

CHAPTER 1 THE CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

South Africa's democratic government inherited a divided and unequal system of education. Under apartheid, South Africa had nineteen different educational departments separated by race, geography and ideology (DoE, 1998:4). These departments differed as follows:

- the Department of National Education (NDE), which was responsible for setting and monitoring norms and standards;
- the Department of Education and Training (DET), which was responsible for the education of Africans outside of the homelands;
- one department for each of the four so-called independent homelands (also known as the TBVC states);
- one department for each of the six non-independent homelands (or self-governing territories);
- one department each of the houses of tri-cameral parliament: the House of Assembly (for Whites), the House of Representatives (for Coloureds), and the House of Delegates (for Indians);
- one department for Whites in each of the then four provinces (answering to the House of Assembly) (Buckland & Hofmeyr, 1993, p. 11).

This education system prepared children in different ways for the positions they were expected to occupy in social, economic and political life under apartheid. In

each department, the curriculum played a powerful role in reinforcing inequality (Kotzé, 2002, p. 76).

Different stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, concerned with educational policy issues, generated a great deal of debate prior to the 1994 South African democratic government elections (Kotzé, 2002, p. 76). There was frequent and justifiable criticism of the inadequacies of the apartheid educational system that led to deficiencies and discrimination in terms of qualifications and skills (Thomen, 2001, p. 6). Education was in a crisis with the breakdown of the culture of learning, a lack of discipline and the absence of teaching in many schools (Samual, 1993, p. 249). Prior to 1994, during the apartheid era in the South African education system, the government policies gave an inferior and unjust education system to Blacks. An education system that enforced an Afrikaans medium of instruction to the all Black communities, which allowed them fewer skills and therefore lesser opportunities than their European and Colored equals. A 'brain wash' education system that allowed its communities stakeholders such as, Education Development Officials (EDO's), Curriculum Specialists, Subject Advisors and educators little input and control over the policies which were implemented in their schools. Policies were imposed by the government and Curriculum Specialists and EDO's were viewed as a policing mechanism to implement these imposed policies with little thought being given to assuring the quality of education provision (RSA DoE, 1998, p. 5).

With curriculum change in post-apartheid South Africa immediately after the election in 1994, the National Education and Training Forum began a process of syllabus revision and subject rationalization (DoE, 1997, p. 3). The purpose of this process was mainly to lay the foundations for a single national core syllabus. In addition to the rationalization and consolidation of existing syllabi, the National Education and Training Forum curriculum developers removed overtly racist and other insensitive language from existing syllabi. For the first time, curriculum decisions were made in a participatory and representative manner. But this process was not, nor did it intend to be, a curriculum development process (DoE, 1997, p. 3).

Curriculum change and the development of new policies in South Africa were first introduced in the White Paper on Education and Training in 1995 with the purpose of constructing and transforming the legacy of the past (Wilmot, 2003, p. 313). Of significance in this case study was the introduction of Outcomes-based education (OBE), which was implemented through a national Curriculum 2005 (C2005) in the compulsory phase of schooling (Wilmot, 2003, p. 315). An OBE approach to education and training in South Africa emerged from “three historical antecedents” identified by Kraak (1998, p. 38) as follows:

The first was the ascendancy of competency-based modular education and training in South African industry after 1985; the second was the adoption of Australian and British ‘outcomes’ models in the policy development work done by the ANC and COSATU since the early 1990s; and the third was the resurrection of the radical rhetoric of People’s Education which first emerged in the heat of the struggle in the mid-1980s.

An outcomes-based approach to education accepts at its premise that outcomes should form the basis of all educational activities, the development of curricula

and the assessment of learners (Malan, 1997, p. 10). These outcomes are 'high quality, culminating demonstrations of significant learning in context' (Spady, 1994, p. 18). The use of the word 'demonstration' in the definition clearly indicates that an outcome is not a score or a grade but the end product of a clearly defined process.

Based on the assumption that all learners can learn, OBE clearly defines what knowledge, skills, values and attitudes learners must demonstrate within a particular context (Kotzé, 1999, p. 32). OBE in South Africa is meant to be learner-centered and results-oriented (Kotzé, 1999, p. 32) and this implies that:

- what a learner is to learn is clearly identified. There is a clear focus on culminating outcomes of significance;
- each learner is provided time and assistance to realize his/her demonstrated achievement;
- each learner's needs are accommodated through multiple teaching and learning strategies and assessment tools;
- each learner is provided the time and assistance to realize his/her potential (DoE, 1997, p. 17 – 18).

The above implies that educators and learners should focus their attention on what learners know and are able to do, making expectations and outcomes explicit, and also focus on learning as opposed to teaching.

The implementation of an outcomes-based approach to education led to the development of a more appropriate curriculum in the GET Band to replace the previous apartheid era curriculum and to meet the challenges facing learners in a democratic South Africa and the 21st Century (DoE, 1998, p. 4).

Outcomes-based education as a “paradigm shift” represented a departure from the previous curriculum in terms of teaching, learning processes and assessment (DoE, 1997, p. 11). The development of OBE assessment policy and a new national assessment system for the General Education and Training band was integral to the curriculum transformation processes. The assessment policy placed greater responsibility and accountability on teachers for their learners’ educational attainments (Wilmot, 2003, p. 313).

Changes in the South African education policies (including assessment policies) after 1994 found teachers ill-prepared for the new demands placed on them (Le Grange & Beets, 2005, p. 115). Vandeyar and Killen (2003, p. 119) made an important observation in their study that teachers’ responses vary in so much that few embraced the changes enthusiastically, many reluctantly accepting the change whilst most resisted the change.

One cause for assessment anxiety is confusion about what assessment means and about its purpose. In the minds of many community members and parents, assessment just means test – especially a “high-stakes’ test, which are designed

to provide information on the learners' progression to the next grade and teachers have tended to rely on these tests and examinations at the end of the year in their assessment of learners (DoE, 1997, p. 3). The results of these tests and examinations might tell teachers which learners in their classes have failed and which have not, but they do not tell what kind of instruction the learners need to master the outcomes or what errors in thinking led to the incorrect answers in the tests (Burns, 2005, p. 28). In order to get that kind of information, teachers need the results provided by the consistent use of classroom-based formative assessment. Learners perceive assessment as a means of competing with classmates for the highest symbol instead of as a "mile marker on the journey to increased knowledge and understanding" (Burns, 2005, p. 26).

All assessments are created to serve some purpose, whether to diagnose a learning disability, to identify a learner who needs remediation, or to determine whether a school has met its achievement goals (Burns, 2005, p. 27). However, no one assessment serves all of these purposes well. Summative assessments, high-stake tests, are designed to provide information on the learners' progression to the next grade and teachers have tended to rely on these tests and examinations at the end of the year in their assessment of learners (DoE, 1997, p. 3). The results of these tests and examinations might tell teachers which learners in their classes have failed and which have not, but they do not tell what kind of instruction the learners need to master the outcomes or what errors in thinking led to the incorrect answers in the tests (Burns, 2005:28). To get that

kind of information, teachers need the results provided by the consistent use of classroom-based formative assessment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although Formative Assessment is included in government policy documents, there has been “little classroom-based research to document what teachers do when they undertake formative assessment” (Loughran, 1999, p. 199). Assessment can be one of the most difficult aspects of teaching and judging the work of a learner can weigh heavily on the mind of the teacher (Newsletter, 2006, p. 1). In spite of the anxiety assessment poses, knowing how to assess learners in order to improve instruction is a core principle of effective teaching (Loughran, 1999, p. 199).

With the spotlight of accountability focused so intensely on summative assessments, it is easy to be distracted from the importance of regular, formative classroom assessment. The researcher was one of the team members who were teaching this grade. In workshops conducted by the District Office; in cluster planning sessions they had as teachers of the same grade and grade meetings they had in the same school, it came to the researcher’s attention teachers are not clear about the distinction between Continuous Assessment and Formative Assessment. It is against this background that the researcher was prompted to investigate why teachers do not seem to use or implement formative assessment

in secondary school classrooms as stipulated in policy documents. These policy documents are:

- Report 550 of June 1997;
- Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R – 9 (Schools) of September 1997, and
- Assessment Policy in the General Education and Training Band (Grade R – 9 and Abet) of December 1998. (Kotzé, 1999, p. 32).

This study will attempt, therefore, to document how formative assessment is implemented by teachers and how, if any deviations from the policy documents, this practice can be salvaged in schools.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not teachers implement Formative Assessment practices as a process of improving learning in their secondary school classrooms. This will help the DoE and schools to offer professional development in the design of high-quality classroom assessment to support the practitioners in the application of these practices. The study will document teachers' perceptions about formative assessment and how it should be implemented in our classrooms.

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1.4.1 What are secondary school teachers' perceptions of Formative Assessment?
- 1.4.2 How do secondary school teachers implement formative assessment in their classrooms?
- 1.4.3 Are secondary school teachers trained in implementing formative assessment in their classrooms?
- 1.4.4 What is the impact of teachers' current assessment practices on learners?
- 1.4.5 What factors inhibit the implementation of assessment practices in the classroom?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to:

- 1.5.1 establish secondary school teachers' perceptions of Formative Assessment
- 1.5.2 establish how secondary school teachers implement Formative Assessment in their classrooms
- 1.5.3 determine the nature of skills that teachers have in Formative Assessment
- 1.5.4 determine the impact of teachers' current assessment practices on learners
- 1.5.5 determine factors inhibiting the implementation of Formative Assessment practices in the classroom.

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

This study was carried out with the assumption that:

- 1.6.1 There are policy documents, which guide teachers in their classes on formative and summative assessments.
- 1.6.2 Teachers implement formative assessment practices in their classes.
- 1.6.3 Teachers underwent in-service assessment training for implementing the assessment policy in their classes.
- 1.6.4 The use of formative assessment practices in class impact on learners' results in school.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Assessment is not a separate part of a learning experience (Kotzé, 1999, p. 31). Assessment and particularly formative assessment is integrated throughout a learning experience and teachers have the responsibility of orienting the learners' constructive process during assessment. Formative assessment is essential as an agent of feedback to learners on their performance, as well as a means of guiding learners on what they need to do to remedy apparent weaknesses (Melton, 1996, p. 420). The general idea emerging from above is that of repetition and development, more development, making relevant changes and determining how learners can be helped further.

Mackrory (1996, p. 17) argues that formative assessment also allows teachers to inform the learner, or to plan future learning experiences. At the same time it enables teachers to diagnose whether learners are experiencing problems and

reveals where differentiated instruction is necessary. The primary goal is therefore to improve the quality of the learner being developed in order to achieve the goals and objectives/outcomes. It is also obvious that information and judgment resulting from formative assessment serve as feedback for improvement rather than for purposes of grading.

The management of formative assessment includes categories such as “planning and conducting procedures, design and also problems” (Kotzé, 1999, p. 33). In planning formative assessment it is important that assessment practices are properly in line with the purpose of the test and with curricula objectives (DoE, 1997, p. 20). General principles for planning formative assessment should include answers to the following:

- What do you want to achieve with formative assessment?
- In what context and when should formative assessment be done?
- Who and how is information obtained?
- How much learning marks an acceptable level of achievement of the outcome? (NRC, 1989, p. 69).

Answers to these questions will encompass a baseline assessment scheme. A scheme that will seek information that has to do with broadly defined outcomes in specific learning areas and is mostly demonstrated in observable products such as showing mastery of knowledge, understanding, solving problems, identifying, recognizing and showing evidence of skills mastered (Kotzé, 1999, p. 34).

The researcher, therefore, hopes to raise awareness among grade 9 teachers about formative assessment practices in their classrooms. The researcher also hopes that the study will empower teachers with new skills in mastering formative assessment techniques in their classroom environments and support the teachers in changing their classroom practices (Loughran, 1999, p. 200). The new skills teachers will be mastering in their classrooms have amongst others to do with involving learners in the assessment process. Involving learners is “at the heart of the shift from assessment that measures learning to assessment that promotes learning” (Popham, 2006, p. 86).

The researcher finally hopes the study will empower and develop teachers with high level skills in “providing high-level instructional feedback” (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 143). Although teacher feedback can be observed in almost every classroom, its use does not always serve as an effective classroom assessment tool. High-level instructional feedback is timely, useful and appropriate. It is timely because feedback is given as soon as possible after the assessment had occurred and this means that timely feedback can actually influence the ‘next steps in the learning process.’ Guskey (2005, p. 6) argues that:

Useful feedback is both diagnostic and prescriptive. It reinforces precisely what (learners) were expected to learn, identifies what was learned well, and describes what needs to be learned better.

Whether verbal or written, instructional feedback should go beyond indicating the degree of right and wrong to include the advice on how the learner can improve next time.

1.8 Rationale of the Study

Formative Assessment, also known as assessment for learning (Angelo, 1993, p. 3), takes place anytime during a lesson. It identifies strengths and weaknesses of the learner and is intended to enhance the learner's final performance. This means it is not only used to support learning, but also teaching. 'Assessment for learning' (Angelo, 2003, p. 5) is stressed as a way to improve teaching and the learning of learners and also as an 'integral part of the learning, teaching and assessment cycle.'

The study is of value and the researcher wishes to emphasize that Formative Assessment is "central to everyday classroom practice as it involves both teachers and learners in reflection, dialogue and decision-making" (Angelo & Cross, 1993, p. 5). The teacher obtains and uses information about learners' progress toward the learning goals. A learner needs to know where s/he is and understand not only where s/he wants to be, but also know how to 'fill the gap' (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 140) between his/her current knowledge and understanding and desired level.

Black & Wiliam (1998) further argue that Formative Assessment does not only serve as an effective classroom assessment tool, but a 'high-quality instructional feedback tool' that is timely, useful and appropriate. Timely feedback, which is given as soon as possible after the assessment occurs, "can influence the next steps in the learning process" (Guskey, 2005, p. 6). Guskey terms this as 'useful

assessment' that is both diagnostic and prescriptive' in reinforcing precisely what learners were expected to learn, identifies what was learned well, and describes what needs to be learned better (Guskey, 2005, p. 6).

With the spotlight of accountability focused so intensely on high-stake tests, Popham (2006, p. 86) argues it is easy to be distracted from the 'importance of regular formative classroom assessment.' Though each has a place in the educational system, they serve a different purpose. Using effective Formative Assessment strategies in the classroom do empower teachers and learners. It is against this knowledge that the researcher found it necessary to undertake additional research on the topic. It is also against the fact the researcher and his colleagues confused issues between CASS and Formative Assessment that further research was necessary in this field of education.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The study will be conducted at five (5) selected rural secondary schools in the Fort Beaufort District of Education in the Eastern Cape Province. The researcher decided on Fort Beaufort schools as they are in close proximity to his place of residence and work. The researcher is familiar with the area where the schools are situated, two schools in Circuit 2, one school in circuit 5 and two schools in Circuit 11. The researcher was a teacher in one of the Circuit 2 schools and hence is familiar with the location of these schools and now these teachers and school heads. The study will focus on teachers and learners, as they are key

stakeholders in the education system. The study will use teachers and learners as respondents as these are the actual stakeholders who are directly involved with the problem under study: classroom assessment. Mackrory (1996, p. 17) further witnesses the latter statement when he argues that “formative assessment allows teachers to form the learners, or to plan future learning experiences” for the learners.

1.10 Definition of terms

1.10.1 Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process (Black & Wiliam, 1998a, p. 9). It is important that teachers have a clear understanding of what they want to assess and then be sure they communicate that understanding to their learners. It is a collaborative effort; it is not something ‘done to learners’ but rather something ‘done with learners’ in which they gain valuable information about their own learning (Qualters, 2000, p. 3).

Boston (2002, p. 1) defines assessment broadly to include all activities that teachers and students undertake to get information that can be used diagnostically to alter teaching and learning. This definition implies that assessment encompasses teacher observation, classroom discussion, and analysis of student work, including homework and tests. Teacher observation is when a teacher observes a problematic learner. Teachers observe learners when they are working on a group project to make sure they all have equal participation

and contribution, and constantly giving assistance where required. Classroom discussion entails all learners involved in a debate on a certain aspect of the subject where the teachers act as a mediator and judge. When teachers analyze learner work, homework and tests; they do this simply because they want to make sure or want to verify whether learners have attained the necessary outcomes of a lesson.

1.10.2 Formative Assessment

Black and Wiliam (1998b) state that assessment become formative when the information is used to adapt teaching and learning to meet student needs. In a similar vein, Qualters (2000, p. 8) defines Formative Assessment as those activities that are used to improve student learning. These activities may be graded or ungraded, but they provide learners with information that allows them to learn something about their own knowledge or skills, make a change, and ultimately improve their learning (Qualters, 2000, p. 8).

Boston (2002, p. 2) argues that feedback given as part of formative assessment helps learners become aware of any gaps that exist between their desired goal and their current knowledge, understanding, or skill and guides them through actions necessary to obtain the goal.

Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall and William (2003, p. 2) state formative assessment can occur many times in every lesson. It can involve several

different methods for encouraging students to express what they are thinking and several different ways of acting on such evidence. It has to be within the control of the individual teacher and, for this reason; change in formative assessment practice is an integral and intimate part of a teacher's daily work.

1.10.3 Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is assessment carried out at the end of a learning period and is used to confirm that learners have met all the competence requirements, It requires the collection of sufficient, appropriate evidence on which to base a judgment about achievement against the relevant national standard. The results of the formative assessment process should be taken into account in making this final judgment (DoE, 1997, p. 12).

Summative assessment refers to emphasized products, which were assessed formally and finally without much attention to the process (Kotzé, 2002, p. 77). This was the notion of 'filling empty vessels' with knowledge or the transmission of knowledge was often preferred to the construction of knowledge, thus focusing on teacher-attention instead of learner-attention (RSA DoE, 1997, p. 14).

The boundary between formative and summative assessment is not always clear-cut. Certainly an examination at the end of a learner's course, which is being used to decide what the learner, as he/she is now, 'adds up to', and where the assessor has no intention of basing further teaching on the knowledge so gained, is a tool of summative assessment.

1.11 Summary

This chapter set out to outline the context of formative assessment problem. This was achieved by providing a background on the origins of the policy. The chapter also highlighted the statement of the problem, purpose of carrying out the study, research questions and objectives the study hoped to achieve, assumption of the study, significance of carrying out the study, delimitations of the study and definition of key terminology as acceptable for the research as a concluding remark for the chapter.

The following chapter shall set out to outline the literature relevant to the study where the concept under study shall be critically discussed.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review related literature on formative assessment practices of teachers within the South African context and developed countries. The motivation behind this literature is to shed light on issues and themes related to assessment of learning and assessment for learning, which could be very helpful for this study. This chapter covers the following sections: an understanding of what assessment is; the South African and the international contexts on formative assessment; and the Theoretical Framework of the study.

2.2 What is assessment?

Assessment is the term used to describe those actions for collecting information about what students have learnt in terms of 'cognitive, psycho-motor and affective domains. It should be an integral part of the education process (DoE, 1998, p. 3). In school practice, assessments are mostly summative in the form of standardized tests and examinations which measure student learning outcomes for the purpose of holding schools accountable for their student performance (Vandeyar & Killen, 2003, p. 122).

Assessment is generally separated from instruction and largely takes the form of assessing discrete, isolated or fragmented knowledge and skills. Assessment in this paradigm is characterised by paper-and-pencil tests that emphasizes academic exercises and the recall of textbook-based knowledge (Vandeyar &

Killen, 2003, p. 122). Learners are assessed individually with much secrecy surrounding the tests (DoE, 1997b, p. 23). Assessment is largely driven by the need to produce marks that could be recorded and reported to parents to prove that assessment has taken place, rather than being an integral part of the learning process (Cockburn, 1997, p. 5). Teachers generally do not consider assessment until after teaching has occurred and many teachers within this system simply assess what they believe they had taught well so that the learners' marks would reflect highly on their teaching skill and ability. The focus of assessment is thus not on the growth and development of the learner, or in the interest of the learner (Cockburn, 1997, p. 5).

Teaching and learning must be interactive and teachers need to know about their learners' progress and difficulties with learning. Teachers must adapt their teaching to meet the learners' needs, and unpredictable needs that vary from learner to learner. These needs can be found out in various ways, including amongst others classroom observations, classroom discussions and reading of learners' written work (Black & William, 1998, p.139). The activities undertaken by teachers that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning are generally termed as assessment.

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process and therefore not a simple term many teachers take to include all forms of testing (Nakabugo & Siebörger, 1999, p. 288). It is important that teachers have a clear understanding of what they want to assess and then be sure they communicate that understanding to

their learners (Qualters, 2000, p. 3). Assessment is a collaborative effort; it is not something 'done to learners' but rather something 'done with learners' in which they gain valuable information about their own learning (Qualters, 2003, p. 4). With the broad meaning attached to the term assessment, it can be seen to serving a range of purposes (Qualters, 2003, p. 4). One purpose of assessment is to make schools accountable and provide learners with certificates (DoE, 1997, p. 3). The results of these tests and examinations might tell teachers which learners in their classes have failed and which have not, but they do not tell what kind of instruction the learners need to master the outcomes or what errors in thinking led to the incorrect answers in the tests. In order to get that kind of information, teachers need the results provided by the consistent use of classroom-based formative assessment, which is also known as 'assessment for learning'.

Assessment for learning is usually informal, embedded in all aspects of teaching and learning, and conducted by different teachers as part of their own diverse and teaching styles (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 140). These authors argue that assessment can help learning if it provides information to be used as feedback by teachers and learners in assessing themselves and each other to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. This form of assessment is formative assessment when the evidence is used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs.

