development.

#### **Step 1:**

Self-evaluation through reflection. Through reflection, teachers began to determine the competencies, knowledge, talents and achievements they have that they believed should be represented in their professional portfolios. These were based on the purposes of portfolio development in the programmes as discussed under 6.2.2 of this chapter. From the self-evaluation, teachers began to think about how they can represent those competencies and characteristics;

#### **Step 2:**

Then teachers had to select representative artifacts, to gather the evidence of the qualities the teacher wanted to demonstrate. This selection requires careful decision-making. That is where the teachers in this study expressed some confusion. Hence it was found necessary to provide them with questions to promote self-reflection (see Table 2, for questions promoting self reflection). The selection process is a meaningful act of self-evaluation (Seldin, 1991);

#### **Step 3:**

The third step can be referred to as determination of the fundamental reason for each entry in the portfolio. The teachers used a process whereby they decided upon the particular qualities of a learning area they wanted to achieve and then determined artifacts to represent them. Also, some teachers shared artifacts to be included for which they carefully composed

rationales. Whichever way, the recognition of growth and achievement led to identification of areas that needed further attention and subsequently goals were set.

#### Step 4:

The teachers in this study went as far as this step in their portfolio development. With the help of the researcher during interviews there was collaborative evaluation and goals setting. Goal setting therefore was seen as a beginning and an end to the evaluation cycle. This is in line with Wolf's (1991) view that goals are set, worked towards, progress toward them is reviewed, and new or revised goals are set.

#### Step 5

The teachers in the study showed evidence of advancement through professional development as the year progressed. During the end of the second year of study the teachers were to replace the entries of the first year with entries of the second year to demonstrate growth. This was only possible in the second year because the professional practice module (as discussed under 1. 1) it would be carried over to the second year of the teacher's year of study. However the results of this step are not included in the results of this study because this was beyond its scope of this particular study.

#### Step 6

The last recommended step is to encourage in-service teachers to continue with portfolio development throughout their careers.

### **6.2.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF PORTFOLIOS WITHIN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

In this teacher education programme, the emphasis was upon the process, particularly self-evaluation and reflection as keys to professional development. The processes followed for evaluation of the portfolios are discussed under 4.2.2. The important part of the evaluation of the portfolios in this programme was the formative assessment that was conducted by the researcher to encourage the teachers' self-reflection. This leads into recommending the role that can be played by the lecturers/ facilitators of teacher education programmes.

As discussed earlier the role of the lecturer/ facilitator in the teacher education programme (the researcher in this study) is one of collaborative evaluator and model of professional development. The researcher acknowledged the teachers' self-evaluation and offered further assessment to guide the teacher's professional development. This was done in such a manner that a fair and honest critique of performance was provided. That is why the interviews conducted in this study were semi-structured, to allow the teachers to take a leading role in the discussion of their professional development, see discussions around semi-structured interviews under 3.4.2. It is recommended that the facilitator should bear in mind the following roles in the process of portfolio development:

- Review portfolios and enter into discussions that affirm the student teachers' professional growth and achievements
- Assist student teachers to recognize strengths and identify weaknesses of their portfolios that may not show at any given time
- Assist student teachers to set goals for continued progress
- Ensure that portfolio interview meetings (conferences) are accurately recorded
- Model continuous professional development which might be carried out through portraying a positive attitude toward and providing encouragement for professional development.

Implementation of a portfolio approach in teacher education does not go without an impact on practitioners. The practitioners need to make changes in their own pedagogical practices to make portfolio development a success. As much as the practitioners had a role to play in giving guidance to students in the developmental process it is important that the practitioners trust the students to work in groups.

In sharing the findings with colleagues in the in-service unit at Rhodes University, it became clear that all the lecturers were keen to continue the use of portfolios for professional development of teachers. However the effects of this approach do not necessarily permeate assessment practice as a whole. A change in assessment practice requires a total rethinking of how to organize instruction. For portfolio assessment to be institutionalized it will require more than one enthusiastic department.

### **6.2.3 THE MENTORING SYSTEM WITHIN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT**

As already indicated the role of mentor teachers in this study was that of a collegial relationship with the teachers. It must also be explained that all the participating teachers had no experience in the development of portfolios. As already mentioned in the discussion of the findings portfolios did provide the teachers with opportunities for peer review. A climate of cooperation and trust did prevail even though there was no evidence of the collaborative collection of portfolios as Seldin (1993) would favour. One has to bear in mind that mentor teachers are not responsible for the supervision and evaluation of practicing teachers. The mentor teacher is an experienced, knowledgeable peer who is willing to engage in discourse regarding aspects of professional development.

### **6.2.4 LINKING TEACHING PORTFOLIOS TO THE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

In this study the portfolios were not assigned specific grade values and therefore not graded independently of the total pass/ fail during teaching practice (see 1.1 for further discussion). It was expected that the portfolio development and review contribute significantly to summative appraisals. However the portfolios do not replace the field experience hence classroom observations were conducted by the researcher in this study. Also the student teachers were to write the examinations based on the curriculum taught in the course of the year (1.2 under the statement of the problem explains this better). It is recommended that while portfolios do enhance assessment they do not take the place of summative evaluation.

### **6.2.5 WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A TEACHING PORTFOLIO**

With regard to the concerns of the teachers in this study about “what should I include? ”, the answer to that depends on the set purpose for the teaching portfolios and what the researcher (as audience of the portfolio) wants to see. There are however, some observations from this experience, both within the program and beyond that serve as guidelines for choosing portfolio entries.

Concerning choice and quantity one must remember that portfolios are representative and not comprehensive. This means each artifact chosen for inclusion should represent at least one significant issue for the teacher or her teaching. As it was in this study, the first focus was representing goals and growth toward those goals and achievements.

The other thing to remember is that a teaching portfolio represents both self- and collaborative assessment and evaluation. This implies a rather limited audience during development. Therefore that artifacts chosen for inclusion should be meaningful first of all to the teacher, the primary audience, and secondly to others who are involved in portfolio evaluation.

It is also important to remember that portfolios are a form of dynamic assessment which means whatever is put in at any given time may be added to or deleted as and when necessary. Although in this study the teacher participants did not manage to do that (already discussed under 5.4 as a problem and weakness of this study), it has been observed that teaching portfolios become increasingly unique as teachers' progress through their teacher education programme.

While there are no fixed rules regarding the nature of artifacts to be included, when choosing it is recommended that one consider the four classes of evidence as indicated by Collins (1991).

The recommendation is that a list of specific items include an outline of five domains of teacher development as was the case in the portfolio guide of this study. The seven roles and competencies of a teacher were the domains around which evaluation in this programme were the focused (see Appendix A). How they were conceptualized and how they were organized was the teacher's choice. Three possible ways of organising and examples artifacts is explained in the next sub heading.

The five domains are:

- Professional goals and achievements

- Teaching competencies in content knowledge of one or more content learning/ subject
- Knowledge of child development and learning processes
- Personal and professional attributes and
- Experiences that contribute to teaching.

### **6.2.6 HOW TO ORGANISE A TEACHING PORTFOLIO**

In organizing a teaching portfolio it appears that the most important thing is the rationale for each artifact: that makes the difference between a portfolio and a collection. Portfolios are, in many respect, as individual as the teachers who develop them. In this study the organisation of teaching portfolios needed to demonstrate conscientious self-evaluation. At the same time the portfolios were to facilitate accurate evaluation by the researcher to ensure that reviewers perceive valid impressions. In this study the teachers began with 2 categories, namely;

- goals statements ( statement of professional goals),
- reflective statements ( evidence of the ability to self evaluate and reflect, ability to set and achieve goals)

The researcher through formative evaluation was responsible for identifying the other categories, such as;

*Teaching competencies, with*

- the ability to communicate
- knowledge of instructional strategies
- knowledge of assessment and evaluation strategies
- classroom management abilities
- organizational and planning skills
- knowledge of prescribed curriculum

The examples of artifacts that were included in a portfolio were a variety of types of lessons, and learners' work.

It is recommended that in the organizational scheme the order of entries in a portfolio would be as follows;

1. The identification page
2. General table of contents
3. Cover page section divider (in the case of this study the three learning areas were divided into sections and labeled)
4. Artifacts including learner's work.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The aim for the future research should be to strive for advancement of teacher professional development by equipping the teachers mentoring skills in the portfolio development processes. A future study could take a form of collaborative action research between the teachers and the faculty of education in their institution of training.

The findings of this study did not contribute to the improvement of this programme. A further research could be done built in the programme assessment. This would require that the lecturers and students work together as a research team. The research could start with needs assessment focusing on certain concerns that contribute to the planning of the programme. The main focus of the research could be on the students as was the case in this study, but the lecturers could research as well on their teaching effectiveness.

### **6.4 CONCLUSION**

The cross sectional case study in the in-service education programme for school educators does reaffirm the professional development of teachers. In particular it has reaffirmed the speculations regarding the potential value of teaching portfolios. It has also further delineated the ways that development of teaching portfolios contributes to effective self and collaborative monitoring of professional growth of in-service teachers.

The findings of this study suggest that, keeping records about their professional development, focused reflection, goal setting and marking achievements afforded the teachers the



opportunity for professional development. The teachers saw the portfolio process as exploration, problem solving, a recording of their development as well as speculative inventing of their potential teaching styles. The process led to the setting of new goals and planning for the facilitation of progress toward and attainment of goals- all of which were documented. These themes created a map of learning how to teach in the researcher's as well as the teachers' minds.

The portfolio development facilitated the teachers' deepened understanding of the practical and reflexive explorations of their teaching. The themes that emerged from the process were the teaching situation, the personal nature of teaching and the dynamic nature of teaching and portfolio development. The themes represented the two major poles of the teaching act – the teacher as person, and the context situation – as well as the dynamic interaction of the person and context over time. This shows that, as the teacher encounters new experiences, teaching practices evolve to take account of new challenges. In turn, cyclically, as the teacher's personal teaching style develops, practices evolve to take account of new insights, attitudes, skills and strategies.

Adapting portfolios for use in teacher education has provided evidence that portfolios are valuable tools for professional development of in-service teachers.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Ashcroft, K. and Foreman-Peck, L 1995. **The lecturers' guide to quality and standards in colleges and universities**. Washington: The Falmer Press.
- Ashton, P.M.E., Henderson, E.S., Merritt, J.E. and Mortimer, D.J. 1983. **Teacher education in classroom initial and in-service**. London: Croom Helm.
- Ashworth, A. & Harvey, R.C. 1994. **Assessing the quality in further and higher education**. London: Jessica Kinsley Publishers.
- Barton, J. and Collins, A. 1993. **Portfolios in teacher education**. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 44(3) pp. 200-210.
- Bayne-Jardine, C.1986. **Staff Development in School Management Skills** (1st ed) (Ed: Michael Marland) (pp.75-86) Oxford: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Bird, T. 1990. **The schoolteacher's portfolio: an essay on possibilities**. In J. Millman & L. Darling Hammond (Eds.), *Handbook for Teacher Evaluation: Elementary and Secondary Personnel*. Newbury park, CA: Sage.
- Bitzer, E. M. and Kapp, C.A. 1998. **A Manual For New Academic Staff Developers In Further and Higher Education**. The Centre For Higher and Adult education. University of Stellenbosch.
- Boud, D., Keogh, R., and Walker, D. 1985. **Reflection: turning experience into learning**. London: Nichols Publishing Company.
- Brundage, D.H. and Mackeracher, D. 1980. **Adult learning principles and their application program planning**. Toronto: Ministry of Education, Ontario.
- Burden, P. R. 1986. **Teacher development: implications for teacher education, in Raths, J.D. and Katz, L.G. ed: Advances in Teacher Education Volume 2**. Norwood, Ablex.
- Calderhead, J. and Gates, P. 1993. **Conceptualising reflection in teacher development**. London: The Falmer Press.
- Calfee, R. and Perfumo, P. 1996. Student portfolios: Opportunities for revolution in assessment. *Journal of Reading*, 36(7), pp 532-537.
- Camp, R. 1992. **Portfolio reflections in the middle and secondary school classrooms**. In K.B.Yancey (Ed.) *Portfolios in writing classrooms*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI Project). 1982. **In service education and training of teachers**. PARIS: Organisation for Economic Co operation and Development Centre For Educational Research and Development.

Cole, A.L. 1992. **Researching teaching: exploratory teacher development through reflexive enquiry**. Boston: Mars: Allyn & Bacon.

Collins, A.1991. Portfolios for biology teacher assessment. **Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education**, 5, pp147-167.

Denscombe , M. 1998. **The good research guide for small-scale social research projects**. Open University Press, Buckingham.

Department of Education and Training (DET). 1996a. **Green Paper on higher education transformation. Discussion document**. Pretoria. Government Printer.

Department of Education and Training (DET). 1996b. **National policy of teacher utilisation and development**. Pretoria: Government Press.

Department of Education. 1997. **Education White Paper 3. A programme for the transformation of higher education. Notice 1196 of 1997**. Pretoria.

Department of Labour. 1997. Green Paper. **Skills Development Strategy for Economic and Employment Growth in South Africa**. Pretoria. Government Press.

**DE Professional Practice Guide 2000**. Department of Education, East London Campus. Rhodes University.

**DE Student Handbook 2000**. Department of Education, East London Campus. Rhodes University.

Dewey, J. 1933. **How we think: a restatement of relation of reflective thinking to the education process**. Chicago: Health.

