EXPLORING ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IN ONE HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSROOM
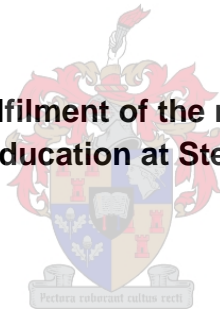
by

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Higher Education at Stellenbosch University

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DECLARATION

In submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted this thesis for obtaining any qualification.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Pieter, Marilé and Marizél in token of grateful appreciation for your love, faith and endless support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to my heavenly Father for being the Source of my knowledge, insight and health to complete this study.

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SUMMARY

Assessment, teaching and learning are key elements in lecturers' pursuit of quality in education. In fact, Black and Wiliam (1998) argue that assessment, a vital part of this reciprocal relationship should contribute to classroom learning rather than concentrate on restricted forms of tests that are not always linked to a student's learning experience. It is therefore open to debate whether a handwritten, one-hour examination does indeed stimulate students to learn and develop the knowledge, the understanding, the attitudes and the skills they need to develop. This statement mirrors the hotly debated and contradictory role of the lecturer of simultaneously having to both judge and support students' learning. In addition, widespread social and political turbulence and changes have played a role in the reform of assessment in South Africa during the past 20 years. It seems as if lecturers are caught in the middle of this conflicting role where they are expected to navigate themselves and their students through the uncertainty about how assessment should be organised, while at the same time being accountable to the students, parents, and the institution.

Given the above background, the following question arises: "How can assessment enhance learning in one higher education classroom?" In answering this question, a basic interpretative qualitative approach employing focus groups and semi-structured interviews, was used in order to explore – through a variety of lenses – how final-year students in one higher education classroom dealt with assessment issues. This study aimed at using appropriate measures to conduct research to establish a chain of evidence (forward and backward) by implementing Lincoln and Guba's model for trustworthiness (1985). The conceptual framework for this study was mainly drawn from Race's spreading ripples model of learning. The underlying premise of Race's theory is based on the idea that effective learning demands the dynamic interaction of four elements like the ripples on a pond, namely wanting/ needing, doing, feedback and digesting.

The findings of the study suggested that assessment of a Life Skills Module should provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their learning in order to develop a well-rounded set of abilities when they enter the workplace. This idea

signalled the importance of bearing in mind the first and foremost purpose of assessment, namely that assessment should serve student learning.

OPSOMMING

Assessering, onderrig en leer is sleutelelemente in dosente se nastrewing van gehalte in onderwys. Trouens, Black en Wiliam (1998) voer aan dat assessering – 'n noodsaaklike deel van hierdie wederkerige verhouding – tot die klaskamerleer moet bydra eerder as om te konsentreer op beperkte toetsvorme wat nie altyd verband hou met 'n student se leerervaring nie. Dit is dus debatteerbaar of 'n handgeskrewe, eenuureksamen studente werklik stimuleer om te leer en om die vereiste kennis, begrip, houdings en vaardighede te ontwikkel. Hierdie stelling weerspieël die heftig gedebatteerde en teenstrydige rol van die dosent om studente se leer tegelykertyd te beoordeel en te ondersteun. Hierbenewens het wydverspreide sosiale en politieke woelinge en veranderinge gedurende die afgelope 20 jaar 'n rol gespeel in die hervorming van assessering in Suid-Afrika. Dit wil voorkom of dosente vasgevang is midde-in hierdie konflikterende rol waar van hulle verwag word om sowel hulself as hul studente te stuur deur die onsekerheid omtrent die wyse waarop assessering georganiseer behoort te word, onderwyl hulle terselfdertyd verantwoordbaar is aan die student, die ouers en die instelling.

Teen hierdie agtergrond onstaan die volgende vraag: "Hoe kan assessering in een hoëronderwysklaskamer deur leer versterk word?" Ten einde hierdie vraag te beantwoord is 'n basiese interpretatiewe kwalitatiewe benadering benut waarin fokusgroepe en semigestruktureerde onderhoude gebruik is om deur 'n verskeidenheid lense ondersoek in te stel na die wyse waarop finalejaarstudente in een hoëronderwysklaskamer die kwessies rondom assessering hanteer het. Die doel van hierdie studie was om die toepaslike stappe te gebruik om die navorsing uit te voer ten einde 'n reeks bewyse te vind – vooruitskouend en retrospektief – deur die implementering van Lincoln en Guba (1985) se geloofwaardigheidsmodel. Die bevindinge van die studie suggureer dat die assessering van 'n Lewensvaardighedemodule aan studente 'n verskeidenheid geleenthede moet bied om hul leer te demonstreer ten einde 'n afgeronde stel vaardighede te ontwikkel vir wanneer hulle die werkplek betree. Die konseptuele raamwerk vir hierdie studie is hoofsaaklik gebaseer op Race se "spreading ripples model of learning". Die onderliggende beginsel van Race se teorie is gebaseer op die idee dat effektiewe

leer die dinamiese interaksie van vier elemente vereis, soos rimpels op 'n poel, naamlik begeerte (behoefte), doen, terugvoer en verwerk.

Die bevindinge van die studie suggureer dat die assessering van 'n Lewensvaardighedemodule aan studente 'n verskeidenheid geleenthede moet bied om hul leer te demonstreer ten einde 'n afgeronde stel vaardighede te ontwikkel vir wanneer hulle die werkplek betree. Hierdie idée dien as teken van die belangrikheid om die allereerste doel van assessering, naamlik dat assessering in diens van studenteleer moet staan, voor oë te hou.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

Assessment methods and requirements probably have a greater influence on how and what students learn than any other single factor. Boud (in Pickford & Brown, 2006:1)

1.1 Introduction

Assessment, teaching and learning are key elements in a lecturer's pursuit of quality in education. In fact, Black and Wiliam (1998:1) argue that assessment, a vital part of this reciprocal relationship, should rather contribute to classroom learning than concentrate on restricted forms of tests that are not always linked to a student's learning experience. Race and Pickford (2007:107) concur, arguing that assessment is "the engine which drives student learning".

If assessment is one of the major determinants of how students approach their studies, why then do some scholars question the value of time-constrained written examinations (Duhs, 2009:1) or that "the types of assessment we currently use do not promote conceptual understanding and do not encourage a deep approach to learning"? (Newstead, 2002:72). The above statements mirror the hotly debated and contradictory role of the lecturer in having simultaneously to judge and support students' learning. In addition, widespread social and political turbulence and changes during the past 20 years have played a role in the reform of assessment in South Africa (Reddy, 2004:32). It seems as if lecturers are caught in the middle of this conflicting role where they are expected to navigate both themselves and their students through the uncertainty regarding how assessment should be organised, while at the same time also being accountable to the student, the parents and the institution.

The way we assess, however, may impact on the lives of our students. It is therefore important to investigate practices and to reconsider ways of fostering student learning. In this study, perspectives and practices of assessment in a Life Skills classroom were explored in order to identify the merits and weaknesses of current assessment methods and to investigate how assessment can be used to promote the quality of a student's learning.

1.2   Conceptual framework

Written and oral examinations have existed for centuries – from the early Chinese exams through public presentations by students of Aristotle to the universal examinations of the past century (Earl, 2003:5). Braskamp (2005:75) however believes the word *assessment* to be derived from an idea important to educators: one of sitting down beside or together, these in their turn derived from the Latin words *ad* and *sedere,* which brings to mind verbs such as *to engage*, *to involve*, *to interact*, *to share* or *to trust*. One can interpret the idea of *sitting beside* as a communication process between the student, lecturer, curriculum designer and administrator. This implies a process of gathering and interpreting what students know and how they are able to use their knowledge (McAlpine, 2002:4). Assessment can therefore refer to all the activities undertaken by lecturers and students to provide information that can be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities (Black & Wiliam, 2001:2). Brown, Bull and Pendlebury (1997:8) furthermore provide a useful working definition for such a communication process when they explain that assessment is a systematic process to determine what students know or can do, to draw conclusions and to determine the value of their efforts. A broader definition, adopted by Palomba and Banta (1999:4), emphasises that during the assessment process information will be collected and reviewed in order to improve learning and development. Based on this understanding, the purpose of assessment can be summarised as being to promote learning, to certify achievements and to provide data for quality assurance (Yorke, 2008:10).

From the above definitions it seems fundamental that a trusted lecturer, preparing students for future vocational success, should "sit beside" the said students when they produce evidence of their competence in organising, structuring and applying knowledge. Assessment can thus be viewed as an integral part of teaching and

learning and not as an add-on to teaching and learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998:1-54; Geyser, 2004:90; McMillan, 2007:7) where the focus should be on "assessment to learn" rather than "assessment and learning" (Carless, 2005:42). This, in turn, begs the question whether formal examinations always fulfil this role. This question, particularly, was reviewed in the familiar work of Black and Wiliam (1998) in which they maintain that a valuable opportunity to enhance learning is lost when the focus is merely on a grade or numerical score, as it does not provide any feedback to students on how to improve learning (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & Wiliam, 2004:13). Recently, Jansen (rector of the University of the Free State) arguing that formal examinations place too much pressure on students, proposed a system in which students would be evaluated throughout the year by using a variety of methods to assess academic proficiency and where class tests would be only one indicator of performance (Coetzee, 2009:11). In other words, assessment should not be confined to an "arena of tests, examinations or formal assignments" only (Rowntree, s.a.:2); it should rather be used as an educational tool that helps students to take an independent, active role in their learning, where they can develop their cognitive abilities of thinking, reasoning, planning and decision making in the service of solving real-life problems (Maclellan, 2004:314).

1.2.1 Statement of the problem

International development and research have led to the introduction of new policies relating to education and the accreditation of qualifications in South Africa (Geyser, 2004:90). The purpose of these policies is not only to create a process that is able to support both the learning and the learner but they also serve the purpose of assuring the process, the instruments and the performance of assessors (South African Qualification Authority (SAQA), 2005:13). If assessment is viewed as the "barometer of the educational system" (Luckett & Sutherland, 1997:100) one should be concerned when students complain that it often feels as if lecturers are turning them into "essay-producing machines" or "examination junkies" (Dunn, 2009:1). A question that arises is whether lecturers approach assessment merely as a part of their job description or do they use assessment as an attempt to determine the quality of learning?

The purpose of the study was therefore to explore assessment in the DLS 112 and 122 modules in an attempt to investigate the issues that influence the quality of student learning and to formulate plans to address the said issues. Life Skills is currently one of three learning programmes (the others being Literacy and Numeracy) in the Foundation Phase. In October 2009, the Department of Education (DoE) published a document proposing that the General Studies learning programme should replace the Life Skills learning programme (DoE, 2009:20). Currently Life Skills is integrated with the Life Orientation learning area, Environmental Education and other learning areas of the Intermediate Phase: Technology; Arts and Culture; Social Sciences; Mathematics; Economic and Business Sciences; Natural Sciences and Languages. After reviewing the proposed document of October 2009, the Department of Education announced in the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in September 2010 that the term Life Skills will still be used to address the following aspects, namely Basic Knowledge; Arts and Crafts; Physical Development and Movement and Health promotion (DoE, 2010).

Assessment of this new Life Skills Programme should however still provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their learning in order to develop a well-rounded set of abilities for when they enter the workplace. It is therefore open to debate whether a handwritten, one-hour examination does indeed stimulate students to learn and develop the requisite knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills. In addition, reports of external moderators of the Life Skills Module indicated that students are expected to apply foundational, practical and reflexive components of learning in this module (Jordaan, 2009; Steyn, 2009). Beets (2009:186) explains that foundational, practical and reflexive components are necessary to empower students with the required skills to apply knowledge in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.

Against the above backdrop, the title of this research project therefore is: Exploring assessment for learning in one higher education classroom.

1.2.2. Research questions and aims

Given the declared goal of assessment, the study was guided by the following primary question: In what way can assessment enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom? In order to explore the primary research question, the following secondary questions were also addressed:

- What should be the major purposes of assessing students in the teacher education Life Skills classroom?
- How should assessment be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education Life Skills classroom?
- How can assessment be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom?

While the first question focuses on the enduring tensions between the various purposes for which assessment is being used, the second question explores how assessment can be implemented to enhance learning; the third question focuses on the way in which assessment can be used as an educational tool to prepare students for the workplace.

The above research questions led to the main aim of this study, namely to explore assessment in one higher education classroom. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives were pursued, namely:

- to explore what the major purposes of assessing students should be in the teacher education Life Skills classroom.
- to investigate how assessment should be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education Life Skills classroom.
- to identify ways that assessment can be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom.

1.2.3 Scope of the study

There are many different approaches, types or paradigms in educational research. One of the most common contrasts is that made between the interpretivist versus the positivist approach (Wellington, 2000:13). Wellington (2000:13) explains that the aim of positivist research is to seek generalisations and 'hard' quantitative data, whereas the interpretivist researcher explores perspectives and shared meanings in order to develop insights into situations. Although it may be interesting to know how many people feel positively or negatively about something, the intention of a qualitative inquiry is to focus on the richness of the responses to a social situation and it is not always possible to ascertain this with numbers and statistics only (Basit, 2003:152). This study was situated in an interpretivist paradigm because it concerned itself with a deep interpretive understanding of social phenomena. In this study, I was allowed to interact closely with participants in order to gain insight into and understanding of specifically the meaning of assessment (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:20, 21).

A qualitative case-study design employing semi-structured interviews and focus groups allowed me to explore – through a variety of lenses – how final-year students in this particular higher education classroom dealt with assessment issues (Baxter & Jack, 2008: 544; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008:431). Willis (2008:210) argues that the implementation of the case-study design enables a researcher to look at a phenomenon holistically in its natural context. Paragraph 3.2.1 describes the rationale for employing the case-study design and how this design allowed me to investigate assessment within its real-life context and to answer the 'what' and 'how' questions of assessment in the Life Skills classroom (Trafford & Leshem, 2008:89). Kvale (1996:95) considers 'what and how' questions to be key aspects in an investigation because the 'what' question will provide knowledge of the subject matter, whereas the 'how' question will be answered by analysing and making sense of the data. The purpose of this study was not to generalise but to gain insight into and understanding of the way assessment is understood in the Life Skills Module. An advantage may then be that this research was carried out in a real-life situation and not in an experimental situation.

1.2.4 Context of the study

Dey (1993:35) highlights the importance of the context of a study in that meaning in qualitative research depends on the context. Section 1.2 explains that assessment of a Life Skills Module should provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their learning in order to develop a well-rounded set of abilities for when they enter the workplace. Reports of external moderators of the Life Skills Module indicated that students are expected to apply foundational, practical and reflexive components of learning in this module (Jordaan, 2009; Steyn, 2009). The research was therefore limited to a specific group of students, namely fourth-year students in the Life Skills classroom at the University of the Free State. The participants – 78 registered female students between 23 and 26 years of age, of whom 69 were Afrikaans-speaking and 9 English-speaking – were all registered for the DLS 112 Module at the University of the Free State. Most of these students continued with the DLS 122 Module in the second semester.

All students attending lectures or participating in Blackboard were invited to take part in the research. Flick (2009:448) clearly states that, in order to triangulate effectively, a researcher should aim to obtain data located on different levels and not only data in similar shapes (cf. 3.2.7). Consequently, not only students, but also lecturers were invited to the semi-structured interviews. Some lecturers had experience in Life Skills assessment while others added a new perspective to assessment in the Life Skills classroom by reflecting on their own assessment in their specific field of expertise. In Section 3.2.4 it will be described why purposive sampling was used to select participants for the interviews and how they were chosen in accordance with the guidelines laid down by Flick (2009:123):

- Practical availability during the June/July holidays.
- Participants who had not participated in the focus-group discussions.
- Knowledge of and experience in assessment in general, but also specifically in Life Skills.
- Capability to reflect critically and articulately on the questions.

This study comprised both non-empirical and empirical data in order to investigate the research questions. The non-empirical research consisted of an extensive

literature review on how assessment can contribute to the learning experience of students, while the empirical research followed a qualitative approach to investigate assessment in one particular higher education classroom.

1.2.5 Data-collection methods

This study was conducted during the first and second semesters of 2010 and generated large quantities of data from multiple sources. Figure 1 indicates how the data were organised systematically in order to prevent the researcher from becoming overwhelmed or losing sight of the original main research question (Wellington, 2000:133).

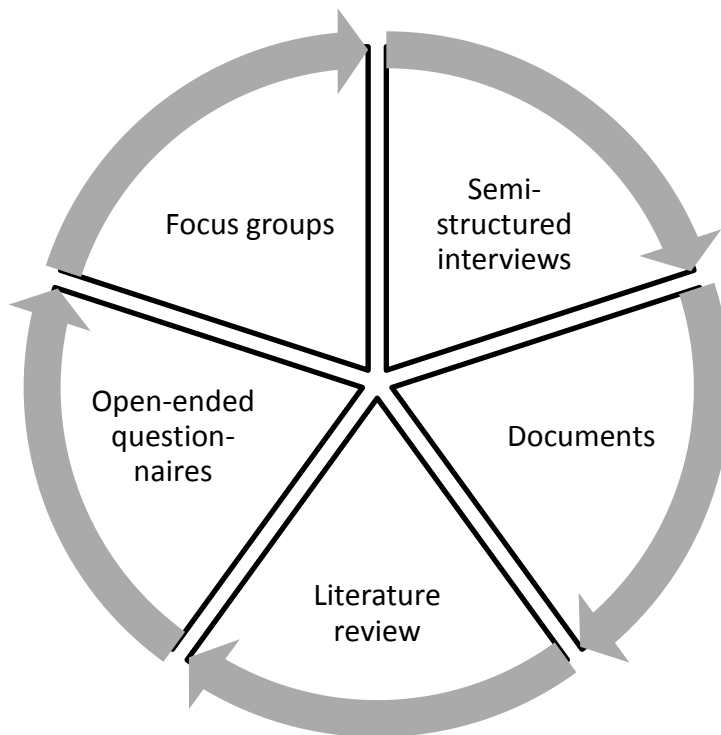**Figure 1: Data-collection methods**

The next section provides a brief exposition of how the data-collection instruments were implemented. This information is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Three (cf. 3.2.3).

1.2.5.1   Literature review

The goal of a literature review is to expand upon reasons behind selecting the research question. Researchers have for many years been interested in assessment

and the pioneering research review of Black and Wiliam (1998) focused the attention of the academic world on the message that assessment must be geared towards assisting students to make progress. Chapter Two grapples with the barriers that influence assessment and will provide the reader with evidence that assessment involves much more than grading. The chapter further argues that although scholars believe that assessment drives learning, the mere changing of assessment methods will not automatically improve student learning. Race's spreading ripples model of learning is therefore explored to determine how assessment can be designed in order to increase students' autonomy in the learning process.

1.2.5.2 Document analysis

Wellington (2000:109) distinguishes between primary and secondary sources as data-collection methods available to educational researchers. Primary literature sources includes text books, accredited journals, refereed conferences and official documents, whereas primary data sources can be grouped together as data from observation, interviews, questionnaires and focus groups. The DLS 112 Module and DLS 122 examination papers were evaluated both internally and externally in 2009, which allowed me to investigate how assessment was being reviewed by others in the field (cf. 3.2.3.2). These documents consequently referred to primary data sources and were used in conjunction with data from the focus groups, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to explore assessment in the Life Skills classroom.

1.2.5.3 Open-ended questionnaires

Open-ended questions should not be overlooked when assessing perceptions of a learning environment (Bernhardt & Geise, 2009:81). Patton (1990:24) adds that open-ended questionnaires generate a wider variety of responses that more truly reflect the opinions of the participants, while the likelihood of unexpected and insightful suggestions is also increased.

Open-ended questionnaires were used to obtain unprompted opinions and to obtain as much information as possible on a few assessment methods in this particular higher education classroom (see Appendix B). Hiramatsu, Oiso, Shojima and Komoda (2008:318) argue that although open-ended questions provide an enormous

amount of text data it can be very time consuming to read all of the texts one by one. The first requirement of analysing open-ended responses is to work with an open mind because a researcher wants to hear what participants want to say (Bernhardt & Geise, 2009:81). Different methods of data-analysis of open-ended responses can be used and the coding of the open questions in this study was based on a substantial representative sample compiled in accordance with Robson's (1993:253) guidelines. He suggests that coding should be done by copying all the responses to a particular question onto a large sheet of paper headed by the specific question, the goal being to determine a small set of categories in which the responses can be sorted.

1.2.5.4 Focus groups

Research interviews are based on professional conversations and on conversations in daily life. In Section 3.2.3.4 it is explained that the main purpose of conducting the focus groups was to obtain some understanding of how this collective group of participants felt, thought and experienced the assessment issues (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2001:13; Kitzinger & Barbour, 2001:4; Krueger & Casey, 2000:1, 26; Marshall & Rossman, 2010:149; Wilkinson, 2004:181). A pilot study was implemented to simulate the real situation and to prepare an interview schedule for the focus groups (Robson, 1993:164). As Mertens (1998:174) argues that market research generally reveals that no new ideas are forthcoming after three or four groups, I therefore conducted four focus-group discussions to collect the ideas, opinions, knowledge and questions of participants in their own vocabulary regarding assessment in the Life Skills classroom (see Appendix C).

The main advantage of this particular instrument was the opportunity it provided for collecting large and rich amounts of data in the students' own words regarding assessment in the Life Skills classroom. It further allowed participants to react and to build on the responses of other group members. Though focus groups are a valuable research method and offer various advantages, they do however have some limitations. A potential limitation in this study could be that focus groups were principally driven by the researcher's interest, which can be a source of weakness (Morgan, 1997:14, 43). I however strove to maintain objectivity and reliability by

using a number of data-collection techniques to check perceptions and to ensure that interpretations were not biased.

1.2.5.5   Semi-structured interviews

Wellington (2000:71) asserts that interviews are implemented to elicit views and perspectives. In fact, as far back as 80 years ago Webb and Webb described an *interview* as "a conversation with a purpose" (1932 in Burgess, 1989:164). The purpose of interviews in this study was to refine questions from the focus groups and further to explore issues that emerged from the focus-group discussions (see Appendix D).

Utilising interviews allowed me to access participants' perspectives in order to obtain rich descriptive data to construct meaning to their life worlds (Patton, 2002:341). Paragraph 3.2.3.5 describes how the semi-structured interviews allowed me to see assessment through the eyes of the participants as they provided 'nuanced' explanations from their real-life worlds (Kvale, 1996:27, 30). It was therefore important to listen not only to the eight participants' explicit explanations of assessment, but also to search for what they said between the lines (Kvale, 1996:31). This was done so as to gather information on the different ways participants discussed assessments, to seek patterns in their responses and to develop the dimensions of their experiences (Morse & Richards, 2002:111-112).

Two postgraduate students were used as moderators to facilitate the group discussions (cf. 3.2.3.4). This was done because (1) the students were able to identify with these postgraduate students since they came from the same academic background, (2) the moderators' presence contributed to a relaxed atmosphere and participants were willing to share their views and were possibly more open than would be the case if the moderator had been a lecturer or an unfamiliar person, and (3) qualitative researchers are frequently interested not only in what people say but also how they say it. This arrangement allowed me to observe and to write down impressions and the most obvious non-verbal elements from behind a one-way mirror panel, principally since non-verbal behaviour and especially eye contact serve important functions within a group (Kitzinger & Barbour, 2001:5).

1.2.5.6 Data analysis

Krathwohl (1998:304) argues that people have probably never thought of art as the elimination of the unnecessary. He however explains that this is precisely what is done by sculptors when they are revealing the form hidden within a stone. Doing good qualitative research consequently also involves cutting away those details that are of no consequence in order to concentrate on what is important. This is done by data analysis, coding and reduction.

The object of analysing the data originating from the focus groups and interviews in thus study was to break the data down into segments in order to determine the categories, relationships and assumptions that informed the participants' views of assessment and then to make sense of the information. Some researchers refer to this process as "an attractive nuisance", explaining that the attractiveness lies in the words of the participants (Miles in Robson, 1993:370). This process was done manually because there were fewer than twenty interviews to analyse, and, according to Tesh (1990 in Wellington, 2000:147), a computer cannot replace the researcher's own interpretation, analysis and 'craftsmanship'.

The different categories and subcategories that emerged from the analysis will be discussed in Chapter Four. Tesh (1990 in Basit, 2003:144) refers to this process as data condensation or data distillation, implying that the process of establishing categories involves not only manageable chunks of information, but that analysis could happen as a result of a process of interpreting and organising data bits. The eventual outcome of a qualitative analysis is to provide an overall summary of the insight gained from the data. This will be discussed in Chapter Five.

1.2.5.7 Validating the research

Trustworthiness is of the utmost importance in qualitative research and qualitative researchers are often criticised for their lack of rigour and are even regarded as unworthy of entering into "the magic circle of evidence" (Robson, 1993:402). Several researchers have nevertheless in some measure demonstrated how qualitative researchers can persuade the reader to accept the findings of a study. Lincoln and Guba (1985:294-301), for example, propose a scientific construct parallel with trustworthiness by describing four criteria that lie at the heart of any qualitative

research project. Precisely how credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability were applied in this study is explained in Section 3.2.6.

1.2.5.8 Triangulation

Fielding and Fielding (in Patton, 1990:187) explain that the term *triangulation* is taken from land surveying. They assert that knowing a single landmark will locate a person somewhere along a line in a direction from the landmark. Triangulation will therefore be ideal when you take bearings of two landmarks and locate yourself at the intersection. Section 3.2.7 explains that when the concept *triangulation* is used in research, it entails the borrowing and combining of different approaches in order to confirm and improve the clarity or precision of a research finding by building a more complete picture of the methods, methodological perspectives and theoretical viewpoints (Flick, 2004:178; Flick, 2009:444; Henning et al., 2004:133; Robson, 1993:383). *Triangulation* can be seen as a way to strengthen a research design by means of comprehensive data. In this study, triangulation of the knowledge produced by the focus-group interviews, semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires and document reviews implied going beyond the accumulated knowledge in an effort to make meaning of assessment and thereby contributing to promoting quality in research (Flick, 2004:445). In this way, sources of information can be tested and discrepancies can further be explored in order to explain the phenomenon more successfully (Robson, 1993:393).

1.2.5.9 Ethical considerations

Kvale (1996:110) emphasises that ethical considerations do not belong to a specific stage of research, but are relevant throughout the entire process. Ethical considerations are therefore of the utmost importance in order to respect and honour participants. The ethical considerations were based on the following guidelines suggested by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:63-65) and Henning et al. (2004:73):

- **Informed consent.** Care was taken that participants fully understand the purpose of the study and was reminded in writing that participation was fully voluntary.
- **Anonymity.** Participants were assured that all information will be treated anonymously and that they will not be identified at any stage of the research.

- **Confidentiality.** Participants' right to privacy were acknowledged and all the interviews were conducted in a relationship of trust and transparency.

- **Right to withdraw.** Participants were assured that they have the right to withdraw at any time during the research and would not be disadvantaged in any way.

- **Ethical approval**. Since, at that juncture, there was no official ethical committee in the Faculty of Education (January 2010), ethical approval was obtained from the Head of the Department of Curriculum Studies of the University of the Free State, Prof. G.F. du Toit (see Appendix A).

1.3 Structure of the study

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the study was structured as follows:

Chapter One: Orientation and background

This chapter has provided a general overview of the research and the purpose of the research was introduced. In order to reach the purpose of the study, the research questions and data collections methods were explained.

Chapter Two: Assessment in service of learning

Chapter Two begins with a discussion of assessment for and of learning and identify some key principles and concepts of formative and summative assessment. It furthermore considers how assessment can be implemented to enhance learning by exploring Race's spreading ripples model of learning.

Chapter Three: Research methodology and design

The research methodology of this study is discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Findings

Chapter Four deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusions, implications and limitations

This chapter deals with the conclusions, implications and limitations of the study, based on the findings from the literature review in Chapter Two and the empirical findings reported in Chapter Four.

1.4   Clarification of concepts

A number of key words, terms and concepts are used in this study. The explanations below are offered as operational definitions only and will be explained in greater detail in Chapter Two.

Alternative assessment

Alternative assessment methods can broadly be explained as assessment methods that are alternatives to traditional paper-and-pencil tests. Alternative assessment assumes many different forms according to the nature of the skills and knowledge being assessed. Students are usually asked to demonstrate learning by creating a product, such as an exhibition or oral presentation or performing a skill such as conducting an experiment or demonstration. Three variations of alternative assessment are performance-based assessment, authentic assessment and portfolio assessment.

Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning can be described as assessment where the first and utmost purpose is to promote students' learning. It differs from assessment of learning where the focus is to certify competence, ranking or accountability. Assessment for learning is part of the instructional process, having a diagnostic, forward-looking purpose of aiming to improve future learning, and of giving encouragement (Black et al., 2004:10).

Authentic assessment

This approach attempts to connect assessment with the real world. It requires students to apply skills and knowledge in the creation of a product or performance that applies to situations beyond the school environment (Broadfoot, 2007:176).

Blended learning

Definitions of blended learning vary considerably. *Blended learning* can be defined as simply the combination of online-learning with face-to-face learning (Vignare, 2007:38). For the purposes of this study, the term *blended learning* will be used to refer to the "the marriage between technology and education" (Siemens, 2002:2).

Bricoleur

Denzin and Lincoln (2005:5-13) describe the researcher as a *bricoleur.* The concept *bricoleur* refers to a maker of quilts or, as in filmmaking, a person who assembles images into montages. The interpretive *bricoleur* (maker of quilts) will consequently construct a set of representations that are suited to a specific complex situation by employing whatever strategies, methods or empirical materials are available.

Criterion-referenced

Assessment that is designed to provide a pass/fail decision in relation to a defined standard (Broadfoot, 2007:178).

Document analysis

The strategies and procedures for analysing and interpreting the documents of any kind important for the study of a particular area (Wellington, 2000:196).

E-assessment

Assessment that is conducted using a computer interface (Broadfoot, 2007:178).

E-learning

Learning that is facilitated and supported through computer-student interaction (Broadfoot, 2007:178).

Feedback

Any information that is provided to the performer of any action about that performance (Black & Wiliam, 1998:53).

Formative assessment

Formative assessment in the classroom refers to frequent, interactive assessment of student progress in order to identify learning problems, to support, guide and encourage students and to adjust teaching appropriately (Yorke, 2008:12).

Meta-learning

Learning about learning – awareness of the process and elements of learning (Broadfoot, 2007:179).

Meta-cognitive skill

The capacity to monitor one's own strengths and weaknesses in relation to a particular task or desired goal (Broadfoot, 2007:179).

Norm-referenced

Assessment that is designed to provide a spread of candidates' test scores in order to rank them (Freeman & Lewis, 1998:316).

Race's spreading ripples model of learning

According to Phillip Race (2001:11), a human brain does not work in a linear or pre-programmed way all the time, but rather operates at various overlapping levels when, for example, making sense of ideas. He offers a theory with the underlying premise that the most effective form of learning is constituted of the continuous effect of four elements like the ripples on a pond, namely wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting, with each of the processes in dynamic interaction with the others.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is used to measure what students have learnt at the end of a unit, module or course and constitutes a final grade to promote students or to ensure they have met the standards that are required for progression (Bloxham & Boyd, 2008:236).

Trustworthiness

A criterion offered by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as an alternative to the traditional concepts of *reliability* and *validity* in judging. Trustworthiness comprises the following: (i) credibility; (ii) transferability; (iii) dependability; and (iv) conformability.

1.5   Conclusion

This chapter, besides providing a general overview of the research, has provided the rationale for the study and introduced the purpose of the study. The research questions and data collections methods utilised with a view to attaining the purpose of the study have further been explained. The next chapter deals with the recent literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

ASSESSMENT IN SERVICE OF LEARNING

One of the outstanding features of studies of assessment in recent years has been the shift in the focus of attention, towards greater interest in the interactions between assessment and classroom learning and away from concentration on the properties of restricted forms of tests which are only weakly linked to the learning experiences of students.
Black and Wiliam (1998:1)

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One aimed to provide an understanding of the interaction between assessment, teaching and learning in higher education. This may lead one to inquire regarding to what extent and in what respect assessment does play a role in this partnership. Brown (2004:81) provides answers by stating that assessment lies at the heart of the student experience in that it focuses on important issues fundamental to the core foci of higher education, namely teaching methods, assessment standards and student development.

In reality, however, lecturers find the multiplicity of assessment purposes to be a problematic issue and different assessors can define assessment differently, depending on its uses and the context of the educational experience in which it is applied. Yorke (2008:2) points out that "there is plenty of room for confusion or misunderstanding" and it thus becomes clear that assessment is "not a simple matter" (Earl, 2003:3; Heywood, 2000:32). Understanding assessment is further complicated by the global perception that assessment is synonymous with measurement or making judgments. Heywood (2000:32) reminds us that the early

uses of the word *assessment* entail primarily the act of placing a value on the nature, character or quality of something. In fact, in the real world of education, it seems impossible to imagine teaching without some form of judgment (Reynolds, Livingston & Wilson, 2009:3). Making judgments is a challenging responsibility for the lecturer, one which can further be complicated by the fact that the assessment must be congruent with the culture of the institution, the learning outcomes, and the students' needs and abilities (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008:46).

It would however seem that, in the past few years, the perception of assessment as being value laden has been subjected to a paradigm shift in terms of its nature and purpose. This has resulted from continuous dynamic societal developments in the higher education teaching-and-learning environment (Gulikers, Bastiaens, Kirschner & Kester, 2006:382). Scholars highlighted the necessity of moving away from a culture of testing in which greater emphasis is placed on the quality of *student learning*. Harris (2007:252) holds that assessment today is less about labelling and more about a desire for determining the exact stage of the learning process in order to adapt teaching and learning to meet students' needs. Also, evidence gained through assessment methods can enhance the quality of both the lecturer and the student's engagement with the learning process. On the one hand, assessment can provide the lecturer with feedback on students' current understanding in order accordingly to modify and plan instruction, and, on the other hand, it can produce information to the students, which could potentially assist them with self-assessment, the recognition of needs for the next steps in learning, and so to improve their learning (Beets, 2009:184).

In the current climate of lifelong learning, scholars believe that assessment should no longer be viewed as something separate from teaching where the focus is primarily on grades, but rather a process aiming to develop students' ability to reflect in order to enhance their own motivation and commitment to learn (Marriott, 2009:252). Silva (2009:630) continues this line of reasoning by arguing that the essence of so-called 21st-century teaching lies not in the type of knowledge students have, but rather in how they are able to apply such knowledge. The question next arises whether a "handwritten, three-hour, essay type examination" will stimulate students to learn and develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills that they need to develop to prepare them for their future working lives (Schwartz &

Webb, 2000:3). Knight (2002:148-149) further wants to know whether grades will be enough to prepare students for a lifelong career of engaged citizenship and leadership in a global society. Above all, literature indicates that employers today are complaining that graduates are not prepared for the world of work in that they write and speak poorly, cannot work in teams, do not think critically and are not able to apply abstract knowledge in practical settings (Anderson, 2004:17).

Higher education students do not to merely need to demonstrate high standards of academic achievement, but they also need to demonstrate practical capabilities that can be applied in the workplace setting. A practical issue for teacher-education lecturers today is thus how innovatively to apply assessment in the current accountability environment so as to deliver teachers who have the necessary knowledge and employment skills that the future world of work expects. Before strategies are explored to widen the assessment frame it would be useful first to flesh out two sets of philosophical assumptions that hinge on the distinction between assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning.

2.2   Assessment *for* and *of* learning

For the past few years, the concepts *assessment for learning and assessment of learning* have frequently featured in discussions on educational assessment. In his review of assessment for learning, Marzano (2006:8) claims that when Michael Scriven (1967) first used the concepts of *formative* and *summative* assessment, it had little to do with classroom assessment or even learning. The author argues that Scriven's original idea had been that a distinction should be made between programmes that were formulated versus programmes that had evolved to their final state, but the latter was however interpreted in a formative versus a summative sense and this distinction was soon applied to assessment in the classroom. Since the 1990s, the idea that assessment drives learning has enjoyed considerable attention. Research on assessment does indeed indicate that formative assessment is perhaps to be regarded one of the most important interventions ever studied to promote performance (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), 2005:22).

In a research review, Black and Wiliam (1998) raised awareness of the inadequacy of assessment methods. These authors argued that while there was not a good fit

between summative assessment and constructivist learning theories, formative assessment however seemed to produce a more powerful effect on student learning (Pryor & Crossouard, 2008:2). Scholars held that the idea of self-regulated learning – in which students take control of their own learning – centred on the distinction assessment *for* learning and assessment *of* learning (Crooks, 2004:1; Duhs, 2009:1; Hagstrom, 2006:26; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006:199; Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis & Chappuis, 2004:29). Black et al., (2004:10) define assessment *for* learning as follows:

> Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. It thus differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence. An assessment activity can help learning if it provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessment becomes "formative assessment" when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs.

