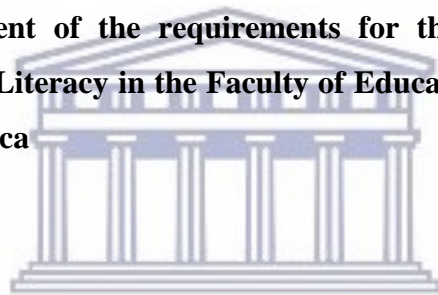


Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language: A case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation at Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe.

By

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Thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Language and Literacy in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa



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KEY WORDS

Curriculum

Dichotomy

Framework

Instruction

Knowledge base

Knowledge domain

Mentoring

Multidimensional

Multifaceted

Pedagogic decision

Pedagogic practice

Practicum

Professional support

Supervision



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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that “Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language: A case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation at Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe” is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other University, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

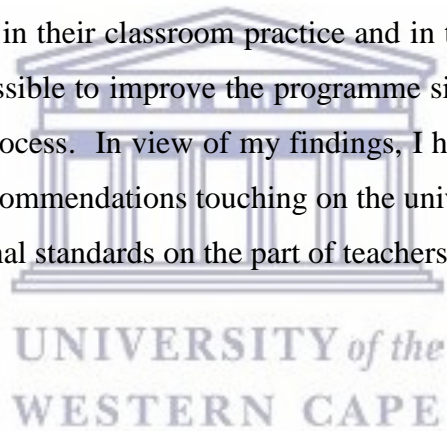


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ABSTRACT

Ordinarily, Teacher Development at the level of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) comes in two major phases spread over four years - the theoretical and the practical based phases. The theoretical phase comes in the form of courses based on pedagogical content and professional knowledge in the initial years at the university while the practical based phase comes in the form of school-based Teaching Practice (TP) for real and direct teaching experiences. The initial theoretical phase is often based on the liberal arts-like education to develop the whole teacher for adaptable life-long service. This is translated by a number of subject that can vary according the dictates of the focus of a particular national curriculum. TP on the other hand, provides student-teachers the opportunity to apply not only the knowledge acquired in the initial phase but also the school-based curriculum they are immersed in plus other contextual experiences they might have. If well-structured and blended, the two phases may ensure a smooth transition from a novice student teacher to an expert professional teacher for long-life practice. Often however, there are constraints encountered in the structuring and blending the phases leading to intractable challenges that threaten the student teachers and the efficacy of the teacher development programmes as a whole. This interpretive qualitative intrinsic case study involving twenty one participants deemed to have the requisite experience to provide appropriate information is about “Improving B.Ed. Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language at Great Zimbabwe University in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe.” The study probes into the theory- practice gaps otherwise existing in student teachers’ pedagogical practices in English during Teaching Practice hoping to establish and document the challenges that student teachers encounter, their views & perceptions about their own teaching and the degree of consistency or inconsistency obtaining between lecturer & mentor critiques of the same. The study further wishes to examine the quality of professional support and supervision that student teachers get from mentors and lecturers. The nature of my problem requires the use of semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis, lesson observation and focus group discussion which I adopted and employed as appropriate methods for the kind of information I seek for a comprehensive analysis of the problem.

It is expected that voice and agency from these participants all directly involved in the pedagogic enterprise can provide significant insights on the gaps to be revealed by the pre-service pedagogical practices in ESL during TP. My study was conceptualised within the multifaceted teacher education and development framework; underpinned by several theoretical perspectives which I proposed to discuss in the literature review chapter of this study. The results of the study revealed both positive and negative aspects of the teacher development programme that needed to be enhanced and mitigated respectively. Starting from the negatives, findings indicated that critical theory-practice gaps existed at every stage of the whole process of Teacher preparation and development from the initial college based tuition, through the practicum period to the final phase of that process and that it involved all stakeholders in this triad. On the positive side, findings revealed that in spite of the challenges encountered, student teachers applauded the fruitful TP experiences that saw them make substantial progress both in their classroom practice and in their way of knowing. It further came out that it was possible to improve the programme since the problem was not the structure but perhaps the process. In view of my findings, I have in the last chapter of my study, made appropriate recommendations touching on the university and the practicum schools as well as on professional standards on the part of teachers, mentors and lecturers.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my husband, Marriote, Jacob who has been a constant source of inspiration, and encouragement during the demanding and trying times of my studies. To you Marriote, I gratefully say you are an equal part in this accomplishment and I would not be who I am today without your support.



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I have been blessed along the way, to know and work with all these people who made my journey a smooth learning curve than a lonely dry path. May God continue to shower his blessings on you all!

ACRONYMS

A-Level	Advanced level
BA	Bachelor of Arts
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
CDU	Curriculum Development Unit
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
ELLs	English Language Learners
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELTD	English Language Teacher Development
EMI	English Medium of Instruction
ESL	English as a Second Language
FLT	First language teaching
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GNU	Global National Unity
GPA	Global Political Agreement
GZU	Great Zimbabwe University
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MA	Master of Arts
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC T	Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai
M.Ed.	Master of Education degree
O-level	Ordinary level

PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
SARUA	Southern African Regional Universities Association
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SDA	School Development Committee
TE	Teacher Education
TP	Teaching Practice/Practicum
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union—Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIMCHE	Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council
ZIMTA	Zimbabwe Teachers' Association

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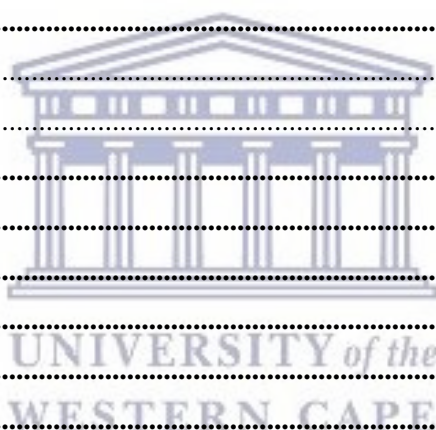


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A Point of departure

There is substantial evidence the world over that language teacher development programs encounter a myriad of challenges in preparing high quality prospective teachers for the realities of the classroom. This is supported by Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998, p. 167) who point out that “what has become clear is that the idea of simply transmitting important pedagogical knowledge to teachers hoping that they will apply this knowledge in their practices does not really work. Jones et al. (2004), reinforce the above issue by acknowledging the occurrence of theory-practice gaps as one of the main challenges to overcome in managing the transition from training to professional practice. A thorough examination of the challenges is therefore necessary to improve student teacher effectiveness especially at the Teaching Practice (TP) phase of their training. Achieving ambitious goals set by reform visions and the changes in classroom practices demanded by those vision ultimately rely on teachers. Hence, adequate preparation and professional development of teachers is of vital importance. It is in the context of this backdrop that I have decided to carry out this study designed to examine how the existing teacher development structures and the practices involved in secondary school language (English) teacher preparation in Zimbabwe could be reinforced. This is most pertinent now as Sub-Saharan countries including Zimbabwe are encountering persistent challenges in providing quality teacher education that could respond effectively to the ever-changing demands of the school curriculum and learners 'needs.

As I have indicated above, the effects of a huge theory-practice dichotomy in student teachers' pedagogical practices is an issue to be problematized and investigated. Therefore, my research is based on the premise that student teacher learning and their professional development is essential for improvement of pedagogical practices leading to the quality of educational standards in the schools. My study is significant and would appeal to a wide audience and stakeholders as educational reform movements around the world clamour for change through improved professional development opportunities for teachers for the

enhancement of content and pedagogical knowledge. My study is a qualitative case study' about improving secondary school Pre-Service teacher development practices in English as a Second Language (ESL) at Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe. It examines the frequently perceived theory-practice gaps otherwise existing in student teachers' practices and experiences during the Practicum period. This phase of training is interchangeably referred to as Teaching Practice (TP). The purpose is to establish the extent to which pre-service ESL teachers' instruction and development, spanning from university through induction to the mentoring process in their TP schools would adequately prepare them to become effective teachers.

The study is thus undertaken with an 'intrinsic' purpose of improving local practice by providing locally-sourced as well as grounded evidence. The most significant aspect of my particular research study is that pre-service teacher preparation in English is the foundation stage at which all critical work in teaching English in bilingual contexts commences. This is why, for the purposes of the reader, this chapter outlines the background to the study, and the theoretical perspectives that underpin the study, a brief literature review to shed light on the theoretical framework, the problem statement, research questions, and motivation of the study. The research design and methodology employed in carrying out the study, delimitation and limitations of the study are outlined to enable the reader to appreciate the logic that I followed.

1.1 Background to my study

The academic and professional standards of teachers constitute a critical component of the achievement of the educational goals of a nation. Implicit in this statement is the fact that the quality of pre-service teacher preparation and development provided through teacher education programs affects student teachers' practice, effectiveness, and career commitment (Eren & Tezel, 2010; Liang, Ebenezer, & Yost, 2010; Roness, 2010). In keeping with the above stated view, Tomlinson (2003) augments that the aim of teacher preparation and development approaches should be to develop a multidimensional awareness and ability to apply this awareness to their real context of teaching. Tomlinson's view chimes in well with the views of Connelly & Clandinin, (1999) who point out that the process of becoming an

effective teacher develops from the pre-service teacher's understanding and construction of personal knowledge, construction of self, and identity development. The quality of teaching and learning taking place in the classroom therefore depends on and reflects the quality of programs. Another notion about quality teaching from a cognitive resource perspective assumes that teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions are central predictors for quality teaching (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008; Pajares, 1992; Shulman, 1987). Well-trained and developed quality teachers reciprocated with good quality support system, adequate and appropriate materials have a significant impact on high learner academic achievement while the reverse can be the case with poorly prepared and developed teachers with limited support systems.

However, while teacher education institutions make concerted efforts to prepare and professionally develop quality pre-service student teachers with comprehensive knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to confront the complex and uncertain demands of the school curriculum and the diverse learning needs of pupils at the same time, literature about initial teacher preparation has revealed a disparity between the theory taught in teacher education programmes and the subsequent practice of these teachers in the classroom (Cheng, Cheng & Tang, 2010; Korthagen, 2010). Several reasons including; the quality of teacher development programmes, the discrepancy in responsibilities between the practicing schools and the university and the complaints by student teachers that they have not been adequately prepared have been cited. These are the some of the factors advanced as the chief barriers militating against effective pedagogy which in turn result in theory practice gaps (Dean, Lauer, & Urquhart, 2005; Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006; Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009; Zeichner, 2010).

Pre-service secondary student teachers of ESL pursuing studies at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) at the undergraduate level in Zimbabwe are not an exception to this scenario where they encounter a number of instructional and practice challenges during TP resulting in theory practice gaps. Seminal among their many challenges that we often hear of from supervisors are the anecdotal accounts of students on TP who are unable to integrate the theoretical knowledge acquired during university tuition into practice with confidence

and effectiveness. Echoing the same view, Lawes; (2003, p. 27) reiterates, that “If language student teachers do not even begin to have some understanding of educational and applied subject theory, they will be mere technicians and feel themselves to be such.” Regarding this difficulty in making the transition from theory to practice, Wren and Wren (2009) say that this issue in question, arises at least in part, from a failure on the part of university teacher to integrate both theory and practice into the same course in the curriculum in ways that are relevant and meaningful to the student. In my view, the plethora of challenges student face during the practicum could be traced to but not limited to the quality of preparation student teachers have gone through probably where there is no adequate emphasis on how to relate theory to practice.

Zeichner (2009) again makes a strong case that teacher education continues to be characterized by a traditional approach whereby academic knowledge is viewed as the authoritative source of knowledge about teaching instead of bringing different aspects of expertise that exist in schools and communities into teacher education so that these co-exist on a more equal plane with academic knowledge. Zeichner further points out that evidence from years of research indicate that many university teacher programmes do not make any effort to understand how student teachers of education value and make use of the theory they are taught to meet the practical demands of the classroom. The old perspective of teacher education which views academic knowledge as authoritative source of knowledge about teaching continues to be applied (Zeichner 2009).

Despite the challenges that permeate the process of preparing and developing quality pre-service teachers as presented above, educators of professional teacher education institutions in Southern Africa including Zimbabwe persistently make reviews about their teacher education programmes in order to improve the quality of teachers. An interesting point to note about Zimbabwe is that the first fifteen years of independence 1980 – 1995, saw it make significant advances in higher education specifically in basic and Teacher Education achieving impressive literacy rates, first of 80% and then above 90% making the country’s education system by far one of the most effective in Africa (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011; Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) (2009). SARUA is a

membership-based organization of Vice - Chancellors of public and private universities in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, which structures its activities across four focus areas including capacity building and advocacy.

However, it is important to note that the gains in Zimbabwe's Education system described above was heavily compromised as a result of the detrimental economic disintegration between the years 2000 – 2012 from which negative effects have naturally persisted. Despite the down turn, SARUA (2009) confirms that Zimbabwe's Teacher Education has remained higher than that of many of its SADC counterparts largely due to the firm foundation laid earlier on. It is against this background of the on-going process of improving teacher development programmes that my study (Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language at Great Zimbabwe University) is premised. In particular, I investigate the theory-practice gaps in student teachers' pedagogic practices in ESL.

Since its initial national mandate to lead in the development of primary and secondary education, Great Zimbabwe University finds it crucial to provide rigorous Teacher preparation and professional development programmes across the whole education spectrum to produce quality teachers. Teachers who have comprehensive knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that enable them not only to understand the diverse learning and linguistic needs of different language learners but also to adapt to the on-the-ground conditions in the classroom and the surrounding contexts. Such teachers should be able to confront the ever-changing demands of the school curriculum leading to national development. This is the reason why university departments responsible for pre-service and in-service teacher education and development are constantly seeking ways to improve their programmes by making students teachers realize and appreciate the importance of a solid grounding in theory in order to achieve excellence in their professional practice.

As I have come to understand, Teacher preparation usually refers to initial college or university based education while teacher development entails teachers' continuous renewal during and after initial training. It is an approved course of study, which when completed

signifies that the enrolled candidate has fulfilled all the institution's educational or training requirements for initial diploma certificate to teach in the primary or secondary schools. Teacher preparation and professional development programs typically consist of a blend of theoretical knowledge about teaching and a field-based practice experience called Teaching Practice or Practicum.

In the Zimbabwean context of Teacher education, Diploma teachers are prepared and developed through the Teachers Colleges while the Bachelor of Education is done through Universities. Great Zimbabwe University through its department of Teacher Development is one of the institutions responsible for the preparation and development of B.Ed. pre-service secondary school teachers. The B.Ed. programme is accessible on a full time basis over a period of four years. I can refer to it as the 2-1-1 model where undergraduate student teachers spend the first two years in the university, third year (full year) on TP and the fourth year back in the university. This follows a model where the initial two years on campus exposes student teachers to a wide range of foundational disciplines including pedagogic and content specific modules to empower them with acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that would enable them to contribute effectively to classroom practice (Smith & Lev-Ari 2005). Pedagogic and content modules separately equip students' teachers with instructional methods, teaching strategies and classroom management and substantial subject matter knowledge to cope with the school curriculum as well as to have the confidence to deal with classroom instruction.

In the third year, student teachers go for TP where they are attached to experienced mentor teachers whose overall role is to promote the growth and development of the novice teacher to improve student learning. My understanding of a mentor refers to a trained and experienced subject specialist who is engaged to supervise the day-to-day teaching experiences of the pre-service teacher. Teaching Practice aims to provide student teachers with practical experience in teaching and abilities to further develop their knowledge and skills in the areas studied in their education courses applying these in real teaching contexts in the schools. This is in the true spirit of what Perry (1997, p.3) means by "Teaching Practice refers to the period of time in which a student teacher gains firsthand experience in

working with a particular group of children”. It is part of the formative development process for pre-service teachers in skills exploration and enhancement that afford them the opportunity to reflect not just on matters associated with professional life and growth but also on who they are and are to become in the future (De- ville 2010). This is mostly the sector where Vygotsky’s (1978) Social Constructivism and Padua’s (2003) mentoring model apply.

During TP, student teachers construct their own understanding of practice by learning from their mentors as they are mentored into professional practices. Learning is enhanced when student teachers are provided with multiple opportunities to apply what they have learned in meaningful contexts (Gagne, 1985; Gardner, 1999; Perkins & Unger, 1999). Barksdale-Ladd et al. (1997), describe the practicing school as “site-based experience” as being instrumental in developing an understanding of the day-to-day life of schools and in providing a medium for increased linkage between course content and practice. During this period, university lecturers visit student teachers frequently to observe their teaching, assess their performance, write crits and discuss what would have transpired during the lesson. Zeichner (2010) reiterates that there is need to couch TP with recreation and evidence based teaching procedures in pedagogic courses to foster meaningful instruction. The Great Zimbabwe University however treats TP as a stand-alone component that is finalised and closed after it is completed. Subsequent stages of teacher preparation do not re-visit TP experiences to address any critical issues that may have arisen during that period. Additionally, mentors’ critiques that should be the bases of reform are not usually considered when students come back for their final year.

For most of my career as both an ESL classroom practitioner as well as a teacher educator, I have gained vast experience in teaching English language and literature to students who are English Language Learners (ELLs) at different educational stages beginning from primary, via secondary through to tertiary levels. This experience in the classroom, in college and in the university has made me realise that experienced teachers, pre-service teachers and pupils frequently encounter serious problems in the teaching and learning of English due to a number of factors including low proficiency levels in the language of education and the

disparities between the school curriculum and the college or university English curriculum. The ESL school curriculum (as the curriculum of other subjects) in Zimbabwe is centrally designed by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) - a branch of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education responsible for the design, development and dissemination of the school curricula. School teachers have not much say over curriculum design and development despite taking part in the curriculum subject committees where dominant relations of power between themselves and curriculum specialists does not help matters. Ultimately, teachers receive the pre-packaged document which they are expected to read and understand, then implement it as effectively as possible. On the contrary, Teacher Education institutions particularly colleges and universities have the autonomy to design their own teacher preparation programmes that are regulated by the Zimbabwe Council of Higher Education (ZIMCHE).

In view of the points I have expressed above, it has always been my desire to professionally develop myself and become a highly skilled teacher educator. This prompted me to undertake Bachelor of Arts (BA) studies with the University of South Africa (Unisa). The completion of my studies with Unisa soon found me teaching at a local high school where I enjoyed a short stint as a secondary school teacher before joining a local Teachers College as a teacher educator. It was a fulfilling and exciting experience to prepare and develop students who were going to join teaching, a profession in which I had vast experience. From my experience as a teacher and mentor, I learnt that a great deal of student teacher learning and innovative efforts began in the context of TP when, as much as possible, their ideas about the profession needed to shape up. It is against strengthening pre-service teacher preparation and professional development that I have decided to carry out this study. Among other things outlined above, the investigation establishes whether there is a shared understanding of expectations regarding pre-service teacher development practices which result in professional knowledge built up by integrating learning in a range of university and school sites (Meere 1993). Reflection is the process of critical examination of experiences - one that can lead to a better understanding of one's teaching practices and routines. Having deliberated on the background to my study, I now move on to examine the theories that guide my study.

1.2 Theoretical framework

Hollins (2011, p.395) describes teaching as “a complex and multidimensional process that requires deep knowledge and understanding in a wide range of areas”. It needs the ability to synthesize, integrate, and apply this knowledge in different situations under varying conditions with a wide diversity of groups and individuals. My study is premised within the language Teacher preparation and development framework wherein the ultimate goal is to produce insights into how best to develop competent prospective language teachers with the ability to translate into practice their personal, experiential and conceptual knowledge acquired in previous experiences. The study is thus hybrid in nature and hence draws from several theoretical perspectives. These include but are not limited to Social Constructivism (Richardson 1997; Vygotsky 1978), the Language Teacher knowledge base (Fleming et al. 2011; Richards 1994; Golombek 1998; Farell 2003; Prabhu 1990), Reflective practice (Schon 1983; 1987; 1996; Dewey 1933; 1938), mentoring models of Padua (2003) and the Post method condition (Kumaravadivelu 1994; 2003; 2006). Needless to say that I will enrich and enhance the theoretical focus of my study progressively, as I move on especially at data presentation and discussion level when I bring in the Episteme and Phronesis framework of theory and practice gaps (Korthagen and Kessels 2001). However, for the purpose of a representative focus, I have chosen to present the mainstay theoretical orientations below in a condensed form.

1.2.1 Social Constructivism

Social Constructivism is a theory of knowledge which advocates that understanding, significance and meaning are developed in coordination with other human beings. It further assumes that human beings rationalize their experience by creating a model of the social world, the way that it functions and the belief in language as the most essential system through which humans construct reality (Leeds- Hurwitz 2009). It emphasizes that individuals construct knowledge in transaction with the environment. In the process, both the individual and the environment are changed and individual development derives from social interactions within which cultural meanings are shared by the group and eventually internalized by the individual (Richardson, 1997). Social Constructivism fosters the

emergence of ideas from the collective practices of the classroom community. The implication is that stakeholders directly involved in pedagogic activities need to shift and reshape their perspectives by moving away from being “people who teach” to being “facilitators of learning.” In the context of my study, I believe that a Social Constructivist approach to pre-service teacher education in ESL can have the potential to minimize the theory-practice divide that pervades stakeholders’ practices. Emphasis is on social transformation, reflecting a theory of human development that situates the individual within a sociocultural context Kroll & LaBoskey, (1996) and the student teachers to develop from novice to professional teachers within the sociocultural context.

1.2.2 The language Teacher knowledge base

Teacher knowledge base can be conceived as all profession-related insights, which are potentially relevant to a teacher's activities. Teacher knowledge and the nature of the knowledge base have been among the most fundamental concerns of research in language teacher education for the past decade (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). From this perspective, it can be argued that, teacher knowledge or teacher practical knowledge, should be included within this knowledge base, along with formal propositional knowledge. Shulman (1987) sees the teacher’s knowledge base as consisting of categories of knowledge which are needed for effective teaching. He comes up with categories of; content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of curriculum and knowledge of the context. In keeping with Shulman’s (1986;1987) views, language teaching experience has been found to be associated with teachers’ pedagogical knowledge (Dittrich et al., 2000), subject matter knowledge (Johnston et al., 2000; Sengupta & Xiao, 2002), and pedagogical content knowledge (Velez-Rendon, 2002;Sengupta & Xiao, 2002). Furthermore, collegial support and discussion have been found to contribute to knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Sengupta & Xiao, 2002) and help develop novice ESL teachers’ personal professional knowledge (Sivell & Yeager, 2001). Teachers are required to draw on an extensive bank of this knowledge as they plan, teach, and assess student learning on a day-to-day basis. With reference to teaching ESL teaching, teachers require a profound understanding of the language content, along with a vast repertoire of pedagogical strategies judiciously linked to particular content. This knowledge must then be applied to

the planning and implementation of lessons within diverse contexts, requiring spontaneous adaptation according to the learners' responses. It is important to understand what constitutes this knowledge base in order to maximize student learning and better prepare teacher candidates for the most acute needs of classroom language teaching.

1.2.3 Reflective Practice

Reflective practice in teaching has become one of the reform efforts that have taken grip in the teacher education arena (Dewey, 1933; Schon, 1983; 1987; Kabilan 2007; Farell 2008; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). It came in the wake of persistent complaints about pre-service teacher education where the theory learnt at college does not quite relate sufficiently to the real work of student teachers during the practicum period. My study therefore adopts reflective practice as one of the guiding theoretical perspectives with the hope that if incorporated into university programmes and effectively implemented, it can contribute significantly towards mitigating the theory practice gaps in student teacher practices in ESL. Schon's (1983; 1987) views of reflective practice chimes in well with the views of Hubball, Collins and Pratt (2005, p. 60) who say that "reflective practice is the thoughtful consideration and questioning of what people do, what works and what doesn't, and what premises and rationales underlie our teaching and that of others". In my research, reflective teaching refers to the student teachers' ability to look at what they do in the classroom, think about why they do it, and thinking about if it works. It is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Reflections about student teachers' experiences are important in trying to understand and improve student teaching and program effectiveness (Boyd et al., 2008; Fry, 2007).

1.2.4 The Post method condition

Kumaravadivelu (2006) describes the Post-method condition as "a sustainable state of affairs that compels us to fundamentally restructure our view of language teaching and teacher education. It urges us to review the character and content of classroom teaching in all its pedagogical and ideological perspectives thereby driving us to streamline our teacher education by refiguring the reified relationship between theory and practice. It is a practice-

driven construct which calls into question the traditional conceptualization of teachers as a channel of received knowledge (Crandall, 2000, p. 35) that raises serious questions regarding the traditional dichotomy between theorizers and practitioners with a view to empowering teachers whereby they can “theorize what they practice and practice what they theorize” (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 545). In the Post-method era, “it is teachers who have to act as mediators between theory and practice, between the domain of disciplinary research and pedagogy” (Widdowson, 1990, p. 22). That is made possible by employing the three parameters of; Particularity, Practicality and Possibility wherein the parameter of particularity is concerned and emphasizes the key aspect of local context or what Kumaravadivelu calls “situational understanding” (2006, p.171. The parameter of practicality, suggests that, rather than being overly concerned about what outside experts have to say regarding teaching efficacy, local teachers should themselves begin to seek avenues that will help them teach and their students learn in a most successful way. The parameter of possibility aims at providing a more comprehensive context for language teaching in terms of its social engagement and political accountability. Borrowing on Akbari (2005), the post-method condition is a more democratic approach to language teaching profession that assigns a voice to practitioners and respects the type of knowledge they possess.