On the other hand, Boston (2002, p. 1) defines assessment broadly to include all activities that teachers and students undertake to get information that can be used diagnostically to alter teaching and learning. This definition implies that assessment encompasses teacher observation, classroom discussion, and analysis of student work, including homework and tests.

The *Assessment Policy in the General Education and Training Band (Grade R – 9 and Abet)* document defines assessment as the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about a learner's achievement, as measured against nationally agreed outcomes for a particular phase of learning (DoE, 1998, p. 4). It further goes to state that it involves four steps, which are to generate and collect evidence of achievement; evaluating this evidence against the set outcomes; recording the findings of this evaluation and using this information to assist the learner's development; and improve the process of teaching and learning (DoE, 1998, p. 4).

2.2.1 Formative Assessment

Kotzé (1999, p. 32) states that the functions of assessment are, inter alia, for decision-making, to model, to monitor and to inform. Decision-making is for the final summative judgment providing information on successes or failures for selection and certification purposes (p. 32). The modelling and monitoring functions 'shift(s) emphasis to portraying instead of judging competences', thereby informing on quality and progress (Malcolm, 1997, p. 4). The modelling

and monitoring functions relate to formative assessment, which is a break from summative assessment, an assessment that 'measures what students ultimately achieve on completion of a course or a program of studies' (Kotzé, 1999, p. 32). Summative and Formative assessments therefore, usually occur at different periods of time in the education process. This study will only deal with Formative Assessment.

Formative assessment, at times called 'classroom-based formative assessment' or 'assessment for learning' is defined as 'those activities that are used to improve student learning' (Qualters, 2008, p. 8). This means formative assessment is essential as an 'agent' of feedback to learners on their performance, as well as a means of 'guiding' learners on what they need to do to remedy weaknesses by making relevant changes and determining how learners can be helped further (Kotzé, 1999, p. 32). The primary goal of formative assessment is therefore to improve the quality of the learner being developed in order to achieve the outcomes. This is also obvious that information resulting from formative assessment serves as feedback for improvement rather than for purposes of grading.

Young (2005, p. 4) stresses that successful formative assessment depends on different factors amongst which learners need to believe that 'improvements in their learning are more likely to occur through their efforts than through their ability'. This implies that belief that improvement is possible for everyone,

regardless of ability, should underpin every activity designed to harness classroom assessment to raise standards. Teachers have another important role added to their teaching, that learners' attention should be shifted from how clever they are to the effort they are willing to put in (Young, 2005, p. 4).

Likewise, Black and Wiliam (1998b, p. 140) argue that the 'active involvement of learners in their own learning is another essential that yields successful results' in formative assessment. This means that for teachers making the purpose of teaching for improving the use of formative assessment real is to give their learners the capacity to assess themselves more often and effectively. Whilst formative assessment provides a teacher with a 'bridge between assessment and teaching, it is essentially also a way of creating independent, reflective learners who can play and assess their own progress' (Young, 2005, p. 5).

Another successful strategy about assessment for learning implementation is when learners are given timely feedback about the quality of their work (Young, 2005, p. 5). This implies that feedback is more likely to be used to guide improvements if it can be provided before learners have moved on to new work. Written feedback, according to Kotzé (1999, p. 34), may lose impact because it lacks the immediacy of spoken comments. That is why verbal feedback, though demanding and time-consuming, of the learning process is more effective (Kotzé, 1999, p. 34). Although this may be the case, Kotzé states that there should be a balance between written and verbal feedback, and these should be specific and appropriate. Constant feedback encourages learners to close the gap between

where they are now and their desired goal. This happens only if it will help them see what is good about their current effort before pointing out an area for improvement. Looking for some improvement to be made always carry the message that 'improvement is always possible and more likely to come through effort, not ability' (Kotzé, 1999, p. 35). The above implies that the mentioned features of effective feedback are important when learners plan and take forward their own learning.

2.3 South African Context

Changes in assessment theory and practice have become commonplace in many education systems across the globe (Le Grange & Beets, 2005, p. 115). There have been calls across the globe for more authentic ways of assessing learning and for assessment to become integral to teaching and learning processes. Kotzé (2002, p. 76) states that the international trend towards alternative forms of assessment influenced assessment policies that emerged in South Africa after the country's first democratic elections in 1994 (Kotzé, 2002, p. 76).

There were two distinguishable waves of change in South African Assessment policy: first the introduction of continuous assessment (CASS) policies which coincided with the introduction of interim school syllabus documents, and second assessment policies aligned to an outcomes-based education (OBE) curriculum (Le Grange & Beets, 2005, p. 115). These changes found teachers ill prepared for the new demands placed on them.

The new democratic South African government of 1994 had a major task to dismantle the deeply flawed education system it inherited from the apartheid regime. *The White Paper on Education and Training* (DoE, 1995, p. 17) articulated a vision of transformation driven by the need for education and training to empower people to participate effectively in all the processes and institutions of a democratic society and build a nation free of race, gender and any other form of discrimination. All South Africans were invited to participate in bringing about transformation (DoE, 1995, p. 1). Since the manifestation of this new vision, South Africans have witnessed the introduction of a number of policies; amongst others the 1996 *Curriculum Framework for General and Further Education and Training*; the October 1997 *Senior Phase policy document*; the 1998 *Assessment policy in the General Education and Training Band, Grades R to 9*; the 2000 *Norms and Standards for Educators (NEPA)*; the 2001 *Draft Revised National Curriculum Statement for Schools (Grades R-9)*; the 2002 *Curriculum 2005 Assessment Guidelines: Human and Social Sciences Senior Phase*; the 2004 *Curriculum 2005: Lifelong learning for the twenty-first century and South Africa's new curriculum framework* and many more. These policies were aimed at reconstructing and transforming the education system. Although international experts have acclaimed many of these new education policies as ranking among the best in the world, there is little evidence that the goals of transformation, including redress, equity and democracy, have been achieved (Jansen, 2001, p. 271). Instead, there have been evidence of “policy

gap”, that is, a “mismatch between policy intention and policy practice” (Wilmot, 2005, p. 2).

The establishment of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the implementation of an outcomes-based approach to education has led to the development of a more appropriate curriculum in the General Education and Training (GET) Band to replace the previous apartheid era curriculum and to meet the challenges facing learners in a democratic South Africa and the 21st Century (Thomen, 2001, p. 12). The new curriculum, referred to as Curriculum 2005 (C2005), is learner-centered as opposed to teacher-centered (Kotzé, 2002, p. 77). Despite its noble intentions, the curriculum transformation process has been characterized by tensions and struggles, and a disjuncture between what was intended and what has in reality proved attainable. Kotzé (2002, p. 77) further argues that assessment is further complicated by the arguments of “input-based, summative form of assessment or an outcomes-based assessment of formative and continuous assessment”. These problems emphasize the significance of assessment and the implications for sound formulation of assessment policies. It is therefore obvious that a good practically manageable system of education is necessary to address the problems and meet the needs of the diversified audiences of South Africa. Chisholm (1999, p. 250) argued that South Africa needed to have a public debate on issues pertaining assessment practices. She believed there were a need for a reliable national examinations as well as a need for diversified qualifications and assessment procedures. In

Curriculum 2005, an outcomes-based approach to education accepts as its premise that outcomes should form the basis of all educational activities including the development of the curricula and the assessment of learners (Malan, 1997, p. 10). According to Kotzé (2002, p. 77), the process had received more attention and assessment became more developmental than judgmental; outcomes and results are assessed against standards and clearly defined criteria.

2.3.1 Outcomes-based education and Curriculum 2005

Numerous accounts have been written of the origin and roots of OBE in South Africa which, contrary to what some teachers and officials think, is not the same as C2005 (Vandeyar & Killen, 2003, p. 123). The NQF has an outcomes-based design and orientation, and it is a legal requirement that all curricula that it authorizes - irrespective of the level or provider - adopt an OBE orientation. A key issue associated with this orientation is its origin in industry, which has led to questioning of its appropriateness for education. Explaining how OBE emerged historically in South Africa, Jansen (1999b, p. 14) writes:

The historical account emphasizes that OBE did not emerge as a coherent and comprehensive curriculum reform in South Africa; its origins lie in a number of disparate influences, both internal (for example, competency debates in labor) and external (for example, the Spady version of OBE in the United States); both historical (the apartheid legacy) and contemporary (managing the contradictory claims of reconstruction, redistribution and reconciliation); both educational (performance-based learning) and economic (globalization pressures to participate meaningfully in competitive economies).

This statement highlights the complexities and tensions inherent in OBE, which have tended to carry over into the new curriculum framework and impact on teachers.

OBE has given rise to tensions within which the major battles associated with curriculum have taken place between different interest groups in South Africa. Through its flexible methodology, OBE is on the one hand seen as a technology for devolving curriculum processes to the micro-level and as an enabling mechanism for greater participation and self-determination in educational processes. On the other hand, because of its emphasis on the outputs or outcomes of education, OBE is seen as being used by the state as a mechanism for managing, monitoring and regulating the education system.

OBE was the most significant force shaping the design of C2005, which is based on generic critical outcomes and specific outcomes for each learning area. The latter outcomes are linked to assessment criteria and lists of performance indicators. While the outcomes are non-negotiable, an OBE orientation is flexible in terms of the selection of content. OBE is an enabling mechanism for devolving curriculum design processes to the individual teacher. At the same time, however, OBE also signals a shift to a new form of governmentality, and a new way of regulating teachers under the guise of decentralized curriculum processes.

More importantly, the Review Committee found that C2005's design was significantly flawed (Chisholm, 2000, p. 18). This was addressed by reducing the design features (for example, performance indicators and range statements were scrapped), and making the language more accessible and simpler by removing the assessment-driven terminology, which is evident in the National Curriculum Statement (Chisholm, 2005, p. 197). While C2005 was intended to serve an instrumental purpose determined by economic rationality, it was also intended to serve a new political and social vision. C2005 was seen as fostering learning, which encompassed human rights, multi-lingualism and multi-culturalism, and sensitivity to the values of reconciliation and nation building (DoE, 1997a, foreword). The principle of learner-centeredness was adopted because of its emphasis on participation, active learning and non-authoritarianism. This approach was seen as appropriate for developing an ability to reason independently, engage in open argument and accept multiple solutions to a single problem (DoE, 1997b, p. 6). These abilities are clearly indicative of the subject's rational autonomy, freedom and responsibility, as envisaged by the emancipatory and democratic ideals of policy. However, despite the importance of the political and social intent of C2005, little research has been done on the extent to which the rhetoric of social justice and human rights has been achieved in practice (Wilmot, 2005, p. 53).

Harley and Wedekind (2004, p. 212) argue that meliorism, that is, a commitment to 'what should be' to the exclusion of a serious consideration of 'what is', has

characterized C2005. These authors argue that because of it, policy-makers overlooked the profound inequalities that characterize the South African school landscape. According to them, this has led to a situation in which C2005 has become 'scriptural', that is, underpinned by faith and belief rather than rationality (Harley & Wedekind, 2004, p. 212). These authors argue that the simplistic oppositionalising of the 'old' and 'new' has led to a belief that:

If we are opposed to Apartheid Education then we must be in favor of OBE. We might be a bit unsure of what OBE is, but we must find ways to make it work, because it is the path we have chosen to transform education in South Africa, it is our new scripture... (Harley & Wedekind, 2004, p. 212).

This, according to Harley and Wedekind, has resulted in a disturbing tendency to act as though OBE cannot be debated or modified. A non-negotiable stance towards OBE is evident in the brief given to the Review Committee of C2005: the brief was to review C2005, not OBE (Chisholm, 2000, p. 5). From this one may infer that OBE is the new order and as such is not open to scrutiny or challenge, other than in terms of how to improve and resolve issues associated with implementation and management. This is disturbing in the light of research findings suggesting that the pedagogical project of C2005 is working against its social and political transformative goals (Wilmot, 2005, p. 54).

A national assessment at the end of Grade 9, the exit point of the GET band of the NQF, will provide a powerful indication of the extent to which C2005's goals are realistic and achievable. The General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) is a high stakes self-assessment instrument that the state will be able to

use for accountability purposes. The public will be able to use it to judge the credibility and effectiveness of the state's promise to improve education and raise standards, especially among those groups disadvantaged by the apartheid regime. This takes on a new significance when one considers that existing research on C2005 indicates that South African learners are lagging in terms of the C2005's expected standards and international standards (Wilmot, 2005, p. 54).

One of the main aims of this new assessment policy in the GET band is to "recognize and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning during the learning" (Loughran, 1999, p. 198). One way of reaching this aim is through continuous assessment (CASS). CASS may be described as the ongoing formative assessment of the learner (DoE, 1997, p. 25) and is associated with "feedback to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of learners' performance" (DoE, 1997, p. 25). CASS includes a formative function of teaching and learning, which enables improvements to be made in the learning and teaching process (DoE, 1998, p. 14). It is used to developmentally support the learner and to feedback into teaching and learning. CASS should not be interpreted merely as the accumulation of a series of traditional test results, but "... a collection of assessment practices, which include traditional testing as well as portfolios, projects and performance assessment" (DoE, 1997, p. 26).

In their article on whether primary teachers assess formatively, Nakabugo and Siebörger (1999) argue that the approach to CASS within C2005 requires that

decisions on a learner's progress be "based on on-going formative assessment associated with helpful skills on how a learner tackles various learning tasks rather than results of a single end-of-session test or examination" (p. 288). As already mentioned earlier, formative assessment is not a description of a mode of assessment but rather a "description of a use to which assessment is put, to inform educators and their learners about a learner's progress in order to improve learning" (p. 288). This implies that the assessment forms part of the normal course of teaching and learning, and that "...learners are assessed while they are engaged in the teaching and learning task rather than at the end of it" (p. 288).

In the same vein, Wilmot (2005, p. 53), states that formative assessment is viewed as "occurring within the interaction between the teacher and student(s) and so is at the intersection of teaching and learning". The importance of formative assessment in the teaching and learning processes has therefore become more widely acknowledged and government educational policy documents recognize and emphasize the importance and value of assessment in informing learning (DoE, 2001, p. 5). Learning is informed through constantly engaging learners with assessment tasks. Feedback to these tasks should be provided immediately after learners had submitted their tasks for marking. Constant feedback, therefore, informs learning whereas delayed feedback delays learner learning.

Although formative assessment is included in government policy documents, its implementation in the classroom had been documented but, is not implemented

in the classroom. What teachers do when dealing with formative assessment in their classrooms is still a mystery, which still needs being unfolded (Loughran, 1999, p. 199). This research will, therefore focus on how formative assessment is implemented by investigating classroom-based formative assessment in one Grade 9 learning areas of five schools in an attempt to clarify what educators and learners do during formative assessment activities, and for what purpose educators implement formative assessment in relation to emerging educational policies.

Assessment in its traditional form shall have to be expanded to provide for the aspiration of an outcomes-based approach (Kotzé, 1999, p. 36). More emphasis will have to be shifted to a formative approach than a summative one. Different assessment instruments must be implemented and new assessment methods will have to be developed in order to evaluate processes and performances, cognitive skills and problem solving strategies.

Teachers should, therefore, be knowledgeable about the dynamics of assessment and guard against the possibility of merely adapting outcomes-based education to fit their traditional teaching styles and contexts. Assessment is about learning how students think as well as what students are able to accomplish (Kotzé, 1999, p. 36). The way in which we seek information and make judgments will determine the future sustainability of this vision of assessment.

2.4 How Teachers Perceive Formative Assessment in South African Schools

In his study on how teachers perceive formative assessment for classroom implementation, MacLaughlin (2002, p. 183) describes two possible teacher responses concerning curriculum innovation, namely, 'non-implementation and co-optation'. The first is self-explanatory because teachers are simply not implementing formative assessment in their classrooms. The second describes implementation through the modification rather than transformation of traditional practices. This refers to what Mattson and Harley's (2003, p. 288) call 'mimicry' - teachers going through the motions of change without buying into the new framework, perhaps because their understanding of the new framework is too limited or too shallow. These responses shall be very useful in this study to assess teachers' perceptions towards Formative Assessment.

Because of the diversity and complexity of the school landscape in South Africa, there have been great variations in teachers' understanding of, and commitment to, the principles of the policy under discussion. This was already apparent within a few months of the implementation of C2005 in 1998 (Jansen, 1999a, p. 211). Schools usually 'change the incoming message than the message is likely to change the school'. This is evident from the investigations of the Chisholm Committee (2000) when they identified ways in which C2005 manifested itself in the diverse context of South African schools (Chisholm, 2000, p. 18). When

C2005 ran alongside a traditional subject-based curriculum in school, teachers chose to implement the subject-based and teacher-centered curriculum they were adapted to. These teachers, especially those in rural schools where resources are very minimal, further mentioned that the new policy (C2005) is good but is not meant for them.

Wilmot (2005, p. 25) states that the issue of teacher identity and the disjunction between their values and beliefs and those espoused by policy must be viewed against the backdrop of the larger state modernizing project and the tensions associated with it. The questions of teachers' beliefs and values, of how they see themselves and the role they should play in the education system, as against their identity and role as constructed by policy, will be addressed by the case study in this study. In her recent South African research on teacher identity, Wilmot (2005) found that those teachers in better-resourced, 'historically privileged' schools are far better able to take on the identities constructed by curriculum and assessment policy. Wilmot (2005, p. 26) further argues that:

teachers are positioned as providers and reproducers of human rights, democracy and citizenship, while ironically their own human rights tended to be ignored. Through C2005, South African teachers are to be re-professionalized with a greater sense of autonomy and decision-making powers.

Similarly, Carrim's (2003) research findings which were consistent with those of the Review Committee of C2005 suggest that contemporary South African teachers are caught in the ways of the 'old' whilst wanting to work in the ways of the 'new'. Carrim concludes that teachers do not see themselves as owning the

transformation of education in South Africa but as subjects of it. As such, teachers see themselves as implementers of policy that is handed down to them from the top, rather than as formulators of policy. Carrim also calls for teacher development in South Africa as a way to prioritize teacher professionalism and autonomy, and to affirm teachers' role in the formulation of policies as an aspect of their rights as human beings within a democracy (Wilmot, 2005, p. 27).

In a similar vein, Jansen (2001, p. 215) argued that the vast majority of teachers had "very little insight into or substantive participation in the curriculum process". He concludes that policy's legitimization of the discourse of participation is likely for the foreseeable future to remain at the level of rhetoric. Furthermore, Jansen contends that the dominant mode of curriculum policy will retain its centralized and context-blind character (p. 215). He further had pointed to the likelihood of curriculum policy processes remaining top-down but not necessarily authoritarian. This is because the logic of a top-down 'policy-to-practice' curriculum mode is so strongly entrenched in policy-makers and teachers. Jansen (2003, p. 44) explains:

There is little understanding that practice can direct policy and less that practice could represent policy. Policy is something that happens in Pretoria, something that is handed down to teachers for implementation. There are no established traditions of locally driven curriculum development; in fact, studies have repeatedly shown teachers willing to declare themselves impotent with regard to curriculum process in South Africa. Again, such an orientation coexists comfortably with a public discourse about participation, ownership and transparency.

It is important to note however, that even though policy is proclaimed and issued from central government; such policy is mediated at lower levels of the education system so that what appears in classroom

practice is seldom a mirror-image of what was intended by government policy.

There is little evidence that the teachers meant to implement this same policy had any input to its adoption for implementation. For various reasons, teachers are not grasping the opportunities for curriculum participation intended by OBE policy. The issue of teacher participation in curriculum processes and reproduction shall not be addressed in this study since this study only deals with classroom policy implementation.

2.5 Policy Implementation in South African Schools

A policy making process does not stop after it had been adopted or approved. The implementation is another very important phase these policies are formulated as they are implemented (Jansen, 2001, p. 272). The same author argues that policies developed in the first five years of democracy served the purpose of politicians. In addition, Jansen (2001) contends that these policies marked the shift from apartheid to post-apartheid education, and helped to establish the ideological and political credentials of the new government. The same author further asserts that, the country's first post-apartheid national curriculum should be viewed as 'symbolic' rather than 'realist' (Jansen, 2001, p. 273). Since 1999, the country experienced a period of 'symbolic change' to that of 'deep transformation' in which policy was enacted and real change started taking place in the classroom. This was evident when a review committee (Chisholm, 2000) was appointed in 2000. Its consequence had been the

development of a strengthened and streamlined Revised National Curriculum Statement. Of significance to this study is the question of how teachers started implementing this policy in their classrooms.

Transforming policies from traditional to modern way of being usually poses huge difficulties to the implementers it is intended for. Wilmot (2005, p. 24) argues that a "...policy lays bare a more profound disjuncture between two different ways of being". The different ways of the policy usually involves learners shifting from the traditional to a modern way of learning, which poses a huge difficulty for many rural teachers in South Africa.

Although problematic to all phases and teachers, the implementation of C2005 had been more intense for secondary school teachers where issues first become bad, because of the attitude of these teachers, before they can become better. To make matters worse, Grade 9 teachers were mandated to implement C2005's associated assessment policy in 2002. The intention was to pilot the General Education and Training Certificate using a new assessment instrument, the Common Tasks for Assessment (CTAs) at the end of 2002. These CTAs had their own problems. Not only was the language above that of the intended learners, it also had printing errors and at times did not correspond with the intended syllabi outcomes. This resulted in the DoE announcing in October 2002 that because of problems with translation and with the distribution of CTAs to schools, coupled with the lack of teacher training, the writing of the CTAs would

not be compulsory. The certification process was meant to have started in 2003 but, was postponed again; an opportunity which provided a valuable window period for Grade 9 teachers and learners to try out the new assessment instrument and for researchers to provide feedback to the state. It also bought time for the state to ensure that the system was able to deliver the educational goods promised to the public. The GET Certificate was since then postponed (DoE, 2005, p. 1). The next section looks into the implementation of Formative Assessment in the classroom.