Doolittle, P. 1994. **Teacher Portfolio assessment**. ERIC document.

Dounoghue, C. 1981. **In-service : the teacher and the school**. London : Kogan Page in association with Open University Press.

Easen, P. 1985. **Making school-centred INSET work**. London: Croom- Helm.

Farr, R. and Tone, B. 1994. **Portfolio and Performance Assessment: helping students evaluate their progress as readers and writers**. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Ford, M. and Ohlhausen, M.1991. **Portfolio Assessment in Teacher Education Courses: impact on the National Reading Conferences**, Palm Springs, CA.

- Fullan, M. 1990 **Staff development, innovation and institutional development in Joyce, B. (Ed) Changing School culture Through Staff Development.** Alexandria, V.A, The Association For supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Genck, F. H. 1983. **Improving School Performance – How New School Management Techniques can Raise Learning Confidence and Morale.** New York: Praeger Publishers.
- Gibbs, G. 1988. **Improving the quality of student learning.** Bristol: Falmer Press.
- Gibbs, G. 1995. **Assessing student centred courses.** Oxford: The Oxford Centre for Staff Development: Oxford.
- Government Gazette 2000. **National Education Policy Act C27/ 1996: Norms and Standards for Educators.** Pretoria. Government Press.
- Griffin, G.A. 1983. **Toward a conceptual framework for staff development.** London: The Falmer Press.
- Hall, D. 1997. **Professional development portfolios.** Buckingham Open University Press.
- Herman, J. and Winters, L. 1994. Portfolio research: A slim collection. **Educational Leadership, 52, pp 48-55.**
- Hoyle, E. and Megarry, J. 1980. **Education of minorities.** London: Kogan Page.
- Jarvinen, A. and Kohen, V. 1995. **Promoting professional development in higher education through portfolios assessment.** Assessment and Evaluation in higher Education 20(1): 25-36.
- Knowles, M. 1994 . **The adult learner: a neglected species.** Second Edition. Houston: Gulf Publishing Company. Second Edition.
- Kolb, D. 1984. **Experiential learning. Experience as the source of learning and Development.** Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice- Hall.
- Lambert, M. D. 1984. **A model framework for effective staff development.** York, England: Longman.
- Lang, H.R. , Mcbeath, A. and Hebert, J.A. 1994. **Teaching strategies and methods for student-centred instruction.** New York: Haycourt Brace and Company.
- Lieberman, A. and Miller, L. 1979. **The social realities of teaching,** in Lieberman, A. and Miller, L. ed: Staff development. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Martin, S. 1994. The mentoring process in pre-service teachers education. **School Organisation, 14(3) pp 269-276).**

- Massanari, Drummond, W., Houston, R. 1987. **Emerging professional roles for teacher educators**. Washington: American Association of College for Teacher Education.
- Maykut, P. and Morehouse, R. 1994. **Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide**. Washington, D.C: The Falmer Press.
- Merriam, S.B. 1991. **Case study research in education. A qualitative approach**. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S.B. 1998. **Qualitative research and case study applications in Education. Revised and Expanded from Case Study Research in Education**. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. 1981. **A critical theory of adult learning and education**, *Adult Education*, 32, pp 3-24.
- Moon, J. 1999. **Reflection in learning and professional development: Theory and Practice**. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Mouton, J. 1996. **Understanding social research**. Pretoria J.L. van Schaik Publishers.
- Oldroyd, D., Smith, K. and Lee, J. 1985. **School-based staff development**. York: Longman.
- Schreuder, J.H; du Toit, P.J.; Roesch, N.C. and Shah, C. G. 1993. **Professional Development: Practical activities for the Principal and Teacher**. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman. First Edition.
- Schöon, D. 1983. **The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action**. New York: Basic Books.
- Schöon, D. 1987. **Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Towards a new design for leaching and learning in the professions**. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schulze, S. 1994. **Training teachers to use action research for evaluating environmental education methods**. *Educare*, 23 (2), pp 28-33.
- Seldin, P. 1991. **The Teaching portfolio; a Practical guide to Improve Performance/tenure decisions**. Bolton: Anker Publishing Company Inc.
- Seldin, P. & Associates. 1993. **Successful use of teaching portfolios**. Bolton; Anker Publishing Company Inc.
- Wildman, T.M. and Niles, J.A 1987. **Essentials of Professional Growth**. *Educational Leadership* (February), pp 4-19.
- Winsor, P.J. 1994. **Learning about portfolio assessment: student teachers as language learners, users and teachers**. *Journal of Reading Education*, 19(3), pp 12-18.

Winsor, P. and Ellefson, B. A. 1995. **Professional portfolios in teacher education; an exploration of their value and potential.** The Teacher Educator, 31pp 68-81.

Wolf, K. 1991. **The schoolteacher's portfolio: Issues in design, implementation and evaluation.** Phi Delta Kappan, 73, pp 129-136

Wolf, K., Whinery, B. and Hagerty, P. 1995. **Teaching Portfolios and Portfolio Conversations for Teacher Educators and Teachers.** Action in Teacher Education, 17(1), 30-39.

Valencia, S. McGinley, W., and Pearson, P.D. 1990. **Assessing Reading and Writing; Building a complete picture for middle school assessment.** Technical report no 5000. Urban, II. Center for Study of Reading.

Yin, R.K. 1989. **Case study research: design and methods.** Beverly Hills: Sage.

Yorke, D.M. 1981. **Patterns of Teaching.** London. CET.

Zubizarreta, J. 1994. **Teaching portfolios and the beginning teacher.** Phi Delta Kappan, 76 (4 ), pp 323-326.

Zumwalt, K.K. 1986. **Improving Teaching.** Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

**APPENDIX A**

<b>1. Name of Institution</b>	Rhodes University
<b>2. Title Qualification</b>	Diploma in Education (Primary)
Type	Professional undergraduate Diploma
Field of Learning	05: Education Undergraduate Diploma
Sub- field	5
Level	120 Credits (1200notional hours)
Minimum Duration	
<b>3. Purpose of Qualification</b>	<p>The overall purpose of the qualification is to produce GET Band educators who have practical, foundational and reflexive competence.</p> <p>The educators will provide professional educational services, operating effectively in schools and delivering high quality teaching and learning programmes within the seven roles of the educator.</p> <p>The qualification will equip educators to be agents of change and transformation through creative and innovative praxis.</p>
<b>4. Exit- level Outcomes</b>	<p>Candidates should be</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. able to mediate learning</li> <li>2. able to interpret and design learning programmes and materials</li> <li>3. leaders, administrators and mangers in the educational setting</li> <li>scholars, researchers and life- long learners</li> <li>4. scholars, researchers and life - long learners</li> <li>5. phase specialists in either the Foundation, Intermediate or Senior Phase</li> <li>6. able to act in a community, citizenship and pastoral role within the school community</li> <li>7. able to assess learners' progress and evaluators of programmes</li> </ol>

**Adapted from Norms and Standards for Educators (Government Gazette, 2000).**

**APPENDIX B**

**LETTER OF CONSENT**

**Title of your study:** -----

\* I agree to participate in a programme of research conducted through the faculty of Education at Rhodes University by Xoliswa Mtose.

\* The purpose of the study is to .....and has been explained to my satisfaction.

\* The data/ artifacts that will be collected are .....

\* I understand that the participants' names will be coded to maintain confidentiality.

\* I understand that, upon request, I may have full description of the results of the study after its completion.

\* I understand that the data from this study may be published.

\* I understand that I am free to withdraw from this study anytime without negative consequences.

\* I understand that if I have any questions or concerns about this study I may contact the researcher; Xoliswa Mtose (043) 7047062 or e- mail [x.mtose@ru.ac.za](mailto:x.mtose@ru.ac.za)

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS CONSENT FORM AND I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.**

Student's name (PLEASE PRINT) .....

Signature of student teacher- .....

Date .....



## **APPENDIX C: PORTFOLIO DATA**

### **Teacher 1' goal and reflective statements (Numeracy, Language and Lifeskills)**

T.1/N

#### **Goal Statements**

- I want children to develop listening skills
- To be able to identify different types of sport
- Enhance a caring and loving of sport/ games
- Teach them importance of putting objects / pictures in a systematic way / grouping
- To have fun

#### **Reflective statements**

Lesson 1 IN MLMMS and LLC has more activities to be done than LLC. The reasons for that this lesson is done with grade R learners that are still struggle to do most of the components of LLC like writing and reading. I think this lesson could be suitable for all the grades because it promotes individual work, group games love of mathematics and love of different sports. The aim of this lesson is to emphasise on problem solving, taking decisions. I am helping them to be able to look at things creatively, to have solution for real life situations, and the lesson is linked to something in which they are interested in something done by them.

#### **Introduction of the lesson / Morning Ring**

I have told them the story to help to help them to think, collect their mind and to share information with them. The story was short thinking of their concentration span. After collecting their thinking. I have asked them question. I think asking questions while telling the story or after I have told them to have made a difference to me and see how children use their minds it try and find solutions. What was surprising about them is that the answer without thinking at times, it was better because poster on the wall helped them to think. When brainstorming all children were taking about soccer I was surprised without being bias, nothing was mentioned of netball and soft ball, but this shows what media had to do showing different sport so that children can be familiar with. The other reason it may be because this is season of soccer. During morning ring sharing of ideas is emphasized even in giving views, to take turns. I have discovered that the quiet learners were also participating about topic. The issue of favoring the teams – children were unable to tell why they favor certain teams, but I should think adults have an impact in them liking the teams they like. Learners were given papers to make an album it was a difficult thing to do, I have to show them before.

I think my instruction were not clear. Playing outside was the most important thing to them especially when the teacher is also playing. I have enjoyed the playing with children it was fun.

T.1/L

### **Goal statement**

- Doing this lesson with children I want them to be able to communicate oral and visually
- To develop small muscles (writing Skills)

### **Reflective statement**

This lesson is a good work because I was able to use the skills learnt from different workshop. In this lesson I have used the co-operative learning as the way of facilitating the lesson. Learners have used problem-solving fskills in finding out what they are supposed to do as individual and as team members. This is an effective piece from me because of what the children do and how they have understood the goals of my work and also the fact that I have learnt something from learners

To be able to see that before in Scenery Park the use to be post offices and where it was situated and what is happening at the moment. In reality they have mention the situation as it is. The goals I have set for myself is that the learners must be able to communicate orally about the postman and post office and the fact that they can see that it is no longer there

The use of small muscles through writing and tearing envelopes, copying the stamps and cutting from all letters, I think they were able to use the small muscle and eye hand co-ordination. Accomplish my goal statement was not the easy thing because I have to make sure everybody in the group participate by communicating verbally and make use for the small muscles. Other children are too shy to communicate when asked to do so. I have to change the style so that they don't think they are forced to speak. I have changed by asking open – ended question that will allow debate among the group. e.g. why do our parents receive letters from post person? This question helped me to develop other questions that will help me to get answers from them. Different answers were brainstormed; I ended up summarizing the type of letters being received in our homes

My goal for this lesson cannot be accomplished in one day or in a week. It is an ongoing process, I can only be sure if I have accomplish them correctly when they are in grade 1-3 because, they will be forced to speak and write properly or nicely

I have selected this peace of work because communication is one of the human needs to be able to make meaning of things surrounding us, to be understood by other people, and to be able to narrate stories. One needs to be sure that children need to be able to listen first, make sense of what they have listened and take action. The instructions the learner is getting from the teacher and other children will help them to communicate properly with other people. They have to get certain skills before they can communicate properly. I should think also as the educator I have to have those skills I am trying to develop to children. (listening skills)

When I was creating this work I remembered what we use to do when we see a post-person. The way he use to identify use and give us letters even if we are not in the yard (home

address) The important role they play to our community. When creating this peace I want children do realize how good is to receive a letter whether is having good and bad news. When creating this lesson for children I did think of the important role of the post-person, and my focus was only on the development of the communication and small muscles of the learners but the questions from children maid me think about the roles the people play in our communities.

If I have to do more I will allow children to write letters to their friends or relatives they are not staying with, the letter must have a message that is good or bad. When you evaluate this work I should think you need to look at the address, the stamp on the right side and importance of the exercise. The role being played by the post-person.

To what I have learnt before (Co-operative learning )leaner are actively involved, they enjoy doing things for themselves. It also encourages individual development.

During the lesson children were participating in-group discussion, putting learners can feel that they have been offered the opportunities for success and challenges as the educator I have felt I have done my role in educating them about different role people play in our communities.

The way I am doing my work has changed since I stated with the training the method, my thinking skills also have developed. I use to plan the work and evaluate the processes, I have taken in the work done but now I plan and evaluate the process taken and evaluate the children and myself thus help me not to do the same mistakes again. The workshop on LLC has given me different ways to teach LLC in the class. Language empowers us to be able to access education, to think and express our thoughts and emotions, negotiate meaning and understanding. For the grade R language also need to be developing so that children can express themselves through the discussion in the morning ring and during free choice activities. The are different languages in S.A that as an Educator I need to be interested in so that I will be able to deal with all different types of children that are in my class, if not able to do so, ask for help from other educators in the learning site or parent.

My planning has improved since started with the training. It has improved this way, before I use to plan but do not write the assessment of each and every activity, now for whatever I have planned I write the assessment. Writing the assessment help me as an Educator to be able to see the gabs even before I finish the activities/lesson by the end of the activities I already know what I need to change or to improve.