1.2.5 Mentoring in Teacher Education

As I have come to understand, mentoring is a professional development mechanism to support the academic practices of novice teachers. My view appears to be consistent with Bigelow’s (2002) view whose idea of mentoring entails helping student teachers to develop teaching behaviors and strategies, involving a nurturing relationship between a less experienced person and a more experienced person where the mentor provides guidance by serving as a role model and advisor. On the other hand Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000, p.103) define mentoring in teacher education as “complex social interactions that mentor teachers and student teachers construct and negotiate for a variety of professional purposes and in response to the contextual factors they encounter”. Additionally, Smith (2007, p. 277) defines mentoring as “a particular mode of learning wherein the mentor not only supports the mentee, but also challenges them productively so that progress is made”

To them, mentoring involves supporting and providing feedback to the mentee without judgment or criteria thus develops the whole person, rather than in parts. In Padua (2003)'s mentoring model, the mentor teachers are usually experienced, have a deep understanding of specific subject area and know how to build capacity in others. They are practicing professionals who are supposed to be aware of current issues in education, and are positioned to help student teachers navigate the demands of the practicum, particularly in matters of curriculum and classroom management Maphalala (2013). In my study, student teacher participants are attached to mentor teachers who are expected to provide the desired professional support during the practicum period. It is important to point out at this point that I will revisit and restate this section of my study in the Literature Review Chapter when I provide more detail. Having discussed briefly the theoretical perspectives that guide my study, I describe the problem statement of my study in the succeeding section.

1.3. Statement of the problem

GZU has a mandate to prepare and develop student teachers who have a repertoire of competences and skills to handle classroom pedagogy effectively. At this juncture, I must hasten to point out that, whereas the university plays an important role in providing student teachers with the theoretical knowledge, competences skills, and procedures, in most cases however, there seems to be lack of adequate correlation between what students do in real practical classroom experiences and the gains in preservice teachers' content and pedagogical content knowledge. In part, this is due to the fact that several prohibiting factors that militate against teacher effectiveness come into play during the instructional process making it difficult for student teachers to translate into practice the acquired theoretical knowledge. The same is echoed by (Hoban (2005, p. 9) who points out that "what a teacher does in a classroom is influenced by the interaction of many elements such as the curriculum, the context, and how students respond". Hoban continues by saying that this view of the nature of teaching necessitates 'holistic judgement'. Day (1999) reminisces Hoban's (2005) point by adding that holistic judgement about what, when, and how to teach in relation to a particular class is something for which it is hard to prepare teachers.

In view of what I have said above, the problem I intend to address in my study is that of theory- practice- gaps in student teacher practices in ESL. I will revisit this sub-section to furnish it with more detail in my methodology chapter. Meanwhile I move on to describe the intent of my study.

1.4 Aim of the study

My study examines the theory–practice dichotomy in student teachers ‘teaching during TP. I solicited data from participants through; focus group discussion with student teachers, semi-structured interviews with student teachers, mentors and lecturers, mentor and lecturer critiques to determine the degree of consistency or inconsistency obtaining between them and through lesson observation to establish student teacher’s knowledge base in ESL. The study further wishes to examine the quality of professional support and supervision that student teachers get from their lecturers and mentors so that possible ways of mitigating the challenges can be sought out. Insights about pre-service pedagogical practices in ESL during TP are critical to support and to construct shared standards of practice in the teaching profession.

1.5 Research questions

At this point I wish to point out that the research questions guiding my study will be restated in my methodology chapter where I intend to provide a justification for their suitability and relevance.

In light of the problem statement given above, my study proposes and seeks to answer one major research question and three subsidiary research questions.

1.5.1 Major research question

- What theory-practice gaps exist in pre-service teacher classroom practices in ESL at secondary school level and why do they arise?

1.5.1.1 Subsidiary research questions

- To what extent do student teacher practices on TP reflect the ESL theoretical content knowledge and pedagogies learnt at the university?

- Is there a shared understanding of student teachers' expected pedagogical practices between university lecturers and mentors?
- How can the university curriculum and the school curriculum support effective teacher development?

1.6 Objectives

In line with the main aim, my study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the factors that contribute to the theory practice-gaps in ESL during TP.
- To examine student teachers' views and perceptions about; their ability to integrate theory into practice and the quality of professional/pedagogical support they get from lecturers and mentors during TP.
- To analyze and document the consistencies or inconsistencies existing between theory and practice as reflected in mentor and lecturer critiques and interviews on student teachers pedagogical practices.
- To ascertain whether or not mentors and lecturers read from the same page regarding the expected standard of pedagogy in ESL.

1.7 Significance of the study

As I have mentioned above, my study investigates the theory-practice divide in student teacher pedagogical practices in ESL with a view to discover the challenges encountered by student teachers, mentors and lectures in executing their various professional duties during the practicum period. Being an academic and professional teacher educator, I personally felt challenged and saw the need to carry out this study with the intrinsic motivation of trying to establish possible ways of minimising the theory-practice dichotomy that pervades student teacher practices. As part of an analysis and evaluation of the current secondary school teacher initial preparation, I wish to examine student teachers' personal reflections on their teaching, the university supervisors' and mentors' critiques to establish those critical factors that influence student teachers practices. Results can help to inform both educational administrators and ESL teacher educators at GZU on their potential in the improvement of

the quantity and quality of teachers hence contributing valuably towards bridging the theory-practice gaps that characterise initial Teacher preparation and development. Insights from TP such as understanding the lived experiences and agency of ESL student teachers, the observed evidence/critiques of qualified experienced lecturers and mentors can provide valuable understanding needed to offer a framework for the improvement of teacher preparation at Great Zimbabwe University. Most importantly, English in Zimbabwe is a compulsory subject as well as a language of education hence the need for both teachers and learners to have high proficient levels in it to function effectively in both academic and social situations.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study attempts to discover and analyse the factors contributing to the theory - practice gaps in student teachers' teaching during TP. Contextualized within language teacher preparation and development framework, which by nature consists of two major phases (theory and practice) that take place in different settings, likewise, my study took place in two settings. First, at the GZU' main campus and second, at practicing high schools located in the Gweru urban district of the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. More details about the research sites are provided in the Methodology Chapter (see Chapter 3 section 3.2).

1.9 Methodology

The study is about improving student teacher effectiveness in ESL pedagogy with specific focus on the nature and causes of theory –practice dichotomy. Nyawaranda (2000, p. 29) suggests that since a teacher's beliefs cannot be observed or measured, they have to be inferred from the participants' patterns of interaction regarding their conceptualization of how the whole process of teacher preparation is managed and goals implemented. In addition, Creswell (2007) observes that reality is best understood from the perspective of the participants hence my study sought the views and conceptions of participants. In light of Nyawaranda's and Creswell's views, my methodology follows the recommendation of Yin (1994) who advises researchers to; design the case study, conduct the case study, analyze the case study evidence, and develop the conclusions, recommendations and implications. Accordingly, I have adopted a qualitative research approach and a case study design utilizing

multiple data sources to get responses from twenty one participants comprising student teachers, mentors and lecturers. Stuurman (1997, p. 61) describes a case study as “a general term for the exploration of an individual, group or phenomenon”. Therefore, a case study is a comprehensive description of an individual case and its analysis; the characterization of the case and the events, as well as a description of the discovery process of these features that constitute the very process of research itself (Mesec 1998, p.45). Mesec goes further to say that “it is a description and analysis of an individual matter or case with the purpose to identify variables, structures, forms and orders of interaction between the participants in the situation (theoretical purpose), or, in order to assess the performance of work or progress in development (practical purpose)” He adds that one case study could serve both purposes at the same time. Snow and Anderson (cited in Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991) assert that triangulation can occur with data, investigators, theories, and even methodologies. The need for triangulation arises from the ethical need to confirm the validity of the processes. The validity and dependability of my study has been achieved through the use of multiple data sources and several theoretical perspectives. The use of qualitative research, has provided me with a deeper insight and understanding of multiple realities of the participant’s interviews, observations, document analysis, notes and implications of salient issues in the individual teachers’ lives (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). The qualitative methodology further enabled me to gain multiple perspectives of the participants and to solicit unpredicted data on the theory-practice gaps.

1.10 Clarification of key concepts

In this section, I propose to signpost and clarify the key concepts that are used in my study.

Centrally designed curriculum

A centralized curriculum is “the curriculum that is planned by a central unit” (Gatawa, 1990). It uses the top-down approach where implementation begins at the top of the process (government) down to the bottom of the process (school). The centralized curriculum determines the educational goals and embodies centrally prescribed courses which consist of both compulsory and optional subjects.

Curriculum development

Curriculum development describes all the ways in which a training or teaching organisations plans and guides learning. This learning can take place in groups or with individual learners. It can take place inside or outside a classroom. It can take place in an institutional setting like a school, college or training centre, or in a village or a field. It is central to the teaching and learning process (Rogers and Taylor 1998).

Implement

It means to put into action an agreed upon policy. In this study, it means the execution of the curriculum on teaching English at secondary school level.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is the discipline that deals with the theory and practice of teaching. Pedagogy informs teaching strategies, teacher actions, and teacher judgments and decisions by taking into consideration

Responsive

Quick to react to people or events and to show emotions such as pleasure and affection. In this study the term is discussed in the context of designing a teacher development model that is sensitive to the diverse needs of the people.

Second language

An additional language which is not one's native language but which they use at work or at school. In this study English is a second language used as a medium of instruction.

Supervision

Supervision is an intervention that is provided by a senior member of a profession to a junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the junior member(s), monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients she, he, or they see(s), and serving as a gatekeeper of those who are to enter the particular

profession (Bernard and Goodyear 1998). In my study, supervision occurs during TP and is provided to the student teacher by the mentor or lecturer.

Teacher development

Teacher development can be viewed as teachers learning, rather than as others getting teachers to change. In learning, the teachers are developing their beliefs and ideas, developing their classroom practice, and attending to their feelings associated with changing (Bell and Gilbert 1994: 493).

Teacher education

Teacher education refers to the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider community.

<http://www.karmayog.org/ngo/iape/upload/197/iape.pdf>

Theory-practice gaps

The disconnection / disjuncture between what Schon (1983) refers to as the technical rationality and intentional activity.

Transmission model

Transferring information from one end of the educational spectrum to the other without any significant way of manipulating the content of information and critically questioning their validity or relevance to specific learning and teaching context.

1.11 Organization of the study

In Chapter one, I introduced my research by outlining the background information with regard to the theory -practice gaps that persist in student teachers' classroom practice. I then moved on to outline the theoretical principles that guide my study, provide the statement of the problem, aim of the study, the research questions, research objectives, rationale for the study, its significance, limitations and delimitations.

My Chapter Two discusses the several theoretical perspectives that guide my study. Other important issues include; the role and status of English in Zimbabwe, challenges of using a foreign language as a language of instruction, language situation in Zimbabwe, teacher education and teaching practice are also discussed.

In Chapter Three, I provided an explanation and justification of using the paradigm, the qualitative case study research design and a description of the instruments and data collection procedures. The chapter gave an overview of the qualitative data analysis that I employed. Issues pertaining to quality criteria measures (validity and reliability in qualitative research) are addressed and ethical issues are considered.

Chapter four presents and analyses data from individual interviews, focus group discussions, lesson observation and documentary analysis.

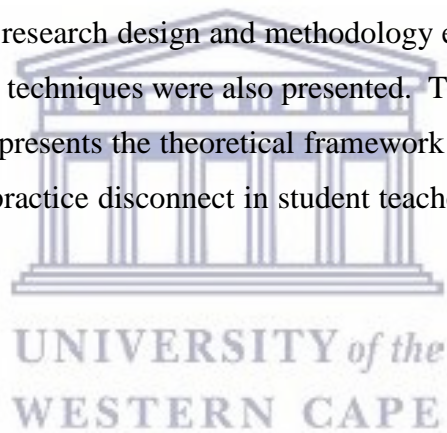
In Chapter five, I present a discussion of the findings of my study by examining the fourteen emergent themes that arose and accrued from my data analysis and each theme forms a section. In the first two sections, I discussed the philosophy that underpins teacher development programmes at GZU. This is followed by the second section, wherein I discuss the theory-practice relationship (*Episteme and Phronesis*) as expressed in the literature about teacher preparation and development practices. In the succeeding sections, I discuss the findings relating them to the literature and to the theoretical philosophies guiding/underpinning the study.

In Chapter six, I presented the conclusions of my study. This chapter is organized into seven sections. In the first section, I provided an overview of the entire study, explaining what the study did and what ensued as results. In the same section, I restated the research questions to remind the reader where I started from. In the second section, I gave a summary of chapters in relation to the research questions and the theories framing my study whereas in the third and fourth section, I discussed the relationship between my study findings with other findings in related research. I then moved on to talk about the implications of my

research findings towards mitigating the theory practice gaps. In the fifth section, I provided the limitations of my study while the sixth section gives the conclusion. In the last section, (seventh) I then move on to make recommendations. The last section voices my personal reflection about the whole research journey of mine.

1.12 Summary of chapter

My chapter one has provided a general introduction that serves as an orientation to the study. The background to the study, theoretical framework and the statement of the problem have been presented, followed by the aim of the study, the research questions guiding the study and the objectives of the study. I have further presented the significance and delimitation of the study. A description of the research design and methodology employed in this study as well as explaining the sampling techniques were also presented. The key terms are then put into context. The next chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study and reviews literature regarding the theory practice disconnect in student teacher practices in English as a second language.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The main long-standing goal of many language and education teacher programs is to link theory and practice for effective pre-service teacher development. Achievement of this goal is usually ascertained during the Teaching Practice (TP) period when student teachers get the real school and classroom based experiences. Due to a number of reasons however, student teachers can fail to integrate theory into practice resulting in critical gaps between the two. Student teachers' ability to teach effectively depends on the interaction of many factors including; their knowledge base, the quality of mentoring and supervision provided and a variety of other factors surrounding them such as the language of education. If these factors are not given special and specific attention, the goals of Teacher Education (TE) would remain elusive. The Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe which has a robust teacher education programme, can be used to illustrate some of these scenarios given that contextual language and pedagogical challenges remain in the programme. For example, the university exists in a multilingual educational context where a second language English is the language of education with which students, school-based mentors and university lectures use to access the curriculum for instruction and for performing their roles respectively. In this context, student teachers often encounter the most challenges as they attempt to integrate theoretical knowledge acquired from the teacher education curriculum into practice as well as their new general school lived experiences. As stated in the previous chapter, the purpose of my study therefore is to examine the type of challenges faced by secondary pre-service teachers in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) as they possibly relate to the quality of supervision, mentoring support and their own other lived experiences while on Teaching Practice.

My investigation hopes to establish and document the consistencies or otherwise existing between theory and practice and the possible causes with a view to improve language teacher education programming in the university. As a researcher, I believe that analysis of a problem is an important diagnostic tool to provide the opportunity to discover the level of

understanding and the causes of mismatches. The issues of language and pedagogy in ESL contexts are worth investigating because the resultant insights can benefit the review of existing curriculum for the ultimate improvement and the quality of ESL teaching by both student and qualified teachers. It is for this reason that this study situated within the language teacher education at Great Zimbabwe University is undertaken.

In view of the above, I therefore propose to define and discuss in this chapter, the different guiding theoretical perspectives, the various roles of English-as a global language, as a medium of instruction and as a means of communication in the world of business. The discussion further looks at; the colonial legacy of English, the language situation in Zimbabwe, and the teaching of ESL. My discussion proceeds by looking at; the language teacher knowledge base (Borg 2003; Farell 2003; Prabhu 1991 and Shulman 1986; 1987; 1991), the Post method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu 1994; 2003; 2006, Richards 2013; Cheng 2006), Social Constructivism, (Vygotsky 1978;Richardson 1997;Arends 1998) and Reflective practice (Dewey 1933; 1938; Schon 1983; 1987; Farell 2004); Behaviorism, (Thorndike 1911;Pavlov 1927;Skinner 1957).

2.2 Theoretical perspectives and ESL classroom practice

A theoretical perspective, as I have come to understand, is a hypothetical model that provides explanation for a given point of view. It is based on certain assumptions which bring the attention to particular features of a phenomenon and thus contributes to its better understanding (<http://www.applepie.com.sg>). Crotty (1998) adds that a theoretical framework relates to the underlying philosophical assumption about the researcher's view of the human world and the social life within that world.

2.2.1 The language teacher knowledge base

Clandinin (1985) describes the teacher knowledge base in ESL as imbued with all the experiences that make up a person's professional being. It is derived and understood in terms of a person's experiential history that is both personal and professional. The teacher knowledge framework has been conceptualized and examined in different ways by different

scholars and is now described as: having a sense of plausibility Prabhu (1990); beliefs about pedagogy; Fleming et al. (2011); pedagogical maxims Richards (1994); personal practical knowledge Golombek (1998); teacher beliefs; Farrell (2003) and teacher language awareness Andrews (1999) among others. Despite the variations, the most common thing among all types of teacher knowledge is that they inform classroom practice. Teachers' instructional decisions such as how lesson development proceeds, on-the-spot judgement and so forth, are all based on teacher knowledge base. It is dialectical and contextualized as both teachers and learners bring to the pedagogical setting a repertoire of knowledge which they share to construct new knowledge. With reference to pre-service teacher development in ESL, Day and Conklin (1992) claim that the knowledge base of second language teacher education consists of four types of knowledge – content knowledge of the subject matter, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical specialized knowledge and support knowledge. In addition to the four, Andrews (1999) adds knowledge about the curriculum while Lafayette (1993) maintains that there is a specialist component of foreign language teacher education, which consists of proficiency in and knowledge about the language, literature and culture to be taught. Lafayette further states that second language teachers should have an advanced command of the language in order to be effective users and models. The question that remains is of how different scholars strive to offer a systematic and comprehensive view of how teachers construct and develop knowledge from the interplay of content, pedagogy, context and curriculum. However, while it is important to understand these variations, I cannot discuss all of them at this point but I propose to discuss some of them later. For that reason, this section of the study discusses one variation of teacher knowledge that Prabhu (1990) calls teachers' sense of plausibility.

Prabhu (1990) describes a sense of plausibility as a teacher's subjective understanding or personal conceptualization of the teaching activities they carry out in the classroom and their envisaged effect, more or less a pedagogic intuition. Kumaravadivelu (1994) also voices a similar issue when he reminisces that the subjective understanding may arise from student teachers' own experience as learners and teachers and through professional education and peer consultation. In addition, because teachers' sense of plausibility is not linked to the concept of method, an important concern is "not whether it implies a good or bad method,

but more basically, whether it is active, alive, or operational enough to create a sense of involvement for both the teacher and the student. Prabhu (1990) further argues that this sense of plausibility arises from any or all of the following: a teacher's experience from the past as a learner, a teacher's earlier experience of teaching exposure to one or more methods of teaching during training, what the teacher knows or thinks about other teachers' actions or opinions and a teacher's experience as a parent or caretaker. It is when a teacher's sense of plausibility is engaged in the teaching operation that the teacher can be said to be involved. Prabhu (1990) further augments that an engagement of the sense of plausibility is a major condition for teacher-learner rapport which is a highly regarded condition in the classroom, going on to argue "if language teaching is to be a genuinely professional enterprise, it requires continual experimentation and evaluation on the part of practitioners whereby in seeking to be more effective in their pedagogy they provide at the same time – and as a corollary – for their own continuing education".

With reference to my study, when student teachers engage in activities that illustrate a sense of plausibility, their teaching becomes productive leading to their satisfaction. Each instance of such satisfaction, according to Prabhu (1990) further influences the sense of plausibility confirming or disconfirming or revising it in some small measure, and generally contributing to its growth and change. As they teach, student teachers continually experiment and get the independence that constitutes 'sense of plausibility'. Language teaching stems from the independent efforts of teachers in their own classrooms and this independence is not brought about by imposing fixed ideas and promoting fashionable formulas. Rather, it can only occur when student teachers, individually or collectively, explore principles and experiment with techniques. It should also be pointed out that teachers do not engage their sense of plausibility only in terms of methodological choices but their approach – with active sense of their plausibility to language teaching methodology being their theoretical rationale underlining everything they do in the classroom.

2.2.2 The Post method framework

Kumaravadivelu (2003; 2006) articulates that the Post method pedagogy is "a sustainable state of affairs that compels us to restructure our view of language teaching and teacher

education. It urges us to review the character and content of classroom teaching in all its pedagogical and ideological perspectives. It directs us to streamline our teacher education by refiguring the reified relationship between theory and practice. Cheng (2006) gives a more comprehensive interpretation about Post method pedagogy by expressing that, “it is a flexible, dynamic and open-ended teaching concept different from any traditional approaches of language teaching”. It heightens the importance of context and sensitivity in First Language Teaching (FLT) and stresses that society; politics and education systems have an important effect on (FLT).

A close analysis of the above definitions shows that proponents of the Post-method pedagogy reject the use of a method by arguing that language teaching or learning is a complex process and is subject to various factors such as participants, contexts, time and purpose. Therefore, they reject the traditional top-down transmission-oriented methods of teaching that regard learners as passive recipients of the teachers’ methodology (Mehrshad 2014) and argue for the adoption of a bottom up process-oriented mode of teaching. The Post method pedagogy is based on Kumaravadivelu’s (1994; 2003; 2006) three pedagogic principles of particularity, practicality and possibility which aim to provide a comprehensive context for language teaching for social engagement and political accountability. The Post method framework again consists of macro and micro strategies which Kumaravadivelu (2003b), expresses as guiding viewpoints derived from historical, theoretical, empirical, and experiential insights related to second language instruction. This framework therefore, is linked with critical pedagogy which advocates social justice and social transformation through education.

The proponents of Post method argue for the formulation of new styles of classroom practices for teaching English as a second language based on contextual realities and teachers’ experiences and knowledge. Kumaravadivelu’s (1994; 2001; 2003) parameter of particularity entails that the sort of techniques that teachers use depends on where, when and who they are teaching. For any language pedagogy to be relevant, it must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals in a particular institutional context embedded in a particular milieu. Local educational, institutional and social contexts have to be duly considered (Kumaravadivelu,

2006). The principle of practicality relates to the relationship between theory and practice by breaking the well-established division of labour between the theorists as producers of knowledge and teachers as consumers of that knowledge because that division does not give room for self-conceptualisation and self-construction of pedagogic knowledge on the part of the teacher (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Abad (2013) states that the parameter of possibility advocates for a pedagogy where teachers are not mere technicians who replicate prescribed curricular and enact imposed policies. This principle takes a critical dimension in which the broad socio-political, historical and economic conditions affect the life of the learner, the teacher and the learning environment. It therefore calls upon teachers to devise their own theories, forms of knowledge and social practices that work within their peculiar experiences and that both teachers and learners bring to the pedagogic setting (Giroux cited by Kumaravadivelu(2006).

The principles mentioned above therefore can constitute an advocacy for pedagogic knowledge that is relevant to the everyday practice of teachers where methods used should be applicable in real situations otherwise the practice-theory relationship may not be realised. Kumaravadivelu (2003) points out the fact that, teachers who attempt to derive a theory from practice get practically in touch with existing language problems and, as they develop deeper insights into those glitches, they become more versatile in addressing them. Second language teachers then should not be asked to put into practice the professional theories handed down to them by traditional theories because instructional contexts are different and requires different classroom procedures and techniques.

The Post method and Constructivist theories are interwoven dimensions of ESL teaching that provide teachers with important guiding principles on which to base their teaching in order to be aware of their teaching processes. The Post-method pedagogy is therefore crucial for student teacher development since it involves the construction of “classroom-oriented” theories of practice (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). In the process, it values teacher potential by emphasizing their experiences as teachers, parents/caretakers and students that is underestimated in the implementation of existing methods (Prabhu, 1990). Based on their knowledge about the post-method and, more importantly their experiences, student teachers

can construct their own methods and thus act as critical thinkers, observers, theorizers, practitioners and evaluators. With macro strategies for example, teachers are able to generate their own location-specific, need-based micro strategies or classroom procedures. This way, the teacher becomes a creator of learning opportunities for their learners and the utilizer of learning opportunities created by learners.

It is important to mention that the Post method is synonymous with teacher autonomy because, teachers have the potential to know how to teach and handle problems within contextual constraints. Supporting teacher autonomy means enabling and empowering them to hypothesize from their practice and practice what they have theorized (ibid, p. 30). The other feature is principled pragmatism which Kumaravadivelu (1994) sees as different from eclecticism explaining that eclecticism reprobates into an unsystematic, unprincipled, and uncritical pedagogy because teachers with very little professional preparation cannot manage to be eclectic in a principled way leaving little option but to randomly put together a package of techniques from various methods and label it eclectic” (ibid, p. 30).