2.5.1 Implementation of Formative Assessment in South African Schools

Teachers employing formative assessment have changed the culture of their classrooms by putting the emphasis on helping learners feel safe to take risks and make mistakes and to develop self-confidence in the classroom (Black & William, 1998; Kotzé, 1999). Such teachers also make effort to understand their learners' cultural backgrounds. They interact frequently with individual or small groups of learners and involve learners in the assessment process, providing them with tools to judge the quality of their own work.

To meet a range of learner needs, teachers vary instructional methods by ensuring that lessons include different approaches to explaining new concepts, provide options for independent classroom work, and encourage learners who have grasped a new concept to help their peers (DoE, 1998, p. 5). This means that learners are introduced to different methods of assessment providing options

for individual attainment of lesson outcomes. Those learners who had quickly grasped the concept are encouraged to assist the slow learners.

South African teachers use a mix of approaches to assess learner understanding of what has been taught. They may use diagnostic assessment to determine a learner's level when s/he first enters a new school or at specified times during the school term to help shape teaching strategies (DoE, 1998, p. 7). During classroom interactions, they often use questioning techniques. Teachers are encouraged to use questioning and classroom discussions as an opportunity to increase their learners' knowledge and improve their understanding (Boston, 2002, p. 3). For example, biology teachers in one of their classes started asking learners what would happen if chlorophyll stopped working, and discovered a common misconception that the entire world would be dark (OECD, 2007, p. 3). The questioning and answering interaction assist learners in talking openly and make mistakes that would be corrected by the teacher and by so doing would easily remember their own mistakes and how they were corrected.

Teachers also make the learning process more transparent by establishing and communicating learning goals, tracking learner progress and, in some cases, adjusting goals to better meet learner needs. Teachers are able to compare their assessments with other teachers to ensure that they are treating learners equitably. They often find comments are more effective than marks for improving learner performance and helping all learners to reach high standards (Kotzé,

2002, p. 27). It is not always easy to drop or decrease the frequency of marks, however. Sometimes learners and their parents prefer to know how they are doing relative to other learners (Sutton, 1998, p. 2).

Boston (2002, p. 3) states that the goal of formative assessment is to gain an understanding of what learners know and do not know in order to make responsive changes in teaching and learning. Alongside tests and homework analysis are other important techniques like teacher observation and classroom discussions to realize effective learning. There are several key elements for a successful use of formative assessment in secondary schools and these have been discussed below.

Teachers may provide verbal or written feedback on learner's work. They found that the most effective feedback is timely, specific and tied to explicit criteria. Teachers also adjust their strategies to meet needs identified in assessment. Boston (2002) goes further to suggest that in addition to classroom techniques, tests and homework can be used formatively if analysed correctly and provide specific, focused feedback regarding performance and ways to improve it. Boston (2002) makes the following recommendations:

- (a) Frequent short tests are better than infrequent long ones.
- (b) New learning should be tested within about a week of first exposure.
- (c) Be mindful of the quality of test items and work with other teachers and outside sources to collect good ones (Boston, 2002, p. 4).

This implies that the shorter the test, the more understandable and attainable the outcomes are (Boston, 2002, p. 6). When feedback is returned to class on such tests, learners are able to understand all mistakes done when writing the test. Boston also argues on the period of assessment after teaching, which enforces learning, as the information is still easily retrievable than a test written after a longer period after being taught. This also enforces frequent studying in learners as they definitely would expect to be assessed within a shorter period after being taught.

The SA Assessment Policy states that portfolios or collection of learner work can also be used formatively if teachers and learners highlight entries and observe growth over time and practice (DoE, 1998, p. 7). These portfolios are built over a period of time and kept as proof of development and improvement of learner achievement. The portfolio content shows that learners are able to integrate knowledge, concepts and skills and they have not been assessed only on memorization. Cumulative evidence of learner achievement is recorded and these records accompany all learners throughout their learning paths (DoE, 1998, p. 7). This implies that these portfolios are used to track the learner's learning development and that they can be utilised when the learner is transferred from one school to another.

Communicating learner achievement is a prerequisite for the provision of quality education (DoE, 1998, p. 7). The teacher comments on the learner's knowledge,

summarizing achievement and progress, as well as providing useful feedback to evaluate and improve teaching. A report conveys through the educator's comments a clear impression of personal knowledge of the learner, summarise achievement and progress, and provide useful feedback to evaluate and improve learning and teaching. Comments from parents and, where practicable, from learners themselves, should be encouraged. The head of the learning site or other appropriate person should sign the report, with an overview comment when this is necessary (DoE, 1998, p. 7). For purposes of this study, the researcher aligns himself with the implementation strategies and recommendations as discussed under Boston and the entire SA Assessment Policy document as it spills over to the specific Learning Areas (LAs) under study.

2.5.2 Teacher Training and Development in South Africa

Training and professional development in the area of classroom assessment are essential in order to provide individual teachers with the time and support to make changes (Kotzé, 1999, p. 2). MacLaughlin (2002) argues against “one-shot training” or training heavily concentrated at the start of implementation (p. 187). Of significance to this study is the author's observation that with few exceptions, outside experts are not seen as useful. They could not relate to classroom realities and their advice tends to be too abstract to be of use. In the few instances where an outsider did help, it was because the person's participation was concrete and the process consisted of ‘hands-on’ inquiry-based workshops and materials development that happened regularly for a few hours at a time over

an extended period. This approach is appropriate for enabling teachers to undergo the learning (and unlearning) process in order to develop new attitudes, practices and skills for the new role expected of them (MacLaughlin, 2002, p. 188).

The development of teachers is seen as a key factor in the transformation of the South African education (Wilmot, 2005, p. 80). There is however a growing body of research which suggests that the official approach to teacher development and the 'cascade model' used by the government since 1994 have militated against the development of teachers into effective agents of change (Wilmot, 2005, p. 80). Early studies on C2005 implementation carried out by Jansen in 1999 showed that whilst OBE, through C2005, was being received with great enthusiasm by teachers, the change taking place was largely superficial and procedural rather than philosophical (Jansen, 1999a, p. 211). This implies that whilst teachers were zealously participating in this new curriculum, the transformation process of implementing classroom OBE successfully had not been adequately and fully adopted.

Similarly, Taylor and Vinjevold (1999, p. 160) found that there was "blind following of procedures without understanding how or why these work". The study identified teachers' poor conceptual knowledge of the subjects they teach as a major constraint to curriculum work. Likewise, the Review Committee of C2005 (Chisholm, 2000, p. 12) found that:

- (a) The teachers' knowledge of C2005 was superficial: they had a "rather shallow understanding of the principles of C2005".
- (b) Teacher training on OBE and C2005 was itself superficial, focusing on terminology with "...little attention being paid to the substance of OBE and C2005".
- (c) Training workshops were not supported with good quality materials, and the approach used by many trainers was not aligned to the principles of C2005; there was virtually no ongoing support and development when teachers were back in their classrooms, and teachers felt that officials did not value their efforts.

This means that teachers never understood C2005 and its principles and their actual training on C2005 and OBE only emphasized on terminology with no insight in outcomes-based education as such. This implies that these teachers would never be able to adequately implement this policy in their classrooms.

The Review Committee took issue with the duration and quality of the training given to teachers to prepare them for the implementation of C2005 (Wilmot, 2005, p. 81). The Committee was in reality concerned with the quality of training manuals and the actual duration taken to train the teachers, knowing well the trainers themselves may have been ill prepared. The short interventions made by the DoE and provincial departments – usually 1- to 3-day workshops, which some termed as 'orientation workshops' – were seen as inadequate, as was the

'cascade model' of teacher training which focused on 'thin' or procedural knowledge, that is, 'how to do' knowledge, at the expense of developing teachers' declarative knowledge, their understanding of the 'why' (Wilmot, 2005, p. 81). Janse van Rensburg and Mhoney (2000, p. 45), argue that the 'cascade model' may well 'water down' information and even serve to perpetuate curriculum misunderstanding. They argue that the model is limited because it is based on a limited understanding of what teacher development requires, and its assumption that curriculum knowledge can be passed down is counter to the social constructivist epistemology that is supposed to underpin OBE in South Africa. As the trainers did not know what teacher development entailed, they could not adequately resource the training workshops.

The Review Committee (Chisholm, 2000, p. 55) recommended that attention be given to the development of programmes that developed understanding, and for teacher development programmes to be aligned to the framework for educators as described in the Norms and Standards policy (DoE, 2000). The latter requires the development of practical, foundational and reflexive competences from which one may infer a deep, as opposed to superficial, understanding. It also recognizes the need for higher education to play a stronger role in teacher development.

2.5.3 The impact of formative assessment on teachers and learners in South African Schools

When learners fail an assessment task, some teachers internalise the task results into feelings of guilt or shame (Nakabugo & Siebörger, 1999, p. 290). These feelings are often based on a belief that they have failed to appropriately or adequately prepare their learners for the assessment task (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 5). That is why the teachers start questioning the usefulness of these assessment tasks. When learners pick these views up, they start developing feelings of anxiety. This situation may keep on repeating itself and simply, the fact is that both groups may be affected by formative assessment task achievements (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 6).

Learners develop an association between high-stakes achievements and decisions made about their lives. When this is coupled with scepticism about the testing process, high-stakes achievement test may contribute to barriers to school completion for some learners (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 6). If learners believe teachers are using these high-stake tests to judge or label them as incompetent, and that these high-stake tests are not accurately representing their abilities; they may simply drop out of the education system.

Contrary to this uncertainty are motivated learners who may have developed the use of these high-stakes tests, using them flexibly to enhance their own practice.

Learners felt more engaged in their own learning and more motivated that this was having an impact on their behaviours (Webb & Williams, 2004 p. 7).

2.5.4 Factors Inhibiting the Implementation of Formative Assessment in South Africa

A great deal of research has shown that there is lack of alignment between the curriculum and assessment policy and a lack of clarity regarding assessment policy and practice (Wilmot, 2005, p. 82). Furthermore, it seems that too less time is spent on assessment (Chisholm, 2000; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). The Chisholm report of 2000 has stressed that more attention has to be given to teacher preparation and for a clear and coherent guideline document on assessment (Chisholm, 2000, p. 19). Research has revealed that a great deal of the country's teachers "lack a good track record as curriculum developers and assessors" (Malcolm, 2001, p. 207), perhaps, the reason why teachers find it very difficult to implement the sophisticated CASS component of assessment in grade 9 in a meaningful way. This factor raises questions about the validity and reliability of school-based teacher assessment, which calls for more externally controlled standardized assessment at the expense of CASS. The present Grade 9 assessment model is based on a system of internal marking, that is, teachers set and mark their own assessment tasks for CASS, and they mark their learners' responses to the externally set standardized CTA, which consists of two sections: A and B (DoE, 1998, p. 17). Assessing both sections and CASS, raises questions of objectivity and validity and suggests that the model places too much

responsibility on teachers. In the same vein, a cluster moderation process whereby teachers monitor and regulate other teachers' assessment tasks characterizes the Grade 9 assessment model. As these teachers were apparently not adequately trained in the actual assessment of their learners, it is supposed their success in the cluster-group moderation ultimately depend on how much assessment training teachers receive.

Other studies have further identified a number of barriers, which affect learners' acceptance, and use of formative assessment feedback (Bell & Cowie, 2001; Black & William, 1998; Shepard, 2001). Some of the learners are not motivated to learn as much as they are supposed to. As a result, they become as insecure about their own potential as successful learners that they focus almost on trying to impress their teachers regardless of whether they understand or not (Mackrory, 1996, p. 18). Insecure learners always try to avoid risks of failure in any given task as a result this fear of failure inhibits their efforts, which leads to learners failing to recognize formative feedback as a helpful signal towards future learning (Sutton, 1998, p. 3).

Other hindrances facing formative assessment are the basic requirements of the extensive curriculum and the reporting requirements in the senior classes of the GET Band (DoE, 1998, p. 6). In most cases teachers prioritise what they are going to teach and not teach the syllabus as it is prescribed. The syllabi specify lesson outcomes and the method the teacher is supposed to be using to teach

but, the teachers employ their old methods of teaching, teacher-centred as against learner-centred approaches. This is because one-teacher schools never granted the teacher opportunity to attend the orientation workshops as the school would have closed down should the teacher attend these workshops. Certain schools never took these developmental workshops serious and teachers remained at school with the excuse of covering syllabi. There are also schools principals who resist transformation and therefore did not see the need of monitoring their personnel in their training and development workshops.

2.6 The International Context

Public schooling takes very different forms in different countries. For example, in the era of education reform in many countries, various government documents, and different concepts and functions of assessment were introduced to communities (OECD, 2005, p. 1). The same organization claims that although assessment is used for many different purposes and comes in many different forms, all assessment should do is to help teachers 'become better teachers and should help (our) learners become more accomplished' (OECD, 2005, p. 1). The introduction of new curricula after the 1994 South African democratic government were also meant to enhance teachers and learners in the same manner but to teachers' dismay, these new policies left them more confused than they previously were (OECD, 2005, p. 2).

However, Boston (2002, p. 1) argues that whilst many teachers are highly focused on state tests, it is important to consider that over the course of a year, 'teachers can build in many opportunities to assess how students are learning and then use this information to make beneficial changes in teaching'. Boston calls this diagnostic use of assessment to provide feedback to teachers and students over the course of teaching, formative assessment.

What teachers and learners do in classrooms drives learning (Boston, 2002, p. 2). Teachers have to manage the difficult and demanding situations, channeling the personal, emotional, and social pressures of a group of learners in order to help them learn immediately and become better learners in the future. Standards can be raised only if teachers can tackle this task more effectively. Black and Wiliam (1998) maintain that 'a focus on standards and accountability that ignores the processes of teaching and learning in the classrooms will not provide the direction that teachers need in their quest to improve' (p. 139). The researcher discusses how standards of achievement can be raised through formative assessment.

Research shows that effective formative assessment raise standards in the classroom (Black & William, 1989b; Grösser, 2007; Kotzé, 1999 & 2000; Young, 2005). The above authors agree that 'improved formative assessment helps low achievers more than other learners and ... raise achievement overall' (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 140). This is evident in studies done on low-achieving learners and learners with learning disabilities, which showed that frequent feedback,

enhanced their learning (Lynn, 1997, p. 514). These authors further argue that '...pupils who come to see themselves as unable to learn usually cease to take school seriously' (Black & William, 1998; Kotzé, 1999). This is supported by the observation that many become disruptive in class and at times resort to truancy. Such learners are likely to be alienated from society and to become the sources and the victims of serious social problems and menace to society.

Therefore, the significance of learning lies within the grasp of teachers but it does not mean that it would be an easy task to achieve such gains on a wider scale in a normal classroom. Research confirms the latter statement through the reports these authors studied which raised a number of issues pertaining to the involvement of both teacher and learner in bringing up new ways to enhance feedback; the active involvement of learners in their learning; the ways in which teachers make adjustments to their teaching programs; and the ways in which assessment can affect the motivation and self-esteem of learners and the benefit of engaging learners in self-assessment that deserves careful attention (Grösser, 2007; Kotzé, 2002; Young, 2005).

In their study, Black and William (1998, p. 142) found that everyday practice of assessment in the classroom is beset with problems and shortcomings. These authors argue that:

Marking is usually conscientious but often fails to offer guidance on how work can be improved. In a significant minority of cases, marking reinforces underachievement and under expectation by being too generous or unfocused. Information about pupil performance received by the teacher is insufficiently used to inform subsequent work.

This implies though teachers carefully mark learners' responses according to the task outcomes, there is often nil guidance in assisting under achievers. This at times is caused by the incompetence and lack of training from the teachers' side, which leads to the learner inadequacy engagement in task outcomes.

Similarly, Neil (1997, p. 35) also confirms the above statement in his review of assessment practices in the United States. For example, Neil argues that although it is not common practice in the classroom, the problems and shortcomings cannot be ruled out, but the most important difficulties with assessment revolve around issues of effective learning, negative impact and the managerial role of assessment. On the other hand, Black and Wiliam (1998, p. 143) claim that,

The tests used by teachers encourage rote and superficial learning even when teachers say they want to develop understanding; many teachers seem unaware of the inconsistency.

The questions and other methods teachers use are not shared with other teachers in the same school, and they are not critically reviewed in relation to what they actually assess.

The above implies that in order to effectively implement formative assessment in the classrooms, teachers must discourage rote and superficial learning and start developing understanding and strive that learners attain the learning outcomes of the lesson. The method of assessing learning must be constantly altered to fit the situation prevailing at the moment. To further effectively attain these learning outcomes, teachers of the same grade in the same school need to prepare together from introducing the learning outcomes, facilitating the active

involvement of learners and finally giving immediate feedback of the tasks carried out.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The two models of formative assessment in schools by Bell & Cowie (2001), namely, *planned* (PFA) and *interactive* formative assessments (IFA) will guide this study. According to Bell and Cowie (2001, p. 82), these two models are cyclical in nature and the components involved are mutually related. It must be pointed out that the purpose of formative assessment is to determine how the assessment information is collected and used.

2.7.1 Planned Formative Assessment (PFA) Model

The teacher eliciting, interpreting and acting on essential information usually characterises the process of PFA (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 83). The purpose for which the information is being collected and what is being assessed determines how the information is collected (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 83). The PFA Model aspects are interrelated and are represented diagrammatically below (see Fig. 2.1). An example of PFA is when a teacher requests learners to brainstorm their understanding of aspects of electricity at the beginning of a lesson. The assessment was planned by the teacher before the lesson began and is formative in the sense that it gives feedback to both the teacher and learners about the learning outcomes of the learners in the lesson (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 83). The teacher will therefore use the information obtained to determine the exact content of the day's lesson.

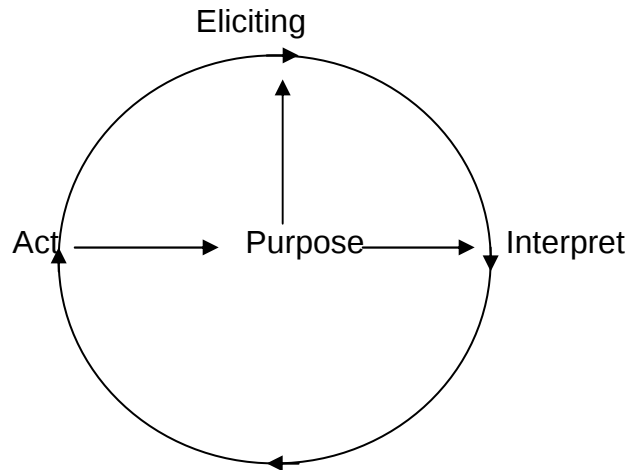


Figure 2.1 *Planned Formative Assessments* adapted from Loughran, 1999, p. 207

In this study, the teacher would plan the assessment activity from which s/he would draw the learners' reactions. S/he would interpret the results from the assessment activity, act upon them and respond accordingly. The learners will be assigned with an assessment activity they would brainstorm on; the teacher will interpret what the learners had brought forward after they had brainstormed according to her/his planned lesson. After the teacher had interpreted what the learners had brainstormed, s/he would be required to act on the assessment information brought forward by the learners. This would then fulfill the teacher's lesson objectives or outcomes. The teacher will draw out of the brainstorming results, interpret these and act to fill the learning gaps.

2.7.2 Interactive Formative Assessment (IFA) Model

IFA occurs during student-teacher interactions and has the potential to occur any time learners and teachers interact with each other. Unlike PFA with pre-determined assessment activities, IFA arises out of a learning activity (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 83). The teachers are unable to plan the details of this kind of formative assessment because they cannot predict what exactly the students would be doing. In the actual process of IFA, the teacher firstly gets information, which is verbal (learner answers) or non-verbal (learner body language). This sort of information is short-lived and in progress. The teacher recognizes the significant levels of information and determines its implications for his/her learner learning. Then the teacher makes response to the information so as to improve his/her learners' learning. (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 84).

The process of IFA involves the teacher noticing, recognizing and responding to learner thinking during these interactions and this is shown in Fig. 2.2 below. An example of IFA is when a teacher notices in a lesson that some of the learners hold an unacceptable view when brainstorming about the use of electricity. The teacher recognizes that teaching is required and responds by moving the class discussion to the responsible use of electricity.

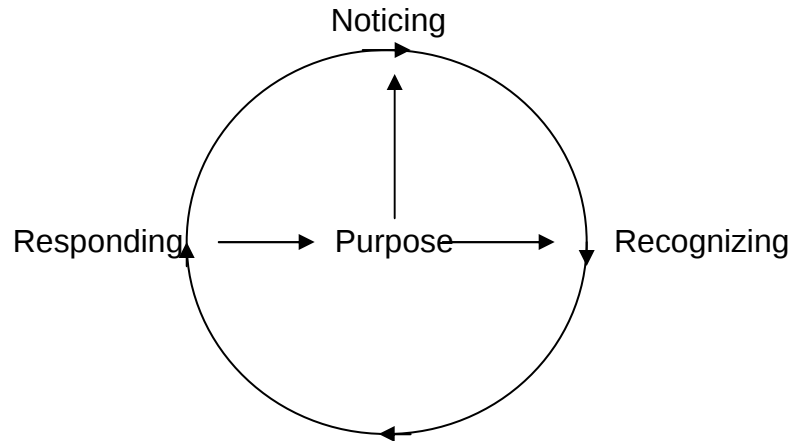


Fig. 2.2 *Interactive Formative Assessment adapted from Loughran, 1999, p. 208*

Teachers prepare for IFA by planning to increase the number of interactions between them and their learners, by providing opportunities for learners to approach them. Teachers prepare for IFA by rehearsing their responses to possible learner alternative responses or conceptions. Lastly, they also plan to increase their opportunities for observing learners interacting with each other (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 84).