Assessment *for learning* can therefore be summarised as being part of the instructional process and having a diagnostic, forward-looking purpose of aiming to improve future learning, and of giving encouragement. Assessment *of* learning, on the other hand, is used as a means of gauging and making judgements regarding students' achievements for purposes of selection and certification, while also simultaneously acting as a focus for institutional accountability and quality assurance. Ewell (2009:8) illustrates the two roles of assessment by means of two philosophical assessment assumptions (see Table 1): assessment for improvement (evolved from the institutional approach of the mid-1980s), and, assessment for accountability (derived from the early state mandates).

Table 1: Two paradigms of assessment

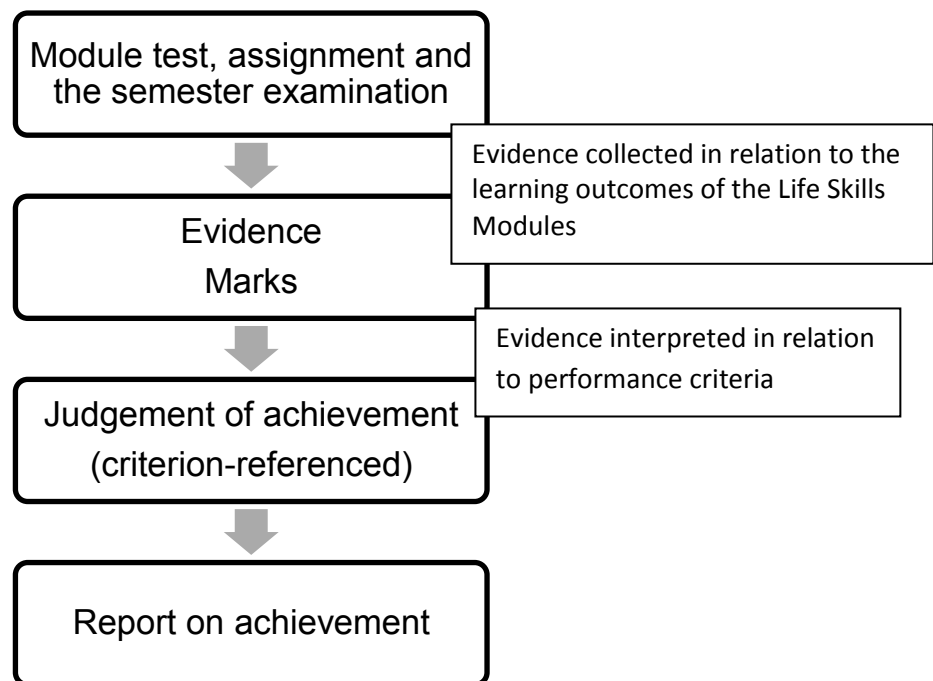|	Assessment for improvement	Assessment for certification and accountability
Strategic dimensions		
Intent	**Formative (improvement)** The purpose of formative assessment is to generate feedback, promote ongoing growth and accelerate student learning (Tuttle, 2009:4)	**Summative (judgement)** The goal of summative assessment is to judge student competency after an instructional phase for the purposes of reporting (Fisher & Frey, 2007:4)
Characteristics	Student involvement in setting goals and criteria for assessment Performing a task, creating an artefact/product Use of higher-level thinking and/or problem-solving skills Measuring meta-cognitive, collaborative and intrapersonal skills, and also intellectual products Measuring meaningful instructional activities Contextualisation in real-world applications (Wiggins, Linn, Linn & Baker in Maclellan 2004:312)	Occurring at certain intervals, after which achievement is reported Relates to progression in learning measured against public criteria Results of different students can be combined since they share the same criteria Requires methods that are as reliable as possible without compromising validity Involves quality-assurance procedures Should be based on evidence from the full range of learning goals (Broadfoot, 2007:110; Greenwood, Hayes, Turner & Vorhaus, 2001:109)
Student's role	Self-assessment and keeping track of progress Act on classroom assessment results to be able to do better next time (Stiggins et al., 2004:33)	Studying to meet standards Taking the test Striving for the highest possible score Avoiding failure
Primary motivator	The belief that success in learning is achievable (Stiggins et al., 2004:33)	Threat of punishment; promise of rewards
Primary users	Students, teachers and parents (Stiggins et al., 2004:33)	Policy makers, programme planners, supervisors, teachers, students and parents
Stance	Internal	External
Predominant ethos	Engagement	Compliance
Application choices		
Instrumentation	Multiple/triangulation	Standardised
Nature of evidence	Quantitative/qualitative	Quantitative
Reference points	Over time, comparative, established goal	Comparative or fixed standard
Communication of results	Multiple internal channels and media	Public communication
Use of results	Multiple feedback loops	Reporting

(Adapted from Ewell, 2009:8)

The logic of formative assessment is shown in Table 1, namely identifying learning goals, assessing where students are in respect of these goals and then using effective teaching strategies to close the gap (Yin, Shavelson, Ayala, Ruiz-Primo, Brandon, Furtak, Tomita & Young, 2008:336). Suskie (2004:37) interprets this idea as one of "cultivating a culture of learning rather than one of assessment per se" where students have freedom to explore ideas, question perceptions and construct meaning to information. Table 1 indicates that the accountability programme - with its focus on marks and certificates – has, in contrast to this idea, a more distinctly retrospective nature when it is time to sum up what the individual student has achieved (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & Wiliam, 2003:13; Broadfoot, 2007:7; Falchikov, 2005:3; Hagstrom, 2006:24; Tian, 2007:388; Wiliam, 2006:285). Stobart (2006:134) summarises that in formative assessment it is all about the consequences: Has further learning taken place as a result of the assessment? In summative assessment the trustworthiness is drawn from the results: Does our interpretation of the students' results do justice to their understanding?

It seems that for the past several years some hotly debated issues surrounded assessment in higher education. Central in these debates was the growing belief that innovative assessment methods should be used to support and improve student learning. In addition, scholars believed that expanded assessment methods could create independent thinkers, problem solvers and decision makers – skills students entering the 21st-century workforce reality surely need. In order to investigate the research question, namely how assessment in the Life Skills classroom can enhance learning, it will first be necessary to throw some light on the way in which summative and formative assessment is practised.

2.2.1 Summative assessment in the Life Skills classroom

Boud (1995) describes summative assessment as the *final language*, implying that the goal of assessment is to summarise the performance of students (in Yorke, 2008:12). The rationale behind summative assessment is dichotomous in that it reports on the performance of both the lecturer and the student (Freeman & Lewis, 1998:32). In the Life Skills classroom, summative assessment first holds the students accountable for what they have learned by reporting on achievement at a particular time in order to confirm whether they have achieved a particular standard

or passed a particular part of a programme, and it is done primarily for certification and accountability purposes. Second, it holds lecturers accountable for the programme they taught (Hagstrom, 2006:24). This particular goal of assessment is explained by Figure 2. The purpose of summative assessment in the Life Skills Module is based on the assumption of evidence. Evidence generated from the module tests, assignment and examinations is used to determine how well the goals and learning outcomes have been achieved.

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  Module test, assignment and│
│   the semester examination  │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              ↓           ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
┌─────────────────────────┤ Evidence collected in relation to the │
│        Evidence         │ learning outcomes of the Life Skills │
│                         │ Modules                          │
│         Marks           └──────────────────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────────┐
              ↓           ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
┌─────────────────────────┤ Evidence interpreted in relation │
│ Judgement of achievement│ to performance criteria          │
│   (criterion-referenced)└──────────────────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────────┘
              ↓
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   Report on achievement     │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

(Adapted from Harlen, 2007:122)

Figure 2: Assessment of learning in the Life Skills classroom

Advantages of this summative assessment method include that the assessment provides the most up-to-date information possible, the conditions of the examination give confidence that it is the student's own work, students are not subject to most of the problems of plagiarism, it may be able to standardise the marking process and thus to be fair to candidates (Crooks, 2004:4; Race, 2007:33). Harlen (2005b:249) however cautions that this type of assessment may fail if lecturers have a narrow view of assessment and merely use discussions regarding the results as an exercise to adjust marks. If the focus is only on the performance, students will not have the

opportunity either to reflect on or to demonstrate improvement, and it will limit the range of cognitive skills included in assessment (Maki, 2004:97). Wilson and Scalise (2006:643) add that a single summative score in the form of a grade does not contribute to the mastery of complex material or the development of meta-cognitive skills. Further, focusing merely on the reporting of the achievement may mean that assessment is not used to shape the application of knowledge by means of conceptual understanding and that a deep approach to learning is not encouraged (Newstead, 2002:72).

One can argue that the Life Skills lecturer needs first to recognise some of the unhelpful effects of traditional forms of assessment, and then to investigate alternative means of assessment that are able to engage students, direct their learning and assist them in making adjustments to meet learning needs. In the light of this, it is necessary to explore the ways in which assessment can leave room for students to learn, grow and succeed. The crucial feature is that evidence is evoked, interpreted in terms of learning needs, and then used to make adjustments so as the better to be able to meet the learning needs.

2.2.2 Formative assessment in the Life Skills classroom

While fact-based knowledge is still one component of the learning that is assessed, its measurement is however not the sole purpose of formative assessment. Formative assessment is based on the assumption that a learning environment must entice students to be fully engaged in collaboratively constructing meaningful and worthwhile knowledge (Maclellan, 2004:311). Part of the purpose of formative assessment is to bridge the gap between learning and working, by providing students with opportunities to practise skills, develop competencies and enhance confidence that are relevant for their future professional life (Duhs, 2009:2; Gulikers et al., 2006:382; Pickford & Brown, 2006:13; Waugh, Wood, Wallace & Walker, 2009:3). For this reason Pickford and Brown (2006:13) reason that it is unthinkable to assess the practical application of skills without also providing opportunities for students to rehearse and practise such skills in advance. This idea implies that assessment should not be viewed as a once-and-done process, but rather as a continuous, cyclical process (Suskie, 2004:3-4).

Harlen (2007:119) suggests such a cycle where he views formative assessment as a continuous repeated cycle of events in which the lecturer and students use information from ongoing activities to plan the next steps in the learning process (see Figure 3). In this cycle the components of a module are interrelated as an essential whole where engagement and autonomy in learning are combined with creative learner-centred teaching, for example:
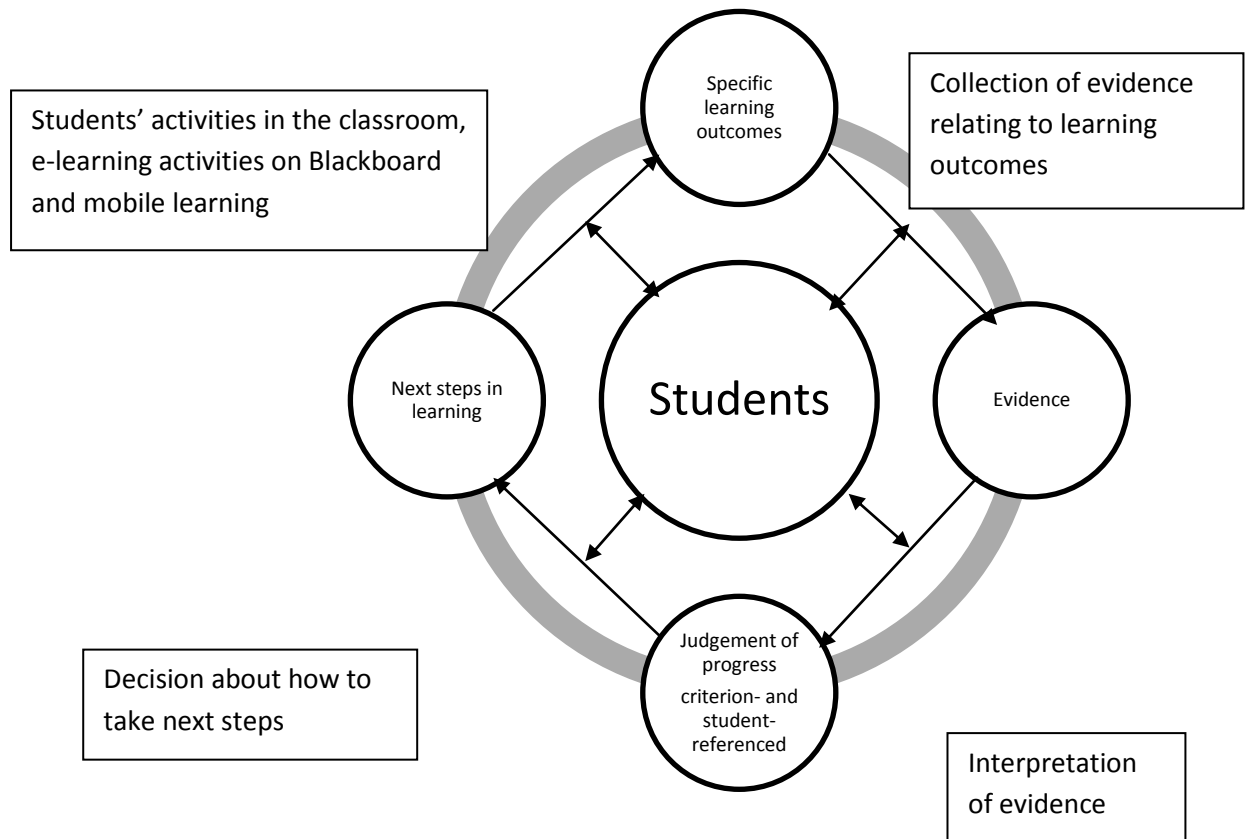
(Adapted from Harlen 2007:120)

Figure 3: Assessment as a cycle of events

It is possible to argue that, instead of a tool that merely judges a student, one should rather use formative assessment in a Life Skills Module, which is able to encompass different aspects of assessment that all fit together as a whole and which will promote student learning (see Figure 3). The lecturer can use information from the different on-going activities to plan the next steps in learning. Here, the students are at the centre of the learning process and the focus is on ways to prepare the students to face the academic challenges with which they will be confronted.

Yet some scholars have doubts regarding the effectiveness of formative assessment. Maclellan (2004:313) warns that "it would be unwise to assume that alternative assessment is the panacea for all assessment problems in higher education". Like Maclellan, Dylan (2006:288) raises a concern that, although many research efforts represent formative assessment as a "counsel of perfection", it may not be feasible in many classrooms. It would seem that although formative assessment sounds very promising and is widely used by many researchers, lecturers and staff developers, the uncertainty and flexibility of this process may create some confusion and place demands on those who use it to develop more insight about assessment and sustainable learning (Davies & Ecclestone, 2008:72; Yin et al., 2008:340). Despite these concerns, it is necessary to ask how assessment can be used to stimulate learning in a Life Skills classroom.

2.2.3 Assessment in service of learning

Many debates surround the topic of assessment, and it emerges from the above discussion that a dialectic tension could exist between assessment *for* and assessment *of* learning. According to research, the distinction between formative and summative assessment is not a sharp one and both forms of assessment are actually interconnected with different purposes of assessment (Harlen, 1998:7,117). Ewell (2009:20) points out that we must look for possible synergies between formative and summative assessment because:

> Giving too much attention to accountability risks losing faculty engagement – effectively suppressing the sustained critical self-examination that continuous improvement demands. Devoting attention solely on the internal conversations needed for improvement, on the other hand, invites external actors to invent accountability measures that are inappropriate, unhelpful or misleading. Managing this tension requires staking out a middle ground.

It seems therefore that both formative and summative functions of assessment, rather than being mutually exclusive, in fact coexist, support and complement each other in an educational context (Taras, 2008:83). There is nothing inherent in summative assessment that prevents lecturers from using summative results formatively (CERI, 2005:24); and by applying both formative and summative assessment methods lecturers are provided with a rich understanding of the different learning styles of students, how and what they learn, and how to foster different

modes of inquiry (Maki, 2004:97). Making formative use of summative assessment means the lecturer wants to establish collaborative and transformative assessment in order to improve future student performance (Palloff & Pratt, 2007:206). It can be said that good formative assessment will support good judgements by lecturers about student progress and levels of attainment and that good summative assessment will provide feedback that can be used to promote learning (Harlen, 2005a:215).

If we define formative or summative assessment in terms of its primary purpose, and not of the particular source, method or instrument used, it could, for example, mean that in the Life Skills classroom we could thus use a checklist for good communication skills (instrument), assessment from a peer (source) or an essay (method) for either formative or summative assessment (adapted from Freeman & Lewis, 1998:33). Although formative assessment offers significant benefits for student learning, merely embedding it in a curriculum will not guarantee improved learning and teaching - lecturers still need to figure out how best to adapt formative assessment both to their needs and the needs of the students. Formative assessment should therefore not be seen as a "silver or magic bullet" to solve all higher educational challenges (CERI, 2005:27; Yin et al., 2008:356).

The above discussion suggests that it is possible to travel between formative and summative assessment for different purposes (Harlen, 2005a:220). For example, in the Life Skills classroom an informal classroom test might well be used by the lecturer as a quick assessment of what has been learned in a learning unit in order to plan future lectures and also as feedback to students about what they can and cannot do. Students may mark their own tests or their friends' tests in order to ensure direct feedback. In other words, Harlen (2007:118) here points out that between the extremes of assessment *for* and assessment *of* learning there may be tasks that can be described either as *formal formative* (mainly formative with some summative use) or *informal summative* (mainly summative but with some feedback into learning). This debate indicates that assessment cannot be separated from either teaching or learning and that assessment should indeed be in service of learning.

Furthermore one can easily become entangled in certain assessment issues and lose sight of the real purpose of assessment. It is therefore important for a lecturer to ask the question: What is the purpose of my assessment? In this respect, Wiggins (1998) talks about *educative assessment* – meaning that assessment should do more than merely provide a basis for assigning grades: it should educate well (in Fink, 2007:2). This begs the research question how assessment can be used to educate Life Skills well. The following specific questions can be asked:

- Why do I assess Life Skills?
- How will I use this assessment information to engage students in the learning process in order to improve student learning?

A key phrase in answering the above questions should be that the assessment should be pedagogically appropriate (James & Pedder, 2006:39). Constructing pedagogically appropriate assessment in the Life Skills classroom involves designing and implementing appropriate assessment techniques that are clear and guide the students to high levels of learning.

Whilst the previous paragraphs explored specific aspects of assessment practices and described the tension between these practices, the aim of the next section is to investigate how assessment can be used to educate well. In other words how can the above why, how and who questions be answered in serving the learning process in the Life Skills classroom.
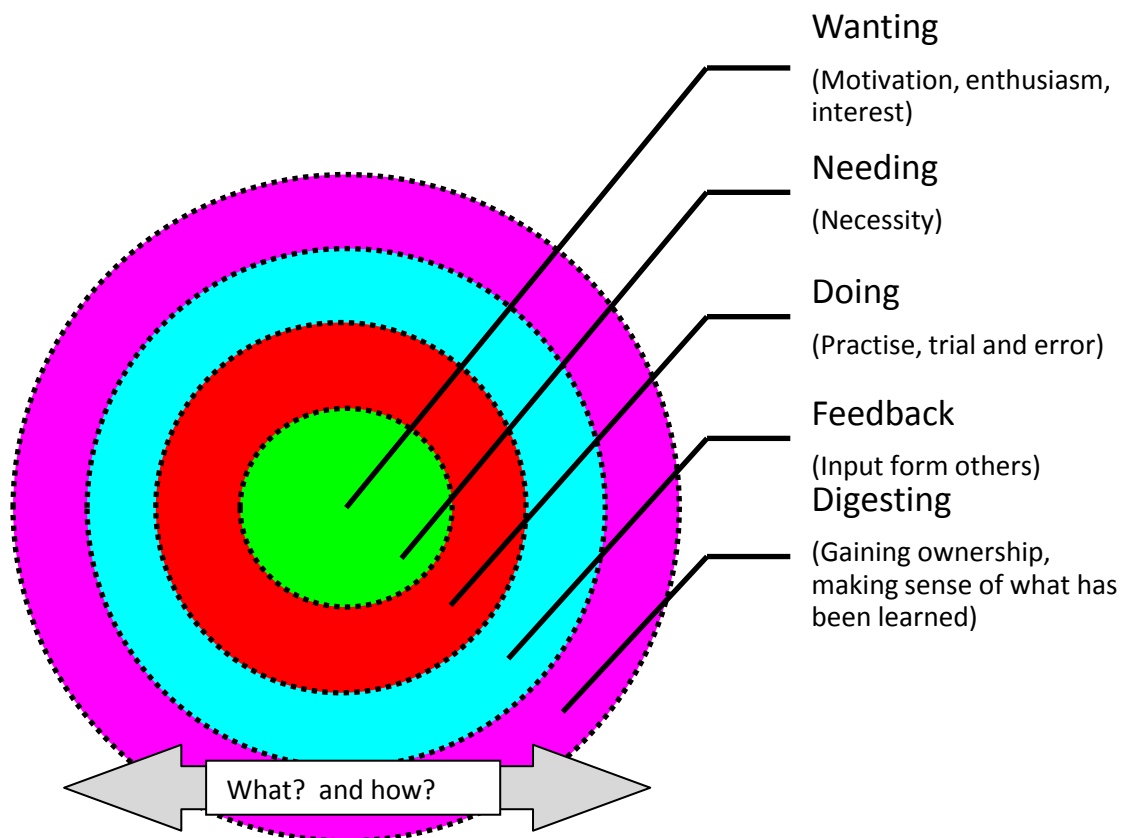
2.3 Race's spreading ripples model

In Section 1 the argument is made that the purpose of assessment can be a critical factor in choosing different assessment activities in that this choice will determine the assessment programme and ultimately shape students' learning. Einstein believed that "knowledge is experience – everything else is just information" (Race, 2005:2). This idea may imply that assessment should be implemented with the aim that experience and consequently knowledge will be gained in an assessment process. In other words, assessment should be used as a tool for educational improvement, rather than an end in itself (Kuh, Gonyea & Rodriguez, 2002:100).

A number of theories have been advanced to explain how to create independent learners. By exploring Race's spreading ripples learning model, this study however

wishes to investigate how assessment and learning can co-exist (Race, 2001:1-29). Biggs (in Albon, 2006:103) reminds us that the starting point in designing authentic assessment strategies is to understand how learning occurs. Interrogating Race's learning theory may lead to suggestions on how possible interactions between learning, assessment, motivation and performance may be formed.

Race (2001:11) reasons that a human brain does not work in a linear or pre-programmed way all the time, but rather operates at various overlapping levels when, for example, making sense of ideas. He offers a theory with the underlying premise that the most effective form of learning consists of the continuous effect of four elements, like the ripples on a pond (Figure 4). Race (2005:26) believes that these elements affect each other, and occur more or less simultaneously, for example:

Wanting
(Motivation, enthusiasm, interest)

Needing
(Necessity)

Doing
(Practise, trial and error)

Feedback
(Input form others)

Digesting
(Gaining ownership, making sense of what has been learned)

What? and how?

(Adapted from Race, 2001:28)

Figure 4: Race's spreading ripples model of learning

Wanting to learn is placed in the centre of this model as it is a powerful source that makes a student want to learn something in the first place. Race proposes that learning can be initiated by the bounced-back ripples through doing, making sense, feedback and understanding. He also agrees with Kolb regarding the importance of receiving feedback on the learning process, often from other people and regarding the importance of reflecting on one's learning experience to develop a sense of ownership – a process he calls 'digesting' (Greenaway, 2007:65). From this perspective, the model seems to highlight the importance of key factors in the development of self-regulated learning, namely input from others, interaction, practice and gaining ownership. Race believes that one should also ripple inwards and keep revisiting the central *wanting* to learn, otherwise the outer ripples will disappear if there is no energy at the centre (Greenaway, 2007:65).

The next section will therefore further probe how assessment can be used to motivate, engage and enhance student learning.

2.3.1 Wanting/needing to learn

Student learning is primarily driven by the need to learn - or as depicted in Figure 4 – *the wanting and needing* to learn (Race, 2001:9). The ripples *wanting* and *needing* are explained by Race (2005:26) as the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that inspires students to take ownership of the need to learn. *Wanting* or *needing* to learn plays a major part in students' interest in or enthusiasm regarding the work and this cannot be done for students. Students need to be active in their own learning as lecturers cannot learn for them. There is the old saying that you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. Munt (2004:1) however argues that although you cannot make students drink, you can make them thirsty! In fact, it would be almost impossible to teach students effectively if they are unmotivated to learn, as unmotivated students will give less than their best efforts in the process of learning. Unmotivated students will not engage in learning, and disengaged students will not extend their abilities and skills (Ainley, 2006:392; Erwin & Wise, 2002:70; Tan, 2009:156). If students thus do not want to do anything - the *want or need* will simply fade away.

Harlen (2006:61) makes it clear that assessment is one of the key factors that affect motivation. The problem that we face is that assessment is a sensitive issue in that it is closely integrated with motivation (Harlen, 2006:62; Harris, 2007:259;). Bloxham and Boyd (2008:20) argue that most students experience some stress if lecturers talk about assessment and, depending on the way it is implemented, it can unfortunately often work *against* rather than *for* learning. When students begin to compare themselves with others, assessment becomes tied up with a social and emotional experience that can influence their motivation and self-esteem. Students who believe that they lack ability will become unmotivated to learn as they fear failing. They will 'retire hurt' and avoid investing further effort in learning because of the belief that their efforts will only result in disappointment (Black & Wiliam, 2001:6). The reason for this 'learned helplessness' phenomenon is that assessment is more than a mere cognitive experience - it involves the whole student (Black et al., 2004:18). Motivation researchers therefore propose that assessment can be used as a powerful tool towards communicating ways to improve learning efforts by focusing on behaviour or outcomes rather than on competition and comparison with others (Broadfoot, 2007:123; Harris, 2007:259). Students must feel safe and confident in a classroom where they understand that "it is okay to make mistakes – that is how we learn" (CERI, 2005:56).

Although there are a number of different theories to help us explain the complex phenomenon of motivation in the classroom, doing so is however beyond the scope of this study. The focus is also not on the somewhat unrealistic dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ecclestone, 2007:318), but rather on gaining some insight into the dynamics of motivation in independent learning. Given that Race highlights the importance of *wanting/needing*, which causes ripples in the centre to fuel the *doing* of learning, the next section will briefly explore the dynamics of motivation in independent learning as outlined by Marzano (2003) who refers to the dimension of drives, attributions, self-worth, emotions and the self-system.

- **Drive theory.** Marzano (2003:144,145) conceptualises the drive theory as comprising two competing forces operating simultaneously, namely striving for success or fear of failure. In other words, students are driven by these forces and develop strong tendencies to be either success oriented or failure avoidant. It seems as if these tendencies become habituated because success-oriented

students will be motivated to engage in learning because of the anticipated emotional rewards, whereas failure-avoidant students will avoid engagement because they fear failing (Marzano, 2006:7). Race and Brown (2005:92) identify marks as one such emotional reward that could dominate students' reactions and determine whether they will either read or avoid the feedback. It would thus seem to be important to assist students in a classroom to interpret low scores in a way that does not imply failure but communicates a message that their efforts could potentially result in higher scores. A sense of empowerment or self-efficacy needs to be developed so that students feel confident to conquer new tasks, otherwise a failure-avoidant attitude may result in self-handicapping strategies.

- **Attribution theory.** A fairly straightforward relationship exists between the drive theory and the attribution theory. The attribution theory postulates the way in which students attribute their success or failure to ability, effort, luck and task difficulty (Marzano, 2006:7,8). Martin (2006:73) agrees that motivation underpins achievement. Central to the attribution theory is the concept *locus of control* that argues that students who tend to be success oriented also tend to believe in the effort attribution when they perceive that working hard will bring them success (Harlen, 2006:66). This highlights the importance to students of understanding the effect that effort has on achievement because it is the only attribute that they can truly control (Marzano, 2006:7,8).

- **Self-worth***.* Students who work hard but gain little accomplishment or feel that their efforts are unrewarded may quickly experience a feeling of diminished self-worth (Harlen, 2006:66). Munt (2004:3) reasons that the way in which students perceive their ability to meet demands influences their self-efficacy beliefs. Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003:120) warn that although self-efficacy is closely related to self-esteem it should not be confused with either self-esteem or self-concept. Although all these terms refer to a student's belief about the ability to be successful, self-efficacy is more directed at specific subjects and refers to the capability of learners in feeling that they can succeed in a particular task (Harlen, 2006:66). In other words, students need to know where they are doing well and where improvement is necessary in order for a teacher/lecturer to use past experience to teach a student how success can be connected to effort (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003:120).

- **Emotions.** Emotions can be seen as the strongest force in the brain (Tileston, 2010:22). Marzano (2006:147) identifies emotions as an important factor in student motivation and believes it can sometimes override rational and/or cognitive thinking. This means that negative emotions can literally block a student's thought processes, while positive emotions can enhance their motivation to learn (Tileston, 2010:22).

- **Self-system.** Many of the dynamics described in the above aspects fit into the description of the self-system, as the self-system contains a network of interrelated goals that guide students in decisions to engage in new tasks (Marzano, 2006:147). He refers to the work of Csiksentmihalyi and Maslow to explain how the self-system organises deeply-seated hopes, needs and aspirations in a somewhat hierarchical structure. This idea implies that students' self-system will determine their drive for success. While some students may find simple tasks threatening because of the drive to avoid failure, others may not be deterred by more challenging tasks owing to their strong drive for success (Marzano, 2006:148).

Following from these points, it can be hypothesised that 'success breeds success'. As one student explains in Chapter Four, "So, if you get high marks it will automatically help you to work harder." Students who believe that their efforts can indeed produce success connect their accomplishments with effort, which, in turn, leads to the development of self-worth. It is thus paramount that students be provided not only with opportunities to experience success but also with feedback to show them where to improve. If the lecturer helps students to become aware of their competences, it can cause the ripple to move back into the centre and create some motivation (See Figure 4). In other words, conscious competence can be linked to *the wanting to learn* factor when confidence is enhanced. The Life Skills Module can address this issue by expressing intended learning outcomes clearly in order for students to understand that they will be able to demonstrate the achievement of these learning outcomes when they are assessed. If students are aware of their competences, this may motivate them to develop a sense of efficacy.

2.3.2 Doing

Sadler (2007:390) reminds us that three conditions need to be met before students have learned something: (1) they must be able to do something that they could not do before; (2) they must be able to do it independently of other people; and (3) they must be able to it well. Following from these conditions, it can be argued that, in order for assessment to be effective, assessment must provide students with opportunities to be engaged in learning to take ownership or as Race's model proposes, the *doing* ripple must be stimulated (see Figure 4).

Integrating assessment into the *doing* ripple involves much more than the "conventional empty vessel perspective" (Broadfoot, 2007:119) where a lecturer merely deposits knowledge in the student's mind and then checks whether the student is able to retrieve the knowledge by testing lower-order cognitive skills. Assessment must especially engage students in worthwhile educational experiences by providing them with opportunities to take an active role in learning, to master autonomy and to develop self-efficacy (Cauley & McMillan, 2010:6; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008:16; Mann, 2001:7; Race, 2001:12). One can argue that students can only do or practise if they are engaged in the learning experience. In fact, Wilson and Scalise (2006:635) believes that insufficient engagement with study material is a common explanation for underperformance and that much more can be achieved in the classroom if the students are more effectively engaged in the teaching-learning process (Bryson & Hand, 2007:352). Defining the concept *engagement* however is problematic as it is a multidimensional construct and there is no agreement about what precisely counts as student engagement (Harris, 2008:58).

This section will therefore briefly focus on Linnenbrink and Pintrich's framework (2003:122) of student engagement to explore how assessment can activate the *doing* ripple through behavioural, cognitive and motivational engagement. Section 2.3.1 indicated the complex interrelationship between motivational, behavioural and cognitive engagement in explaining that the way students think (cognitive) about learning will ultimately determine how they tackle (behavioural) their assignments (Struyven, Dochy & Janssens, 2005:325). The power of assessment thus becomes evident when it is used to stimulate the 'wanting' ripple and motivate students to be engaged in learning and to develop into self-directed learners.

2.3.2.1 Motivational engagement

Motivational engagement can be defined as students' energy and drive to achieve their potential (Martin, 2006:73). Developing motivation for learning can be regarded as an important outcome of education in the twenty-first century (Harlen, 2006:61). It is therefore essential that lecturers are aware of how assessment can actualise or inhibit motivation (cf. 2.3.1). Section 2.3.1 explains that students will only achieve their potential if they are motivated to close the gap (doing) between the actual and the desired performance. Motivated students will understand their role in higher education when they are actively engaged in the learning process, become independent learners and take responsibility for their own learning (Wingate, 2007:393). This action can be described as learning while participating (Black & Wiliam, 2006:18) and can consequently be referred to as behavioural engagement.

2.3.2.2 Behavioural engagement

Behavioural engagement correlates to observable behaviour. Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003:123) identify persistence, help-seeking, learning from others, and the understanding of study material as important indicators of behavioural engagement. This involves active learning where students are involved in authentic representations of real-life problems. In Chapter Four it is described that students prefer to be involved in situations where knowledge can be applied practically, or as one student noted: "But it always makes more sense practically." In fact, successful functioning in society demands assessment methods where students have the opportunity to apply their knowledge efficiently and develop conceptual understanding (Gijbels & Dochy, 2006:399). Assessing these real-life representations involves authentic, innovative methods. Depending on the nature of the skills and knowledge being assessed, these may assume many different guises (Falchikov, 2005:71; Fink, 2007:15, Frey & Schmidt, 2007:403). The following are but a few ways to assess real-life representations:

Seminar, poster, role play, case study, video or other multimedia presentations	•To learn how to communicate information and ideas in ways other than using the written word, by presenting work orally or in mixed-media form
Peer feedback or self-assessments of assignments or presentations	•To take a more active role in assessment, and so to enhance the capacity to review and apply criteria for assessment, to judge the quality of their own and others' work, to give constructive feedback and to reflect on how that work might be improved in consequence
To review systematically how effectively learning has happened and so identify, and so to remedy strengths, gaps and misconceptions in the knowledge and understanding of specific content	•Computer-based self-testing using multiple-choice questions and other forms of online tests

Figure 5: Examples of learning activities

Figure 5 refers to but few examples of the various activities that can be implemented as drivers for student engagement. In Chapter 1 it was indicated that this, the technological era, demands that universities deliver teachers with the necessary knowledge, sustainable habits and employment skills acquired during teaching and assessment. I shall therefore briefly look at self-assessment and e-learning as means of engaging students in the learning process and, consequently, to develop these skills. In fact, Broadfoot (2007:135) notes that self-assessment should actually be regarded as a learning activity rather than an assessment practice. Graham (2006:8) adds that e-learning can be effectively implemented to stimulate interactive learning in that most learning practices in higher education focus only on transmissive learning.

Self-assessment

Self-assessment has become an important educational aim that is central to the lifelong learning concept (Dragemark, 2006:169). Black and Wiliam (2006:15), in

arguing that students can only achieve learning goals if they understand the goal and how to attain it, highlight the importance of self-assessment. Self-assessment forms part of the *doing* ripple in the sense that the more students learn about how assessment really works, the better will they be able to demonstrate learning *back* to the lecturers; in other words, students need to know "where the goalposts are" (Race, 2005:89, 94). The purpose of self-assessment is thus to involve students deeply in the evaluation of their work in order to incorporate immediate feedback with mastery of knowledge and understanding so as eventually to increase confidence and motivation (McMillan, 2007:143). Self- and peer assessment helps to create a learning community in the classroom where students can develop their meta-cognitive skills (Garrison & Ehringhaus, 2007:1). Meta-cognition includes the ability to monitor and evaluate thinking skills and to decide how learning can be adjusted (cf. 2.3.4).

Self-assessment is part of the social element of learning and engage students in the learning process when they monitor their own work, identify gaps between their current and desired performance, take more responsibility for their own learning and gain insight into their own performance (Kirby & Downs, 2007:477; Rushton, 2005:511). Furthermore, self-assessment incorporates skills of time-management, self-discipline, reflection, communication and interpersonal skills, which are invaluable skills for students' future professions (Broadfoot, 2007:134). Cauley and McMillan (2010:4,5) however warn that self-assessment does not only imply checking answers, but is a process in which students develop a sense of autonomy to improve understanding. Students must therefore be trained to do self-evaluation as part of the process of formative assessment (Rushton, 2005:511). One way to teach students how to use self-assessment is by means of e-learning.

E-learning

E-learning can be defined in a number of ways. In general, e-learning broadly entails the use of a network (any computer-enabled network or things like cellular phones, television or the radio) that enables the transfer of skills and knowledge. Is it however really necessary to use digital technology to assess a student's progress? Together with McGuire (2005:265) we could well ask why the lecturer cannot simply mark students' work just like in the 'good old days'.