These frameworks provide teachers with important guiding principles on which to base their pedagogies in order to be aware of their teaching processes and justifying them. The term pedagogy is used in a broad way intending to cover a wide-range of issues about the classroom as well as historical, political and sociocultural experiences that more or less influence the awareness learners bring to classroom settings. Such awareness may alter pedagogic practices in ways unintended and unexpected by policy planners, curriculum designers, or textbook compilers. By using appropriate strategies, learners are able to monitor their learning processes and maximize their learning potential. If academic autonomy enables learners to be effective, liberatory autonomy empowers them to be critical thinkers. Therefore, liberatory autonomy goes further actively helping learners reflect on themselves and their social world, form their learning communities, and provide them opportunities and possibilities for exploration. This way, learners become more prepared for better solutions to problems in learning.

However, learners may only be able to achieve such a goal with the help of others, and particularly, their teachers. It can be underlined that the Post Method condition again allows student teachers the freedom to design, conduct, evaluate, and reshape their teaching processes without the confines of traditional theories. In doing so, the local, psychological and socio-economic needs of the learners are taken into account. In line with this, Kumaradivelu (2008) laments that teachers may find it difficult to develop a valuable, internally-derived sense of coherence about language teaching in part because the transmission model of teacher education they may have gone through would do little more than passing on to them a ready-made package of methods and related body of knowledge. Having discussed the Post-method pedagogy, I now turn to Social Constructivism.

2.2.3 Social Constructivism

Social Constructivism is a theory of knowledge which assumes that understanding, significance, and meaning are developed in coordination with other human beings. The most important elements in this theory are the assumption that human beings rationalize their experience by creating a model of the social world, the way that it functions and the belief in language as the most essential system through which humans construct reality.

Kroll & LaBoskey, (1996) express that Social Constructivism emphasizes education for social transformation and reflects a theory of human development that situates the individual within a sociocultural context. Richardson (1997) on the other hand, maintains that in Social Constructivism, individuals create or construct their own new understandings or knowledge through the interaction of what they already know and believe and the ideas, events, and activities with which they come in contact. Put together, the definitions seem to confirm three fundamental principles of this theory; reality, knowledge and learning. Knowledge is seen as a socio-cultural human construction (Ernest, 1999; Gredler, 1997; Prat & Floden, 1994) with the learner as an active participant in the learning process. Individuals create meaning through interactions with each other and the environment they live in. Reality on the other hand, cannot be discovered and does not exist prior to its social invention but, is constructed through human activity, where members of a society together invent the properties of the world (Kukla, 2000).

Socially constructed reality is seen as an ongoing dynamic process reproduced by individuals acting on their interpretation of knowledge. Learning thus becomes a result of the individual's interaction with the environment and knowledge constructed as learner makes sense of their experiences in the world. The content of learning is not independent of how it is acquired but what a learner comes to understand is a function of the context and goals of their learning through the activities involved. This is why Social Constructivism emphasizes the importance of culture and context in the process of knowledge construction underlining that theory and practice do not develop in a vacuum but are shaped by dominant cultural assumptions (Martin, 1994; O'Loughlin, 1995). It becomes clear why it is said that the historical and cultural environment that generated them influences formal knowledge, the subject of instruction, and the manner of its presentation.

With Social Constructivism, learning is a social process that does not take place only within an individual and is not a passive development of behaviours that shape external forces (McMahon, 1997). It supports the acquisition of cognitive processing strategies, self-regulation, and problem solving through socially constructed learning opportunities all of which are critical skills for evidence-based knowledge uptake and implementation of classroom practice. Pedagogic practices consistent with Social Constructivist approaches prioritize student -teacher or student-student interaction. Small group, pair and whole-class interactive work, extended dialogue with individuals; higher order questioning, teacher modelling, reciprocal teaching and cooperative learning can all be seen as justifiably fundamental by Social Constructivism. This is why this theoretical perspective could be seen as supporting student or learner-centred pedagogy – terms which feature very strongly in curricula reform in developing countries. Assumptions around student -centred pedagogy are that teachers share their students' language and culture, accepting a more democratic and less authoritative role in setting up effective group work and tasks and to offer skillful support instruction at the point it is needed.

Knowledge use within this epistemology is an active learning process in the same way it is not an inert object to be sent or received but a fluid set of understandings shaped by those

who produce it and those who use it. My study recognizes that to accomplish the goals of social transformation and reconstruction, the context of education needs to be deconstructed, exposed and critiqued and if necessary, altered (Myers, 1996). This would include, but not limited to the cultural assumptions of power relationships and historical influences that undergird it.

In the context of the Great Zimbabwe University, students are deployed to various schools to have varied real classroom experiences that they can share in the later educational phase. These schools are the sociocultural settings where teaching and learning take place and where "cultural tools," such as reading, writing, and certain modes of discourse are utilized (Richardson, 1997). ESL pre-service students, cooperating teachers, university supervisors and learners are participants engaged in the social practice where they adopt a dialectical relationships. As novice teachers learn to teach, they get the guidance and mentorship from co-operating teachers, professional support and advice from their university supervisors and they interact with their pupils in the instructional process. Scaffolding, or guidance, is provided by mentors or more experienced peers in the teacher learner Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—between what the learner can achieve independently and what they may achieve with support. This situation makes my study socially constructivist in the sense that during the process of interaction, student teachers engage in professionally multifaceted activities and interactions with the pedagogic players affording them the opportunity to construct own theory and practice based on real experience and observation.

This position improves teaching by constantly engaging in the reassessment of problems evolving from instructional practice. With Social Constructivism, all knowledge is subject to constant reassessment and critique as nothing is taken as fixed or absolute. In this context, it is recognized that knowledge must make sense in terms of a person's whole life as people cannot separate the professional from the personal and the academic from the everyday. The contribution of one's rich prior experience to knowing how to teach is acknowledged. Learners are therefore involved in actions that make sense to themselves constructing knowledge through interaction with each other.

My study is therefore within the Social Constructivist and Post Method domain in as far as it does not attempt to develop a coherent theory but rather work towards a more insightful understanding of how the theory-practice gaps in ESL instruction are created, perceived and can be minimized. Student teachers of ESL are expected to embrace these aspects for themselves during TP given that learning to teach is a gradual process rather than a sudden initiation based on the transmission model Shoonmaker (2002) in (Dewey 1916). In every day classroom practice, teachers apply this model by setting up a ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD), that is, an area of activity where, with the aid of an expert or more knowledgeable people, students teachers are able to do what they cannot achieve alone (Vygotsky 1986). Having deliberated the Social Constructivist theory, my next discussion is reflective practice.

2.2.5 Reflective practice

Pennington (1992, p. 47) sees reflection or reflective teaching as “a movement in teacher education in which student teachers or practicing teachers analyze their own practice and its underlying basis, and then consider alternative means to achieving their ends”. It is also viewed as “An approach or a process in which practicing teachers and student teachers collect data about teaching, examine their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, teaching practices and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching”.

Schon’s (1983; 1987; 1996) views on reflective practice chimes in well with the views of Hubball, Collins and Pratt (2005, p. 60) who define reflective practice as ‘the thoughtful consideration and questioning of what people do, what works, what doesn’t, and what premises and rationales underlie our teaching as well as that of others.’

In my research, reflective teaching refers to the student teachers’ ability to look at what they do in the classroom, think about why they do it and whether it works. It is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Reflections about student teachers’ experiences are important in trying to understand and improve student teaching and program effectiveness (Boyd et al., 2008; Fry, 2007). Schön (1987) specifies two types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection on-action indicating that teachers can reflect both during and after

action to improve practice. Reflection-in-action happens whilst teaching, and it refers to the importance of teachers' being aware of their decisions as they work that enable them to take the necessary steps towards their following actions. Reflection-on-action on the other hand, occurs after action has been completed to engage the teacher in reviewing, analyzing and evaluating the situation as a process of enhancing professional growth. Schön (1983) suggests that the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning is one of the defining characteristics of professional practice.

Schon (1983) further argues that the model of professional training which he termed "Technical Rationality" (of charging students up with knowledge in training schools so that they could discharge when they enter the world of practice, perhaps more aptly termed a "battery" model) had never been a particularly good description of how professionals "think in action", and was quite inappropriate for practice in a fast-changing world. Since reflective practice enables language teachers to think about what, how and why they do what they do, it allows them to step out of routine action and make adaptations to match the needs of the learners echoing reality, practicality and possibility.

Becoming reflective classroom practitioners concerns the particular skills needed to reflect constructively upon ongoing experience as a way of developing those skills and knowledge and improving the effectiveness of one's work" (Moore 2000). In the context of my study, the three categories of stakeholders directly involved in TP, - lecturers, school-based mentors and student teachers have the responsibility to reflect upon themselves. Lecturers' reflection on student teachers' TP experiences are important in order to understand and improve student teaching and program effectiveness (Boyd et al., 2008; Fry, 2007). Dale (2001) (cited in Postholm ,2008) maintains that theories can be used to reflect on practice while Craig (1994) acknowledges that despite the fact that teachers are often aware of the term reflective practice and the importance of being reflective, they do not really apply this to their real life teaching experience.

In my study, student teacher's ability to reflect upon themselves can be established during document analysis particularly in their lesson evaluations, and on teaching and learning

activities. Student teaching is the final field experience in which teaching and learning is followed by reflective thought, which may lead to re-planning, re-teaching, and re-evaluation at the next opportunity. Reflecting on personal experience is vitally important because all teachers have personal theories and beliefs about themselves as teachers, their teaching, subject matter, pupils, and their roles and responsibilities within the classroom (Berliner, 1987; Ennis, 1994; Kagan, 1992; Lester, 1990; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1991).

In support of individual reflective practice in the classroom, Dewey (1938) comments that "We do not actually learn from experience as much as we learn from reflecting on experience." In order to help teachers become more reflective, it is recommended that teacher preparation programs should include a course that helps freshmen grasp the significance of reflective practice. The reflective model emphasizes the fact that people seldom enter into professional training situations "with blank minds and/or neutral attitudes" (Wallace, 1991, p 50). Student-teachers bring with them concepts, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes that shape their behavior in various ways. So, their reactions to any problem in the classroom are determined by the mental constructs they already have about that specific situation; for example, what they think about discipline. That reaction can also be determined by the way they feel at the moment (tired, excited, etcetera). Some sources of these schemata are personal, social, and cultural factors. Therefore, to find the essence of our student-teachers' professional development, it is necessary to find a way to connect received knowledge and experiential knowledge to bridge the gap between theory and practice. In the joint work done by teachers during the revision process of the syllabus, it should agree that one way to link both is by carrying out discussions about the applicability of the teaching methods to the particular contexts where students do their practicum. These discussions must be part of the classes of the pedagogical component and the research seminars as well. In the next section I discuss Behaviorism.

2.2.5 Behaviorism

Behaviorism is a bygone theory that has seen its better days in terms of teacher training. However, it is important at this point to take a look back at where teacher training started in order to think and reflect on the past. Reflecting on past teacher education models that

were steeped in Behaviorists thinking helps me to get a better understanding of how modern language teacher development models could be improved hence this discussion on Behaviorists theory. The historical review of research on cognition as it relates to teaching and learning generally begins with (Thorndike 1911; Pavlov 1927; Skinner 1957) well-known advocates of Behaviorism- a theory which has its roots in Behaviorist psychology dominant in the 1960s and 1970s. Their intent was to use the processes of science to improve classroom instruction and learning and therefore they conceived cognition as the learners' way of making associations and committing facts to memorization. Consequently, drill practice was highly valued by researchers and practitioners alike. A lot of people needed the knowledge and skills necessary to work in the new manufacturing complex of the early twentieth century and scientists sought well-organized methods of getting facts quickly and efficiently into the minds of students. Researchers attempted to accomplish this through the lab-based study of learning.

Behaviorist's scientifically proven laws of stimulus response, classical and operant conditioning were used to explain the learning process through or trial and error where learning is seen as habit formation, one that takes place through reward and punishment (Roberts1998). With reference to teacher education, this view led to what was known as *teacher training* which Mann (2004) describes as the introduction of methodological choices to make trainers familiar with a wide range of concepts that are the common currents of language teachers. Edge (2003) cited by Schofield (1972) agree that to train is to instill habits and skills implying that the acquisition of a 'skill' and drill is an essential part of training whereas education must provide those committed to it with knowledge, understanding and cognitive perspective. Consistent with this model, teacher trainers are therefore equipped with techniques that are thought to produce the best results in teaching and these are employed in classroom practices (Kumaravadivelu 2003; Johnson 1999; Roberts 1998). This behaviorist understanding of cognition and learning dominated research in America until mid-century, though alternative educational viewpoints were present that focused on connecting students with a complex meaning-filled world (Dewey 1938). It is a top-down approach known as the transmission model where theories, approaches and methodologies, are handed down to teachers by theorizers. It is associated with a lot of

challenges as can be implied from Freeman's (1989) sentiments that "knowledge obtained through the transmission model is mere trainable and does not equip teachers with awareness and positive attitude towards teaching".

Classroom interaction is weak because the teacher does a lot of talking while children are passive recipients of information. Teachers with this teaching type of style are not as concerned with building relationships with their students nor is it as important that their students form relationships with other students. Due to the weaknesses I have presented, it becomes apparent that Behaviorism is presently considered a narrow view of teacher education as it assumes that there is a "one size fits all best practice" that all teachers can follow. However, despite the negative connotations, Roberts (1998) comments this model as having the capacity to serve where there is a shortage of teachers as a short term guide to beginner teachers. The inherent weaknesses in behaviorist based teacher training led to the emergence of the term teacher preparation/development. Vygotsky's (1978) Social Constructivism pushed these boundaries hence my study is framed by a Social Constructivist view point.

2.3 English as a global language

It is important for this study to highlight the fact that a language teacher in a global world is now different from the teacher in the previous era. This is largely due to the advent of globalization, which has had tremendous impact on different aspects of human life including the process of teaching and learning (Bose, 2006; Safran, Helic, & Gütl, 2007). The language teacher in Zimbabwe is part and parcel of the global world and has to be responsive to the demands of globalisation. Giddens (1991:70-71) defines globalisation as "an intensification of worldwide social relations which link localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events happening many miles away and vice versa." McKay (2002) distinguishes between "English as an international language" in a global and a local sense by observing that as an international language, English is used both in a global sense for international communication between countries and in a local sense as a language of wider communication within multilingual societies. She further says that the very global spread of English entails the localization of the language because the widespread use of international technology for

communication, for example the use of Internet, has made it increasingly difficult to distinguish between local and international interaction for people using their computers at home.

Kachru (1992) offers a model that portrays the classification of localized and nativized forms of English, known as World Englishes, using three concentric circles: Inner Circle, Outer Circle, and Expanding Circle. As described, each circle refers to a set of countries and is determined by the manner people acquire and use English. The inner circle represents the countries including the United Kingdom, the United States of America, New Zealand and Canada where English is spoken as a first language while the outer circle countries such as Zimbabwe, India and Kenya have a colonized history and use English as a second and official language in major institutions. The last group belongs to the expanding circles which refers to countries that do not have colonial history and where English is learnt as a foreign language (EFL) and used for international communication. It does not have a distinct status or function in institutional domains. These categories are important in as far as they inform us of the status of English in the countries where it is used. Writers including (Richards 2008; Graddol 2006; Crystal 1997) are of the view that globalisation has brought some benefits to the world community. Richards (2008) for example, points out that “becoming a student of English means becoming part of the world-wide community of professionals with shared goals, values and discourse of professional practice”. He expresses the need for specialized knowledge base for English which he says is obtained through academic studies and practical experience. Teachers of English therefore have the responsibility to demonstrate their level of proficiency to teach effectively.

Graddol (1997) contends that economic globalisation has encouraged the global spread of English, while the global spread of English has also encouraged globalisation. He deliberates that this spread is natural, inevitable, neutral and beneficial and goes further to say that English is now redefining national and individual identities worldwide, shifting political fault lines, creating new global patterns of wealth and social exclusion, and suggesting new notions of human rights and responsibilities of citizens. For that, he has been accused of English triumphalism. Crystal (1997) augments that English fosters opportunity and

promotes a climate of international intelligibility while Lin (2001) argues that ability in English and access to adequate opportunities to learn it has a considerable impact on the lives of many learners worldwide, including both children and adult learners. McCrum (2010) expresses the view that the spread of English is the result of a number of historical and pragmatic factors. A theoretical framework such as Social Constructivism suits well in this section of the study as it supports the notion that, people are social actors who construct their world both within their own minds and through inter-subjective communication with others. However, while the impact of globalisation is believed to have brought some benefits, the issue is deeply controversial. Proponents of globalization argue that it allows poor countries and their citizens to develop economically and raise their standards of living, while opponents of globalization claim that the creation of an unfettered international free market has benefited multinational corporations in the Western world at the expense of local enterprises, local cultures, and common people. In particular, Phillipson (1992) sees the spread of English as threatening local cultures, languages and identities. He uses the phrase ‘linguistic imperialism’ to explain how English has come to play a leading role in maintaining the economic and political dominance of some societies over others whose languages have been prevented from going through processes of development and expansion, and have been allocated a secondary status, along with the cultures they represent.

In view of the preceding discussion, I wish to argue that globalization affects issues and trends in different world spheres including education. Similarly, my study, which is conceptualised within the ESL teacher development framework at Great Zimbabwe University, recognizes the issue of globalisation and its continued spread of English to the complex interculturality of interactions among speakers. As such, pre-service teachers who may find themselves in intercultural and inter educational settings should have the prerequisite language facility to operate efficiently and to meet the challenges therein. Subsequently, the ESL curricula at GZU should develop formidable teachers capable of achieving success in intercultural communication with speakers and pupils from various cultural backgrounds. For the wider community, an appreciation of languages contributes to a greater respect for cultural diversity and differences, and the ability to relate to others in ways to enhance social cohesion and stability. Language learning provides opportunities to

gain new insights into changing global context within which we live including the awareness of others' ways of knowing, being and relating. I hasten to state that one way in which ESL curricula can expose learners to socio-cultural realities and the diversity that characterise the English language today is to present students with examples of cultural conceptualisations from multiple varieties of English. English Language Teaching (ELT) pedagogy should also involve creating natural appreciation for learners to engage in reflecting and explicating their cultural conceptualisations. The globalisation of English and its rapid use among communities of speakers around the world has led to the localisation of the language and the development of many varieties of English, a process that is referred to as *glocalisation* of English (Sharifian 2010) and it continues to do so.

2.4 The language situation in Zimbabwe

At this point I must mention that this conversation about the language situation in Zimbabwe that I propose to discuss now is important to my study which takes place at a university existing in a multicultural environment where English is used as a second language and a language of instruction. In that context, student teachers of English to the attendant of English language learners (ELLs) often face a myriad of challenges in instructional practices due to low proficiency levels in the language of instruction. It is against the backdrop of this situation that I find it relevant to discuss the triglossic situation of Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe, (House of Stones), is named after the Great Zimbabwe Monument located fifty kilometers south-east of Masvingo city. It is situated in South Central Africa between the Limpopo and Zambezi rivers. It is an independent agro-based land locked country with an area of 390,757 square kilometers and a population of about thirteen million people, the majority of who live in rural areas while the rest of the people live in urban areas. Five countries namely Botswana to the west, Namibia to the north west, South Africa to the south, Mozambique to the east and Zambia to the north are its neighbours. It is made up of diverse ethnic groups who speak different languages thus can be described as a multilingual country where languages play a crucial role in both social and academic situations. The Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe (2013) recognizes sixteen official languages as opposed to the previous one where only English, Shona and Ndebele were the official languages depending

on the province where they were spoken. The sixteen languages recognized are; English, Shona, Ndebele, Kalanga, Nyanja, Tonga, Shangani, Venda, Barwe, Nambya Xhosa, Tswana Sotho, Ndaou, Hwesa, and Sena.

The languages can be categorized into two groups -majority languages and the minority languages where minority refers to all Zimbabwean African languages other than Shona and Ndebele Hachipola (1995). The mother tongue speakers of the minority languages are fewer than those of the majority languages. Shona, Ndebele (also known as Chishona and IsiNdebele) and English are the major national and official languages. Shona speakers constitute seventy five percent of Zimbabwe's population and has the highest number of speakers in the country compared to other languages (Hachipola 1998). It is a member of a large family of Bantu languages and forms part of a continuum of closely related varieties including Manyika, Nambya and Ndaou spoken in Zimbabwe and central Mozambique (Guthrie1948). Ndebele has some 1, 550 000 speakers in Zimbabwe (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001) which constitute 16.5 percent of Zimbabwe's population and is mainly spoken in Matabeleland around Bulawayo and in the midlands province around Gweru. It is an Nguni language related to Zulu and other languages in South Africa. English is the native language of the white population of European origin which constitutes less than one percent of the country's population. It is understood, if not always used by more than half of the black population of Zimbabwe.

The Doke Report of the 1930s sets the stage for a colonial language policy in education where English was declared the official language and medium of instruction in the education system. The reality was that all the indigenous languages of Zimbabwe were marginalized and reduced to mere vernaculars without official use or status. They were taught in the early grades of primary schooling by the Missionaries only to enable natives to access the bible (Magwa, 2007). In 1987, an Education Act which required the use of three main languages – Shona, Ndebele and English was enacted.

It specified that;

- Shona and English in all areas where the mother tongue of the majority of learners are Shona or Ndebele and English where the mother tongue of the majority of learners are Ndebele.
- Prior to the fourth grade, either of the languages referred to in paragraph a) or b) of subsection(1) may be used as the medium of instruction, depending upon which language is more commonly spoken and better understood by the pupils.
- From the fourth upwards, English shall be the medium of instruction provided that Shona or Ndebele shall be taught as subjects on an equal time allocation as the English language.
- In areas where minority languages exist, the minister of Education may authorize the teaching of such language in primary school in addition to those specified in subsection (1), (2) and (3), part xi, section 55, p 255.

The 1987 Education Act (Chapter 25.04) was amended in 2006 to allow the use of indigenous languages as media of instruction until grade seven.

Part XII of that Education Act Section 62 stated that;

Languages to be taught

- Subject to this section, all the three languages of Zimbabwe, namely Shona, Ndebele and English, shall be taught on an equal-time basis in all schools up to form 2 level (former group A schools included).
- In areas where indigenous languages other than those mentioned in sub-section (1) are spoken, the Minister may authorize the teaching of such languages in schools in addition to those specified in sub-section (1).
- The Minister may authorize the teaching of foreign languages in schools.
- Prior to form one, any one of the languages referred to in subsection (1) and (2) may be used as the medium of instruction, depending upon which language is more commonly spoken and better understood by the pupils.

- Sign language shall be the priority medium of instruction for the deaf and hard of hearing.

The education act which is currently under review for the purpose of making it consistent with the new constitution does mention languages in section 55(11). However, in spite of government effort to allow the use of local languages as media of instruction, most teachers in Zimbabwe do not take heed of the language policy and thus continue to use English from the first grade until university level. Implicit in this situation is that both the first and second language (English) are kept apart in two ‘balloons’ inside the head” and that they operate separately (Baker, 2006). Cummins (1980a) cited in Baker, (2006) refers to it as the ‘Separate Underlying Proficiency’ (SUP) model of bilingualism which he says presents problems if two languages are insufficiently developed, information from one language cannot readily be transferred into the other language. The use of English as medium of instruction in the Zimbabwean Education System dates back to the colonial period where indigenous languages were marginalized in preference to the foreign language. As early as 1908, the committee on education chaired by Hole concluded that, “English language should continue to be recognized as the sole medium of instruction, “in the colony (Rep. Educ., Comm., B. S. A. C. May 1908, p. 14). The Judges Commission which had been tasked to look into the African Education System had recommended that children should learn to write and read English from the first day of grade one. It is against this background that English continues to occupy a high status in the Zimbabwean school curriculum where; it is a compulsory school subject from primary to secondary levels, a medium of instruction as well as a language used to set and write examinations in all subjects except in indigenous languages. It is also a unifying language used for communication purposes among different ethnic groups. Having said that, I now look at first and second language and how ESL is taught in Zimbabwe.

2.5 L1 and L2 interface

The majority of Zimbabwean children acquire their first language in a family setting. Like any other people elsewhere, this is when they are exposed to comprehensive language input through interaction with siblings, parents, friends and other relatives in the neighborhood.

On the contrary, English is usually learnt in artificial or contrived settings such as the classroom and learning is through instruction. For that reason, the level of proficiency that learners gain varies according to a number of factors including the type of comprehensible input provided, the teaching techniques employed by teachers, the quality of teachers, the resources available and sometimes according to the educational backgrounds of parents. When children start school, they are introduced to two languages- their mother language as a medium of instruction and English as a subject as well as a medium of instruction. Usually, from the fourth grade onwards, English takes centre stage and the indigenous languages are relegated to the periphery. However, researches about the language of education in Zimbabwe have highlighted that the use of a foreign language as a medium of instruction hinders the learning process as it becomes more of a barrier than a language of learning resulting in learners' poor academic performance (Mufanechiya & Mufanechiya 2010; Muchenje et al 2013; Ndamba 2008). It also denies indigenous languages the chance to develop their own terminology and opportunity to develop and establish themselves. In line with the above issues, Muchenje et al (2013) purport that although the Education Act of 1987 has been described as a noble attempt to address the country's linguistic diversity, it results in subtractive bilingualism for all the pupils coming from indigenous language backgrounds. Subtractive bilingualism occurs when the acquisition of a second language and culture takes place at the expense of the first language, which according to Cummins has been associated with disabling educational settings for minority language speakers (McLaughlin, 1990; Molojiwa, (2009) cited in Muchenje et al (2013). Mwamwenda, (1996) cited in Ndamba (1999) reiterates that subtractive bilingualism arises out of a situation where the second language is acquired without accommodating the linguistic skills that have already been developed in the first language.