IFA depends on the teachers' skills of interaction with the learners and the nature of the relationships they establish with their learners. They view IFA as an integral part of teaching and learning, and not separate from it. The responding as an action can be seen as a part of formative assessment or a part of teaching from this perspective (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 84). IFA is more complex and more difficult to execute in the busyness of the classroom than PFA. That is why some teachers indicate that IFA tends to be done more by the experienced teachers

and when they know the learners better. Loughran (1999, p. 209) proposed a model of Formative Assessment shown below (Fig. 2.3) which combines both PFA and IFA.

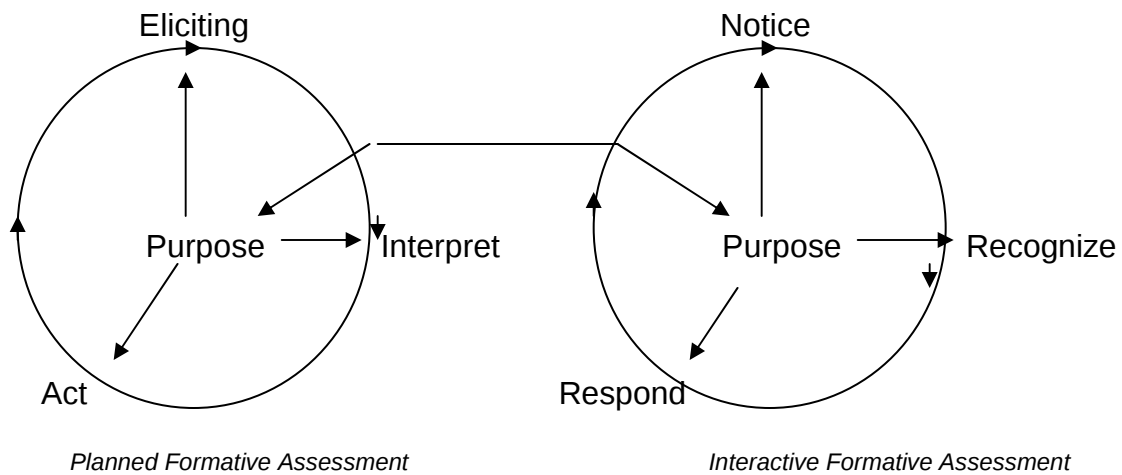


Fig. 2.3 A model of Formative Assessment adapted from: Loughran, 1999: p. 209

The main distinction between PFA and IFA is the degree and type of planning done by the teacher and the purpose for which they do formative assessment (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 85). In this regard, planning for PFA involves preparing specific assessment activities in advance of the lesson, and planning for IFA involves being prepared to notice and recognize learners' ideas and planning to respond to them (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 85). The purpose of PFA is perceived as obtaining information from the whole class about progress in learning science (electricity) as specified in the curriculum to inform the teaching; whilst the purpose of IFA is perceived as mediating in the learning of individual learners with respect to science, personal and social learning (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 85).

The advantages of these models of formative assessments are that teachers assessed a wider range of learning outcomes than was originally thought in their lessons. Though assessing for the purpose of learner learning, the learners' personal, social, subject, and skills were also developed in the process (Loughran, 1999, p. 206). Learners' personal development related to their learning about themselves as learners of science; whereas their social development related to their interacting with each other. Their subject development related to the development in the knowledge and understanding of the subject and their ability to do more in the subject. This author further states that the three aspects 'were not independent from each other' because the complexity and richness of their interactions was a contributor to the diversity and complexity of the classroom.

The diagrammatically presented as figure 2.3 are linked through the purpose of formative assessment (dotted lines) to each other. This is evident that some teachers could be more relaxed utilizing the PFA more than the IFA, whilst some teachers could be more relaxed utilizing IFA more than PFA. It is also evident that teachers could move from the planned to the unplanned and back. Though the teachers may be planning their lesson outcomes to be presented two or three times in a cycle of five days, Loughran (1999, p. 213) argues that the unplanned model could be utilized each and every day of contact with the learners because teachers have to constantly remind and interact on lessons already delivered in their classrooms.

2.8 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the philosophical underpinnings and development of the two kinds of Formative Assessment. Literature relative to the topic of investigating formative assessment practices of teachers in selected schools has also been discussed. During the discussion, the researcher first gave an overview of the relevant policy and further handled each research question individually.

Though formative assessment had been described as a complex and skilled task; it is also contextualised, responsive, ongoing, done during the learning to improve the learning and relied on the teachers' pedagogical knowledge (Loughran, 1999, p. 213). This author further states that knowing about the details of the formative assessment process will raise the awareness of teachers about what they do by formative assessment in their classrooms. This new and increased awareness may enable the teachers to reflect in new ways on their practice and the researcher assumes the increased awareness would be perceived by teachers to be the main aspect of their assessment development skills. Therefore, the hypotheses of the study are:

- (a) There are policy documents, which guide teachers in their classes on formative and summative assessments.
- (b) Teachers implement formative assessment practices in their classes.
- (c) Teachers underwent in-service assessment training for implementing the assessment policy in their classes.

(d) The use of formative assessment practices in class impact on learners' results in school.

This is precisely how the researcher of this study would suggest formative assessment be carried out in the identified teachers' classrooms.

The methodology framework and issues such as selection of the cases, data collection and recording, data analysis, verification processes and the limitations of this research will follow in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a brief explanation of the ontological, epistemological and methodological orientation of the study. It also gives a description of and justification for the case study method that is adopted for the research. This Chapter also covers the following: the research approach; the research design; population, sample and sampling; instrumentation; the reliability and validity/trustworthiness; data collection and analysis methods; ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

3.2 The Research Approach

The primary goal of this study is to determine whether or not teachers implement Formative Assessment practices as a process of improving learning in their secondary school classrooms. To accomplish this goal, this study will be guided by the interpretive qualitative inquiry approach, which is according to Merriam (2002, p. 6) concerned with understanding the meaning that participants make of a situation or phenomenon.

Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 6) state that paradigms are all-encompassing systems of interrelated practices and thinking that define for the researcher the nature of their inquiry along three dimensions; ontology, epistemology and methodology. Ontology specifies the nature of social reality to be studied.

Epistemology specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known. Methodology specifies how the researcher may go about practically studying whatever he or she believes can be known (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6).

The qualitative approach assumes the research takes place in a natural setting (Creswell, 2003, p. 181). This enables the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual or place and be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants. Qualitative research uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic (Creswell, 2003, p. 181). The methods of data collection are growing and they increasingly involve active participation and seek to build rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study. To support this statement, Creswell (2003, p. 181) emphasize that:

The traditionally based open-ended observations, interviews, and documents now include a vast array of materials such as sounds, e-mails, scrapbooks, and other emerging forms. The data collected involve text (or word) data and images (or picture) data.

The qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). This implies that the researcher makes an interpretation of the data. Furthermore, this also implies that developing a description of an individual, analyzing data using themes or categories and finally making an interpretation or drawing conclusions about its meaning, personally and theoretically stating the lessons learned, and offering further questions to be asked (Wolcott, 2001).

As already stated above, this study is guided by this interpretive paradigm. Interpretivists can only understand the world as it appears to them and not as it really is (Van Rensburg, 2001, p. 16). Gibbons and Sanderson (2002, p. 9) suggest interpretivism is an umbrella term normally associated with qualitative research methods for evaluation in the social science. The research is field focused and natural settings are the direct source of data in which the researcher was the key instrument. Gibbons and Sanderson (2002) argue that:

Interpretivists (or internalists) maintain that we use constructs such as culture, social context and language to build our view of the world, and that social reality is shaped through social interactions (p. 9).

The interpretivist approaches stress the way that people shape society. The social world is viewed as a social creation constructed in the minds of people and reinforced through their interaction with each other (Denscombe, 2002, p.18). Since existence is viewed this way, Interpretivists are committed to an epistemology that embraces social construction and knowledge as meaning in particular contexts, and made possible by social interaction. Given these interpretivist doctrines, it follows that their research interests will be concerned with people's beliefs, feelings and interpretations and how they make sense of their own world through meaning (Gibbons & Sanderson 2002, p. 9). Van Rensburg (2001, p.16) reiterates:

As Interpretivists, our design would reflect an interest in contextual meaning making rather than generalized rules. Instead of surveying large groups we would take a close look at individuals or small groups in natural settings using in-depth case studies. We would look for rich, detailed information of a qualitative nature through in-depth interviews, observations or interpretation of documents.

In agreement with Van Rensburg, the current study, which employs the interpretivist ideologies, is interactive and emphasizes context. Only a sample of five secondary schools out of forty-six found in the District had been investigated. Instead of arranging meeting respondents at centralized artificial points, they were interviewed in their natural settings. Interviews with teachers, for example, had been conducted in their own classrooms or offices, while learner interviews had been conducted in their own classrooms. As for observations, the learning area, Technology (Tech), had been observed in its respective laboratory, which is the learners' natural setting.

3.3 The Research Design

A research design is a specific plan that the researcher follows when conducting research (Hall, 1996, p. 17). This author further states it is a road map or structure of the envisaged investigation used by the researcher to obtain data for addressing key research questions. Hall (1996, p. 17) justifiably highlights its centrality in any research effort. Accordingly, this segment describes how, and justifies why, the research is conducted. This study adopts a case study research design.

Gillham (2000, p. 1) defines a case study as “a unit of human activity embedded in the real world which can only be studied or understood in context”. In this study, the cases to be studied are five secondary schools. The learning area and respondents (teachers and learners) within these schools constitute the

embedded units of each case. The case study will be a strategy for doing research and this involves an empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon (Robson, 1993, p.117). The difference between a case study and other studies is that the phenomenon of interest is investigated within its real life context and the investigation is in-depth. Case studies are designed to bring out the details from the respondents' viewpoint by using multiple sources of evidence.

The purpose of case studies according to Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 243) is "... to probe deeply and to analyze intensively the multifarious phenomenon that constitute the life cycle of the unit...". In this study, the diverse phenomenon constituting the case is the teachers and learners. Yin (2003, p. 46) also distinguishes between single and multiple case studies as follows.

The study may contain more than a single case. A common example is that the study of school innovations (such as the use of new school curricula...) in which individual schools adopt some innovations. Each school is the subject of an individual case study but the study as whole covers several schools and in this case uses a multiple case design.

Yin's explanation fits the current study. The current study investigates the formative assessment practices of teachers in five selected Fort Beaufort schools. Each of these five schools constitutes an individual case, which qualifies the study as a multiple case study. While single case studies provide rich in-depth insights into a particular case, multiple case studies provide even greater depth through replicating several cases (Yin, 2003, p. 46).

There are several advantages why Interpretivists employ a case study design. Yin (2003, p. 2) elicits that the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events such as individual life cycles and organizational and managerial processes. As context is central to interpretive paradigms, Robson (1993, p.154) suggests that if the researcher's main concern is to understand what is happening in a specific context and if s/he can get access to cooperation from the people involved, then s/he must use a case study. Human behaviors, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context. For example, if the researcher wants to understand people in their real life settings, then s/he must visit respondents at their homes during the vacation. The researcher had visited respondents at their schools where he also analyzed the context in which they operate in addition to what they gave as responses. Van Rensburg (2001, p.176) acknowledges,

As interpretivist researchers, our design would reflect an interest in contextual meaning making rather than generalized rules. Instead of surveying large groups we would take a close look at individuals or small groups in naturalistic settings using in-depth case studies.

Researchers are, therefore, concerned with processes rather than simply outcomes and the research is idiographic in the sense that it studies individual cases (small groups) intensively (Gibbons & Sanderson, 2003, p. 9).

Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 1) is of the view that the perceived shortcomings of a case study research are in essence the misconceptions about that type of research. This author states that five misconceptions or perceived shortcomings were identified as responsible for this scenario. These are that:

- (a) Theoretical knowledge is more valuable than practical knowledge.
- (b) One cannot generalize from a single case; therefore, the single case study cannot contribute to scientific development.
- (c) The case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypotheses testing and theory building.
- (d) The case study contains a bias toward verification; and
- (e) It is often difficult to summarize specific case studies (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 2).

3.4 Population, sample and sampling

The population of a study is usually that group of people about whom we want to draw conclusions (Babbie & Mouton, 2005, p. 164). In the same vein, O'Leary (2004, p. 102) states that a population is a total membership of a defined class of people, objects or events. In this study, the unit of analysis is schools based in the Fort Beaufort District of Education, which is partly urban and partly rural. The district is made up of 46 secondary schools having more than 500 teachers and more than 6650 learners, starting from grade 8 to grade 12. The bulk of these schools are rurally based and a percentage of these schools' learners commute from the District's urban area. The researcher has chosen this district because he stays and works in the district. He knows most of the teachers and is more comfortable conducting the research on home turf.

Leedy & Ormrod (2005, p. 144) and O'Leary (2004, p. 103) state that sampling is a 'strategic and sometimes mathematical' process of selecting samples (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 144) that is always strategic and sometimes mathematical (O'Leary, 2004, p. 103). Identifying one's sample at times depends on the research questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 145) the researcher wishes to answer. The same authors further argue that qualitative researchers are 'intentionally *nonrandom* in their selection of data sources. Instead their sampling is *purposeful* (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 145). This implies that the selection of those individuals will yield the most information about the phenomenon under investigation. In the same vein, Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003, p. 279) state purposive or nonprobability samples are samples in which the researcher uses some criterion or purpose to replace the principle of cancelled random errors. These authors further state the logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting 'information-rich cases for study in depth', with an underlying focus on intentionally selecting specific cases that will provide the most information for the questions under study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 279).

There are basically two types of sampling methods known as probability sampling techniques, which are a primary method for selecting large representative samples for social science research and political polls; and the non-probability sampling techniques, which are often the most appropriate (Babbie & Mouton, 2005, p.166). For this study, the researcher made use of

non-probability techniques employing the purposive sampling method. A purposive sample has been used in this study. Employing this method allowed the researcher to 'select those individuals ... that yielded the most information about the topic under investigation' (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 145). The researcher selected the sample on the basis of his knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of his research objectives (Babbie & Mouton, 2005, p. 166).

The researcher has purposely chosen the five schools from the 46 in the Fort Beaufort District because of the diversity of the schools, which may be a true reflection of what transpires in all schools in the district. In purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included on the basis of their judgement of their typicality (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2006, p. 103). One Grade 9 learner class has been purposely chosen because of the time they have spent on the programme and random sampling had been used to choose this particular one Grade 9 class of respondents from this school.

Five teachers and their total number of 280 learners from their learning area class from which, a systematic random sample of 25 learners shall form the sample of the research. These teachers are working in five different secondary schools and the learners shall be coming from their individual schools. The investigated learning area shall, for obvious reasons, be Technology because the researcher had been teaching it and that most teachers are most comfortable with Technology teaching. Sampling is a process of selecting

samples (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 144) that is always strategic and sometimes mathematical (O'Leary, 2004, p. 103).

3.4.1 Schools participating in the study

The schools that participated in this study are all bisexual, rural based and public secondary schools offering Grades 8 to 12. The total number of educators in all schools depends on the number of learners in the selected schools. Their numbers differ with the smallest enrolling 125 and the biggest boasting 550 learners from Grades 8 to 12. Bearing in mind the broad spectrum of schools in South Africa, in terms of geographical location, socio-economic backgrounds, levels of resourcing and former administrative departments (Wilmot, 2005, p. 103), the researcher purposively selected one urban and four rural located, socio-economically previously advantaged high-resourced and disadvantaged low-resourced schools. The rural schools are those thought to be dysfunctional and non-performing because of lack of resources and sometimes have defects in their infrastructure.

The five schools' buildings differ tremendously in terms of infrastructure and resources, comprise a well planned layout for the urban and two or three two-floor blocks of classes for the rural; in the form of barracks or the apartheid hostel blocks built for village labourers working in mines. Some of the floors are in good shape with a few rooms vandalized and out of use; other schools are in need of

major face-lifts and some minor repairs such as windowpanes repairs and paint here and there.

There were also didactic reasons why I chose the five schools. First, the schools produced good results when assessed in terms of the Nated 550 curriculum used to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the national school system – for example, infrastructure and equipment, education conditions and availability and quality of teaching staff (Wilmot, 2005, p. 92). The researcher had used these schools because he believed that they have the infrastructure and physical and human resources necessary for C2005 to be successfully introduced. The researcher also wished to find out what impact the implementation of the formative assessment policy under study had on these schools.

3.5 Instrumentation

In this study, data was collected using interviews, observations, documents and artifacts analyses.

3.5.1 Interviews

The researcher employed the interviews as a data collection instrument. Interviewing is a commonly used method of collecting information from people. According to Kumar (2005, p. 123), “Any person-to-person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind is called an interview”. Interviews are very flexible because the interviewer has the freedom to formulate questions as they come to mind around the issue being researched. However,

“an interview can be inflexible, when the investigator has to keep strictly to the questions decided beforehand” (Kumar, 2005, p. 123). This implies the interviewer must only pose the preset questions and can at times not probe as he wishes to. As such, the interviewee cannot refer to other similar cases.

Furthermore, interview data is appropriate in interpretive research because “hermeneutics is the study of the interpretation of texts” and the interview “is the oral discourse transformed into texts to be interpreted” (Kvale, 1996, p. 46). In the naturalistic tradition, “the prime sources of data are the *words* and *actions* of the people you are interviewing and observing ... you ‘get at’ your prime source of data – words and actions – through a combination of *looking, listening and asking*” (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 71). Interview data is an appropriate inter-subjective way for participants and researchers to exchange meanings and interpretations of particular events or actions (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 72). Audiotape recordings also extend the range and precision of the observations that can be made. O’Leary (2004, p. 169) states “audio recording allows you to preserve raw data for review at a later date. It therefore allows you to focus on the question/answer process at hand”. The researcher made use of an audiotape though ‘unable to capture non-verbal cues’, implying these audiotapes cannot capture facial expressions, gestures and body language (O’Leary, 2004, p. 169). This inability had been substituted with extra written notes during the interview process.

Kvale (1996, p. 109) argues that “personal interaction in the interview affects the interviewee, and the knowledge produced by the interview affects the understanding of the knowledge produced”. The same author cautions that transcribed interview texts are incomplete accounts of the meanings expressed in the lived interview situation and argues:

The researcher is critical to the quality of scientific knowledge and for the soundness of ethical decisions in any research project. By interviewing, the importance of the researcher as a person is magnified because ... [he] is the instrument for obtaining knowledge ... in the end, the integrity of the researcher - his or her honesty and fairness, knowledge and experience – are the decisive factors (Kvale, 1996, p. 109).

Addressing Kvale’s concern that transcribing is problematic since it involves translating from an oral language with its own set of ‘rules’, to a written language with another set of ‘rules’, the audio-taped conversations had been transcribed using transcription symbols. The transcribed audiotape recordings had been printed and the hard copies had been filed along with the field notes and other information in topic and/or date order while the audiotapes had been stored in date order for easy retrieval.

According to Kumar (2005, p. 123), “Interviews are classified according to the degree of flexibility”, as structured and unstructured interviews. In structured interviews the researcher asks a predetermined set of questions, using the ‘same wording and order of questions’ as specified in the *interview schedule*. An interview schedule is a written list of questions, open-ended or closed-ended prepared for use by an interviewer in a person-to-person interaction (Kumar 2005, p. 126). Its main advantage is to provide ‘uniform information’ that assures the

'comparability of data'. "Structured interviewing requires fewer interviewing skills than does unstructured interviewing" (Kumar, 2005, p. 126).

Unstructured interviews have "strength of almost complete freedom in terms of content and structure" (Kumar, 2005, p. 123). The researcher has a complete freedom in terms of the wording s/he uses and the way s/he explains questions to his/her respondents. Questions can be formulated and issues raised in front of the respondents depending on what actually occurs to the researcher in the context of the discussion. There are several types of unstructured interviews being in-depth interviewing, focus group interviewing, narratives and oral histories.

Unstructured interviews, also known as 'intensive interviews' are a purely qualitative interviewing strategy in which questions and follow-up probes are generated during the interview itself (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 72). The intensive interview was the type of interview the researcher had mostly made use of because the "purpose ... is to understand how people in a program view the program, learn their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experiences" (Patton, 1990, p. 206).

3.5.2 Observations

Observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place (Kumar, 2005, p.

119). Yin (2003, p. 92) states that not all qualitative data collection approaches require direct interaction with people. Observation is a method that can be used when data collected through other means may be of limited value or is difficult to validate. For example, in interviews respondents may be asked about how they behave in certain situations but there is no guarantee that they actually do what they say they do. The same author further states that observing them in those situations is more reliable: it is possible to see how they actually behave. Observation can also serve as a technique for verifying or nullifying information provided in face-to-face encounters. In this study, the researcher did not plan to become immersed in the study (O'Leary, 2004, p. 172) but he planned the observation to be non-participant.

A non-participant observation is when the researcher is not involved in the activities of the group but remains a passive observer, watching and listening to its activities and drawing conclusions from this (Kumar, 2005, p. 120). For example, the researcher may wish to study how a specific teacher implements a policy in his classroom, as this study investigates precisely the implementation of a policy, as an observer, the researcher can watch, listen and record activities as the teacher and his/her learners perform them. After making a number of observations, conclusions 'could be drawn about activities teachers carry out in their classrooms when implementing a policy. Kumar concludes by stating "Any occupational group in any setting can be observed in the same manner" (2005, p. 120).