In answering this question, Suskie (2005:10) explains that good assessment should involve evaluation of assessment methods and deciding how to adapt to new changes. Barone (2003:41) reminds us that today's "information-age mindset students" - whose cognition was formed in a digital age - consider access to the Internet to be a given. We should thus acknowledge the needs of a generation of students who have been brought up with computers, Bluetooth and iPods, and who are currently entering our campuses. These students are accustomed to using technology to organise and they integrate knowledge, and expect to *do* rather than to *hear* about things. This idea was supported by the students in the Life Skills classroom, when one student noted: "... because we like to do that then we will go on MXit and do a group discussion ... and it's everyone's viewpoint and so ... you also give different answers and different viewpoints." Furthermore, employers have become more critical and demand technological skills from graduates. If technology aims to enable students to reflect on their work, allow them to share their thinking, provide meaningful feedback, then this is an avenue that is surely worth considering (McGuire, 2005:265). E-learning can link instruction to both formative and summative assessment. In terms of formative assessment, e-learning can be helpful in self-assessment and in monitoring the progress of students. Regarding summative assessment, e-learning can assist the lecturer in assessing student mastery of specific content topics, concepts and skills and in communicating this information to the student and others (Salend, 2009:49).

Harris (2008:59) however points out that physical participation does not guarantee students' cognitive engagement in learning. In fact, Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003:124) opine that "learning should not just be 'hands on' but also 'minds on'".

2.3.2.3 Cognitive engagement

Cognitive engagement correlates to commitment to academic study and student learning (Harris, 2008:59). This process consequently involves the students' perceptions of academic competency and may guide their behaviour (Walker & Greene, 2009:463). Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2003:124) argue that students must think deeply, critically and creatively about the content and must know how to use a variety of strategies to increase their understanding of the learning material. For example, a student noted (see Chapter Four): "If you grasp the concept then you will

be able to give your own meaning." Here meta-cognitive skills play an important role as it is necessary to reflect on actions and to regulate learning. Meta-cognition is a very important aspect of the *digesting* ripple and it will therefore be discussed more thoroughly in Section 2.3.4.

A vital element that is likely to affect students' level of engagement will be the way in which students receive feedback.

2.3.3 Feedback

Feedback has the potential to advance student learning because it allows students to recognise areas of deficiency in their knowledge and helps them to plan for future learning (Crisp, 2007:572; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006:200; Perera, Lee, Win, Perera & Wijesuriya, 2008:395; Rodgers, 2006:219). Black and Wiliam (in James, 1998:86) maintain that the concept *feedback* has been borrowed by the sciences to explain an electric circuit in physics and is used in education to refer to the way a gap between the actual and the desired performance of students can be closed. Feedback can thus be seen as an active force that has the potential for interaction by means of input from different sources in order to show students how they are progressing, whether they are improving and what other people think of their efforts. When lecturers point out to students' specific misunderstandings that occur in a content area of a skill set, the latter will be able to adjust these gaps and will hopefully maximise their performance (Cauley & McMillan, 2010:3). Feedback can thus stimulate the whole learning ripple and, ultimately, it may encourage the *digesting* stage. In the process, the pedagogy will be enhanced, while the gaps between the actual and the desired achievement are closed (Bloxham & Boyd, 2008:103; Broadfoot, 2007:123; Heritage, 2007:142).

As compelling as the above ideas may sound, not all feedback stimulates learning. Students often ignore lecturer feedback, do not know how to use the feedback constructively or are simply only interested in the mark (Broadfoot, 2007:124; Crisp, 2007:573; Freeman & Lewis, 1998:48; Pickford & Brown, 2006:15). Meyer (2009:217) adds that learners in South African schools often experience summative assessment as the dominant mode of assessment and therefore students at university are often unable to recognise the value of formative feedback and "may even be traumatized by the presence of so much (*sic)* ink on the page". Not

surprisingly, the effect of feedback is often different from what the lecturer originally intended. Boud (2000:154) furthermore points out that although feedback is often regarded as the 'bread and butter' of education, the possibility exists that it can become so commonplace that it is simply ignored.

It seems that students need to learn how to convert feedback into improved knowledge and competence so as to understand precisely what aspects they need to improve. Recent research therefore suggests that feedback must be understandable and given in a tone that will motivate students to engage in the learning (Crisp, 2007:573). Feedback will furthermore be ineffective unless students understand that their efforts can be improved and then accept the responsibility to do so (Crooks, 2001:1-5). Fink (2007:15) describes effective feedback as FIDeLity feedback (frequent, immediate, discriminating and delivered lovingly). In other words, feedback should be user friendly, descriptive and non-judgemental in order to guide students in making sense of their learning and to provide them with an opportunity to express their thoughts about the learning process. FIDeLity feedback entails the following:

- **Frequent feedback.** There are many ways in which lecturers can provide feedback to a student's work: for example, written, oral, individual or group feedback. Rodgers (2006:221) explains that written feedback allows every student to be heard by the lecturer, while oral feedback offers the potential of an open discussion around how things can be improved. It does not matter which method is selected but feedback must be given frequently in such a way that the student will be provided with direction for improvement.

- **Immediate feedback.** Feedback needs to be given as soon as possible after the event - because the longer the delay, the less likely it is that the student will find it useful or be able to apply the suggestions (Freeman & Lewis, 1998:49). Research emphasises that the most effective feedback is immediate, specific and given with reference to specific criteria (Policy Brief, 2005:3). Bloxham and Boyd (2008:104) add that a prompt return of assignments accompanied with feedback is to the students' advantage.

- **Discriminating feedback.** Garrison and Ehringhaus (2007:1) state that descriptive feedback is one of the most significant instructional strategies to

engage students in learning and to move them forward in their learning. Descriptive feedback provides students with an understanding of how they developed from previous work and how to meet each criterion. Students should not be overloaded with too much detailed information or over-corrected written work, but ideally feedback should be used as a means of channelling students' thoughts and providing them with opportunities to reflect, thereby causing deep learning to take place (Bloxham & Boyd, 2008:104; Gulikers et al., 2006:393; Marriot, 2009:238).

- **Delivered lovingly.** Suggestions for improvement must be aimed at moving students forward and must therefore be delivered in a sensitive way. As research indicates that students are most motivated if they feel they can achieve results with reasonable effort (Freeman & Lewis, 1998:49), students should perceive suggestions as attainable. Bloxham and Boyd (2008:106) concur, highlighting that feedback will impact on self-efficacy beliefs, which will, in turn, influence how students approach their learning. Feedback must therefore not only focus on weaknesses; it should rather be delivered in such a way as to give everyone the opportunity to slow down, to reflect on efforts, and to make them believe that they are capable of improvement (Rodgers, 2006:210). Feedback that is delivered lovingly is made *with* students, rather than *for* them where they have the opportunities for dialogue on their performance (Perera et al., 2008:395,396).

It is no wonder that scholars often refer to feedback as the oil that makes the assessment engine run, or as Pickford and Brown (2006:13) put it, feedback "lubricates the cogs of understanding". It is clear that feedback has the power to stimulate the *wanting* ripple and consequently it affects the whole learning process. Constructive feedback will furthermore affect the motivation and self-esteem of students, will help students to tackle classroom activities, understand the learning goals they are pursuing, identify the criteria, understand how they are learning, reflect on their learning strengths and weaknesses and develop approaches to learning. In Chapter Four the motivational value of feedback is illustrated when one of the students notes: ".... just her noticing there, well done ... to me meant the world to me." Feedback will thus help students to improve upon their work, think about their learning and progress in relation to their own prior performance rather than in comparison with others, develop the skills of peer and self-assessment skills as an

important way of engaging in self-reflection, (Black & Wiliam, 2006:12; James & Pedder, 2006:28). Hiffins (in Crisp, 2007:572) even notes that students actually may demand feedback as part of their high tuition fees - irrespective of whether they intend to ignore or respond to it!

2.3.4 Digesting

Lecturers should understand that the focus of learning must be on the changes taking place in students' minds and not on the effectiveness of a particular lecturer's performance (Harris, 2007:249). Gaining understanding or making sense of what is being learned is a key factor underpinning successful learning. Race (2005:26) explains this important process as *digesting* or "getting your head around it".

Digesting knowledge involves more than observation or the mere reflection of information; it rather refers to a sense of ownership (Race, 2007:9). A central feature of this knowledge-construction process is that students must take responsibility for their own meaning making where nobody else can do it for them. Costa (2007:115) explains that "meaning making is not a spectator sport". *Digesting* can therefore be described as an intentional action when students identify the important aspects of what must be learnt and discard what is unimportant. This process involves time to reflect and to communicate own progress while linking it to the feedback, doing and learning (Race, 2007:248). Tileston (2004:16) argues that when students pay attention to learning, set their personal goals and make decisions on how to overcome problems, the meta-cognitive system becomes engaged. Black, McGormick, James and Pedder (2006:123) explain meta-cognition as an integrated framework referring to the construction of knowledge, reflective thinking and self-regulating mechanisms. Meta-cognition helps students to make sense of what they have done, how they have done it and to improve their subsequent attempts. When students are able to practise the knowledge and communicate it to others, it means that learning has taken place (Race, 2001:12). Monitoring understanding involves meta-cognition and can be explained as the most complex level of functioning in the knowledge continuum (Hagstrom, 2006:25). Figure 6 summarises this complicated process of meta-cognition:

Thinking about experiences

Thinking about the past when planning future actions

Thinking about learning

Learning about thinking

Meta-cognition

Learning from mistakes and becoming more conscious of the value of learning from mistakes

Becoming more able to reflect and working out what reflecting actually means in practice

Deepening learning by thinking about feedback

Working out what stopped some learning from happening

Tileston (2004:16)

Figure 6: Meta-cognition

Figure 6 indicates that meta-cognition plays an important role in the construction of new knowledge. It also provides opportunities to develop insights into themselves as learners, to discover strengths and self-efficacy but also to gain insight into how to avoid pitfalls in the future (Race, 2007:247). The meta-cognitive system is controlled by the self-system. Students must therefore be taught how to redirect thoughts when problems occur. In Section 2.3.1 it is emphasised that if students have negative feelings about the learning process, they may easily give up when problems are encountered. On the other hand, learning will be done successfully if a student has a positive feeling about the learning. It could therefore be helpful to teach students positive self-talk to help to solve problems (Hagstrom, 2006: 16, 25).

In Section 2.2.3 it is argued that assessment is not only a final summative act at the end of a learning process but that it should be integral to learning. We have seen how learning and assessment can be initiated by the bounced-back ripples - doing,

making sense, feedback and understanding - of Phillip Race's spreading ripples model.

2.4   Implications for the Life Skills classroom

In Section 2.1 to Section 2.3 it is argued that effective assessment implies going beyond the mere testing of facts. The literature on assessment and learning suggests that assessment methods that aim to promote deep learning and conceptual understanding could foster critical thinking skills and enhance students' abilities to apply knowledge effectively (Gijbels & Dochy, 2006:399). Scrutiny of Race's spreading ripples model revealed the following distinct purposes of assessment, namely that assessment should aim to inspire students by encouraging engagement in learning - it should provide opportunities to think critically and to reflect over time, and, it should aim to give meaningful feedback. Such a perspective requires consideration of the interaction between all elements in the learning situation, namely the students, the teaching methods and the nature of the assessment methods (Miller & Lavin, 2007:4). Central questions that emerged during consideration of these elements are posed in Section 2.2.3:

- Why do I assess Life Skills?
- How will I use this assessment information to engage students in the learning process in order to promote student learning?

In the process of answering the first question it becomes clear that because the focus of assessment should be on 'real' learning, students in higher education need to be exposed to situations where they learn how to deal competently with new and unseen problems (Albon, 2006:106). The purpose of the assessment thus forms the basis for evaluating the success of the assessment. In fact, Black and Wiliam (2001:1-13) argue that the first and foremost purpose of assessment is to serve and support student learning. Suskie (2004:18) furthermore reminds us that if assessment does not improve teaching or learning, "Why bother with it?" This means that in the Life Skills classroom, we should move away from the idea that assessment focuses only on the quality of teaching and must accept that assessment should rather focus on the quality of learning. It is easy to be bogged down by administrative fixation on assessment and thus to lose sight of what assessment should be all about, namely to serve and support student learning. It

therefore seems that both formative and the summative functions of assessment, rather than being mutually exclusive, do in fact coexist, support and complement each other in an educational context (cf. 2.2.3).

In answering the second question it becomes clear that for a subject like Life Skills, programme designers in education must not only put great effort into designing an effective learning programme, but lecturers also need to implement assessment methods to support meta-cognition, digesting and engagement. Inappropriate assessment methods will only result in negative attitudes that will neither raise achievements nor help students to learn (Struyven et al., 2005:328). It seems as if implementation of Race's spreading ripples model of learning can provide a framework for operationalising assessment that will stimulate appropriate learning through wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting (cf. 2.3).

Both the lecturer and the student are involved in the assessment process. However what students construct from assessment depends on how they experience the process. As the focus of this study is on ways in which assessment can enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom, it was therefore necessary to further investigate assessment through the eyes of the students in the classroom.

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted that assessment is a difficult and complex issue, one which encompasses the lives of students, lecturers and policy makers. It was attempted to clarify the distinction between assessment *for* and assessment *of* learning in a Life Skills classroom. In this chapter Race's spreading ripples model of learning was investigated to demonstrate but one way of integrating assessment and learning in promoting student learning. The chapter concludes by advocating that although there is little doubt that whatever the approach, learning should always be the purpose in a higher education classroom.

In order to fully explore how assessment can enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom it is necessary to also explore the perspectives of students. Chapter Three discusses the research methodology and design employed to obtain their views.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

As researchers, perhaps we should all thank Kipling (2004) for helping us to clarify our research design. He may not have been thinking specifically about research when he wrote:

> *I keep six honest serving-men*
> *(They taught me all I knew);*
> *Their names are What and Why and When*
> *And How and Where and Who.*
> *(The Elephant's Child)*

Trafford and Leshem (2008:90)

3.1   Introduction

Marshall and Rossman (2010:10) remind us that qualitative researchers face three challenges: those of developing a systematic conceptual framework, planning an appropriate research design and then integrating these components into a coherent way of understanding. The aim of Chapter Three is to discuss how this qualitative study was framed in response to the said challenges, bearing in mind Miles and Huberman's (1994:35) assertion that a conceptual framework and appropriate research questions consequently are the best defence to keep the research focused. Although Chapter One explained some of the aspects of the qualitative study briefly, the next section will explore these aspects in more detail in order to substantiate the choice of a qualitative interpretive research approach.

3.2   Conceptualisation

Qualitative research can no longer simply be explained as not being a quantitative inquiry, but has developed an identity of its own (Flick, 2007:x). The great strength of qualitative methods lies in the type of evidence with which participants provide researchers, which assist the latter in making sense of the specific issues that they

are investigating (Dey, 1993:7; Gillham, 2000:10). One could argue that qualitative research has the potential "to capture more of the human dimension of educating than does quantitative research" (Soltis, 1990:247). Robson (1993:227) consequently asks: "When carrying out an enquiry involving humans, why not take advantage of the fact that they can tell you things about themselves?"

In this study, a basic interpretative qualitative approach was designed to learn directly how participants understood and experienced assessment, since it allowed the researcher to explore how participants make meaning of their assessment experiences in the Life Skills Module and to discover meaningful patterns from such perspectives. Wellington (2000:16) explains that the aim of interpretative research is to explore perspectives and shared meanings and to develop insights into situations. In contrast the positivist researcher believes in objective knowledge of an external reality and seeks generalisations and hard qualitative data. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) advocate that qualitative research involves researchers studying phenomena in their natural settings and attempting to interpret the phenomena in the way the participants bring these to them. The researcher consequently becomes a *bricoleur* as a result of the value-laden inquiry, whereas the research can be described as the quilt with a sequence of representations where the researcher has to connect the different parts of the specific research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:5-9;13). In other words the concept *bricoleur* refers to a maker of quilts or as in filmmaking a person who assembles images into montages. Denzin & Lincoln (2000:4) explains that the interpretive *bricoleur* (maker of quilts) will consequently construct a set of representations together that is fitted to a specific complex situation employing whatever strategies, methods or empirical materials are available.   One can thus argue that qualitative research was used in this study to seek answers, through dialogue, to create and give meaning to an *assessment quilt.*

Chapters One and Two describe assessment as a key element in the teaching-learning relationship of higher education. It furthermore becomes clear that assessment should provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their learning in order to develop a well-rounded set of abilities for when they enter the workplace. The question is therefore posed whether a handwritten, one-hour examination does indeed stimulate students to learn and develop the knowledge,

understanding, attitudes and skills they need to develop. In addition, reports of external moderators of the Life Skills Module have indicated that it is expected of students to apply foundational, practical and reflexive components of learning in a Life Skills Module (Jordaan, 2009; Steyn, 2009). Given the above background, the title of this research project is:

Exploring assessment for learning in one higher education classroom

In line with the declared goal of assessment, the proposed study was guided by the following primary question: In what way can assessment enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom? In order to explore the primary research question, the following secondary questions were addressed:

- What should be the major purposes of assessing students in the teacher education Life Skills classroom?
- How should assessment be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education Life Skills classroom?
- How can assessment be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom?

While the first question focused on the enduring tensions between the various purposes for which assessment is being used, the second question explored how assessment can be used to enhance learning; the third question focused on the way in which assessment can be implemented as an educational tool to prepare students for the workplace. The above research questions have lead to the main aim of this study, namely to explore assessment in one higher education classroom. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives were strived after, namely to:

- Explore what the major purposes of assessing students should be in the teacher education Life Skills classroom.
- Investigate how assessment should be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education Life Skills classroom.
- Identify ways that assessment can be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom.

It can be deduced from Chapter One that assessment is interpreted differently by different individuals. Chapter Two explores perspectives regarding assessment in higher education classrooms. Although there is an extensive body of research on assessment (cf. Chapter Two), this study tried to investigate how assessment in the Life Skills classroom can be used as a basis to provide a solid foundation for the encouragement of critical learning skills by integrating it into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of Race's ripples model of learning (cf. 2.3). Given Race's emphasis on the importance of the *wanting/needing* aspects of learning to cause ripples in the centre of the model to fuel learning, this study wished to explore how assessment in the Life Sills classroom can be used to fuel learning. Thus, the question asked in this study focuses on how assessment can potentially contribute to learning in one specific higher education classroom.

3.2.1 Scope of the study

A research design can be explained as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research (Mouton, 2001:55). A good design consequently refers to a plan in which the different components work together. Maxwell (2005:2-3) notes that in a qualitative research design there is an ongoing process, one which involves "tacking back and forth between the different components" while assessing the purpose, theories, research questions and validity. He further states that during such a process there is no specific order in which the different components must be arranged, thus it does not start from a predetermined point nor does it end at another point. As the goal of this study was to explore how participants make sense of assessment in order to learn, it was continuously necessary to assess the interaction between the different design components.

A case-study design was used to investigate assessment within its real-life context and to answer the 'what' and 'how' questions of assessment in the Life Skills classroom (Trafford & Leshem, 2008:89). Graham (2000:1) explains that a case study design investigates to answer specific research questions by seeking a range of different kinds of evidence, evidence which is there in the case setting and which has to be abstracted to get the best possible answers to the research questions. A case study can be defined as a unit of human activity embedded in the real world which can only be studied or understood in context (Graham, 2000:1). The author

adds that this human activity exists in the here and now and merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw. The real focus of a case study is particularisation and not generalisation because a particular case is taken and explored, with the focus not on how it differs from others but rather on what it does (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008:321; Niewenhuis, 2007:76; Stake 1995:8). The purpose of this study is not to generalise but to gain insight and understanding of the way the assessment is understood in the Life Skills module. An advantage may then be that this research was carried out in a real life situation and not in an experimental situation.

Graham (2000:2) identifies two important characteristics of case studies. First case studies typically involve the collection and analysis of multiple sources of evidence each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Yin (2003:4) argues that the richness of a context of case study refers to the use of several types of data as evidence as the case study cannot rely on a single data collection method. This notion is reinforced by the idea that case studies are not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied (Stake in Willis, 2008:119). An advantage of the case-study design used in this study was that multiple sources could be used to gather data regarding participants' personal perceptions and opinions regarding assessment, for example: focus-group discussions, semi-structured interviews, documentation review and open-ended questionnaires

According to Graham (2000:2) the second important characteristic lies in the fact that a researcher does not start with a prior theoretical notion. He argues that researchers need to be involved in the study, obtain the data and to start understanding the context before they will know what theories work best or make more sense. Denscombe (2007:36) argue that the logic of the case study is in the insights to be gained when investigating an individual case because "when a researcher takes the strategic decision to devote all his or her efforts to researching just one instance, there is obviously far greater opportunity to delve into things in more detail and discover things that might not have become apparent through more superficial research." In this study it was therefore necessary to make multiple passes through the data, engage in reflection and re-reflection about the data while keeping in mind the need for validating the understandings that emerge from the study (Willis, 2008:217). Anderson in Wellington (2000:100) however warns that

researchers that choose this design must have deep understanding of the relevant literature, be a good question-asker, listener and observer, be adaptable, flexible and have an inquiring and unbiased mind.

3.2.2 Context

Cases are not randomly selected. The case should be chosen deliberately on the basis of specific attributes to be found in the case attributes that are particularly significant in terms of the practical problem or theoretical issue that the researcher wants to investigate (Denscombe, 2007:39). This research focused on ways to enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom. Therefore the case was limited to a specific group of students, namely fourth year students in the Life Skills classroom at the University of the Free State. A few lecturers were also invited to participate in the individual interviews to add rich descriptions regarding assessment. Denscombe (2007:39) highlights that the criteria used for the selection of cases need to be made explicit and need to be justified as an essential part of the methodology therefore the unit of analysis and selection criteria will be discussed in paragraph 3.2.4.

3.2.3 Data-collection methods and instruments

This study generated a large amount of data from multiple sources. Table 2 shows how the data were organised systematically in order to prevent the researcher from becoming overwhelmed or losing sight of the original main research question (Wellington, 2000:133).

Table 2: Data-collection methods

Literature review	Assessment methods	Research interviews		Questionnaires
Explore literature on assessment	Review reports of external moderators as part of an assignment for the MPhil Programme. Investigate assessment methods, for example blended learning opportunities, a research and community service project.	Focus-group interviews	Semi-structured interviews	Open-ended questions
Time line				
June 2009 – October 2010	First and second semester 2010	May 2010	June and July 2010	February - October 2010

The next section provides an exposition of how the data-collection instruments were implemented.

3.2.3.1   Literature review

For the past several years much has been written about assessment in higher education. Chapter Two describes a specific body of assessment and explained how I used this knowledge that is being recognised by other scholars to explore how assessment can be used to support and improve student learning (Trafford & Leshem, 2008:68). Black and Wiliam's developing theoretical framework of formative assessment attracted a good deal of attention world-wide with the paper *Inside the Black Box* (cf. Chapter Two) and several studies followed investigating the impact of assessment on learning. As it became clear that one of the main reasons for assessing students is to promote learning Chapter Two explored how assessment could be integrated into Races' ripples model of learning (cf. 2.3).

3.2.3.2   Document analysis

Dey (1993:99) suggests that the criteria for selecting documents or for focusing on particular extracts in a documentary review should reflect the issues on which the researcher is seeking evidence. The DLS 112 Module was evaluated both internally and externally in 2009, which allowed me to investigate how assessment was being implemented and reviewed by others in the field. The external moderator noted that although the degree of difficulty of the module was appropriate for the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) level, that the content was relevant to the aim and outcomes of the module and that the assessment tasks included a range of different assessment methods and various formative assessment strategies, the module nevertheless failed to make provision for sufficient interactive activities (Steyn, 2009). The use of the term *interactive activities* means that assessment methods are included because Life Skills Education and assessment are connected to real-life problems when students are prepared for the classroom. Although the role and the value of assessment are quite clear, it is the implementation and maintenance of effective assessment that is a challenging task. The following assessments methods were therefore implemented to explore how assessment can fuel learning when integrated in the spreading ripples model of learning (see Table 3).

Table 3: Examples of assessment methods in the Life Skills classroom

Assessment method	Description
Blended learning	Formative assessment was investigated by means of online learning activities and by utilising cellphone technology.
Community service	Students were expected to identify a group of learners in a low socio-economic community. During practical teaching in the second semester, students had to design and implement a programme to develop these learners' life skills according to the learning outcomes of the National Curriculum Statement.
Research project	Students had to conduct a small research project during their practical teaching in April, one in which they investigated how learners in the Foundation Phase manifested life skills.

Feedback regarding the above methods was obtained by means of open-ended questionnaires.

3.2.3.3   Open-ended questionnaires

Open-ended responses can be very efficient in terms of researcher's time and effort (Robson, 1993:243). Such responses which permit participants to answer however they choose, generate a wider variety of responses that more truly reflect the opinions of the participants, while the likelihood of unexpected and insightful suggestions is also increased (Patton, 1990:24).

Open-ended questionnaires were used to obtain unprompted opinions and to obtain as much information as possible on a few assessment methods in this particular higher education classroom (Appendix B). Open-ended questionnaires were distributed to all the students (78) and the return rate for the different questionnaires varied between 62% – 100%. The coding of the open questions was based on a substantial representative sample compiled in accordance with Robson's (1993:253) guidelines. He suggests that coding should be done by copying all the responses to a particular question to a large sheet of paper headed by the specific question. The goal is to determine a small set of categories in which the responses can be sorted.

Although a variety of responses can be collected, reading all the answers individually could be a very time-consuming activity.

3.2.3.4   Focus groups

Conversation is a basic mode of human interaction, and through verbal interactions we get to know other people, learn about their experiences, emotions, desires and the world in which they live (Kvale, 1996:5). Research interviews are based on professional conversations and on conversations in daily life. The main purpose of a focus group is to provide some understanding of how a collective group of participants feel, think and experience certain issues (Bloor et al., 2001:4; Krueger & Casey, 2000:1, 26; Marshall & Rossman, 2010:149; Wilkinson, 2004:181). According to Patton (1990:335), a focus-group interview should not be seen as a discussion, problem-solving session or decision-making conversation – it is an interview with the primary goal of obtaining high-quality data in a social context.

In Section 3.2.4 it is described how a pilot study was implemented to simulate the real situation and to prepare an interview schedule for the focus groups (Robson, 1993:164). An interview schedule comprises a list of questions guiding the researcher to cover all the relevant topics during the interview (Patton, 1990:280). As Mertens (1998:174) argues that market research generally reveals that no new ideas are forthcoming after three or four groups, I conducted four focus-group discussions to collect the ideas, opinions, knowledge and questions of participants in their own vocabulary in respect of assessment in the Life Skills classroom (Appendix C). The participants - 78 registered female students between 23 and 26 years of age, of which 69 were Afrikaans-speaking and 9 English-speaking - were all registered for the DLS 112 Module at the University of the Free State. As it was necessary to explore more assessment issues the study continued during the second semester with the DLS 122 Module where more or less the same students continued with this Module.

All the students were familiar with one another and had shared the same assessment experiences in the Life Skills classroom. The use of focus groups was ideal, since in a focus-group discussion interactions between individuals occur and both similar and different views regarding certain issues are expressed (Morgan, 1997:8,10; Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007:20). Focus groups can be

distinguished from interviews in that all of the interacting individuals in a focus group concentrate on a specific topic. The main advantage of this particular instrument was the opportunity it provided for collecting large and rich amounts of data in the students' own words regarding assessment in the Life Skills classroom. It further allowed participants to react and to build on the responses of other group members. Though focus groups are a valuable research method and offer various advantages, they do however have some limitations. A potential limitation in this study could be that focus groups were principally driven by the researcher's interest, which can be a source of weakness (Morgan, 1997:14,43). I however strove to maintain objectivity and reliability by using a number of data-collection techniques to check perceptions and to ensure that interpretations were not biased.

Non-verbal aspects

People feel more comfortable when focus-group discussions take place in a familiar venue - quiet, comfortable and free from interruptions, and protected from observation by others who are not participating in the research (Kitzinger & Barbour, 2001:11).The focus-groups discussions were thus held in the experimental classrooms that are frequently used by students to practise practical teaching skills. Mindful of Krueger and Casey's advice (2000:44), my opening question, "How do you understand assessment?", was not intended to obtain profound information, but to get the participants talking and make them feel comfortable.

The presence of a moderator may inhibit the free flow of discussions and create an atmosphere of artificiality. It is therefore the task of the moderator to overcome these limitations arising from the temporary nature of the group and to facilitate the sharing of information (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007:35). In this study, two postgraduate students were used as moderators to facilitate the group discussions. This was done because (1) the students were able to identify with these postgraduate students since they were from the same academic background, (2) the moderator's presence contributed to a relaxed atmosphere and participants were willing to share their views and were possibly more open than would be the case if the moderator had been a lecturer or an unfamiliar person, and (3) because qualitative researchers are frequently interested not only in what people say but also how they say it. This arrangement allowed me to observe and to write down

impressions and the most obvious non-verbal elements from behind a one-way mirror panel, principally since non-verbal behaviour and especially eye contact serve important functions within a group (Kitzinger & Barbour, 2001:5).

3.2.3.5 Semi-structured interviews

Some students indicated that they were not comfortable talking openly in a group and that they would rather be willing to participate in an individual interview. Semi-structured interviews were therefore implemented as a 'conduit' between the researcher and participants (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004:140). In-depth interviews were utilised in this study to refine questions from the focus groups and further to explore issues that emerged from the focus-group discussions (Appendix D). Thus the question posed by Lofland and Lofland (1984 in Madison, 2005:31) was also investigated: "What about assessment in the Life Skills classroom is still puzzling me?" (own interpretation).

The purpose of interviews is to allow the researcher to access participants' perspectives in order to obtain rich descriptive data to construct meaning to their life worlds (Patton, 2002:341). Interviewing consequently allowed the researcher to see assessment through the eyes of the participant as they provided 'nuanced' explanations from their real-life worlds (Kvale, 1996:27,30). It was therefore important to listen not only to the participants' explicit explanations of assessment, but also to search for what they said between the lines (Kvale, 1996:31).

Holstein and Gubrium (2004:142) argue that one must distinguish between the *hows* and *whats* of an interview. According to them the *hows* refer to the interactional, narrative procedures of knowledge production and the *whats* pertain to the issues guiding the interview, the content of questions and the substantive information communication by the participant. One can argue that in this study the *hows* and *whats* of meaning production regarding assessment went hand in hand when participants conveyed understanding of assessment as viewed from their own perspectives and in their own words (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004:142). This was done so as to gather information on the different ways participants discuss assessments, to seek patterns in their responses and to develop dimensions of their experiences (Morse & Richards, 2002:111-112).

3.2.4 Participants and context

Common questions usually asked by researchers relate either to the required number of participants for interviews or the required number of focus-group discussions. According to Kvale (1996:101), the answer is very simple because one needs to interview as many participants as it takes "to find out what you need to know".

The students were invited to participate in the focus-group discussions. One focus group discussion was held and used as a pilot study. The interview schedule for the pilot study was revised by the supervisors in order to prepare an interview schedule comprising five open questions (see Appendix C). Bloor et al. (2001:19-20) note that researchers have to pay attention to the composition of groups because the success of the discussion will depend on the dynamics between the participants. As participants were students in the Foundation Phase they were mainly female students and the groups were formed according to the way students selected the predetermined time slots. It was noted that pre-existing social groups with shared views were present in some groups; yet when the data were analysed it seemed that this fact had no influence on the dynamics of the group.

The rule of thumb is to use three or four groups with any one type of participant and then determine whether you have reached saturation (Krueger & Casey, 2000:26**).** I this study a pilot stud and four focus-group discussions were used, each comprising an average of five to ten participants. As Afrikaans-speaking students were in the majority, three focus-group discussions were conducted in Afrikaans and one in English - according to the participants' choice.

Purposive sampling was used to invite students to participate in the semi-structured interviews. Silverman (2006:306) argues that the use of purposive sampling requires the researcher to think critically about the characteristics of the chosen population before choosing them. This research focused on ways to enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom. Therefore the case was limited to a specific group of students, namely fourth year students in the Life Skills classroom at the University of the Free State (cf. 3.2.2). In this study, participants for the interviews were chosen according to the guidelines laid down by Flick (2009:123):

- Practical availability during the June/July holidays

- Participants who did not participate in the focus-group discussions

- Knowledge of and experience in assessment in general, but also specifically in Life Skills

- Capability to reflect critically and articulately on the questions

Flick (2009:448) clearly states that a researcher should aim to obtain data located on different levels and not only data in similar shapes in order to triangulate effectively (cf. 3.2.7) therefore I did not want to use the same students in the focus-group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Consequently not only students, but also lecturers were invited to the semi-structured interviews. Some lecturers had experience in Life Skills assessment while others added a new perspective to assessment in the Life Skills classroom by reflecting on their own assessment in their own specific field of expertise. Although it is difficult for a novice qualitative researcher to know when to stop collecting data, research must stop somewhere (Wellington, 2000:138). After ten interviews (seven with students and three with lecturers), perspectives and issues began to recur and reappear, recurring themes and patterns were exhibited and it seemed as if theoretical saturation had been reached. All the focus-group discussions and interviews were recorded electronically and transcribed verbatim. The focus-group discussions were coded at the end of the data collection and it was soon realised that coding is something that should drive ongoing data collection because it leads to the reshaping of perspectives in order to guide the researcher's ideas on what is happening and why (Miles & Huberman, 1994:65). Therefore, after each semi-structured interview, the data were transcribed, coded and sent to participants in order for them to vouch for the accuracy of the captured data and to avoid misunderstandings.

3.2.5 Data analysis

According to Bohm (1983 in Dey, 1993:30), the word *analysis* derives from the prefix *ana* (meaning 'above') and the Greek root *lysis* (meaning 'to break up or dissolve'). Data analysis thus involves breaking data down into smaller units and then making sense of the ideas participants have expressed when these are put together (Dey, 1993:30). No recipe or formula exists for this transformation, and the final conclusion will be unique for each inquirer (Patton, 2002:432). The object, in this study, of

analysing the data originating from the focus groups and interviews was to break the data down into segments in order to determine the categories, relationships and assumptions that informed the participants' view of assessment and then to make sense of the information. This process was done manually because there were fewer than twenty interviews to analyse, and, according to Tesh (1990 in Wellington, 2000:147), a computer cannot replace the researcher's own interpretation, analysis and 'craftsmanship'

Dey (1993:99) warns that it is not possible to draw a sharp distinction between coding and analysis. Making sense of the participants' perspectives in order to explain the assessment phenomenon was therefore not seen as a procedure to be carried out in the final stages of the research, but was regarded as an 'all-encompassing activity' throughout the study (Basit, 2003:145).

Reasons for using content analysis

A qualitative study can generate large quantities of multifaceted, richly detailed and complex data (Kitzinger & Barbour, 2001:16; Wellington, 2000:133). Wellington (2000:133) warns that the problems largely experienced in doing qualitative research are *over-collecting and under-analysing.* The challenge of qualitative analysis of this study was to make sense of the masses of data, to reduce the volume of raw information, to identify significant patterns, to separate trivia from significant information, and to construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal (Patton, 2002:432). Content analysis was therefore used for the following two reasons:

- **To close the gap between the research concern and raw data**

Content analysis was utilised to examine the communicative material systematically (Marying, 2009:266). According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:472-473), content analysis is an extremely valuable technique for analysing participants' communications. The goal of the content analysis was thus to close the gap between the research concern and the raw text by subdividing the data by means of assigning categories (see Table 4).

Table 4: Goal of the content analysis

Research concern: Assessment for learning in one higher education classroom
Strategies to close gap between the research concern and raw text: Focus groups, interviews, documents and open-ended questionnaires
Raw text: Data from focus groups, interviews, documents and open-ended questionnaires

Adapted from Auerbach and Silverstein (2003:34)

- **To formulate themes (major ideas) that help to organise and make sense of large quantities of descriptive information**

Themes are typically groupings of codes that emerge either during or after the process of developing codes. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:477) argue that in doing a content analysis either or both the manifest and the latent content of a communication can be coded. The *manifest content* refers to the obvious surface content: the words that are directly accessible to the naked eye or ear and which obviates the need to search for underlying meaning. The *latent content* on the other, hand refers to the meaning underlying what is said or shown to get to the underlying meaning of a course. Both methods were used in this study in order to form an overall idea of what assessment in the Life Skills classroom is, and to enhance trustworthiness (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008:478).

Coding

Codes were assigned to chunks of words of varying-sizes, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs in order to trigger the construction of a conceptual scheme regarding assessment (Basit, 2003:144). This technique was not only used to simplify the data, but also to focus on specific characteristics of the data and to go beyond the data (Basit, 2003:144; Morse & Richards, 2002:111,115). Auerbach and Silverstein (2003:35) explain this idea by using the 'staircase' metaphor, moving one from a lower to a higher, more abstract level of understanding in order to discover

patterns between the texts that one could not see in the massive amount of text when one started analysing the transcripts.

Categories

The data obtained from the focus groups and interviews were segmented and grouped into significant comments. This involves an interactive process of moving backwards and forwards between the categories and the data (Dey, 1993:98,99). Basit (2003:144) explains that when a category is devised, decisions are being made about how to organise the data in ways that will be useful for the analysis.