Baker (2001) adds that subtractive bilingualism refers to the negative affective and cognitive effects of bilingualism where both languages are underdeveloped. However, ESL instruction presents a host of challenges to teachers and learners who both may not possess the prerequisite proficiency. In this model, the learners' L1 skills are replaced by the L2, thereby placing linguistic and cultural systems in conflict instead of complementing one another (Robinson, 1996). Vespoor (2003) says that the policy of using English appears to have a

major impact on the discursive patterns found in many of the classrooms. My study is meant to examine the critical gaps that exists between theory and practice during TP. It is assumed that if the language issue (among other issues) is effectively implemented, the proficiency levels of both teachers and learners, can be high thus resulting in improved instructional practices that lead to minimal gaps.

However, the existing language scenario in Zimbabwe is that some student teachers of ESL go on TP with low proficiency levels in the language of education. They therefore face a double-barreled challenge of; being second language users of English in which they have low proficiency levels to being teachers of the same second language to the attendant of English language learners who grapple worse with acquiring basic linguistic ability, let alone academic proficiency. The result of such a case is continued ill classroom practices hence the theory – practice gap issue remain unsolved. Such a scenario is well articulated by Perez-Gimeno and Gamez (1988) who point out that at the TP stage of their training, student teachers enter the classroom with a degree of preparation as well as some amount of linguistic and professional competence to use to mediate classroom pedagogy. In many cases however, both remain a real challenge which fail to measure up to the harsh realities of the classroom especially given the mismatch between student teacher competences and the learners' needs for support. Inevitably, some student teachers usually realize, as do their tutor son supervision, they are not linguistically and pedagogically equipped to deal with the situation and resort to 'classroom survival skills' some of which had been well documented as: "safe talk" in South African classrooms (Chick 1996; Hornberger & Chick, 2001), ritualized techniques in bilingual classrooms (Ngwaru 2010; Abd-Kadir, 2007) and code-switching between English and the mother language classrooms (Bunyi, 2005). Safe talk was a well-practiced or rehearsed pattern of procedure – a type of chorusing and patterned classroom talk which allowed participation without risk of loss of face for the teacher and the learner and maintained an appearance of doing the lesson.

Ngwaru (2010) authenticated ritualized techniques in Zimbabwean primary school classrooms by identifying the following routines: brief previous lesson recap; dysfunctional group work; fragmented group reporting back and written work based on textbook exercises.

Bunyi (1997; 2005), discussed code switching in Kenyan classrooms showing how teachers switched between English and Kiswahili to explain texts, elaborate a point and provide for pupils who had limited knowledge and control over the language of instruction to access the curriculum.

2.6 ESL Teaching and learning in Zimbabwe

This part of the literature review looks at ESL instructional practices in Zimbabwe which are framed by theories of second language acquisition and theories of language teaching and learning. In particular, the communicative proficiency model (Baker (2011) and the communicative competence framework (Canale & Swain 1980, 1981; Hymes 1972; Richards 2005; Wilkins 1976). Although it is difficult to make a water tight distinction between language proficiency and competence, the most important thing is that in both cases language is a crucial part of thinking and that its acquisition constitutes an important achievement in the development of the learner at school and in their linguistic communities. Before commencing this discussion, a brief description of how curriculum in Zimbabwe is designed and developed is significant towards understanding why language teachers teach the way they do.

A variety of definitions regarding the term “curriculum” have been presented by different scholars. In this part of the study I present three working definitions.

Goodson (1994, p.111) describes curriculum as, “a multifaceted concept, constructed, negotiated and renegotiated at a variety of levels and in a variety of arenas”.

Wood & Davis, (1978, p.16) suggest that a curriculum be considered as a “totality of courses that constitute a course of study offered by an institution or followed by a student” (this describes content and the goals of formal instruction.

Marsh (1997, p.5) sees curriculum as “an interrelated set of plans and experiences which a student completes under the guidance of the school”. That means: the relationship between

“plans and experiences” is intertwined, where “plans” are attributed to planned curricula in advance and “experiences” refer to unplanned happenings in classrooms.”

The fundamental issue to note from the definitions is that; for the curriculum to benefit its consumers, it should be feasible and desirable. Since my study is about improving student teachers’ ESL practices, a look at the Zimbabwean curriculum context is important.

The school curriculum in Zimbabwe is a centralized entity as it is designed, developed and coordinated by the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) within the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (Chinyani 2013). Teacher representation is through members of various subject panels of teachers, education officers, and representatives from the teachers’ association, such as Zimbabwe Teachers Association (ZIMTA), universities, churches, and other stakeholder groups. Subject teams made up of professionally trained personnel in the fields of research, writing and evaluation drawn from universities, teacher Education colleges, schools and other institutions are involved in materials development. The activity of materials development also encompasses pilot testing of materials within a 50 kilometre radius of Harare (The Curriculum Development Plan 1987; Gatawa, 1990). Elementary school curriculum includes mathematics, English, Agricultural and Environmental science, Physical education, Social studies, Moral and religious education, Music, Art and craft, and the indigenous languages (Ndebele and Shona). Indigenous tribal languages of the Kalanga. An important point to note here is that teachers are chief players in the pedagogic enterprise and as such, implementing a curriculum whose design and development they are not actively involved in sometimes present problems. Notably, if teachers are denied the opportunity to exercise their considerable skills and judgement in making decisions about what is taught and the instructional strategies most suited to their children, deskilling may occur (Apple 1987; Hargreaves 2003).

Over time, teachers’ knowledge atrophies and they become less capable of adapting curriculum for their specific students and more depended on pre-packaged material. This study about improving pre-service teachers’ practices in ESL teaching during TP is concerned about how student teachers implement the ESL curriculum. In this section of the

study, the term curriculum implementation is used synonymously with student teacher classroom practices/classroom pedagogies.

Effective ESL curriculum implementation needs good communication skills in the target language for both teachers and learners. It requires their comprehensive understanding of linguistic, sociolinguistic and socio—cultural aspects of that language to enable them use the right language in the right context for the right purpose and then they can be referred to as communicatively competent. Hymes’s (1972) ‘communicative competence’ refers to the level of language learning that enables language users to convey their messages to others and to understand others’ messages within specific contexts. It further implies the language learners’ ability to relate what is learnt in the classroom to the outside world. Canale and Swain’s (1980) theoretical model of ‘communicative refers to “the relationship and interaction between grammatical competence, or knowledge of the rules of grammar, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of rules of language use while the communicative proficiency as described by Baker (2011) focuses attention on the level of linguistic and contextual challenges in classroom activities. However, this notion of communicativeness becomes problematic when Bachman (1990) brings the term communicative language ability which he says refers to both “knowledge, or competence, and the capacity for implementing or executing that competence in appropriate contextualized communicative language use” It is suggested that competence, both linguistic and pragmatic, is the knowledge developed and acquired through exposure and use (Kasper, 1997).

In other words, without sufficient exposure needed for learners to notice and acquire the language input and chances to use the knowledge, communicative competence is not likely to be promoted. In light of this study, the Zimbabwe ESL context is similar in many ways to other bilingual contexts where proficiency levels among many English Language Learners (ELLs) is low. For that reason, Baker (2006) states that the low level proficiency in the second language may limit the ability of children to cope with the curriculum resulting in low academic achievement. The curriculum is the crucial reference point for teachers, particularly in developing countries including Zimbabwe where it is encoded in the official textbook and teacher guides, which are the sole resource used by teachers.

Teachers' pedagogic approaches, strategies and practices therefore serve to enact the curriculum hence the need to be conversant with it. The curriculum links the macro (officially selected educational goals and content) with the micro (the act of teaching and assessment in the classroom/school) and is best seen as a series of translations, transpositions and transformations (Alexander 2009). The official curriculum is transacted and in the process gets transformed as 'teachers and students interpret, modify and add to the meaning' embodied in the official specification. Accordingly, Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are interrelated and mutually influence one another in the day -to-day classroom interaction (Bernstein 1975; Alexander, 2009). Additionally, the deliberations and learning that students acquire are mediated by student-related factors such as student agency, home language, needs, gender and socio -economic status.

However, an important point to note is that teachers sometimes face difficulty in choosing what concepts to teach or fail to identify effective techniques for developing learners' communicative competence (Huda, 1999). In keeping with the above, Butler (2005) laments that the lack of clear definition about 'what constitutes 'communicative competence' for ESL and about what teaching for achieving this aim creates problems. He argues that implementing communicative activities in classrooms would not necessarily lead to enhance students' learning. In the Zimbabwean ESL context, the functional-notional syllabus associated with the work of a British linguist Wilkins (1972) is still the basis of current official syllabus document used. Wilkins (1976) describes the functional –notional syllabus as a kind of communicative syllabus which organizes units with the foundation of some functions such as asking question, expressing opinions, expressing wishes, making suggestions, complaining, and apologizing rather than including units instructing noun gender or present tense ending. Grunert (1997) & Postorino (1999) augment that it provides a framework for what needs to be studied, along with a rationale for why that content should be selected and ordered. It consists of functions and notions. The term "functions" refers to the communicative act usually involving interaction at least between two people where language use is for purposes of an utterance rather than the particular grammatical form an

utterance takes while notions refer to the conceptual meanings expressed through language (Savignon 1983).

When teaching using the functional notional syllabus, teachers should choose real-world situations as their "notion," and choose corresponding functions to teach to prepare students to communicate in that situation in the lesson. This would generate a special kind of excitement for learning and leads to productive learning. During classroom discourse, the teacher is advised to take a passive role, acts as a facilitator who guides all the instructional processes and is the initiator of interaction (Littlewood 1981). The minimal controls on the classroom discourse by the teacher allows learners to take control of the topics of their own discourse freely (Brown, 2001; Ellis, 1999). Despite the popularity of the notion of communicative competence Sano et al, (1984) laments that many second language teachers find it a far reaching goal because of the several challenges that they encounter in their instructional practices. In my study, the seven participating students are not spared in this situation. While on TP, they are supposed to use the syllabus which, according to the Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) should be implemented according to the principles of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT).

The Communicative Language Teaching is an approach of teaching that superseded the grammatically based methods linked to behaviorist psychology described earlier (Richards and Rodgers 2001). As such, CLT starts from the theory that the primary function of language use is communication (Celce-Murcia 2001). Thus, the goal of language learning is to develop the learners' communicative competence or simply put, communicative ability (Hymes 1971). Additionally, the purpose of language learning is to make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. However, CLT has received severe criticism for paying insufficient attention to the context in which teaching and learning takes place (Swain 1981). Littlewood (2007) points out that it has been associated with a lot of practical challenges which are reported from numerous countries especially where classes are large and resources limited for an example Carless (2004) in Hong Kong; Hiep (2007) in Vietnam; Hu, (2005) in China; Jeon (2009) and Li (1998) in Korea and Orafi & Borg (2009) in Libya. In addition, CLT has been criticized for not paying adequate attention to local cultural and

linguistic needs and culture of learning, as well as for imposing prepackaged, one-size-fits-all methods, materials, assessment tools, and teaching approaches imported from the West (Bax, 2003).

Similar cases were also noted in Zimbabwe for example; Ngwaru (2011) critically explored children's funds of knowledge to establish how teachers utilised them towards pupils' literacy learning. The results highlight a very disturbing trend where pupils' learning and academic performance in ESL are heavily compromised by the use of an unfamiliar language as a language of instruction in which both teachers and children had limited competence. The situation further resulted in the use inappropriate pedagogy where interaction was limited to mere repetition. Nyota and Mareva (2012) ascertained the techniques, methods and approaches that dominated the teachers' practices by documenting how teachers used the Structural Approach focusing on grammatical structures and linguistic competence. In their study, lessons were characterized by a proliferation of repetition, memorization and substitution techniques, non-contextualization of language teaching, non-tolerance of errors, and preoccupation with accuracy. In ESL contexts such as Zimbabwe, it is better to develop a model of communicative competence that takes into account the specific contextual, social and linguistic factors of non-native speakers. Therefore, local experts especially teachers need to be involved in the process of designing the language learning materials for their own contexts.

With reference to my study, the implication of the above mentioned points is that student teachers on TP are expected to translate into practice, a syllabus already associated with numerous challenges that even experienced teachers fail to counteract. Again, the situation is compounded by the fact that some student teachers can be mentored by teachers who are not well conversant with the syllabus and its attendant approach. This is further articulated by Perez-Gimeno and Gamez (1988) who point out that the practical situation in the classroom is one which is full of complexity, uncertainty, unstable and one where conflicting values exist. For these and other reasons, the skills and capacities required on the part of the student teachers to perform efficiently cannot be overemphasized. This is where views such as Schon's and Dewey's ideas of reflective practice and Kumaravadivelu's three principles

described above can work because mechanical or indeed pre-established as in the paradigm of technical rationality will not work. This discussion has therefore helped to show the numerous challenges that both the syllabus and the recommended approaches present in the pedagogical process. A close analysis of the above studies can serve as a testimony to the fact that the functional notional syllabus is not effectively implemented partly due to it being incomprehensible to some teachers and mainly owing to the several other challenges that it presents. Having discussed this section on ESL practices, I now move on to teacher education in Zimbabwe.

2.7 Challenges of using a foreign language as medium of instruction

Research in ESL instruction and its use as a language of education has been demonstrated to be linked to educational exclusion and low educational outcomes among ESL speakers. Research also highlights that as a subject, English is a complex embedded discipline and a language that many non-native speakers are not fully conversant with. To that end, the use of English, a language not spoken by students more often, presents cognitive and pedagogical challenges as it restricts the interactive and communicative learning process necessary for meaningful learning. The language relegates the learner to the periphery. Similar sentiments are echoed by Scheerens (2000) and Vespoor (2003), who articulate that the policy of using English appears to have a major impact on the discursive patterns found in many of the classroom. Probyn's (2001) studies of practices of teachers teaching through the medium of English in township schools South Africa, suggested that teachers and learners experienced a lot of stress in teaching and learning through a language in which they were not able to communicate freely. This had a negative impact on student learning including lack of self-confidence, dissatisfaction and alienation. In South Africa alone, it was estimated that some three quarters of ESL learners failed school (Heugh 2000). Ong et al (2004) adds that many aspects of teaching practice by primary student teachers highlighted a very disturbing trend where almost fifty five percent of pre-service teachers found that their teaching did not give them the opportunity to engage in theory and practice because they were overwhelmed by the classroom realities.

Rubagumya (1990; 1993), discussed the benefits of mother tongue literacy in Tanzanian classrooms where when English was used, students remained silent and grave and teacher talk dominated the lesson. McDonough (1981) lamented that lessons given by ESL trainee teachers revealed differences between what eventually happened, what was planned and what the teacher recalled from the lesson. This study interrogates student teacher practices, lecturers and mentors' views about student teachers' practices to establish and document the consistence or inconsistencies that lead to the theory- practice gaps to arrive at evidenced insights on challenges or opportunities that can inform pedagogical strategies going forward.

2.8 The knowledge domain of teaching

Teaching is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires a complex interplay of multiple teacher knowledges. Carter & Dole (1987) claim that much of what experienced teachers know “is event structured”- knowledge organized around the activities and events they have experienced in the classroom. The assumption in their argument is that, no one type of prescribed knowledge can be said to be the best in instructional practices. Instead, a massive interplay of various teacher knowledge and other related issues contribute towards effective teaching. In my study, it can be argued that student teachers' ESL practices during the practicum are influenced by the various knowledges they have acquired in their ESL preparation curriculum and from their lived experiences. At the beginning of this chapter, the term knowledge base was used as an umbrella term to refer to the knowledge base that teachers require. In this part of literature review, I proceed by stating that the ESL knowledge base refers to a repertoire of knowledge, skills and dispositions that teachers require to conduct classroom practices effectively (Farell 2004; Borg 2003). Regarding these, Shulman (1987) probes seven categories (content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge & curriculum knowledge learners, trends contexts values) of teacher knowledge that are essential for effective classroom practice while Goodwin (1997) mentions five categories, four of which are already included in Shulman's list and Sociological context as the fifth one. I propose to use this part of the literature review to explore four categories- content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, personal knowledge contextual knowledge as they relate to student teachers practices while the rest of the domains provided a broader view of the situation.

2.8.1 Content knowledge

Student teachers need a working knowledge and understanding of language as a system, and the role of the components of language and speech, specifically; sounds, grammar, meaning, coherence, communicative strategies, and social conventions (Samson & Collins (2012). The professional knowledge base of teachers is known as *content knowledge*. Content knowledge refers to what teachers need to know about what they teach (including what they know about language teaching itself), and constitutes knowledge that would not be shared with teachers of other subject areas. With this knowledge student teachers should be able to draw explicit attention to the type of language and its use in classroom settings, which is essential to first and second language learning. How language variation and dialectical differences relate to learning is also necessary. English language teaching requires a specialized knowledge base, obtained through both academic study and practical experience.

2.8.2 Pedagogical content knowledge

Pedagogical content knowledge is the ‘how’ of teaching generally acquired through education coursework and experience in schools (Ball 2000). It is a type of knowledge that is unique to teachers, and is based on the manner in which teachers relate their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching) to their subject matter knowledge (what they know about what they teach). It is the integration or the synthesis of teachers' pedagogical knowledge and their subject matter knowledge that comprise pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman (1986). It was later revised and blended with content to become Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) - which is a form of practical knowledge used by teachers to guide their actions in highly contextualized school settings Shulman (1987). It entails knowledge of specific strategies, methods and rules of classroom management that can be used to address student learning needs in particular classroom circumstances. In my study, pedagogical content knowledge is drawn from the study of language teaching and language learning itself, and can be applied in different ways to the resolution of practical issues in language teaching. It could include coursework in areas such as curriculum planning, assessment, reflective teaching, classroom management, teaching children, teaching the four skills and so on. A sound grounding in relevant (PCK) therefore prepares teachers who understand learners’ needs, they are able to diagnose learners’ problems, can select and

design suitable learning tasks and make use of authentic instructional materials. This is reminiscent of Freire's (1995; 2006) critical pedagogy- a teaching approach that attempts to help students to question and challenge domination and the beliefs and practices that dominate. Freire endorses students' ability to think critically about their education. It entails knowledge of specific strategies, and rules of classroom management that can be used to address student learning needs in particular classroom circumstances.

2.8.3 Personal knowledge

Student teachers who enroll for teacher preparation have been through a laboratory in teaching. As such, they have acquired vast personal experiences of what it means to be a teacher. A working definition of the term personal experience will help to understand what it constitutes. I define *personal experiences* as all the positive and negative involvements that an individual has had in their life time. The experiences that people acquire in their life help to shape their personality and to influence their decisions. Similarly, student teachers' personal experiences are important in how they learn to teach. This is because teaching behaviour is often shaped by these positive and negative images that constitute personal knowledge of teaching rather than a pre-service program (Richardson 1996). The learning to teach is what Progoff (1975) *calls a position point*. Hence, the teacher preparation becomes a transition between a student teacher's what he/she was in the past and what he/she will be in the future. The student teacher's experience and autobiographies become the foundation upon which teaching practice is built (Goodwin 1997). Implicit in this scenario is that teacher preparation programmes including those at GZU, facilitate a conscious intersection of prospective students' personal experiences and the formal teacher education curriculum, student teachers should then draw on personal experience, prior knowledge, the teacher preparation and practicum and reconstruct these in ways that make the pre-service teacher develop meaning. Without meaningful reconstruction, no transformation or change of behaviour will occur because the new knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions presented in the teacher education have not been integrated into the student's action.

2.8.4 Contextual knowledge

ESL student teachers at GZU as other students elsewhere, go on TP in varied school settings where they work with pupils of different personalities and dispositions. Such a diverse situation, according to Goodwin (1997) makes classrooms complex and dynamic and that children who inhabit them defy categorization despite attempts to do so. What that means is, if teachers are not careful, their purpose for teaching will be thwarted. To curtail that problem, Richardson (1996) suggests that student teachers should be provided with the skills of thinking about teaching and pupils, problem solving issues, problem-posing and information gathering and strategies that will keep their children busy thus restraining them from engaging in undesirable behaviour.

Schoonmaker (2002) says that contextual knowledge begins with immediate environments in which pupils are located-the classrooms, the school premises, their families and the outside community. As such, information from their localities can be used as the content of what they learn. This may include knowledge about all issues that affect the local community which may also reflect global issues such as politics, histories, poverty and diseases. However, the question that remains unanswered is how student teachers in preparation come to acquire the depth of contextual issues. In our ESL programmes at GZU, we encourage student teachers to keep abreast of world events by engaging in wide reading of current texts, listening to news broadcast on a variety of channels, to make effective use of the internet to get information and to read worthwhile newspapers.

2.9 Participants as teachers in schools and communities

The social nature of individuals learning and the wider context of learning in a community has to be emphasized strongly if we want to know how learning may be supported. The current view of schools as learning organisations (Dalin & Rolff 1993) encourages teachers' collaboration and the development of a communicative culture within the single school. Situated cognition and metacognitive approaches to classroom activities are basic prerequisites to teachers working as professionals. The mentor-mentee-relationship could become a model of cooperative teaching-learning partnership in the community of practice, involving educational research and teacher education as well in a communicative network.

A description of the practicing schools situations is needed in order to understand how and why of the student teachers' classroom practices.

The two schools are former group "A" schools located in the Gweru urban district of the Midlands province. Both schools work closely with the School Development Association (SDA) on matters of governance on a regular basis. Members which form the SDA vary according to school but generally it consists of important stakeholders who have a keen interest in the development of the school in particular and the province in general. Such people usually include some parents with children at that school, local business personnel, medical doctors and lawyers. The SDA runs on a system of cooperative administration with school administrators-the head, the deputy head and the senior teacher as part of the management team and all other members' allocated responsibility. Apart from the SDA, the schools work very closely with the community particularly parents with children at those schools and other agencies or organisations such as ZIMTA. In this partnership teachers are expected to collaborate. The rationale behind the mutual cooperation and collaboration is to create a skilled professional workforce that is able to enlist support for student learning in the home and at school, and to improve the working environment of teachers. Participating students in this research become part and parcel of the school system in which they teach.

As such, they need quality support of their fellow colleagues at school and the outside community. The rationale for providing quality support during pre-service TP experiences is to develop further the skills that students acquired in the first two years of their preparation and to help close the gaps that often result in ineffective pedagogy. These areas need a reconsidering to provide the basis for renewing or reforming components of the ESL teacher education program. This is vital for the professional development of pre-service teachers training policies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

The study focuses on the persistent discrepancies between theory and practice during TP. It begins on the premise that certain processes during teacher preparation are so important and necessary that they need continuous review to minimise some of the problems that bedevil student teachers' classroom practices during the period.

2.10 Teacher education in Zimbabwe

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2005) describes teacher education as “a process that includes four elements; improving the general educational background of prospective teachers, increasing their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, pedagogy and understanding of children’s learning and developing the practical skills”. Tomlinson (2003) feels that teacher education aims to develop a multidimensional awareness and ability to apply this to the context of teaching. A close look at the definitions above unfolds knowledge pedagogy and ability as the three significant roles played by teacher education institutions in preparing future teachers.

Lucas (1968) confirms that Teacher education is the main pillar of any established system of education and the custodian of the society’s culture. The general assumption is that high teacher expertise is needed to produce quality teachers who can handle classroom pedagogy efficiently at the same time contributing meaningfully in the outside world. Literature about teacher education indicates that teacher competences, skills values and dispositions is a result of the teacher knowledge base which can be acquired during both phases of teacher education -an in campus phase and teaching practicum (Darling-Hammond 2006b ; Zeichner 2006; Freeman 2001). As I have said earlier elsewhere in this chapter, my study is framed within the language teacher education at GZU - one of the Teacher Education institutions in the city of Masvingo, in Zimbabwe responsible for the preparation and professional development of both pre-service and in-service secondary and primary teachers.

As I have pointed out earlier in the background section of my study, the Zimbabwean context of teacher education, at GZU, follows a four year Bachelor of Education pre-service secondary programme that consists of two main phases: the *In college* and the *Teaching Practicum*, which all pre-service student teachers go through and are expected to fulfil the requirements of their programme. While on training, student teachers enrolled for the B.Ed. programme are required to take thirty-eight modules in accordance with the university regulations. Twenty six of the modules are completed in the first two years while the third year is the practicum component which constitutes two modules. The last ten modules including a research project in one area of specialisation are taken in the fourth and final year

of their teacher preparation program. Student teachers take the modules in different subject areas including taking two school subjects of their choice which constitute their specialisation modules. These modules form part of their coursework which equip them with the skills and competences necessary to handle classroom pedagogy during the TP period (Smith & Lev-Ari 2005). The theory guiding all GZU programmes is well articulated in the Mission statement represented by the terms *Knowledge Culture and Development*. The key issue here is therefore the development of teacher competence which Weinert (2001) describe as the latent dispositions that enable teachers to master their job-related tasks.