Observations are recorded in many ways, but in this study the researcher had only explained the ways in which he had observed. The selection depends on the purpose of observation and each method has its advantages and disadvantages. In narrative observations, the researcher records, as Kumar (2005, p. 121) argues:

A description of the interaction in his/her own words. Usually, s/he makes brief notes while observing the interaction and soon after the observation makes detailed notes in narrative form. In addition, some researchers may interpret the interaction and draw conclusions from it.

Narrative recordings have advantages in that they provide a deeper insight into the interaction. The disadvantage is that the researcher may be biased in his/her observation and the interpretations and conclusions drawn from the observations may also be biased (Kumar, 2005, p. 121). In this study, the researcher had watched himself against biasness and had done his utmost not to focus too much on observation and “forget to record an important piece of interaction and, obviously, in the process of recording, part of the interaction may be missed” (Kumar, 2005, p. 121).

Observations can also be recorded on a video recorder and then be analyzed.

The advantage of taping the interaction is that the observer can see it a number of times before drawing any conclusions, and can invite other professionals to view the tape in order to arrive at more objective conclusions (Kumar, 2005, p. 122).

However, some of the respondents may feel ‘uncomfortable’ to be video recorded or may ‘behave differently before a camera’. This implies that “the interaction may not be a true reflection of the situation” (Kumar, 2005, p. 123). As said

earlier, the choice of a particular method depends, of course, upon the purpose of the observation, the complexity of the interaction and the type of population being observed.

3.5.3 Document analysis

Document analysis refers to documents as a source of data (O'Leary, 2004, p. 177). This can take the form of previously gathered newspaper articles, historical archives, company minutes, government published documents, and so on (O'Leary 2004, p. 177). The main fact is that the documents are pre-produced texts not gathered by the researcher. In this study, the researcher had analyzed government published assessment policy documents to bring the actual meaning of the study at hand to light. The researcher envisaged these documents should shape and guide the entire study.

The difficulty with documents is to consider the author's bias and that of the researcher of the study. The text is pre-prescribed and therefore, the 'credibility of the data (the researcher) generated had, in part, been dependent on recognition of the bias/purpose of the author; (O'Leary, 2004, p. 176). The second source of bias lies with the researcher himself or herself.

The researcher had, therefore, also made use of physical evidence of formative assessment by looking at physical artifacts such as work done in class. These artifacts were found in the learners' workbooks together with the teachers'

planning schemes; the assessment outcomes; the educators' memoranda and mark schedules.

3.6 Triangulation

Johnson (1994, p. 8) says another way in which social research can be strengthened is by 'triangulation', that is, by homing in on research evidence from several points of view. Most researchers believe that if a researcher relies on a single source of evidence, there is a possibility that inaccuracies or prejudices incorporated in the evidence will not be noted (Johnson, 1994, p. 8). If on the other hand different sources of evidence provide a broadly consistent picture, the researcher may be more confident about the findings.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995, p. 199) warn that what is involved in triangulation is not the combination of different kinds of data per se, but rather an attempt to relate different sorts of data in such a way as to counteract various possible threats to the validity of our analysis. In order to ascertain validity and reliability of data in this study, a variety of complimentary methods had been used to gain deeper insights into the problem under study. For example, in this study, the following data collection methods were used as data sources: interviews, observations and document analysis. The use of several methods of data collection, or triangulation, had enabled the researcher to explore more fully the richness and complexity of the phenomenon under study by examining it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, achieved a measure of validity and

reliability. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p. 208) outlined advantages of the multi method approach or triangulation as follows:

It has been observed that as research methods act as filters through which the environment is selectively experienced, they are never theoretical or neutral in representing the world of experience. Exclusive reliance on one method, therefore, may bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality s/he is investigating. S/he needs to be confident that the data generated are not simply artifacts or one specific method of collection. And this confidence can only be achieved as far as a normative research is concerned when different methods of data collection yield substantially the same results. Further, the more the methods contrast with each other, the greater the researcher's confidence. If, for example, the outcomes of a questionnaire survey correspond to those of an observational study of the same phenomena, the more the researcher will be confident about the findings.

Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 121) and Merriam (2002) concur by maintaining that triangulation is used to confirm the emerging findings in respect of information gathered and regularities of data from different sources. Situations and methods are compared to see whether the same pattern keeps on recurring. This adds to the trustworthiness of empirical materials (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 121).

Research has established that multiple sources of information should be sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective of issues being researched (Patton, 1990, p. 244). The questions directed to different respondents concerning a single theme can bring forth a balanced outlook of what it is that is being studied and data from different sources or methods must necessarily converge on or be aggravated to reveal the truth (Patton, 1990, p. 244).

In this study, different informants and data collection instruments had been used to validate data. For instance, the responses from interviews were considered complete only when those from observations and document analysis were added. On this account, an aspect of consistency had also come into play, as different respondents involved in various high school institutions had verified the data.

3.7 Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Interviews, observations and document analyses were used to collect data in this study. O'Leary (2004, p. 168) states that the main game in interviewing is to facilitate the interviewee's ability to answer. This involves easing respondents into the interview by asking the right questions probing and prompting appropriately and winding it down where the time is right. Sensitive and threatening questions, if any, will be asked towards the end of the interview session.

O'Leary (2004, p. 168) states how the researcher can be true to his/her role by keeping all questions on track or explore tangents considering the role the researcher has chosen to adopt as an interviewer. In this study, the researcher had used unstructured interviews because these allowed him to explore interested tangents as they developed. The trick here had been 'mindful of the time and be sure ... (to) end the interview with the full range of data (the researcher) aimed to gather' (O'Leary, 2004, p. 168).

Observing as a data collection method requires as much foresight as was mentioned in the interview process. The researcher needed to plan for all issues and contingencies; observed the setting; recorded observations, reviewed the press, refined as appropriate and finally analyzed the data (O'Leary, 2004, p. 174). In planning the process, the researcher had to be realistic considering the access to the group; familiarizing himself for any cultural issues likely to affect the process; considered the role he had taken and decided on the time he had taken for the process (O'Leary, 2004, p. 174). The researcher had used all his senses and intuition to gather data and 'because he had not be directing the process, (he) needed to be prepared to invest significant time in (his) observation' (O'Leary, 2004, p. 174).

Observations need to be recorded in a timely manner. In this study, the researcher had not been immersed in the observations since he had been 'using schedules that (will be) filled in while observations occur' (O'Leary, 2004, p. 175). Data had been recorded in a systematic order that eased future analysis. Observation recordings had been reviewed noting any difficulties encountered, and the observed data had been triangulated with other data types at hand.

Document analysis had also been used to collect data. Because document analysis does not involve document productions, the steps involved differ from other methods of data collection. Like in observations, the researcher needed to plan for all contingencies, gathered the documents, reviewed their credibility,

interrogated their evidence, reflected and refined the process and finally analyzed the data gathered (O'Leary, 2004, p. 179).

The researcher had created a list of all relevant documents and if some of them carry sensitivity information, permission to utilize them had been applied for. All translations were considered in time and if too many were available, an appropriate sampling strategy will be developed (O'Leary, 2004, p. 179).

Viewing documents is an ongoing process and the researcher must reflect on any difficulties associated with gathering data, reviewing the source and exploring the content. After credibility of the document had been acquired, the researcher extracted the required data. Answers to the research questions may be found in the documents and such documents may require further investigation (O'Leary, 2004, p. 180). This author states that the researcher can treat documents like respondents and interview them to provide information relevant to the inquiry. The researcher had determined what he wished to know about the document and whether the document could provide answers to such inquiries. Noting occurrences is a 'process that quantifies the use of particular words or phrases within a given document' (O'Leary, 2004, p. 180). Like in observations, the researcher determined what is being looked for and noted the amount and the frequency of, or perhaps the context of the occurrences.

Data analysis refers to the analysis of data that was gathered using qualitative techniques. Babbie and Mouton (2004, p. 490) state there is neither “one neat and tidy approach to qualitative data analysis” nor even one approach to “each specific type of qualitative data analysis”. Two aspects of importance in data analysis include “the topic you want to study and a specific research question on that topic” and “the question behind the question” (p. 491) The implication of this in my study refers to the perceptions of secondary teachers of the policy under research and as well how this policy is implemented in their classrooms.

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006, p. 321) also argue that in qualitative studies there is “no clear point at which data collection stops and analysis begins”. These authors state there is a rather “gradual fading out of the one and a fading in of the other. This means that at first the researcher mainly collects data and towards the end mainly analyzing what has been collected. Terre Blanche, *et al* (2006, p. 321) identified “two basic patterns” for doing qualitative data analysis. The first pattern is based on ‘interpretive assumptions’ where the key to doing a good interpretive analysis is to stay close to the data and interpret it from a position of ‘emphatic understanding’. The second pattern is based on ‘social constructivism’ of which the most popular approach is ‘discourse analyses’. In this study, the researcher had analyzed data according to the interpretive assumptions. Interpretive analysis “rarely proceeds in as orderly a manner as may be suggested” by the steps the researcher had applied, but “it can be a helpful starting point” (Terre Blanche, *et al.*, 2006, p. 322). Data of this

study had been analyzed following the steps suggested by Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006) as stipulated below.

3.7.1 Inducing themes

Induction, according to Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006, p. 323), refers to “general rules or classes from specific instances, which is known as a ‘bottom-up approach’. This means looking at the texts and try to work out what the organizing principles are that naturally underlie the material, rather than using ‘ready-made categories’ that fit the categories.

The researcher had utilized the informants’ language to label his categories, rather than ‘abstract theoretical language’ and had not summarize the data content but thought in terms of processes, functions, tensions and contradictions. “Having two or three themes is probably not enough to do anything interesting with the data” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006, p. 324), that is why the researcher had tried to come with as many themes as possible “trying to find an optimal level of complexity” (Terre Blanche, *et al.*, 2006, p. 324). Themes had been decoded into smaller sub-themes under each main theme.

Verification is a process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain of the reliability, validity and generalizability of data collected. “Without rigor, research is worthless, becomes fiction and loses its utility. Hence a great deal of attention is applied to trustworthiness, consistency and applicability in all research

methods” (Morse, Barret, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002, p. 2). Challenges to rigor in qualitative studies paralleled the blossoming of statistical packages and the development of computing systems in quantitative studies.

3.8 Reliability and Validity/Trustworthiness

The reliability and validity of a study affects the credibility of the findings. Reliability relates to the methods of data collection and the concern that they should be consistent and not distort the findings. According to Denscombe (2002, p. 100):

It refers to the ability of a research process to provide results that do not vary from occasion to occasion and that do not vary according to particular persons undertaking the research. Researchers need to feel confident that the results they obtain are not being affected by a research instrument that throws up different results each time it is used

Reliability thus refers to the stability, accuracy and precision of measurement (Denscombe, 2002, p. 100). Exemplary case studies ensure that the procedures used are well documented and can be repeated with the same results over and over again. The main ways in which qualitative researchers ensure the retest reliability of their analyses is by maintaining meticulous records of interviews and observations and by documenting the process of analysis in detail (Mays & Pope, 1995, p. 2). Details of data collection and analysis procedures had been documented in ensuing sections and the research instruments and data sets had been included under appendices.

Denscombe (2002, p. 100) provides a concise definition of validity as follows:

It refers to the quality of data and explanations and the confidence we might have that they accord with what is true and what is real. Claims

to validity involve some demonstration that the researcher's data and his/her analysis are firmly rooted in the realm of things that are relevant, genuine and real; they act to reassure the reader that the research is not based on poor data and erroneous interpretations.

Multiple sources of evidence had been used in this study in order to enhance the validity as well as the credibility of the findings. In addition to interviews and observations, documentary analysis had also been conducted. Yin (2003, p. 137) warns researchers of the need to be open to contrary findings as follows:

A related analytic and presentational issue is concerned with the thoroughness with which the researcher examines negative or deviant cases, those in which the researcher's explanatory scheme appears weak or is contradicted by evidence. The researcher should give a fair account of these occasions and try to explain why the data vary.

Where negative or deviant cases were found during data analysis, the background information of respondents had been used to try and explain why the data varies.

Silverman (2000, p. 177) states “there is a tendency towards an anecdotal approach to the use of data in relation to conclusions or explanations in qualitative research”. He states that brief conversations, snippets from unstructured interviews are used to provide evidence of a particular contention.

Subjectivity questions the trustworthiness of much qualitative research, but two common responses to it are to suggest method and data triangulation and/or respondent trustworthiness. Silverman (2000, p. 177) argues that triangulation “refers to the attempt to get a ‘true’ fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it or different findings”. Respondent trustworthiness “suggests that

we should go back to the subjects with our tentative results and refine them in the light of our subjects' reactions" (Silverman, 2000, p. 177).

Responses based on participants' own words in the context of comprehensive data treatment are possible because the quality of data should be high in qualitative research (Silverman 2000, p. 185). Quantitative researchers try to claim reliability by using "pre-tested measures and scales, but they end up with highly unreliable tabulations. Silverman (2000, p. 185) argues that this is "because asking and answering any question can never be separated from mutual interpretations which are inherently local and non-standardizable". This is because the data from survey research interviews, tapes and transcripts are open to further inspection by both researchers and readers, but this opportunity is not always present in qualitative research. The readers are dependent on the researcher's depiction of what was really going on. As Silverman (2000, p. 186) state "field notes are rarely available; these would be very helpful ... to allow the reader to formulate his/her own hunches about the perspective of the people who have been studied ...".

Applicability refers to 'generalizability'; a term used in quantitative research studies. In qualitative research studies this refers to applicability. In this study, "generalizability refers to the applicability of the findings to the program as it actually operates or to similar programs in comparable settings" (Rossi & Freeman 1993, p. 255). The researcher doubts that the findings of the evaluation

study in the particular case could be applicable to any other case, as this is an individual, unique case study, in its own setting with its own problems that can never be applicable to any other case. As Rossi and Freeman (2000, p. 255) state it that “In practice, the problem of generalizability is an especially critical one in the assessment of a prospective program, because such evaluations are usually conducted with a trial version of the program administered by the researcher”. The two authors argue that the “sample of target units should be an unbiased sample of the targets that will be or actually are the clients of the enacted program” (Rossi & Freeman 2000, p. 256). Should it have been a quantitative study, yes, and then the findings could have been generalized.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In any research endeavour, researchers are expected to employ high standards of academic rigor and to behave with honesty and dignity. According to Denscombe (2002, p. 125), ‘the acceptability of social research depends increasingly on the willingness of social researchers to accord respect to their subjects and to treat them with consideration’. Ethical issues in research include the need for informed consent, voluntary participation and confidentiality.

Informed consent, one of the critical issues in research, requires that respondents be fully aware of any consequences that might result from the research. As Konza (2001, p. 1) puts it, ‘informed consent is seen to be one of the ethical issues in research ... the foremost consideration in research should

be given to the dignity of research participants and on these grounds alone deception in research can never be condoned'. Closely aligned to informed consent is the right to voluntary participation in research. 'The participant's consent to participate in the research must be voluntary, free from coercion or promises of benefits that are unlikely to result from participation' (Konza, 2001, p. 1). The author further adds that the researcher must ensure that the participant has received a full disclosure of the nature of the study, the risks, the benefit, with an extended opportunity to ask questions. Prior to the commencement of each interview, an informal discussion had been held with each respondent where the researcher had introduced himself and explained the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. Respondents had been granted opportune time to ask any questions before the interview had commenced.

Konza (2001, p. 1) further writes that:

As in all ethically sound research, students must be provided adequate opportunities to refuse participation in research with a clear written undertaking that their refusal will not in any way jeopardize their academic or personal standing.

As these sites are under the control of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs), in addition to learners' own consent to participate, consent had also been sought from the school authorities.

The researcher had to gain entrance into the sites by writing letters to the department of Education requesting permission to conduct the study at the identified sites. Individual letters had also been sent to the sites requesting

entrance permission as well as explaining the purpose of the research mentioning issues pertaining to ethical considerations.

Information that is given to social researchers during the course of their investigation should be treated as confidential. 'It should not be disclosed in any way that allows the information to be traced back to the individual who provided it' (Ndebele, 2007, p.178). Denscombe (2002, p. 180) supports this and emphasizes that making them anonymous in published reports should protect the informants' identities. This extends beyond simply exchanging the name because in some settings identities could still be recognized from roles played, when events took place or other contextual issues. It is therefore good practice to avoid publishing any reports, which would allow individuals or groups to be identified either by name or role. All respondents had been assured of the confidentiality of their data in terms of individual identities. All data in this study had therefore been reported as group data.

3.10 Limitations of the study

There are parameters for a research study that establish the boundaries, exceptions, reservations, and qualifications inherent in every study. Creswell (2003, p. 147) call these parameters the delimitations and limitations of the study.

The limitations of this study had been time constraints that the researcher had to constantly battle against. The timing of the study was so bad in so much the researcher, a school manager, had to negotiate for a leave to collect and analyze

data. Another constraint had to do with finances to cover transport and to purchase the necessary equipment for oral and visual data. If the researcher had been granted fiscal relief in conducting the research, distance; data gathering equipment and analysis software would not be the envisaged limitation.

3.11 Summary

This chapter set out to outline the research methodology that had been followed in conducting this study. The philosophical framework underpinning the research methodology was discussed, as was the research design. The specific strategy of inquiry, that is the case study research design, was discussed in detail, focusing on the data gathering instruments, with issues pertaining to ethical considerations concluding the chapter.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data as it was gathered in the field. The study endeavoured to respond to the main research question, which sought to investigate the implementation of Formative Assessment in Secondary schools in the Fort Beaufort District of Education. The data presented in this chapter was collected through interviews, observations, artifacts and the Department of Education policy documents such as syllabi; subject policy guidelines and the National Government Gazettes. The data was triangulated hence the three methods of data collection were scrutinized to find answers to the research questions of this study. Data collected through tape recorder, was transcribed into written text and shown to the respondents to find out whether they agree their responses were valid and reliable or not.

4.2 Demographic data of respondents

The chapter begins with the demographical data of respondents. The reason for presenting this data is to compare the answers of various demographical subgroups, such as location and infrastructure of schools, male and female, age ranges, qualifications and experience.

The demographic information “permits inferences regarding the extent to which the results of the research project are generalizable” (Peterson, 2000, p. 58).

This does not imply that the findings of this study will be generalized to the entire District of Education because it is a case study.

4.2.1 The location of schools

The schools selected for the research study are located in the urban and rural areas of the Fort Beaufort District.

Table 1: The location of schools

Location of schools	N	%
Rural	4	80
Urban	1	20
Total	5	100

The table shows that the majority of schools 4 (80 %) under investigation are rural situated whilst the remainder 1 (20 %) of the schools is in the urban area. The reason for this is that there are many rural schools and very few urban schools in the entire Fort Beaufort District.

4.2.2 The gender of respondents

The researcher shall first present the gender of School Management Teams members involved in the research project as shown in the following table.

Table 2: Gender of SMT members

Gender	N	%
Male	2	40
Female	3	60
Total	5	100

Table 2 shows that the majority of SMT members 3 (60 %) who responded to the interview schedule were females and the rest were 2 (40 %) were males. This implies that there are more female SMT members from the selected schools than male members.

Table 3: Gender of teachers

Gender	N	%
Male	3	60
Female	2	40
Total	5	100

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents as 3 (60 %) who responded to the interview schedule were males and the rest were 2 (40 %) females. This does not imply that there are more male teacher members from the selected schools than female teachers but only in the selected learning area.

Table 4: Gender of learners per school

Gender	N	%
School A	3 females	12
	2 males	8
School B	4 females	16
	1 male	4
School C	4 females	16
	1 male	4
School D	3 females	12
	2 males	8
School E	3 females	12
	2 males	8
Total	25	100

Table 4 shows that the majority of respondents as 17 (68 %) who responded to the interview schedule were females and the rest were 8 (32 %) males. The teachers informed the researcher they requested the learners to volunteer being in the group and they had to convince some of the male learners to participate, as they did not voluntarily avail themselves. One teacher informed the researcher later that this is evident of the female learner to willingly participate in all activities and functions of the school, even in their academic performance, female learners performed better than male learners.

4.2.3 Age range of respondents

The age range of the SMT members was examined and presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Age ranges of SMT members

Age range	N	%
Below 30 years	0	0
30 – 35 years	0	0
36 – 39 years	0	00
40 – 45 years	2	40
46 – 49 years	2	40
50 – 55 years	1	20
Total	5	100

Table 5 shows that the majority of SMT members as 4 (80 %) who responded to the interview schedule were still young and 1 (20 %) were above this age and between 55 – 60 years which, implies these SMT members were ready to retire from the system of Education.

Table 6: Age ranges of teachers

Age range	N	%
Below 30 years	0	0
30 – 35 years	2	40
36 – 40 years	3	60
40 – 45 years	0	0

46 – 49 years	0	0
Total	5	100

Table 6 shows that the majority of teachers from the selected schools, who responded to the interview schedule to be between the age ranges 36 – 40 years as (60%). The other 40 percentile of teachers who responded to the interview schedule shows to be between the age ranges of 30 – 35 years and possibly new in the field.

Table 7: Age ranges of learners

Age range	N	%
Below 10	0	0
10- 15 years	11	44
16 – 20 years	14	56
20 – 25 years	0	0
Total	25	100

Table 7 shows that the majority of learners from the selected sites who responded to the interview schedule to be between the age ranges of 16 – 20 years (56%), an age range older for the grade under research (Grade 9) and more matured than their classmates. Their responses may be more convincing than their counterparts. The 44 percentile may be of the expected age range or younger, which may suggest immaturity.