Once the categories had been decided upon, a specific colour was used to identify the data belonging to a particular category. For example, feedback-related issues were coded in blue, experiences regarding assessment were highlighted in yellow, and concepts referring to engagement were coded in red. In other words, portions of text were associated with a particular topic, in order to create subdivisions within the layers of categories that were conceptualised as a tree-like structure (Morse & Richards, 2002:112). Figure 7 indicates how data were categorised and sorted according to the colours.
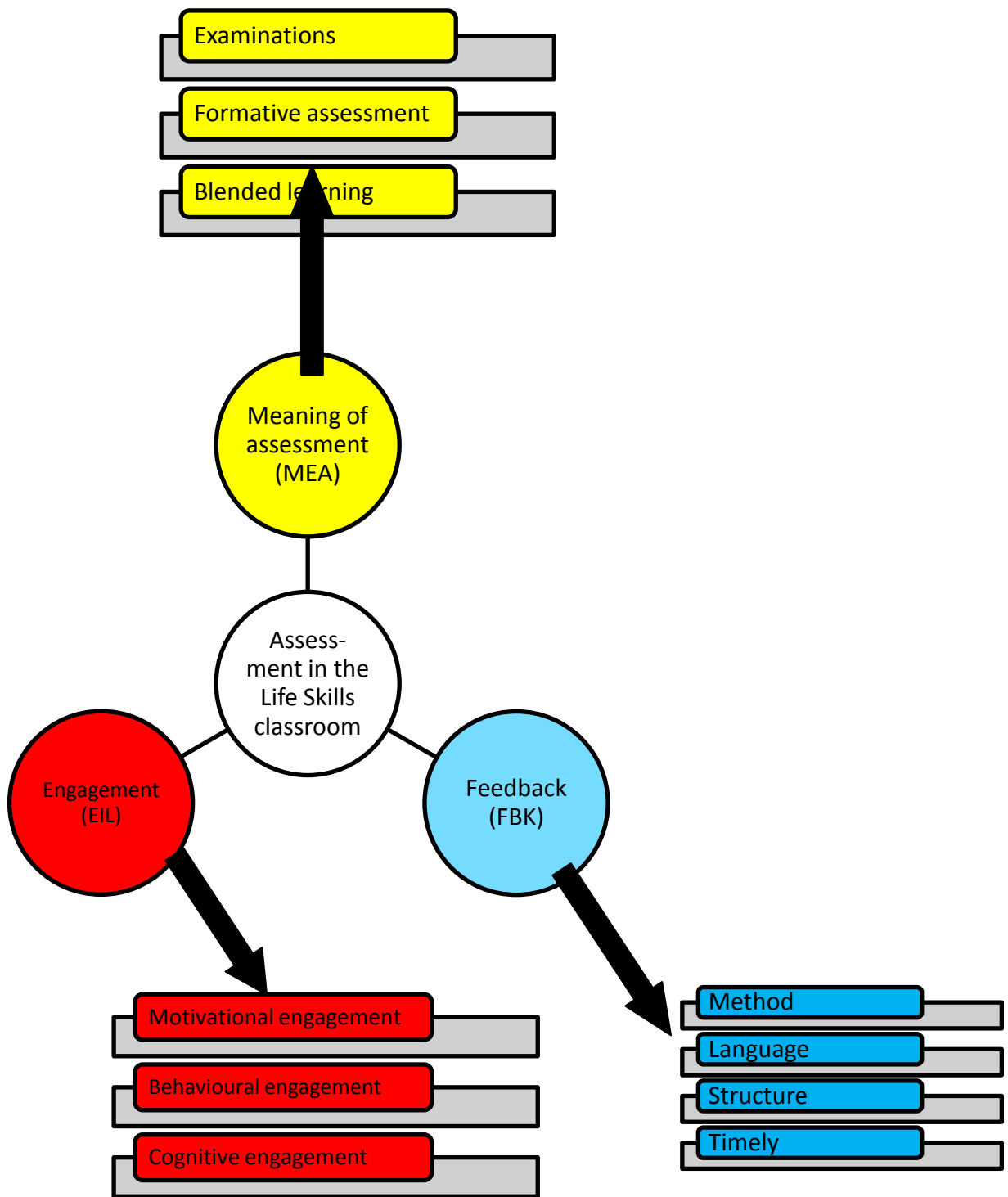
Figure 7: Assessment in the Life Skills classroom

The different categories and sub-categories that emerged from the analysis will be discussed in Chapter Four. Tesh (1990 in Basit, 2003:144) refers to this process as data condensation or data distillation, implying that the process of establishing categories involves not only manageable chunks of information, but that analysis could happen as a result of a process or interpretation and organisation of data bits. The eventual outcome of a qualitative analysis is to give an overall summary of the insight gained from the data. This will be discussed in Chapter Five.

3.2.6 Validating the research

Qualitative researchers are often criticised for their lack of rigour and are even regarded as unworthy of entering into "the magic circle of evidence" (Robson, 1993:402). Several researchers have nevertheless in some measure demonstrated how qualitative researchers can persuade the reader to accept the findings of a study. Lincoln and Guba (1985:294-301), for example, propose a scientific construct parallel with trustworthiness by describing four criteria that lie at the heart of any qualitative research project (see Table 5). Many believe that this construct is able to answer the following question: How can a researcher persuade the reader (including her-/himself) that the findings of a study are worthy of attention? (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). Application of this model was done in the following way:

Table 5: Application of Lincoln and Guba's model for trustworthiness

Criterion		Explanation	Application
Truth value	Credibility	*Credibility* can be explained as confidence in the truth of the findings and is regarded as being parallel to internal validity (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). The focus is on establishing the match between the constructed realities of participants, on the one hand, and those realities as represented by the evaluator and attributed to various stakeholders, on the other (Crawford, Leybourne & Arnott, 2000:1-5). Credibility can be verified by: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, member-checking and peer examination.	**Credibility** in this study was enhanced by means of triangulation and peer examination. All the participants were briefed about the focus of the study and they expressed their willingness to participate in the research. All the participants gave their consent to the recording of the interviews. Data were provided to participants to check and to verify interview data. As a verifying measure, all notes were fleshed out by the researcher immediately after each interview had been conducted.

Applicability	**Transferability**	*Transferability* signifies that the findings have applicability in other contexts and can be described as being parallel to external validity or generalisability (Miles & Huberman, 1994:279). This is relative and depends entirely on the extent to which salient conditions overlap or match (Crawford et al., 2000:1-5). Transferability can be established by: nominated sample, comparison of sample with demographic data and thick description.	**Transferability** was enhanced by means of a dense description of the data and by maximising the range of information that could be obtained from and about the assessment context by purposefully selecting participants.
Consistency	**Dependability**	*Dependability* is parallel to reliability and is likewise concerned with the stability of the data over time (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). Researchers need to be able to demonstrate any changes or shifts in how the inquiry was conducted (Crawford et al., 2000:1-5). Dependability can be established by: dependability audit, dense description of research methods, stepwise replication, triangulation, peer examination and the code-recode procedure.	**Dependability** was promoted by means of an audit trail of processes, for example the data-gathering process, which was done by means of the multiple sources of data methods and data collection. The data tracing also indicated that there was an ongoing meta-evaluation and critical reflection and allowed others to trace data throughout the research process.
Neutrality	**Conformability**	*Conformability* is described as being parallel to objectivity (Miles & Huberman, 1994:278). It is the need to show that data, interpretations and outcomes of inquiries are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator and not simply figments of the evaluator's imagination. All data must be able to be tracked to its source and the logic used to assemble the interpretations into structurally coherent and corroborating wholes must be both explicit and implicit in the narrative of the case study (Crawford et al., 2000:1-5). Conformability can be verified by: conformability audit, triangulation, audit trail and reflexivity.	**Conformability** was similarly enhanced by means of a degree of neutrality where the findings were shaped by the participants' perspectives and not through research bias. Trustworthiness was enhanced by recording interviews and transcribing them verbatim so as to ensure an accurate reflection of the participants' views.

Throughout the research it was aimed to construct the study soundly, to use the correct measures to conduct the research and to establish a chain of evidence forward and backward (Soy, 2006:4). Lincoln and Guba (1985:329) however maintain that no amount of trustworthiness can ever convince the reader to accept the results of a study: it can only "at best persuade".

3.2.7 Triangulation

Triangulation entails the borrowing and combining of different approaches in order to confirm and improve the clarity or precision of a research finding by building a more complete picture of the methods, methodological perspectives and theoretical viewpoints (Flick, 2004:178; Flick, 2009:444; Henning et al., 2004:133; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003:275; Robson, 1993:383). According to Krathwohl (1998:275,620), triangulation corroborates results that are especially important where seeking the meaning of the same phenomenon expressed in different sources of information. If researchers refer to triangulation as a method for corroborating findings and as a test for validity, it can be a controversial viewpoint, one which assumes that a weakness in one method will be compensated for by using other methods (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006:1). One could then argue that triangulation should rather be seen as a technique to ensure rich, comprehensive data that can assist in facilitating deeper understanding. Lincoln and Guba (1985:306) consequently compare triangulation to a fisherman who uses multiple nets each with some holes and tears. When these nets are placed together, the holes of one net are covered by intact sections of the others.

Denzin (2009:301) suggests four useful types of triangulation: (1) data triangulation, using multiple sources of data across time, space and persons; (2) investigator triangulation, using multiple investigators; (3) triangulation of theories, which means approaching data with multiple perspectives and hypotheses, and (4) methodological triangulation, using within-method triangulation and between-method triangulation. In this study data triangulation was used to obtain data across time and persons. This was done by exploring the different types of data that were collected between January – October 2010 (see Table 2). Triangulation is however not simply combining data in different shapes, but it should allow a researcher to capture a more complete dimension of an issue (Perone & Tucker, 2003:2). Flick (2009:448-449) explains that the use of triangulation should rather address different levels of the same problem and reveal varied dimensions of a given phenomenon, thereby contributing pieces to the puzzle. Despite its being potentially very valuable, it is not necessary to use triangulation in every qualitative study. The points of reference for deciding to use triangulation should be the following guiding questions (Flick, 2009:444):

- Are there different levels of information that I need to collect for understanding the issue under study?

- Can I expect my participants to be exposed to several methods?

- Does my research question focus on different aspects or levels of the issue?

In answering 'yes' to the above questions, it would seem that, in this study, data triangulation could be used by combining the different sets of data, in order accumulate knowledge. For example, triangulation of the knowledge produced by the focus-group interviews, semi-structured interviews, open-ended questionnaires and document reviews implied going beyond the accumulated knowledge in an effort to make meaning of assessment and thereby contributing to promoting quality in research (Flick, 2004:445). By doing this sources of information can be tested and discrepancies can be further explored in order explain the phenomenon more successfully (Robson, 1993:393).

3.2.8 Ethical issues

Ethical considerations are relevant to all stages of research and it is the researcher's duty to conduct research in a way that contributes both to science and human welfare (Bloor et al., 2001:17). The ethical considerations were based on guidelines suggested by Fraenkel and Wallen (2008:63-65) and Henning et al. (2004:73). In Section 1.2.5.9 it is explained that care was taken to respect ethical issues like informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, right to privacy and conducting all the interviews in a relationship of trust and transparency with the participants. Since, at that juncture, there was no official ethical committee in the Faculty of Education (January 2010), ethical approval was obtained from the Head of the Department of Curriculum Studies of the University of the Free State, Prof. G.F. du Toit (see Appendix A).

3.2.9 Shortcomings

Validity and reliability are often identified as shortcomings within qualitative research. In this particular study one could argue that, as there was a close relationship between the researcher and the participants, this could potentially have influenced the objectivity of the findings of the study. The following steps were however followed in order specifically to prevent subjective interpretations:

- Multiple data-collection methods were used.

- After each interview, the transcribed discussions were verified by the participants.

- Subsequent to analysis, the findings were sent to the supervisors to test for accuracy of interpretation.

3.3   Conclusion

In this chapter the research methodology and design employed in the study were described. The purpose of a research design is to map out whether and how research questions can be applied in an inquiry. It is explained that this study involved asking questions, listening, reading and evaluating in order to obtain data regarding assessment in one higher education classroom. Wellington (2000:133) points out that a common challenge when doing qualitative research is to make sense of the data because researchers can easily be overwhelmed by large quantities of data. Chapter Four sets out to provide the reader with a decidedly more in-depth exploration of the data, perspectives of assessment, and, finally to refine these into interpretations.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

*It was not curiosity that killed the cat - It was trying
to make sense of all the data curiosity generated .*
<div align="right">Halcom (in Patton, 2002:440)</div>

4.1   Introduction

*I*n Chapter Three, it is described that although quantitative researchers may be tempted to quantify qualitative data to elucidate events and views, one can argue that social phenomena need to be explained in more ways than by numbers. The aim of this qualitative research was to ascertain what participants believed about assessment and why they felt that way. Coding plays a crucial role in the analyses of such data because it allows the researcher to communicate and connect with the data in order to facilitate the comprehension of the emerging phenomena and to generate theory grounded in the data (Basit, 2003:152). The aim of this chapter is to combine analysis, coding and explanations with quotations to create a nuanced understanding of the research events.

Data analysis begins as soon as the first set of data is gathered (cf. Chapter Three). In this study the data analysis process was thus an ongoing process, because as Wellington (2000:149) confirms, it is not possible to learn everything at once. Mertens (1998:348-349) notes that the data-analysis process can actually be explained as a somewhat "mysterious process" because the interpretations of the findings gradually emerge from the data through some type of "mystical relationship" between the researcher and the data sources. Two processes are involved in which they either inform or drive each other: first, the data analysis must be systematic and meticulous; and second, it can be enriched by creative thinking (Miles & Huberman, 1994:85; Wellington, 2000:148). These two processes were followed in order to

investigate the primary question of this study, namely how assessment can enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom. This was further investigated by the secondary research questions**:**

- What should be the major purposes of assessing students in the teacher education Life Skills classroom?
- How should assessment be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education Life Skills classroom?
- How can assessment be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom?

Both the results obtained by means of the various data collection instruments and the coding of the results will now be discussed with a view to answering the above research questions.

4.2   Categories emerging from the data

The following three main categories emerged during the course of the coding process:
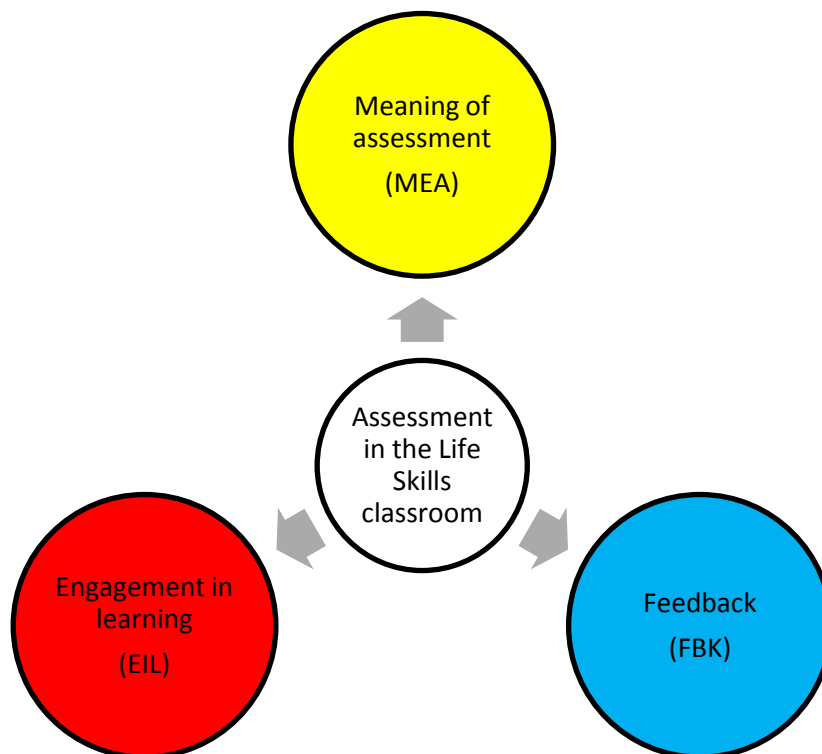
Figure 8: Categories emerging from the data

The next section will explore the different categories and sub-categories that emerged from the data (see Appendices G, H and I). These categories and sub-categories will be investigated by looking at ideas from both the literature and the research data to determine how assessment can impact on learning in the Life Skills classroom.

4.2.1 Meaning of assessment

The literature perspectives in Chapter Two clearly indicate that assessment lies at the heart of the student experience. In reality, however, the multiplicity of assessment purposes can be a problematic issue depending on its uses and the context of the educational experience in which it is applied. Lecturers and different assessors may also define assessment differently (cf. 2.1). In fact, as Beets (2009:184) asserts, assessment is a factor that causes not only apprehension amongst students but also produces frustration among academics. In order to explore assessment in the Life Skills classroom, it is first necessary to investigate how participants experienced the assessment.

Brown, McInerney and Liem (2009:4) maintain that during the past few years, a great deal of attention has been paid to the ways in which assessment can be used to *improve* learning as opposed to simply *measure* learning. Although the idea of student-centred learning makes sense, these authors found it strange that so little attention had been focused on the perspectives of students, the people who are supposed to do the actual learning. Solis (2003:10,11) agrees that student perspectives are often overlooked and that researchers lack students' input when investigating assessment. Bearing the foregoing in mind, I now turn to a discussion of students' perspectives regarding assessment.

The following sub-categories emerged:

Table 6: Students' perspectives on assessment

Question		Sub-categories	Key concepts	Additional descriptive words
What is the purpose of assessment *for* and *of* learning in the Life Skills classroom?	Formative and summative assessment	Examination	Study	Rote learning, learn, facts
			Certification	Qualification, degree, to become a teacher
			Negative	Stress, can't relax, go blank
		Formative assessment	Develop	Learn, practise, can make mistakes
			Ongoing	Repeat, continuous
		Blended learning	Blackboard	Computer, time, comfortable, technological problems
			Mobile learning	Cell phone, quizzes, quick, engaged

The next section will explore students' perspectives regarding assessment in an attempt to answer the research question: What is the purpose of assessment *for* and *of* learning in the Life Skills classroom?

4.2.1.1   Examinations

All students have to face the demands of attaining academic standards. In Chapter One it is argued that a written examination paper can be one of the ways in which students have to prove their abilities and show that they reached the required qualification standards (Fisher, 1994:46). As this assessment method can have an impact on student learning, it is therefore necessary to explore students' perspectives regarding the purpose of examination papers.

Various factors may shape students' perspectives on assessment and previous experiences can likewise affect their learning. Because of past positive experiences, some students may view examinations as a valuable assessment method; others may however view assessment negatively owing to other factors. Some students apparently viewed examinations to be an effective assessment method:

> We want to write exams. [Ons wil eksamen skryf.]

> Yes, an exam is effective. [Ja, die eksamen is effektief.]

This study was prompted by the question whether a one-hour examination paper is able to promote conceptual understanding and deep learning (cf. 1.1). When

students indicated the examination to be an effective assessment method, a few questions could arise, namely: Do students in education believe examinations are effective because it prepares them for the teaching world? Do they believe it promotes conceptual understanding or do they see it as an effective method in which they can apply their knowledge?

Some doubts can be raised about the reasons behind the comment "Examinations are effective" and therefore it needs to be further explored. A closer look at the reasons for the above comment reveals that some participants may have interpreted the "effectiveness" of examinations in terms of a time-management tool, for example:

> I uhm may had like 11 subjects this semester and to put a lot of effort into {in} every single lecture takes a lot of time, and in a term you don't really have that, where {whereas} in the exam you can focus only one ... the one subject because you had that all that time {whole} to focus on one subject.

> Because there isn't time, we kind of prefer to write exams. I don't know about you, but I prefer to do so once things have calmed down – when there are no assignments to be submitted and when there isn't this crazy schedule and classes and whatever. [Omdat daar nie tyd is nie verkies ons half om eksamen te skryf; ek weet nie van julle nie, maar ek verkies dit om dan eenkeer wanneer dit rustiger word {te leer} – daar is nie take om in te gee nie en daar is nie hierdie mal skedule, en klasse en wat, wat, wat, nie.]

> I mean, we all pushed {ourselves to the limit} during the semester... [Ek bedoel ons het almal so gedruk in die kwartaal...]

The above comments would lead us to believe that the reason behind "effective assessment" has more to do with time-management factors than with the conceptual understanding of the content. Some students mentioned that during the examinations there were no assignments or apparatus that had to be completed; they did not have lectures, they did not write tests and they had time to focus only on studying. Other participants revealed that they preferred to write an examination, because it either forced them to study or it motivated them to work hard in order to obtain a qualification.

> I think ..., but an exam actually forces one to go and swot up that work ... an exam forces you, otherwise you are not going to know what's what. [Ek dink ... , maar {☐ n} eksamen dwing jou eintlik om daai werk te gaan opswot ...... {☐ n} eksamen dwing jou, anders gaan jy nie weet wat daar aangaan nie.]

> ... I have to say what motivates me to learn is that, that I get the qualification.

The motivational aspect of assessment will be explored in Section 4.2.2.2, but the immediate question that now arises is: How do participants understand the phrase "examinations force you to study"? Do students view *study* as a tool for retelling facts that they have learned or do they interpret the concept *study* as attempting to make sense of the information?

The past few years have seen a vast body of research investigating how assessment can support both the learning process and the learner, while also serving the purpose of assuring both the process and the instruments (cf. Chapter Two). Section 2.3.2.3 argues that the concept *learning* should also imply conceptual change and should not merely refer to the mere acquisition of facts. In fact, Duhs (2009:2) asserts that, if assessment is primarily seen as a test of factual knowledge, it cannot be regarded as an appropriate assessment method. The following comments reveal that some participants perhaps see *study* as the mere regurgitation of facts and they consequently reaffirm this argument:

> You only learn nonsense. And you forget it. You only learn a lot of facts just to remember them. [Jy leer net strooi. En jy vergeet dit. Jy leer net {☐ n} klomp feite om te onthou.]

> But you often also learn like a parrot. [Maar partykeer leer jy ook soos ☐n papegaai.]

The above comments would lead one to believe that students regarded examinations as an effective assessment method for reasons other than conceptual understanding. The implication of the above comments is that if students learn without adequate understanding, they will probably follow a mechanical approach to their studies in that low cognitive levels are used. It has furthermore been argued in Section 2.1 that the essence of so-called 21st-century teaching lies not in the type of knowledge that students have, but rather in how they are able to apply such

knowledge. This then begs the question how assessment can then be implemented to fulfil functions such as meta-cognition, motivation, feedback and digesting.

Before exploring how formative assessment (Section 4.2.1.2) and student engagement (Section 4.2.2) can be implemented to assist students to do more than simply memorise and reproduce factual content, it is necessary first briefly to probe one of the negative influences of examinations, namely stress.

Examination stress

Biggs (2002:143) maintains that summative assessment is usually carried out to determine how well students have mastered what they are supposed to have learned. He explains that because the examination results will be final, students may become anxious in that their future depends on it. Stress can therefore be associated with examinations when students focus on the possible negative implications of grading (Falchikov, 2005:39). Some comments captured the idea that examinations can be stressful:

> So, it is very stressful.
>
> And also during exams you are more stressed; and the fact that they count more ... {And also during exams you are more stressed and the fact that it counts more}....
>
> Definitely negative.
>
> So it's ... not ... it's not ... you are not that relaxed because you know it is for marks.
>
> It would be nice if there were no formal examinations because that would reduce pressure. {It would be nice if there is no formal examination because it will reduce pressure.}

This negative effect of examinations may be one of the reasons why researchers highlight the necessity of moving away from a culture of testing to a culture in which the focus is not on the marks, but rather on improving the quality of learning (cf 2.2). Formative assessment can perhaps allow students to relax because the focus shifts from the mark to student empowerment. This was illustrated by one of the participants who observed: "But if it is not really for marks, you can be relaxed." Perhaps by exposing students to multiple opportunities for practising their skills and

knowledge, for learning and improving through assessment as part of a developmental process – self-confidence will be enhanced and they will feel more relaxed.

In order to support this argument, the next section will concentrate on how formative assessment in the Life Skills classroom can be used as part of this developmental process.

4.2.1.2   Formative assessment

As discussed in Chapter Two, the purpose of formative assessment can be summarised as being part of the instructional process and having a diagnostic, forward-looking purpose of aiming to improve future learning. Some scholars, for example Biggs, even regards formative assessment as "inseparable from teaching" because he believes that students should test the application of knowledge while monitoring themselves as they learn (Biggs, 2002:142). This idea was reflected in the following comment:

> So, nothing is final. So you can give marks, but then those marks don't count. They {It give} give the learner the idea of their level of the performance only right at the end when they completed and actually go back {gone back} and improved on what they have done {are doing}. Only then will you give {you will give} a final mark.

In formative assessment, the students have the freedom to explore ideas, to rectify mistakes, to question perceptions and to construct meaning regarding information (cf. 2.2.2). The developmental value of formative assessment is highlighted in the above comment, where it is explained that students can go back and improve before receiving a final mark. If we want assessment to produce a powerful effect on student learning, it will be necessary to provide opportunities for students to modify their efforts in order to improve understanding and to advance learning:

> ... There are also enough activities to increase your semester mark and you not only have {do not have} to do rote learning, but also have to apply the knowledge {to apply the knowledge as well}.

> I would prefer only formative assessment and no examination. By means of formative assessment I learn more and know what is going on in the subject, whereas exams only focus on facts.

While formative assessment provides students with multiple opportunities to learn, develop and consolidate, students may also be able to enhance their capabilities, which can, in turn, impact on self-esteem and confidence. Yet Stiggins (2002:761) warns that it may be tempting to equate the idea of assessment for learning with the idea of testing more frequently so as to increase marks. He clearly states that assessment for learning involves far more than frequent testing. The focus should be on providing students and learners with evidence to revise instruction and learning and thereby involving students in the learning process.

During the first and second semesters students were given opportunities to be involved in the learning environment of the Life Skills Module by means of blended learning. The way these methods were implemented will now be discussed.

Blackboard and mobile learning

Blended learning, which included e-learning, was implemented during the first and second semesters to focus on progression and on the developmental purpose of assessment. In Section 2.3.2.2 e-learning is defined in terms of the use of a network (any computer-enabled network or devices like cellular phones, television or the radio) that enables the transfer of skills and knowledge (Gottlieb, 2000:3). For the purposes of this study, the term *blended learning* will be used to refer to the "the marriage between technology and education" (Siemens, 2002:2). Definitions of blended learning vary considerably. A significant group of scholars in the field of education however seem to prefer defining blended learning as simply the combination of online learning with face-to-face learning (Vignare, 2007:38).

Assessment in the first semester was integrated by means of online quizzes on Blackboard in order to support student learning, while in the second semester assessment was integrated by means of mobile learning. In Section 2.3.2.2 it is described how the integration of blended learning into a module can offer a combination both of practical benefits to the lecturer while simultaneously enhancing students' learning. All the students attended an orientation lecture conducted by Mr Alastair Smart (Blackboard) and Mr Waldemar Blanché (Mobile Learning) to ensure that they understood the procedures and also to assist them in ironing out possible technical problems. Literature suggests that multiple-choice questions are probably the best form of questions to use in online testing in that these provide immediate

feedback to students (Bloxham & Boyd, 2008:211; Frey & Schmidt, 2007:417). During the first semester, three quizzes were designed for Blackboard and students had to read a case study, complete nine multiple-choice questions and answer one-paragraph question entailing a critical evaluation of a real-life situation in a Life Skills classroom (see Appendix E).

Students received instant feedback on the nine short questions, and individual electronic feedback was given on the paragraph question. Although approximately three hours had to be spent on reading, evaluating and giving feedback regarding this particular question, the goal was to help students to interpret the feedback appropriately and to turn the comments into improvements and knowledge (Pickford & Brown, 2006:15). Students further had the option of repeating this process with tests 2 and 3 where only the highest mark formed part of the continuous assessment mark.

It seems that if students are allowed to have multiple chances to perform well in a specific test, they are very likely to pay careful attention to specific feedback on their initial unsuccessful attempts. One could argue that students in this study had developed the requisite skills to interpret and evaluate a situation more effectively – in other words that the assessment method had indeed served the learning. Possible explanations may be: (1) previous experiences had provided opportunities to allow them to identify gaps in their learning; (2) students were more engaged in the learning process and received immediate feedback; (3) the feedback enabled students to identify and correct the gaps; and (4) consequently students believed in themselves as productive learners, which resulted in the confidence to apply knowledge and not merely having to rely on the memorisation of facts.

Mobile learning presents students with multiple online learning opportunities. This was the students' first encounter with mobile learning and the focus was on online quizzes only. During the second semester, mobile learning activities integrated self-assessment into the Life Skills Module when students had to complete quizzes on their cellphones after each lecture (see Appendix F). Some students complained about the cost, the small screen and about the technological problems related to incompatible phones.

> I didn't have a particularly positive experience regarding mobile learning. My cellphone worked during the first session, but when I had to do the first test, my phone refused to open the questions. I had to wait at Client Services for more than an hour for opera-mini to be loaded onto my phone. It took a lot of airtime and students don't exactly have much money. I rather prefer Blackboard. [Ek het nie 'n baie positiewe ervaring met mobiele leer gehad nie. My selfoon het met die eerste sessie gewerk, maar toe ek die eerste toets moes doen, wou my foon nie die vrae oopmaak nie. Ek moes toe meer as 'n uur by kliëntediens wag sodat opera-mini op my foon gelaai kon word. Dit het baie lugtyd geneem en studente het nie juis baie geld nie. Ek verkies eerder Blackboard.]

Others pointed out some advantages, for example having the flexibility to have access anytime anywhere, and being able to work independently and to receive immediate feedback.

> I found this to be a positive, effective experience. It also serves to motivate me to attend in class. The test results also gave me an indication of how {well} I understood the work and was able to apply it. I thus consider it to be very effective in terms of time and {also} trouble free. [Ek het dit baie positief en effektief beleef. Dit dien ook as motiveerder om op te let in die klas. Die toetsresultate was ook vir my □n aanduiding of ek die werk verstaan en kan toepas. Ek sien dit as baie tyd effektief en moeiteloos.]

The mobile learning activities forced students to engage in the learning process before, during or sometimes at the end of a lecture, as this student indicated: This forced me to spend time going through my work before class." [Dit het my gedwing om bietjie my werk deur te gaan voor klas.] The focus was on self-assessment. The aim was not to obtain marks as part of continuous assessment activities, but rather to involve students deeply in the evaluation of their work in order to incorporate immediate feedback with mastery of knowledge and understanding. The students had multiple opportunities to complete the tests and, surprisingly, they were motivated to repeat their efforts until they obtained 100%, although the activity was not part of the continuous assessment mark. The aim of the blended-learning activities was first to integrate technology into the module, to assist students to track their own progress toward attainment of standards and finally to motivate them by building confidence in themselves as learners.

Discussion

A few issues emerge from the above analysis. First, student perspectives are often overlooked when we investigate our own assessment practices. It can be argued that if lecturers perhaps know how students feel and experience assessment, surely then they can be helped to make the connection between the purpose of the assessment and the assessment task. Second, it can be argued that no assessment practice can be labelled as being either inherently good or bad. It all depends on the purpose.

Section 2.2.3 outlines the possibility to vacillate between formative and summative assessment in a Life Skills Module. Making formative use of summative assessment may generate opportunities for improving students' understanding and fostering self-confidence. It seems as if formative and summative assessment can be implemented as complementary and overlapping methods in the Life Skills classroom, both aiming to benefit the quality of student learning. Thus, although participants had found formative assessment valuable and noted that they had enjoyed the involvement in assessment tasks, summative assessment should not be seen as a process that always affects the learning process negatively. These findings support the argument of Stiggins et al., (2004:29) which reminds us that although we put assessment in two general categories, both actually have their place in the classroom. The first and foremost purpose of assessment should be to support student learning – in other words assessment should serve learning (cf. Chapter Two). A third point is that, as we progress through the 21st century, students need faster and more inventive means of learning. Blended learning was used, precisely because it provided students with flexible options for engaging in learning. As lifelong learning requires students to be able to conduct learning independently, one could make a case that blended learning could be successfully used to provide more opportunities for independent, self-regulated learning.

Other ways by which to engage students in the learning process by means of assessment will now be discussed.

4.2.2 Student engagement

Student engagement in assessment and learning is not easy to define and may be seen as an umbrella term that covers a number of aspects where active learning is adopted in authentic learning environments. Section 2.3.2 highlights that assessment must engage students in worthwhile educational experiences by providing them with opportunities to take an active role in their own learning, to master autonomy and to develop self-efficacy (Cauley & McMillan, 2010:6; Garrison & Vaughan, 2008:16; Mann, 2001:8; Race, 2001:12). In attempting to answer the two research questions outlined in Table 7, one realises that, for a subject like Life Skills, the lecturer needs to implement assessment methods to support motivational, behavioural and cognitive engagement.

Table 7 reflects the sub-categories that emerged from the data:

Table 7: Engagement

Question			Sub-categories	Key concepts	Additional descriptive words
Can assessment be integrated into Race's ripples model of learning?	How can assessment be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom?	**Wanting**	Motivational engagement	Goal orientation	Marks, pass, distinction, proud, self-esteem, vocational success, degree, future, teaching
				Didactical context	Lecturer, enthusiasm, subject-specific knowledge, presentation, interesting subject, students want to learn
		Doing	Behavioural engagement	Active	Participate, active, apply, do, use
				Authentic	Real life, in schools, hands-on, not only book sense
		Digesting	Cognitive engagement	Meta-cognition	Making sense, understand, meaning
				Self-regulation	Monitor, regulate

The next section will explore how assessment can be integrated into Race's ripples model of learning by focusing on motivational, behavioural and cognitive engagement and thus preparing the teacher for the school classroom.

4.2.2.1   Cognitive engagement

Taking ownership or making sense of what is being learned is a key factor underpinning successful learning. Race (2005:26) explains this important process as "getting your head around it". Getting your head around something implies the making use of meta-cognition and self-regulated learning. Meta-cognition or learning how to learn is not only the result of being taught how to use a set of higher-order skills, but it also comprises a set of effective learning practices in different contexts. In Section 2.3.2, the complex interrelationship between behavioural, cognitive and motivational engagement was discussed by explaining that the way students think about learning will determine how they tackle their assignments and consequently also influence their drive for learning (Struyven et al., 2005:325). In Sections 4.2.2.2 and 4.2.2.3 the emphasis is on the power of assessment to enhance learning when assessment is used to stimulate cognitive, motivational and behavioural engagement in the Life Skills classroom.

4.2.2.2   Motivational engagement

In Section 2.3.1 it was argues that assessment is a key factor affecting students' motivation to learn. It furthermore highlights that unmotivated students will not engage in learning and that disengaged students will not extend their abilities and skills. Pears (2010:1-2) adds that students' beliefs about their abilities will influence what and how successful they will learn. Thus, if students do not want to do anything – the *want* or *need* will just fade away. Before answering one of the secondary research questions – namely how to integrate assessment into the wanting/needing ripple (cf. Figure 4) – it is necessary first to establish what inspires students in the Life Skills class to learn.

According to Dixon and Ecclestone (2003:117), our everyday image of student motivation tends to comprise of either intrinsic or extrinsic factors. As explained in Chapter Two, the focus of this study is not on the exploration of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, but rather on the dynamics of student motivation (cf. 2.3.1). Although the

exploration of extrinsic and intrinsic factors can be regarded as material for another study, one has to accept the fact that motivation does fluctuate between external and internal motivation. The potential motivational value of marks on student learning is widely acknowledged (Yorke, 2008:62) and most lecturers would agree that one of the first things students ask when they must write a test or complete an assignment is: "Will this count for the semester mark?" Harlen (2006:62) claims that one of the reasons why students are motivated by marks is that for most of their school years, they are exposed to the passing of a test or an examination as the goal of learning, rather than being introduced to a focus on the usefulness of the information being learned. In many cases there is evidence of the motivational value of marks when students admit that they are inspired by the act of passing or obtaining a distinction:

> I want to do well.
>
> Marks.
>
> Marks, yeah!
>
> To get a distinction. Ooh!

One could ask whether it then is necessary to do formative assessment or to provide formative feedback when it seems as if students are instrumental consumers, driven by extrinsic motivation of their marks (Higgins, Hartley and Skelton, 2002:54). For example, when students in the Life Skills classroom were under the impression that they needed to complete a questionnaire as part of continuous assessment, the return rate was 78%. The return rate however dropped to 24,3% when they believed that it did not contribute towards the semester mark. One participant reveals how important marks are to students:

> Uhm, I think one should be given marks ... have myself seen that for that one ... that one questionnaire that you told us counted 15 marks and then the students wrote something. It is really, it motivates one when you get marks for something. So, I personally also feel that marks are important. I put extra effort into something for which I get marks. [Uhm, ek dink □ n mens moet punte kry vir ... het nou self gesien vir daai een ... daai een vraelys wat dr. gesê {het} dit tel 15 punte en toe skryf die mense iets. Dit is rêrig, dit motiveer □ n mens as □ n mens punte kry daarvoor. So, ek voel persoonlik is punte vir my ook belangrik. So, ek doen ekstra moeite met □ n ding waarvoor ek punte gaan kry.]