It is important to note that GZU does not have a stand-alone department of language teacher education but has its pre-service ESL programme under the stewardship of the Department of Teacher development responsible for the education and development of all pre-service teachers both primary and secondary. So, like all other student teachers specialising in various subject areas, student teachers of ESL are equally required to complete a total of twelve specialisation modules in English language and in literatures in English of different regions of the world. The first six modules are completed in the first two years before students go on TP and amongst these coursework modules is the pedagogics module in *ESL* which provides them with a working theoretical knowledge that they need during teaching practicum where they will get the experience of working with school pupils who are English Language Learners (ELLs). This module equips them with what Baumert and Kunter (2006) call the facets of teacher competence in ESL practices which I have described in sections 2.8.1-2.8.4 above. Competence in those facets equip prospective teachers with knowledge of scheming, lesson planning and evaluation, assessing pupils' learning, and reflecting upon their own teaching. Pedagogics modules further empowers student teachers with pedagogic content knowledge and skills such as instructional methods, teaching strategies and classroom management.

With knowledge of other theoretical pedagogical knowledge and skills from the university, student teachers of English on TP are expected be able to demonstrate understanding of; language as a system, a high level of competence in helping ELLs to acquire, and use English in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for social and academic purposes.

On the other hand, content specific modules provide student teachers with substantial subject matter knowledge to cope with the school curriculum as well as to have the confidence to deal with classroom instruction. When students come back for their final year, they are expected to carry out a research project in their area of specialisation, based on the challenges/opportunities encountered or observed during TP. This is equivalent to two modules. The remaining four modules are done alongside the project. It is, therefore, argued that the academic program of the teacher education should be coupled with an important and integral component called school -based experiences that is the Practicum which provides students with supervised experiences and help the to understand the full scope of teachers' role. I now move on to TP.

2.11 Teaching Practice within teacher education

The TP discourse has become so valued that it occupies a large area in the educational literature (Schulz 2005). This is largely because TP has come to be recognized as one of the most important aspects of the teacher education programmes (Beck & Kosnik 2002; Farrell 2003; Marais & Meyer 2004). While the term TP appears to be the most commonly used, different scholars have attached different names to refer to it hence there are variations such as; Teaching Practicum (Derrick and Dicks 2005; Liston etal 2006); Induction, (Collinson etal 2009); Internship (Darling Hammond 2006; Collinson etal 2009) and school based experiences (Taneja 2000). The goals of TP also vary across countries depending on the kind of teacher education pursued. The following are some of the goals put forward by different writers.

- Making prospective teachers acquire tools for their ongoing development (Korthagen & Vasalos; Smith, 2007).
- Allowing pre-service teachers to meet challenges to learn something new, and to go beyond the level of current competence (Vygotsky 1986).
- Supporting novice teachers with the skills to unlearn so that they can learn (Loughran 2006).

- Providing student teachers with opportunities to put theories into practice and to develop a deeper understanding of the educational principles and their implication for learning (Akbar 2002).
- Improve student teacher's subject matter and curricular knowledge (Shulman 1986; 1987).
- Empowering student teachers with the ability to guard against blindly following routine, but to think intelligently and reflectively (Dewey 1933).
- Equipping student teachers with the skills of reflecting in action, on action and for action (Schon 1983; 1987).

In view of the objectives of TP that I have present above, I am inclined to believe that my study about “Improving Pre-service teacher development practices in ESL fit well into this scenario where there is no one specific objective that is more important than other objectives. In that case, GZU embraces all the above stated objectives since the goal in teacher preparation is to produce a holistic, versatile, and competent professional teacher capable of operating in any pedagogic environment both locally and globally.

Having discussed the various goals of TP by several authors, it is again important for me to mention that such complex objectives can only be achieved if TP is equally viewed and attended to from a broader perspective. Below is a list of different authors' several views about the importance of TP:

- TP is a vital component of a teacher training program that has an important impact on their future careers (Myles, Cheng, & Wang, 2006; Rozelle & Wilson, 2012; Fazio & Volante, 2011).
- It is a professional development period and a critical time for student teachers to hone their skills, competences and dispositions to improve their teaching (Kombo and Kira 2013).
- It is the stage where student teachers competencies become an important component of becoming a teacher, grants student teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment (Ngidi and Sibaya 2013).

- A period that affords student teachers a unique opportunity to gain practical classroom-teaching experiences of their major subjects under the supervision of experienced teachers at the same time getting professional feedback from lecturers. (Clarke & Collins 2007; Farrell 2008).
- To lectures, is important as it provides feedback to the teacher education institution regarding the progress of students thus enabling the institution to identify aspects of their programme to improve (Derrick and Dicks, 2005).
- It is very a beneficiary experience for student teachers to show the integration of the knowledge about teaching and it encourages them to think critically, constantly redefine the context and the process of the learning experience (Staynoff 1999).
- It is expected to heighten student teachers' individual awareness of community issues, to motivate them to create opportunities, embrace new ideas and give direction to positive change (Chapman 1999).
- While on TP, student teachers get the opportunity to try the art of teaching before actually getting into the real world of the teaching profession (Kasanda 1995 in Kiggundu and Nayimuli, (2009).

Despite the variations in what different authors say, the assumption is that all embrace the whole range of learning experiences that student teachers acquire during school based experiences (Ashraf 1999). Stones and Morris (1977) are of the view that the terms described have some connotations- the practising of teaching skills, the acquisition of the role of the teacher and the practical aspect of the course as distinct from the theoretical studies. While it is difficult to provide a universally acceptable synthesis statement of purpose, there is considerable agreement that the major purpose of TP is to link theory with practice. This is done by providing regular and supervised opportunities for student teachers to apply and test knowledge skills and attitude developed largely in campus-based studies to real world of school and school community Price (1987). In this study, the terms Teaching Practice/Teaching Practicum (TP) are used synonymously as umbrella terms for other variations.

Some of the most commonly recommended practices identified during TP include: strong supervision by well-trained teachers and university supervisors, solid grasp of subject matter as well as sound understanding of pedagogy. Hoban (2005) reinforces the idea above by stating that, what teachers do in a classroom is influenced by the interaction of many elements such as the curriculum, the context, and how students respond to instruction at one particular time. In my opinion, what Hoban expresses is that student teachers should be aware of the multidimensional nature of the classroom and should be equally prepared to deal with any situation. Reports from student teachers on TP often cite the content of ESL as something much more complex than the process of presenting it. As such, student teachers should be able to select authentic content that is relevant and applicable to the learners' lives. Apart from these inherent demands of the content itself, there are the diverse learning needs of individual students, which vary across many dimensions and student teachers' practices are expected to be responsive to learner needs. Having discussed this section, I now move on to discuss the next section.

2.12 Mentors and Mentoring

I will commence this conversation by defining the metaphors *mentors* and *mentoring* to get a clear understanding of what they entail.

Smith (2007) describes mentoring as involving guidance and suggestion, as well as the development of autonomous skills, judgments, personal and professional mastership, expertise, trust and the development of self-confidence over time (O'Brien & Hamburg, 2014).

Padua (2003) sees mentor teachers as experienced, having deep understanding of a specific content area, and as knowledgeable people who know how to build capacity in others. He points out that primary goals of a mentor teacher are as follows:

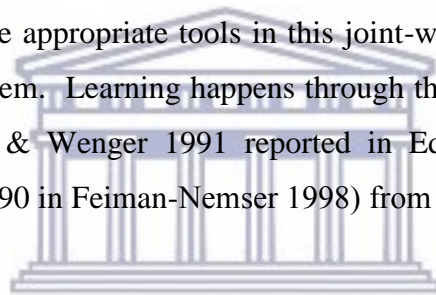
- to assist classroom teachers in refining existing instructional strategies;
- to introduce new strategies and concepts
- to engage teachers in conversations about their teaching; and
- To provide overall support.

Bey and Holmes, (1992) point out that the commonly agree that the process includes the various developmental phases of the mentoring relationship, the dynamics of the mentoring relationship itself, and the application of cognitive developmental theory to the mentoring process.

The presentations above shows that the mentoring process is dialectical in nature and proceeds from a social constructivist perspective where two people (student teacher and mentor) interact to create meaning in a learning process. The underlying assumption in attaching student to mentors is to allow novice practitioners to get support, guidance, induction and suggestions from the more experienced person in order to bring them to the desired level of classroom pedagogy. This appears to couch well with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in which the less experienced need the support of the expert to bridge the knowledge gap between the two. During TP, mentors are expected to provide quality support to develop further the skills that students acquired in the first two years of their preparation and to help close the gaps that often result in ineffective pedagogy. Different orientations to teaching have been seen as significant factors that affect the way in which cooperating teachers view the role of the mentor.

The current views of schools as learning organisations encourage teachers' collaboration and the development of a communicative culture within the single school (Dalin & Rolff 1993). Situated cognition and metacognitive approaches to classroom activities are basic prerequisites to teachers working as professionals. The mentor-mentee-relationship could become a model of cooperative. Mentors should be educative, in other words they as much as possible they are expected to refrain from traditional modes of training, where the trainees are simply required to adopt recommended techniques and imitate a master teacher. Educative mentors interact with students to create opportunities for an inquiring stance that serves long term goals of good teaching. They help students confront problems and learn from them, rather than simply ease them into the system. Educative mentors interact with students to create opportunities for an inquiring stance that serve long term goals of good teaching.

In line with the ideas of Dewey (1933), Feiman-Nemser (1995), Zeichner (1995) and Tickle (2000), I can argue that, educative mentoring includes experiences that promote learning in the future, rather than merely solving the immediate problems in the present. However, literature about mentoring indicate that teachers' professional orientation, classroom behaviors and the way they mentor student teachers are strongly influenced by the way they were taught in the past (Murdoch 1997). This may conflict with the kind of teacher development proposed at GZU today which emphasizes the use of reflective practice. For this reason, the current shift from traditional instruction to student centered learning (van Veen, Slegers, Bergen & Klaassen, 2001; Wang, 2000) is called for. Schon (1983; 1987)'s theory about teacher as "reflective practitioner" can formally be established in the mentoring relationship. The mentor and the mentee practice reflection on action when they share experience from a joint work-project. Co-planning, co-teaching, observation, joint inquiry and critical conversation are the appropriate tools in this joint-work relationship, bringing about benefits for the two of them. Learning happens through the active participation in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991 reported in Edwards 1998). Effective mentoring is reported (Little 1990 in Feiman-Nemser 1998) from "joint work of the mentor and the mentee.



In the context of my study, when student teachers get to their practicing schools, they are attached to mentors who will assist them to get acquainted with the classroom and school situation. In the process of their teaching, student teachers and mentors each has a role to play and the roles are usually spelt out in the Faculty TP hand book. The University values the input of all parties involved in the supervision process since the quality of this involvement will determine, to a large degree, the nature, competence and professionalism generated in the University's pre service teachers, and future teachers in the education workforce. For this reason, the GZU holds the placement school, supervising teacher, and student teacher coordinator in high regard and trust to ensure the integrity of the program and the monitoring of pre-service teacher quality.

However, student teachers fail to measure up to the required standard resulting in them getting demotivated or frustrated. The major flaws exist in student teachers' failure to

translate theory into practice hence the gaps. Given the critical importance of ESL practical teacher education, there has been a concern among lecturers of English at GZU about how ESL student teachers experience their teaching practice period. This situation is an issue of serious concern among teacher educators and other stakeholders who continuously seek innovative ways of creating solid structures and processes in ESL programmes that can promote quality among student teachers. These areas need constant reviewing as well as rethinking in order to be able to provide the basis for renewing or reforming components of the ESL teacher education program. This is vital for the professional development of pre-service teachers training policies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

As I have mentioned earlier in the background section of my study, and seeing it worth to say again in this part of my discussion, my study about improving pre-service secondary teacher practices in ESL at GZU examines student teachers personal views about their teaching, the university supervisors' and mentors' critiques to establish those critical factors that otherwise exist and result in the theory-practice dilemma during TP. Insights from TP such as understanding the lived through experiences of ESL student teachers, the observed evidence/critiques of qualified experienced lecturers and mentors may provide the valuable understanding needed to offer a framework for the improvement of teacher preparation at Great Zimbabwe University. Results can help to inform both educational administrators and ESL teacher educators at GZU on their potential in the improvement of the quantity and quality of teachers hence contributing valuably to bridge the theory practice gap that characterise initial Teacher preparation and development. In the next section, I discuss supervision of student teachers by lectures.

2.13 Lecturer supervision

When student teachers go on TP, lecturers are expected to follow them up in order to supervise and evaluate their progress in conjunction with mentoring teachers. Supervision of student teachers leads to assessment of their performance and aims at providing feedback to help the student teachers gain insight into their performance so that it is valuable to their professional growth (Tillema, 2009). Supervision by lecturers is intended to; provide evidence of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom, identify good practice and

weaknesses that need to be addressed and to establish all problematic and crucial issues that arise during TP as well as to comment on and provide a general assessment of students' progress. Lesson observation and supervision carried out to determine the student teacher's performance is usually based on the lesson quality wherein high lesson quality is one that is characterized by a number of positive aspects including the teacher's ability to match the learning goals and instructional activities to the developmental levels of the learners and building on levels of understanding. It is one where a teacher provides multiple opportunities, engage learners with the content and increasing the grasp of targeted concepts. In high quality lessons, learners are provided with the opportunities to draw connections and related phenomenon. On the contrary, a low quality lesson is one that is devoid of some of the said characteristics. Both mentors and university supervisors expect student teachers to perform highly by preparing as well as delivering high quality lessons.

2.14 Colonial legacy of the Zimbabwean Education system (1923-2016)

At this stage, I find it necessary to discuss the colonial legacy of the Zimbabwean education system. This is significant because my study is carried out within that context where systems and structures of education have been affected by social, political and economic considerations of the colonial and post-colonial regimes.

Zimbabwe was formerly a British colony known as Southern Rhodesia or Rhodesia which assumed colonial status in 1923. The origins of the formal education system in Rhodesia can therefore be traced to the period of colonization when a new formal education system emerged to supplement and gradually replace the traditional non-formal education (Hungwe 1994). During the British occupation of Rhodesia, the education system was based on European colonial policies largely shaped and constrained by the values and assumptions of a white racial elite determined to maintain a socio-economic and political dominance over other ethnic groups in the country. For that reason, the current Education system in Zimbabwe should always be understood within the context of its colonial history. Like other former British colonies in the Sub-Saharan region and elsewhere, education provision in Zimbabwe was established upon ethnic, racial, institutionalised and tribal discrimination characterised by glaring inequalities (Zindi 1996; Ministry of Education Sport and Culture-

Zimbabwe 2005). The four main racial groups were Europeans, Africans, Asians and coloureds. In 1927, two separate education systems-the Department of European Education for whites and the Department for African Education for blacks were inaugurated.

The two systems were meant to serve different purposes and, for black Africans, education was meant to serve the needs of the minority whites who were defined in Zimbabwe as Europeans, Asians and Coloureds (Kurasha & Chabaya 2013). This situation resulted in the lack of basic literacy for many black people (Riddell 1980). It was then followed by the compulsory Education Act of 1930 that made education free in all white primary schools (Rep. Dir. Educ., S. R. G. 1931). This brought the educational policy in line with the general government policy which sought to maintain segregation and limit African educational development. In addition, no Africans were allowed to enroll in white only schools. Some private schools would however enroll one or two blacks each year if they showed outstanding academic performance and had influential and wealthy parents or if they belonged to the same religious denomination (Zindi 1996). Funding black education was limited as compared to that availed to European education which was ten times more than that spent on Africans who constituted 99% of the school population (Dorsey et al 1991).

At Independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual education system characterised by the glaring inequities (Kurasha & Chabaya 2013; Zindi 1996) and to redress these inequitable and discriminatory practices of successive colonial governments, the post-independence Republic of Zimbabwe government adopted the policy of education as a basic human right, and committed itself to universal and equal educational opportunity for all. However, a number of inequalities are still pronounced for instance, pupils in rural areas still do not have access to good quality education, most of the children have to walk long distances of fifteen to twenty kilometers each morning in order to attend the nearest school. Walking long distances has an impact on rural pupils' performance (Dorsey, 1991).

The first step was the amalgamation of separate education system through the progressive Bill of human Rights. It was within this broad policy framework that the Government, buttressed by the progressive Bill of Rights in the Independence Constitution (1979),

reorganised, democratised and expanded its education system. The Bill of Rights enshrined fundamental human rights and freedoms designed to guarantee equality of opportunity for all regardless of race, colour, gender, creed, place of origin, or any other considerations. This situation enabled the government to expand the education system by building schools in marginalized areas and disadvantaged urban centres, accelerating the training of teachers, providing teaching and learning materials to schools.

Increase in enrolments gave rise to the need for buildings. Kanyongo (2005) points out that this was managed by introducing double shifts per day, but with two different sets of teachers, ensuring a more efficient use of existing classrooms without disturbing the existing teacher-pupil ratio. The need and supply of teachers was met by rapidly increasing the number of untrained teachers at primary level. This was achieved by introducing the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC), a low-cost teacher-training scheme, whereby, only two terms of the four-year course were spent in college and the remainder in teaching in schools (Kanyongo 2005). The result of this educational transformation was that over the first twenty years of independence (1980- 2000), Zimbabwe witnessed incredible strides in school expansion, teacher education and resource improvement. However, despite the commendable growth in education, social, economic and political factors have affected/eroded the educational gains that were achieved. First, there is still a huge discrepancy between the private schools and the government funded schools (former group A schools for whites and former group B schools for blacks).

The huge divide along racial lines which remained as a legacy from the colonial period simply shifted to create an even wider gulf between social classes and between urban and rural children. Those families who moved into former white residential areas now send their children to former white schools which retained all the facilities for learning and for sports which they had accumulated earlier. Or they attended the mission schools which had taken the cream of black children before Independence. They did not have all the facilities of a schools, but they had well qualified teachers and traditions of high standards of achievement. The widest gap fell between urban and rural schools and is still pronounced as can be seen from the long distances that children need to walk from home to school. Add to these

disadvantages the inability of many children, not necessarily rural, but in all communities, to cope with an academic curriculum, and the difficulty of achieving any kind of equal opportunity becomes clear. Children in different circumstances will not become equal by being offered the same opportunities; they need to be offered opportunities appropriate to their situation and their capacities. As the Permanent Secretary reported at the end of 1991, “Most of the old and well established schools continued to maintain satisfactory standards of work while the majority of the newly established schools lagged far behind.

Secondly, there was an economic meltdown between the years 2000-2010 following the land redistribution programme initiated by the ruling party (Zanu PF) in 2000 and the highly contested presidential election of 2008. The political stalemate created political, economic and social insecurity that negatively affected the majority of Zimbabweans and most employment sectors particularly the education sector. The resultant effect was a massive exodus of teachers, lecturers and other professionals to other countries particularly to English speaking countries. Following a protracted political and economic crisis that led to a massive migration of Zimbabweans for external greener pastures, 2008 saw the three main political parties; Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) Patriotic Front, (PF) Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai (MDC-T) and Movement for Democratic Change (MDC led by Professor Welshman Ncube) entered into a marriage that was meant to ease the hostilities before rescuing the deteriorating situation. The relationship was expected to last for not more than 24 months during which period, a new constitution would have been written before another election was held. This culminated into the Global Political Agreement (GPA) of 2008 which bore the Government of National Unity in 2009 (Dodo etal 2012). The Zimbabwean GNU has to some extent helped in averting serious political and economic crises that were imminent given the hostilities that existed between the main political parties; ZANU PF and MDC-T. The fact that the two formations were working ‘together’ meant that they were now sharing some responsibility in most of the matters to do with national governance. In the education sector, the advent of the Unity government helped to instill the confidence of many professionals such as teachers, lectures and professors. Many of those returned home and managed to get absorbed in schools, colleges and universities.

2.15 Implications of language and education on Teacher Preparation

The challenges that student teachers in bilingual and multilingual contexts face in teaching English are a result of many factors including the mismatch between; what teachers learnt in their initial teacher education programmes, their educational and academic backgrounds and the knowledge they need to confront the reality of classroom practice (Thomas 2006; Pomerantz and Pierce 2004) and colonial legacy of the country. In order to solve some of these persistent problems, teacher preparation institutions should play a major role in educating and preparing quality teachers who are able to handle the diverse needs of learners. One way of doing that is by creating an effective link between pre-service teachers' university acquired theoretical knowledge and the knowledge needed to operate in the classroom, in the school situation and in the outside world. In light of that, teachers should be capable of successfully responding to the demands of the school curriculum in general and the ESL curriculum in particular.

Accordingly, teacher education institutions have been continually searching for the best possible ways of preparing teachers in the future. In that pursuit, the emerging board of research on L2 teacher cognition has begun to construct a very different characterization of how teachers learn to do their work (Borg 2003; Freeman 1996; 2002). Effort should be made to plan practicum experiences that align with the curriculum and learning outcomes of the teacher education program and at the same time striving to be epistemologically consistent with the current conceptualization of L2 teacher cognitive reflective practice and teachers' sense of plausibility. Additionally, pre-service teachers should be educated to be users and creators of knowledge and should try to make sense of the learnt theories in their professional lives and settings where they work (Freeman & Johnson 1998a; 2004). The concept of teaching professional experiences recognizes pre-service teachers as key elements in their own professional growth, role of model, knowledge constructors and distributors, and agents of change in students learning behaviors (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1994). Clearly, any sound pedagogy for teaching ESL must be informed by a theory of language teaching and learning that is sufficiently complex to account for this diversity since ELLs have different linguistic and academic needs from first language speakers of English (L1). They therefore need special assistance to bring them to a better

level of proficiency that enable them to function effectively in class, in their locality and in the world of work.

In light of learners' needs, student teachers need to be equally proficient in order to handle the pedagogic needs of learners. Implicit in this situation is that the quality of pedagogical inputs in teacher education programmes provided to student teachers determines their professional and pedagogical competence to deliver the content.

These expectations suggest that teachers and pre-service teachers on TP operate in a larger education context and its dynamics as well as the concerns impinging upon their functioning. That is to say, these teachers have to be responsive and sensitive to the social contexts of education, the various disparities in the background of learners as well as in the macro national and global contexts, national concerns for achieving the goals of equity, parity, and social justice as also excellence. Teacher educators too should be well versed with current theoretical views such as reflect practice, teacher cognition and the post method condition. Knowledge of such theories might help to solve the situation of theory practice gap. Pre-service teachers should be made to understand that while on TP, they operate within social, cultural and political contexts view learning to teach and as such, they should search for meaning out of personal experience and should understand the way it occurs.

Supervision of student teachers must be based on practical theories that are sensitive to the context of the instructional process. The university should ensure that for all teacher educators, their other role is to provide pre-service teachers with adequate tools for classroom observation and pedagogic exploration and transforming learner possibilities in and out of the classroom (Kumaravadivelu 2012). These student teachers therefore need a strong knowledge base of English to assist learners effectively. That knowledge base should free itself from relying on pre-package theories but on something feasible. In line with this, Sridhar and Sridhar (1994) contend that second language acquisition (SLA) is not relevant to an investigation of second language speakers of English because it often rests on assumptions that were developed and tested with reference to the learning of English outside of the inner circle countries (Kachru 1992). For many learners in the outer and expanding

circle, the nature of English language input they receive is restricted in amount and quality. Often the learner is not exposed to a full range of styles, structures and speech acts that supposedly are necessary to acquire native like proficiency (Sridhar & Sridhar 1994).

In this case, culture plays a significant role in language pedagogy because cultural knowledge often provides the basis of the content and topics that are used in language materials and classroom discussion. Cultural content in English is irrelevant because it can result in bilingual teachers feeling insecure as they lack specific knowledge about the target cultures (Mackay 2002). Ultimately, English belongs to its users and as such, it should be the users, cultural content and their sense of the appropriate use of English that should inform language pedagogy. Kubota (1999) argues that the labels that symbolize a cultural dichotomy serve to create and perpetuate rather than reflect cultural differences. She maintains that this construction of otherness is part of the colonial discourse in which the colonizers construct an artificial view of the other as being what the colonizer is not, as having qualities such as backwardness, opacity and lack of reason constituting a depersonalized collectivity. In view of the above, teacher education including the one at GZU today needs to consider how English is embedded in the local content and to recognize the use of English as a global language where it is used for a wide range of cross-cultural communicative purposes. To that note, Tomlinson (2003) argues for a teacher development approach within a teacher education program in which he says the aim of such programmes should be to develop a multi-dimensional awareness and the ability to apply this awareness to the actual context of teaching. Canagarajah (2003) states that both the content and activities of L2 education must take into account the social economic and cultural history located in the context where teachers teach. On the other hand, Kumaravadivelu (2012a) laments against tinkering with the existing system of language teacher Education which he says will not suffice to meet the challenges posed by accelerating economic, cultural and educational globalization.