4.2.4 Qualifications and experience of respondents

The qualifications and experience of respondents were presented and analyzed according to the highest professional qualifications, qualifications and experience in moderating other teachers, and qualifications and experience in teaching the subject under study. These qualifications and experiences are presented in tables 7, 8 and 9.

Table 8: Professional qualifications and experience of SMT members

School	Qualification	Experience (in years)
A	B.Sc. UED, B. Ed	28
B	B. PEd. B. Ed	16
C	B.Sc., HDE, B.Sc. (Hons)	20
D	B.A. HDE, B. Ed.	22
E	STD, B. A., ACE (Man)	20

Table 8 shows that the qualifications and experience of SMT members from the selected schools under study. This experience includes their teaching years as well. This table shows that all SMT members have basic education and had furthered up until honours level in their education qualifications with the exception of only one SMT member who had not achieved any honours degree in his education. Their experience is self explanatory with lowest at 16 years and the highest at 28 years of teaching and management.

Table 9: Professional qualifications and experience of teachers

School	Qualification	Experience
A	B.Sc. HDE	15
B	B. PEd, B. Ed	12
C	B.Sc. HDE	13
D	B.A. HDE, DPAL	06
E	B.Sc. HDE	09

Table 9 shows that the professional qualifications and experience of teachers of the selected schools under study. The table shows that all teachers have basic education qualifications and are above 5 years of teaching experience.

It is recognized that one of the key factors influencing quality curriculum implementation in schools is the qualification of teachers in their specialized area. It was for this reason that the qualifications of teachers were investigated to find out their specialization in Technology.

Table 10: Teachers specializing in Technology

Technology specialization	N	N %
Core	0	0
Major	0	0
Minor	2	40
Other	3	60
Total	5	100

Table 10 shows that the subject specialization of teachers in the selected schools. Only 40% of teachers took Technology as a minor at their institutions of study and 60% of teachers did not specialize in Technology but in other subjects. It is recognized that one of the key factors influencing quality curriculum implementation in schools is the qualification of teachers in their specialized area. It was for this reason that the qualifications of teachers were investigated to find out their specialization in Technology.

4.3 Qualitative operationalization

The qualitative approach assumes the research takes place in a natural setting (Creswell, 2003, p. 181). This enables the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual or place and be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants. Qualitative research uses multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic (Creswell, 2003, p. 181). A researcher who uses the qualitative approach seeks to understand his participants from their own frame of reference.

The goal of using a qualitative research approach is to fully understand the essence of the phenomenon. In this study, data production was done through personal interviews, observations, artefacts and documents analysis. Creswell (2003, p. 30) says:

One of the main reasons for conducting a qualitative study is that the study is exploratory. This means that not much has been written about the topic or the population being studied, and the researcher seeks to listen to participants and build an understanding based on their ideas.

In the process of trying to explore the “what and how” of the implementation of Formative Assessment by teachers in the classroom, the researcher described and interpreted data produced during the research process through the qualitative approach.

The methods of data collection are growing and they increasingly involve active participation and seek to build rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study. To support this statement, Creswell (2003, p. 181) emphasizes that:

The traditionally based open-ended observations, interviews, and documents now include a vast array of materials such as sounds, e-mails, scrapbooks, and other emerging forms. The data collected involve text (or word) data and images (or picture) data.

The qualitative research is fundamentally interpretive (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). This implies that the researcher makes an interpretation of the data. Furthermore, this also implies that developing a description of an individual, analyzing data using themes or categories and finally making an interpretation or drawing conclusions about its meaning, personally and theoretically stating the lessons learned, and offering further questions to be asked (Wolcott, 2001). This study is guided by the interpretive paradigm. Interpretivists can only understand the world as it appears to them and not as it really is (Van Rensburg, 2001, p. 16). Gibbons and Sanderson (2002, p. 9) suggest interpretivism is an umbrella term normally associated with qualitative research methods for evaluation in the social science. The research is field focused and natural settings are the direct source of data in which the researcher was the key instrument.

4.4 Analysis of qualitative data

Content analysis was used as a data analysis strategy. This strategy is used for the categorization of verbal data, for the purpose of classification, summarizing and tabulation. The content was analyzed on two levels, namely the descriptive and the interpretative level. Descriptive analysis is where data is described; that means what was actually said with nothing read into and/or assumed about it. Interpretative data analysis is about what was meant by the respondents, inferred or implied. This level of data analysis is sometimes called the latent level of analysis. Data will from this point be presented and analyzed according to research questions of the study. The respondents had been coded and the SMT of all schools had been coded as:

- *SIR A – E* (SMT Interview Responses of School A – School E)
- *TIR A – E* (Teacher Interview Responses of School A – School E)
- *LIR A – E* (Learner Interview Responses of School A – School E)

4.5 Research themes

Themes were derived from the research questions used in this study and data were presented and analyzed under these themes.

4.5.1 Teacher and learner perceptions of Formative Assessment or Feedback

When the SMT and teachers were asked what their understanding about Formative Assessment was and learners about feedback, they responded to perceive Formative Assessment or feedback as

- SIR A (urban) *the assessment that assists the learner to focus on their studies in the classroom.*
- SIR C (rural) *the work that is supposed to be done by the learner and controlled by the teacher and further states that the tasks given should be marked and feedback given immediately.*
- SIR D (rural) *the school-based assessment and constitutes collection of marks for progression.*
- TIR B (rural) *a way of assessing learners if they are ready to proceed to the next grade.*
- TIR E (rural) *about testing learners' understanding in the class.*
- LIR A (urban) *what teachers give us back when we have done a task in the classroom.*
- LIR B (rural) *when you do corrections and do the right answers when you are ...wrong.*
- LIR C (rural) *to show that you make poor in the class.*

The above findings show that although SMT members claim to know what Formative Assessment is their perception of it implies something else. However, SMT members from school A (urban), school C (rural) and learners from school

A (urban) gave convincing responses but were not certain about their perceptions of the phenomenon under study. Perceptions of SMT members, teachers and learners from the rest of the schools are definitely not aware and sure what Formative Assessment is and entails.

4.5.2. Implementation of Formative Assessment or Feedback in the classroom

The research respondents, SMTs, Teachers and learners, understand Formative Assessment to be implemented in the following manner in the classroom:

- SIR A (urban) *they teach and afterwards give the learners a task to do. This task shall be marked before the end of the lesson.*
- SIR C (rural) *after they had given learners a task, they have to mark it and give feedback.*
- SIR E (rural) *they give these tasks individually, in pairs and in groups.*
- TIR A (urban) *when I teach, the learners sometimes forget the previous lesson and I would constantly remind them about it during my lesson.*
- TIR B (rural) *by supervising the tests you do in the class, and by doing it with them; you have to tell them in which section you are testing them.*
- TIR E (rural) *I teach a lesson and set a test afterwards.*
- LIR A (urban) *the teachers give us our books and explain where we were wrong.*
- LIR C (rural) *they let us sometimes exchange books to mark our work and when giving corrections, they will teach the lesson over again.*

- LIR E (rural) *the class rep brings corrections and sometimes other teachers bring the corrections and write them on the board and we write in our books*

The responses from the interviewed SMTs, teachers and learners were different though all were responding to the same research questions. The assumption is that there seems to be much understanding of the policy and what it entails from the urban school (SIR A, TIR A and LIR A) and one rural school (SIR C, TIR C and LIR C). The results show that a big percentage of the respondents from the rural schools are not aware what this policy entails and how this policy should actually be implemented in their classrooms for the benefit of the learner.

My observations revealed that some of the teachers had a clue of the policy implementation and as such had an impact on the researcher. This had been evident when TIR A (urban) and TIR C (rural), whilst in the middle of their lessons, *noticed* a break in the flow of their lessons. These teachers *recognized* their learners had an unacceptable view of a part in the lesson or had a knowledge gap; and summarily *responded* positively and corrected the unacceptable view or knowledge gap. Other teachers did something quite different from what the researcher thought to be about classroom implementation of Formative Assessment.

4.5.3 Training undergone by teachers in the implementation of Formative Assessment

Questions pertaining to the training of Formative Assessment implementation theme were not posed to learners as they would not know whether their teachers were trained in the implementation of this policy or not. However, when faced with questions under this theme, the respondents said:

- SIR A (urban) *yes a few of us went to training.*
- SIR B (rural) *I am not aware whether they went for training.*
- SIR C (rural) *I am not sure.*
- TIR A (urban) *I was not trained.*
- TIR B (rural) *Yes, but I wish to emphasize the training was not enough, we need another training, but the little we got helped us a lot.*
- TIR D (rural) *I am not sure but I have not been trained yet.*

Though SMT from School A and a teacher from School B claim they were trained, this makes no difference as they wish to attend more training. Most of the SMTs and teachers from other schools claim they were never trained or are not aware whether other teacher members were trained.

Training workshops held for teachers were superficial, not supported with good quality materials, and the approach used by many trainers was not aligned to the principles of C2005. There was virtually no ongoing support and development when teachers were back in their classrooms, and teachers felt that officials did not value their efforts.

4.5.4 The impact of teachers' current assessment practices on learners

All respondents were asked to comment about the impact teachers' current assessment practices have on their learners. Learners were also granted this opportunity to say how their teachers' current assessment practices – other than Formative Assessment – impact on them. These were the responses:

- SIR A (urban) *they must impact negatively*
- SIR B (rural) *of course, learners won't understand. They are struggling to make out what their teachers do in class. They impact negatively on them.*
- TIR B (rural) *it impacts on a positive way because you find those learners who are active, they do not want to have lower marks than the other learners. So there is a competition between them; this means they study more and can improve.*
- TIR D (rural) *it must be having a positive impact because they always attain all their outcomes.*
- LIR A (urban) *their practices impact good on us, we like the way they assess us. We know after each lesson we are getting a task to do and mark it and the teacher keeps all marks and we file our mark tasks after feedback.*
- LIR D (rural) *we don't like the way they do it*
- LIR E (rural) *we want to know when they are giving us a test but they don't tell us and we always fail their tests*

The assumptions from the responses are that teachers' current assessment practices impact negatively on learners. The reason why a small percentage of the teachers claim their current assessment practices impact positively on learners is that they use the teacher-centered approach on learners. The learner response from the urban school might have misunderstood the question and as such gave a positive response to the question and might have been referring to Formative Assessment.

4.5.5 Factors inhibiting Formative Assessment or Feedback implementation

There were certain factors that stopped the implementation of Formative Assessment in the classroom. The following are some of the factors mentioned by the respondents.

- SIR A (urban) *lack of knowledge from the teachers' side; lack of training and resources; willingness of learners to study their books; and many more*
- SIR B (rural) *traditional ways of teaching, no cooperation by teachers, teachers don't want to accept change*
- TIR B (rural) *lack of teacher training and implementation.*
- TIR E (rural) *the absence of learners from school and sometimes the absence of teachers that are attending teacher union meetings during tuition time*

- LIR A (urban) *shortage of textbooks and practical resources like tools and materials*
- LIR B (rural) *shortages of resources*
- LIR C (rural) *shortages of computers to learn and create computer lessons and diagrams of shapes in structure lessons*

The above findings show that school heads, teachers and learners hold various reasons on non-implementation of the policy. From these various responses the reasons include among others, lack of knowledge, non-implementation of the policy and lack of training. The assumption is that these teachers must have found it really difficult understanding or knowing the policy, which, led to them not implementing the policy in their classrooms.

4.6 Summary

In summary, the data presentation provided a clear picture of teachers' and learners' understanding of the phenomenon under study. In particular, the qualifications and experience of teachers teaching Technology in Secondary Grade 9 schools were also presented. It was also revealed that all teachers had the basic education diploma for teaching other subjects but, only 40% of the researched teachers studied Technology as a *minor* course.

The lack of training and teaching resources provision in schools affects the implementation of the policy. Teachers are burnt out and wish to leave teaching

profession for other avenues. The SMT are also having their hands full as some claim they neither know the policy under study nor were they trained in its implementation and it becomes worse when they have to moderate these teachers' portfolios. The next chapter shall discuss the foremost findings of the study.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4. This Chapter first discusses the demographic data of respondents mentioned in the previous chapter. The following were the research questions used in this study:

- (a) Teacher and learner perceptions of Formative Assessment OR Feedback
- (b) Implementation of Formative Assessment or Feedback in the classroom,
- (c) Training undergone by teachers in the implementation of Formative Assessment
- (d) The impact of teachers' current assessment practices on learners
- (e) Factors inhibiting Formative Assessment implementation

The discussion of findings is mainly centred on the five themes that formed the cornerstone of the study, namely: teachers' and learners' perceptions about FA and or Feedback, the classroom implementation of this policy, training undergone by the implementers, the impact of the policy on learners and factors that inhibit the policy implementation.

5.2 Demographic data of the respondents

Under demographic data, the researcher discusses the location of the selected schools, the qualifications and experiences of the respondents pertaining to the subject of Technology.

5.2.1 Location of selected schools

The location of the selected schools plays a noticeable role pertaining to the geography and school infrastructure, general management and administration of the school, community involvement, and the distribution of the required resources. The schools used in this study are located in the Fort Beaufort Education District.

Prior to 1994, during the apartheid government in South Africa, the Department of Education in South Africa had nineteen different educational departments separated by race, geography and ideology (DoE, 1997:4). To mention just a few, these departments differed as follows:

- (a) The Department of National Education (NDE), which was responsible for setting and monitoring norms and standards of all other departments;
- (b) One department each of the houses of tri-cameral parliament: the House of Assembly (for Whites), the House of Representatives (for Coloureds), and the House of Delegates (for Indians);
- (c) One department for Whites in each of the then four provinces (answering to the House of Assembly).

- (d) The Department of Education and Training (DET), which was responsible for the education of Africans outside of the homelands;
- (e) One department for each of the four so-called independent homelands (also known as the TBVC states); and others (DoE, 1997:4).

One of the selected schools was prior 1994 under the tri-cameral parliament controlled and resourced directly from the House of Assembly, whilst the other four were under the so-called TBVC (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei) states. The selected four schools in the study were under the Education Department of the independent Ciskeian government. These education systems prepared children in different ways for the positions they were expected to occupy in social, economic and political life under apartheid. In each department, the curriculum played a powerful role in reinforcing inequality (Kotzé, 2002, p. 76).

These schools stem from such diverse backgrounds and there was frequent and justifiable criticism of the inadequacies of the apartheid educational system that led to deficiencies and discrimination in terms of qualification, skills, geographical location and school infrastructure (Thomen, 2001, p. 6).

Another discriminatory and indifferent factor was the type of management and administration these schools had. As the previously disadvantaged schools had inadequately prepared leadership, the urban school had ample chances to train

and give adequate skills to the leadership of this school. Policy in areas such as curricular, examinations, teacher training and employment, and school organization and construction, were centralized within each department (Buckland & Hofmeyr, 1993, p. 14).

Education was in a crisis with the breakdown of the culture of learning, a lack of discipline and the absence of teaching in many schools (Samual, 1993, p. 249). Prior to 1994, during the apartheid era in the South African education system, the government policies gave an inferior and unjust education system to Blacks. An education system that enforced an Afrikaans medium of instruction to the all Black communities, which allowed them fewer skills and therefore lesser opportunities than their European and Coloured equals (Samual, 1993, p. 249).

Allocation of funds to these unequal schools had also been a major role that contributed to the inadequacies of the selected schools. Funds were granted at a sliding scale, with the then House of Assembly making sure their departments received more funding than the previously disadvantaged Black schools (Pampallis, 2002, p. 8).

5.2.2 Qualifications and experiences of teachers in the selected secondary schools

Previous studies have reported that the qualifications and experience of teachers teaching the GET learning areas have become a major concern for education

practitioners and policy makers. Their impact on the quality of the teaching and learning process in secondary schools has adversely affected the successful implementation of these learning areas (Webster, 2002, p. 125). Inferring from this statement, teachers ought to have been adequately and meticulously trained before being allocated with these learning areas to teach learners in the class. The Chisholm Review Committee of C2005 had cited this inadequate training where it stated that:

- teachers' knowledge of C2005 was superficial: they had a "rather shallow understanding of the principles of C2005" (Chisholm, 2000, p. 2);
teacher training on OBE and C2005 was itself superficial, focusing on terminology with "...little attention being paid to the substance of OBE and C2005 (Chisholm, 2000, p. 19). training workshops were not supported with good quality materials, and the approach used by many trainers was not aligned to the principles of C2005; there was virtually no ongoing support and development when teachers were back in their classrooms, and teachers felt that officials did not value their efforts (Chisholm, 2000, p. 61).

The above quotation from the Review Committee had sufficed research assumptions of inadequacy training of teachers pertaining to the implementation of the policy in their classrooms. Wilmot (2005) further argues that the short interventions made by the DoE and provincial departments – usually one- to three-day workshops were seen as inadequate, as was the 'cascade model' of teacher training which focused on 'thin' or procedural knowledge, that is, 'how to do' knowledge, at the expense of developing teachers' declarative knowledge, their understanding of the 'why' (p. 81).

The interview schedules revealed that most of these teachers did not study Technology as a subject during their training sessions, they met Technology in

the work field, and because they desperately wanted to work, they promised to teach any subject they are requested to teach, irrespective of whether they were trained for that subject or not. The following responses from some teachers interviewed in this study show these issues:

TIR A (urban): No I was not trained.....
TIR B (rural): Yes, but I wish to emphasize that the training was not enough, we
need another training,
.....

It is clear from the above responses that whenever these teachers teach the subject in class, they literally made use of the old teacher-centered method of teaching. Some of them are young teachers just from tertiary institutions claiming they were not aware of the learner-centered and NCS methods of teaching. This is precisely where they failed implementing FA that requests learner's progress be "based on on-going formative assessment associated with helpful skills on how a learner tackles various learning tasks rather than results of a single end-of-session test or examination" (Nakabugo & Siebörger, 1999, p. 288). The latter two authors go on to describe FA as not a description of a mode of assessment but rather a "description of a use to which assessment is put, to inform educators and their learners about a learner's progress in order to improve learning" (p. 288). This implies that assessment forms part of the normal course of teaching and learning, and that "...learners are assessed while they are engaged in the teaching and learning task rather than at the end of it" (p. 288). Newly appointed teachers are faced with this problem in their classrooms and hence they are not able to deliver as expected of them by the Department of Education. .

5.3 Teacher and learner perceptions of Formative Assessment and or Feedback

Various research findings show that most teachers' understanding of new frameworks is too limited or shallow (Mattson & Harley, 2003, p. 288). The diversity and complexity of the school landscape in South Africa, also played a role about the teachers' understanding of the policy as well as their commitment to implementing principles, not only of the phenomenon under study but, of policies in general.

For example, in his study on how teachers perceive formative assessment for classroom implementation, MacLaughlin (2002, p. 183) earlier described two possible teacher responses concerning curriculum innovation, namely, 'non-implementation and co-optation'. The first is self-explanatory because teachers are simply not implementing formative assessment in their classrooms. This is evident from learners', teachers' and SMTs' responses when asked what their understanding of FA was, some said:

LIR C (rural): Feedback is to show you make poor in the class.

TIR B (rural): It is a way of assessing learners whether they are ready to proceed to the next grade.

TIR E (rural): FA is about testing learners' understanding in the class.

SIR C (rural): It is the work that is supposed to be done by the learner and controlled by the teacher.

SIR D (rural): It is school-based assessment that constitutes collection of marks for progression

The above responses are from rural-based SMT members, teachers and their learners are clear in their responses that they don not understand what this policy is about, hence it cannot be implemented adequately in their classrooms. Stating the policy is to 'assess learner progression' or 'test learners' understanding in the

class' is totally unacceptable from professionals thought to be comfortable in assessing their learners. It becomes a disaster when the SMT will respond as to say FA is mainly used to collect progression marks. If this is the perception of a manager, how broad do we expect the teachers' perceptions should be?

When the researcher was observing teachers in their classrooms he noticed that they did the opposite of what they actually said FA was by giving other learners their feedback to write on the blackboard, a move that is totally unacceptable as the learners writing on the board are themselves poor in the subject matter.. Wilmot (2005, p. 53), earlier also stated that formative assessment is viewed as "occurring within the interaction between the teacher and student(s) and so (it) is at the intersection of teaching and learning". The importance of formative assessment cannot be emphasized more than it had been done. Wilmot (2005, p. 54) further says learning is informed through constantly engaging learners with assessment tasks. Feedback to these tasks should be provided immediately after learners had submitted their tasks for marking. Constant feedback, therefore, informs learning whereas delayed feedback delays learner learning. The teachers do give learners their feedback but, this feedback is delayed at times and learners tend to forget the task done earlier when feedback is delayed.

Some of the responses show some understanding what FA is meant to be. For example, the following responses gave some light to the understanding of FA and or Feedback in the classroom:

LIR A (urban): This is what teachers give us back when we have done a task in class.

LIR B (rural): Feedback is when you do corrections and do the right answers when you are ... wrong.

TIR A (urban): It is a session that has to do with the development of children in the class.

SIR B (rural): It is informing the teacher and the teacher is trying to make up information on what is going to be taught in class

These responses suffice the perception about the phenomenon under study and as such convinced the researcher that the respondents knew what the policy entails. If the respondents know what the policy entails, the researcher assumes they ought to know how the policy should be implemented in their classrooms.

The document on Grade 9 Assessment Guidelines states that FA 'monitors and supports the process of learning and teaching. It is used to inform teachers and learners about their progress so as to improve teaching and learning' (DoE, 2005, p. 5). Learning is informed through constantly engaging learners with assessment tasks. Feedback to these tasks should be provided immediately after learners had submitted their tasks for marking. Constant feedback, therefore, informs learning whereas delayed feedback delays learner learning (Wilmot, 2005, p. 54). As in the case of the responses, respondents do not explain further that these tasks have not to be delayed as delays in feedback may also delay learner learning.