My work does show me that I am motivated self-confident because I have helped/improved my way of thinking and the way of thinking and the way of doing things. As the educator I am able to look at myself critically evaluate my actions and improve or work on those that I am not confident on. I t has change because I have planned to do my portfolio every week have lesson with chidden more than I planned to do. I should think topics done so far in LLC where interesting the integration of all learning areas is also interesting. Co-operative leaning I enjoy most doing with children especially that I know the benefit of it.

T.1/LS

**Goal statement**

- Learners must have the ability to make, create and invent.
- Learners should learn how to respect and know their rights and the rights of others.
- Learners must know how to live a healthy life by caring for others.
- Learners should know themselves as individuals and understand their feelings.
- They should know the world that they live in and how to make a positive contribution to make it bearable for all.

**Reflective statement**

Lifeskills is an integrated course with all learning areas. I will help to develop the learners to become what is expected from them in the eight critical outcomes. The activities used in lifeskills, relate to real life situations. They will be successful and productive participants in creating a better society. I must provide the different activities to help them examine their environment and society and learn to express their own feelings and creativity. They learn that are unique with their own likes and dislikes. They learn how to deal with their different feelings and that we should respect each other, child or adult.

There are also certain values that are of great importance. I must make them aware of these, because they must be able to interact with others. To interact with others, means to have respect for others values and dignities, as well as their possessions. There are other values such as obedience, caring sharing, thankfulness and faithfulness. I need to give learners the opportunity to practice these values. They must know how to live a healthy lifestyle. They should know how to control their emotions such as fear and happiness. They should know how to care for one another. Learners should know the difference between friendly and unfriendly behaviors and explore this through storytelling and dramatization in groups. This will help them to be careful of all dangers around them.

Let us focus on one of these activities that we dealt with in lifeskills. The topics caring for our pets. In this activity, they learned how to care for their pets. They understood the reason why it is important to care for their pets. If you know how to care for animals, you will have a better understanding for human life. As animals have rights to live, so do you as an individual learner have rights. Learners should be able to know and understand these rights such as, the right to be cared for and the right to education. Learners describe and classify roles and tasks of family members and develop an appreciation of different types of family celebrations such as birthdays, weddings and baptism. These celebrations can be compared to other cultural celebrations.

## **Teacher 2's goal and reflective statements (Numeracy, Language and Lifeskills)**

T.2/N

### **Goal statement**

- Learners must use numbers in real –life context and situations
- Learners must solve their problems through critical thinking by asking continuously why.
- Learners must understand, calculate, read and write numbers in different ways.
- Learners must explain how they arrived at the answer.

### **Reflective statement**

The game and activities we do is very instrumental to measure the growth and success of the learner as well as my own. Number sense and problem solving is very important because the learner can relate to fundamental things e.g. age, size, number of members in the family and ages in the family as well as different quantities in the home and their surroundings. This is something that you use throughout your everyday life.

You can relate this to your real life situation not only in the immediate surroundings but also in the world around us. Number sense can be developed at a early age at home by giving instructions to the child e.g. give me one slice of bread, one apple, counting the family or comparing things or objects.

Critical Outcome number one e.g. Identify and solve problems by using creative and critical thinking is very important not only for the learner but also for the educator to be a good citizen of the country.

By making use of the resources that is familiar to the learner and starting by the known before we go to the unknown is very significant.

The activity the facilitator used to make us aware of number sense was refreshing our minds by using the number plates of the cars in the street.

It shows that you must start with what the learner knows before you can go deeper and broader.

T2/L

### **Goal statement**

- Learners must communicate and interact effectively with others throughout their life.
- Learners must solve their problems through communication.
- Learners must understand, read and write the spoken word throughout their lives.

### **Reflective statement**

I have a different view of story telling now. I realize that story telling is not only for enjoyment and relaxation but to learn a language. When children listen to stories, they are hearing language that encourages them to ask questions and this lead to more talk. By telling stories to the children and asking them to retell the story I was able to find out the background of the learners and the perceptions they have. The children come from a diverse group and through stories I can work on their attitude and biases. You don't have to read a story from a book only but you can make up your own story with the children. To me story telling is very important because this is the vocal point of learning a language by listening to the person. I have to listen to understand and retell the story.

I have set goals for myself that the children must be able to communicate and interact effectively with others throughout their life and through story telling the child will be able to communicate and interact with others. You help the children learn to use language by talking with them and listening to them. Children make mistakes when they are learning a language and when they retell a story they will say the words differently but it is more helpful to rephrase what the child said and to respond to the sense of what was said rather than to have the child correct his or her mistake. It is important for children to speak up express themselves, to get responses and story telling allows them to do that.

The reason why I selected story telling is that it is a vital component of learning a language as I have said before the child learns to express his feelings and put it into words when they tell a story.

It is important for the teacher to know the background of children and work on this knowledge to develop the child to listen with understanding when you talk to him or her or relate a story to them. If you don't listen you will not be able to understand and communicate with others effectively.

I feel it is important to make the children part of the activities I present to them because when I reflect on the task done, I am able to assess my growth and the growth of the learner. I am able to work on my weaknesses and develop the children to their full potential when reflecting on the work or task I have completed.

In the past I will tell the story to the children for them to relax after the days work with the children but now I know the importance of story telling.

I have learned the skill to assess my growth and the learner's growth. I can see the progress I have made in my work because I can reflect on my work and ask my peers to assess me so that I can make sure that what I am doing is correct and relevant to what I am suppose to do.

There is a change in the way of presenting activities to the children as well as preparing the activities for the children. I must plan and manage my work and the activities the children do effectively and not do the work on the day of the workshop or when I go to school.

I am confident when doing my work because I am able to ask my peers to validate my work and I can challenge my colleagues on developing a culture of teaching and learning in the classroom. I would be very good and also important for all educators to reflect on their teaching practices so that we could have a high standard of learners.

In the beginning of the course I felt unsure of what I am doing and if I am doing it the correct way and would always ask my colleagues to comment on what I am doing but now I can say that through doing this teaching portfolio I have grown.

I enjoyed the topic on story telling because the way it has been presented to us was very interesting. The impact it made on how important it is to tell stories and rhymes to the children to develop their language learning.

I enjoy being part of the experiential activities because the experiencing the activity you are able to relate to it in an effective way.

I find the developing of the portfolio and reflecting on my own practice most challenging because it gives me the opportunity to assess and assist my learners and work co-operatively with my colleagues.

## T.2/ LS

**Goal statement**

- Know the world around them.
- Know the rights of others and respect their feelings
- Live a safe and healthy lifestyle
- Respect and promote different cultures, values and belief systems

**Reflective statement**

This learning area gives us the opportunity to develop emotionally, socially, spiritually, intellectually and politically. The learners have the opportunity to discover the world around them; through the different activities they do and create meaning. The learners will have a better understanding of their lifestyle, the different cultures and customs. They will understand themselves and others better and respect the values and norms of other cultures as well as their own. They would understand the importance of their contribution towards a healthy sense of self, environment and their living. The children will learn how to express and deal with the different feelings they have e.g. sad, happy, fear, joy, and laughter. Children were thought in by their parents that only girls cry and that boys do not cry, instead of allowing the boys to express their feelings they are thought not to express their feeling of sadness and hurt.

We learned about music and how to make music instruments from waste to express our feelings through Arts and Culture. They get to know the differences and similarities in the different cultures. The different ways in which people celebrate an important occasion e.g. birthdays or religious events. When the young men go to be circumcised in the bush and others at the hospital. What is different by using these methods and to respect other people's beliefs. When it's their birthday they will learn to invite their friends. What to wear to the party and how to be disciplined and to respect the rules of the friend's family. You don't just go to the party but you must also know to take a present with. The different ways birthdays are being celebrated. They learn how children grow and that you must go through the childhood stages before you can become an adult.

Life Skills can be integrated with Maths and LLC. When going shopping the children will learn the names of the items in the shops. They will learn the prices of the items and how to use the money they have to pay for the items they want. The child learns the skill of how to manage his/her money wisely and budget for the things he/she wants to buy. The children learn what their rights are e.g. the right to education, the right to food, the right to be healthy and to respect the rights of others. They must value the things they have and care for their belongings and that of others.



### **Teacher 3' goal and reflective statements (Numeracy, Language and Lifeskills)**

T.3/N

#### **Goal statement**

- To promote a comfortable learning environment.
- To encourage learners to solve problems
- To encourage learners to explain what they did, rather than simply giving an answer.

#### **Reflective statement**

The reason why I think this is a good piece of work is because problem solving is something that they will use for life. I first gave them a word-problem using everyday life things like apples, sweets, etc. I encouraged the learners to explain what they have done to find the answer. When I give them a simple word sum, they will give me the answer, but when asked to explain how they got the answer, they will act as if this is not important.

It is important for the learners to identify the problem and then propose a solution. You cannot give a solution without identifying the problem. I would like them to give details on the steps that they have taken to get to the answer. The goals I have set for myself to encourage learners to solve their own problems. To accomplish this goal, I decided to change my method to the aspect of problem solving by giving them more oral exercise before they do the written work. I have to develop their listening and thinking skills. The reason why I chose this piece of work, is because children will have to solve problems for the rest of their lives.

What was important to me, is that the learners must identify the problem before they can find a solution and to begin with things in their immediate surroundings. I will use more practical, daily problems and do more exercise. This approach to problem solving is different from what I've learned. It is concentrating on what the learner know and how I can improve on it. The learners have mastered the skills to identify the problem before they give the solution. This is done by listening, because they know now that they must listen and understand before they can do it. The way I plan my work has changed, because I have to work and build on what the learner know. The work is more learner-centered than teacher-centered.

I am motivated, because I will persist in changing my techniques if the learners do not understand. My persistence has changed, because I will only go to the next stage when I am sure that the learners understand. The video on problem solving was enlightening, because the learners were free to express their thoughts. The experiential activities, because in doing, you remember more. The portfolio is more challenging to me, because I have to reflect on my teaching practice and improve on my weaknesses.

T.3/L

### **Goal statement**

- The learners must be able to communicate effectively.
- The learners must be able to solve their problems by talking about it.
- The learners must be able to participate and interact socially and politically.

### **Reflective statement**

Storytelling is an important tool for educators, because learners of all cultures have a store of knowledge by the time they are five or six years old. Using the framework of a story is very useful when introducing new concepts or a language. Through storytelling you develop their communication skills they will need in future. Communication skills will help them have a better understanding interact socially, spiritually and politically. They will be able to read and to write and make sense of what they read and write. They will be able to relate to the story in their daily lives. They will also be able to solve their maths problems if they have a clear understanding. By giving them enough opportunity to retell, dramatize, and fantasize, will help them to develop their speaking skills in a fun and pleasant manner.

Questions and responses can also help to develop their speaking skills. At a later stage, the educator can develop their reading skills and writing skills by giving them exercises such as draw a character and write your own story, or draw parts of the story and write your own sentences. Read aloud to the learners in the class. That will encourage them to write their own storybooks. They can use the vocabulary in the story to write their own. Their critical thinking skills can also be developed by giving them the opportunity to write the end of the story. If storytelling can be develop my learners in good communicators as well as good problem solvers, then I realize that storytelling is not just for fun and enjoyment. Storytelling is especially useful for learners who are in the process of learning a new language.

All learners do not develop at the same time and they are not on the same level of development. I could see some learners don't enjoy stories because they do not understand the content of the story. The story did not make sense to them. Those are the learners who disturb other. I solved this problem using those learners who did not listen, to dramatize the story. They did not understand the story, but I used them to motivate them.

By doing this, it gave me a better understanding of the development of the learners in my class. But what I still don't understand, is for e.g. I teach learners in a language that is new to them. It is not their mother tongue. It is crucial that their communicating should be developed well, but I am not always sure how to help them. I would like you to help me in this regard. I realize that I need to plan my story properly to get most out of the story. Chance to get to know the very wrong in what I say, but this is what I believe in. I think if I had a better understanding I could perhaps change my attitude. Even though the series are out dated as they say I can still integrate with any other learning area. This method is not the prescribed method. You cannot break the sentence unless you have reached the stage where they can build new sentences with the words. Why duplicate when you can do new sentences straight away. They need to master 5 sentences strips before you break up in words, and than only they build new sentences.

**T.3/LS****Goal statement**

- Learners should be aware of how to live a safe and healthy life
- Know the rights of others and respect their feelings
- Know the world around them
- Be able express oneself through art and to design out of waste materials.

**Reflective statement**

This learning area gives me and my learners the opportunity to develop in different ways; that is socially, spiritually, emotionally as well as politically. Learners are open to discover the world around them through different activities they do. They understand them selves as well people around them. They understand that by giving positive contribution in life, they will create a better society.

They learn how to express and deal with their emotions. Lifeskills can be integrated to Numeracy and LLC. It helped towards developing the learners' skills which are needed in real life situations. The learners developed how to manage their finances when they were doing a shopping lesson. They read the names of the items, and prices of the items before they paid. They had to choose what to but according to what they own. In this very lesson if they were made aware of their rights as customers. They were given an opportunity to look at the bought items and see if they re worth the value. If there was anything unpleasant they were to go back to the shop and lay their complaints.

In this learning are I taught my learners how to make musical instruments from waste material. This where they expressed their creativity. Whilst engaged in this activity I had an opportunity to do assessment on their communication skills. When they were asked to play music of their choice they sang different songs. It was amazing to see the shy learners expressing their feelings through music. The developed respect to different people and were so attentive to each others' contribution.