It seemed that some students were only motivated to complete activities because of the motivational aspect of the marks and that they did not see the value of preparatory assessment activities that could potentially lead up to important assignments. It is possible to argue that they failed to see the importance of accepting responsibility for their own learning. The implication of the above perception is that students who are only driven by marks will probably gauge their success by the marks obtained, for example:

> ...and to you it is, I find it rather gratifying when I know I have learned hard and I {then} get good marks. Then you are proud of yourself. [...en dit is vir jou, dis vir my half so bevredigend as jy weet jy het hard geleer en jy kry goeie punte terug. Dan is jy trots op jouself.]

The above comments seem to indicate that students who have invested effort and have performed well will feel proud. The challenge is to motivate all the students, even though some are less likely to achieve than others. Students will not invest effort if the learning is seen as a competition because those who are used to failure will see no point in trying. Section 2.3.1 explains that students who are motivated to learn have a positive self-image as successful learners and therefore are more likely to be engaged in learning than those with a more negative view of themselves. This positive self-image will influence student learning because motivation, self-confidence and self-esteem are closely related. But what about those students who do not experience success, who do not want to ask for help and who cannot regulate their own behaviour? How can they be helped to build confidence when there is no motivational power in their efforts?

The challenge is how to motivate students in the Life Skills classroom in order for them to believe there is something to be achieved. We have already seen that some students are motivated by marks only. In addition to marks, knowledge and the vocational value were also identified as motivators in respect of being engaged in learning:

> A person wants to learn. You want to be an expert in your field. [□n Mens wil tog leer. Jy wil □n kenner van jou vak wees.]

> [The only reason I studied so hard is because at the end of this year I can go and do what I am supposed to go and do – I can go and teach.]

Comments such as these emphasise that students want to know the subject and want to use this knowledge when they go and teach. Following from these arguments, it does seem as if the lecturer can be a key element that may either inhibit or motivate students to reach their potential.

Enthusiastic, engaged lecturers were identified by some of the participants to be a prerequisite for inspiring them to learn. Killen (2010:37) explains that enthusiastic teachers or, in this study, lecturers, will influence students' motivation and perceptions, which can, in turn, positively influence their learning. In fact, Stiggins and Chappuis (2005:13) claim that the most important *instructional* task of a teacher/lecturer is to encourage growth and to take students to the edge of their capabilities. Participants were likewise in agreement:

> It would very much depend on the lecturer. [Dit hang baie van die dosent af.]

> This is important as long as the lecturer demonstrates that the subject is important to her ... [Dit is belangrik solank die dosent wys hierdie vak is vir haar belangrik ...]

> The lecturers. That would depend on how enthusiastic they are and they are then able to stand in front of the class and be an expert in the field ... [Die dosente. Dit hang af hoe entoesiasties hulle is en dan voor die klas kan gaan staan en 'n kenner van die vak wees ...]

It is the lecturer who defines the tasks and provides the feedback. Thus the lecturer can inspire and guide students to achieve something and experience success (Montalvo & Mansfield, 2007:144). A small success can perhaps spark confidence, which, in turn, will encourage more effort (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005:12). It seems that success can lead to increased confidence, which can activate the belief that learning is possible. Participants explained:

> One can get as far as to see learning as a process, as a developmental process. And then the important thing is that you just have to see improvement, whereas for instance, if you could do a formative assessment they go back and improve. And if they can see the difference in their marks! People will also say success breeds success. So that should be a type of motivation.

So ... nothing is final. So, you can give marks, but then those marks don't count. It gives learners an idea of their level of performance. Only right at the end, when they {have} completed {the task} and actually go back and improve on what they are doing, only then will you give a final mark.

The above discussion then leads us to conclude that focused effort with an expectation of success is essential for successful learning. One of the participants referred to the saying that 'success breeds success'. This idea explains the sense of control that will be evident when students realise that they are capable of success and, as a result, they will then be prepared to invest more effort to meet other challenges. Also, the notion that there are various forms and components of student motivation and that it can be affected by assessment is confirmed by the above discussion. The challenge in the Life Skills classroom is thus how to inspire students to achieve their goals.

What emerges from the data is, first, that although there is a body of research on assessment, it is necessary that I pay attention to my own assessment practices. This action is important because the findings suggest the importance for students to feel successful which in turn can enhance their self-esteem and increase their chances of future success. Second, students want enthusiastic, knowledgeable lecturers who respect their students and acknowledge their efforts. There seems to be little doubt that lecturers influence student motivation and achievement and that a lecturer's assessment approach will thus be vital towards encouraging students' interest in the learning process. Third, the assessment process should be used in a developmental, formative way so that the learning becomes the source of satisfaction, in other words students must want to learn. If this condition is not met, no learning will take place.

4.2.2.3   Behavioural engagement

Studying to become a lawyer, doctor or teacher involves theoretical knowledge; yet it also requires practical components that cannot always be assessed through summative activities alone. This involves assessment through active learning where students are involved in authentic representations of real-life problems. Bresciani (2006:1) points out that students often complain that lecturers should rather *show them something* than *tell them something*. The following comments capture this view:

> Doing something practically is a much better learning experience. [Om iets prakties te doen is □n baie beter leerervaring.]

> Practically, yes, so that you can learn ... it's that ... so that all those practical, visual, auditory and tactile ... Yes, so that you ... then you remember better. [Praktiese ja. Sodat jy kan leer ... dis daai ... sodat al daai prakties, visueel, ouditief en taktiel ... Ja sodat jy ... dan onthou jy beter.]

> Yes, because then they judge whether the knowledge that you have learned, whether you are able to apply it. [Ja, want dan kyk hulle of die kennis wat {jy} geleer het of jy dit kan toepas.]

It follows from the above comments that, in order for assessment to be effective, such assessment must provide students with opportunities to be engaged in learning or as Race's learning model proposes, the *doing* ripple must be stimulated (cf. Figure 4). Integrating assessment into learning involves much more than merely memorising facts. One of the participants explained: ["It's not just about knowledge ... [Dit gaan nie net om kennis nie ...] but {being able} to apply the knowledge". This means that students must have opportunities to be engaged in worthwhile educational experiences. Students who want to make sense of learning are on the lookout for links between new information and familiar knowledge. Thus they are interested in the big picture and how the new facts fit in with it (Crick, 2007:140). Black et al. (2004:19) express concern about a deeper issue here. They argue that in order for students to make sense of learning, a learning environment has to be engineered to involve students more actively in the learning tasks. Knowledge is constructed through active participation and interaction (Biggs, 2002:94). The premise is simple: the more students are involved in the learning process, the better will they understand it.

As part of their assessment the students participating in this study were given a research project in the first semester, while in the second semester they were expected to conduct a community-service project. These assessment tasks had the following objectives in mind: (1) to expose students to different contexts in which they could apply their knowledge; (2) to develop autonomy in learning; and (3) to reflect on their learning.

Research project

Alderman (2008:13) maintains that engagement implies both investment and effort that are directed towards learning, understanding and mastering of knowledge and skills. The goal of the research project and the community-service assignments was to combine theoretical and practical knowledge by placing students in authentic situations where they were forced to practise the implementation of Life Skills.

The research project focused on expanding learning in an authentic context, one where students had to focus on real-world problems in the classroom. Students were expected to undertake a research project during their practical teaching in the first semester in order to explore any aspect of the Learning Outcome: Social Development. Section 2.3.2 emphasised that if we want students to create and regulate their own knowledge, it is important that activities in and around the higher education classroom should be considered. The research assignment required of students that they follow a process of careful inquiry while they were in the school classroom, that they collect data and that they integrate this information with a literature review. A variety of skills were involved, for example writing, communicating, problem solving, and inter- and intrapersonal and reflection skills. The following comment confirms that different skills were implemented in completing this assignment:

> I think that the time we spent in practising our skills was successful. I liked the fact that the assignment did not only involve theory but we also had to collect data and interpret the data. That developed my skills in the Life Skills classroom.

> The most learning results from discovery. I experienced the research project as being positive and I feel that this is a very good assessment means of accommodating students at all levels. [Deur ontdekking vind die meeste leer plaas. My ervaring met die navorsingsprojek was positief en {ek} voel dat dit 'n baie goeie assesseringsmetode is om studente op elke vlak te akkommodeer.]

These comments revealed that students did indeed want to be active while learning. The students confirmed that they had been able to practise the skills that they had learned during the theoretical discussions of Life Skills. The following comment

highlights that this project gave students a 'hands-on' experience and a greater in-depth understanding of Life Skills in the classroom:

> This learning experience made me realise the importance of Life Skills in the Foundation Phase. Through the research project I discovered how well a Grade 2 learner is able, for instance, to control his/her emotions and how good their social skills are. In this way, you as teacher, discover what the skills are that you have to emphasise so that the learners will fare better in this regard. [Hierdie leerervaring het my laat besef hoe belangrik Lewensvaardighede in die Grondslagfase is. Deur die navorsingsprojek het ek uitgevind hoe goed □n graad 2 leerder byvoorbeeld sy/haar emosies kan hanteer en hoe goed hulle sosiale vaardighede is. Op hierdie manier vind jy as onderwyser uit op watter vaardighede jy moet klem lê sodat die leerders beter daarin kan vaar.]

Cognitive engagement was furthermore part of this process as students were expected to go beyond the theoretical content that was explained in the Life Skills classroom. They immersed themselves in the school classroom and practised the skills of organising, analysing, thinking critically, managing their time and reflecting on the data. Considering the above comment, it would seem that an important part of helping students to manage Life Skills learning is that of providing them with opportunities to apply their own Life Skills.

Community service

In Section 2.3.2.2 it was explained that assessment in an appropriate social context relevant to students' real-life world is an important factor in knowledge construction. Hagstrom (2006:33) emphasises the need of blending "book-smart" and "sense smart" skills in the classroom in order to prepare students for their future professional roles. The community-service assignment provided students with the opportunities to be assessed on learning-by-doing. Students were expected to choose any group of learners from a deprived environment and to introduce them to one of the learning outcomes of Life Skills, namely Physical Development and Movement. Students had to organise and plan the project, they had to choose between working individually or in teams and whether they would spend all three hours on one day with the group or whether they wanted to go on different occasions. They furthermore had to integrate this practical experience with a literature review to motivate why the specific activities had been used and how these were applicable to the specific age group.

The following comment revealing that students are motivated by the practical application of Life Skills is important:

> Yes, more practical ... like that community project, understand? Something that you physically have to go and do. [Ja meer prakties ... soos daai gemeenskapsprojek, verstaan? Ietsie wat jy fisies moet gaan doen.]

> ... especially Life Skills, because one can't just have the knowledge and write it down. [... veral Lewensvaardighede, want jy kan nie net die kennis hê en neerskryf nie.]

Given the gist of the above comments, it seems that students prefer to do things practically. They believe that it might be easier to write down the knowledge, but that it is not always that easy to apply the knowledge practically, for example:

> Yes, but introverts will be very good at simply writing things down ... at writing down all they know. And that seems wonderful. And then the lecturer thinks that this person is wonderful ... this person has wonderful skills. But meanwhile, when he has to stand in front of a class, he stands in there speechless and does not know what to do and ... he isn't even able to communicate with the people. [Ja, maar introverte sal baie goed doen om iets net neer te skryf ... om al hulle kennis net neer te skryf. En dit lyk wonderlik. En dan dink die dosent hierdie persoon is wonderlik ... hierdie persoon het wonderlike vaardighede. Maar *meanwhile* as hy voor die klas moet gaan staan, staan hy daar met 'n mond vol tande en hy weet nie wat om te doen nie en ... hy kan nie eens behoorlik kommunikeer met die mense nie.]

> I think ... because it puts you in that situation ... Because it is easy just to read in a book what is out there, but if you physically see it, then you can realise: "OK this needs to be done and OK then we can do this and do that."

> It's not just about knowledge. You learn to use knowledge and skills. If you land in a situation, you have to learn to handle it; you have to be able to apply it. [Dit gaan nie net oor die kennis nie. Jy leer om kennis en vaardighede te gebruik. As jy in 'n situasie kom moet jy leer hoe om dit te hanteer; jy moet dit kan toepas.]

> I think it better teaches you to think on your feet. [Ek dink dit leer jou baie meer om op jou voete te kan dink.]

> Because one day, in the classroom situation, you have to be able to think on your feet. [Want in die klaskamersituasie eendag moet jy op jou voete kan dink.]

Here, the student highlights that "it is not just about knowledge ... you learn to use knowledge and skills." The integration between cognitive and behavioural engagement is clear in that the student noted that "you are physically there ... and you realise this needs to be done". It thus becomes clear that students supported the idea of active learning and knowledge construction in which they are exposed to real-life situations. They emphasised the importance of the Life Skills Module to provide opportunities for them to apply their theoretical knowledge in a setting that is socially relevant to their prospective classroom situations.

Not only did the community project expose students to an authentic experience but they were also given an opportunity of engaging in problem solving, teamwork, communication and self-regulated learning as they had to plan and organise the project, work together and write a report by integrating a literature review with the practical application. Some students furthermore included a photo-shop CD to explain the project visually, meaning that technological skills were also stimulated.

Some students were negative when they received the assignment: "At first it was a headache to think that I also had to make time for this" [Dit was vir my eers □ n kopseer om te dink ek moet dit ook nog inpas.] Other students mentioned that they would have preferred to do this assignment during the first semester because at the end of their fourth year they find it difficult to manage time effectively. Yet it seems as though it did contribute to personal growth and development. Volke (2002:1-3) explains that student engagement actually involves psychological investment in learning were students will be affected by their motivation. The focus should shift from getting a good grade to the development of focus.

During the focus groups the informants were asked whether they thought that Life Skills education had in fact changed some of their attitudes. Although some students answered this question, they were not convinced that Life Skills had influenced their attitudes regarding certain aspects. However, at the end of this project students clearly indicated that personal growth had occurred:

Giving is certainly one of the most enriching experiences. No amount of money can buy such experiences. Meaning something to your community engenders personal growth. Thank you for this opportunity to make a difference. [Om te gee is verseker een van die verrykendste ervarings. Geen geld kan daardie ervarings koop nie. Om iets vir jou gemeenskap te beteken laat jou as mens groei. Dankie vir die geleentheid om □ n verskil in iemand se lewens te maak.]

This service also helped me to grow personally and to learn more about myself. [Hierdie diens het my ook gehelp om persoonlik te ontwikkel en meer van myself te leer.]

Although one or two students complained about the time they had to invest in this assignment, most of the participants indicated that they had enjoyed doing this assignment. Stiggins and Chappuis (2005:11-18) argue that when students are involved in collecting evidence of their achievement, they develop insight into themselves as learners, which means that they are cognitively and behaviourally engaged in the learning. One can reason that if students are exposed to real-life situations where they are given the opportunity to interact with different members of the community – which also includes diverse cultures – it may lead to positive outcomes. This is borne out by the following comment:

Doing things for others and also being involved with a community in which we were faced with different cultures is enjoyable. [Dit is ook lekker om goed te doen vir ander en ook betrokke te kan wees by □n gemeenskap, waar ons met verskillende kulture, ensovoorts te doen gekry het.]

One can argue that when students have an opportunity of interacting with people from different cultures it may help the former to enhance their cultural understanding, develop empathy and develop their interpersonal skills. The above comments indicated a deeper experience where the outcome was not only better-educated students, but it also provided opportunities for personal development.

At the end of the day the project meant more to me personally than, for instance, the marks that I am going to get for it. The children with whom we worked ... they were also so grateful ... and I once again realised that there were so many things that I take for granted, for which I actually have to very grateful. [Die projek het aan die einde van die dag vir my persoonlike baie meer beteken as byvoorbeeld die punte wat ek gaan kry daarvoor. Die kinders waarmee ons gewerk het ... hulle was ook so dankbaar ... en ek het net weer besef dat daar soveel dinge is wat ek het

wat ek as vanselfsprekend aanvaar, waarvoor ek eintlik baie dankbaar moet wees.]

This assessment task not only served the purpose of balancing cognitive, motivational and behavioural engagement, but it also enhanced the impact of service on personal development.

Discussion

According to Crick (2007:137), the education system needs to foster flexible learners who are able to extend their learning and understanding beyond the classroom. The central aim of both the research and community assessment tasks was to enhance the quality of learning of the students while they were placed in authentic learning situations (cf. 2.3.2.2).

A number of issues emerge when the findings are analysed. First, it appeared that students placed high value on learning while in a real classroom context. Students were provided with opportunities to learn through active participation and to coordinate their knowledge with the needs of the specific group they served. Second, cognitive, motivational and behavioural engagement was stimulated while students were able to use their theoretically acquired life skills in real-life situations. These assignments also demanded higher-order thinking such as diagnosing, problem solving, explaining and decision making. Students were presented with the opportunity to apply the knowing and doing simultaneously. Third, it seems as if assessment was successfully used to extend student learning not only beyond the higher education classroom but also into a school classroom where personal growth and the development of a sense of caring towards others were fostered. The comments indicate that involvement in a real-life community would indeed motivate learning as students became highly motivated when they realised that their efforts could make a difference.

4.2.3 Feedback

Feedback is regarded to be a key factor underpinning successful assessment and learning as it serves the purpose of helping students to understand deficiencies and how to improve and ensure progress. Based on this understanding, Brown (2004:84) argues that feedback must be at the "heart" of assessment. The expectation is that

formative feedback should hold benefits for both the student and the lecturer (cf. 2.3.3). Students however often ignore lecturers' feedback, which lecturers could interpret as wasted time when they think of spending so many hours on writing and providing feedback in order to help the student (Crisp, 2007:572). In fact, as one student explained, feedback can be overshadowed by students' focus on their marks: "Definitely, definitely, I think it is the first thing, I think, that what every student does is to look at their file – they look for marks."

But how do students in the Life Skills classroom view feedback? The following sub-categories emerged from participants' responses.

Table 8: Feedback

Question		Sub-categories	Key concepts	Additional descriptive words
Can assessment be integrated into the feedback ripple?	**Feedback**	Method	Written	Personal, read, communicate, reflect
			Oral	Ask, discuss, questions
			Both	Combination, together
			Non-verbal	Gestures
		Language	Encouragement	Positive, right, correct, effort, sensitive, enhance, learn, acknowledge, appreciate
			Improvement	Grow, better, develop
		Structure	Rubric	Guidelines, precise, memorandum
			Alignment	Learning outcomes, structured
			Self-regulation	Monitor, understand
		Timely	Immediate	Soon, quickly

The next section explores students' perspectives on feedback in the Life Skills classroom.

4.2.3.1 Feedback method

Feedback may be provided by means of written or verbal comments on students' performance. Written feedback has the advantage that students can read it over and over again. Some participants indicated that they were keen to receive written feedback:

> For me, written is more personal. If it is going to be done orally, it will be sort of for the whole class ... So, I like to have it ... on my script ... for then I know it was [written] for me personally. So, I like the written {feedback}.

> [Geskrewe is vir my meer persoonlik. As dit mondeling gaan wees gaan dit half vir die hele klas wees ... So ek hou daarvan dat ... op my papier... want dan weet ek dit was vir my persoonlik gewees. So ek hou van die geskrewe.]
>
> And I would say, it must, if possible, it must be in writing so that the students can go back ... and read and reflect on the feedback and see how that can help them to improve their learning.

The focus here is on personal feedback that can provide information to students aimed at enabling them to correct inappropriate efforts. The value of written feedback to students lies in their being able to read both the diagnosis of their errors and the suggestions on how to improve. They can always go back to reread the feedback and reflect on it again. Whereas written feedback can often be cryptic, oral feedback offers an opportunity of elaborating more in the form of detailed comments:

> Oral feedback. Because when you get oral feedback, then you can also still ask questions: "But mam, why do you think … what was wrong with the paper or why do you think this and this?"

This comment particularly highlights the important value of oral feedback as a communicative learning tool where it is intended to communicate problems and suggest ways to correct mistakes. There is little argument about the importance of offering students the opportunity to seek clarification regarding comments, where they are repeatedly allowed to ask questions if something is unclear to them. Oral feedback can furthermore motivate the student to engage in the learning process when suggestions and explanations are discussed.

Other participants believed that it was better to receive both written and oral feedback:

> Uhm ... Ja ... a combination of both, but then time should also be provided for individual feedback because individual feedback – then you come {to know what's} behind the thoughts of a learner. The meta-cognitive skills of a learner ... and that to me is very important. Then you can determine where the learner went wrong, because often they ... you find they will say, "I've discussed, now I have studied." But how did they really study? How did they regulate their learning? In terms of what went wrong, you give the feedback, but can they really apply that feedback to their own situation?

When both written and oral feedback is implemented, two different learning styles are accommodated. The above participant furthermore noted the importance of going beyond the thoughts of students in order to provide key points needed for correction and improvement. The participant emphasised that when the reason behind the mistakes is identified, meta-cognitive skills might be stimulated by enabling the student to learn about learning (see Section 4.2.2). The challenge however lies in the purpose of the feedback in that the feedback must be educative (cf. 2.3.3). It is possible to argue that the focus should neither be on whether the feedback is written, or oral, or on the amount of commentary, but rather on what the students do with the feedback. If the students do not implement the improvements so as ultimately to promote learning, there will be little value in providing feedback. Here, the feedback language can play a critical role.

4.2.3.2   Feedback language

Harris (2007:256) holds that because motivation and self-efficacy are closely integrated, insensitive judgemental feedback can negatively influence students' work attitude. Although feedback indicates the areas that have to be improved and how to build on it, it is important that feedback be delivered in an encouraging mode, while focusing on positive achievements (Brown, 2004:84). Using language of a positive kind can make a significant difference to students' ultimate achievement (cf. 2.3.3). There are two key aspects involved: first, a positive climate may encourage student engagement more than would a judgemental tone, and second, student engagement may generate opportunities for promoting student learning. This idea, namely that feedback should be an indication of encouragement, is reflected in the following remarks:

> And this means even more to me … And that meant a lot to me because I studied hard and even now that I did not get a distinction, I still tried and it was still appreciated]

> Then I feel rather good. Then I at least think someone is noticing your hard work. [Dan voel ek nogal lekker. Dan dink ek ten minste iemand sien jou harde werk raak.]

These comments indicate that if feedback helps students to identify their strengths, it may motivate them more than if they were compared with other students, which could result in de-motivation.

And it must be.. uhm communicate in such a way that it gives meaning to the learners so that they know exactly how can I use this to my benefit to help me to improve and to improve my learning to put it that way.

{And it must be ... uhm, communicated in such a way that it gives meaning to the learners so that they know exactly how they can use this to their benefit to help them to improve, and to improve my learning, to put it that way.}

A key feature of the above comments is that feedback should be used to benefit students to improve their learning. Duncan (2007:279) interprets this idea as *feed-forward*, where the feedback has a forward-looking purpose with a positive focus on the next steps for improvement. The above comment argues that feedback must "give meaning to the learners" and one could reason that this idea implies that the feedback should offer students the opportunity of understanding the difference between their intentions and what was expected of them.

The feedback language can influence the way students feel about themselves, which in turn affects their learning (cf. 4.2.2.2). For example:

... and what was nice there ... Dr actually said the names of a few of the kids who gave good answers and I felt that was ... that was cute, because that kid felt ... Wow ... Wow. She actually looked at my answer and I gave a good answer there. So I think that gives ... that motivates a person even if you generally did not do all that well in that test. But in that specific question the lecturer liked my {answer}. I answered that one correctly and it was ... was good. Even if I do not generally score 80%, but {with} a 60% the kid still felt good about the answer that he gave specifically for that question. [... en wat lekker was daar ... dr. het mos party van die kinders se vanne gesê wat 'n goeie antwoord gegee het ek voel dit was ... dit was oulik gewees want daai kind voel ... Sjoe ... sjoe. Sy het nou regtig na my antwoord gekyk en ek het □ n goeie antwoord daar gegee, so ek dink dit gee ... dit motiveer □ n mens al het jy oor die algemeen in daai toets nie so goed gedoen nie. Maar daai spesifieke vraag het die dosent van my gehou. Ek het daai ding reg geantwoord en dit was ... was goed gewees. Al het ek nie oor die algemeen 80%, maar {met} □ n 60% kon die kind nog steeds goed voel oor daai antwoord wat hy spesifiek vir daai vraag gegee het.]

This comment suggests that a positive learning experience involves more than written or verbal comments on work. Latham (2007:1-3) points out that every remark, gesture, facial expression, every act and every omission that occur in and beyond

the learning space is a form of feedback. The challenge of providing feedback lies not only in the information; it also lies in motivating students to want to learn. It is the responsibility of the lecturer not to demoralise students with evaluative feedback, but to use feedback to form a link between assessment and the learning process.

4.2.3.3   Timely feedback

Students need prompt feedback because the longer the delay, the less likely it is that the student will find it useful or be able to apply the suggestions (Freeman & Lewis, 1998:49). Research emphasises that the most effective feedback is immediate, specific and according to specific criteria (Policy Brief, 2005:3). One can thus reason that frequent and timely feedback increases motivation and tends to motivate students to engage in learning. Participants framed this idea in the following way:

> Now you have to balance the time of feedback. Timing of feedback – which is so crucial.

> So, I think the most important thing for me is that it must be {given} as quickly as possible because there is a process taking place now. So, as quickly as possible …

> My number one {requirement} would be that it must really be quick. It must really be efficient as in operational conditioning. Let's say within a week.

These comments articulate the expectation that feedback should be provided soon after the work has been handed in. The longer the delay the less likely it may become that students will find the feedback useful or be able to apply the suggestions.

4.2.3.4   Feedback structure

Harris (2007:257) states that students need to know precisely what and how they will be assessed in order to be successful. This idea is reflected by Biggs (1999) – the originator of constructive alignment – in maintaining that assessment procedures and teaching methods should be aligned in order for the curriculum objectives to relate to higher-order thinking (Harris, 2007:257). Participants agreed that feedback had to be given in accordance with the assessment criteria:

> .... if they give feedback it must be according to the rubric.

A rubric can assist the student to identify the achievement expectations. This tool will ensure that they understand the specific requirements of a specific task. Participants had the following to say in this regard:

> Firstly, what I consider to be important is, uhm, ... sort of like a memorandum. One must basically go through the question with the exact answer ... and also a reason. [Eerstens wat ek dink wat belangrik is, uhm, ... half soos □n memorandum. □n Mens moet basies die vraag deurgaan met die presiese antwoord ... en ook □n rede.]

> Because one often writes an answer and then it is incorrect, but one does not know why it's wrong. Or one gives the right answer, but he {lecturer} continues with the following correct question. One doesn't know why they say the answer is incorrect. So, I would say, a person should basically provide the memorandum, but then that person should basically provide the reason why this is the case. [Want baie keer skryf □ n mens 'n antwoord en dan is hy verkeerd maar □ n mens weet nie hoekom is hy verkeerd nie. Of □ n mens gee die regte antwoord maar hy {dosent} gaan aan met die volgende regte vraag. □ n Mens weet nie hoekom hulle sê daai is nie regte antwoord nie. So, ek sou sê □ n mens moet basies die memorandum gee, maar dan moet □ n mens ook basies die redes gee van hoekom is dit so.]

These comments refer to the use of a memorandum. Students admitted that they did not usually receive memoranda for their tests and especially not for examinations. For the purposes of this study, memoranda were made available to students via Blackboard. Students here emphasised the importance of verbal feedback where the reasons behind answers could be thoroughly discussed. This process involved students in the learning process and it seems as if it was important for students to know exactly where they were headed. In order to know where they are headed, students need to understand the link between the different elements of the assessment design, for example the task, the learning outcomes, the assessment criteria and the lecturer's feedback. This means that feedback needs to be clear, specific and attainable. The following comments reinforce the idea that general feedback will not be useful and that feedback should specifically suggest ways to improve and develop:

> If you don't know what you did wrong, what you can work at and where can you improve, and so on? [As jy nie weet wat jy verkeerd gedoen het nie, waaraan kan jy werk en waaraan kan jy verbeter en so aan?]

Because if you have made a mistake you can of course correct it. [Want as jy ⬜n fout gemaak het kan jy mos dit regmaak.]

So, that motivates one to perform better. [So, dit motiveer jou om beter te presteer.]

Yes, one learns from one's mistakes. [Ja ⬜n mens leer uit jou foute uit.]

You learn and see, I did it in this way, but I should have done it in that way. [Jy leer en sien, ek het dit so gedoen, maar ek moes dit so gedoen het.]

These comments underline that the focus of feedback should not be on being right or wrong, but rather on how the effort can be improved. Feedback that focuses on what needs to be done can encourage students' beliefs that they can indeed improve. General feedback given in the form of rewards or grades enhances ego involvement rather than task involvement. As explained in Section 2.3.1, it is important to focus students' attention on ability rather than on the importance of effort in order to avoid damaging self-esteem, which results in learned helplessness. The goal of feedback is thus to enable students to regulate their own learning.

Again, if you look at the whole idea of ... uhm ... feedback and also self-regulation {or} self-regulated learning there is a very big correlation between the two, because self-regulation is seen as the pivot and all these other things revolve around that. So, if they have a skill of monitoring things themselves, for instance, then it should definitely work .

The above comment emphasises that feedback is an important central aspect aimed at promoting student learning. This means that assessment procedures should be designed intelligently and with a specific purpose in mind so as to allow the lecturer to give feedback that will empower students to manage and improve their learning.

Discussion

Although the above discussion implies that feedback has an important role to play in enhancing student learning, it would seem that students often focus only on their marks and ignore the lecturer's feedback, especially if they interpret the feedback as being negative.

Feedback can thus, on the one hand, empower the student; on the other hand it can however impede learning. An important question arises: How then is one to use

feedback in the Life Skills classroom so as to stimulate the learning ripple and inspire students to learn? First, using both oral and written feedback can accommodate the different learning styles of learners. The nature of the feedback is however not as important as the fact that the students understand and use the feedback and moreover believe that the feedback will tell them how to improve. From Section 2.3.1 it is evident that students will tend to be more inspired to learn if they believe that the feedback can help to improve their performance. It is thus important that students recognise the goal of the feedback and interpret and apply the suggestions in order to close the gap between the current level of performance and the expected learning objective.

Second, and in addition to this idea, one could make a case that the focus should rather be on feeding *forward* instead of only feeding *back*. Feed-forward can be explained as providing the student with the ability to close the gap between the areas of deficiencies and how to remedy these. Through this act students monitor their learning process and it will enable them to become reflective, self-directed and self-regulated learners. In other words it is important that students distinguish between feedback and feed-forward and not merely focus on what has already been done in order consciously to build upon their strengths as the work progresses.

Third, the feedback language should be used non-judgementally in order to be useful to students, the idea being that positive feedback may work positively. In the final analysis, feedback will only be effective if students pay attention to it, believe it and use it.

4.2.5 Conclusion

The findings reported in this chapter clearly indicate that it is one thing to plan new assessment practices and altogether another to put these plans into practice. It becomes evident that one can easily become entangled in assessment issues and lose sight of the real purpose of assessment in the Life Skills classroom. Boud (1995 in Pickford & Brown, 2006:22) aptly asserts: "Students can avoid bad teaching, they can't avoid bad assessment." It is thus important constantly to ask oneself: What is the purpose of my assessment?

Unfortunately there is no magic assessment wand that will guarantee student learning. It is the lecturer's sole responsibility to plan assessment methods whereby students will be able to demonstrate their learning and to help them to develop a well-rounded set of abilities by the time they graduate. These abilities include both intellectual and personal development. It is apparent that assessment practices must provide students with opportunities to learn and develop through motivational, cognitive and behavioural engagement by means of which they can use their knowledge and skills in real-life situations. The findings further suggest that students' perspectives can be helpful in planning such assessment practices.

There is little doubt that assessment experiences allow students to arrive at conclusions about themselves based on the information they receive from the assessment. Bearing this idea in mind, the implication thus is that assessment should not be used as a tool with which to emphasise failure, but rather as a tool that is able to increase students' faith in themselves as learners. This idea in turn implies that both formative and summative assessment can be implemented as complementary and overlapping methods in the Life Skills classroom, their aim being to benefit the quality of student learning.

This chapter has a simple message: assessment can impact on students' engagement in the learning process; therefore, when lecturers plan their assessment activities they should always remember the first and foremost purpose of assessment, namely that assessment should serve student learning. Chapter Five will focus on the conclusions, implications and limitations of this study.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

> *A real voyage of discovery consists not of seeking new landscapes but of seeing through new eyes.*
>
> Proust (in Stiggins, 2002:758)

5.1   Introduction

*O*ver the past decades the terms *assessment* and *feedback* have become central themes in the higher education environment and have been the source of various studies since Black and Wiliam's comprehensive research (1998). In their study, they investigated the test results of teachers participating in formative assessment activities. A key finding of their study was that students were able to grow from passive receivers of knowledge delivered by the teacher to active participants who are able to take responsibility for their own learning. This important finding gave rise to a vast body of research on assessment and learning.

As a newcomer in the academic world, I mostly designed assessment activities without considering the purpose or consequences of the assessment tasks and considered assessment merely to be a part of the job description. The MPhil Programme, in particular, inspired me to investigate the complex issue of assessment in order to gain a nuanced understanding of how assessment is able to enhance learning in a higher education classroom.

The qualitative case-study design employing semi-structured interviews and focus groups allowed me to explore – through a variety of lenses – how final-year students in this particular higher education classroom dealt with assessment practices. The research was limited to a specific group of students, namely fourth-year students in

the Life Skills classroom at the University of the Free State. The participants – 78 registered female students between 23 and 26 years of age, of whom 69 were Afrikaans-speaking and 9 English-speaking – were all registered for the DLS 112 Module at the University of the Free State. Most of these students continued with the DLS 122 Module in the second semester.

Given the declared goal of assessment, the proposed study was guided by the following primary question: In what way can assessment enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom? With this in mind, the following secondary questions were formulated:

- What should be the major purposes of assessing students in the teacher education Life Skills classroom? (chapters 2 and 4)
- How should assessment be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education classroom? (chapter 2)
- How can assessment be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom? (chapters 2 and 3)

Subsequently the following objectives were formulated for this study:

- To explore what should be the major purposes of assessing students in the teacher education Life Skills classroom (chapters 2 and 4).
- To investigate how assessment should be integrated into the wanting/needing, doing, feedback and digesting factors of learning in the teacher education classroom (chapters 2 and 4).
- To identify ways that assessment can be used to prepare the prospective Life Skills teacher for the school classroom (chapters 2 and 4).

In this chapter, I shall reflect both on the conclusions drawn from the study and the implications and limitations of the study. I shall also suggest follow-up research with a view to enhancing learning in the Life Skills classroom by means of assessment.

5.2   Conclusions

Based on the findings from the literature review and on the empirical findings reported in Chapter Four of this study, at least three conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, in addressing the value of assessment in the Life Skills classroom, one can argue that assessment plays a key role both in fostering learning and the certification of students. In Chapter Four it was indicated that effective assessment implies that students should learn and not merely be taught. The core mission of designing assessment activities involves therefore careful consideration of the purpose of the tasks. The focus of assessment should not be on a specific approach, but rather on whether it will assist the student in becoming an independent and self-managing learner. Central to this idea is the notion that the purpose of the assessment task is to serve student learning (cf. 2.2.3).

Secondly, if the focus then is on student learning this means that students need to be involved in authentic situations in which they have to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills (cf. 2.3.2.2). In Chapter Four it was explained that authentic assessment tasks outside the classroom can provide opportunities to be motivationally, cognitively and behaviourally engaged in tasks in which students are able to demonstrate the theoretical aspects of Life Skills that they have learned. Whatever the form of the assessment task, it can provide students with a variety of learning experiences when they have to interact with learners – when they are thus confronted with real-life problems, different cultures or learners from diverse backgrounds. Assessment experiences of this nature will not only enhance students' learning, but also widen their perspectives and provide opportunities for personal growth. Students will have opportunities to show that they have developed the necessary knowledge and skills – such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving competency, self- and time management, empathy and interpersonal skills – required to be future Life Skills educators.

Thirdly, in Chapter Four it was highlighted that students would benefit from clear and helpful feedback on their learning. Every Life Skills lecture or assessment task provides opportunities for feedback. This places a responsibility on the lecturer to ensure that quality feedback is given to students to develop their confidence and

competence in order to help them to move behind their present performance and, consequently, to enhance the quality of their work (cf. 2.3.3).

The above conclusions seem to suggest a number of implications not only for assessment and learning in the Life Skills classroom but also for future research.

5.3 Implications

In order to reflect on the implications of assessment on learning in the Life Skills classroom, I shall review aspects of the literature review in Chapter Two, the issues that emerged during the data analysis process as reported in Chapter Three and the findings in Chapter Four. Reflecting on these implications could lead to the understanding and monitoring of some of the critical factors that play a role in assessment and learning in the Life Skills classroom.