In order to be functional, student teachers need to be proficient in negotiating a repertoire of world Englishes. In light of this, the study further wishes to examine the quality of professional support and supervision that students get from their lecturers and mentors so challenges can be solved. Insights about pre-service pedagogical practices in ESL during TP

are critical to support and to construct shared standards of practice in the teaching profession. They also help to illuminate the consistencies or inconsistencies between student teachers' presumed pedagogical content knowledge acquired at university and the real pedagogical practices as reflected in lecturers and mentors' critiques. Results can detail the areas where teacher proficiency in the language of instruction, pedagogical content and curriculum knowledge lead to effective learning and those areas requiring a re-look in the interest of improved educational outcomes.

2.16 Conclusion

As I stated earlier, my proposed research probes into the teacher education components by examining the supervisory models employed by mentors and university lecturers. It further examines the quality of induction and support students get, the way students utilise their various teacher knowledge, their linguistic repertoire to present the content to their learners and, to create ways that can offer a new orientation to the teaching of English during TP. I believe that the examination into teacher preparation and development processes illuminates in multiple ways the expansive/fluid practices that shape teachers' knowing, thinking, and doing that provides a window into how alternative mediation can be actualized and achieved. The goal of these field experiences is to provide a valuable and productive experience in which there are many opportunities to implement the ethos and ideas that have been acquired from the professional education courses. Student teaching during internship is the cornerstone of the teacher preparation program; it is a time both to highlight the culmination of all the teacher preparation coursework, as well as a significant opportunity to learn additional teaching skills under the supervision of mentor teachers while applying prior learning in a real classroom environment.

In view of that, I have therefore attempted to discuss the main theoretical views in relation to their use in the ESL instructional practices. I have further looked at how English assumed primacy and prominence in the Zimbabwean curriculum and how it is viewed as a language of education and as a medium of communication in the world of work. Of particular interest was how the teaching of English present a host of challenges for both teachers and learners. Some of these challenges are beyond the teachers' control and need the intervention of strong stakeholders such as universities and other big organisations. Cases such as the type of

syllabus to be used, a clear and straightforward language policy that need to be well aligned with what goes on in the classroom are some of the difficult issues that both schools and teacher educators can address. From what I have said so far in this chapter, I am inclined to believe that my discussion has helped highlight some of the major contributing factors including the colonial legacies that continue to impinge on the current teacher education processes and practices. I also believe that the gaps persistent during TP can be minimised if some of the issues raise were addressed. Notably, the issue of student teachers working towards fulfilling the university requirements thereby compromising the fundamental aspects of what they must acquire and develop to be effective practitioners should be addressed to make them appreciate the need to develop their competence by constructing their own knowledge. Mentors too, can be critical evaluators of the pedagogical implications and engage in collaborative research make pedagogical suggestions more careful by analyzing the teaching context to which generalization can be made. Lectures on the other hand can use TP insights to improve the ESL teacher education curriculum to a new perspective that seeks to conceptualize the field and establish a research-based approach to language teacher education.

This is in tandem with Richards and Nunan (1990) who hold that teacher education is moving from an approach of acquainting teacher candidates with classroom techniques and skills to an approach whereby teacher candidates develop their own theories and become aware of their own learning-to-teach processes. This can only be possible if GZU engages in using the currant theories that I have discussed above. Understanding how language teachers learn to teach and how their professional lives evolve, is equally complicated and challenging but students should be equipped with the skills to act intelligently by adopting the pragmatism view of doing that which works instead of confining themselves theories that have no relevance to their situation. In the next chapter, I examine the research methodology that I employed to carry out my study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 A research design refers to the researcher's overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions and testing the premise(s) upon which it is predicated (Polit & Hungler 1999, p.225). Maree (2012, p.70) augments that a research design "is a plan or strategy used by the researcher for collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data in order to answer the research questions".

The previous chapter of this thesis, presented a relevant review of literature on this topic "*Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language: A Case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation in Zimbabwe*" through an examination of how theory and practice relate to each other as can be established through student teachers on the teacher development programme, lecturers who teach on the university-based programmes and later follow students up when they go on TP and the school-based mentors who work with the students teachers on TP. The teaching practice model, aims to offer ESL student teachers the opportunity to integrate theory and practice through developmental experience that acknowledges the longitudinal process of learning to teach and becoming members of a profession.

This chapter, then, discusses the details of the research process including the theoretical philosophies and practical issues that guided the research procedures. I will clarify within the interpretive paradigm the qualitative intrinsic case study design; highlighting the methods of data collection, population and the reasons for their selection. In keeping with Interpretivism, I will describe access negotiation procedures and selection of research participants since they are integral to this selected design. First, I will reiterate the statement of the problem and the research questions to reinforce the topic. I will then move on to discuss and justify the data generation process - collection, transcription, coding and categorization leading to data analysis before indicating the basis of validity and trustworthiness in the context again, of the ethical considerations.

3.1 Statement of the research problem

Teacher preparation and professional development is an important component of the education system of any society because, the quality of an education system is typically based on the quality of its teachers. Teacher preparation in that sense is an important aspect of the whole business of shaping education systems and teacher professionalism for the desired national ideologies and ways of knowing. Teacher preparation and professional development usually consists of two important phases. First, there is the initial college based teacher content and pedagogical development where student teachers are exposed to the teacher education curriculum for the acquisition of essential theoretical knowledge required for the handling of classroom pedagogy. Second, is the teaching practice component which constitutes practical classroom based experience for the opportunity to develop hands-on practical skills and knowledge needed to function as effective language teachers (Richards and Crookes 1988). These two components are intricately interrelated in a complementary way as parts of a whole systematic effort to transform a novice student teacher to an expert teacher. Exactly how this happens is important and hence this study.

In the context of this study, these two phases constitute teacher development leading to product called a professional teacher with knowledge and skills associated with effective classroom practice as indicated by Stoyhoff (1999) who point out that in the two phases, ESL student teachers engage simultaneously with the goal of developing teachers who have self-knowledge and skills associated with effective classroom practice. As articulated by Drever & Cope (1999), a long-standing goal for many teacher preparation programs is to empower student teachers to develop content knowledge theory and then link it to practice during the practicum. Bailey (1997) brings in the reflective model of teacher development that is based on the assumption that teachers develop professional competence through reflection on their own practice. In that regard therefore, the reflective process is a mediating tool that enables pre-service teachers to tackle teaching problems, evaluate past experiences and take some action. However, studies about initial teacher preparation have revealed a disparity. Perhaps even a disconnection between the theories taught in teacher education programmes and the subsequent practices of the teachers in the classrooms. As an example, studies about *theory-practice* gaps in teacher education by Abel & Faust (2010) highlights that very often the

knowledge acquired at a teacher education program by student teachers did not enable them to handle the uncertainty, the complexity and the instability of actual practice situations. In the same vein, Stuart and Thurlow (2000); Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, (1998); Adams, Shea, Liston & Deever, (1998) add that the teaching of theories or knowledge to prospective teachers and expecting that they will effectively apply them is an inadequate approach to teacher preparation. Barkhuizen and Feryok (2006); Farrell (2007); Kagan (1992); Mader & Smith (2010; Cheng & Cheng and Tang (2010) and Korthagen (2010) echo the same sentiments about the theory –practice in teacher preparation.

As articulated from the beginning, my study is about the theory-practice gaps in ESL pre-service secondary teacher preparation. It is based at Great Zimbabwe University in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe and it investigates the relationship between what is taught in the teacher development ESL curriculum and how this knowledge is actually reflected in student teachers' classroom practice during the one-year of teaching practice/practicum exercise that comes after a two year duration of the university-based courses. The express purpose, of this study then, is to establish and document the consistencies or inconsistencies existing between the theoretical knowledge acquired during university tuition, and the expected standard of pedagogy as reflected in the student teachers' ESL practices and supervisors' feedback. Due to the multifaceted/ multidimensional nature of the topic, the study aims to answer one major question and three sub-questions as follows:

Major question

- 3.1.1 What theory-practice gaps exist in pre-service teacher classroom practices in ESL at secondary school level and why do they arise?

Sub-questions

3. 1.1.1 To what extent do student teacher practices on TP reflect the ESL theoretical content knowledge and pedagogies learnt at the university?
- 3.1.1.2 Can there be a shared understanding of student teachers' expected pedagogical practices between university lecturers and mentors?
- 3.1.1.3 How can the university curriculum and the school curriculum support effective teacher development?

Lecturers observe every year that student teachers appear to lack some pedagogical proficiency in ways suggesting something fundamentally missing from their overall development. That proficiency is made up of department-based theory & practice and school-based practice (Monroe, Blackwell & Pepper, 2010; Stensmo, 1999). This has been something that appeared to call for a more systematic inquiry especially possibly starting from or based on the teaching practice itself to inform the entire teacher development programme. This main question (3.1.1) therefore, is the basis of this investigation that is further interrogated through the subsidiary questions 3.1.1.1, 3.1.1.2, and 3.1.1.3.

The first sub-question seeks to examine the suitability of the theoretical content knowledge of teacher development offered in the department programme. This is a direct question seeking stakeholder views based on their reflective knowledge of the complementarity of the two teacher development components. This is important since the study needs to establish informed opinions or perceptions from the three categories of participant stakeholders - student teachers, lecturers and school-based mentors. This, I am inclined to believe, will confirm the truth of the statement of the topic - *that is* there are gaps in student teacher practices.

The second sub-question follows on the first above. It interrogates whether there is a shared understanding of expected pedagogy between stakeholders. This is important because stakeholders need to focus on the same fundamentals if the data will be systematically reliable. The details sought out here are about where the understanding is not shared. It might be possible that the expected school-based practices are no longer in keeping with current theoretical guidelines; that is, schools might remain following traditional models that are not very effective or, simply the student teachers are not receiving adequate preparation. It might again be possible that there is shared understanding but the calibre of students especially with their lack of motivation leaves something to be desired. This question seeks in-depth interrogation of all possible causes of gaps.

The last sub-question is important, seeking ways in which the teacher development program could be made theoretically sound as well as enriching, made more comprehensive to ensure it contains insights into the school curriculum and expectations to empower student teachers to understand the theory in relation to practice for the teachers' effective transformation from

novice to effective professionals. This is important since the study is looking for weaknesses wherever they may exist. This way, it hopes to bring out not only the gaps but also the reasons for their existence and how to bridge them as a way of reforming both components.

3.2 Research Site

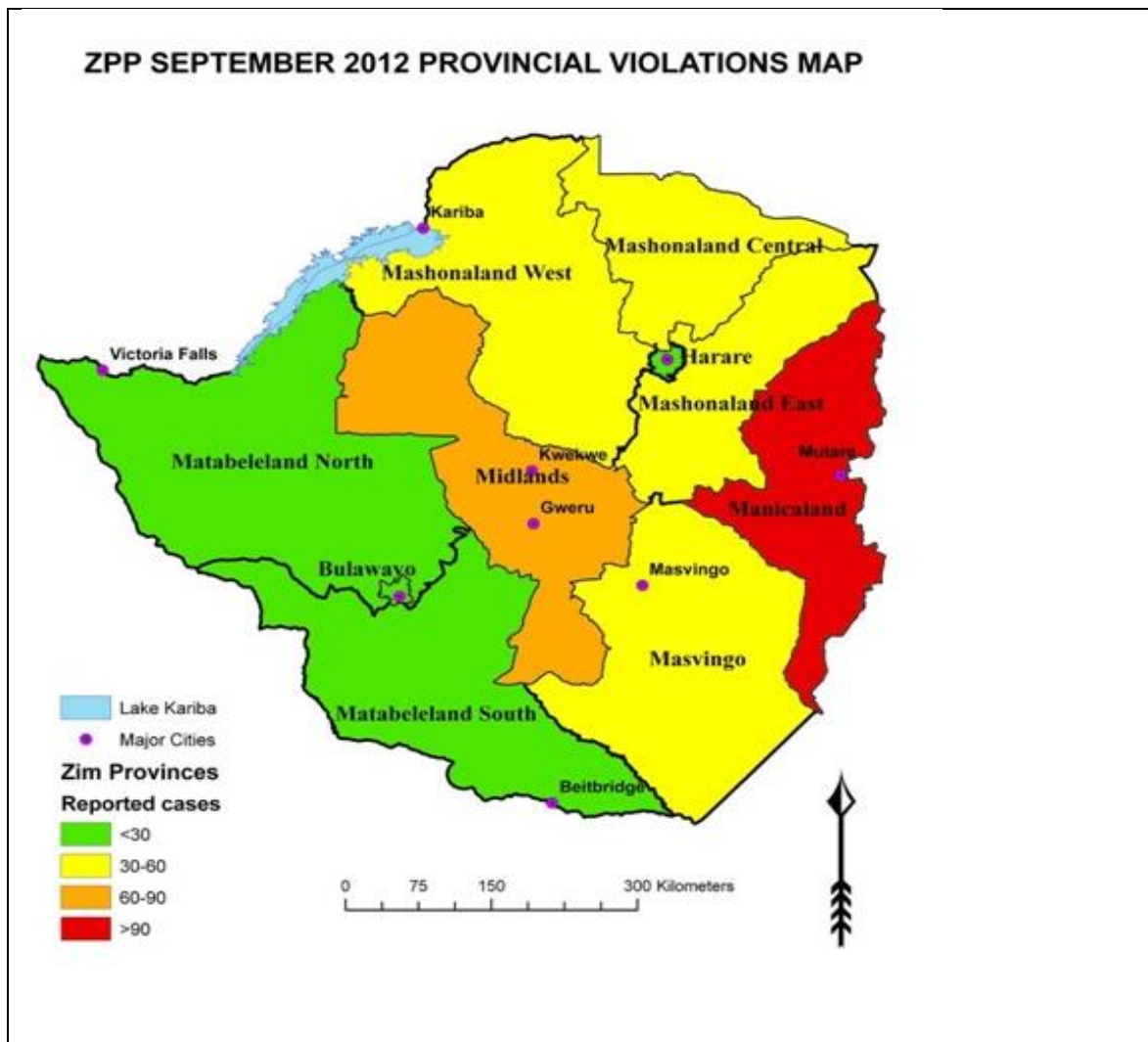
The Teacher Development framework in Zimbabwe consists of two phases – the college/university based theoretical part and the school-based practical component. In the first phase of the teacher development program, many other personal and professional experiences including programs, curricula, resources used for the practice as well as national policies and assessments for schools and teacher education institutions contribute towards student teacher development. This is typically the case with my study where the first phase takes place at Great Zimbabwe University's campus where I am a lecturer in the Department of Teacher Development and where I am actively involved in the supervision of student teachers on Teaching Practice. The Great Zimbabwe University's main campus is 7 km southeast of Masvingo town along the Old Great Zimbabwe road in the Masvingo province of Zimbabwe (see simple political map attached). The major university facilities including the Department of Teacher Development's lecturer offices, lecture room blocks and student hostels are located here. Interviews with lecturers who participated in the study took place in either in my or their offices and most interactions with student teachers participants or non-participants took place in the lecture rooms and in my office here on the campus. The TP component however, is the one that took place away from the university campus in the two practicing high schools located in the Gweru urban district of the Midlands province (see map attached).

3.2.1 Practicing high schools

The second phase of my study took place in practicing government high schools in the Gweru urban district of the Midlands province where student teacher participants did their TP under the direct supervision of mentors. The high schools in question have assumed pseudo names GC and GN and this is in keeping with the declared confidentiality. The midlands province was of special interest here because it is a province with a population where people speak both Shona and Ndebele (the main indigenous languages of Zimbabwe). Mother tongue

languages are important in student learning especially where a foreign language (English) is the language of instruction. In such situations, teachers can sometimes code switch for better comprehension especially where learners have a poor level of proficiency in the second language and language of learning (Butzkamm 1998). GN- is a high school located approximately four kilometers northeast of Gweru Central Business District (CBD) with a student population of around nine hundred pupils. It caters for boys and girls from form one -six. It is mostly a day school with a small capacity to hold boarders. GC- is situated in Gweru urban district. It caters for boys and girls from form one–six and has boarders and day scholars. It has a student enrolment of about one thousand pupils.

Figure 1 below shows the geographical location of the research sites.



3.3 Research participants

A research participant also called as a human subject or an experiment, trial, or study participant or subject, is a person who participates in human subject research by being the target of observation by researchers Coleman (2005, p.55).

In this section, I will discuss the profiles of all participants starting with student teachers then lecturers and lastly mentors.

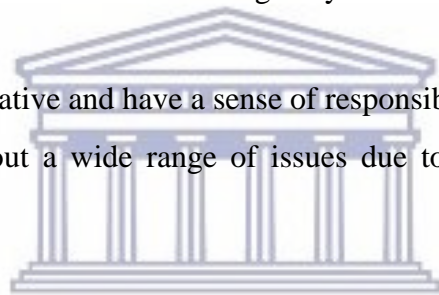
My main objective was to collect and analyze data about the theory – practice gaps prevalent in ESL teacher development at secondary school level for pre-service student teachers. This was strategically based on TP experiences of the student teacher participants who could be able to share insights into the gaps as they saw or experienced them practically. I therefore chose to work with twenty-one participants; comprising seven pre-service student teachers (two males and five females), seven school-based mentors (two males and five females) and seven lecturers (three females and four males). My sample of mentors included more female than male participants because participants were selected from a population with more females than men and the same was the case for lectures. All the participants are bilinguals-who can speak English but have either Shona or Ndebele as their mother languages. Having said this, I now move on to discuss their profiles.

3.3.1 Pre-service student teachers

The student teacher participants in this study enrolled for the four-year (B.Ed.) degree in the Teacher Development Program in 2014 specializing in ESL as one of their major subjects. The average age of the group was twenty three (23) years old. Generally, these student teachers come from low to middle socio-economic backgrounds. All of them are holders of the Advanced level ('A' Level) certificate examinations administered by the Zimbabwe Schools Examination Council (ZIMSEC) and obtained after six years of secondary education. Secondary schooling in Zimbabwe is divided into two phases based on the University of Cambridge's 2-tier model, four years 'O' and two years 'A' Level. In the colonial past and at early independence, the University of Cambridge-United Kingdom (UK) Local Examinations Syndicate, ran and coordinated the 'O and A' level examinations. 'O'

Level requires a pass in a minimum of five subjects where core subjects including English language are studied. 'A' Level on the other hand, requires two passes- a requirement for entry into degree programmes in the Zimbabwean universities. Students who take ESL as their major subject at the university are required to have passed literature in English or English literature in order to qualify for the intended programme. Student teacher participants in this study are therefore those who are:

- 'A'-Level graduates with a pass in English literature or literature in English.
- Specializing in ESL as one of the major subjects.
- Voluntarily willing to take part in face to face interviews and group discussions.
- Conversant in the language of instruction (ESL) and in one or both major languages of Zimbabwe (Shona and Ndebele interchangeably known as Chishona or IsiNdebele).
- Are known to be cooperative and have a sense of responsibility.
- Are knowledgeable about a wide range of issues due to their own personal and academic experiences.



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3.3.2 Lecturers

Seven lecturer participants selected from the two departments responsible for the educational development of pre-service and in-service student teachers took part in the study. They necessarily included the TP coordinator and those with experience in supporting and supervising students on TP. These lecturers followed up, supervised and assessed the student teacher participants during the practicum period. One of the seven lecturers is a PhD holder, while four are holders of the Master of Arts (MA) and two have Master of Education (M.Ed.) degrees. The majority of the non-PhD holding lecturer participants are currently pursuing their part time doctoral studies with different universities mainly in South Africa and therefore showed a lot of interest in my study. They showed a generally high level of commitment with the TP program and were strategic informants in my study. In line with Cohen et al. (2011, p.157), I was going to “acquire in-depth information from those in a position to give it”.

My expectations of lecturer participants were those who had/are:

- A minimum qualification of a Master's degree.
- Close to ten years of experience in teacher education institutions.
- Experience in teaching languages preferably ESL.
- The willingness to respond to face to face interviews at least or even in written responses.
- Worked, supervised and assessed the student teacher participants during the practicum period.
- Cooperative and innovative to be capable of coming up with possible solutions to challenges.

3.3.3 Mentors

Practicum schools-based mentors play an important role in nurturing student teachers on TP. Good mentors are those that seek to support student teachers to optimize their practical educational experiences as well as assisting them to be socialized into the disciplined culture of educationists. These are important traits that eventually help student teachers grow and become eligible for employment. In this study, seven school-based mentors participated by responding to a set of semi – structured interviews. Of the seven mentors, three were holders of the BA while four were holders of Diploma in Education. In Zimbabwe, there is no clear system of mentor selection but it remains the prerogative of school administrators to select respective mentors of their choice possibly based on which classes they want to deploy the student teachers. Although I may not be aware of the criterion that school administrators use to choose mentors, literature on mentoring highlights that good mentoring is beneficial to both the mentor and mentee as articulated by Boreen, etal (2000) that continued contact between mentors and mentees provides some of their richest collegial interactions.

In my study, I expected mentors to possess the following qualities:

- A minimum qualification of a diploma in Education
- Specialist and expert teachers in languages particularly ESL

- With more than five years of teaching experiences in high school
- Viewed as being collaborative and cooperative to nurture mentees into holistic professionals
- Willing to participate in various school and community related activities
- Accommodative, tolerant and patient professionals who did not view their mentees as relief teachers
- Capable of engaging in reflective practice in their mentoring activities to provide an opportunity for the necessary growth and renewal necessary for novice teachers (Daloz, 1999; Stevens, 1995).

Having discussed the problem statement, the research questions, the research site and the participants, I will in the next section, describe the research philosophy/ paradigm that informed how the research data was gathered, analyzed and validated. The study required collecting interpretive data that meant to support a qualitative case study design.

3.4 Theoretical orientations

In research, theoretical orientations are synonymous with philosophical orientations or theoretical paradigms which Bogdan & Biklan; (1982, p. 30) define as “the identification of the underlying basis that is used to construct a scientific investigation; or, “a loose collection of logically held together assumptions, concepts and propositions that orientate thinking and research”. Hatch (2002); Denzin & Lincoln (2005); Crotty (2003), seem to have a common understanding of a theoretical paradigm as “*the underlying philosophical perspective about the researcher’s view of the human world and the social life within that world*”.

Corbin & Strauss (2008, p. 1) augment that, “a philosophical orientation is a “worldview that underlies and informs methodology and methods” while Mertens, (2005); Bogdan & Biklen, (1998) suggest that philosophical orientations are “the fundamental models or frame of reference that serve as guiding principles influencing the way knowledge is studied and interpreted”. Guba & Lincoln, (1994, p. 105) add that “it is the basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation”.

A close look at the definitions above confirm the significant role that theoretical paradigms play in the research process and as Babbie (2007, p. 3) reiterates, “paradigms serve as lenses that guide the underlying belief system of the researcher and justifies the choice of methodology employed in the research process”. They are distinguishable from each other by virtue of the purpose they serve and the assumptions embedded in them. Neuman (2006) lists three alternative approaches to social science (positivist, interpretive, and critical) while Merriam (2009) and Glesne (2011) advocate four philosophical perspectives by adding the *Post structural/Postmodern* to Newman’s list. Rallis and Rossman (2007) also identify four paradigms but point out the two major types of research are positivist, which is associated with quantitative research and the analytical or post-positivist, linked to qualitative research.

Embedded in the research paradigms are different ontologies, epistemologies and methods which according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) influence one another in different ways. Ontology assumptions involve ways of constructing reality – how things really are, how things work, what constitutes reality and how we can understand existence (Denzin and Lincoln (1998: 201). These assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions – the philosophy of knowledge of that reality, the nature of relationship that exists between the inquirer and the inquired, what constitutes valid knowledge and how we can obtain it. It is concerned with possibilities, nature, sources and limitations of knowledge in the field of study. Blaikie (2000, p. 8) aligns this to qualitative inquiry by adding that epistemology “is the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality, whatever it is understood to be. In short, claims about how what is assumed to exist can be known”. With clarity of epistemological assumptions, researchers try to get as close as possible to participants under studied and subjective evidence is assembled based on individual views from research conducted in the field. Epistemological assumptions in turn give rise to methodological considerations (the tools we use to know that reality) that finally influence the type of instruments used (Cohen et al 2011).

As I said earlier in section 3.1 above, my study is conceptualized within the teacher education framework, focusing on the theory-practices gaps seemingly prevalent in student teachers’ pedagogic practices during TP. By its nature, this complex and multifaceted topic takes

place in two different settings of practice. First, at the teacher education institution and then at the practicing schools. In the first setting, student teachers spend the first two years of tuition-acquiring different forms of knowledge including experiential, personal and professional knowledge, where they are exposed to school related issues as pointed out in section 3.1 above. All these contribute towards the student teachers' development of the kind knowledge, skills and attitudes that they need in practice. On the other hand, the practicing schools are most fundamental settings, where teacher candidates learn in a variety of ways how to respond to classroom issues in the process of learning to teach in the manner expected of them by both the school and the university - marrying theory with practice under the direct supervision of mentors. As a researcher, I also engaged in conversations with student teachers in natural classrooms attempting to make sense of or interpret exactly how their teaching was influenced by the university programme and the mentors support.