In the past I use to buy the music instruments for that kind of lesson and I would be in charge of every instrument tormented by fear that they might break them. Now the learners are actively involved in making their own which makes them proud owners and participants.

**Teacher 4's goal and reflective statements ( Numeracy, Language and Lifeskills)**

T.4/N

**Goal statement**

- To give the pupils the knowledge that even Roman figures, shops, angles and their classifications can develop number sense
- To empower pupils with Curriculum changes of OBE
- To work towards reconstruction and development of South African Society
- To develop skills such as creativity, writing solving problem, working co-operatively, discussion, hearing, listening, sharing etc.
- To make pupils to understand the contested nature of Mathematical knowledge, language and understanding .

**Reflective statement**

I regarded this piece was a good one because most of my goals I had were achieved. There was a lot of Maths and LLC language which was not familiar to my pupils. There were a lot of strategies we tried to use on Problem Solving. During trying and teaching these strategies I'm going to list, there was a lot of communication and discussion about the piece and it is where the maths and LLC language became no more unfamiliar as they got used on pronunciation of most language which was there.

Language was involving Centimeters, Meters, Millimeters, measuring, distance, length, width, vegetables, tools, panting, watering can, hosepipe, lettuce, beetroot, cabbage, garden fork, spade and many more.

Solving problem strategies such as follows helped me as Educator to fulfill my goals.

- Breaking down the problem
- Building on what they already know
- Making of drawing or models
- Making a list –table chart of Centimeters and Meters
- Looking of patterns

All these strategies helped me a lot in solving a problem because since I'm not a Maths teacher it was easy for me to work on Maths tasks with my learners and they (the pupils) enjoy all the activities. That is why I regard it as a good piece of work.

The pupils were so creative during this lesson as there was a lot drawing of models such as garden tools, different kinds of vegetables and there was a lot of measuring of plots in books although there was a lot of mistakes that I tried my best to assist on that. There was also a lot of writing which was mostly done from coping notes from the chalkboard. Solving problem through this piece was very enjoyable amongst pupils which were very important.

Yes I did encounter some problems because sometime pupils didn't work co-operatively. Most of the time they don't understand English as their Mother tongue is Xhosa. Their pronunciation was not quite good.

I encouraged them to work co-operatively by giving them task such as going to the garden as we did to plant and use tools co-operatively and measuring of plots also. I was of a good help in their discussions during the task trying to correct their mistake as well. Since they are not good in English I tried my best to interpret where it was needed to use their language to understand the lesson. They wrote all the words they had difficult with and I made sure that I pronounce the words correctly.

I selected this piece of work I wanted to develop the pupils Mathematical thinking. I wanted them to understand and enjoy Maths together with LLC. I wanted to encourage critical thinking. They must also think for themselves. To use forms of language where it is needed I like this piece because it developed many skills.

I can also say that was my most effective piece because the activities made them to work co-operatively, there was a lot of discussion. My pupils worked as if they really know if you solve a problem, you must search success and find solution. This encouraged Mathematical thinking.

As I have mentioned my goals in my goal statement I realized I have achieved them understanding developed, there was sharing of material and a lot of listening. Attitudes and values were developed because they showed care about other pupils or members of the group. they waited for their turn. All this was happening through observation of the Educator during the task, through using meaningful material, through positive teaching and learning, through assessing and enjoyable activities.

During this piece the most important thing was that there was a lot of Maths and LLC language developed. Pupils were so responsible for their work. They enjoyed the task. There were good results from assessing. During assessing they showed understanding. There were some arguments during the discussion although what I like they were logical.

If I could work further on this I would let the pupils to work on their pace because that promote the learning of the children. I would work had in hand with the parents of the pupils. I would visit the pupil's home as I noticed pupils have many problems as they came to school late, without having food before going to school. There is a lot of absenteeism during the learning. Some do not come to classes again after interval

I applied this lesson in Grade 7 as I am a Grade 7 teacher and since next year they are going in Grade 8 where OBE which helps the pupils to develop many skills has not applied yet. They have the right age to handle the garden tools we were using in the garden to plant and measure. The activities were applied were right for Grade 7 pupils because they were for their standard. The language used there and also the vocabulary was for Grade 7. If you evaluate me I would like to look if I understand what the Portfolio is and if I have achieved my goals and if my caption statement shows the achievement of my goals.

T.4/L

### **Goal statement**

- To encourage the pupils to understand the meaning of birthday and its circumstances.
- To encourage them to think and express their thoughts and emotions logically, critically and creatively.
- To let the pupils to develop many skills such as, communication, discussion, hearing, listening, understanding, sharing, co-operation, creativity and writing.
- There should be also a share understanding of their environment and its culture
- To understand the contested nature of LLC knowledge
- To understand the relationship between language and power and influence relationship through this understanding
- To encourage pupils to use standard form of language where appropriate.

### **Reflective statement**

I can say this was a good piece of work because of the goals that were achieved at the end, the pupils enjoyed it as they were working so co-operatively and compared with the first piece done, it was not quite easy to apply it as it was my first piece, there were some mistakes of pupils not working, co-operatively few skills were developed than this piece and I was not sure at the first piece to implement OBE and I am sure that is why the pupils were so little bit tense. Now the teaching strategies are familiar to the teacher and even to them.

As it was an LLC piece the pupils showed their creativity, they were so creative in doing invitation cards to invite people to the birthday part. Their birthday cards were so beautiful and as a result I couldn't know which group card was more beautiful. They also showed their writing skills because there was a lot written in the invitation cards and also letters of invitations were written although there were some mistakes here and there e.g. spelling uses of capital letters and most of the punctuation marks. There were problems as I have mentioned the punctuation marks. Some problems were that the learners were never in the surroundings or environment where birthdays or birthday parties were practiced. Most of them didn't know what is happening during birthday parties.

It was not a difficult task for me to solve these problems instead I saw them as a challenge to me as a teacher because one of my goals was to encourage my learners to understand the meaning of birthdays / party and its circumstances. I tried my best that my pupils achieved that goal.

Since I learnt at Rhodes University that language includes vocabulary and reading, Literacy is speaking, writing listening and understanding and questioning, communication is speaking writing, listening and understanding. I made a great effort to write on the chalkboard some statements with punctuation marks, trying to show my pupils where to use capital letters, small letters question marks, commas and inverted commas. We practiced that not for one day which changed them to be perfect in that because even for them the punctuation marks were not new but its because pupils learn to forget rather than to master what they have learnt in previous Grades.

I tried to give the knowledge of birthday parties by telling them what is happening during this time. They listened attentively, some with surprise knowing that a birthday party is a happy event. Even their spelling became better than before as there was a lot of writing and most of it was copying the right spelling from the chalkboard written by the educator.

This LLLC piece was an effective piece of mine because it was my teaching Learning Area even in my career. I like it very much because it develops a lot of pupils skills e.g. communication, writing, reading, listening, speaking, understanding, singing and even vocabulary and questions. It gives you as a teacher to lead your pupils to the right career as you see his/ her skills.

As I mentioned my goals in my goal statement I am sure that I accomplished them well, because at the end of the lesson my pupils knew very well what was meant by birthday parties, the skills I wanted were developed as I mentioned them in my goal statement. All my goals were achieved. To let the pupils communicate, write, understand questioning, speaking, reading to have some new vocabulary. They understood what I was trying to do with them and that was very important to me. Literacy is an encouraging Learning Programme because it helps the pupils to question and it is where you get proud of yourself as a teacher to answer their questions which also gives you a chance to go and research and even to involve your colleagues by seeking knowledge you don't have and yet sometimes you also help even them.

I selected this piece of work because I wanted to weigh my understanding even in Literacy as I have already done with maths. It also assigned it for Grade 7 because the vocabulary I used such as birthday, party/ parties, people, graduation, Graduates, invitation, invite, Master of Ceremony and guests were for grade 7 levels and I also teaching Grade 7. I was so proud of myself the way I accomplished it, it was totally more different than the first piece because all my goals were achieved and many skills were also achieved as I am already mentioned them. I could work further on this I would use meaningful material, organise the my learners and my learning site more. I would work hand in hand with my colleagues for good results. I would also work hand in hand with the pupils' parents and the community for better results in my Learning Site.

During the time you evaluate my work I would like you to look if I have achieved my goals and if I have showed the roles of a teacher during this. You may also look if I developed skills.



## T.4/LS

**Goal Statement**

- To let the learners to make, recreate and invent meaning.
- To encourage the learners to develop respect for human value and dignity
- To let the pupils to develop many skills such as creative thinking, communication, listening, understanding, discussion, co-operation, creativity, participation, writing and solving problem.
- To give the learners the knowledge of the importance of water.
- To encourage the learners to develop the insight into the aspirations and values of our nation and effective participation in the construction of a democratic society

**Reflective statement**

It was a good piece of work because it was easy for me to deal with it as I have already done two pieces e.g. MLMMS and LLC so as I was doing this Art and Culture piece I was already knowing and understanding my pupils, as it is very important as an educator to know your class very well e.g. their weaknesses and problems with the knowledge I gained when I was dealing with the previous pieces I have mentioned. The pupils were so creative when they were drawing different attires of different cultures e.g. Xhosas, Zulus and Indians. I was so happy for them to see them showing their intelligence as there was no format model/drawing in front of them. They showed me they are so observant. The other group was so emotional during their song and dance trying to show their confidence and creativity. I was so pleased, there was a lot of writing as the attire was written Zulu for Zulus, Xhosa for Xhosas and India for Indians. Even the song that was sung, was written down.

Food that was cooked by the third group on the following was also labeled with written labels e.g. Umngqusho, umfuno, umqa, ipapa and I was pleased because I noticed the spelling I was complaining about from the LLC piece was improved although there were some minor mistakes. The problem was minor spelling mistakes and that some of the pupils were not working co-operatively. I was little bit unhappy about that but I tried my best to remark on their spelling as I noticed words that include q sh nty are not quite easy for them to spell when they are writing. So I tried to remark on that positively. For those who were not working co-operatively I decided to praise those groups who were on the right way, telling them their group are going to develop good results if they continue working co-operatively. I know learner like very much to be praised as a result is was a cure (my plan of praising) because each of them likes good results. I was happy at the end because the co-operative skills I wanted were developed. This was the most effective piece of work since I'm a LLC teacher I develop0ed as an Art and Culture teacher too. I was so proud the way my learners enjoyed the activities, you would say I'm used in teaching this piece because creativity understanding, listening, writing and all the skills I mentioned were all developed.

I selected this piece because there is a tendency among the learners that Art and Culture is a least learning are and yet it is where the learner can show his/her intelligence, emotions and spiritual ideas and it also shows you as a teacher intelligent, spiritual and emotional the learner is. I also selected this piece for my second and fifth goal because I believe respect goes a long way in anyone's life and I also encourage the effective participation in the construction of a democratic Society. I noticed if I teach Art and Culture I will achieve these goals as I did.

If I could work further on this piece I would encourage the learners to like it as it opens career chances for them in their coming life. I would also use meaningful material during teaching so that I really able to notice those who have Art skills to lead them to the right career because it is very important for the child to follow the right career as it is a waste of time for anyone to follow the wrong direction. I can say portfolio is getting so easy and familiar to me than before. I can say I'm easy with it and I notice I'm coming alright with it as long as I reflect on what I have done. It gives me time to express my feelings and my dislikes and difficulties. I assigned this piece for Grade 7 because since I'm a Grade 7 teacher I get is a challenge to teach a Senior Class because I believe it is where I can prove my strength and strides. Another thing I realized the standard of language used an even the activities were for Grade 7.

**Teacher 5's goal and reflective statements ( Numearcy, Language and Lifeskills)**

T.5/N

**Goal Statement**

- Help my learners to develop number sense.
- Help them to solve problems.
- Help them to understand the language in math, and how to apply it in everyday living
- Help them to work in a team
- Help them to develop to develop entrepreneurs skills

**Reflective statement**

We had a workshop on number sense and I would like to start off with the good lessons I have learnt and would like to comment on what I have experienced in my classroom. I think many of us isolate maths. And I think that is the reason why educator and learners have a problem with maths. I have learnt something very interesting, and that is to bring maths nearer to the child, relate to daily living. Life is after all about numbers, shapes, problem solving money and colour. Maths is all about that.

Another thing is prior knowledge. Most of the children when they come to school already have some knowledge of numbers and colours. We seem to forget that. Many of us don't even consider it as important. I include myself in this. I had an activity on numbersense. I used topics like a birthday party, the shop, in the street. We looked at where you find numbers. They draw and write different numbers. You could just see their attitudes. They used the numbers I taught them. It is than that I realized that I if I had to use this method using their prior knowledge they could have done such an activity long before. I will remember this for future learning.

I decided to repeat this activity, because even the numbers on their houses were numbers under 10. We discussed their numbers they wrote. It is only than that they could see the difference. I have decided instead of my posters with numbers 11-20, then can do the posters. They must complete this in groups. We are busy with the 100 – chart. I have grouped them in 5. It is in the form of a puzzle. We played games, and I can promise you some of the instructions were not even on their level, but they could cope with it.