5.3.1 Perspectives of students

In Chapter One it was described that assessment brings to mind verbs such as *to engage*, *to involve*, *to interact*, *to share* or *to trust*. Based on this description of assessment, it is possible to argue that assessment is meant to build a relationship of trust between the student and lecturer, one in which both parties' understanding of assessment should be acknowledged.

If we thus consider assessment to be at the centre of a student's learning experience, it is interesting to note, from the data analysed, that in reality, lecturers and students can indeed have differing understandings of the role of assessment in learning. The argument can thus be made that if lecturers perhaps know how students feel about and experience assessment, they may potentially be in a better position to make the connection between the purpose of the assessment and the assessment task itself. For example, in Section 4.2.1.1 it was explored why students believed that "examinations are effective". It was revealed that factors other than the important issue of making sense of knowledge may have prompted the students' comments to the effect that "examinations are effective". One can reason that in a trusting relationship the benefits of sharing understanding of the learning objectives not only ensure clarity, but further prove to be effective in promoting learning (Harris, 2007:249).

5.3.2 Purpose of assessment

Assessment in higher education can serve a number of purposes (see Chapter Two). Broadly speaking, the lecturer is confronted with a wealth of methods within the formative and summative assessment practices. Because doctors, lawyers or teachers require different skills, assessment methods must be designed accordingly. Based on this understanding, lecturers need for two reasons to be mindful of the purpose of the assessment when designing assessment activities: first, to ensure creating as many learning opportunities as possible; and second, to prepare students for their future professional roles (cf. 4.2.1).

As we progress through the 21st century, students need faster and more inventive ways of learning. In Chapter Four it was explained that mobile learning and Blackboard can be implemented as assessment methods. Some students regarded this kind of learning to have been a positive learning experience: "I experienced it {to be} positive and effective. It motivated me to pay attention in class"; however, as one student claimed, technological problems can, on the other hand, impede learning: "What is wrong with the traditional paper-and-pencil tests?"

Responses like these make it evident that when the Life Skills lecturer chooses assessment methods there ought to be a better alignment between the purpose of the assessment, the required competencies and learning. Assessment is inextricably part of teaching and the core of assessment should be to serve student learning (cf. 2.2.3). Perhaps a shift in thinking about assessment is required at the teaching (lecturing)-learning interface so as not to get fixated on the assessment method *per se* but always to bear in mind the underpinning purpose – namely that of promoting student learning.

5.3.3 Integration of assessment into learning

The conceptual framework for this study was drawn from Race's spreading ripples model of learning (cf. 2.3) along with qualitative interpretivist inquiry (cf. Chapter Three). Based on Race's spreading ripples learning model, this study highlighted how assessment and learning can co-exist, complement and support each other in the Life Skills classroom.

Integration between motivational, cognitive and behavioural engagement

Section 2.3.1, while maintaining that wanting to learn is paramount to student learning, however also pointed out that the underlying motives and principles of student motivation are very complex. Race places *wanting to learn* in the centre of his learning model, thereby implying that motivation can stimulate the learning process both backwards and forwards. The primary concern of this idea is that students themselves must want to learn because without this condition no learning will take place. Unfortunately there is no single universal recipe to motivate students to learn and, in addition, a variety of factors can affect students' motivation to learn. It however seems as if a small success is able to spark confidence, which can in turn lead to increased confidence combined with a belief that learning is possible, as the following sample comment indicates: "It largely depends on the lecturer." [Dit hang baie van die dosent af.] As it is the lecturer who defines the tasks, constructs the assessment criteria and provides feedback, then, arguably, enthusiastic lecturers may perhaps fuel participation and direct students to achieve something and thus experience success.

The findings further indicated that a "hands-on" experience may lead to greater in-depth understanding. One student, for example, observed: "This learning experience made me realise how important Life Skills is in the Foundation Phase." [Hierdie leerervaring het my laat besef hoe belangrik Lewensvaardighede in die Grondslagfase is.] In this study it was determined that when students are immersed in authentic, real-life situations they are provided with opportunities to learn-by-doing. The following observation is one example of this: "I think it better teaches you to think on your feet." [Ek dink dit leer jou baie meer om op jou voete te kan dink.] Section 4.2.2.3 also highlighted a deeper meaning in which authentic learning may be implemented – not only to develop better educated students, but it may also provide opportunities for personal development, as the following example suggests: "At the end of the day the project meant more to me personally than, for instance, the marks that I am going to get for it." [Die projek het aan die einde van die dag vir my persoonlik baie meer beteken as byvoorbeeld die punte wat ek gaan kry daarvoor.]

Feedback

In Section 2.3.3 it was stated that feedback was intended to achieve the following in respect of students: (1) influence their motivation and self-esteem; (2) help them tackle assessment activities; (3) enable them to understand the learning goals they are pursuing; (4) assist them to understand their learning while reflecting on strengths and weaknesses; and, (5) empower them to develop successful approaches to learning. In Chapter Four the argument was however advanced that it is not obvious that students will make sense of the feedback, and that lecturers must thus not assume that their feedback will automatically motivate students to be engaged in learning. It became evident that it was not the feedback in itself that would improve learning, but the way students understood what to do with the feedback that might motivate them to be engaged in the learning process (cf. 4.2.3).

It is suggested that students interpret feedback as feed-forward, in other words to focus on what has already been done to build upon their strengths consciously as they progress (cf. 4.2.3). Thus, for feedback to be effective in the Life Skills classroom, it needs to be timely, meaningful and also provide specific suggestions about problems – clear suggestions that can focus students' attention on rectifying mistakes. A central idea here is the concept of 'feed-forward' where the feedback has a forward-looking purpose with a positive focus on subsequent steps for improvement. This idea implies that feedback should enable students to close the gap between areas of deficiency with ways to improve.

5.3.4 Synergy between formative and summative assessment

For the past few years substantial scholarly attention has been devoted to assessment *for* and *of* learning. In Chapter Two it was argued that the distinction between formative and summative assessment is not a sharp one and that both forms are actually interconnected with different purposes (cf. 2.2.3).

A central argument in Chapter Four was that formative and summative assessment can be implemented as complementary and overlapping methods in the Life Skills classroom, which jointly aim to benefit the quality of student learning. Such a perspective implies that summative and formative assessment can be used not only to refine teaching strategies in the Life Skills classroom but also to provide a full

picture of students' learning needs. It therefore seems as if one must shift the focus from the divide between assessment *for* and *of* learning, to one that finds ways to integrate assessment into learning while empowering students to move forward in their learning. Perhaps, by using these methods in tandem in the Life Skills classroom one can maximise student learning optimally.

5.4   Implications for further investigation

Although this study has attempted to provide a useful, basic understanding of exploring assessment issues in a Life Skills classroom, further research into the following aspects could prove to be valuable:

- While one may assume that assessment involves a lecturer who assesses students, students can in reality also assess themselves. I would thus suggest that there is a need to investigate self- and peer-assessment in the Life Skills classroom. Developing a clear picture of exactly how students can use self-assessment to generate feedback and enhance their own learning would be of great value.
- Assessment is a complex issue comprising a variety of critical elements. This study has however focused on only a limited number of aspects. Other critical elements, for example alignment between the different components of the Life Skills Module, could be explored in order to determine how assessment may enhance learning in the Life Skills classroom.
- As both educationists and students are unable to escape the increasing influence of the so-called technological era, it would be appropriate to suggest that the impact of online assessment in a Life Skills Module may be further investigated.

5.5   Limitations

The following aspects indicate the limitations of this study:

- The study was limited to fourth-year Foundation Phase students only. The students from the other phases – the Intermediate Phase, the Senior Phase and the Further Education Training Phase (FET) – were excluded. This was done for the following reasons: first, the students in the Intermediate and the FET phases were registered for the Module Life Orientation that has four different learning

outcomes than does the Life Skills Module in the Foundation Phase. This would thus complicate the planning of the assessment tasks. Second, the students in the Foundation Phase were registered for two semesters (DLS 112 and DLS 122), whereas the students in the Intermediate and FET phases were either registered for the last semester only or for four separate term modules. These modules were furthermore taught by different lecturers, which would further have complicated the administration of the assessment tasks.

- A potential limitation could be that the focus groups were principally driven by the researcher's interest, which can be a source of weakness. The following steps were however followed in order specifically to prevent subjective interpretations:
  - Multiple data-collection methods were used.
  - After each interview, the transcribed discussions were verified by the participants.
  - Subsequent to analysis, the findings were submitted to the supervisors to be tested for accuracy of interpretation.

5.6   Conclusion

In order to answer the main research question of the study on how assessment can enhance learning in a Life Skills classroom, the gist of the answer can be summarised in the words of Broadfoot (2007:15): "The *assessment* door is open (own interpretation). We only need to go through it."

Although assessment has become the centre of attention in higher education over the past few decades, it seems as if the focus has moved beyond the question whether assessment is important or not. This study wishes to highlight that the emphasis now is on how assessment can be used to enhance learning in a higher education classroom. In order to translate this vision of enhanced learning in the Life Skills classroom, a number of critical factors need to be emphasised.

First, it may be useful to take into account students' perspectives when choosing assessment methods. A shared understanding of the purpose and effects of assessment is required so that students will know where they are headed with their learning.

Second, it is now evident that assessment involves more than simply a series of tests. Determining the purpose of assessment is therefore of key importance to develop student progress and to prepare them for their future professional roles. It is vital that lecturers constantly ask themselves how any particular assessment activity will maximise student learning.

Third, it is vitally important to consider the different elements during the assessment process so as to promote student motivation, engagement and self-regulation. Central to this idea is Race's spreading ripples model of learning that suggests that learning can be initiated by the bounced-back ripples through doing, making sense, feedback and understanding.

Fourth, one may reason that we should not become fixated on the distinction between formative and summative assessment but rather try to connect the purpose of the assessment method to learning improvement. Rebalancing both assessment approaches with the goal of promoting enhanced learning may perhaps lead to greater investment in student engagement and learning improvement.

These four ideas frame the conclusion that assessment is an integral part of the learning experience and they imply that how students are assessed in the Life Skills classroom will make a difference to how they learn. Though it is easy to underestimate the key role of the lecturer in this important relationship, lecturers should nevertheless take time to reflect upon their assessment practices so that students can benefit from the lecturer's carefully considered assessment practices.

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APPENDIX A

Ethical issues
Prof. G.F. du Toit

UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Departement Kurrikulumstudie

Faculty of Education
Department of Curriculum Studies

28 January 2010

Dr MP Koen
Department of Curriculum Studies
Faculty of Education

Dear Dr Koen,

PERMISSION – RESEARCH: DLS112

In the Department of Curriculum Studies we strive to research teaching and learning in our lecture rooms and to teach the outcomes thereof. Your request to research the module on Life Skills supports the Department in it's strive.

I approve of your request on condition that students will have a choice to be part of the research project and that the project has to comply with the ethical regulations of the University of the Free State.

Good luck with your research.

PROF GF DU TOIT
(HEAD OF DEPARTMENT)

Open-ended questionnaires

1. Why do you learn?

2. What motivates you to study?

3. Reflect on assessment in the DLS 112 course and explain your view of effective assessment that can be implemented in the second semester.

4. Reflect on the following assessment activities and write a short report to explain how you experienced these activities:

   a) Mobile learning
   b) Research project
   c) Community service

APPENDIX C

Interview schedule: focus groups

1. What is your understanding of the concept *assessment*?

   What does *assessment* mean in the Life Skills classroom?

2. What inspires you to learn?

   What are your internal and external motivators?

   Who motivates you?

3. Do you consider an exam to be a suitable method of assessment to prepare you for the Life Skills classroom?

   Why is an exam effective?

   What are the benefits of an exam?

   What about other kinds of assessment?

   How do you experience formative assessment?

   Does an exam enable you to apply knowledge?

4. Explain how you experience feedback in the DLS classroom.

   Do you prefer either oral feedback or written feedback?

   Do you read feedback?

   Do you pay attention to feedback?

   What do you regard as positive?

   What do you regard as negative?

5. How, in your opinion, can assessment be more effectively applied so as to prepare you better for the Life Skills classroom?

   How can you apply the knowledge that you have learned in the LS classroom?

   How can better student engagement in the LS classroom be achieved?

Interview schedule: semi-structured interviews

1. What, in your opinion, is the purpose of assessment in the Life Skills classroom?
   What is the goal of assessment in the Life Skills classroom?

2. Do you think assessment in the Life Skills classroom is able to support learning?
   How can assessment help to enhance learning?

3. How can assessment in the Life Skills classroom be used to make students aware of their competences?
   How can assessment be used to develop a learner?
   How can it develop a sense of self-efficacy?

4. Can assessment in the Life Skills classroom develop meta-cognitive skills?
   (The assumption here is that the respondent knows exactly what meta-cognitive skills are.)
   Give examples of how students can learn to learn.
   How will students demonstrate meta-cognitive skills in the classroom?

5. In what ways can assessment in the Life Skills classroom engage students in the learning process?
   How do students participate in the classroom?
   How can students be active in the learning process?
   Do you have suggestions on how to enhance/increase students' involvement in the learning process?

6. How can this engagement lead to independent self-regulated learning?
   (The assumption again is that the respondent knows what is meant by 'independent' and 'self-regulated'.)
   How can active participation help students to understand what they are learning?

7. Can you suggest additional ideas regarding how a student can make sense of the learning?

8. Let's say the dean asks you to make a list for lecturers on how to facilitate effective feedback in the Life Skills classroom. Mention the most important things that need to be on such a list.

   What do you regard as important when you receive feedback?

   Do you read feedback?

   Why do you believe these aspects to be important?

   What aspects regarding feedback would make you negative?

APPENDIX E

Example of an online test (Blackboard)

Read the case study below and answer the questions that follow:

Ms. Koalane is a grade 3 teacher. She teaches Life Skills by integrating the four learning outcomes (as outlined in the National Curriculum Statement) into the different learning areas and learning programmes of the Foundation Phase. Although she teaches learners how to cope with the challenges of life, it seems as if Mpho is not happy. Last week Mpho's mother informed Ms. Koalane that she is worried because Mpho has been manifesting the following behaviour since they moved from Pretoria: insecurity, excessive crying and clinging, as well as refusing to go to school.

Question 1	**True – False**	**(1.00 points)**

Ms. Koalane believes life skills are coping skills that can enhance the quality of life and prevent dysfunctional behaviour. This means that a life skill is a specific skill which enables a person to interact meaningfully and successfully with the environment and with other people.

Answer true or false:

○ True

○ False

Question 2	Multiple choice	(1.00 points)

Ms. Koalane explains to Mpho's mother that human beings arrive in the world with unique personal characteristics or signature strengths (potential) that distinguish them from other people. She is referring to ... as one of the four ways an individual is equipped with life skills.

- ○ heredity
- ○ social learning theory
- ○ potential and environment
- ○ individual responsibility

Question 3	Multiple choice	(1.00 points)

Ms. Koalane explains to Mpho's mother that stressful life events can be a stressor that may influence Mpho's behaviour negatively. Identify a possible stressor in the case study.

- ○ excessive crying
- ○ resilience
- ○ risk factor
- ○ adapting to a new school

Question 4	Multiple choice	(1.00 points)

Resilience refers to ...

- ○ an assessable trait in a group of individuals
- ○ the presence of multiple protective factors
- ○ coping with the difficulties of life and still enjoying life
- ○ an assessable trait in one individual

Question 5	Matching	(4.00 points)

Pair the broad fields of life skills in the left column with matching examples in the right column.

Match	Question Items	Answer Item
[- ▾]	1. learning skills	A. self-worth
[- ▾]	2. basic skills	B. lifelong learning
[- ▾]	3. intrapersonal skills	C. reading
[- ▾]	4. survival skills	D. health

Question 6	Multiple choice	(1.00 points)

According to the learning outcome .... the learner will be able to make informed decisions regarding personal, community and environmental health.

○ social development

○ health promotion

○ personal development

○ physical development and movement

Question 7	Multiple choice	(1.00 points)

Life skills are acquired through thinking and talking about values and attitudes. This also provides an opportunity to ...... these sensitive issues.

○ assess

○ appreciate

○ understand

○ ignore

Question 8	True – False	(1.00 points)

Life skills learning should take place in a specific context.

○ True

○ False

Question 9	Multiple choice	(1.00 points)

In the Foundation Phase the teacher needs to be able to .... barriers before they are allowed to impact on individual learners' learning and development.

○ assess

○ identify

○ develop

○ treat

Question 10	True – False	(1.00 points)

Good cognitive skills can develop learners' resilience positively.

○ True

○ False

Question 11	Fill in blank	(1.00 points)

Ms. Koalane explains to Mpho's mother that personal characteristics in psychology refer to characteristics of personality that are not directly ....

Question 12	Short essay	(6.00 points)

Critically analyse the concept holistic development of learners. Explain how Ms. Koalane can develop Mpho holistically by referring specifically to aspects in the teaching learning situation.

TOTAL	(20 points)

Example of a Mobile learning test

Read the statements below and answer true or false:

1. All babies think they are wonderful.

2. Your self-esteem is reflected in your behaviour.

3. As children take responsibility for their own actions, they must believe that they can behave according to social standards.

4. All children are familiar with the meaning of feelings.

5. Posture illustrates feelings.

6. There is a positive side to stress.

7. Stress refers to stressors.

8. Only outside pressures cause stress.

9. Apathy is an example of a behavioural response to stress.

10. The coping skills we rely on to deal with stress emerge during adulthood.

APPENDIX G

Categories: open ended questionnaires

1. Meaning of assessment (MEA)

*Code	Examinations (learn, facts, understand)
1	[Eksamen is my keuse vir assessering. Dit bring mens op die einde van die kwartaal tot 'n opsomming en geheelbeeld van die vak.]
2	[Ek verkies om aan die einde van die semester eksamen te skryf.]
3	[Ek dink eksamen is nodig om mense te assesseer en te kyk wat hulle verstaan onder die werk. Daar moet net seker gemaak word leerders verstaan die uitkomste goed en hoe om dit toe te pas.]
36	[I would like to say to keep an exam is in my best interests. Let me explain. If I would be assessed continuously. It would be difficult to give my best due to the fact that my attention is given to other subjects at the same time. When an exam is written my attention is focused only on that one subject.]
8	[Eksamen is goeie assessering.]
37	[Ek hou van die feit dat daar eksamen is. Dit bied my die geleentheid om seker te maak dat ek die werk onder die knie het ... die eksamen versker dat ek deur die werk moet gaan en in die proses leer ek alles wat nodig is.]
38	[Ek voel dat eksamen nodig is ... maar jy het meer tyd om te leer.]
24	[Ek dink eksamen is 'n belangrike faktor, omdat ons dit wat ons geleer het kan voorstel.]
37	[I like the fact that there is an exam. It offers me the opportunity to make sure that I understand the work. Sometimes I am not prepared when I come to class and that means that I do not know that specific part of the work. The exam enables me to study all the work and this process allows me to learn everything that is necessary.]
23	[Nee, ek dink daar moet eksamen wees om finaal te assesseer of 'n leerder werklik die leerinhoud verstaan, want take gee jou geleentheid om in groepe te werk en so word 'n leerder nie individueel geassesseer nie.]
39	[Yes, I agree that exams must be written. This allow teacher learners to see if they have gained the necessary knowledge or not.]
41	[... and during the exams you have more time for preparation than during the term.]
42	[... the term is so busy as it is ... more pressure on the students and as a result there is not enough hours in the day to do all that is expected. Exams are a time when we can focus on just that one subject. It gives a better chance for succeeding.]
46	[A.g.v. tyd is eksamenvoorbereiding beter om rede daar vooraf beplan kan word.]
47	[Ja, ek dink dat ons eksamen moet skryf. Tydens 'n eksamen het mens

	voldoende tyd om voorbereiding te doen.]
48	[Ek dink dit is beter om eksamen te skryf, want deur die semester raak jy net vinnig aan al die werk, omdat daar nie baie tyd was vir kontaksessies nie en deur eksamen te skryf leer jy die werk goed.]
50	[Ek dink eksamenskryf is die beste. Gedurende die kwartaal het ons baie take, projekte en semesters. Ek dink die eksamen sal ons die geleenthede gee om ons punte te verbeter.]
	More practical
21	[I would prefer not to write an exam...I would prefer more practical assignments because it is more interesting.]
4	[I firmly suggest that we apply the module in a practical approach, rather than theoretically.]
30	[Ek dink die assessering d.m.v. eksamen kan eerder vervang word met 'n praktiese opdrag waar ons Lewensvaardighede wat ons aangeleer het gedurende die module kan gaan toepas.]
	Pressure
5	[Dit sal lekker wees as 'n formele assessering kan wegval, want dit verminder druk.]
10	[Geen student hou van eksamen nie en sal verkies om NIE eksamen te skryf nie.]
13	[Geen eksamen, slegs formatiewe assessering, minder stres.]
15	[...dit verminder ook die stresvlakke wat in eksamens 'n negatiewe invloed het.]
	Formative assessment (practise, optimal learning)
7	[Ek dink dit moet slegs formatiewe assessering wees en geen eksamen.]
15	[Om prakties te werk te gaan sal na my mening die leerervaring baie meer interessant en genotvol maak, hierdie positiewe houding sal dan ook positiewe/optimale leer meebring. Dit verminder ook die stresvlakke wat in eksamens 'n negatiewe invloed het.]
13	[Geen eksamen, slegs formatiewe assessering, minder stres.]
9	[Die formatiewe assessering wat plaasvind is goed.]
11	[Ek dink ons moet formatiewe assessering doen, want dis meer 'n navorsingsvak as 'n leer vak.]
19	[The allocation of marks and assessment is very relevant because it contribute to your knowledge, skills and ability to reason. There are also enough activities to increase your semester mark and you do not have to do only rote learning, but to apply the knowledge as well.]
22	[Ek dink dat daar slegs formatiewe assessering moet plaasvind en geen eksamen nie. Deur formatiewe assessering leer ek meer en bly op hoogte van wat in die vak aangaan, waarby eksamen slegs feite is wat jy nou leer en dan verlore gaan met die tyd.]
	Negative
1	[Formatiewe assessering vat te veel tyd in die kwartaal.]
2	[Formatiewe assessering is tydrowend.]

2. Engagement in learning (EIL)

	Motivational engagement
	Marks
8	[Om graad te vang, sodat ek eendag suksesvol kan wees.]
23	[To achieve good marks to be a lifelong learner.]
16	[To be able to pass my exams and tests well.]
17	[Ek leer om goeie punte te behaal en om te leer om 'n beter juffrou te word.]
18	[Sodat ek my kennis kan verbreed en dus ook goeie punte te behaal in my kursus.]
27	[To pass my tests and exams to get a degree.]
	Future
1	[I learnt that how to teach life skill to children and how life skill is important to young children.]
5	[Om my doelwitte in die lewe te bereik. Om my werk so goed as moontlik te kan doen. Die kursus leer mens om met kinders te werk en aan hulle behoeftes te voldoen.]
7	['n Mens kan nooit genoeg weet nie en dis 'n uitdaging aan myself.]
	Teacher
22	[I learn, because I want to develop myself and to become a good teacher. As a teacher I want to be able to develop the children individually.]
12	[Om 'n kwalifikasie te kry om met kinders te werk, want ek het 'n passie vir kinders ... wil 'n onderwyseres wees.]
13	[Ek leer omdat ek graag 'n sukses van my lewe wil maak ... omdat ek leer, verkry ek die nodige kennis en vaardighede om 'n suksesvolle onderwyseres te wees.]
20	[Om my toe te rus met die nodige kennis en vaardighede, sodat ek gereed is

	om dit oor te dra en toe te pas op die leerders wat ek gaan onderrig.]
21	[Om kennis op te doen, sodat ek meer kan weet oor verskeie onderwerpe en om ingeligte besluite te neem.]
4	[In order to do well and reach my goal at being a good teacher.]
9	[Ek wil graag eendag vir myself kan sorg ... om 'n onderwyser te word.]
	Knowledge
2	[I expand my knowledge and be more aware of the things around me.]
3	[I acquire knowledge. To be able to know more about life and the systems inside our society.]
6	[Om meer te weet van die wêreld en om dit aan ander te kan oordra.]
11	[Om myself te verryk, sodat ek reg kan wees vir die onderwysberoep.]
10	[Ons leer om ons kennis uit te brei.]
14	[Om my kennis uit te brei en bevoegd te wees om ander te kan leer.]
15	[To become aware of things that we are not familiar with. To become knowledgeable in certain fields.]
19	[Wanneer 'n mens leer, ontwikkel 'n mens beter kennis van 'n bepaalde vakgebied.]
25	[I learn to gain knowledge towards what I already know. I learn to be a better person.]
26	[Om meer te kan leer ... bou van kennis en suksesvol te wees.]

	Behavioural engagement
	Community service
1	[The project was fun. I learnt so much. It also helped me to realise that you

	should be thankful for what you have. It was nice to work with the children and to develop their physical development.]
2	[Dit was wonderlik om na ander nie bevoorregte mense en kinders uit te reik. Dit het my as persoon laat groei en my weereens laat danbaar voel oor wat ek als het en wat ek als bereik het.]
50	[This was a very positive experience for me!]
6	[Dit was lekker om 'n verskil in die lewe te maak van kinders wat dit nodig het.]
8	[Was baie lekker om met die kinders te werk en ook om by die gemeenskap betrokke te wees. Ek het persoonlik dit baie geniet en sal graag meer by die gemeenskap betrokke wil raak.]
9	[Die gemeenskapsdiens was baie vervullend, dit was 'n geestelike leerervaring. Dit het 'n bydrae gelewer tot 'n dieper verstandhouding t.o.v. lewensoriëntering.]
10	[Ek is baie bly dat ons na die Eersteling plasskool gegaan het. Ons het met kinders waardeer wat min het en wat met baie min tevrede is. Hulle het alles wat ons met hulle gedoen het opreg waardeer en jy kon sien dat hulle geniet wat hulle doen. Dit is ook lekker om goed te doen vir ander en ook betrokke te kan wees by 'n gemeenskap, waar ons met verskillende kulture ensovoorts te doen gekry het.]
2	[Die projek het aan die einde van die dag vir my persoonlik baie meer beteken as byvoorbeeld die punte wat ek gaan kry daarvoor. Die kinders waarmee ons gewerk het was so goed gemanierd en hulle het dit regtig baie geniet. Hulle was ook so dankbaar vir die kos wat ons vir hulle gevat het en ek het net weer besef dat daar soveel dinge is wat ek het wat ek as vanselfsprekend aanvaar, waarvoor ek eintlik baie dankbaar moet wees.]
11	[Goeie projek. Ek het dit baie geniet. Dit het my gedwing uit my gemaksone uit.]
13	[Dit het my baie geleer van myself en van kinders, omdat ek nie elke dag in aanraking kom met minderbevoorregte kinders nie.]
14	[Dit was vir my eers 'n kopseer om te dink ek moet dit ook nog inpas, maar toe ek daar kom was dit so lekker. Dit was so lekker om te sien hoe hulle die aandag geniet. Ek het net weer besef hoekom ek 'n juffrou wil word. Maak nie saak van ras, geslag of ekonomiese omstandighede ek kan nie wag om skool te gee nie. Ek dink dit is belangrik dat student hierdie ervaring moet hê. Die tyd kan selfs meer gemaak word, dink ek. Dit was vir my baie lekker.]
15	[Dit was vir my baie lekker en 'n voorreg om deel te kon wees van gemeenskapsdiens. Dit is vir my lekker om ander mense te help en half hulle nood te verlig. Ek is gereeld betrokke by gemeenskapsdiens, maar hierdie keer was dit vir my uitsonderlik lekker. Ek sal enige tyd dit weer gaan doen.]
16	[Om te gee is verseker een van die verrykendste ervarings. Geen geld kan daardie ervarings koop nie. Om iets vir jou gemeenskap te beteken laat jou as mens groei. Dankie vir die geleentheid om 'n verskil in iemand se lewens te maak.]
17	[This was a real experience for me, it opened my eyes to thing I didn't knew excisted. To see the joy in the children's eyes and to give more of ourselves and that we took things for granted. Thanks for a wonderful opportunity.]
19	[Ek was aan die begin baie positief oor hierdie gemeenskapsprojek. Ons het baie tyd, moeite en geld aan die projek bestee. Die onderwyseresse was baie veeleisend. Hulle het eise aan ons gestel wat nie deel uitmaak van die projek nie, bv. hulle het gesê dat hulle soek 'n weerkaart, verjaaarsdagkaart ens. Hulle is gewoond om alles te kry en dat hulle niks self hoef te doen nie. Ek het die verjaarsdagkaart aan die onderwyseres verskaf en na twee weke het sy dit nog

	steeds nie opgesit nie. Ons het die speelgrond verbeter en skoongemaak asook om die badkamers op te ruim. Ons het twee weke later die liggaamlike oefeninge gaan doen en alles was weer aan skerwe.]
20	[Ek het die gemeenskapsdiens vreeslik baie geniet. Dit was so lekker om iemand se dag vir hulle meer spesiaal te maak, al was dit net vir 'n rukkie.]
21	[Die gemeenskapsdiens was vir my persoonlik 'n *eye opener* omrede mens nie besef hoeveel kinders daar is wat swaarkry nie en ook hoe baie hul fisiese ontwikkeling daaronder lei nie.]
22	[Die gemeenskapsdiens was 'n lekker ervaring. Gemeenskapsdiens is verseker 'n *eye opener* en laat 'n mens besef hoeveel jy het om voor dankbaar te wees.]
24	[Aan die begin was ek nie lus vir dit nie maar hoe verder projek gegaan het, hoe beter het dit geraak. Dit maak net weer jou oë oop].
25	[Dit laat 'n mens regtig weer laat dink aan alles wat jy het. Dit is goed om ander mense se lewens ook van te weet en jy ook 'n verskil in hulle lewe maak en hulle help.]
26	[Ek sal wel die gemeenskapsdiens korter maak, want eerstens raak dit te lank vir die kinders en tweedens vat die beplanning en reëlings soveel van 'n mens se tyd. Ons kan nie soveel tyd aan dit spandeer nie, want ons het ander vakke met hulle eie verpligtinge wat ook tyd nodig het.]
27	[Dit was baie lekker om bietjie kinders uit ander kulture en gemeenskappe te help en uit te reik.]
28	[Dit was 'n lekker projek om aan te pak. Ek en almal wat saam met my in die groep was het dit vreeslik geniet om saam met die kinders tyd deur te bring.]
31	Ek voel as iet iets vir die gemeenskap kan gee sal my niks kos nie. Ek leer baie hieruit, om dankbaar te wees vir wat ek het.
32	[Die gemeenskapsdiens was baie lekker en het my baie geleer. Dit was lekker om saam met die kinders te speel en hulle motoriese vaardighede te ontwikkel. Dit is lekker om hulle iets nuuts te leer en te sien hoe geniet hulle dit om dit uiteindelik reg te kry. Ek het agtergekom dat die kinders nog steeds vir mekaar probeer help en mekaar ondersteun. Hierdie leerervaring sal my ook kan help in 'n skoolsituasie.]
33	[Ek dink nie net die kinders het met iets daar weggestap nie, elkeen van ons studente het ook iets weggevat van die ervaring.]
34	[Hierdie diens het my ook gehelp om persoonlik te ontwikkel en meer van myself te leer.]
35	[Die gemeenskapsdiens was baie lekker. Dit laat jou net weer besef hoe dankbaar 'n mens moet wees vir wat jy het. Dit laat 'n mens terugkom aarde toe en dit laat jou net weer besef hoe jy als wat jy het moet waardeer. Om iets vir iemand te beteken wat minder as jy het, lei tot 'n groot vervulling in jou eie lewe. Ek beveel gemeenskapsdiens aan, dit maak van jou 'n beter mens.]
36	[Gemeenskapsdiens maak elke persoon ryker in alle opsigte. 'n Mens waardeer wat mens het. Die besef dat 'n bietjie aandag en tyd vir iemand so baie beteken maak 'n mens se hart oop. Ek het regtig na die projek 'n behoefte om meer vir die gemeenskap maar veral vir kinders te doen.]
37	[Ek het dit ongelooflik positief ervaar en het soveel daaruit geleer. Ek sal enige tyd weer deel wees van gemeenskapdiens en 'n bydrae lewer waar ek kan.]
38	[Dit was 'n voorreg om so 'n taak te kon doen. Dit het werklik my oë weer laat oopgaan en my laat besef dat ek soveel het om voor dankbaar te wees en soveel om te gee. Ek dink werklik die gemeenskapstaak was 'n groot sukses.]

40	[Dit was 'n baie lekker ervaring. Dit was vir my 'n groot voorreg om by die Bokokonang weeshuis 'n verskil te kon maak. Het baie geleer by die kinders self, meeste van hulle kan nie Engels of Afrikaans praat nie, so het 'n paar Sotho woorde aangeleer by hulle.]
41	[Deur die diens te doen kan ek 'n klein verskil aan 'n kind se dag maak.]
43	[Dit was lekker gewees. Dit was regtig 'n voorreg om dit vir die kinders te doen want 'n mens kon sien hoe baie het hulle dit geniet en as hulle gelukkig is, is dit baie lekker vir my.]
44	[Ons moet meer sulke gemeenskapsdiens doen, want mens kan sien hoeveel dit vir die kinders beteken het, dat ons daar was.]
46	[Dit het regtig vir my gevoel dat ek iets vir iemand beteken het.]
30	[Gemeenskapsdiens het my laat besef dat 'n klein bietjie van my eie tyd, 'n groot positiewe impak op 'n lewe van iemand kan maak wat minder as ek het om voor dankbaar te wees.]
52	[The community service was a life changing event ...]

	Behavioural engagement
	Mobile learning (technological problems)
	Negative
1	[Personally I do not like Mobi learning. Often my battery is flat and then you have to do the test. I prefer Blackboard.]
4	[Mobiele leer volgens my is nie 'n goeie evalueringsisteem nie. Nie almal se fone is reg vir dit nie en nie almal kan nuwe fone bekostig nie. Hou eerder sulke evaluering by Blackboard.]
5	[Mobile learn is nie compatible met al die fone nie. Die program het ook nie elke keer gelaai nie. Dink dit sal goed werk indien alle studente kan deelneem.]
9	[Nadat ek ure gemors het om my foon reg te kry om deel te neem daaraan, kon ek nog steeds nie deelneem aan Mobiele leer nie. Ek voel dus baie negatief teenoor Mobiele leer.]
10	[Ek is persoonlik nie 'n groot voorstander van Mobiele leer nie, daar kan baie tegniese foute voorkom en baie mense sukkel om op te kom en om dit gebruik. As gevolg van die tegniese foute kan dit dan soms 'n onbetroubare bron wees.]
11	[Hierdie leer kan baie goed werk, maar daar is die probleem van sommige mense se fone wat nie werk nie, of uitgedateer is.]
13	[My foon kan glad nie Mobi nie. Ek het al alles probeer. Ek moes 'n nuwe simkaart koop, maar dit wou nog steeds nie werk nie.]
15	[Ek sou aanbeveel dat ons dit nie weer in die toekoms gebruik nie, maar eerder Blackboard.]
16	[Dit is regtig vir my 'n struikelblok wat ek glad nie geniet nie. Daar is soveel komplikasies met hierdie stelsel wat die doel van die leerervaring om iets te leer, heeltemal oorskadu.]