In his study, Kotzé (1999, p. 199) further states that assessment in its traditional form shall have to be expanded to provide for the aspiration of an outcomes-based approach. More emphasis will have to be shifted to a formative approach

than a summative one. Different assessment instruments must be implemented and new assessment methods will have to be developed in order to evaluate processes and performances, cognitive skills and problem solving strategies.

5.4 The classroom implementation of Formative Assessment

Loughran (1999, p. 199) earlier pointed out that formative assessment is included in government policy documents but its implementation in the classroom had not been adequately documented. What teachers do when dealing with formative assessment in their classrooms is still a mystery and still needs being unfolded. This statement has some truth in it as interview responses and observations clearly indicated that some of the teachers and their management actually do not know how this policy should be implemented in their classrooms.

For example, when asked what they do in their classrooms when implementing FA, teachers and SMT responded as follows:

TIR B (rural): By supervising the tests you do in the class, and by doing it with them; you have to tell them in which section you are testing them.

TIR D (rural): We start from the known to the unknown.

TIR E (rural): I teach a lesson and set a test afterwards.

SIR D (rural): They follow policy guidelines or implement this in their classes for each subject.

SIR E (rural): They give learners different tasks to perform. They give these tasks individually, in pairs or in groups.

The above responses clearly indicate that the teachers and their SMT members are not really sure what is being done when implementing FA in class. Bell and Cowie (2001, p. 83) state clearly what teachers must do when implementing FA in their classrooms. These authors lay it clearly out that teachers ought to plan

their learners' assessment activity from which they would draw their learners' reactions. The teachers, after assessing their learners, would interpret the results from the assessment activity, act upon them and respond accordingly. The learners will be assigned with an assessment activity they would brainstorm on; the teacher will interpret what the learners had brought forward after they had brainstormed according to the planned lesson. After the teacher had interpreted what the learners had brainstormed, s/he would be required to act on the assessment information brought forward by the learners. This would then fulfil the teacher's lesson objectives or outcomes.

Sadler (1989) and Black and Wiliam (1998) state that learners can only achieve learning outcomes if they understand those outcomes, assume some ownership of them, and can assess progress. Weak and incorrect conceptions of learning outcomes not only influence what students do but also the value of feedback information. Teachers are a crucial source of feedback and this feedback from them is a source against which learners can assess progress and check out their own internal construction of learning outcomes (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 85).

Above is a clear procedure of implementing the policy in classrooms but, the respondents do not actually know how this policy should be implemented in their classroom. Had they known, they would have given correct answers from the start when asked about their understanding of the policy.

The learner responses pertaining to what is actually done when feedback is given to them, were as follows:

LIR A (urban): They teach the lesson over again.

LIRB (rural): Other teachers make corrections with all the learners in the class, but others don't.

LIR C (rural): They ask the class rep to write the corrections on the board

When probed to explain more on what they mean with the above quoted responses, these learners again responded confidently and with surety as follows:

LIR A (urban): The teachers give us our books and explain where we were wrong when writing the test and give us the correct answers.

LIR B (rural): The teacher marks our books and if you don't know she will write the corrections on the board for us to write down, and sometimes do not even explain the corrections.

LIR C (rural): They let us sometimes exchange our books to mark our work and when giving corrections, they will teach the lesson over again.

LIR E (rural): The class rep brings corrections and sometimes other teachers bring the corrections and write them on the board for us to write in our books.

From the above probed responses, it is clear that the teachers are not actually implementing the policy as it should be implemented in their classrooms.

As earlier stated in chapter two, the researcher had taken a non-participant observation stance which states that the researcher is not involved in the activities of the group but remains a passive observer, watching and listening to its activities and drawing conclusions from this (Kumar, 2005, p. 120). The researcher conducted these observations on different days.

During observations, the researcher found out that although teachers are teaching the learners and some learners are actively involved in the lesson, teachers are not aware of the fact that some of them are actually implementing

Formative Assessment in the correct manner. *TIR A* (urban) planned his lesson on Levers. He **drew** (elicit) from his planning and **interpreted** his planning (teaching) to the learners who **acted** positively (actively involved) for the **purpose** of learning. According to Bell and Cowie (2001, p. 83), the Planned Formative Assessment (PFA) model the teacher was employing when teaching learners on Levers. At the end of the lesson, he gave them a task to perform but the learners seemed to have forgotten the formula for calculations. The teacher, as he knows his learners better, **noticed** the learners had a problem. He **recognized** through body language what their problem was and **responded** (taught the learners) positively for the **purpose** (of learning) of reminding the learners about the formula. According to Bell and Cowie (2001, p. 83) actually the Interactive Formative Assessment (IFA) model the teacher utilized to assist the learners in his class on Mechanical Advantage of levers.

Likewise, *TIR C* (rural) taught the learners a lesson on “Gears”, their ratios and torque the previous day. She distributed the sheets of paper she had in her hand and made sure no learner receives his/her own script. Bell and Cowie (2001, p. 84) suggest that other than building learners’ ‘learning to learn’ skills by emphasizing the process of teaching and learning, FA also builds learners’ skills at peer-assessment and self=assessment, and helps them develop a range of effective learning strategies. This rural teacher was implementing FA in the form of peer-assessment as mentioned in Bell & Cowie (2001, p. 80) as mentioned by these authors.

The learners knew immediately that they were going to embark on peer-assessment because they all took out their red pens and pencils and waited patiently for their teacher. The teacher came to mark a task the learners did the previous day. The teacher audibly and with emphasis read out the first question of the task and learners raised their hands. During this marking process the teacher **noticed** that some of the learners had different views from those requested in the task. The teacher **recognized** from their answers and **responded** positively by teaching the part from the previous day's lesson the learners had a problem with. That is actually IFA in its best form.

Only two teachers could actually present in a lesson what Formative Assessment entails in reality. In fact, even they themselves were not aware they were implementing this policy in their classrooms. The other teachers could not convince the researcher first, about their understanding or perception about FA and secondly, by implementing the policy in their classrooms. Whereas the assessment policy document (DoE, 1998) sets out the broad principles of assessment, the assessment guideline documents (DoE, 2002) prescribes, in a rigid way, exactly how the policy is to be carried out in classrooms. The model's outcomes-based orientation places assessment at the heart of teaching and learning. Teachers are told to "design down", that is, to start with the outcomes to be assessed before selecting the assessment type and activity. They must have "clarity of focus", meaning a clear picture of what is wanted at the end, and must

be able to share this with the learners (DoE, 2002, p. 3). The implementation of the phenomenon under study really needs more attention for proper utilization in the classroom.

5.5 Training undergone by the implementers

Training is necessary in a community in order to experience "wellbeing", and it gives people knowledge and skills and is the key to a productive economy because it produces skilled workers. It creates space within which people can develop their potential and be responsible citizens (Lubbe & Smith, 2008, p. 1).

Many countries are actually in the transition period between the old and the new system. The latter authors insist that the transition is, in essence, moving away from a problem centred approach to a development directed approach, from needs to strengths and assets, from welfare relief to sustainable development, from dehumanisation to human welfare (*wellbeing*) (Lubbe & Smith, 2008, p. 2).

This transition phase requires a change in behaviour of people, companies, institutions and communities. For individuals this means, in essence, the development of potential mainly through education. For companies it means transparency and social responsibility. For training institutions it means centers of excellence through research, social involvement and partnerships with the workplaces. For the community it means social investment, networking and the sharing of resources (Weil, 2005, p. 29).

The South Africa Yearbook 2006/2007 (2006, p. 195) states,

"According to the Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996), everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education and further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make available and accessible progressively. Formal education in South Africa is categorized according to three levels namely General Education and Training (GET), Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE). All training levels are integrated within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) provided by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, 1995 (Act 58 of 1995)".

The training scene is influenced from the outside, on the one hand, and from the inside, on the other hand. Therefore, the South African training scene must first be approached against the background of the United Nations' Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005 – 2014). One of the aims is, for instance: "promotion and acceleration of quality training for all in the workplace". Education and training are inseparably linked to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2004, p. 9). Secondly, the scene must seek and reflect association with the Millennium Development Goals (Fox & Van Rooyen, 2004, p. 142).

Thirdly, Van Der Horst and McDonald (1997, p. 5) suggest that the process of educational changes within South Africa, especially after the democratic order since 1994, must be taken into account. Educational changes were necessary, especially because the attitudes and values of most South Africans were formed by an era of apartheid. Educational changes were and are necessary to ensure equality in educational resources and a more balanced view of education and training. Educational changes are further necessary to create further training

opportunities for the teachers as well as learners and adults who did not have the opportunity during the previous era. These changes form the core of lifelong learning.

Therefore, the development of teachers is seen as a key factor in the transformation of the South African education (Wilmot, 2005, p. 80). There is however a growing body of research which suggests that the official approach to teacher development and the 'cascade model' used by the government since 1994 have militated against the development of teachers into effective agents of change (Wilmot, 2005, p. 80). Early studies on C2005 implementation carried out by Jansen in 1999 showed that whilst OBE, through C2005, was being received with great enthusiasm by teachers, the change taking place was largely superficial and procedural rather than philosophical (Jansen, 1999a, p. 211). This implies that whilst teachers were zealously participating in this new curriculum, the transformation process of implementing classroom policies successfully had not been adequately and fully adopted.

Wilmot (2005, p. 80) found out that there was "blind following of procedures without understanding how or why these work". The study identified teachers' poor conceptual knowledge of the subjects they teach as a major constraint to curriculum work. The latter author cited the findings of the Chisholm Review Committee of C2005 as follows:

- (a) The teachers' knowledge of C2005 was superficial: they had a "rather shallow understanding of the principles of C2005".

(b) Teacher training on OBE and C2005 was itself superficial, focusing on terminology with "...little attention being paid to the substance of OBE and C2005".

(c) Training workshops were not supported with good quality materials, and the approach used by many trainers was not aligned to the principles of C2005; there was virtually no ongoing support and development when teachers were back in their classrooms, and teachers felt that officials did not value their efforts.

This implies that teachers never understood C2005 and its principles and their actual training on C2005 and OBE only emphasized on terminology with no insight in outcomes-based education as such (Wilmot, 2005, p. 81). This implies that these teachers would never be able to adequately implement this policy in their classrooms.

In this study, 4 of the respondents claimed that they were not trained on how to implement Formative Assessment in their classes and only one rural teacher claims that he was trained on how to implement the policy. When observed in the class, this teacher did the opposite of what Formative Assessment is understood to mean. The researcher could not find a study to cite explaining this anomalous behaviour, strange as it is. This action emphasized the non-training of teachers pertaining to the classroom policy implementation.

In her case study analysis of Outcomes-based Assessment policy implementation, Wilmot (2005, p. 81) stated the Review Committee took issue with the duration and quality of the training given to teachers to prepare them for the implementation of C2005. This author claims that the Review Committee was in reality concerned with the quality of training manuals and the actual duration taken to train the teachers, knowing well the trainers themselves may have been ill prepared. The short interventions made by the DoE and provincial departments, usually 1- to 3-day workshops, which some termed as 'orientation workshops', were seen as inadequate, as was the 'cascade model' of teacher training which focused on 'thin' or procedural knowledge, that is, 'how to do' knowledge, at the expense of developing teachers' declarative knowledge, their understanding of the 'why' (Wilmot, 2005, p. 81). Some of the respondents confirmed the above facts as follows:

TIR A (urban): If I remember well, I think it (workshop) was a week long.

TIR B (rural): Four weeks and longer.

SIR A (urban): Three to five days.

SIR B (rural): That one was a week long, definitely not adequate for teachers who had been trained for three to four years on learner assessment ...

SIR D (rural): A week long.

SIR E (rural): About a week long.

From the responses, 80 % of the teachers, and all the SMT members (100 %) claimed that they were neither trained nor do they remember such training. Whereas 60% of the teachers claimed the documents they saw when they started with the learning area, Technology, were neither user-friendly nor were they readily available for utilization at their schools. Finally, 80 % of teachers and 100 % of the SMT members state they remember overhearing other teachers who were apparently trained that the training workshops or 'orientation

workshops' took five days in total and that even the trainers were also 'ill-prepared' for conducting these workshops.

The Report 550 of June 1997 points out that identifying the central role that teachers will play in assessment does not imply that all of them will be immediately comfortable with such a role or that they will be expected to be assessors without support. It assumes that on-going training will be essential and that one of the primary functions of education support personnel will in future be to support teachers and to assist with training (DoE, 1997, p. 4). This had been the ideal situation but implementation of these ideas had been a wishful thinking as teachers had been 'assessors without support' and responses do corroborate this statement as follows:.

TIR A (urban): As we were never trained we are not sure whether we are doing this correctly in the class.

TIR D (rural): I am not sure whether I am doing the right thing or not.

All training programmes must include components, which attempt to address anxieties and attitudes, which will stem from the role changes of both teachers and national up to and including district education support personnel (DoE, 1997, p. 5). These training programmes neither address anxieties nor attitudes as most teachers are negatively oriented towards all training workshops or orientation workshops that the DoE embarked on. Teachers feel it was a waste of precious time going to these workshops because neither material used nor trainers were user friendly or of assistance at all.

Janse van Rensburg and Mhoney (2000, p. 45), argue that the 'cascade model' may well 'water down' information and even serve to perpetuate curriculum misunderstanding. They argue that the model is limited because it is based on a limited understanding of what teacher development requires, and its assumption that curriculum knowledge can be passed down is counter to the social constructivist epistemology that is supposed to underpin OBE in South Africa. As the trainers did not know what teacher development entailed, they could not adequately resource the training workshops.

5.6 The impact of teachers' current assessment practices on learners

When learners fail an assessment task, some teachers internalize the task results into feelings of guilt or shame (Nakabugo & Siebörger, 1999, p. 290). These feelings are often based on a belief that they have failed to appropriately or adequately prepare their learners for the assessment task (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 5). This is why some teachers start questioning the usefulness of these assessment tasks. When learners pick these views up, they start developing feelings of anxiety. This situation may keep on repeating itself and simply, the fact is that both groups may be affected by formative assessment task achievements (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 6).

Learners develop an association between high-stakes achievements and decisions made about their lives. When this is coupled with scepticism about the testing process, high-stakes achievement test may contribute to barriers to

school completion for some learners (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 6). If learners believe teachers are using these high-stake tests to judge or label them as incompetent, and that these high-stake tests are not accurately representing their abilities; they may simply drop out of the education system.

Contrary to this uncertainty, there are motivated learners who may have developed the use of these high-stakes tests, using them flexibly to enhance their own practice. Learners felt more engaged in their own learning and more motivated that this was having an impact on their behaviors (Webb & Williams, 2004 p. 7).

The following, according to DoE (1997, p. 4), are but a few of the negative factors that are associated with teachers' current assessment practices.

- As a result of the current policy having promotion requirements, for particular subjects, at every grade, many learners are repeating the whole year, even when they have mastered other subjects. This has given rise to a high repetition rate.
- Many learners who find themselves having difficulty in fulfilling the requirements for promotion and thus having to repeat grades a number of times, are dropping out of the system.
- Due to the fact that current policy stipulates requirements for promotion and progression at the end of every grade, teachers have tended to rely

on written tests and examinations at the end of the year in their assessment of learners.

- The teaching and learning strategies currently operating in most of our learning centers are teacher-driven and traditional, and they do not lend themselves to progressive forms of assessment.
- The high rate of failure in the Senior Certificate examination. Since 1997 and the ensuing years, only 47.4% of the learners who wrote the examination passed.
- In most of the provinces, for some of the subjects the overall assessment of a learner in the Senior Certificate was based on the examination marks only.
- Although continuous assessment had been introduced as part of the public schools' policy, its implementation had proved to be problematic, as a result of varied interpretations of continuous assessment.
- The high rate of unemployment of out of school youth had been viewed as one of the inefficiencies associated with current assessment practices.
- The mismatch between formal qualifications and the skills possessed by learners, who leave the education system.
- The high exclusion of learners with special educational needs within the system, as a result of inaccurate assessments.
- The flow of learners within the system had been hampered by the high repeater rate.

- The lack of transparency and accountability in the system of assessment had resulted in learners not being clear about what was required in the assessments, and who was accountable for their failure to fulfill the requirements.

The above-mentioned factors are some of the few found in the system. There are many more that can be brought forward but that will have to wait for the second round again. The implication of the above pertaining to the implementation of FA in the classroom leaves much to desire, and failing to adequately developing teachers in the implementation of this policy resulted into what Burger and Krueger (2003, p. 5) called a belief that (teachers) have failed to appropriately or adequately prepare their learners for the assessment task(s) and rather start questioning the usefulness of assessment tasks.

Furthermore, the resultant of learner dropouts is the belief that teachers take serious decisions about their classroom achievements. When this is coupled with high-stake achievements and scepticism about the testing process, high-stakes achievement test may contribute to barriers to school completion for some learners (Burger & Krueger, 2003, p. 6). If learners believe teachers are using these high-stake tests to judge or label them as incompetent, and that these high-stake tests are not accurately representing their abilities; they may simply drop out of the education system. Contrary to the above-mentioned factors, FA produces motivated learners who may have developed the use of these high-stakes tests, using them flexibly to enhance their own practice. Webb and

Williams (2004 p. 7) state that such learners may feel more engaged in their own learning and more motivated than this was having an impact on their behaviors.

5.7 Factors that inhibit the policy implementation

Wilmot (2005, p. 82) suggests that a great deal of research has shown that there is lack of alignment between the curriculum and assessment policy and a lack of clarity regarding assessment policy and practice. Furthermore, it seems that too less time is spent on assessment (Chisholm, 2000; Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). The Chisholm report of 2000 has stressed that more attention has to be given to teacher preparation and for a clear and coherent guideline document on assessment (Chisholm, 2000, p. 19). This study has revealed that a great deal of the country's teachers "lack a good track record as curriculum developers and assessors" (Malcolm, 2001, p. 207), perhaps, the reason why teachers find it very difficult to implement the sophisticated CASS component of assessment in grade 9 in a meaningful way. This factor raises questions about the validity and reliability of school-based teacher assessment, which calls for more externally controlled standardized assessment at the expense of CASS. The present Grade 9 assessment model is based on a system of internal marking, that is, teachers set and mark their own assessment tasks for CASS, and they mark their learners' responses to the externally set standardized CTA, which consists of two sections: A and B (DoE, 1998, p. 17). Assessing both sections and CASS, raises questions of objectivity and validity and suggests that the model places too much responsibility on teachers. In the same vein, a cluster moderation process whereby teachers monitor and regulate other teachers' assessment tasks

characterizes the Grade 9 assessment model. As these teachers were apparently not adequately trained in the actual assessment of their learners, it is supposed their success in the cluster-group moderation ultimately depend on how much assessment-training teachers receive.

Other studies have further identified a number of barriers, which affect learners' acceptance, and use of formative assessment feedback (Bell & Cowie, 2001; Black & William, 1998; Shepard, 2001). Some of the learners are not motivated to learn as much as they are supposed to. As a result, they become as insecure about their own potential as successful learners that they focus almost on trying to impress their teachers regardless of whether they understand or not (Mackrory, 1996, p. 18). Insecure learners always try to avoid risks of failure in any given task as a result this fear of failure inhibits their efforts, which leads to learners failing to recognize formative feedback as a helpful signal towards future learning (Sutton, 1998, p. 3).

Other hindrances facing formative assessment are the basic requirements of the extensive curriculum and the reporting requirements in the senior classes of the GET Band (DoE, 1998, p. 6). In most cases teachers prioritise what they are going to teach and not teach the syllabus as it is prescribed. The syllabi specify lesson outcomes and the method the teacher is supposed to be using to teach but, the teachers employ their old methods of teaching, teacher-centred as against learner-centred approaches. This is because one-teacher schools never

granted the teacher opportunity to attend the orientation workshops as the school would have closed down should the teacher attend these workshops. Certain schools never took these developmental workshops serious and teachers remained at school with the excuse of covering syllabi. There are also schools principals who resist transformation and therefore did not see the need of monitoring their personnel in their training and development workshops.

5.8 Summary

This chapter had been discussing findings as stipulated in chapter four. Despite these many obvious challenges facing the proper implementation of FA in the classroom, the policy has the potential of promoting learner attainment and provides teachers with the required feedback knowledge they need to know in order to prepare for the next lesson.

This research study also confirmed that FA is not implemented in all schools as required and expected by government policy. Only about 40 % of the selected schools actually implement FA and, in fact, with them not being aware of this implementation. Lack of training and subject content can be highlighted as the major drawback in the implementation of the policy in the classroom. The next chapter shall recommend what ought to be done to rectify this error.

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings about the research questions, conclusions and recommendations. The findings of this study are based on the main research question about how secondary school teachers implement Formative Assessment in their classrooms. The following research questions were used in this study:

- (a) What are secondary school teachers' perceptions of Formative Assessment?
- (b) How do secondary school teachers implement formative assessment in their classrooms?
- (c) Are secondary school teachers trained in implementing formative assessment in their classrooms?
- (d) What is the impact of teachers' current assessment practices on learners?
- (e) What factors inhibit the implementation of assessment practices in the classroom?

A summary of the research findings shall be drawn from each research question; recommendations and conclusions shall also be drawn on the respondents' responses in this Chapter.

6.1.1 Teacher and SMT perception about Formative Assessment

The research question being answered by respondents wanted to find out what are secondary school teachers' and learners' perceptions of Formative Assessment or Feedback. According to the responses received using the tool, this study found out that 'most teachers' understanding of new frameworks is too limited or shallow'. This finding concurs with those by Mattson and Harley (2003, p. 288), These authors further state that the teachers' understanding of policies and their commitment to implementing them also play a role in the non-implementation of policies in general. The respondents were unable to say whether they did not see this departmental policy nor were these policies forwarded to them. The fact that these teachers and their SMT members did not see or hear about the policy shows ignorance from their part.