I gave them a triangle to draw and then they had to put in 5 numbers. With that 5 numbers they had to make as many sums possible. Some of them manage up to 20 sums. This is an activity I usually work on, but I can promise you not at this stage. We usually do this type of work at the end of the year. Now if they can manage this now, it means that they are ready for more challenges. That means I have no choice but to give them that. I now already know next year there will be a definite change in maths in my class. I am looking forward and I am very positive about this. My colleagues can't believe that you as the teacher should be creative, because I can guarantee you my success lay within my goals.

T.5/L

### Goal statement

- My learners must be able to communicate effectively
- They must be problem solvers
- They must be able to interact and work in a team

### Reflective statement

LLC is about Language Literacy and Communication. Literacy is the process that Language enables you to think and express your thoughts and emotions logically, critically and creatively. Communication enables you to think to interact and participate socially, politically, economically, culturally and spiritually. LLC integrates through all Learning Areas and through out the world. What is my role as an educator, to help achieve these goals. I will have to plan and design learning materials on an ongoing basis. I will have to manage and evaluate their, as well as my progress and development.

### COMMUNICATING SKILLS

As we all know the traditional teaching were teacher-centered. The teachers were in control. Learners had very little to say. Now that the focus is changed to the learners much can be done to develop your learners. This will depend on how you plan and manage it. Have lots of discussions, re-telling and situations where they must think.

### READING AND WRITING SKILLS

Reading and telling stories is very important when developing this skills. From a script or a story your writing skills can develop. Make reading as interesting as possible. Through reading you can develop writing skills.

We had a workshop on LLC and the focuses were on story telling reading and writing. But there is one thing I've missed in that workshop. Children learn through their senses. I know that children have stories. They can listen to one story over and over. Unless you develop their listening skills, story telling has no meaning. Give them enough opportunities to listen to different things e.g. animal sounds, sounds that are hard/soft so that if they listen to a story where the dog barks, they can imagine or have an idea of that dog.

Use their sense of sight. Let them look at different objects or pictures to be able to identify differences and things that are the same. Let them look at colours, things in different positions. This will help them to reason e.g. Little Red Riding Hood were small a little girl and that is why. If the story talks about a wolf in grannies bed they can identify with the little girl all difference she has noticed about the wolf and her granny. It is then when story telling makes meaning, and not just for enjoyment. I think we take it for granted that children should understand what they are listening at, and this is not always the case.

The workshop on story telling was very interesting, and motivating. I could go back and re-look at my story telling. Stories must be planned as you plan any activity. This is something I've learned. There will be an assess to do also. I wonder how many of us realize that. Children will have to organize and manage e.g. when dramatize parts of the story. E.g. If

you want them to re-tell or interpret. One story per term like we use to choose can never be the same anymore. I also like the idea of getting one of their grannies to tell the story. I would like to have that experience. I would like to see their response to that. I did different activities on stories. I told the story but did not finish it I asked them to draw what they think would have happened. I had different endings, and beautiful pictures. In another story. I focused on the sequence of the events as well as re-telling and writing of the story. I told the story, and they had to draw just one thing they remembers fro the story. We discussed all the pictures sequence them and retell the story. The differences were we telling the story from their pictures. On another activity they wrote the story. I think all these activities went very well. It just proof to me that story telling can lead to may more challenges. I must be prepared for them.

Problem solving sums can be a nightmare. I am struggling with it. I have really tried everything. Do you know what have I realized and that are the solution to my problem. I have noticed that I now that I concentrate on story-telling, problem solving became easier. The problem is they don't see the beginning and the end of the story. They look at the numbers. It is only when I told them that this is also a story I could see the difference. This had really helped a lot. Their attitudes also changed. They are doing it with much more confidence. At this stage it is not all of them.

We also did reading. I could learn much more in story telling than in reading. We focused on the different reading. What I liked were reading can be done on any newspaper or book. We did nothing were said about reading in the O.B.E. approach. The old series that we are used of, are outdated. I personally don't use the 60 books that are based on O.B.E. I prefer to carry on with the series. I am used off because of practical reasons. Most of those books are not relevant. On our learners needs. If I can just give you an idea of what I am doing we use sentences strips at first e.g.

[Dit is 'n mooi huis]

[Wie woon hier]

Now what I do I break it in words e.g.

Dit is Lynette use their own names.

Dit is groot use vocabulary from maths.

Dit is mooi.

Dit is 'n huis

I continue until we have mastered all the words. We build a new sentence everyday, and add just one new word to the sentence. With the books based on O.B.E. it is different. The first book don't really relate to the second one. Children don't get a When you plan your lessons and your activities you need to know the needs of your learners. The level of their development. If what you want them to learn relevant. What they already know (prior knowledge) is it interesting will they learn any good values. Will they be able to use the knowledge in future or everyday living. What goals and skills do you want them to achieve. If you look at my goal statement you will see that one of my goals were to help my learners to communicate effectively, and to be problem solvers, understanding, speaking, doing, reading and writing. We cannot take it for granted that children will be able to be good communicators. These are all skills to be developed first.

I find story telling very effective. This is the method that can develop all their communicating skills. Children love stories. You can use rhymes too, because rhymes is just a shorter form telling. As I have done in story telling the story of little red hood, the same will apply to a little rhyme. Let us look at it, listen to understand the rhyme, I will ask questions and assess their response to questions. Like in the story, ask them to draw what they remembered. Do dramatizing use the rhyme in maths for an example, to test their understanding. When they dramatize you can observe their speaking skills. They could make their own little rhymes, like in story telling. This will help them to think creatively. If they experience any problems in the rhyme ask them to help tem to relate it with their own experiences. Discuss the lessons learned could they be bad or good. They must be able to understand their feeling and attitude too.

If I had to be honest to myself, than I admit that this really makes a difference to what I did in my rhymes or story lessons. Rhymes and stories were just for fun and enjoyment. It can never be the same in future learning. I must plan my rhymes and stories, to get the best and the most from them. The knowledge, skills, values and attitudes my learners need. Must they be able to get form all the stories and the rhymes we deal with.

Can we take a rhyme like Humpty-Dumpty and see how this rhyme integrates across all learning areas. LLC for discussion and understanding the vocabulary in the rhymes, maths for position, shapes. I personally have got every new approach to story telling, and will use this approach to help my learners to benefit from this to the fullest.

I am glad that I could reflect on this because it gave me the opportunity to discover important to discover important things that can help me better myself in my task I can assign this work to any grade, from grade 1 up to grade. And I will. This will promote reading. South Africans don't want to read. I think it is because story telling had been neglected. We must begin to tell stories to our children again. I think we need to have more assignments on this topic. I look forward to see what one can really achieve in doing this. Can one really develop your learners on a rhyme or am I foolish to think that? What if your programme organiser could be the name of your rhyme? I am sure it can work, I want to try it out. I will use the rhyme as my programme organiser. Use waste material and design characters and write your own rhyme or story. Design road-signs and write your rhyme. Use your likes and dislikes and design a rhyme Design your counting rhymes.

At the beginning of the year you will find that not all learners are able to speak fluently. some of them are polite. We encounter a lot of problems during the news or discussion time. I think I have a better understanding to this problem. I need to plan more stories and rhymes, because this develops these skills in a pleasant and fun way. Stories won't just help at the beginning of the year to promote speaking, but there are still more to achieve with story telling like vocabulary, sentence writing and punctuation, pronunciation, creative and imagination, concentration and memory.

I am looking forward to next year. I am very excited, because I am sure that I have got a very new approach of doing things. I realized that most of our problems we encounter is due to

skills that are not developed properly. I should rather spend more time to develop these skills, before I engage in activities where these skills are necessary. I hope to challenge or rather I will challenge my colleagues, that is grades 1 to 7 to organise a story rhyme day, where learners will design their own stories or rhymes. Our children need to develop in creative thinking. They need to develop and use their abilities and talents., there is so little they can be proud of .

#### **ASSESSMENT**

At this stage, I would like to look at assessment across the two learning areas LLC and Maths, because I have intergrate LLC and Maths. Assessment should be weaved into learning. It should be one process. Making progress and checking the progress made. The skills that need to be assessed in these learning areas are all most the same. For example listening, communicating problem solving, interacting etc. Aspects such as vocabulary. How you assess these skills and knowledge for the one learning area will and knowledge for the one learning area will apply to the other learning area. If I look at what my learners should know, and what they should be able to do when assessing in the one learning area will apply to the other. How they get involed in either LLS or Maths (their attitude) How they work co-operatively in a team. It is possible to plan one assessment method. You don't need to separate it. For example you assess vocabulary – new words. What is it you want to assess-their understanding. Although the words differ – their understanding can be assessed.

#### **WHAT DO I WANT TO ASSESS IN STORY-TELLING AND DO I SEE SIMILARITIES IN MATHS**

Do they understand the story. – Problem solving.

Can they identify people, animals, objects – numbers

Guess or predict what the story is about – concepts such as heavy, more, time etc.

Observe the sequence in the picture – number patterns.

Re-tell the story- Explain how they got their answer, or explain their findings.

**T.5/LS****Goal statement**

- Learners should know the world they live in
- Know how they fit into life.
- Understand their feelings and their rights.
- Know how to live a safe and healthy life.
- Know how to make a positive contribution

**Reflective Statement**

This learning area gives my learners and me the opportunity to develop socially, politically, spiritually and intellectually. They get opportunities that will help them to discover the world that they live in. They will have a better understanding of themselves, and the people around them. They will be able to look at their life styles, norms and values, and why they should make a positive contribution in life. They should know concepts such as fear, happiness, worry etc. and how to deal with it.

Life skills can integrate with LLC and Maths. They integrate so nicely that you can hardly see the difference in these learning areas e.g. Safety LLC – you discuss or list manners or ways of how they get to school. While you discuss this, safety rules will be discussed too, How far or near (k.m.) will also be included in their discussion of that LLC activity. In Art and Culture the learners get the opportunity to express their feelings, and will know how people in different cultures do things. They will learn to respect each other.

Take for example: A birthday party.

In Maths we did number sense activities draw and count all the numbers at the party. You could see the children who were at a party already they could relate. Thee other learners were not so excited about this activity. In this activity they have learnt why we celebrate our birthdays, and what we do on the 25 December. They could learn about appreciation and thoughtfulness. We designed wrapping paper. You could see how they expressed their feelings in their drawings, and the colours they use. An activity like this will help learners to understand that they are special and they will appreciate their parents. The present will be something special, and they will learn how to care for it. Art and Culture helps the learners to think creatively. Helps them to look at a drawing critically. Helps them to analyze drawing. Give them the opportunity to peer assessment. Guide them when they do this. Learn them how to criticize and how criticism can better you drawing. It is my responsibility to develop my learners to be the citizens that can make a positive contribution in our land.

Once again I need to look at my planning for next year. My art and culture activities will make more sense to me now.



**Teacher 6's goal and reflective statements ( Numeracy, Language and Lifeskills )**

T.6/N

**Goal statement**

- To develop the ability to understand, interpret, read, speak and write mathematical language.
- To communicate effectively and develop vocabulary.
- To enable learners to apply mathematics to other learning areas and daily life.
- To involve the learners continuously and actively.
- To allow learners to develop their own methods and explain how they come up with answers.
- To allow learners to come up with answers by drawing the objects and then the number that promote understanding of what they do and therefore they are able to solve problems.
- To improve the knowledge, skills and values we learn.
- To develop self- confidence, creativity, reasoning and lifelong critical thinkers.
- To develop a comfortable learning environment.
- To share ideas and comments on each other's work.
- To encourage the learners to work co- operatively.
- To understand how games can help learners to reinforce and consolidate number sense.

**Reflective statement**

Learners should have a good sense of numbers.

Our workshop on numbers sense was implemented in a very interesting way, because I learnt that in using numbers on for example, a car registration number plate, I could do subtraction, addition and multiplication sums as well as vocabulary. I can even play games. I learnt that number sense integrates with Language, life skills, Arts and Culture, Technology and Economics and Management Science. After the workshop, I implemented some of these ideas, e.g.: counting on the calendar.

To determine the calendar, I ask the learner about their birthdays – months, day and age through questioning. Then ask where they will fund their birthdays. If they don't, I will show them the calendar. Do they know in which month their birthday is? Refer to birthday chart and count the number of children with birthday in each month. Then ask them how old people know they ages/birthdays – because they didn't have calendars, I will explain they base their ages on events that took place. Who has calendar at home? The calendar was invented to give us more accurate time, to work out dates. The calendar is divided up into twelve months for the whole year. Each month has thirty or thirty one day, divided into four/five weeks a days. All the Sundays are normally a different colour and all the holidays. Learners join in singing the rhyme Jan, Feb, March, April etc. use flashcards of month's teacher says the rhyme. Now they count the months and ask them how many moths in a year and they will discover twelve. Group discussions – how many days in one week – they count seven. Learners will now count the days of month.

Learners count in 1,2's on the calendar. To introduce counting in 3's. I will ask them to discuss in their groups what they could count in 3's e.g. come up with tricycles, three legged pot, triangles. Learners are asked to explain why they chose the particular objects. Facilitator gives each group a number range to count up to. Learners illustrate their activity as they count in three's. Now they colour in every third number. Facilitator asks – what pattern they have noticed.

E.g. three – jumps over two numbers every time – horizontally and vertically. What else do we notice about the coloured in numbers e.g. they are lying in slanting lines. Children questioned why some weeks on the calendar only had less than seven days, especially at the beginning or end of the month. Facilitator then asked why? And if they don't know I will explain why the following month starts or ends in the middle of the week and others end or begin at the beginning of the week I would help learners to discover the development of calendar. The learners are actively involved in solving problem set then they are also able to relate back to their discoveries.