19	[Ek het nie 'n baie positiewe ervaring met Mobiele leer gehad nie. My selfoon het met die eerste sessie gewerk, maar toe ek die eerste toets moes doen, wou my foon nie die vrae oopmaak nie. Ek moes toe meer as 'n uur by kliëntediens wag, sodat opera mini op my foon gelaai kon word. Dit het baie lugtyd geneem en studente het nie juis baie geld nie. Ek verkies eerder Blackboard.]
20	[Ek dink net die tegnologie van almal se selfone is nie op dieselfde standaard nie, en dit is onregverdig om die student te assesseer, indien sy nie toegang het nie.]
24	[Dit vir my maar 'n tydmors, want helfte se selfone werk nie en ons doen genoeg op Blackboard. Dit is onnodig vir my.]
25	[Ek is glad nie vir dit nie. Dit is 'n mors van tyd. Die Mobiele leer is regtig nie lekker nie. Ons kan eerder op papier toetse skryf as op jou foon.]
30	[Die foon is te stadig om te gebruik en uit my eie ervaring werk Blackboard die heel beste.]
32	[Die nadeel is dat die selfone partykeer vashak of nie op Mobi wil gaan nie. Hierdie leerervaring het my nie regtig gehelp deur te weet wat om te verwag in die toets of eksamen nie.]
35	[Hierdie assesseringsaktiwieit is glad nie effektief nie. Die rede hiervoor is meestal tegniese probleme asook finansiële probleme.]
37	[Ek het Mobiele leer nie goed ervaar en beleef nie. Die selfoon sukkel om in te gaan op die *website* en omdat so baie leerders dit gebruik, is die internet vreeslik stadig en kan jy nie die vrae beantwoord nie. Ek dink toetse op Blackboard is baie meer effektief as op 'n selfoon wat so baie probleme gee.]
43	[Ek dink as die probleme uitgesorteer is sal dit baie lekker werk.]
46	[Ongelukkig is almal se selfone nie *compatible* met die stelsel nie en a.g.v. dit het baie van ons gesukkel om in te *log* en om die toetse te doen.]
	Positive (quick, comfortable, engaged)
2	[I enjoyed Mobi learning.]
3	[Dit werk gerieflik, omdat 'n persoon altyd haar foon by haar het.]
6	[Vir my was dit heeltemal iets nuuts. Ek het dit baie geniet.]
7	[Ek hou van Mobiele leer, want dit is vinnig om op jou foon te gaan en gou die toets te skryf en dan kan jy nog in die diktaat die antwoorde opsoek. Dit is vir my beter as Blackboard, want my foon is altyd by my waar 'n mens eers op die internet op 'n rekenaar moet gaan om op Blackboard toets te skryf.]
8	[Die Mobi learning werk lekker en gerieflik om na 'n klas 'n aktiwiteit te doen. Dit is 'n baie goeie manier om formatiewe assessering te doen.]
14	[Dit werk vir my baie lekker en ek het geen probleme ondervind nie. Dit het my gedwing om bietjie my werk deur te gaan voor klas.]
17	[It was fun to do the test more than once to improve my marks.]
18	[Ek vind Mobiele leer maklik, omdat ek oor 'n goeie foon beskik en geen probleme ervaar nie.]
20	[Ek dink Mobiele leer is 'n baie oorspronklike manier om die leerders in die klas betrokke te kry by die lesing, omrede die leerdes weet dat hulle na die lesing die klastoets moet skryf.]
21	[Die idée van die Mobiele leer is baie goed, maar as almal se selfone nie werk nie, is dit onregverdig.]
28	[Mobiele leer is 'n baie interessante vorm van assesseer. Dit is maklik en vinnig om te doen, as jy weet hoe om dit te doen.]

29	[Dit is 'n gerieflike stelsel omdat die meerderheid van studente fone besit.]
32	[Die toetse op Mobi is 'n manier om ons betrokke te kry en om aktief deel te neem in die klas.]
33	[Ek vind die Mobile leer lekker en maklik. Sodra 'n mens net als het op die foon wat jy nodig het, is dit baie maklik. Dit is lekker om sommer daar en dan in die klas dit te doen, i.p.v. om Blackboard toe te gaan.]
38	[Ek het dit baie positief en effektief beleef. Dit dien ook as motiveerder om op te let in die klas. Die toetsresultate was ook vir my 'n aanduiding of ek die werk verstaan en kan toepas. Ek sien dit as baie tyd effektief en moeiteloos.]
39	[Baie meer prakties as om na klasure eers op Blackboard in te gaan.]
40	[Dit was baie effektief. Het baie daaruit geleer en was lekkerder as om 'n toets in te vul.]
41	[Het dit beter as die geskrewe toetse gevind. Jy kan na die klasaktiwiteit gesien het wat jou punt is.]
44	[Positief was dat ons na ons die werk behandel het, die werk weer herhaal het in Mobiele lee. So, 'n mens het beter in die klas geluister.]
45	[Die Mobiele leer het my gehelp dat ons dadelik na die inligting in die klas geleer is, daaroor getoets kon word. Dit het baie gehelp in die vaslê van sekere terme.]
46	[Mobiele leer is 'n maklike en gerieflike metode en vinnig om die student te assesseer in die klaskamer.]
12	[Mobiele leer is 'n goeie manier om inligting deur te gee aan studente, omdat almal selfone het.]
50	[I think it is an excellent learning tool. Doing the test before or after class really gave me a good summary of the work and I remember it.]
51	[I think mobile learning is an excellent way to test your knowledge and a way to prepare for class. It gives you an idea of what you know and understand.]
	Research
32	[Ek dink die tyd om vaardighede in te oefen was baie geslaagd. Ek het daarvan gehou dat die taak nie net oor teorie gehandel het nie, maar dat ons data moes versamel en interpreteer. Dit het my vaardighede in die lewensvaardighede klaskamer verbeter.]
2	[Was 'n wonderlike ervaring. Tydens navorsing leer mens soveel meer en doen baie meer kennis op oor onderwerpe waaroor ek as persoon nooit sou aan dink bestaan eers nie.]
6	[Ek dink dit was goed, want daar was geluister na ons almal se opinie. Almal kan na almal luister en so almal se sieninge kyk oor elke aspek.]
7	[Ek hou oor die algemeen glad nie van navorsing nie. Ek is 'n praktiese mens en sal eerder iets maak as om voor die rekenaar en boeke te sit en navorsing doen.]
9	[Deur ontdekking vind die meeste leer plaas. My ervaring met die navorsingsprojek was positief en voel dat dit 'n baie goeie assesseringsmetode is om studente op elke vlak te akkommodeer.]
20	[Die navorsingsprojek was 'n baie lekker leergeleentheid en baie meer kennis is gedurende die projek, as gedurende die teorie opgedoen. Praktiese toepassing van die teorie lei tot die vaslegging van die teorie en 'n beter kennis rakende die verskillende aspekte word sodoende verkry. Beter insig word ook deur middel van die toepassing van die kennis verkry.]
25	[Navorsingsprojekte vat ongelooflik baie tyd,maar dit leer 'n mens baie van

	dinge waarvan jy nog nooit voorheen geweet het nie.]
28	[DLS 122 is 'n baie interessante vak en dit is rêrig noodsaaklik om hierdie inligting wat die module bied te weet, nie net in die onderwys nie, maar ook in my eie lewe het dit 'n verskil gemaak. Navorsingsprojekte soos die laat 'n mens toe om in diepte oor goed te gaan lees wat jy in jou eie lewe kan integreer en help jou om konflikte soos stres, ens. beter te hanteer.]
29	[Het dit baie geniet om iets buite die klas te moet doen en nie net weer 'n geskrewe taak nie.]
32	[Hierdie leerervaring het my laat besef hoe belangrik Lewensvaardighede in die Grondslagfase is. Deur die navorsingsprojek het ek uitgevind hoe goed 'n graad 2 leerder byvoorbeeld sy/haar emosies kan hanteer en hoe goed hulle sosiale vaardighede is. Op hierdie manier vind jy as onderwyser uit op watter vaardighede jy moet klem lê sodat die leerders beter daarin kan vaar.]
35	[Navorsing verbreed jou kennis op soveel terreine en lei tot lewenslange leer.]
36	[Navorsing brei elke individu se kennis uit. Help mens om inligting te versamel en te organiseer. Dit is 'n baie leersame ervaring om navorsing te doen oor 'n onderwerp.]
37	[Dit was vir my lekker om navorsing te doen onder graad 2 leerders by Oranje. Hulle het meeste beskik oor goeie lewensvaardighede, maar tog was daar gevalle wat uitsonderings was.]
38	[Die taak het gehandel oor veerkragtigheid by leerders. Dit was nogals skokkend om te sien dat sommige leerders glad nie oor die vermoë beskik nie. Het die analise baie geniet om te kyk watter aspek van 'n kind se lewe beïnvloed word.]
39	[Baie lekker om na skole te gaan en verskillende terugvoer te kry en te vergelyk.]

APPENDIX H

Categories: focus groups

1. Meaning of assessment (MEA)

*Code	Goal
3:1	[LV is eintlik een van jou belangrikste lewensvaardighede, want daarsonder kan jy nie eintlik eendag 'n goeie landsburger wees nie.] [Ja, want die *skills* moet jy aanleer né.] [Ja, want dit berei jou voor om mens te wees. So, dis eintlik ook een van die belangrikste aspekte van die gemeenskap wat jy eintlik moet hê.]
	Examination (learn, study, facts,
1:5	[Is eksamen 'n geskikte metode?] [Nee.] [Jy leer net strooi.] [En jy vergeet dit.] [Jy leer net klomp feite om te onthou.] [Om iets prakties te doen is 'n baie beter leerervaring.]
1:7	[Is toets- of eksamenvaardighede nodig vir lewensvaardighede?] [Nee, dit doen nie.] [Doen dit glad nie?] [Ek dink dit toets die kennis wat jy nodig het vir lewensvaardighede, maar nie die vaardighede self nie.] [Ek dink as jy die eksamenvraestelle net meer prakties maak.]
1:12	[Ja, vraestelle meer prakties maak.] [Ja, maar introverte sal baie goed doen om iets net neer te skryf om al hulle kennis net neer te skryf. En dit lyk wonderlik en dan dink die dosent hierdie persoon is wonderlik. Hierdie persoon het wonderlike vaardighede maar *meanwhile* as hy voor die klas moet gaan staan, staan hy daar met 'n mond vol tande en hy weet nie wat om te doen nie en... hy kan nie eens behoorlik

	kommunikeer met die mense nie.]
	[Meer praktiese aktiwiteite in die klas.]
	[Ja, dan doen jy meer praktiese aktiwiteite en dan kyk hulle daarna eerder as om eksamen te gaan skryf.]
	[Ja ons wil eerder deurlopend geassesseer word, eerder as in 'n eksamen.]
Negative (stressful, can't relax, go blank)	
5:1	[Negative.] [Definitely negative.]
	[Negative.] [Because most of the time. It depends on what type of assessment you are referring ...]
	[Even our practical teaching if they observe what you are doing, it is stressful.]
	[So, it's.... not.... it's not ... you are not that relaxed because you know it is for marks.]
	[But if it is not really for marks you can be relaxed.]
5:2	[And sometimes when you know they are there to give you marks to observe you ......you feel pressured to do what they expect you to do and not what you can actually do.]
5:4	[So, it is very stressful.]
	[And also during exams you are more stressed and the fact that it counts more.]
	[Ansie (alias) said exams are so very stressful that most of the times you blank or you don't get to finish you have to put in all your knowledge and ....ag man you know.]
Prefer exams (learn, study)	
4:7	[Ons wil eksamen skryf.]
4:6	[Ja, die eksamen is effektief.]
4:7	[Maar eksamen dwing jou eintlik om daai werk te gaan opswot en 'n kenner van jou vak te word en die eksamen dwing jou, anders gaan jy nie weet wat daar aangaan nie.]
Time to study	
4:1 4:4	[Dit is 'n probleem, want as hulle te veel klein takies ... jy het nie tyd om alles in te sit. Soos in daai eerste taak. Sê nou maar .... nie ... sê nou maar ek vat een groot ding, dan kan jy al jou aandag kan jy alles in daai een ding ... in daai een projek sit - as wat jy klomp kleintjies ... en jou aandag is nie by dit nie, want jy het te veel. Jy kan nie alles in sit nie, jy het te min tyd. Jy het te min tyd vir alles.]

	[...Dink ons het soveel ander take ook om te doen dat jy nie jou beste gee aan een taak nie, want jy deel jou tyd op tussen verskillende take.]
3:5	[Daar is te veel goeters wat ons by verskillende vakke moet doen.]
3:9	[En as elke vak so kan werk met klein toetse ....Dit is eintlik ideaal, maar omdat daar nie tyd is nie, verkies ons half om eksamen te skry. Ek weet nie van julle nie, maar ek verkies dit om dan een keer wanneer dit rustiger word daar is nie take om in te gee nie en daar is nie hierdie mal skedule, en klasse en wat wat wat nie.]
3:10	[Maar dit voel vir my, as ek nou kyk ... na hoe ons hierdie vak benader het. Ons het ... baie ... Die werk is opgedeel in aktiwiteite, verstaan ... ons het baie dele van die werk gedoen. Dit voel vir my as jy oor elke deel van die werk ietsie gedoen het dan het jy mos die hele werk behandel. Dan hoekom moet jy dan eksamen ook daaroor gaan skryf as die assessering voldoende was? As elke aspek geassesseer en daar gekyk is, verstaan die kind wat daar aangaan? Dit voel vir my dan .. dit is hoekom op hierdie stadium is dit vir my voldoende. Want in elk geval moet ons eksamen gaan skryf. Verstaan, dit voel vir my jy het nou so hard in die kwartaal gewerk en klomp ... hierdie goedjies gehad om te doen en take gehad om te doen en klastoetsies en ... en ... en maar nou moet jy ook nog gaan eksamen skryf.]
3:11	[Want alles is so ingedruk.]
3:4,5 3:5	[Jy leef van een *deadline* na 'n ander *deadline*. Want nou, soos verlede week toe het ons soos die oggend toets geskryf en ek kan nie onthou nie, maar ek het soos 12 uur met 'n taak klaar gekry en ek het die volgende oggend 7 uur ... , en twee uur die oggend toe begin ek leer vir 'n semester toets. Daar is nie 'n manier wat jy tussen 1 en 7, terwyl jy moeg is al daai kennis so ingedruk kan kry nie. So, jy skeep alles op die ou einde af, want daar is net nie. En dan skryf jy daai toets en dan skryf jy die aand weer Sielkunde en dan druk jy dit ook net so in en die volgende oggend 7 uur dan skryf jy weer.]
2:2	Want jy staan in die oggend op en dan kan jy, sê nou maar 'n rukkie leer en dan begin jy net leer dan kom jy klas toe.]
4:1	[Ja, dan kom jy klas toe dan leer jy weer 'n bietjie dan ....Dan sien jy ... jy ... o ja jy moet nog 'n taak doen. Dan moet jy nou eers weer 'n taak doen en tyd kry om klaar te kom. Dan die aand weer .. moet jy dan sê jy OK ... nou moet ek eers weer 'n biejtie leer.....So die hele dag het jy stuk stuk geleer en dat jy nie eers meer kan onthou wat het jy nie ...]
1:2	[Assesseer ... of hoe ons in die kwartaal of hierdie laaste ruk, hoe ons geassesseer is. Is dat jy moes leer vir die klein toetsies wat jy geskryf het en dit het jou baie gehelp toe jy moes leer vir die semestertoets.]
	[Want dan leer jy die werk en dink daaroor. Veral hierdie vak het baie scenarios wat hy skep en dan moet jy daarvolgens weet wat om te doen.]

	[En dit help jou om te verstaan.]
	[Want jy het gedurende eksamens tyd om te beplan.]
	[Ja, om te tyd ... om te beplan wat jy wil doen.]
	[Sê nou maar, sê nou maar ek vat een groot ding, dan kan jy al jou aandag kan jy alles in daai een ding in daai een projek sit as wat jy klomp kleintjies en jou aandag is nie by dit nie want jy het te veel. Jy kan nie alles in sit nie. Jy het te min tyd. Jy het te min tyd vir alles.]
	[Ja, en minder take doen.]
	[Maar dit is net moeilik want in elke vak wil hulle toetsies toetsies toetsies skryf, jy hou nooit op met leer nie verstaan en dit is take en dit is nie altyd lekker om so baie klastoetse te doen nie.]
	[Ek bedoel ons het almal so gedruk in die kwartaal jy het nie tyd om na 'n toets eintlik weer te werk nie daaraan nie.]
	Rote learning (learn, facts)
5:6	[Do you do rote learning?]
	[Yes, we do.]
	[Yes, that is what is exactly going on. But it is not as if you say oh this is how I understand it.]
4:6	
	[Maar partykeer leer jy ook soos 'n papegaai.]
4:7	
	[Dit is belangrik dat jy verstaan wat jy in die eksamen gaan doen. Ek skryf eksamen om te weet wat in daai vak aangaan. So, dit beteken jy moet leer. So, dit is belangrik dat jy nie dit soos 'n papegaai leer nie, want verstaan as jy dit soos 'n papegaai leer gaan jy dit nie kan oordra nie want jy sal nie verstaan nie.]
1:2	
	[Maar baie keer as jy vir toetse leer jy leer nie regtig nie, jy neem nie regtig kennis in nie, jy leer net om goed so te ken vir die toetse en om klaar te kry dit is nie asof jy kennis inneem nie.]
	[Ek bedoel 'n week nadat ek geskryf het kan ek nie eers regtig onthou waaroor ek geskryf het nie.]
	[Dis asof en die goed wat jy leer (jaa) en dit dit net ja dadelik weer vergeet.]
	[Ja dis asof jy leer en dit is net 'n ....]
1:3	
	[Jy vergeet dit dadelik.]
	[Dis net uuh ... toetse maak rêrig nie sin nie.]

	[Nie altyd nie, baie keer leer jy soos 'n papegaai werk en jy leer om die ding te gaan neerskryf, en dan weet jy nie eers regtig soos wat ek netnou gesê het. Dan weet jy nie eers wat jy geleer het nie, maar jy leer dit maar net.] [Baie keer leer ek net om te onthou, maar kom nie by die punt om dit toe te pas nie. Maar baie werk is net papegaai leerwerk jy moet dit net memoriseer, maar dit beteken niks nie. Dit hou nooit op nie.] [Ja maar baie keer ... jy weet mos elkeen leer soos om op sy eie manier... maar soos ek né, ek moet dit vir my interessant maak ...] [Maar ek kan nie net leer nie. Ek moet iets doen. Ek moet dit vir my interessant maak soos kleure of soos prentjies en so. Ek is 'n baie visuele mens. Ek moet soos om dinge inbrand en verstaan.]
	To understand the work
4:6 3:9	[Ek dink dit is ... want jy kan na 'n lesing gaan onvoorbereid en die dosent kan luister maar jy het nie rêrig ingeneem nie maar eksamen dwing jou eintlik om daai werk te gaan opswot en 'n kenner van jou vak te word en die eksamen dwing jou anders gaan jy nie weet wat daaraangaan nie] [.... Finale eksamen toets van kennis is noodsaaklik.] [Eksamen is nodig...... Ja, ek dink daar is baie van daai toepassingsvrae wat 'n mens in daai situasie insit......] [Gee hulle vir jou 'n gevallestudie.] [.....Aan die ander kant het jy net 'n deel daarvan geleer in die kwartaal. In die eksamen moet jy weer gewoonlik alles leer dan as jy nie eksamen skryf nie dan het jy net 'n deel van daai kennis en in die eksamen gaan jy weer die res leer.]
	Blended learning (see Appendix G, I)
	Formative assessment (see Appendix G, I)

2. Engagement in learning (EIL)

	Motivational engagement
	Goal orientation: Marks (learn, self-esteem, proud)
5:1	[Yes, it is all about marks.]
5:3 4:5	[No, I will not only go to class because I will get marks. I also want to learn in this subject.]
1:1	[Punte.]
3:4	[Punte.]

2:3	[Punte.] [...en dit is vir jou dis vir my half so bevredigend as jy weet jy het hard geleer en jy kry goeie punte terug dan is jy trots op jouself.] [So, as jy goeie punte kry gaan dit mos jou outomaties help om harder te werk.]
	To learn (pass, motivate)
3:4	[Punte motiveer jou om te leer.]
2:3	[Wil deurkom.] [Wil goed doen.] [Deur te kom.]
	Continuous assessment
3:10	[Want almal word gedryf deur deurlopende assessering.]
	Didactical context: Lecturer
4:5	**Presentation** [... hoe die dosent of die onderwyser dit aanbied. So, as die onderwyser moeite doen en dit interessant gaan aanbied dan gaan jy dit ook makliker leer en dan gaan jy verstaan.]
4:5	**Enthusiasm** [Dit is belangrik so lank die dosent wys hierdie vak is vir haar belangrik ...]
3:6	**Subject knowledge** [Die dosente. Dit hang af hoe entoesiasties hulle is en dan voor die klas kan gaan staan en 'n kenner van die vak wees ......] [Dit hang baie van die dosent af.]
	Interesting subject
4:5	[Dit moet 'n vak wees wat vir my regtig interessant is.] [Dit is vir my lekker om werk te leer wat ek verstaan en belangstel.] [En uhm ja, as dit in jou belangstelling is soos hierdie vakke is wat ons eendag gaan doen. Dit is vir ons lekker en ons dis lekker om te leer.]
1:6	[Dit is soos, ek dink soos ek nou nou sê as ek dit leer dan moet dit interessant wees. Verstaan dit moet interessant wees, soos ek dit nie fisies hoef te leer om te onthou nie maar as jy dit moet deurlees moet dit interessant wees.]
	Vocational value
	Knowledge

3:6	['n Mens wil tog leer.]
2:3	[Jy wil 'n kenner van jou vak wees.]
1:1	[Ja en dit is lekker om die kennis ook te hê.]
5:3	[En kennis.]
3:10	**Teaching** [The only reason I studied so hard is because at the end of this year I can go and do what I am supposed to go and do. I can go and teach.]
	[Jy het die kennis om 'n goeie onderwyser te wees.]
	[Baie min mense gaan hulself motiveer en sê: "Ek kan moeite doen. Ek kan 'n goeie onderwyseres wees. So, ek moet klas toe gaan. Ek moet goed doen".]
	[Die punte gaan saam met goeie onderwyser wees.]
2:3	[As jy goeie punte kry dan sal jy 'n goeie onderwyser wees.]
	Future [Dit is maar ... jy weet jy werk vir jou toekoms.]
	[Ons is hier om te leer om die res van ons lewens 'n sukses te maak.]
2:4	[Ja, dis half asof jy leer omdat jy iets nodig het vir jou toekoms.]
	[Jou doelwit te bereik.]
	[Ja, jy werk hiervoor.]
	[Dit motiveer jou.]
	[Ja, want almal wil graag goed doen en as jy iets vir punte moet doen, dan is dit soos almal sê, OK dan doen jy moeite.]
	[I have to say what motivates me to learn is that ... that I get the qualification.]

	Behavioural engagement (practical, active, participate)
1:13	[Meer praktiese aktiwiteite in die klas.]
	[Praktiese ... ja.]
	[Sodat jy kan leer.] [Dis daai..]

	[Sodat al daai prakties, visueel, ouditief, taktiel ...] [Ja, sodat jy ... dan onthou jy beter.]
1:1	[Ek dink ons assessering moet dalk meer bietjie prakties georiënteerd wees, want enige ie leer en dit gaan neerskryf. Maar dit sê nie hy beskik oor die vaardigheid om lewensvaardig dit sal dalk beter wees as ons nie eksamen te skryf nie maar dalk eerder 'n praktiese taak c [Of iets wat ons rustig kan prakties gaan doen by 'n skool of so iets.] [Ja, toepas of so iets.] [Ek dink weer wat nogal kan help is 'n gevallestudie of soos *you tube* iets wys, sy gebruik *y* ons sit in die klas na die tyd en ons kan dit alles toepas en evalueer.]
1:3	[Dit gaan nie net oor die kennis nie.] [Jy leer om kennis en vaardighede te gebruik. As jy in 'n situasie kom moet jy leer hoe o toepas.] [Ja, jy moet dit in die klaskamer kan toepas ook.] [Want verskillende goed leer jy op verskillende maniere. Ek bedoel soos Wiskunde gaan le jy Geskiedenis of Aardrykskunde of wat ookal kan gaan leer deur dit deur te lees, en weer niks daaraan doen presies nie. Maar iets soos Lewensvaardighede gaan jy beter leer as j gaan leer om dit weer te lees om dit weer te kan toepas.] [Jy moet dit self gaan doen.]
1:7	[Ja, kyk soos in die klas kan ons ook meer praktiese goed doen. Ek bedoel dit is baie b doen as teorie.] [Ek dink dit is baie beter om goed prakties te doen as teorie.]
3:2	[Meer prakties.] [Veral in die skool.] [Meer prakties.] [Ja, baie meer prakties.] [Jaa ....] [Soos wat?] [Soos om goedjies en goed te kom toets.] [As jy in 'n situasie is en jy weet nie hoe om dit te hanteer nie en dan as jy leer sal jy r hanteer.] [Prakties is belangrik.]

		[Prakties in verskillende situasies.]
		Application
2:14		[Ja, meer prakties dalk ... verstaan dalk meer in so 'n groepie waar soos daai gemeensk fisies moet gaan doen.]
		[Veral Lewensvaardighede, want jy kan nie net die kennis hê en neerskryf nie.]
		[Dit sal ook help in die leerproses om minder geskrewe goeters en bietjie meer prakties ...]
2:1		[Ja, want dan kyk hulle of die kennis wat geleer het of jy dit kan toepas.]
2:3		[Dit is die ding as jy dit wat jy geleer het *actually* sien en ...]
		[Daaroor praat en toepas.]
		[Ja.]
		[Dit is ook lekker as jy voor die tyd musiek en videos en ... daai goedjies voor die tyd.]
		[Om te wys in die klaskamer dan help dit ook om jou ... ook om die kennis beter te verstaa jy: "OK dit is simpel ..."]
		[Ek hou van die toepassing.]
2:7		[Ja, toepassing is baie nodig, want Lewensvaardighede gaan juis daaroor.]
2:11		**Authentic** [Ja, ons dink net ons het nou gesien in die tweede semester lyk dit meer na lewensvaardigheid is vir my half iets wat jy *hands on* betrokke moet wees. Dit is iets moe daarby is en jy kan nie self dit ervaar nie en nie self daarmee doen nie.]
		[Soos 'n ding van sê nou drie ure twee ure gemeenskapsdiens vir daai vak. En jy ga terugvoering gee. Die onderwyseres kan dan eerder terugvoering gee ... die dosent kan toetsie oor dit te skryf, gaan jy en jy pas hierdie inligting wat jy het prakties *hands on* toe sk jou toepassing daarvan en die dosent merk dit en jy kyk of dit ... jy dit reg geïnterpreteer he moet ons die kennis wat ons in die klaskamer kry, wat ons moet leer moet jy in die klaskam
5:4		[But knowledge is nothing if you can't apply.]
5:9		[But it always makes more sense practically.]
3:4		**Not only book sense**
		[Baie keer ervaar ek dit wat sy op skool gehad het wat nou nie meer in boeke staan nie inhoud.]
		[Ja, want al die voorbeelde kan nie in die boek wees nie né.]
		[Ek leer persoonlik baie meer om dit toe te pas uit toepassings. Ja, dis hoe ek dit verstaan

	[So ja, dit is belangrik om dit fisies self te gaan doen.]
	[Nee, want dit is deur take en fisies goeters te doen kyk soos die gemeenskapsprojek en rollespel of klein klastoetsies wat jy weet jy was in die klas.]
	[Ek dink dit hang af van die dosent wat die vraestel opstel want as daar *case studies* in is ... jy moet dit gaan toepas.]
	[Maar as dit net feite is wat jy moet neerskryf. Ja, jy gaan die kennis daarvan hê, maar jy g
	Groups
4:3	[In elk geval groepwerk is *stupid,* want een gaan doen en dan doen die res niks nie o opgedeel tussen die vyf van ons jy doen taak1 jy doen taak 2 jy doen taak 3 so daar is nê lyk asof ons werk maar ons doen.]
	[Ons het nie altyd tyd om by mekaar te gaan sit en die hele taak te doen nie.]
	[Want elkeen het sy eie goed.]
	[Groepwerk werk nie eintlik lekker op kampus nie.]
	[Ja dit werk nie.]
	[Ja elkeen het verskillende klieke.]
5:17	[Group work stinks.]
	[Why?]
	[Because there is always one person that does more than the others.]
	[Yes always.]
	[And it is difficult to get together to work time is a very important factor especially when we a and then we have to do something it is usually group work which means we only can come once a week per subject.]
	Cognitive engagement (making sense, apply, use, do it practically)
4:6	[Ja, vra vir mekaar...]
	[Wil nie net leer om te leer.]
	['n Mens probeer om te verstaan.]
4:7	[Soms moet jy die vakkekennis het, verstaan moet jy die simptome van iets ken.]
	[Jy kan nie die lewensvaardighede hê voor jy die kennis van iets het nie.]
	[So 'n mens moet toepassingvrae kry en jy moet kennisvrae kry ...]
3:6	[Want jy kan nie gaan toepas sonder die kennis en die vaardighede nie.]

1:3	[Ja, want jy kan nie die vaardighede doen as jy nie die kennis het nie.]
	[Dit help nie jy weet net ek moet in hierdie situasie dit doen, maar jy kan dit nie doen nie.]
	[Ja, jy moet nie net weet nie.]
	[Ek weet ek moet so wees en veerkragtig wees en aanpas en positief dink en ... Maar dit h
	[Jy moet die vaardighede kan gebruik. Dit help nie jy kom in 'n situasie en jy kan nie die v ek moet iets gaan doen en ek moet positief wees en ek moet aanpas, maar dit help nie el dit nie doen nie.]
	[Baie kinders het die kennis maar hulle kan regtig nie die Lewensvaardighede toepas nie word is daar ander faktore soos emosies, en die omgewing maak hulle so angsbevange d nie.]
	[So, ek dink dit is regtig belangrik dat hulle moet.. dit is vaardighede...hulle moet wat om om die vaardighede in die situasie te gebruik.]
1:4	[Ja, Lewensvaaardighede leer jy deur dit doen.]
	[Ek dink ons is soos kinders. Jy leer deur doen. Ons leer ook deur doen. Jy leer om dit prak
1:7	[Jy jy kan amper in die situasie kom.]
	[Dit sal nou nie help om....]
	[Ja, dit sal nie help jy het al die kennis maar jy kan dit nie oordra nie, want mense wat teru om dit oor te dra nie.]
	[Ja, jy moet dit prakties doen.]
	[Ek meen jy gaan nie tyd hê om in die situasie ... om terug te gaan nie. Ek meen dit gaan n
	[En jy moet nou iets kan doen.]
1:12	[Ek dink dit leer jou baie meer om op jou voete te kan dink.]
	[Want in die klaskamer-situasie eendag moet jy op jou voete kan dink.]
	[Jy kan nie sê weet jy né jy het nou dit of dat nie dit staan iewers in die boek nie.]
	[En 'n mens onthou dit ook beter en dan leer jy ook daaruit baie.]
	[En dan leer jy uit iets wat jy gedink het jy gaan glad nooit doen nie.]
	Attitudes change
4:5	[Ja, ek dink nie ons besef altyd dat dit gebeur nie, maar as jy terugdink jou houding veran daaroor.]

	['n Mens dink baie dit wat jy leer is nie regtig dit nie, maar 'n mens weet nie regtig altyd wa Wat gaan in daai persoon se kop aan dat hy dit doen nie so dit is belangrik om oor dit te dink daaroor en ook om oop kop te wees daaroor.]
	[Want in die LV klas leer jy mos om so 'n situasie te hanteer.]
	[In 'n mate ja, want baie keer dan het jy 'n ... 'n eie opinie oor iets en dan sodra jy ander die siutasie werklik is, kan dit jou opinie beïnvloed.]
	[Jy is partykeer so *narrow minded* dat jy net een aspek van 'n situasie sien uhm en dan so jy die ander kant ook sien.]
3:6	[En nou is dit half meer vir myself, ek wil nou ryker hier uitstap ...]
	[So ja, jy doen dit meer half vir iets anders.]
	[Wel ja, en jy weet ook die kinders is half in jou hande.]
	[Ja, soos ek as ek iets leer kan ek my houding daaroor verander.]
	[Uhm leer jy ... leer jy deur die vakke, en doen jy kennis op om agter te kom ... om misk maak.]

3. Feedback (FBK)

	Feedback method
	Written (read)
4:9	[Want dan kan jy weer gaan kyk.] [Veral naby die eksamen.]
1:10	[Baie mense hou nie van mondelingse terugvoer nie.] [Veral as dit negatief is nie.]
	Oral (discuss, listen, ask, questions)
3:11 **1:10**	[Ek hou ook van mondeling, sodat jy kan terugsê maar dis hoe jy dit verstaan maar dan kan die dosent sê: "Nou maar dis reg hoe jy dit ervaar.". .. interpreteer ja en dan kan jy sê nou maar jou eie mening teruggee teenoor wat jy so pas gesê het.] ['n Mens hou nie van mondelinge terugvoer veral as dit 'n groot klas is. Maar partykeer is mondelinge terugvoer beter, waar jy 'n blaai kry en jy sit dit in jou sak en jy gaan huistoe. Waar as jy mondelingse terugvoer kry, luister jy en jy hoor hoe hulle dit verduidelik. Ek meen as 'n mens mondelinge terugvoer kry luister jy.]
	Both (combination)

1:10 2:9 2:10 4:9	[Maar ek dink as jy altwee kan kry en dit sien. Vir party is dit beter om te hoor en vir ander is dit beter om te sien en as jy dan in die toets kom dan weet jy wat jy verkeerd gedoen het.] [Want dan kan 'n mens notas ook maak, want baie keer is daar goed op 'n memo wat jy in elk geval nie verstaan nie soos wat nie sin maak nie.] [So, as jy môre 'n memo kry van 'n toets waarop daar geskryf staan. Ek gaan dit rerig nie deurlees en kyk nie. En die op die internet. Ek het daarna gekyk en toe stop ek, want ek het nie tyd om dit te lees nie.] [Dit is goed om skriftelike terugvoer te kry, sodat jy 'n basis het maar julle wil ook graag praat ook.] [Ja dis eintlik altwee.] [Ek sê altwee.] [Partykeer haak iets by my beter vas as 'n onderwyseres wat in die klaskamer vir jou gesê het dat as wanneer jy dit sommer net lees.] [Ja, want ek dink 'n mens kan ook lekker daaroor gesels want dan kry jy ook 'n kans om jou opinie te gee net ... net sy uh opinie nie.] [Altwee.] [Ja, albei.] [Geskrewe is makliker. Mondeling met klas van 50 is seker moeilik.] [Mondeling. Een ding word gesê, jy is nie seker. Maar met geskrewe - dit is daar. Staan daar.]
	Friends
5:16	[No, I would rather talk to the lecturer.]
3:11	[Jou maats is makliker om te verduidelik as dosente.]
1:11 2:10	[Nee, want die ding is net hulle het nie daai kennis rêrig om jou te motiveer nie.] [Nee wat, baie keer dit maak nie saak wat sy dink nie. Dit gaan oor wat die dosent gaan dink.] [Ja, dit kan maar ek dink as die ding is - as dit 'n vriendin is gaan sy altyd vir jou positiewe terugvoer gee. So, dis nie eintlik ... dis soos daai paar ..soos ons gepraat het...dis eintlik dit help nie, want hulle gaan altyd vir mekaar 90% of 100% gee.]

	[Dit hang af hoe ernstig neem jy dit op, verstaan. As jy nou voel jy ... dis moeilik as jou vriende jou assesseer of jy ander mense assesseer en jy voel half ...] [Ja, dis moeilik.] [Ek hou nie daarvan om punte te gee nie.]
4:7 **2:10**	[So, dit is altyd beter om met jou ... jou pelle daaroor te praat. Dalk moet jy in groepe bietjie leer of net bymekaar kom nadat jy geswot het en daaroor praat.] [Dit is goed om dit dan net 'n biejtie oor te dra sodat jy kan verstaan wat jy geleer het.] [Ja, ek voel jou maats moet jou nie assesseer nie.] [Nee.] [Hulle kan nie.] [Hoe kan jy iemand assesseer waarvan jy nog besig is om te leer.]
	Feedback language
	Encouragement (positive, acknowledge, appreciate)
5:12 **5:13** **1:9** **5:13,14**	[The way that dr. K. does it is for me is a lot different than other lecturers. In your test she actually writes what about this ... think about this.] ["I liked your answer", so she points you out and you feel you are not just a number.] [As ek dit doen, en sê nou maar ek het toets geskryf en ek kry nou 'n vraestel terug en daar staan baie mooi of *jis* jy kan trots wees op jou werk, soos in take. Dan voel ek nogal lekker. Dan dink ek ten minste iemand sien jou harde werk raak.] [You know what we actually ... I got ... I can't ... I got less than my ability with dr. K.'s test and I got an OK percentage mark but for me that is a brilliant mark because of my learning problem, but she wrote next to me: "Well done." You know that for the whole week what just that and I know I am stupid and must get over it but....just her noticing there well done to me meant the world to me.] [Last year in Psychology the lecturer gave the top ten students a chocolate.] [Really?]

5:6	[And it was so nice. Because you got a chocolate in front of the entire class and it made you feel - like you know the effort I put into it ... it paid off.] [And this means even more to me….And that meant a lot to me because I studied hard and even now that I did not get a distinction, I still tried and it was still appreciated.] [Can I just say a last thing. I think 75 for some people, 75 might be very easy to reach for other people it might be very hard. So, it is a very … I don't know I think if they can actually just test you according to your ability.] [Ja, first tell us all the good things. I mean if there is something that we did really badly .. like...mention it.]
	Improvement (grow, learn, enhance)
5:13,14 **4:8**	[Yes, we put a lot of effort in it. And you can actually go back and say: "Where did you find this?" and then she will write: "on p. 40." And there is where the actual answer is and then you will go oh ... and then when it comes to the exam - because when you have given me feedback ….I forgot it. But now it is written in there and now I can go back.] [Jy verbeter mos nou jou swakpunte. Dit wat jy verkeerd gedoen het.] [Jy wil beter doen in dit waarmee jy sukkel.]
	Improve
5:12	[To make my work better.] [So, that you know where you went wrong.] [Especially where you want...] [...to know how to improve.] [Listen, if I give you this huge summary which I thought was brilliant and you give me a mark of 50. I would want to know what I did wrong.] [I would want to know why it was not right.]
3:11	[As jy nie weet wat jy verkeerd gedoen het nie, waaraan kan jy werk? en waaraan kan jy verbeter? en so aan ...] [Want as jy 'n fout gemaak het, kan jy moes dit regmaak.] [So, dit motiveer jou om beter te presteer.] [Ja, 'n mens leer uit jou foute uit.]