Given the intricacy of the broad contexts and multifaceted nature in which the study occurred, variables to be considered were equally meant to be as complex as they were interwoven and therefore required careful/pointed measurement. The approaches to deal with the set of variables then needed to be proportionate to that situation. In keeping with the domains of social research, approaches needed to be naturalistic, context-based and multidimensional. It was in view of this intricate network of perceptions and perspectives in the naturalistic contexts that the qualitative intrinsic case study design underpinned by interpretive/constructivist principles was deemed appropriate for this study. This methodology was preferred because it came with many advantages as it took into account the significance of context in relation to meaning. This said, focus now shifts to discuss the central tenets of the Interpretivist theory.

3.4.1 Interpretivism

Bevir and Kedar (2008) describe, interpretivism as understanding the social context of the phenomenon and the process whereby the phenomenon influences and is influenced by the social context. Klein & Myers (1999), add that the foundational assumption for interpretive research is that knowledge is gained or at least filtered, through social constructions such as language, consciousness, and shared meanings. Interpretivism is therefore a philosophical

theory and a net that contains the researchers' view of reality, the way of looking at that reality and the way of covering that reality Denzin and Lincoln (2005). Interpretivism adheres to reality as a product of subjective experience, which considers that "the social world can only be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated". It is associated with the philosophical position of, realism and is used to group together diverse approaches; including social constructivism, reflective practice and teacher knowledge base / teacher cognition all of which are important theoretical underpinnings guiding this study (Best & Kahn 1993). In my study, I chose to employ the Interpretivist qualitative methodologies because it has several advantages over other paradigms. First, it rejects the positivist and post-positivist viewpoints that knowledge is based upon observable and measurable observations of a stable and objective reality that exists 'out there' which has no personal bias affecting the research results and where data collected is measurable (numerical data formally known as quantitative data). Instead, it accepts that all human action is meaningful and has to be interpreted and understood within the context of social practices.

In keeping with the interpretive tradition, my study seeks to understand the lived experiences, thoughts and ideas of student teachers and to establish the everyday meanings of their experiences. As Lowenberg (1993) articulates, I sought to understand pre-service student teachers' interpretations of their own teaching during the Practicum period bearing in mind that the contexts in which student teacher participants worked influenced their operations (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.37). Meaning is established by undertaking multiple data collections through interviews and observations, and by analyzing and understanding transcriptions (texts). It is evident that interpretive research is fundamentally an epistemology or a way of knowing what qualitative researchers identify as different from that of the logical positivists. Anderson (1981) suggests that applying the skill of observation can help to connect verbal and actual behavior in order to gain a deeper understanding of the exact meaning of an event.

Since the goal of interpretivist research is understanding, rather than making predictions, the focus of my study was therefore on the experiences and perceptions of the participants from

their perspective and to enable reform through suitable intervention strategies to alleviate the problem being addressed. That way, the subjectivity of interpretivist research was the appropriate vehicle in the attempt to provide rich description of student teachers' personal experiences of TP from the researcher's emic or insider's viewpoint where results are influenced by the opinions of the researcher. In terms of methodology, interpretive research does not predefine dependent or independent variables, does not set out to test hypotheses. Instead, it aims to produce interpretive methodologies encompassing an experience – near orientation that sees human action as meaningful and historically contingent. As I have pointed out in section 3.3 above and worth restating it again in this section, I chose to work with twenty-one participants. The decision to choose the three groups of participants was in line with De Vos et al.'s (2012: 8) view that the interpretivist approach maintains that all human beings are engaged in the process of making sense of their worlds and continuously interpret, create, give meaning to, define, justify and rationalize their daily actions.

Using the interpretivist paradigm, I was able to obtain knowledge from participants by interacting freely with them as advocated by Schunk, (2012, p. 232) that, “knowledge is therefore neither tied to the external world nor wholly to the working of the mind, but it exists as the outcomes of mental contradictions that result from ones interactions with other people in the environment”. In line with Creswell's (2010, p. 212) and Silverman's (2010, p. 14) view, the idea of interacting with participants here was to enable them to be heard regarding their views and perceptions about improving teacher development practices. Utilizing the interpretive approach, as postulated by Babbie (2010), I managed to observe aspects of the participants' social world (classroom) and discovered patterns that could be used to explain why there are critical gaps in student teachers' ESL classroom practices.

Deriving from a Social constructivist perspective, participants in this study seek to understand their world to develop their own particular meanings that correspond to their experience (Creswell, 2013). It was within this paradigm (interpretivist) that it was possible to recognize that all participants involved, including the researcher, brought their own unique interpretations of the world or construction of the situation to the research context. This is what gave the researcher the opportunity to be open to the attitudes and values of the

participants and to adopt a research design which embraced the idea of multiple realities including semi structured interviews, documentary analysis direct classroom observation Hammersley et al (2006). I was also able to report on them by exploring multiple forms of evidence from different participants' perspectives and experiences.

3.5 Research design

A research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems (Kumar, 2011, p.94). This definition chimes in well with Maree's (2012, p.70) definition that says, "a research design is a plan or strategy used by the researcher for collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data in order to answer the research questions". De Vos et al. (2012, p.307) add that a design refers to "all those decisions a researcher makes in planning the study" while Trochim, (2001, p. 18) says "it is the glue that holds the research project together". A close reading of the above definitions shows that a research design typically includes how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analyzing data collected. The definitions also point to the central roles that a research design plays. Primarily, it serves two main functions of; identification or development of procedures and logistical arrangements required to undertake a study and emphasizing the importance of quality in these procedures to ensure their validity, objectivity and accuracy (Kerlinger, 1986, p. 280) as quoted by Kumar (2011). For these reasons, my study lends itself to qualitative intrinsic case study design (Creswell 2009; Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Berg 2007; Glesne 2011). Typical of qualitative case studies, the knowledge produced is what I wanted to get and might not have been generalized to other people or other settings. Nevertheless findings are unique to the relatively few participants included in the research study. This, notwithstanding similar situations, even contexts, often can learn a lot from findings accruing from systematically conducted case studies and to this extent, the data can very well be used to interpret other situations. I now move on to discuss the qualitative approach.

3.5.1 Qualitative approach

Creswell (2003) says that "a qualitative approach is where the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based on constructivist perspectives for example, the multiple meanings

of individual experiences, meanings socially and historically constructed, with the intent of developing theory or pattern or advocacy/participatory perspectives. Creswell's (2009) version describes qualitative research as an approach that emphasizes the qualities of entities, processes and meanings not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Instead, as one exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem in which process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data are typically collected in the participant's setting and analyzed inductively. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) add that qualitative research involves "an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. Put in another way, quality refers to the essence and ambience of something – the what, how, when and where of it. Qualitative research thus refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things (Berg 2007).

A common and clear factor discerned from these definitions is that qualitative research starts from the position that the knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors in their natural settings. This is consistent with Creswell's (1994) opinion that qualitative studies are commonly used to understand people's experiences and to express their perspectives with a view to gaining an in-depth, holistic perspective of groups of people, environments, programs, events. We use research methods that seek data through in-depth and open-ended means such as interviews, direct observation, and written documents, and that vary by type, purpose, and quality (Patton, 2002). Eliciting such data is usually possible with insider researchers. McNiff et al (2003) describe the concept of 'insider research' in a positive light and explain the potential for deeper understanding when the researcher has a varied array of background knowledge regarding the field of study (re: McNiff et al, 2003. P12-13).

Consistent with Creswell's (1994) opinion about qualitative studies, I used the qualitative approach to understand the causes of the theory practice-gaps in student teachers' practices by allowing all stakeholders to express themselves freely with a view to gaining an in-depth, holistic perspective of participants. In particular, I had to engage in conversations with student teachers in natural classrooms attempting to make sense of or interpret exactly how

the university programme influenced their teaching and the mentors support. Since I work as a teacher-educator in the university being studied in this research, I am indeed an ‘insider researcher thus I am able to enter into the schools so conceived as the natural settings of the lived experiences of the student teachers and their mentors. I therefore studied them by observing their teaching, interacting with them and asking them questions relating to their work. This was done to make sense of, to interpret, and get the views and opinions of participants about their practices. This in reality meant understanding the quality of their work including the profession support they were getting from both their mentors and university supervisors.

As I have come to understand, such descriptions have the advantages of flexibility, in-depth analysis, and the potential to examining a variety of aspects of a social situation (Babbie1986). In that case, my study had to be multi-method, involving the interpretation of classroom practice to produce rich holistic understanding of contextual, and generally unstructured, non-numeric data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mason, 2002). The qualitative design was deemed suitable for this study because it concerns itself with providing rich descriptions that can occur without the intervention of an experiment or any contrived treatment (Best & Kahn 1993; Dooley 1990; Seliger and Shohamy 1989).

From this qualitative perspective, student teachers in this research were seen as social beings who interacted not only with each other but their mentors, lecturers and other members of the school community. The result of this interaction developed the subjective knowledge and the cultural world in which student teachers lived their lives on an identification for themselves within that working community (Blumer 1972); Congalton and Daniel 1976).

Based on the points I have so far raised, I was convinced that the qualitative approach was suitable given that the practice of teaching is too complex to be answered by a yes or no, instead requiring the use of either software or manual coding and categorizing to harness unstructured information and extract meaning hence its adoption. In line with what Stake, (1995, p. 99) says, as a qualitative researcher, I again gained a more in-depth understanding of the respondent's beliefs, attitudes, or situation. By using the face-to-face interview, I could

quickly adjust the interview schedule if the interviewee's responses suggested the need for additional probes or lines of inquiry in future interviews. Typical of the qualitative case studies, I was the sole investigator who gathered and made interpretations that required me to report my rendition or construction of the constructed reality or knowledge that gathered through their investigation. Yet, by using the qualitative approach, I was not distanced from my participants, instead maintaining a close proximity enabling me to keep interacting with them at varying degrees, observing, questioning, and sometimes actually living as one of those to be studied (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p. 2; Mason, 1996,p. 4; Creswell 1998,p. 15; Marshall & Rossman, 1999:2). The assumption is that reality should be interpreted through the meaning that research participants give to their life world and that this meaning can only be discovered through language (Schwandt 2007). The next section now examines the case study design used in this research.

3.5.2 Intrinsic Case study design

Many researchers who attempted to define a case study or a case have come up with different descriptions. Simons (2009) describes a case study as “an in-depth exploration from multiple prospects of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution program or system in life.” Gall, et al (1996, p. 545), see a case study as “the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspectives of the participants involved in the phenomenon”.

Yin (2002) offers a more detailed and technical definition of case studies as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context” (p. 13). Stake (1998) points out that crucial to case study research are not the methods of investigation, but that the object of study is a case which he further describes as an object to be studied for an identified reason that is peculiar or particular. Stake (1998) further says that a case study takes the emic perspective of the participants by penetrating in their frames of mind. Hartley (2004), states that case study research consists of a detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time, of phenomena, within their context, with the aim being "to provide an analysis of the

context and processes which illuminate the theoretical issues being studied" (p.323). Robson (2002, p. 178) defines a case study as a strategy for doing research that involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. Merriam (1998, p. 27) describes a case as "a specific, a complex, functioning thing," more specifically "an integrated system" which "has a boundary, working parts" and purposive and "a phenomenon that is inherently bounded, with a finite amount of time for data collection or a limited number of people who could be interviewed or observed.

Stake (1995) agrees with Smith's (1978) rendition that researchers should view case as "a bounded system" and inquire into it "as an object rather than a process" whereas Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p. 319) regard a case as a study of key players' situations and critical incidents in life. Despite the disparities however, the underlying assumption is that particularity, complexity and boundary are at the center stage when defining a case. Considering the various definitions above, a qualitative case study can therefore be summarized as a research strategy whose result can draw from some or all of the following:

- The nature of the case itself.
- The historical background of the case.
- The physical setting in which the case is bounded.
- Other contexts, such as economic, political and legal, that affect upon the case.
- Other cases through which the case is recognized.
- Those informants through whom the case can be known. (Stake in Denzin & Lincoln, 2002, pp.438-9).

Robert Stake (2000) cited in Silverman, (2010, p. 139) has identifies three different kinds of case study as follows:

- The *intrinsic* case study where 'the case is of interest in all its particularity and ordinariness'. In the intrinsic case study, Stake, says no attempt is made to generalize beyond the single case or even to build theories.

- The *instrumental* case study in which a case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to revive a generalization. Although the case selected is studied in depth, the focus is on something else.
- The *collective* case study where a number of cases are studied in order to investigate some general phenomena.

Therefore, since the objective of my research was about improving pre-service teacher development practices, with specific focus on the *theory-practice gaps* in their ESL classroom pedagogies during TP, my study falls within the intrinsic case study design. Subsequently, I adopted and used it in line with Stake (1995)'s view that researchers who have a genuine interest in the case should study it when the intent is to better understand the case. My case was to examine the theory - practice gaps prevalent in the classroom pedagogies of the seven pre-service secondary teachers of ELS under teacher preparation and development at GZU.

I studied this case because I had an intrinsic interest in that particular case, for its own sake, where there was no expectations that results have implications for other case studies, or for the purposes of generalization. Giving examples of Stake's case studies, Punch (2005, p.146) argues that generalizations would not be the objective, particularly where the case may be so important, interesting, or misunderstood that it deserves study. With the case study, I was able to probe into issues in more detail, relating to student teachers' teaching, as well as their overall classroom experiences. I was in a position to investigate a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2003b cited in Gray, 2009, p. 247) implying that considerable data for my research was gathered from student teachers, mentors and lecturers.

Observing student teachers teaching, describing and analyzing their practices with a purpose to identify and gather factors, variables, and structures including interactions between participants in their classroom work is what I did. In the context of this research, and in order to help research participants generate solutions to the theory-practice gaps, I needed to thoroughly understand what the participants perceived to be barriers to and what they thought needed to be done to break down the barriers and enhance effective ESL practices.

This was significant because the findings of my case study could be used to inform professional practice or evidence-informed decision making within the language teacher education at GZU. Cohen et al. (2011, p. 292) reinforces this idea by deliberating that case studies should be ‘a step to action’ because their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use for the purpose of staff or individual self-development, for within institutional feedback, for formative education, and in educational policy making. I was able to collect data over a span of a year during which time the student teachers were on TP. That lengthy period provided me with the opportunity to describe the data heuristically and intensively (Merriam 1988; Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991; Descombe 1998). Using a case study was also flexible because; I had the privilege to select a topic, decide its boundaries, make use of flexible analysis and explanation of methods, sensitive to both the studied student teachers’ special features and the social context in which data was produced (Mason, 1996; Gobo, 2005; Robson, 1993; Miles and Huberman 1994).

The choice of a qualitative case study was attributed to a distinctive advantage over other research strategies when “how” or “why” questions were being posed to discover the theory-practice gaps in student teachers’ teaching and when the researcher had little or no control over the events (Yin, 2003). One of the many advantages of case studies is their acknowledgement that facts and values cannot be separated and that understanding is inevitably prejudiced because it is situated in terms of the individual and the event (Cousin 2005; Elliott & Lukes, 2008). Human beings as opposed to inanimate objects can interpret the environment and themselves (Hammersley, n.d. Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Since a case study enables information to be collected from multiple data collection instruments and sources, I was able to use several data gathering techniques and in these, I considered not just the voice and perspective of the seven student teachers under study but also the views of mentors and lecturers. The acceptance of multiple perspectives in interpretivism often leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation (Klein & Meyers 1998; Morehouse, 2011; Nunan 1992). Having discussed the research design that I adopted, I now proceed to discuss population and sampling in the next section.

3.6 Population and Sampling

3.6.1 Population

Polit and Hungler (1999, p. 37) refer to the population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. On the other hand, Tuckman (1998, p 238) defines population as “that group about which the researcher is interested in gaining information and conclusions while Creswell (2013) contends that it is the entire group of persons from which the required information to answer the research question is obtained. Kvale (1996) adds that a population is a generally large collection of individuals or objects which is the main focus of the scientific inquiry. A close examination of the definitions above confirm that a research population is a well-defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar or binding characteristics or trait. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), two types of populations exist, namely: the general population and the target population. The general population is the largest group of potential participants of a qualitative study, which Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010) define as “... an entire group about which some information is required to be ascertained”. In this study, the general population was; all B.Ed. secondary part three students on TP, all lecturers responsible for the education and professional development of pre-service and in-service teachers at GZU and all school heads and mentor teachers in Gweru urban high schools.

Though the general population qualified to participate in my study, their inclusion in the study population violated some of my main research goals and assumptions, and might seriously have affected the research outcome. I therefore needed to refine the general population by removing individuals who did not belong to the category of my interest. This left me with a more refined population which contained attributes that could help to validate my research objectives, assumptions and contexts. The part of the general population left after its refinement is termed target population, which (Bartlett et al., 2001; Creswell, 2003) describe as the group of individuals or participants with the specific attributes of interest and relevance. The target population in my study therefore comprised twenty-five mentor teachers (for forms 1-3) of the two practicing high schools, fourteen language lecturers in the department of Teacher Development and Curriculum Studies at GZU’s school of education and forty two B.Ed. Secondary part three student teachers of ESL. All these

subjects had the probability to be selected to take part in the study. However, it is often impractical and sometimes undesirable to try and study the entire population especially if the population is a large group. Therefore, I choose to study just a sample of the population.

Fink, (2003, p.1) describes a sample as a proportion or subset of a larger group called a population while O’Leary (2004, p.103) defines sampling as a process that is always strategic and sometimes mathematical, which will involve using the most practical procedures possible for gathering a sample that best ‘represents’ a larger population. Sampling is “the selection of a subset of persons or things from a larger population, also known as a sampling frame with the intention of representing the particular population (Scott & Morrison, 2007, p. 219). Yin (2011, p,311) sees sampling as “the selection of participants or sources of data to be used in a study, based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the study’s research questions. A good sample is a miniature version of the population of which it is a part just like it, only smaller. It is a smaller but hopefully a representative collection of units from a population used to determine truths about that population. The definition I have presented above confirm that sampling is important in selecting the subjects that best represents the entire population and that are capable of providing the required data. It is therefore vital that sampling, the manner of obtaining data and from whom the data is acquired be done with sound judgment, especially since no amount of analysis can make up for improperly collected data (Bernard et al. 1986).

Several types of sampling procedures including simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified and probability sampling can be used in research. My research was a qualitative case study, in which I had special interest in establishing the how, why and what of the persistent theory-practice-gaps in student teacher practices in ESL, hence it required the adoption of purposive sampling - interchangeably called judgmental sampling or purposeful selection (Saunders, et al 2012). I will now move on to discuss purposive sampling in the next section.

3.6.2 Purposive sampling

This method of sampling is also known as subjective or 'judgment sampling' method Hagan (2006). Welman et al. (2009, p.69) describe purposive sampling “as the most important type of non-probability sampling procedure” which I used in the selection of student teacher participants who, as Cozby, (2009, p.139-140) states, “by virtue of coming from the sub set of the population of interest, were knowledgeable and reliable study participants”.

Purposeful selection of information-rich cases, are important with the goal of making sure that the selected sample provides the necessary depth, but at the same time meets the goal of a preferably high degree of breadth Patton (2002, p.230; McMillan and Schumacher 2010, p.325 Merriam, 2009, p.77). Teddlie & Yu, (2007, p. 77) adds that, “purposive selection is the technique mainly used in naturalistic inquiry studies, and is defined as selecting units (for example, individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions”. Researchers choose the samples because those samples have particular features or characteristics that enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and questions that researchers wishes to study Bryman (2012). In my study, I used purposive sampling to select seven suitable student teacher participants whom I identified by virtue of their educational background, willingness to participate in the study, personal experience and whose proficiency in ESL was good enough to allow them to articulate and put across their ideas and views well. They were reliable participants and as articulated by Cozby (2009, p.139, 140.), such participants enable the researcher to elicit the required data. Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979) sum it all by expressing that; availability, willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner is very important in research.

Sampling for lecturer participants comprised the TP coordinator and six other lecturers’ five of whom are specialists in language subjects in the university programmes and who also follow up student teachers on TP to observe, supervise and assess them. In this study, selection of mentors was not the domain of the researcher since school based mentors in Zimbabwe are usually selected by school heads using a criteria of their own. The decision to choose the three groups of participants was in line with De Vos et al.’s (2012, p. 8) view

that the interpretivist approach maintains that all human beings engage in the process of making sense of their worlds and continuously interpret, create, give meaning to, define, justify and rationalize their daily actions. Having described the sampling procedures that I followed to select the study participants, I will, in the next section discuss data gathering instruments I used to collect data.

3.7 Data collection and instrumentation

In this section, I will discuss in detail, the instruments used to elicit data, the reasons for the choice of instruments and the method of collecting data.

Research data is information collected, observed, or created, for purposes of analysis to produce original research results” (Boston University Libraries, n.d.a). Data collection in both qualitative and quantitative research is a systematic process of gathering information on variables of interest. Several instruments can be used to collect data in an established systematic fashion that enables the researcher to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcome (Creswell 2007; Marshall & Rossman 2006). The type of research techniques usually depends on the research design and the methodologies employed. Mills (2003,p.4) specifies that: “qualitative research uses narrative and descriptive approaches for data collection to understand the way things are and what they mean from the perspective of the research respondents.

My study is a qualitative case study that requires the use of multiple data collection sources. I therefore used document analysis (Harvey 2012; Leedy & Ormrod 2006), semi-structured interviews (Dane 2010; Dayman and Holloway 2002; Gall et al 2008), direct classroom lesson observation (Patton 2002; Mills, et al 2010) and focus group discussion (De Vos et al. 2012, p. 360). In the next section, I will discuss each of the data gathering tools used in this study.

3.7.1 Documentary analysis

A document is an artefact that has as its central feature an inscribed text, any cultural product including hand-written documents such as letters, printed documents, paintings,

photographs, charts, maps, films, videos television programmes, newspapers (Scott 1990). It is a written text produced by individuals and groups in the course of their everyday practices and exclusively for their own immediate practical needs (Scott op cit.). Documents are written with a purpose, and are based on particular assumptions and presented in a certain way or style. To this extent, the researcher must be fully aware of the origins, purpose and the original audience of the documents (Grix 2001). Documents are not deliberately produced for the purpose of research, but naturally occurring objects with a concrete or semi-permanent existence that tell us indirectly about the social world of the people who created them (Payne 2004). They can be analyzed with the ultimate purpose to arrive at an understanding of the meaning and significance of what they contain (Scott 1990, p. 28).

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) defines document analysis as “a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of materials for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases” while Bowen (2009) views it as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic material. It is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic (Campus Labs 2011; Bowen 2009).

In my study, the documents analyzed were; schemes of work & detailed lesson plans (DLPs) of student teachers and supervision critiques by lecturers and mentors. The exercise involved analytic reading and review of lots of written material. This was valuable to help me extract the relevant portions that could be deemed as statements of facts to validate individual research objectives. Analysis of the documents was done in accordance with Merriam’s (1988) view that “documents of all types can be analyzed to uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem”.

I chose to analyse documents because they present several advantages. First, they are manageable and practical resources which are an efficient and effective way of gathering data as put forward by Bowen (2009) that, obtaining and analyzing documents is often far more cost and time efficient than conducting own research or experiments. Second, they are commonplace which come in a variety of forms, making themselves a very accessible

and reliable source of data. Additionally, they are stable “non-reactive” data sources, meaning that they can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged by the researcher’s influence or research process (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). The advantage in analyzing documents was that they were developed with no reference to the researcher and therefore they provided objective, systematic and reliable information about the theory practice gaps.

An analysis of the student teachers’ documents was primarily useful in establishing the facts about how they used their teacher knowledge base, (one of the theoretical perspectives guiding this study as discussed in the Literature Review Chapter) to present their content and how they reflected upon their own teaching to improve their efficacy. Documentary analysis further provided me with some perceptions and reactions that were validated in the semi structured interviews. When combined with information from interviews and observations, data gleaned from documents provided me with important information from multiple data sources that was summarized and interpreted in order to address the research questions. With document analysis, I was also able to identify and mitigate the effects of biases and prejudices in order to ensure the impartiality of my conclusions. Analyzing documents incorporated coding content into themes similar to how focus group or interview transcripts are analyzed.

3.7.1.1 Lecturer supervision and assessment form

This is a document that is designed by the Department of Teacher Development to capture the student teacher practices marked out of 100 per cent with emphasis on a number of lesson aspects including documentation (35 per cent), learning atmosphere (5 per cent) teaching procedures (50 per cent) and books & marking (10 per cent). The assumption behind the structure of this instrument is that if the information is collected, it can inform the department about the effectiveness of the student teacher. The sum total of attributes and the respective scores allocated on this form reflects what the department considers important knowledges and skills for the student teacher to demonstrate. This is what is used to judge not only the student teacher’s effectiveness but suitability of the university curriculum used to prepare them. Most significantly, this is the instrument used to determine the student teacher’s readiness to transit from novice to professional. This is the reason why this form is one of the central pieces in my study because TP success or failure is determined by how much it is

fulfilled or not. The sample of supervision assessment for lecturers and mentors is provided in Appendix 11.