In the beginning I had to tell the learners everything. The new way, learners have to discover for themselves and discuss I as mediator asked question and observe how they interact with each other in answer to my question. I struggled because the children did not understand the group discussions and reporting back. I was very frustrated. However, because I was determined to make it work I persisted and now I see that with practice it will come right.

Many children are still afraid to talk while others talk freely. As a mediator I have to ensure that all the learners are involved. In planning I must ensure that I have a variety of open-ended questions to enable my learners to think creatively because numbers can lead to many activities. I feel that my learners had developed a good sense of working with numbers, because they can count with ease and they are comfortable with the basic operations. I feel that I had achieved my goal.

T.6/L

**Goal statement**

- To develop communication skills
- To develop reading
- To promote multilingualism
- To value your language
- To promote reading, understanding and listening skills
- Learners should be able to communicate effectively

**Reflective statement**

Our workshop on LLC broadens my concept of Language, Literacy & Communication. I learnt that language is integration of learning areas. I select this piece of work because through story telling, my learners develop vocabulary, communication skills through speaking, listening and writing: poetry and dramatization. At the workshop, I learnt that LLC develop literacy through speaking, reading, writing, questioning and understanding. I also learnt that stories can be told in different ways, e.g.; in using puppets, in using media – T.V. and radio, in drama, in pictures, in an interactive way; by a school community member, in puzzles and poetry, reading and songs. In the old way story telling was just enjoyment. After the workshop, I implemented some of the ideas.

I choose to reflect on story telling, because through story-telling. I have achieved my goal to enable my learners to communicate effectively. It was not easy because most of the learner's communication skills were not developed. I had to develop their skills by starting with listening skills. If learners can listen attentively, they would be able to understand. To improve their listening skills, I did a few listening skills exercise. I encountered lots of problems when it comes to questioning and responses. I realize that I had to develop their thinking skills by giving them exercise and oral instructions to follow.

Story telling – to me it is the most effective method to use to develop communicating skills. When I introduce the story I used this method.

Firstly, I would ask open-ended questions. Who can tell me what kind of small animals don't we like to have in and around the house and learners give example.

Learners discuss in their groups. Learners must also say why we don't want them around. Do you think we find mice at home? Teacher will explain differences between rats and mice. What do mice live on?

**The facilitator reads the story:**

Learners listen attentively to the complete story for the first time. Read the story a second time and stop to ask one or two questions to see if learners could predict what was to follow and to test their listening skills. I then assess my learners listening skills by doing oral work by asking questions to determine the content. They could respond well to the questions. I was pleased, because I could see that they have listened with understanding. At this stage their listening skills were well developed.

Problem solving skills were also developed. The responses to the question indicated to me that the learners listened attentively. Learners could predict what was going to happen. The discussion on the story was long and I shall divide different aspects in stages, because if there is too much discussion on different aspects at once, the impact of the story and the vocabulary is lost. Learners could give me the Xhosa word for mice as “impuku”. Now I as well as the Afrikaans-speaking learners have benefited. The story will be repeated over a period of time, until all the learners can retell the story and even dramatize it and are able to answer all the questions.

I was pleasantly surprised in the learner’s drawings of the picture. I am glad that I could reflect on story telling because I had the opportunity to re-examine my method and the problems I have encountered. I realized that in telling stories in this new way, my learners would develop communication skills in a fun and enjoyable way. I will definitely use this method in future. I believe that my learners will become good readers, writers, problem solvers and good communicators. If I could help my learners develop their skills, then I have achieved all my set goals.

## T.6/LS

**Goal statement**

- To be able to create and design something original
- To express oneself through art.
- To communicate effectively about our feelings in groups and as individuals.
- To explore in a healthy way as a person.
- To enable us to think and practice our entrepreneurial skills in many forms.
- To respect and value ourselves and treat each other with dignity and respect.
- To participate as a nation in various cultural forms of art to deepen our values as a diverse cultural nation.
- To express ourselves through poetry, literacy, storytelling and drama.

**Reflective statement**

Designing a musical instrument from waste material and using it to create a song. In planning my lesson, I asked my learners to bring a variety of waste material like boxes, tins plastic bottle tops, blocks and sticks. I also collected a few items that I felt they may not find, e.g.: elastic bands, rubber tube, wire, hammer nail, cello tape, stickers, seeds, mealies –beans, rice, etc. I asked my learners to sort the waste into different boxes. Here they were actively involved in the lesson. I mediated by questioning why they put a coffee tin and a vim together and they replied that they were all tins. I played a recording of different musical instruments and asked my learners to listen and to tell me what instruments they had heard. My learners responded that they had heard drums, shakers, piano, clappers, guitar, etc. then I instructed my learners to sing an easy song that they know. I then asked my learners how we could play the song because we do not have any musical instruments. My learners responded that we could make our own. I asked them how and they said they need a coffee tin, stick, drums, tins, etc. I then instructed them to think what they wanted to make. They went to the waste material boxes and chose what they needed. Each learner was busy designing their own musical instrument and I questioned them while they were busy. I noticed that although many made drums, they did not all look the same. One learner used the rubber tube and rubber band to make his drum. Some learners made shakers but used different contents like mealies, beans, stones and some seed. Some even decorated their shakers with stickers and kokis.

I then asked my learners to make music with their instruments, e.g.: all the drums, all the shakers, etc. I asked my learners what they noticed in the sound of the drums. They responded that the sounds were not all the same. I did this with all the groups of instruments and they also had to say why, e.g.: the objects inside the tins were different, the drums were not all made the same. In the past, I only used the few bought instruments and now I realize that making our own instruments are cheap, easy and equally effective. I also discovered that I don't need to do it all but that the learners are even more creative and eager to show off their skills. I was motivated to see how proud they were about the instrument they had planned and made all on their own. I asked the learners to get into groups with a variety of instruments and to make up their own song and to play a known song on their own instruments. I notice that all of the learners chose to play a well-known song, hymns and even pop song in Afrikaans, Xhosa and English. The manner in which they grouped themselves was quite interesting as they were not only careful to have a variety of instruments in their groups.

**APPENDIX D****TEACHER 1 (INTERVIEWS 1 & 2)****I.1.T1**

I think it helped me to change the way I do things, when we started informing us about Teaching Portfolios I only had little understanding, which I used as a starting point to add on what I knew. The small information helped me to make a link between my work experience and what I was learning. Then the daily activities I do at work I am able to use it. I plan for the week and then reflect on the weeks' work. I use this experience in the classroom as well. I ask my learners to develop their own portfolio as well. I am not sure whether I should reflect on the Programme for the week or a day's work?

In the sense that you need to plan, reflect opens a door for changing. Before I used my heart and only concepts would be discussed. Portfolio makes you to decide before you teach the what to teach, how to teach it and why you teach the way you teach? and that it not all you have to think of your evaluation strategies as well. It makes you conscious that you need to research your topic, plan it implement and you reflect on it. You look at your self and see what you need to change. As teachers you claim to know what and how to teach children when you have to do it directly, you begin to see things that you did not know about yourself. For instance I was doing a section in Numeracy and trying to use group work and they were in groups of 4, but it came up as a disaster because they all talked at the same time and those that were quite did not have time to say a thing, there was chaos in my classroom. Now I had to think seriously on how I have missed it. I wondered whether the activity was meant for group work?. Were my learners ready for a group work activity?; Was I ready for this kind of activity or should I do research on group work and understand group work dynamics? This were the kinds of questions that occurred in my mind when reflecting on that lesson, which is something that has never happened before I was engaged with portfolios, I never thought about what went well and what did not go well and what to do to make up for what went wrong in my lesson ?.

I had thought of the purpose seriously, when you know the purpose you kind of know what to do and know what you have achieved for the year. It is the same as portraying yourself as an individual, you can see how much you have developed. You begin to see how much you have developed by looking at where you come from, and where you are at and where about you need to go.

I have developed more interest on Teaching Portfolio and I want to know more about them. I think it would be good to use teaching portfolios as a proof of ones' professional development because they carry a weight and proof of you have developed as a teacher the fact that you reflect on what you have done and not only reflect but come up with a plan of action on how to mend your weaknesses. I believe that the assessors can easily use this information to accredit one.

After the workshop on teaching portfolios I looked at myself to find out where I was according to what is expected of me as set by the roles of a teacher. Then I reflected on what I do in my own classroom and I knew what the purpose of a teaching portfolio is in the DE. In the first instance I concentrated on setting up goals for the Learning Area and I studied my roles as a teacher and they directed me on what I should be doing in my classroom.

I was not sure of whether the reflections should include my remarks about the workshop or purely my own teaching. But I revisited my Portfolio Guide then I understood that it is about my own teaching and of course I can relate to what I have learnt in the workshop and how it has contributed to my teaching experience. But I still have a problem of integrating that to my practice experience, having said that I believe that if I keep on trying I will get it right on the way.

I find the group useful to work with because we have different experiences and we are different levels. I believe they benefit from me as I benefit from them. By levels I mean even from what we learn in the workshop we have our own interpretations of what is being said, which we relate to our own experiences, the experiences that I am referring to are the grades we teach. It is so good to share with someone who teaches in a lower grade than you to hear how she would do the activity in the class.

Yes they must continue because it is one-way of assessing the educators in the programme. Also it helps the teachers because they can look at the mirror which is the reflection of their teaching. But at first I saw them as a burden, as they take too much time and at times you don't know what to put in.

## I.2.T1

The experience of constructing a portfolio influenced my reflections; I was able to reflect back in the things/ activities I am doing with the children. The seven roles of the educator, I don't only know them but I implement them in my teaching career.

The way I used to do my lessons changed totally, I am able to plan and include time, activities I will be doing with children, ways of assessing the activities planned etc. Other roles of an educator cannot be easily implemented if you are not doing a teaching portfolio. For instance is to be an assessor of learning starts with assessing my performance as an educator then I can be able to select the methods, strategies to use for different groups of children. I am a scholar because I am learning from children in my classroom. As a teacher I have taught children to play a caring role to their peers and adults. The portfolio gives me the freedom of knowing what I am able to do as a person and to work hard to improve my performance.

Being part of the study group motivated me to keep track, wanting to know and do more because I was aware that I am developing as a teacher.

Constructing a portfolio requires one to be dedicated because it is about you. Looking at my purpose of a portfolio also motivates me because it always reminded me that I am a professional educator and I am doing the portfolio to improve my teaching experience.

With the portfolio I am encouraged to evaluate/ reflect on my own practices, of which I think it has developed me. To look at myself critically and evaluate the methods I use, time management, learners and the environment etc. Reflecting on practice cannot be underestimated because this is an important part of teaching career of any teacher

From the engagement with teaching portfolios I was able to grow personally. I have improved my assessment strategies. Through reflections I can see my other side as teacher.



**TEACHER 2 (INTERVIEW 1&2)****I.1. T2**

I did in a way at first I was not sure of what to put in, whether I reflect on my own practice and the impact I have on the learners. It changed me as a teacher from the traditional way of teaching and I am becoming more child-centered. Now I don't impose the knowledge on the learners but I take the prior knowledge into consideration and I allow their participation in the classroom. It has changed my beliefs about teaching.

My way of teaching is different now because I reflect on my practice. I think about what I am to do and once done I have got to think about how I have done it in line with how well have I done it and what to improve which makes me to grow and develop as a professional. At first it was a difficult thing to do because I was not sure of what to put in. the portfolio. My biggest problem has been what to choose from my work, what is best work? the process has helped me in understanding what I do in the classroom . It made me to think about what I do and how I things.

It showed my a component because that is how you build yourself – professionally as well as intellectually because (in the best) you develop a culture of teaching learning and that is what is lacking in the teaching profession. Teachers continue with learners that understand and leave behind those who don't understand. In developing a portfolio because you reflect this helps you to think about how you do things, it also challenges the learners, your method of teaching by thinking seriously about what you do with the learners for the future and so that if all teachers do portfolio they would know what to do before the learners leaves each level one would not just pass them to a higher level without reflecting at the problems that one encounters as a teacher. By doing the portfolios the teachers would pick up on learners development disabilities in their work and come up with means on how to improve on those disabilities.

Yes it is the first time I am not sure what to reflections on how. What I written in my portfolio. I think it did because I have to learn new things more involved in learning. I was stuck in the traditional way look at new ways something else on how to tackle my teaching. Change my style of teaching. Yes I was used to talk all the time I now get the learners involved. I taught and then I observe that they need to participate than my experience of my teaching.

Group has been very useful I don't know but the group will help you to direct you. I think sometimes talking to other people give you ideas than just thinking all by yourself Without talking to my study partners I would not have coped with teaching portfolios, I believe so I think the portfolio gets you focused to prepare for the years ahead. It gives you time to reflect on what you have done and build on your teaching achievements.

At first I was confused because I had so pieces of work and I would not know how to organise them for my portfolio which ones to leave out and which ones to put in. I find it taking too much time. Yes I do want to focus on my professional development but it is just

that I am a slow learner I need more time to be able to do all these things, portfolios, the curriculum in the programme and my learners in the classroom too.

I see the portfolio as the best thing I have ever did for my teaching profession. It helps me to reflect on what, how I have done the lesson. It gives me reasons for doing the lesson. I feel encouraged in teaching. It encourages me to do more research about what about what I teach, and because I reflect on my teaching it becomes easier for me to build on what I have learnt. Through portfolio development I have learnt not to leave problems unsolved and that has encouraged me in working with parents as well when it comes to problems with the learners.