1:9	[Jy leer en sien ek het dit so gedoen, maar ek moes dit so gedoen het.]
	[Ja, want as jy nie vir hulle sê wat hulle verkeerd gedoen het nie, hoe gaan hulle nou weet wat hy verkeerd gedoen het.] [As jy swak gedoen he,t gaan dit jou motiveer om iets te doen en my punte beter te doen.]
2:8	
6:8	[Terugvoering, dis maar basies om te wys of ek verstaan wat ek geleer het. Want as jy nie iets verstaan nie of jy het nie iets geleer in die klas nie hoe kan jy dan weet wat is Lewensvaardighede?...]
	[Feedback where you told us question for question and then you told us this person you thought did well because of this this and this. That was very good, because that was individual as well as group, because you told that individual that that person was right, but then also gave us the reasons why the individual was right.]
	Timely feedback (immediate, after summative assessment)
	After summative assessment
3:11	[Jy kry nie terugvoer.]
	[Jy weet nie eers of is daar reg gemerk nie of is daar verkeerd gemerk nie. Jy sien nooit wat daar staan nie.]
	[Jy sien net jou punt op die Blackboard.]
	[So, dis 'n nadeel van die eksamen.]
2:7	[So, dit sal vir my lekker wees as die juffrou terugkom en sy sê hoor hier maar hier ... soos jy moes die vraag so beantwoord en ek ek vra wat was daai. Want ek weet nie so mooi ...jy kry nooit jou vraestelle terug nie. So, ek weet nooit wat rêrig daar aangaan..]
1:9	[Want hoe gaan jy nou weet hoe om volgende keer se vraag te beantwoord as jy nie weet wat die antwoord in die eksamen was nie.]
	[So, ek dink nogal dat terugvoer in die eksamen is nogal belangrik.]
	[Ons kan nie terugkom klas toe en die toets bespreek nie, want jy het baie vakke om te leer.]
1:8	[Na die eksamen is dit vakansie. Dan is ons weg.]
	[Daar is nie terugvoer na die eksamen nie.]
	[Nie regtig nie.]
4:8	[Op die huidige stadium.]
	[Ek sal graag my vraestel wil sien.]

[En 'n memo wil hê.]

[En jy kry dit nie terug nie en as jy nou wil weet of jy die vak deur is.]

[Dan kan jy sien waar jou foute was.]

[So, ek sou terugvoer wou hê na die eksamen soos met skool.]

[Help terugvoer na afloop van 'n toets?]

[Terugvoer na afloop van 'n toets help baie.]

[Terugvoer sê vir jou waaraan jy nog moet werk en wat jy nog kan verbeter wat jy anders moet doen.]

[Kan jou sê of jou antwoorde reg is en wat verkeerd is.]

[Na 'n eksamen ook, ek weet nie, omdat ons nog baie vakke het, en baie werk het weet ek nie.]

[Maar as jy klaar eksamen geskryf het twyfel jy of jy die regte antwoorde geskryf het en dan wil jy weet of dit reg is.]

[Omdat ons punte georiënteerd is, is terugvoer belangrik. Want dit is belangrik vir punte dit help jou ook vir die praktyk waar jy ingaan, want soos ek sê dit help om dan uit 'n boek te wil gaan praat nie.]

[Maar dan dink ek weer wat het ek uitgelaat en wat het ek vergeet.]

[Maar nou aan die ander kant, ek het nou eksamen geskryf ... en nou wil ek vergeet.]

[So, kyk sê nou maar ek het eksamen geskryf, nou kan ek kyk hoe het ek gedoen.]

APPENDIX I

Categories: semi-structured interviews

1. Meaning of assessment (MEA)

*Code	Experience
	Exams and formative assessment
4:8	**Prefer exams**
	[I like exams, but I also think that continuous assessment is important, I think you must have both.]
5:2	
	[Uhm I still believe in the exam in terms of a summative assessment in the end to determine exactly whether the student can apply. But to me especially in life skills, is the process and not only looking at the product. Because what was happen... what happens they look at the product and if you haven't really looked at the process. I can't say whether that learner is really skilled, because if you want to think about something like communication skills how can you only do that in a theoretical way? And now they write on that but that is not to say that they really have the communication skills. I would say that it would help the process, but in the end you would like a product. Uhm again, then when one looks in terms of numbers ... it is going to be difficult if you have 60 learners to assess them in terms of alternative assessment in terms of observations or skills, for example. But now you have observed either the lecturer or the group or the tutor. So, there is progress and in the end when they get that then you can combine the marks ... the summative marks and you often find that those marks correlate with one another so building up the process.]
	Rote learning
2:6	[I sometimes feel like that a lot of the work we do. A lot of the lecturers mark very strictly. They look for specific words in a definition, for example if you don't give those words you don't get those marks. So, therefore, students would rather learn the definition like a parrot and just write it, because it is guaranteed that you get your marks even if you don't understand it so.]
2:5	
	[Students do rote learning. I do rote learning ... in the things in a manner that I try to make the most sense out of it that I can. I will take a definition and learn it just like that, but if you need me to explain the definition I will give you the formal definition that I have learned out of the book and under that take that same definition and pose my meaning on it so I think lots of children do rote learning, but you need to give your own opinion in that rote learning as well.]
6:4	**Time**

7:2	[Uhm actually I have been thinking about it a lot and uhm I think on the one hand it is difficult, because I uhm may had like 11 subjects this semester and to put a lot of effort in every single lecture takes a lot of time and in a term you don't really have that where in the exam you can focus only one the one subject because you had that whole time to focus on one subject, so uhm it would it was nice if we have less subjects and uhm that would be very nice but on the other hand it would also be very difficult if you have to prepare for every single lecture .]
4:2	[Ek persoonlik hou nie van die klein assesserinkies nie die rede hoekom ... dit het eintlik positiewe en negatiewe uhm goedjies uhm die negtatief vir my is uhm ek hou daarvan om tyd te hê om te leer vir uhm 'n toets so die eksamen is vir my lekker want daar is genoeg tyd om te leer en voor te berei vir die toets vir daai assesseringstaak wat gaan volg, maar die klein assesserinkies is partykeer net na klastyd dan is daar nie altyd lekker tyd om voor te berei dit nie en dan jaag 'n mens dit af en dan doen 'n mens nie tot die beste van jou vermoë nie.] [There is not enough time to do in one module.] [I do not know, because I know we don't have a lot of time and you do have to you have to do the uhm the theory you'll have to do the theory before you can apply it practically so it is very difficult if you do not have time.]
7:3	[Negative] [Ek sê negatief ... ha ha ...] [Hoekom?] [Ha ... ek weet nie ek .... uhm daar is altyd die kans dat jy gaan swak doen. So, dit is hoekom dit is vir my negatief. Want, ek wil altyd die beste doen so as ... as 'n mens as ek hoor daar is 'n toets of iets dan is dit soos oooo daar is 'n kans om swak te doen .... dis hoekom ...]
7:8	**Combination** [Ek dink 'n eksamen is belangrik, maar ek sou sê 'n mens kan deurlopende assessering ook gebruik. Ek sou die twee gekombineer het. 'n Mens kan deurlopende assessering doen deur formatiewe assessering te gebruik of dan klein puntjies gee. Of dan ek 'n mens moet op die ou einde 'n eksamen gebruik dan kan 'n mens alles saamvat. Want 'n mens gaan nie met klein goedjies of selfs met 'n toets gaan jy nie al die werk kan dek nie. Maar by 'n eksamen moet jy al die werk leer. So dan gaan 'n mens kan sien waar daai leerder of die student - nie watter vaardigheid hy nie verstaan nie of watter werk hy nie onder die knie het nie.]
5:9	**Support** [Yes, assessment is there to support. Assessment is not judgemental, but it is developmental as much and that is where the focus should be. And when I am satisfied by that and I am convinced that the learners are performing, then I should move to the final summative assessment, for that reason I believe in summative assessment.]
	Formative (support, improve, ongoing, can make mistakes)
2:1	**Formative** [I think an important type of assessment that you can use is definitively formative that's way uhm formative then you can determine ... Then the

6:4	progress ... if you look at how they develop. Let's take an example for specifically learning skills, for example something like a mind map. You explain that to them and they implement that into any learning area. You facilitate that. You guide them on how to do that and then they go back and then they implement it, because according to me life skills and life skills assessment should be implemented through the different learning areas. I think that is also the whole aim the life orientation as a learning area.]
4:6	Yes, I do think small activities can help to develop these skills. Uhm I must admit the uhm the research was very interesting because a lot of us use different schools and it was interesting to see the cognitive levels of the different schools it was nice uhm but it was also nice for me personally to see others' assignments.]
2:3	[You need... I come back to assessment to develop confidence. You can do assessment. Give those small tasks. Children will go: ... "Ha I got ten out of ten, yeah I can actually do this." And I think that got that motivates me, if I do an assessment or a task not really knowing what to expect - get a good mark back, then I will go over that assessment read it again. "OK, actually I do understand this, OK I can do this, I'm good, I feel better.]
4:3	
2:4,5	[So, just make it like small breaks ... it ... make it like small tasks, and that will help to build self-confidence like the little tests that you gave us or the things that we had to go on blackboard. It's something smaller. And may be the first test, you did not do so well, but then you know that you can do it over. And I think that that helps your self confidence, because you can do it over and can do it better.]
5:3	[It is a lot of work for a little bit of marks, but ag in the end when we had to go and write exams we already knew what was going on. Whereas we only write the exam it is more work and that is why most of us don't like it. But I think then when you get to the exam you already know what is going on. It takes you half a time to study everything, because sometimes you don't have time to go to class or you don't have time to do this in class or
2:4,5	something. And then you don't know what is going on so then when the exam comes, you start from scratch where if you do the little tests it's in your breaks somewhere. So, it's much quicker to learn it.]
	[One can get as far as to see learning as a process, as a developmental process. And then the important thing is that you just got to see improvement, whereas for instance if you could do a formative assessment they go back and improve. And if they can see the difference in their marks because they will also say success breeds success so that should be a type of motivation.]
	[Read an example of the Johnston city school in the USA which I quite like a lot. I actually attended a lecture where they explain that for a specific instance in that school they done it, they mark with pencils.]
	[Uhm ... So, nothing is final. So you can give marks, but then those marks

	don't count. It give the learner the idea of their level of the performance only right at the end when they completed and actually go back and improved on what they are doing only then you will give a final mark. When they finalised that product or whatever and submit that.. so that can also be another way for example in doing it.] [I must say assessing formatively in a written way, I have experienced that students come back and they see their marks that does encourage them a little bit but the important thing is that they got to know where they went wrong and I uhm from little bit of research that I also did. One of the things that stood out that the students say that they don't always know what to do and they don't always know how to correct that and that is way there is a combination between verbal and written and individual feedback you bridge that gap.]
	Outcomes
4:1	[Yes, and to see if they met the outcomes and then you can see afterwards if you have done the assessment. Then you can see do I have to go back because they haven't grasp the concept if they don't know enough yet must I go back teach again change my strategy of teaching and If they did require the outcomes then you can go on to something else.] [You do the assessment that is there, because another reason the teacher won't do assessment just for the fun of it. There is always a purpose behind it. Students do not always understand the purpose behind it, but there is a purpose behind it.]
	Working in groups
2:5 8:6 4:5 1:7	[Well, it can enhance learning because I was given a task to do and this is now my opinion. My learning will be enhanced, because the other group had a different ... completely different. So, therefore they might learn from me and I might learn from them. You don't always learn from another group, but if you are open for it you can learn from anyone ... any person, but for sure that will enhance your learning.] [Ja, en dan leer 'n mens ook weer by mekaar. Baie keer as 'n mens so 'n klasbespreking doen, dan leer 'n mens by die ander ou. Want wat die ander ou ... sien iets wat jy nooit so sou gesien het nie. Hy sien dit in 'n baie ander perspektief as wat jy dit sou sien so dit help partykeer nog om... maar ek weet ons klas is nie baie spraaksaam nie ha ha ha ons praat nie baie as daar gepraat moet word nie. So, miskien is dit goed ... maar dr. doen dit ook ... in groepies in te deel en dan moet ons terugvoer gee. Want dan is ons verplig om terugvoer te gee ...] [You learn from one another and you also see things from more viewpoints. So, then you actually it's not like when learn in a book you learn one fact you see different people's viewpoints you get a bigger broader perspective of what you learning.] [Yes, I can see may be this way and then my friends say" "No, no, no, but doesn't she mean this?" And then you discuss it and then you can actually see the overall picture ....]

2. Engagement in learning (EIL)

	Motivational engagement
	Marks
6:1	[Yes definitely marks, because that is one part of feedback.]
3:3	[So, yes ... getting good marks for myself ... is good for me. And I like to share my joy with other people.]
4:4	
	[My mark (ha ha ha). It is your mark. It's definitively your mark that
7:4	motivates you to learn.]
	[Want, ek kyk ook eers na my punte en dan dink ek: "OK, nee dis 'n orait punt en dan gaan kyk ek na... O ok, hier so... en so het dr. gedink en dit moes ek eerder geskryf het." Maar 'n mens is onmiddellik negatief as jy 'n negatiewe punt kry. 'n Swak punt dan is 'n mens onmiddellik negatief, want dan dink 'n mens ag... Ja. Ja dit is maar net hoe 'n mens is want... uhm 'n
6:8	mens wil so graag goed doen en 'n mens wil deurkom veral in 'n mens se finale jaar. 'n Mens wil nie nou 'n vak sleep nie. So, dis belangrik dat alles wat 'n mens nou doen moet goed wees. So, dit is moeilik dan om 'n kind te
1:4	kry wat dan eerder na die opmerking te kyk as wat na die punt.]
7:2	[Definitely, definitely I think it is the first thing. I think that what every student does, is they look at their file they look for marks.]
	[I want to do well.]
	[Uhm ek dink 'n mens moet punte kry vir ...dr het nou self gesien vir daai een..daai een vraelys wat dr. gesê dit tel 15 punte en toe skryf die mense iets. Dit is rêrig ... dit motiveer 'n mens as 'n mens punte kry daarvoor. So,

	ek voel persoonlik is punte vir my ook belangrik. So, ek doen ekstra moeite met 'n ding waarvoor ek punte gaan kry.]	
2:4,5	**Intrinsic** [I think working with higher education students one should not say that I am going to reward you with this or that. It should be done inherit motivation where they compete against themselves but doing something like that ... that they can see how they improving. That's how you can motivate them.]	
6:8 **3:2**	**Success** [To be honest success that motivates me.] [One day the employee or you need to be employed. This person can look at your CV and see this person. If he looks at your marks he will see that this person studies hard she can practically apply the knowledge.] [A degree, but if you have a degree with good marks and things ... it conveys to the person who might appoint you one day that this is a competent person. That she studied hard. She is hard working. Your marks say a lot about who you are.]	
	Classroom, lecturer presentation	
6:1 **7:3** **7:7**	**Lecturer** [Yes, definitely marks because that is one part of feedback. But it is also nice like when you were in a class and you told us that you liked this answer from this person or this person. That motivates people a lot.] [Ha ha ha....uhm... ek het gehou van daai wat dr. na die tyd op Blackboard vir ons presies .. uhm die antwoorde gee..uhm en wat lekker was daar dr. het mos party van die kinders se vanne gesê wat 'n goeie antwoord gegee het ek. Ek voel dit was.. dit was oulik gewees, want daai kind voel sjoe ...sjoe dr. het nou regtig my antwoord gekyk en ek het 'n goeie antwoord daar gegee. So, ek dink dit gee.. dit motiveer 'n mens al het jy oor die algemeen in daai toets nie so goed gedoen nie daai spesifieke vraag het dr. van my gehou ek het daai ding reg geantwoord en dit was ... was goed gewees ... so ek dink dit was iets... uhm so ek het daar oor die algemeen nie 80%, maar 'n 60% kon die kind nog steeds goed voel oor daai antwoord wat hy spesifiek vir daai vraag gegee het.] [Vir my is dit lekker ... ek hou daarvan veral as 'n mens hard geleer het en jy het 'n goeie punt gekry dan hou ek daarvan om te sien die dosent dink darem jy het goed gedoen of jy het iets mooi geskryf of nee ek hou daarvan.]	

Behavioural engagement

	Practical application
4:5 **2:1**	[Because practical it is more fun than having to go sit and learn. It is actually more interesting you naturally learn if you have to talk to someone about it or something. You naturally do it without even know that you learn.] [Ja, it can support learning in terms of ... OK let's first look at the type of a skill that you do. Let us if you do something about learning skills and you assess that you guide them, you facilitate that skills so it should enhance the learning.] [You can put them in a situation and then see if they handle that situation correctly or not or just to see the manner in which they handle the situation, for example a social conflict how if you taught your children a specific concept in class or a specific skill in class. If you put them in a situation where there is conflict how are they going to deal with that situation do they use the skill that you taught them or do they use different skills.]
7:1 **4:2**	[Another way that I would say is role play you can specifically divide groups into ag ... divide the class into groups and give each group a different situation so that they can act that out and as that even if you give the same situation to all children then the groups or each groups all groups will come up with a different solution because each one the way they understand the skill is different so you can assess them by giving them a situation and letting them act that out and see what the outcomes is or the way they handle it.]
1:2 **4:7**	[Ek sou weer sê praktiese goedjies. Ek is 'n baie praktiese mens so ek hou van prakties. Ek voel as ons as 'n mens soos sosiale ontwikkeling nie lekker verstaan nie en 'n mens weet nie lekker waaroor dit gaan nie, dan om dit uhm prakties te demonstreer of op 'n praktiese manier te verduidelik ... snap 'n mens dit makliker.] [I think may be with a ... a ... uhm that when you give a like the example on the a case study. Yes. Yes I think in Life Skills you have to give case studies. That is the best then. You must read something and think for yourself: "OK this is a situation and this is how I gonna apply my knowledge."] [Because practical it is more fun than having to go sit and learn. It is actually more interesting. You naturally learn if you have to talk to someone about it or something. You naturally do it without even know that you learn.] [Ja, ek dink so. Uhm ek is weer by die prakties. 'n Mens kan dit selfs teoreties ook doen ... uhm dit gaan oor om te verstaan. So, om dit prakties te doen en of jy dit toereties doen, party mense gaan dit teoreties baie

	makliker snap as mense wat dit prakties doen. So, ek wou sê 'n mens moet dit albei saam doen, prakties en teoreties. Uhm miskien ouditief bietjie ... visueel miskien heel op 'n ander manier dit doen of miskien na 'n plek toe gaan en miskien 'n vaardigheid vir die kinders demonstreer of wys. Of wat ook al ... dan sal 'n mens dit kan verstaan as 'n vaardigheid op verskillende maniere gedemonstreer is.]
	Blended learning (Blackboard, time, resources)
3:9 7:9 2:9	[Yes, I would for the reason that teenagers and students are so into their cell phones ... is they get a SMS or a thing or quickly answer these five questions. Why would they not going to do that? They have their cell phones 24/7.] [Dit is nogal partykeer 'n probleem, want ek het ook nie internet by die huis nie, so ek moet Universiteit toe ry as ek dit wil gaan doen, maar....] ['n Mens kan dit op die selfoon ook doen, maar dit is net moeilik, want die selfoon se skermpie is baie klein en so aan so dit is moeilik om dit te doen.] [Ha we go on MXIT a lot and we do a group discussion before the exam and we like do old exam papers ha ha. You do it when you can't get together once and go through exam papers, because we like to do that then we will go on MXIT and do a group discussion and we go through the work it is easy and its everyone's viewpoint and so what will you answer on this question and then they say they will answer this and I think it's that and then you also give different answers and different viewpoints.]
	Authentic
8:1 8:2 6:1 1:3	[So, all that in one hand and I think on the other hand uhm authentic assessment. I mean speaking of real life skills - that this is what it is all about. So I think authentic assessment is important.] [Let's say we deal with the old trait factor thing and we do some questionnaires, introduce and complete some questionnaires ... so, that it becomes real and not only the theory. But that they can see this is how their own interest ...is... So, definitely the real connection must be there with real life ... as well as possible.] [So, if I say you need to... all the contents ... the content is also important, you need to know the content before you can assess or apply the knowledge. And uhm formative assessment for me is critical there, you know to assess values and things like that. I mean role play and that kind of thing. It is critical there. Also to develop meta-cognition.] [Uhm I think there is so much to do still. There is so much to do. What I like very much is to.. uhm try to make it authentic but really by making use of various assessment activities. Get away from just one way of assessing, just written ... written assessment. You know, multiple intelligences is part of our teaching where you aim to address different learning styles and different types of questions as part of assessment.]

	[Uhm like if we ... like if we for instance ...if like with this whole DLS research project that we have to do now for DLS 112. I think that exposes us to things that we normally wouldn't expose ourselves to and if we ... if that wasn't part of our assessment in Life Skills in DLS I don't think we would have ever come across that until we were teaching and to come across that as students just us being more better teachers.] [I think it does, because it put you in that situation. You see what you are working with. Because it is easily just to read in a book what is out there, but if you physically see it, then you can realise: "OK this needs to be done, and ok then we can do this and do that."]

Cognitive engagement

	Meta-cognition (making sense, understand, self-regulation)
2:6 1:1	[f you grasp the concept then you will be able to give your own meaning on it. So, I think that this Life Skills section module has taught me lot about giving your own meaning. Because sometimes I have my own meaning, but I am not always sure it's right. So, I am very afraid to write what I think is right. So, this module taught me that you need to sometimes just do that.]
	[Not just sitting there. So, through the assignments and tests you know... OK she does understand what I am ... they do listen in the class ... what I am trying to do in the class works they understand what the work is about.]
6:6	[When you give a case study or in an assignment then and you sit there and you actually knows what this is about ... then you know: "OK I can build from this, I can understand it ... Yeah, I think it builds self-confidence as well."]
	[Uhm I do think case studies ... I love case studies, because case studies are something that you have to think about that is also one of the good things I think but also to design things.]
1:2	[For example?]

6:7	[For example if you are to ask us to design an activity to develop a certain skills and to give like our own activity that would also be developing our skills because then we have to think for ourselves and not what the book told us to do.]
1:9	[Tests... it tests what you know ... not always how you can apply that knowledge. But if you have an assignment where it say critically evaluate this... and this statement and then you go and find information about it and you can actually see: "OK this guy said this .. and this ...for me assignments do that and projects ..."]
8:5	[Yes. Yes. Because like for instance, if you ... like the case study ...you'll have to critically think about what you have learned and then apply that correctly.]
7:8	[Yes it did. Because I was usually a person ... I just red things and copied it down, but then if you have a statement like with the suicide the boy that committed suicide ... that assignment ... you actually ... you couldn't just take that info and blot it down on the page. You actually had to critically think about it and say ... you know, but I think...]
2:3	
	[Uhm ja... da ...was so enetjie in die eksamen gewees uhm... 'n uittreksel wat dr. gee en dan basies nog steeds die werk wat ons geleer het gebruik ... maar dit meer uhm toepas op die uitreksel. So, jy moet nog steeds jou werk wat jy geleer het uhm ken, maar jy moet dit kan toepassing maak op daai uittreksel. So, dit is nie net papegaai werk wat jy neerskryf nie, maar jy moet dit nou gaan toepas op daai spesifieke situasie.]
2:2	
	[Ja, want jy moet vinnig op jou voete kan dink baie keer met kritiese evaluering of 'n vraag wat sê ... uhm iets wat uhm ... daai vraag wat dr. gesê het jy moet krities evalueer ... moet jy die negatiewe en die positiewe van daai vraag ... of daai situasie uitlig. So, jy gaan ... moet daar krities dink en redeneer en uhm en ja so beantwoord ... so ja.]
	[That skills can only be developed if they know what it is. And I think one should spend time in teaching the students to monitor their own situation. So, if they read through it ... what type of questions do I ask myself: "Did I analyse the situation? Did I look at the main concepts? Do I really understand? Can I apply that?" They got to go through a process where they are learned what the skills are. For instance and I don't know think they know. Just interesting ... something is also that ... uh previously researchers have proposed that this is a skill that should be developed right from the pre-primary school. You got to ask yourself those questions."
	[Yes, but then they got to be that motivated learner. With some learners you do find that. But with others you don't find that, but I personally feel that if you - I think we have all see that that - if you have the skill on doing something and you are seeing that you are busy improving that does usually motivate you. I think very few students stay unengaged in the end. So I

	personally think, I am very positive about that, it should work. But first we got to sit down and learn and teach them the skill of how to regulate their own learning.]
	Self-assessment
6:7	[No, to be honest I think self-assessment is not really relevant, because you don't know what you want at the end of the day.]
4:6	[No, I do not think so, because you are always going to give yourself a good mark I don't know. It is all about the mark.]
2:1	
	[How do I assess myself? And then you go back and then the whole process can be monitored within a group. Uhm if you can for instance have a tutor that can guide the group or uhm you can get one of the learners that may be excels in that specific area. Going back and discussing that in a group way ... in a group ... because that feedback that the students give one another that is when they really start learning. So, I don't think it is necessary that you do it by yourself. But, first they got to learn that skill of self-assessment.
2:4	So, then if you look at the whole idea about assessment is much more than only formative assessment and the lecturer giving feedback and summative assessment in getting written feedback, because they learn from one another and that is actually the process when learning takes place the most.]
7:10	[Self assessment that they ... they got to ask themselves the questions so that that come back to the first thing: "How do I, that I got to now understand myself? Regulate my own learning? and I got to have knowledge about my meta-cognitive skills." So, if they assess themselves they engage and then you can go further on now and also look at group assessment. So, the groups can also assess one another and I think during the assessment process one should engage uhm the learner self and then also more group ... group assessment which I think is something that does not really happen and again that can only happen if you know how to do that and what and what to do.]
	[Ek dink so. Ek dink so, want party mense ... dis eintlik moeilik ... want party mense skryf ... of ek sou iets skryf en dan gee ek vir myself 70, maar as 'n ander ou dit deurlees dan sê hy: "Sjoe 50." So dit... (sug) 'n mens weet nie rêrig wat is....vir jou is dit 'n 70? Maar vir daai persoon is dit eerder 'n 50 gewees. So, ek dink dit is maar 'n ding wat 'n mens moet aanleer. 'n Mens moet leer wat is 'n goeie opstel en wat is 'n swak opstel of uhm....of swak werk of goeie werk.]

3. Feedback (FBK)

	Feedback style
	Written (personal, communicate, reflect)
7:4 **2:8**	[Geskrewe is vir my meer persoonlik. As dit mondeling gaan wees, gaan dit half vir die hele klas wees. Dokter gaan sê daar was kinders wat dit en dit geskryf het en dit was goed gewees en dan was daar party wat so geskryf het. So, ek hou daarvan dat ... op my papier... want dan weet ek dit was vir my persoonlik gewees. So, ek hou van die geskrewe.] [Online feedback. Online feedback could work. You just need to consider that everyone does not always have access to everything all the time. So, for example you can put feedback on the computer, but I only get it a week later or three or four days later, because I could access the internet like I needed to.]
	Oral (discuss)
6:2 **1:6**	[Ja, but uhm I think I think uhm with the oral its sometimes more motivating, because you say it in front of everyone. Where's with the written it's more individual. So maybe if it was constructive feedback uhm written would be easier to take in than oral constructive feedback.] [Oral feedback. Because when you get oral feedback then you could also still ask questions: "But mam why do you think… what was wrong with the paper or why do you think this and this?"] [Because if it is just written on blackboard you don't always, you can't really speak to someone, because then you have to come to the office and make an appointment. And then it is just well if you are in the class then everyone knows and everyone can ask questions and maybe someone can ask a question that someone else wanted also to know.] [Oral, because then you can make your notes on the test. I don't think it matters. You can talk about the test and then give the memo back. It would be the same, if you don't give the memo. But I think it is very important to talk about a test in the class in spite of just give the memo, because you may be wrote something and then you didn't talk about it again in the class. So, you don't understand why is it like that in the memo and why is yours not right. I like if you say: "This is why. I want this answer" and then you can think for yourself: "Ok, this is what I have did wrong."]
	Both (combination)
2.5	[Not only oral, but oral is time wise... oral is faster, quicker and especially

6:2 **2:3**	DLS I'll find it easier to express myself orally than actually in writing. So, written could also work but oral time wise is probably best.] [Both is just as good.] [Uhm... Ja ... a combination of both, but then there should also be time made for individual feedback because individual feedback - then you come behind the thoughts of a learner. The meta-cognitive skills of a learner... and that too me is very important. Then you can determine where the learner went wrong, because often they you find they will say that I've discuss now I have studied but how did they really study? How did they regulate their learning? In terms of what went wrong you give the feedback, but can they really apply that feedback to their own situation? So, uhm both but also individual feedback is important.]
	Lecturer
7:3 **7:4**	[Ha ha ha....uhm... ek het gehou van daai wat dr. na die tyd op Blackboard vir ons presiess ê uhm die antwoorde gee..uhm en wat lekker was daar, dr het mos party van die kinders se vanne gesê wat 'n goeie antwoord gegee het Ek voel dit was.. dit was oulik gewees, want daai kind voel: "Sjoe ...sjoe dr. het nou regtig my antwoord gekyk en ek het 'n goeie antwoord daar gegee." So, ek dink dit gee.. dit motiveer 'n mens, al het jy oor die algemeen in daai toets nie so goed gedoen nie. Daai spesifieke vraag het dr. van my gehou, ek het daai ding reg geantwoord en dit was ... was goed gewees ... so ek dink dit was iets... uhm so ek het daar oor die algemeen nie 80%, maar 'n 60% kon die kind nog steeds goed voel oor daai antwoord wat hy spesifiek vir daai vraag gegee het.] [Vir my is dit lekker. Ek hou daarvan veral as 'n mens hard geleer het en jy het 'n goeie punt gekry.Dan hou ek daarvan om te sien die dosent dink darem jy het goed gedoen of jy het iets mooi geskryf of nee ek hou daarvan.]
	Feedback structure
	Rubric (guidelines, memorandum, precise)
7:7 **5:7**	[Eerstens, wat ek dink wat belangrik is uhm half soos 'n memorandum. 'n Mens moet basies die vraag deurgaan met die presiese antwoord en ook 'n rede. Want baie keer skryf 'n mens 'n antwoord en dan is hy verkeerd, maar 'n mens weet nie hoekom is hy verkeerd nie. Of 'n mens gee die regte antwoord, maar hy gaan aan met die volgende regte vraag. 'n Mens weet nie hoekom hulle sê daai is nie regte antwoord nie. So, ek sou sê 'n mens moet basies die memorandum gee, maar dan moet 'n mens ook basies die redes gee van hoekom is dit so. En ek dink ook 'n mens moet uhm 'n mens moet kan redeneer oor 'n antwoord as 'n student sê maar sy dink eerder so en sy kan 'n goeie rede gee vir haar antwoord moet die dosent flexible wees. 'n Mens moet dan ook uhm oor die algemeen moet hulle uhm wanneer hulle terugvoer gee oor 'n toets of 'n eksamen uhm sê wat was moeiliker vrae gewees uhm wat was die makliker vrae gewees. Hoekom was dit moeiliker vrae? Hoekom was dit makliker vrae? Wat het die dosent gedoen om dit moeiliker te maak of dit makliker te maak. Dan ook hoe hulle gemerk het waarvoor hulle punte gegee het. Uhm, want baie keer skryf 'n mens 'n hele paragraaf en jy kry 2 uit 10 en jy as persoon dink jy het verskriklik goed geskryf en dan is dit glad nie wat jy wou gehad het nie. So, die presiese

		antwoord, die punt waarvoor hulle punte gegee het. Die rede hoekom hulle daai antwoord gesoek het en dan ja.]
2:3		**Alignment** [I think it is all about the construction of your learning activities. So, if there is good alignment and they see how assessment between your learning activities and learning outcomes are talking to one another, then they are empowered in the process and it is all about providing them with rubrics because as soon as they see when they finish a thing they can see I will be assessed on the following things then.]
5:3 **5:8**		**Self-regulation** [Again if you look at the whole idea of uhm feedback and also self-regulation self-regulated learning there is a very big correlation between the two because self-regulation is seen as the pewit and all these other things go around that so if they have a skill of monitoring things themselves. For instance then it should definitely work, but again from experience I found that they don't really have that that skill. And if you look at the literature the literature also says that they can apply these skills but we don't know how well they apply it. So, the more advanced the self-regulated learner and academic achievement is there is a very good correlation between that. So, definitely if they have if they have the skills if they have the skill to do that and which then the lecturer must monitor then I definitely think that it will work.] [I am assessing assessment of learning to make sure whether learning has taken place so I think if you give feedback and you uhm support the learner then learning will definitely take place and that is the purpose of assessment.] [And it must be.. uhm communicate in such a way that it give meaning to the learners that they know exactly how can I use this to my benefit to help me to improve and to improve my learning to put it that way.]
		Feedback language: Improvement
6:2 **1:5** **2:2** **2:3**		[Uhm it is feedback in my opinion. It is negative and positive, but bringing negative positively. So, if you have to give me feedback, I want to know what were the points that you felt that I did right and what were the points that I could improve on.] [I think it is really important, because you need to know the way I did was the correct way. And to say: "You see, you did a good job." But maybe if you think about this and this and this or go for this angle then you actually you learn more as well. It opens your mind a bit.] [You can see by the feedback of the assessment: "Ok I really didn't understand this activity, so let's go back."]

4:4 **5:3** **6:8** **2:10** **2:7** **6:8**	[If you get the assessment back, you look, you ask questions and you say: "Ok now I understand it." And if you get another situation or question like that, I will be able to handle it.] [After the test, you got your test back and then you think: "Ok, maybe I should have done it in that way."] [But that is what I say ...it is important to mark with a pencil....so then that mark is not final. So, when.. if you give them feedback and tell them what to do to improve and they know that they can improve and get a better mark, then I think their attitude will change but if you give... if that mark is final...then they will just focus on that mark so that is the reason....] [Feedback where you told us question for question. And then you told us this person you thought did well because of this this and this. That was very good because ... You told that individual that that person was right, but then also gave us the reasons why the individual was right.] [I think of what I have seen in the classroom. OK the DLS, especially the Afrikaans class. Most people refer to write writing the exam. So, I think the assessment of those small assessment of ten marks give the students or give them the opportunity to ... to talk about things, for example if I didn't have those 10 mark assessments I do not think I would have done so well in the exam as I did because those assessments give me the opportunity to see "OK this is what I have to do. I didn't understand it at all ... I am on the right track." So, coming I think the way assessment was done in this past semester is perfect for me.] **Encouragement** [Just one very important thing of feedback is ... it must be … it mustn't let you, the student feel bad about how you did it. So, feedback must be done on a very kind ground.] [Number one most importantly is constructive. You don't want to give negative feedback and de-motivate the learners. You want to give constructive feedback where you can uhm touch one, the things that you felt uhm you did wrong but then constructively give them ways of improving uhm or may be uhm altering or make it better.]
	Timely
	Immediate (soon, quickly)
1:6 **8:6** **8:7** **5:8**	[I think it must be done within that week. Say if you have written on Monday it must be done within that week, because if it is the next week you already have forgotten what it was about.] [Now you have to balance the time of feedback. Timing of feedback which is so crucial.] [My number one would be that it must really be quick. It must really be efficient as in operational conditioning. Let's say within a week.]

2:6 **7:7**	[So, I think the most important thing for me is that it must be as quickly as possible because there is a process taking place now so as quickly as possible. … I would say it must be informative. It must not be in such a type of writing style that no one can understand what the meaning is there. And I would say it must if possible, it must be in writing so that the students can go back ..and read and reflect on the feedback and see how that can help them to improve their learning.] [As soon as possible because again a complaint of the students is that they get the feedback long after they have written the test and then in the next session they write a test. So, they don't have time to read again to see what are the mistakes that they made. So, they make exactly the same mistakes again.] [... dan verwag 'n mens van die dosent se kant af dat dit ook 'n redelike tyd. 'n Mens verstaan as dit uhm groot klasse is en alles maar ek dink 'n week, twee weke is redelik.]
	Feedback on exams
1:6 **1:6** **2:7**	[I think after the examination you don't need feedback. After the exam … that's what I think because you know what you have written what was right or wrong.] [How will you know?] [We'll, I will look in the book.] [I would only want to see my paper if suddenly, if I think I am suppose to get 70% and I get 50%. Then I would like to see may be what I do wrong or maybe they marked wrong, but otherwise I am not to bother.] [I would like to maybe get examination papers back afterwards, because you always get your mark. And then you think: "Ok why, how did I do it?" It's nice to get feedback on your test.]