Wilmot (2005, p. 53) also argues that formative assessment is viewed as "occurring within the interaction between the teacher and student(s) and so (it) is at the intersection of teaching and learning". The respondents could not even come near this view and that is showing how incompetent and ignorant they are pertaining to policies that control their daily workplace chores. If these teachers and their SMT members are so ignorant and incompetent pertaining to implementing policies informing them about the progress and learning of their learners in their workplace atmosphere, how truly committed are they in lesson planning? How do they know what learning outcomes do they wish to attain?

What assessment standards they are addressing with the planned lesson and what assessment activity will go with the planned lesson?

Although some of the respondents could actually state in not so clear words their understanding of Formative Assessment, 60 % of the entire respondents had no clue what is going on pertaining to Formative Assessment. These respondents need to be thoroughly informed what Formative Assessment actually is and what it entails.

6.1.2 Formative Assessment classroom implementation

Although formative assessment is included in government policy documents, however, its implementation in the classroom has not been adequately documented in research studies. What teachers do according to the findings of this study is that when dealing with formative assessment in their classrooms; they do the opposite of FA. This statement appears true because interview responses clearly indicated that 60 % of the teachers and their school management do not seem to know how this policy is implemented in their classrooms.

Kumar (2005, p. 120) states that when a researcher takes a non-participant observation stance, s/he is not involved in the activities of the group but remains a passive observer. The observer watches and listens to the group's activities and draw conclusions from those activities. The researcher took the non-

participant stance and found that these teachers do the opposite of what they say Formative Assessment is in their classrooms.

The researcher conducted these observations on different days and during several of those observations drew conclusions that though 40% of the teachers are teaching their learners, they are not aware of the fact that they are actually correctly implementing Formative Assessment in their classrooms. Teachers of school A and school C actually unknowingly did Formative Assessment with their learners in their classrooms but, 60% of these teachers and their SMT members did not know and in fact did not implement Formative Assessment with their learners in their classrooms. These teachers must summarily be assisted in implementing this policy in the correct manner in their classrooms. This means the implementation of the phenomenon under study must urgently be given the utmost attention for proper utilization in the classrooms.

6.1.3 Teacher training for FA implementation

In order for people to develop their potential and be responsible citizens as mentioned by Lubbe and Smith (2008, p. 1), they must be trained and acquire knowledgeable skills. Our country, like any other African countries, is in a period of transition, moving away from a problem centred approach to a development directed approach as stated by the latter author (p. 2). This transition period requires a change in behaviour of people, especially in institutions and the

communities at large, in essence, the development of potential through education.

This study found that some of the teachers who had been in the system for more than ten years might have been trained in the implementation of this policy in their classrooms but, because they received no support or follow-up from the so-called trainers, they might have forgotten what was actually expected from them during implementation. Another factor that might have sabotaged the proper implementation of this policy in class might have been the jargon used in the outlays of the policy itself, the use of new and unfamiliar words in the teaching fraternity.

The expertise of the trainer also appears to have contributed to the failure of this policy implementation. Teachers claimed the Department utilized incompetent trainers hence they could not carry the policy over in their classrooms. These incompetent trainers were at times not sure of these policies as some of them constantly voiced it out they were not sure whether they were doing the correct thing or not. Such statements discouraged the already demotivated and demoralized teachers to an extent that some of them did not bother attending the training workshops ever again, claiming it is just a waste of precious time.

Another factor that the researcher observed in schools is that the training material had not been too friendly to the users. The training manuals were big

and thick, a factor, which was also discouraging to the already disorientated trainees. Teachers could not make use of the resources mentioned during training, as these were not available or too expensive to acquire, e.g. trainers referring teacher-trainees to the Internet.

The researcher also observed that teachers were not trained in the specifics of the subjects but were in the generics of the learning areas. The following confirm this statement:

TIR C: Not another! I need my first training in the implementation of FA in the classroom; as well as further training in the LA itself.

SIR B: They were given the normal policy books and pamphlets to read through to familiarise themselves with the new vocabulary of OBE.

SIR E: No, they could not implement it because it was not done properly with specifics.

SIR E: Yes, they do not need more training workshops in FA.

Teachers need to be trained in the specifics and content of the subjects rather than giving an overview of the generic of all subjects. Assessment in all these learning areas was granted minimal time, the last day of the training workshop. Teachers claim that most teachers were demotivated during the second day of the training workshop and decided to stay away. If that was the case, that meant those teachers who decided to stay away from the workshop were not trained in the assessment of their respective learning areas or subjects hence, the difficulty in implementing Formative Assessment in their classrooms.

6.1.4 Impact of current assessment practices on learners

Formative Assessment practices assist the teachers and learners to actually find out what learning outcomes the learners had adequately attained and are definite

about them. This form of assessment when its activities are planned thoroughly to be assigned after a lesson, assist the teacher to notice during his teaching that the learners have an alternative notion of what was taught earlier, and as such recognize that teaching needs to be done and shall respond summarily and positively to the needs of the learners. This form of assessment depends on the teachers' skills of interaction with the learners and the nature of the relationships they establish with their learners. They view Interactive Formative Assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, and not separate from it. The responding as an action can be seen as a part of formative assessment or a part of teaching from this perspective.

The study found that these teachers are not aware of such forms of assessment though 40 % of them had been implementing it in their classrooms. This means though they have implemented it in their classes, they need to be made aware of it.

If the teachers are not implementing Formative Assessment as expected of them, then the learners must be suffering in attaining the required lesson outcomes. The study found that the teachers' present assessment practices, other than Formative Assessment, has a negative impact on the learners as they are only preparing the learners for grade progression and when learners pick these views up, they start developing feelings of anxiety and become negative towards assessment in general.. This situation may keep on repeating itself and simply,

the fact is that both groups may be affected by formative assessment task achievements.

The study also found that learners develop an association between summative assessment achievements - what the teachers presently practice in classrooms - and decisions made about their lives. When this is coupled with scepticism about the testing process, summative assessment tests may contribute to barriers to school completion for some learners. If learners believe teachers are using these tests to judge or label them as incompetent, and that these tests are not accurately representing their abilities; they may simply drop out of the education system.

6.1.5 Factors inhibiting FA implementation

The general knowledge of a policy affects its general implementation facet (William, Lee, Harrison, & Black, 2004, p. 49). For example, the responses given during the research interviews are adequate reason to state that 60 % of the teachers, 80 % of the SMT's and 100 % of the learners do not know what Formative Assessment is, and as such becomes a barrier to implementing the policy in the classroom.

The study also found out that too little time is spent on assessment during the so-called training workshops held for teachers. This notion of handling assessment on the last day of the workshops left it crippled as most teachers claimed their

colleagues did not attend workshops on the last day because they were demoralized and demotivated by the trainers.

The study found out that the reason why teachers find it so difficult to implement the policy is that they lack what Malcolm (2001, p. 207) calls a good track record as curriculum developers and assessors. This makes learners become insecure about their own potential as successful learners that they focus almost on trying to impress their teachers regardless of whether they understand the lesson or not. Insecure learners always try to avoid risks of failure in any given task as a result this fear of failure inhibits their efforts, which leads to learners to what Sutton (1998, p. 3) terms failing to recognize formative feedback as a helpful signal towards future learning.

Finally, the study found that teachers prioritize what they are going to teach and not teach the syllabus as it is prescribed. The syllabi specify lesson outcomes and the method the teacher is supposed to be using to teach but, the teachers employ their old methods of teaching, teacher-centered as against learner-centred approaches, which leaves the learners most of the time passive and bored in their classrooms.

6.2 Conclusions

It is clear from the findings that the research questions answered or utilized in this study have helped to identify the barriers, which inhibit the proper implementation of Formative Assessment in the Grade 9 Technology classroom in the Fort Beaufort district area. Among others, the study found out that the Department of Education had not adequately circulated the information of these training workshops to all institutions and their personnel. Funding of these workshops is another factor that left them with no adequate resources for all trainees. The interviewees who attended the so-called orientation workshops stated they were not all issued with the relevant policy documents for referral at their respective schools.

Another factor that could have blemished the training or orientation workshops is the utilisation of the dysfunctional teacher college lecturers. These lecturers stated upfront that they were not familiar with what they were expected to do and would simply read from the documents and explain where they could. These utterances further demotivated teachers, hence some of the trainees decided not to attend the orientation workshops anymore. The major finding of this study is that though a small percentile of teachers unknowingly and correctly implements FA in their classes. The bigger fraction of these teachers and their SMT members do not know what FA entails and, worse of all, how it should be implemented in the classroom. This clearly shows that although teachers seem to be willing to

implement FA in the classroom, they lack knowledge of how FA should be implemented in the classroom.

6.3 Recommendations

To address the broader policy issues, it is recommended that:

- the Department of Education should provide adequate funding for extended curriculum programmes for re-educating teachers in their areas of competency and subject matter. This should be done for those who cannot be re-educated through in-service-trainings or workshops;
- all teachers should be re-trained in the implementation of FA for all subjects and learning areas as teachers and not facilitators. Not as NCS requires them to be facilitators which, they are not;
- training should not focus on jargon but on the actual substance of Formative Assessment in each and every subject/learning area;
- one-teacher schools should be considered when planning these workshops over holidays;
- school principals who resist change and not monitor the developmental workshops should release their teachers for these trainings or workshops;
- the training should be outsourced to reputable higher institutions of learning that can adequately train the teachers and award them with incentives;

- the Department of Education should make provision for the required infrastructure and resources for all schools equally to implement the Technology learning area effectively;
- schools should integrate FA into the curriculum across all subjects and learning areas;
- teachers form Technology learning area clusters with neighbouring schools and/ or fellow teachers to support one another in implementing Technology in the school context; and
- Subject Advisors in the Department of Education should provide teachers with the necessary support to implement not only the Technology learning area but, all subjects and learning areas effectively in the classroom.

6.4 Areas for further research

This study focused on the implementation of Formative Assessment in the Technology classroom. It looked at the perceptions of teachers about this phenomenon, the training undergone by teachers for its implementation and the impact the non-implementation of the policy had on learners.

Further research is recommended to evaluate the implementation of all policies pertaining to teaching and learning of learners in the classroom with specific attention to lesson preparation. A larger study is necessary to determine how teachers implement FA policy in the classroom.

Further research should ascertain how school managers and teachers could adequately act as change agents in the transformation of education in South Africa, as well as implement change effectively in curriculum development and general policy implementation.

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APPENDICE A

LETTER OF ACCESS: DISTRICT OFFICE

63 Charlotte Street
FORT BEAUFORT
5720
August 04th, 2009
083 670 4646 (Mobile)
mongezikuze@yahoo.com

**The District Director
Department of Education
FORT BEAUFORT**

Dear Madam

Re: INTERVIEW REQUEST

I am a master student registered with the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare. I am investigating how formative assessment is implemented by teachers and how, if any deviations from the policy documents, this practice can be salvaged in schools.

The research requires that I visit five (5) of your schools to interview one member of the School Management Team (SMT), the Technology Educator and his/her learners, and also observe his/her classroom in action. A further request is to view a sample of the learners' classwork books/portfolios.

I hereby request your permission to visit the sampled schools to conduct these interviews and classroom observations.

I hope and trust this shall be treated with the urgency it portrays.

I thank you in anticipation of a positive response.

Sincerely
KUZE, MW (Mr.)

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF ACCESS: SCHOOLS

63 Charlotte Street
FORT BEAUFORT
5720
October 19th, 2009
083 670 4646 (Mobile)
mongezikuze@yahoo.com

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: INTERVIEW REQUEST

I am a master student registered with the Faculty of Education at the University of Fort Hare. I am investigating how formative assessment is implemented by teachers and how, if any deviations from the policy documents, this practice can be salvaged in schools.

The research requires that I visit your school to interview one member of the School Management Team (SMT), the Technology Educator and his/her learners, and also observe his/her classroom in action. A further request is to view a sample of the learners' classwork books/portfolios.

I hereby request your permission to visit your school to conduct these interviews and classroom observations.

I hope and trust this shall be treated with the urgency it portrays.

I thank you in anticipation of a positive response.

Sincerely
KUZE, MW (Mr.)

APPENDICE C

SMT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not teachers implement Formative Assessment practices as a process of improving learning in their secondary school classrooms. This will help the DoE and schools to offer professional development in the design of high-quality classroom assessment to support the practitioners in the application of these practices. The study will document teachers' perceptions about formative assessment and how it should be implemented in our classrooms.

Ethical issues

The concerns were principally those of the ongoing maintenance of confidentiality with respect to the data; obtaining informed consent from all participants; monitoring for potential harm throughout the research; and the methods for dealing with any concerns of the participants with respect to being involved in a research study. All data collected during this schedule shall be solely used for the study on nothing else.

Research Question 1: WHAT ARE SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT?

What do you understand by Formative Assessment (FA)?

What is the Department's policy on FA?

What does the policy say?

What is your understanding about this policy?

Why is it important that teachers know about this policy?

Are there any other forms of FA you are aware of?

Why do teachers use FA for in teaching?

How do they use FA in their classrooms?

In what context do they use FA in their classrooms?

Is FA useful in your school? Why?

2. Research Question 2: HOW DO SECONDARY TEACHERS IMPLEMENT FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THEIR CLASSROOMS?

What do teachers do when they implement FA in their classrooms?

How do they implement FA in their classrooms?

What does the Departmental policy say about FA classroom implementation?

Are there any specific steps to be followed when implementing FA in the classroom?

Are there any resources at hand that can be used to implement FA in the classrooms?

How often do teachers implement this policy in their classrooms?

Are there any other forms of FA that teachers can follow?

What specific steps do they need to follow when implementing these forms of FA in their classroom?

3. Research Question 3: ARE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TRAINED IN IMPLEMENTING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THEIR CLASSROOMS?

Are teachers in your school trained to implement FA in their classroom?
When were your teachers trained for the implementation of this policy?
How long was the training session?
Did your teachers receive any resources during their training session?
What kind of resources did they receive?
In your opinion, were these resources user-friendly?
Were they able to implement FA in their classrooms after the training?
What challenges are your teachers faced with in implementing FA in their classrooms?
What kind of support, if any, do you give to your teachers for the implementation of this policy?
Do your teachers need another training session?
What training did you as the SMT undergo for managing this FA implementation?
How long was your training session?
How do you assisting your teachers after you attended this training session?
In your opinion, do you think your school has adequate resources for the implementation of FA?

4. Research Question 4: WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' CURRENT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES ON LEARNERS?

What is the role of learners in your teachers' current assessment practices in their classrooms?
What do you think is the impact of your teachers' current assessment practices on learners?
How do teachers' current assessment practices advantage their learners?
What assessment practices should be followed that can best suit your teachers' learners?
In what way do you think will those assessment practices advantage your teachers' learners?

5. Research Question 5: WHAT FACTORS INHIBIT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN THE CLASSROOM?

Are there any factors that inhibit the non-implementation of FA in the classroom?
What are these factors that inhibit the non- implementation of FA in the classroom?
What may be the cause of FA non-implementation in your school?
How could these FA non – implementation factors be overcome?
How can the SMT overcome these factors?

END OF SESSION

APPENDICE D

TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not teachers implement Formative Assessment practices as a process of improving learning in their secondary school classrooms. This will help the DoE and schools to offer professional development in the design of high-quality classroom assessment to support the practitioners in the application of these practices. The study will document teachers' perceptions about formative assessment and how it should be implemented in our classrooms.

Ethical issues

The concerns were principally those of the ongoing maintenance of confidentiality with respect to the data; obtaining informed consent from all participants; monitoring for potential harm throughout the research; and the methods for dealing with any concerns of the participants with respect to being involved in a research study. All data collected during this schedule shall be solely used for the study on nothing else.

Research Question 1: WHAT ARE SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT?

What do you understand by Formative Assessment (FA)?
What is the Department's policy on FA?
Why is it important for teachers to know about this policy?
Are there any other forms of FA that you are aware of?
How do you use FA in teaching?
Have you ever used FA in your classroom?
How did you use FA in the classroom?
In what context do you use FA in your classroom?
Is FA functional in you school?
How would you improve the use of FA in your school?

2. Research Question 2: HOW DO SECONDARY TEACHERS IMPLEMENT FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THEIR CLASSROOMS?

How do you implement FA in your classroom?
What is the Departmental policy on the implementation of FA in the classroom?
Are there any specific steps that should be followed when implementing FA in the classroom?
Are there any resources at hand that can be used to implement FA in the classrooms?
How often do you implement this policy in your classrooms?
Are there any other forms of FA implementation for the classroom?
What specific steps do you follow when implementing these forms of FA in the classroom?

3. Research Question 3: ARE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TRAINED IN IMPLEMENTING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THEIR CLASSROOMS?

Are you trained on how to implement FA in the classroom?

How long was the training session?

Did you receive any resources during the training session?

Were these resources user-friendly?

Were you able to implement FA in your classroom after the training?

What challenges do you face when implementing FA in your classroom?

Do you receive any support from SMT on FA implementation in your school?

What kind of support, if any, do you receive from your SMT?

Do you need another training session?

4. Research Question 4: WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' CURRENT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES ON LEARNERS?

What is the role of learners in your current assessment practices in the classroom?

What do you think is the impact of your current assessment practices on your learners?

Do your current assessment practices advantage your learners in the classroom?

Are your current assessment practices the best for the learners in your classroom?

What assessment practices should be followed that can best suit your learners?

Do you think those assessment practices will advantage your learners?

In what way do these assessment practices advantage your learners?

What is your learners' role in those assessment practices?

5. Research Question 5: WHAT FACTORS INHIBIT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN THE CLASSROOM?

Are there any factors that inhibit the non-implementation of FA in your classroom?

What are these factors that inhibit the non-implementation of FA in the classroom?

What factors cause the non-implementation of FA in the classroom?

How can these FA non-implementation factors be overcome?

What role do you think should your SMT play in overcoming these factors?

END OF SESSION

APPENDICE E

LEARNER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not teachers implement Formative Assessment practices as a process of improving learning in their secondary school classrooms. This will help the DoE and schools to offer professional development in the design of high-quality classroom assessment to support the practitioners in the application of these practices. The study will document teachers' perceptions about formative assessment and how it should be implemented in our classrooms.

Ethical issues

The concerns were principally those of the ongoing maintenance of confidentiality with respect to the data; obtaining informed consent from all participants; monitoring for potential harm throughout the research; and the methods for dealing with any concerns of the participants with respect to being involved in a research study. All data collected during this schedule shall be solely used for the study on nothing else.

Research Question 1: WHAT ARE SECONDARY TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT FEEDBACK?

What is your understanding by FEEDBACK?
Do the teachers give any feedback in the classroom?
What kind of feedback do you get in the classroom?
When is this feedback used in the classroom?
How do they use this feedback in the classroom?
Why is feedback used in the classroom?
Why should your teachers use feedback when they teach?
Do your teachers normally comment on your scripts
What kind of comments do they normally write on your scripts?
What do they actually do when they use FA in the classrooms?
Is feedback given to all in your school?
Is feedback necessary in your school?

2. Research Question 2: HOW DO SECONDARY TEACHERS IMPLEMENT FEEDBACK IN THEIR CLASSROOMS?

What do teachers do when they implement feedback in their classrooms?
How do they implement feedback in their classrooms?
How often do you have home/ classroom tasks/activities to perform?
When are these home/classroom tasks/activities marked?
How are these home/classroom tasks/activities marked?
Who mark these home/classroom tasks/activities
How soon do you receive feedback after your home/classroom tasks/activities are marked?
How do you receive this feedback in the classroom?
What does your teacher do when s/he gives you feedback?
What is your role when your teacher gives you feedback?

Where does your teacher give you feedback?

Are there any resources at hand that can be used to implement feedback in the classrooms?

How often do teachers implement this feedback in their classrooms?

Are there any other forms of feedback implementation that teachers can follow?

What specific steps do they follow when implementing these forms of feedback in their classrooms?

4. Research Question 4: WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' CURRENT ASSESSMENT PRACTICES ON LEARNERS?

What is your teachers' current assessment practices in your classrooms?

What do you think is the impact of your teachers' current assessment practices on you as learners?

Do your teachers' current assessment practices advantage you in your classrooms?

How do you think would your teachers' current assessment practices advantage you?

Are your teachers' current assessment practices the best for you in your classrooms?

What assessment practices should be followed that can best suit you as learners?

Do you think those assessment practices will advantage you as learners?

In what way do you think will those assessment practices advantage you as learners?

5. Research Question 5: WHAT FACTORS INHIBIT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN THE CLASSROOM?

Are there any factors that stop the non-implementation of Feedback in your classrooms?

What are these factors that stop the non- implementation of Feedback in your classrooms?

What may be the cause of this Feedback non – implementation factors?

How could this Feedback non – implementation factors be overcome?

What role should you as learners play in overcoming these factors?

END OF SESSION

APPENDICE F

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POLICY DOCUMENTS

- (a) Report 550 of June 1997
- (b) Government Gazette Vol. 396, No. 18998, 24 JUNE 1998, National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 Of 1996)
DRAFT ASSESSMENT POLICY FOR THE GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PHASE, GRADE R TO 9 AND ABET
- (c) Government Gazette Vol. 402, No. 19640, 23 December 1998
Regulation Gazette, No. 6397No. R. 1718
NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT, 1996 (ACT NO. 27 OF 1996)
ASSESSMENT POLICY IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BAND, GRADES R TO 9 AND ABET