It is different because when I was a student in training for teaching I never learnt about this approach. I believed that I was meant to carry the knowledge to the class and feed my students but now with this OBE has helped me to give my learners opportunity to share their own understanding about the learning. I have noticed that the learners enjoy being active in the classroom and I enjoy it to because I am also learning form them and I am discovering a lot about myself as well through the reflections that I do.

At first I felt that I was wasting time because I was not sure of what to do. But once I accepted that it is something that I need to do, it changed my way of thinking. I felt so enriched especially when it comes to teach Maths because I have never taught Maths before. but because I build on all the experience I have developed in portfolio it gave me pride to understand my strengths and weaknesses in my teaching practice. I had such a good feeling to be able to teach problem solving and then relate that to everyday life-experience which I have never done before. I believe the fact that I am learning to reflect on my teaching make me a more matured teacher and to gain more confidence.

Working in a group has been more beneficial for me. The fact that we can share our experiences helped me to develop professionally, you learn from one another and when you are working alone you can relate to the to what was said in the group and try to explore the new ideas you have learnt form other people. Group discussions to me meant learning from each other and solving problems that one encounters alone in the classroom. It also encourages you evaluate yourself and your teaching strategies

You also become aware of the problem areas in your teaching and think about solutions. understanding of the learners becomes more important in your teaching more than how much you have taught. I find it very challenging because you have to write a report about what has happened.

Yes I have grown definitely. Teaching is a challenge. Now I can go longer than I use to. When I started I experienced growing. In that things I have taken for granted like story telling in the class, my attitude towards the learners and how do things in my class has changed. Now I know that I have to take the learners' prior knowledge into consideration and give them an opportunity to discover knowledge than the telling method I have been using. We as teachers are to scared to challenge our learners, I am excited about the way learners respond to challenges, they can think solve the problems and contribute good ideas on what you are teaching.

It such a wonderful experience to try something new like the portfolio. I have re considered my roles as teacher. I have to do research and try new teaching strategies and not rely on the old method. The portfolios have given me courage to try new ideas because I can see how much I have grown and identify also the challenges I am still facing in a portfolio to me is like a mirror because I learn more about myself. I record everything that I do in my classroom.

## I.2. T2

My experience of constructing a portfolio allowed me to reflect on my teaching and learning. It helped me to develop children's physical, cognitive, language and creative development. in reflecting on my own practice, I could plan activities relevant to the needs of the children and manage individuals and groups.

Implementing the portfolio helped me to assess not only the strength of my children and areas that need strengthening, but also my strength and the areas that needed strengthening so that I can make the necessary improvements in my work.

It allows me to continuously look at my roles as a teacher. Am I doing what I was suppose to do or am I out of track? It allows me to take every opportunity to gain knowledge and skills in the teaching field. I would ask the opinion of my colleagues when doing a task and let them evaluate my performance in the classroom and workshop.

This allows me to strengthen the areas in my teaching that need strengthening so that I can make necessary improvements in my work. The techniques I use improve not only my teaching and learning it also the quality of the children's lives and meet their specific needs.

I am confident in doing my work, I can even ask my colleagues to validate my work and I can challenge my colleagues on developing a culture of teaching and learning in the classroom.

It is important to reflect on my teaching practice so that I can have a high standard of the learners. I am able to change the way I present activities to my learners as well as preparing the activities. I now make use of the learner's prior knowledge.

Being part of a group allowed me relate to other in an effective way.

**TEACHER 3 (INTERVIEW S 1&2)**

## 1.1.T3

Yes it is the first time. I am not sure of what I should put in my portfolio. I also find myself spending a lot of time in preparation of my portfolio than preparing my lessons and concentrating on my learners. But I think I have changed the way I do things because I hear new things and I am more involved in learning. I was stuck in the traditional way of teaching (being teacher-centered) now I look at teaching in a different way I have changed my style I am more child centered. I have changed my teaching style I am more concerned about where my learners are when I am teaching. I value their contributions and in my lesson than being the main speaker who thinks knows it all.

My teaching yes is different to what it today. I use to talk all the time and now I get the learners to talk. I taught and I find time to observe how much they understand what I have taught. I feel fulfilled in the way I do things now that my learners can participate and I learn from them as well.

It has been wonderful to work in a group. They help you to with direction. You get ideas on how people do things and in that process you develop your teaching skills, you start doing things that you would not do on your own, without support from the study group I have not coped with the teaching portfolios.

I believe that portfolios should continue in the programme, but people need to know what they are do it develops the teacher's professional side. Because it gets you focused in the work you do in your classroom because you are to reflect on what happened which you cannot do if you do things without planning. It helps you to plan ahead, to reflect on what you have done and that makes you to improve your achievements and develop the skills that are still lacking in your teaching.

Things that come up as I deal with portfolios are: confusion; at times I feel confused. But I believe that as we carry on we will gain confidence. It will help me to organise myself in my work. I am a slow learner I need to be focused more to get the best results about professional development.

### I.2.T3

When constructing a portfolio you reflect on your own teaching. You also reflect on the learners' progress. The portfolio is a means of measuring your own development e.g. what went well and what did not go well. It exposes different problems and problem solving skills. This is where you can make a difference as a teacher to get best from the learners.

A teaching portfolio is a document that exposes your teaching methods and where you can improve the standard of your work. You can discuss and share ideas with others on how to reach your goals.

The portfolio is an ongoing 'novel' with no end insight, gradually adding more every time

The portfolios should continue in the programme, but people need to know what they are do it develops the teacher's professional side Many confused teachers about their careers and the concepts of education can get delivered through the use of a portfolios. The reason is that, the portfolio gets you focused in the work you do in your classroom because you are to reflect on what happened which you cannot do if you do things without planning. It helps you to plan ahead, to reflect on what you have done and that makes you to improve your achievements and develop the skills that are still lacking in your teaching.

I believe that portfolios should continue in the programme, but people need to know what they are do it develops the teacher's professional side. Because it gets you focused in the work you do in your classroom because you are to reflect on what happened which you cannot do if you do things without planning. It helps you to plan ahead, to reflect on what you have done and that makes you to improve your achievements and develop the skills that are still lacking in your teaching.

**TEACHER 4 (INTERVIEWS 1& 2)****I.1.T4**

I see portfolios as the best thing that has ever happened to me to improve my profession. It helps me to reflect on what and how I have done the lesson. It inspires me to give more lessons because each time I reflect I discover myself. It gives me reason to teach and I feel very much challenged in my teaching career. Sometimes when I teach I become uncertain about how the lesson went but now that I am developing the portfolio I feel that I am doing research about myself. I am more curious about the learners in my care, as a result I find it necessary to involve parents. I call parents in when I don't understand the child's behavior to ask them what they know about the 'disability' and come up with ways on how we can work together to benefit the child. I also found myself taking the environment of where my learners come from into consideration as well respecting learner's views about a lesson.

I find myself different for the reasons I have already mentioned. I think the approach that is used here at Rhodes has changed my way of thinking as well. Having to reflect on my teaching has really challenged strategy. Having to think about how to work cooperatively with the class has caused me to take the ideas learners bring into the lesson. You know as a school child I never had an opportunity to share ideas with my teachers to act as a facilitator and mediator of learning taught me that I am just between the learners and the lessons. I have learnt that learners enjoy this sharing and working as groups.

With the first engagement with portfolios I was not sure of what to do. Since then I began to understand the change in my teaching especially with maths. Having to reflect on my work has made me proud of how I do things and that I improved on maths teaching it was very difficult at the beginning but through listening and sharing ideas and the input from the workshops I have overcome some of the difficulties I used to encounter.

The groups' support has given me courage and confidence to develop my portfolio. It is good to work in a group than working all by yourself. The discussions and sharing of ideas makes things easier and you turn to understand better. People in the group are willing to help and give you support. Through this support you trust one another and assist each other more the facilitators would. I think it is because amongst your peers one is more relaxed, there are few of you and you are not afraid to make mistakes and the people are willing to assist.

Yes a portfolio should continue in the programme because it is very helpful. Through reflections that you write when you develop your portfolio you recall what and how you have done well not well. You begin to realise your strengths and your weaknesses in your teaching practice. It gives an opportunity to evaluate yourself and your teaching strategies as well. You work ways of working out your weaknesses you don't leave problems unsolved. Actually I believe that it takes away the fears of discovering your weaknesses but you concentrate on finding solutions and you see them as challenges in your teaching.

I.2.T4

The experience of constructing a portfolio influenced my reflections on my teaching and it helped me to view my teaching in new ways too. It taught me as a teacher to set my teaching goals in every learning area. The goals guide me in assessing how much the learners have learnt from my prepared lesson. I can identify learners' problems. The portfolio helped me to view my teaching roles in a new way.

It helped to rethink my teaching strategies as I think about what and how I have taught my lesson. The fact that I had to reflect on all three learning areas forced me to teach maths which not my area of teaching. I am a new person now, I am encouraged to try and not to give up on any of the challenges. The portfolio challenges you to do something about your teaching career. It helps you to overcome teaching problems very easily such learners' disabilities.

Constructing a portfolio has really changed me because the way I plan my work has changed. Throughout my teaching I evaluate the skills, attitudes and knowledge of the learners. It encourages me to do research about what I am to teach.

I hope the portfolio remains part of this programme because it makes a teacher to think and prepare for teaching all the time. A portfolio does not come to an end. One can never say I have finished because as long as you are in classroom environment and reflect on what you do you will change all the time. A portfolio is an ongoing process.

**TEACHER 5 (INTERVIEWS 1& 2)**

## I.1.T5

Yes I have definitely grown from developing a portfolio. Now to me teaching is a challenge. I see myself going longer even in my preparation and activities that my learners are engaged in. When I started reflecting on my performance I experienced growth, in that things that I use to take for granted – like story telling, attitude towards learners are at high level at the time. I have re looked at my teaching practice and I believe I am coming alright. I feel challenged to attempt new programmes in my classroom and go beyond what we are taught in the workshops for instance I enjoyed Number sense but I am not going to stick on that there is so much that one can try out. My attitude has also changed I will start earlier next year. I will take learners prior knowledge into consideration. I will give time in my classroom to solve their problems. We (teachers) are too scared to challenge our learners and our mindsets need to be changed and we not minimize the ability of the learners but our duty is to maximise their abilities.

Through developing the teaching portfolio, I know exactly what to do . I sensed that my methods of teaching were outdated and I needed to make a provision for something new. I discovered that some of my roles as a teacher I took them for granted, for an example my role as a researcher and designer of learning programmes instead I relied heavily on my experience as a teacher. The portfolio has helped me in the sense that it challenges me to plan in advance and with the same pace I need to know where I am with my group of learners to plan for the future. I felt challenged by the development of a portfolio to be up to date with my work. Through reflecting to what I have done, it shows me my growths and the challenges I am still facing. Sometimes I use my portfolio as manual or my diary. It becomes a true reflection of what you are.

I think the study circle is good idea because of the sense of meeting as peers is exciting. It has been my pleasure to go and share with my study peers because I take the platform and I share things that I would not be able to share with a big group. In get ideas on how other people are operating in their classrooms and find an opportunity of trying some of these ideas in my classroom. What I don't like about the study group is that I see myself as a main speaker I feel so tired after very meeting, that people will come unprepared and rely frustrates me about the study group.

My portfolio is my own diary, what is important to me is to treasure and share is in my portfolio that is success. In there is evidence of what I know. I believe that every teacher should develop a portfolio because it is evidence of your experience – successes and weaknesses in your practice and when you record those you can build your future in becoming a better teacher because you will be working towards perfecting your weaknesses.

I think portfolios should be part of DE teachers with experience need something that is challenging their comfort zone of repeating things that they prepared ages ago. Portfolios is like a mirror and it challenges you to consider what you are doing not that as a teacher, the



outcomes you want to achieve for teaching a lesson and you consider the learners as well, their prior knowledge they are bringing to your lesson, means to allow them to participate and how you are going to assess their learning. It goes on and on because all the time are examining “ the what, the what went well, what did not go well and what plan for making up for what did not go well ?”

## I.2. T5

I personally think a teaching portfolio empowers you as a teacher. It helps to bridge the barriers between what you know and what you teach. Through the use of a portfolio you can achieve your highest level of capability.

It is utmost important that you evaluate your teaching from time to time. You will also have to observe and you will experience changes within your profession. The portfolio provides the opportunity to reflect on all areas.

I had a wonderful opportunity of experience observing my learners how they progress, how they benefit from my teaching.

I proudly recommend the use of teaching portfolio to all the teachers in the programme in all the years to come. With portfolio teaching becomes an interesting challenge.

**TEACHER 6 (INTERVIEWS 1&2)****I.1.T.6**

I think the construction of a portfolio helped me in a way. I moved away from my traditional way of teaching to the new of looking at teaching – child centered. I find it fascinating having to work in collaboration with learners. In my classroom a new spirit of teamwork arise even between the learners. It has also challenged me to plan in advance. As a teacher I have learnt how reflect on what I have done by looking at the learners' reaction and level of understanding, by revisiting the outcomes I have planned for the lesson and most important looking at myself as a teacher and discovering the real me in the teaching career. This practice has changed my planning style, teaching style and I am challenged to continuous assessment in my classroom for I don't want to leave my learners behind.

My main goal is to make the portfolio a success. Well at first I was not s, whether to reflect on the programme. I have learnt how to design a lesson plan and how to deliver it in my classroom with careful analyses of my own development as a teacher. It has challenged my to learn new things everyday now that I have to reflect on what and how I have done things in my classroom. I have to think daily of my portfolio. But I must say at the beginning I was so confused because I did not know what was expected of me, I was confused. I was afraid that it is too much work and I was wondering if I really have to spend such long time on it. I was afraid that it is going to waste my valuable time that I should doing preparation for my classroom as well studying. I need clarity on what should I put in my portfolio when I submit it for review.

I enjoy being in the group. I feel free to express myself with my own language and I get better insight as to how other people deal with issues in their classroom it is not like at my school where everyone is working within the closed doors and everything seems fine. In the study group you honestly share your achievements and your failures and people try to advise you on how to better your practice.

Portfolio must continue being the part of the DE programme everyday with portfolios you grow, your understanding about your classroom practice and more especially about yourself as a teacher. It broadens your understanding about the curriculum and the process of learning discovering new things.

I don't believe that the task on portfolios should be changed because it is now that I am beginning to understand what I need to do. From what I have learnt I can say with practice we will improve.

## I.2.T6

The assessment with portfolios is on going it is not a once off. Portfolios help a better parent teacher relationship and improved the interest of the parents. In the past I was only responsible for assessing the learners work, which was very time consuming. My teaching aids were largely always my own charts or drawings but using a portfolio but using a portfolio I made more use of the learners' own examples. It saved time and effort and boosted their self-esteem. The learners' self-assessment helped me in my preparation because I noticed what they enjoyed more. Portfolio development helped me to do more research into what I was preparing for my learners. I was always concerned about the large numbers of the learners I teach. But using cooperative learning groups my task was made easy, as I merely facilitated while the learners discussed and communicated with each other in trying to solve problems presented.

A portfolio has changed my view of teaching but more so my role as a teacher. In the past I was interested in passing knowledge but now I am aware that learners bring knowledge to my teaching. In my teaching I must make sure that the learners gain knowledge, skills attitudes and values in everything I teach. My role as changed from a teacher to a facilitator of learning.

The ongoing assessment of my progress has released stress on my part and my learners are no more subjected to fear. They are no more assessed based on knowledge only but assessment is a holistic. I now find myself reflecting more regularly on my strengths and weaknesses and this helps me in my methods, preparation, planning and organization. I am still continually developing as a lifelong learner.

The ongoing discussions with my colleagues has helped me to continue reading and researching about my teaching.

I no longer teach specific subjects but I teach across the curriculum. I use opportunities positively to create awareness and appreciation of the culture and find opportunities to develop a multicultural classroom.

The portfolio helped to integrate theory and practice.

## **APPENDIX E: TEACHING OBSERVATION FORM**

### **1. FACILITATION/ MEDIATION SKILLS**

#### **1.1 LESSON INTRONDUCTION**

Does it:

- 1.1.1 Arouse learners' interest?
- 1.1.2 Link with the learners' previous experience?
- 1.1.3 Explain the purpose of the lesson?
- 1.1.4 Have a clear relationship with the main lesson?

#### **1.2 LEARNER PARTICIPATION**

- 1.2.1 What activities are they engaged in?
- 1.2.2 Do they have opportunities to ask questions?
- 1.2.3 How are the learners' questions handled?

#### **1.3 QUESTIONS**

- 1.3.1 Are they clearly formulated?
- 1.3.2 Probing and prompting?
- 1.3.3 Redirecting?
- 1.3.4 Used to develop the lesson?

#### **1.4 EXPLANATION**

- 1.4.1 Are explanations clear?
- 1.4.2 Are they relevant and appropriate for the learners' level?
- 1.4.3 Are appropriate examples used?

#### **1.5 SPEAKING SKILLS**

- 1.5.1 Does the teacher speak clearly and fluently?
- 1.5.2 Does the teacher use the voice effectively?
- 1.5.3 Is the diction appropriate for the class level?

### **2. INSTRUCTIONAL PARADIGM/ LEARNING AREA**

#### **2.1 SUBJECT MATTER**

- 2.1.1 Is it accurate?
- 2.1.2 Is it suited to the class?

#### **2.2 STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES**

- 2.2.1 Are they suitable and effective?
- 2.2.2 Were lesson outcomes reached?

## **2.3 DIDACTIC FLEXIBILITY**

- 2.3.1 Is the teacher responsive to the classroom circumstances?
- 2.3.2 Is there evidence of continuous assessment?

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

- 2.4.1 Is the subject matter revised (cognitive closure)?
- 2.4.2 How are learners' responses handled ?
- 2.4.3 Is there integration of pre-knowledge and new matter?
- 2.4.4 What task(s) are given? Does it / do they ascertain the achievement of lesson outcome?

## **3 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

- 3.1.1 Is the lesson delivered with confidence?
- 3.1.2 Was the time allocated realistic for each part of the lesson?
- 3.1.3 Was a steady pace maintained through out the lesson?

### **3.2 TEACHER ACTIVITY**

- 3.2.1 Are non- verbal cues used?
- 3.2.2 Is the classroom atmosphere conducive to effective learning?
- 3.2.3 Does there seem to be a discipline plan?

### **3.3 USE OF MEDIA**

- 3.3.1 Chalkboard Work (neatness, legibility, effectiveness in use)
- 3.3.2 What other media is used? How is it used?

## **4 CLASSROOM PHYSICLA ENVIRONMENT**

- 4.1 Is the classroom arrangement co- operative learning?
- 4.2 Is learner's work displayed and can learners interact with it
- 4.3 Are learning aids are available for learners to use?

## **5 INTERPRETER & DESIGNER OF LEARNING PROGRAMMES & MATERIALS**

- 5.1 Does the planning contain the essentials details?
- 5.2 Is the lesson content presented in logical sequence?
- 5.3 Is the choice of the content and selected instructional activities appropriate to the level of the learners?

## Annexure A

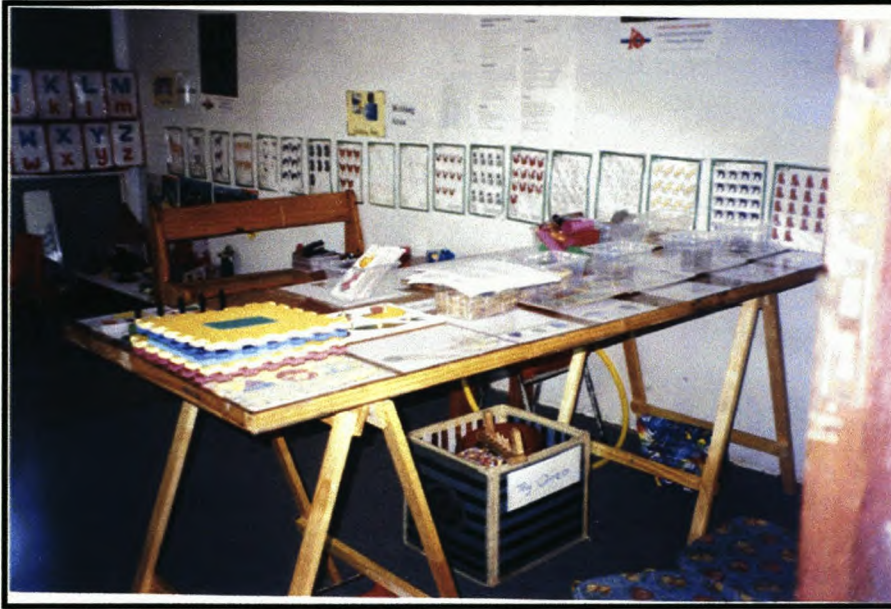


A workshop on inclusive education. A physically disabled person addressed the teachers.



Question time at the workshop. Zininzi really challenged the teachers to ask questions.

## Annexure B



An example a classroom of one of the teacher's in the study - grade one. These materials were part of their 'real-life' experience teaching.



A lesson on how to make tea. Notice the cups and saucers on the table. Once again to promote 'real-life' experiences. This teacher is involving the learner in active participation.

## Annexure C



This is how the teacher's facilitate co-operative learning.



The learners are engaged in group work.



Lesson planLifescills People around us i.e. The Rainbow NationOutcomes

- . Learners to collect analyse evaluate information
- . Learners to be able to know, value and love all people, and be able to recognise them by their clothes etc.
- . Learners to be able to do puzzle given

Prior learning Questions i.e. Who are we?

- . What language do we speak?
- . Who are other people that you <sup>know</sup> who do not speak Xhosa, your language?
- . What languages do these people speak? etc.
- . Who created you?
- . Who created these people?

Introduction A story about my neighbours.

For many years I was staying at Mdantsane a very friendly neighbourhood in west cape. My neighbours were like my family. I sometimes miss them so much.

In 1992 I bought a house in Bracken which is in East London. My back neighbours are Indians, they speak a language that I can't understand I suppose it is Indian. On the right they are Chinese or Japanese they too speak their language. In front they are from Nigeria they speak their language and English. On the left are Coloured people.

**Annexure D: An example of an artifact (lesson plan with reflections and example of**

## Annexure D (continued)

English. Life is not like the one I used to know at Mombasa. The first six months were very hard for me until a white lady invited me to a nearby church this church. There were friendly people there, then life started to be good again.

I have just discovered that the Nigerians across the street are friendly because we now speak the same language because they have big shops in East London and their customers are mainly black. They say they sometimes have difficulty with their customers. They too will be teaching me their language they have promised. My other neighbours greet now and we work at each other.

Life now is not so bad with my other neighbours I have discovered that they are just reserved because their children come to my home and my little seven year old Tova who is friendly, likes visiting them. I don't know how she communicates with them all but she has no problem. I too have an interest in knowing their languages and will learn. as it is never too late to learn. Story ends.

Activity one

- Learners will be in four groups of sixes
- Group one will be the Amathos
- Group two will be the Coloureds
- Group three will be the Indians

## Annexure D (continued)

Group four will be Whites

- Questions or guidelines are written clearly on BB.
- Learners must try to describe them in writing
- How is their skin colour?
- How is their hair?
- How is their structure and bodies?
- What kind of people are they?
- What do they like to eat?
- What did they use to wear, eat in the olden days.
- What do they wear now
- What languages do they speak etc

### ACTIVITY TWO

- Sticking of relevant pictures is done
- Reporters will report and hang work they did on wall
- Good work is highly praised.
- Additions are welcomed
- Corrections are noted and done.

### ACTIVITY THREE (concluding)

- A puzzle is given to all groups to do.
- The first to finish will lift hand to educator.
- Educator will assess their work, i.e. puzzle.
- Praise the correct puzzle.

## Annexure D (continued)

- Correcting those who had made errors, with the help of other learners.
- Learners are told about their next lesson which will be "Black people" but not speaking Xhosa. i.e. African people e.g. a Basotho, a Mazulu etc.
- Learners are to get much information as they can they are reminded.

Assessment of learners progress

- What is assessed? Did they listen to my story about my neighbours?
- Did they work together? Listening and helping each other? The picture they put was it the right one? Did they do the puzzle correctly etc
- Who will assess? I will assess, the learners will be

ReflectionsWhat went well

- The lesson went very well. The learners had more information from their parents. They came to school prepared for the lesson because I have told them to seek this information, thus they did and I complimented them on their good work, and for coming to a compromise as they all had ideas.

They enjoyed my story very much and were sad to hear that I was once sad in Daebyn. They asked many questions about the Indian food, I told them that I personally don't

## Annexure D (continued)

like earned or spicy food. My children do.

I told them my story because I wanted them to enjoy their neighbours to value them. There's the myth amongst us just in town all as well. I know that there are lucky ones who get very friendly neighbours from the very outset but with me it took ages and I think from that there was a lesson.

Another good point that I think opened my eyes is when I read about whites. This group said whites are kind to the children and love them so much. This made me think. I asked them orally to talk more, they were so bold they even talked about the lady who was looking at Nkosi Johnson the H.I.V. & Aids victim. I liked this topic very much. I promised them that we would come back to it. All children need love and they can see.

What did not go well.

One learner said he hated Indians because they are the ones who killed many people in the U. S. A. This shocked me very much because I never knew that learners in grade 3 were interested in that stuff. I tried to explain that the Hindus are my neighbours and not all Muslims like the war. I told these learners that I am not very clear with what was going on but I will try to keep them posted. At first nobody wanted to be grouped as an

Annexure D (continued)

Indian I then realised why. Explaining about war in Afghanistan was not very easy especially to grade three learners. Other learners who had no T.Vs in their homes were bored. They tried to skip the ones with questions. Fighting and hating each other is a sin in the eyes of the one person who created us all, I told my learners. Peace is the word.

Group 3  
Zizwukile

Grade 3 Lr  
Uma - Indiga - Indians

September 2000

Ban aci ngebala? • Bantsundu ngebala. ✓

Unwek zavo zizipi? • Unwek zavo zimnyama, zinde  
yehhu akonela wehoshi  
Uma - Indiya mada, nonzumba

abanyala? • Ngebantu abafundileyo.

avasizwuli  
ama I  
harukha.

Bannohlakele

shuathwethayo  
anaba unphaba

nylon, ne

India, Dance and music of '93



Bharata Natyam is an ancient classical dance style of southern India. It makes use of the mudra (gesture).