3.7.1.2 Mentors' supervision and assessment form

The university through the Department of Teacher Development designs this form and sends it to various schools where the students are deployed. It is the same as the one that lecturers use. The university believes that with the use of that instrument by mentors, it can get the information it wants from the schools which later on may be used to inform decision making especially regarding curriculum analysis and innovation. This form appears in Appendix 11.

3.7.1.3 Student teacher's documents

As I stated earlier, the student teacher documents analysed were their schemes of work and the detailed lesson plans. These portfolios were worth an analysis because they are important professional documents that serve as guides for managing classroom pedagogy. It is in these documents that the teacher knowledge base (discussed earlier in the Literature Review Chapter of this thesis) is replicated.

3.7.1.3.1 A scheme of work

A scheme of work is a guideline that defines the structure and content of an academic course. It maps out clearly how resources including books, equipment, time and class activities for an example teacher-talk, group work, practicals, discussions and assessment strategies can be utilized. It is the teacher's plan of action while a lesson plan is a detailed description of the student teacher's course of instruction that spells out the why, what and how of the content to be covered during the lesson. The scheme of work is usually an interpretation of a specification or syllabus and can be used as a guide throughout the course to monitor progress against the original plan. Schemes of work can be shared with students so that they have an overview of their course. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scheme_of_work.

As I have mentioned in Chapter 2 of this thesis and again worth repeating it in this section, curriculum development in Zimbabwe is not the domain of the generality of teachers and as such, the syllabus and curriculum documents are simply handed down to schools for teachers

to read, comprehend and implement. In such cases, some teachers including mentors who supervise student teachers may fail to get well conversant with the demands of both the syllabus and curriculum standards thus compromising the quality of the instructional process. Therefore, in analyzing the student teachers 'schemes of work, I wanted to establish the level of student teacher proficiency in syllabus interpretation and their ability or inability to align content with syllabus and curriculum standards. I was again able to see how well student teachers were organised, how they were able to marry theory with practice, how they reflected on their teaching, and how knowledge of language theories were exemplified in their instructional practices. Analysis of the schemes of work further allowed me to ascertain whether student teachers were able to design their work in ways capable of meeting the interest of and diverse learning needs of the individual learners from various skills levels. Analysis of student teachers' professional documents was in keeping with Conant's (1963:93) view that;

"If a teacher is largely ignorant or uninformed he can do much harm" "When teachers possess inaccurate information or conceive of knowledge in narrow ways, they may pass on these ideas to their students or they may fail to challenge students 'misconceptions; they may use texts uncritically or may alter them inappropriately." "Subtly, teachers' conceptions of knowledge shape their practice--the kinds of questions they ask, the ideas they reinforce, the sorts of tasks they assign". The subject matter or content is significant if selected and organized for the development of learning activities, skills, processes, and attitude. It also develops the three domains of learning namely the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills, and considers the cultural aspects of the learners.

Analysis of student teachers'ESL scheme of work helped me to see why there are gaps between what student teachers knew and what they were expected to know. The format of the scheme of work used at GZU is included in Appendix 15. Having said that, I now move on to discuss the detailed lesson plan (DLPs).

3.7.1.3.2 Detailed Lesson plan

Fink (2005) views a lesson plan as the road map for classroom instruction regarding what students need to learn and how effective it will be done while Jones (1998) sees a lesson plan as a creative process that provides a framework for purposeful learning. It is at the very

essence of reflexivity concerning the fundamental questions of what the teacher intends pupils to learn and how this is to be achieved. It includes the subject content, how the content is delivered and measured, and the type strategies used. A lesson plan aids a teacher in the planning and execution of teaching as can be discerned from Carlgren's (1999, p. 54) point that, the practice of planning is as important as the practice of teaching; the process needs to be treated as 'a simulated practice with reflective backtalk as part of the planning, so that students have experience of naming and framing as well as re-framing'. In this way, language, and in particular the discourse of planning, becomes a reflective tool rather than a pointer to activities in which meanings are hidden. Jones (1998) also highlights, that a lesson planning requires that attention be given to a range of important philosophical questions concerning; the nature of desirable and worthwhile learning outcomes, the practicalities of implementation and the evaluative judgements about effectiveness and quality. In line with Jones's (1998) view, I centered the focus of analysis on entire aspects the student teachers' detailed lesson plan that I will discuss below.

Learning Objective

These are statements that capture specifically what knowledge, skills, attitudes the learners should be able to exhibit after an instruction. They provide a teacher with a solid foundation for designing relevant activities and assessment. Objectives guide the instructional process by synchronizing the planning and implementation of teaching, learning, and assessment activities, thereby focusing on the outcomes teachers want students to achieve. When analyzing this aspect, my focus of attention was to establish whether student's teachers were able to formulate clear and measurable behavioural objectives. Behavioral objectives, also known as instructional objectives, are requirements for high-quality development of instruction because they are student-oriented and they place emphasis upon what the learners are expected to do, not upon what the teacher will do (Weimer, 1996). They are supposed to be useful and attainable within a reasonable time.

Subject matter content

It is an essential component of teacher knowledge. The myriad tasks of teaching, including the selecting of worthwhile learning activities, giving helpful explanations, asking

productive questions, and valuating students' learning, all depend on the teacher's understanding of what students will learn. In analyzing this part of the lesson, the purpose was to ascertain that teachers' own subject matter knowledge influenced their efforts to help students learn content. This was in keeping with Beers's (1988) view that while epistemological issues are rarely made explicit in classrooms, they are implicitly represented in the organization and content of curriculum, in the interaction between teachers and students, and in the nature of classroom activity and discourse.

Lesson introduction

This is the most important step because it "hooks" the student's attention and sets the stage for the rest of the lesson. Introductions are important because they provide a first impression, establish credibility with pupils, and prepare them for the content of the lessons. A good lesson introduction further provides a smooth transition from known or already covered material to new or unknown material by capitalizing on the use of examples (either verbal or nonverbal), analogies, and student activities which students have interest in or experience with. A good introduction should also motivate the pupils to learn. Analysis of student teacher's written introduction was done in a way consistent with Kumaravadivelu's (2006) principles of possibility, practicality and particularity. I was therefore able to judge the relevance, authenticity and suitability of the whole lesson.

Instructional material

They are resources that teachers use to help themselves teach effective lessons. Instructional materials are important educational resources because they improve students' knowledge, abilities, and skills, to monitor their assimilation of information, and to contribute to their overall development and upbringing. Use of instructional materials also clarifies important concepts to arouse and sustain learners' interests, and give them the opportunity to share experiences necessary for new learning. They further help make learning more permanent. In analyzing this aspect of the lesson plan, I was able to ascertain the student teacher's ability to select suitable materials that aid learners' understanding. In short, I was able to judge the suitability and effectiveness of instructional materials. Usefulness and appropriateness are two important criteria for

selecting relevant material. As such, we at GZU, encourage our student teachers to select the instructional method that most effectively guide them toward desired learning outcomes.

Activities

These are classroom tasks that a teacher makes to aid lesson effectiveness. Lesson activities are important in terms of measuring performances of the students as well as to provide quality information to them. Pupils get involved by interacting and collaborating with each other and the teacher to solve problems. In analysing student teachers' activities, I wanted to find out how the student teacher was able to make each pupils active players in the learning process. I also wanted to establish how student teachers were able to create an environment in which there are opportunities for pupils to join in doing tasks. I am inclined to believe that my analysis was commensurate with the Social Constructivist approach which maintains that, knowledge is constructed as one interacts with one's environments through processes of discourse, negotiation, and consensus building (Syh-Jong, 2007; Tobin & Tippins, 1993). Classroom activities can be different in nature and involve lots of learning elements in it to help the learners to get into the depth of the knowledge to understand the information.

Conclusion

In analyzing this aspect of the lesson. I wanted to establish student teachers' ability to make well-informed conclusions that have as their first purpose to draw attention to the end of a lesson and to consolidate or reinforce the major points that have been learnt. I was also in a position to see whether the conclusions made allowed students to practice what they had learned.

Evaluation and reflection

Formative assessment has evolved as an important mechanism of evaluation that provides a constant qualitative and quantitative supply of data and feedback to all relevant and interested parties. The data can be used to identify weaknesses as well as highlight strengths and successes. In analyzing this aspect of student teachers' written DLPs, I was able to judge the student teachers' ability to reflect upon their teaching. As discussed earlier in the Chapter on Literature Review, this is important because it allows student teachers to assess what they

are doing well, identify areas where they might be lacking or may need more guidance to ensure effective performance. When they reflect they stand back and think of a situation or problem, gain a new perspective of something, make sense of their experiences and construct meaning and knowledge that directs actions in practice.

In sections 3.7.1.3.1 and 3.7.1.3.2 above, I have attempted to discuss the significant role that schemes of work and lesson plans play in guiding the student teacher towards achieving instructional goals. In line with Reed & Michaud, (2010)'s views about documentary analysis, analyzing these documents gave me the opportunity to evaluate student teachers own knowledge with regards to the content to be taught. In the succeeding section, I discuss semi-structured interviews.

3.7 2 Semi-structured interviews

Gall et al (2008) cite three fundamental types of research interviews that they call structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) in Leavy (2014) describe semi-structured interviews as an interview carried out with a purpose to collect data from participants hoping to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomenon. These interview questions consists of a list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the interview in a particular order to enable the collection of what is deemed important in the answering of research questions. They are open-ended methods of data collection techniques used in qualitative research. Qualitative interviewing refers to “in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing” (Ary et al. 2002; Mason, 2002). It requires asking veritably open-ended questions in a natural setting (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 141) in order to make analytical comparisons (Mason, 2002, p. 65). Since my study was a qualitative case study, it required the use of semi-structured interviews to collect data from all participants. With the use of a schedule of questions and issues, I therefore conducted three sessions of those semi-structured interviews with: student teachers, mentors and lecturers (See appendices 8.1, 8.2, 8.3).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p. 267) explain that the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life; rather, it is part of life, its human embeddedness is inescapable. For that reason, they have to be well- conducted to make them “a powerful tool for eliciting rich data on people’s views, attitudes and the meanings that underpin their lives and behaviours Gray (2009, p.370). I scheduled all person-to-person interviews at a time and location convenient for the participants. As recommended by Gall et al. (1996), Huberman and Miles (2002) and De Vos et al. (2005), the interviews that lasted between 30 to 45 minutes (for each participant) took place by means of note taking and audio recording. They were later transcribed. The note -taking served as an additional recording measure and as a back-up procedure if consent could not be obtained from the interviewees to record the interview by means of an audio recorder. In using semi-structured interviews, the purpose varies according to the type of data I wanted from respective participants which I now move on to discuss in the succeeding section.

3.7.2.1 Semi-structured interview questions for student teachers

Interview questions for student teachers were designed to bring out participants’ perceived difficulties encountered in their teaching practice period that would reflect on their university curriculum as well as the support they received from the school-based mentorship. For example, they were asked to describe whether their pre-practicum expectations were being fulfilled, what challenges they had experienced as they developed lesson plans as well as with the teaching itself, interacting with their learners and other teachers around them? Furthermore, I asked student teachers how they analyzed their situation and how they were able to overcome challenges or maximize the opportunities. The type of questions I asked were generally centred on the four research questions that the study attempts to answer. The interview guide is provided for in Appendix 8.1

3.7.2.2 Semi structured interviews for mentors

Mentors are the stake holders who operate in the practical school-based teaching practice as student teachers’ supervisors. It is hoped that they have an understanding of the expected standard of pedagogy thus are able to point out the strengths and weaknesses of the TP program in general and those of the student teachers in particular. In that case then, mentor

interviews were designed to get their views on the perceived theory- practice gaps prevalent in student teachers ESL practices, and their ability to handle classroom pedagogy. The interviews were further meant to establish whether mentors thought there was a shared understanding of the expected standard of pedagogy between themselves and lecturers. For samples of their responses see Appendix 8.2.

3.7.2.3 Semi structured interviews for lectures

Lecturer interviews were designed to add consensus and enhance validity of the data generated from the other methodologies applied in this study. In my study, lecturers are uniquely the only stakeholders operating in both the theory-based departmental modules as the teachers and the practical school-based teaching practice as student teacher supervisors. It is important to note that lecturers were one group of stakeholders expected to have an understanding of the theoretical and practical basis of the structure of the teacher development programme and possibly an over-arching oversight of the inherent strengths and, or weaknesses of its structure. In this regard, the initial theory/ practice gaps could be found to obtain first in the lecturers' theory practice knowledge. Interviews in this regard were going to lend data credibility and study validity as a whole. It should also be noted on the outset however, that even if the lecturers were to be found less conversant with the more salient features of the programme or its structure, that would still be valuable data in the context of theory-practice gaps in teacher development. The interview guide for lecturers is provided for in Appendix 8.3.

I used semi -structured interviews because of the following attributes:

- They provide an opportunity to address complex experiences and investigate each participant's personal perspective using a range of probes and other techniques to achieve in-depth understanding of the personal context within which the research phenomenon is located.
- It has the flexibility that allows researcher to understand better the perspective of the interview (Dane 2010; Dayman and Holloway 2002).

- They allow more clarifying, probing and cross checking questions where the interviewer has the freedom to alter, rephrase and add questions according to the nature of responses from interviewees (Best & Kahn, 2003).
- They provide an opportunity to question thoroughly certain areas of enquiry such as opinions, and it permits greater depth of responses.
- They were used to achieve a balance between structure and openness, meaning that interviewees have had opportunities to give detailed responses about their individual experiences, enabling “‘discovery’ rather than ‘checking’” (Denscombe, 1998, p.113).
- They consist of several key questions that help to define the areas of exploration and they allow the interviewer or interviewees to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail (Gill et al 2008).
- Participants are free to express themselves freely and openly and to define words from their perspective and the researcher is able to make a follow up to the questions by probing more deeply (Dawson & Algozzin 2006).

In carrying out interviews with participants, the initial task was to establish a friendly, secure and cooperative relationship with the interviewee by a word of thanks for being willing to partake in the research. I was also sensitive to the specific situation of each respondent, because of the school-specific circumstances and work-related priorities. Interview skills are not simple language-motor skills, but a high order combination of observation, empathetic, sensitive and intellectual judgement of interview situation and person being interviewed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). For that reason, the purpose, format and sequence of questioning were explained before the actual interview and, in line with Best & Kahn, (2003); Breen, (2006), the pace and time during the interview were continuously monitored. The information and explanations regarding the interviews were necessarily included in the cover letter that was handed to each participant (see Appendix 6). This was meant to ensure participants could always refer to it in case of my return to interview to check something within a few a days of the original interview (participant validation). This is what I followed as I provided a copy of the interview schedule, with my, as well as the interviewee’s contact details to each of my interviewees.

The most common sources of data collection in qualitative research are interviews, observations, and review of documents (Creswell, 2009b; Locke, Silverman, & Spirduso, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In this study, the face -to-face interviews described above were conducted over an interspersed three -week period where in each of those was allocated to one group of participants. My interview technique included three types of questions: main questions, follow-up questions, and probes. The main questions were designed to focus on the substance of the research problem and to stay on target with addressing the research puzzle. The follow-up and probe questions helped to ensure that I pursued depth, detail, vividness, richness, and most shades of meaning (nuance) the interviewee communicated. Depth refers to “asking about distinct points of view while learning enough of the context” to be able to “put together separate pieces” of what I heard “in a meaningful way” Pursuing depth can lead to “richness” which means, “Interviews can bring out a variety of ideas leading to the creation of different themes. Richness “allows a depth interviewer to unravel the complexity of other people’s worlds Rubin and Rubin (1995) define vividness as coming from “asking background questions and learning enough about the overall context to personalize the researcher’s report so that they can present their interviewees as real people rather than abstractions”. The practice of seeking “vividness” is used to obtain narrative reports or to “request step-by-step descriptions of what happened,” whereas “nuance” implies that there are multiple shades of grey in interviewing which is again important to look beyond just the black and white answers because it highlights subtlety of meaning. In the next section I discuss the lesson observation that I made to collect data.

I provide below, the samples of questions (4-6) to which lectures responded.

4. Literature about teacher education shows that there is a gap between what is taught at the university and what student experience in the classroom during TP. What is your comment about that?
5. Which aspects of ESL teacher development curriculum do you think help develop student teachers’ knowledge base?

6. Are you very clear about exactly why our model of teacher preparation has a University-based theoretical component and the school-based practical? Please explain.

3.7.3 Observation

According to Yin (2003a), there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (pp.83, 85-96). Indeed, the case study's unique strength is "its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (Yin 2003a: 8). Observation usually refers to a method of generating data which makes the researcher engage themselves in the research setting so that they can experience and observe at first hand a range of dimension in and out of the setting (Mason 2002). Observational data represent a first-hand encounter with the phenomenon under study which affords the investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations (Cohen et al. 2010, p. 397; Merriam, 2001). Mackey and Gass (2005, p.175) contend that "observations are useful in providing large amounts of data on the participant behaviours and actions". In observations undertaken in a naturalistic setting focusing on the process rather than on the role, Werner & Schoefle (1987) cite three different kinds of observation representing increasingly deep understanding of social groups under study. First, there is descriptive which the observation of everything is and where the researcher assumes child-like attitude assuming that they know nothing. Then, there is "focused observation" in which things defined as irrelevant can be ignored. Finally and most systematically, there is selective observation in which the researcher concentrates on the attributes of different types of activities. This case study adopts the selective type of observation, specifically, direct observation which Patton (1990) says provides insights into the taken for granted aspects of everyday activities. It provides an opportunity for the researcher to observe directly what is taking place in the social setting (Mills et al, 2010).

In my study, I observed twenty-eight lessons taught by seven student teacher participants in a period of eight months. Observations were recorded verbatim in the field notebook. The purpose of the lesson observation was to ascertain the quality of their teaching with regard to the consistency between the ESL teacher curriculum plan and the actual delivery of the

subject content by novice teachers. This was in line with Good (1988, p.377) who purport that “one role of observational research is to describe what takes place in classrooms in order to delineate the complex practical issues that confront practitioners”

Lesson observations were an integral part of this research with the goal of answering questions about how student teachers integrate theory into practice, how they reflected upon their teaching to improve their effectiveness and whether their strategies and activities mirrored the theoretical perspectives underpinning this study relationship between theory and practice as evidenced by student pedagogical practices. I used an observation guide that spelt out the issues of interest that I focused on during the instructional process (see Appendix 13).

Table 1: Name of student teachers participants and class they taught

Name of student teacher	Classes taught
Student teacher Be	Form1 (two classes) and form 2 (one class)
Student teacher Ca	Form 1(one class) and form 3 (two classes)
Student teacher Fa	Form 1(one class) and form 2 (two classes)
Student teacher Ar	Form 1(two classes) and form 3 (one class)
Student teacher Nk	Form 1(one class) and form 2 (two classes)
Student teacher Fo	Form 2 (two classes) and form 3(one class)
Student teacher Am	Form 1(two classes) and form 3(one class)

Observation was used in this case study because it is consistent with qualitative case studies and it has got several advantages described below;

- It is unobtrusive and does not require direct interaction with participants (Adler and Adler 1994).
- Observation produces rigor when it is combined with other methods. When the researcher has access to group processes, direct observation can illuminate the

discrepancies between what people said in the interviews and casual conversations and what they actually do (Pettigrew 1990).

- In contrast to interviews or focus groups, observation gathers naturally occurring data to gather firsthand information about social processes (Silverman 2001).
- Observational methods go some way towards addressing the issue that what people say is not necessarily what they do and they also offer opportunities for the analysis of non-verbal communication (Pope and Mays 2006).
- Very direct method for collecting data or information – best for the study of human behavior and data collected is very accurate and reliable.
- It gives the researcher direct experience of the phenomenon being studied and creates an opportunity to see and hear what is happening in the social setting rather than focusing solely on the narrative description of the participants.

I was however aware of the limitations of observational methods which can be caused by; observer effect/complex (how the observed often change their behaviour due to the presence of an outsider), observer bias (how the observer's point of view may influence what they see) and observer expectations (the observer assuming beforehand what they are going to see). I minimised the influence that the limitations may have had on my research findings by making familiarization tours before the commencement of research. I hoped this helped student teachers and school pupils to become acquainted with me and any electrical gadgets that I used in data collection. Other observational limitations were counteracted by the use of triangulation.

3.7.4 Focus group discussion

Kumar (1987) defines the *focus group discussion* as “a rapid assessment, semi-structured data gathering method in which a purposively selected set of participants gather to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the researcher /facilitator. De Vos et al. (2012, p. 360), says a *focus group discussion* is “a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive non-threatening environment.” while Powell et al (1996, p. 499) say that “a focus group is a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss, comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research”. The focus group in qualitative

research is a small gathering of individuals who have a common interest or characteristic, assembled by a moderator, who uses the group and its interactions as a way to gain information about a particular issue. The purpose of focus groups is to promote a comfortable atmosphere of disclosure in which people can share their ideas, experiences, and attitudes about a topic Kruger and Casey (2000). Participants influence and are influenced,” while researchers play various roles, including that of moderator, listener, observer, and eventually inductive analyst (Lewis, 1995; Gibbs; 1997; Marczak & Sewell; 1998).

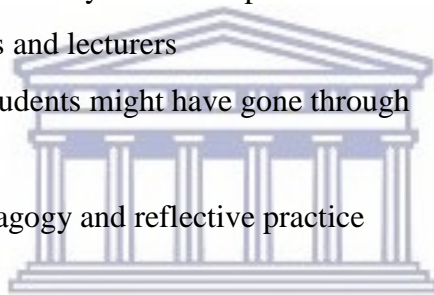
In my study, I chose the focus group discussions because I assumed these novice teacher participants shared and experienced similar situations in their ESL practices and as such, they would be able to interact and share ideas and opinions about the relationship between theory and practice. The focus or object of analysis was the interaction inside the group which Kitzinger (1994, 1995), says is the crucial feature of focus groups because the interaction between participants highlights their view of the world, the language they use about an issue and their values and beliefs about a situation. (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 436) further add that interaction within the group to discuss a topic or topics supplied by the researcher, aims at yielding a collective instead of an individual view. Focus group discussions have several advantages including the fact that:

- If participants reveal multiple understandings and meanings, multiple explanations of their behaviour and attitudes will be more readily articulated.
- They elicit information in a way that allows researchers to find out why an issue is salient, as well as what is salient about it (Morgan 1988).
- Participants give immediate reactions. In the give and take of a lively discussion, participants can raise questions that the researcher had not thought of and might never have raised in the course of a few individual interviews.

Focus group interviews can be unstructured, semi-structured or highly structured (Punch, 2005, p.171). I made use of semi-structured interviews to yield rich thick data from the seven pre-service student teachers and to keep the session on track at the same time allowing respondents to talk freely and spontaneously. FGDs was at least an hour of face -to face discussion for the purpose that I gain insights into the set of thematic questions while taking

advantage of the permissive non-threatening environment. Playing the role of moderator, listener, observer, and inductive analyst, I was able to understand not only the student teachers' emotions but also their objective understanding of the challenges they felt they faced as novice teachers operating between the University Department of Teacher Development and the Practicum schools. I made sure the discussion was relaxed, comfortable, and often enjoyable for participants as they shared their ideas and perceptions. In attempting to cover all the research questions, I used a discussion guide (see Appendix 9) with a list of thematic questions stated below:

- The worthwhileness of TP
- Level of preparedness to meet classroom challenges
- Notable challenges
- Perceived roles of the university and or the practicum schools
- Effectiveness of mentors and lecturers
- Desirable experiences students might have gone through
- On methodology
- On the Post method pedagogy and reflective practice



However, although focus discussion has many benefits in collecting qualitative data, it has its limitations to which effect Krueger (1988) says:

- Groups are more difficult to manage than one individual is; interviewer must keep track of what is going on in the group.
- One person may dominate to the exclusion of others.
- Unexpected conflicts, power struggles, and other group dynamics may inhibit discussion.

In order to give my readership a clear picture of the type of questions I asked during focus group interviews, I provide below three samplings of questions to which participants responded while the rest of the questions are provided in Appendix 9.

1. In your view (with reasons) what role do you think TP plays?

2. Do you think you were adequately prepared you to meet the classroom challenges? Give specific examples.
3. What do you see as the extent of the link between ESL in schools and pedagogical theoretical knowledge from the university and the classroom situations?

Having described all the instrument I used to collect data, for my research, I now move on to discuss triangulation. I believe that my use of triangulation helped overcome and mitigate some of the weaknesses.

3.8 Triangulation

Robson (2002, p.174) describes triangulation as “a valuable and widely used strategy that examines the research problem from more than one viewpoint so that the study becomes more robust”. O’Donoghue and Punch (2003, p.78), view triangulation as a “method of crosschecking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data”. Cohen and Manion (2000) sum it up by pointing out that triangulation is an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint."

The definitions presented above confirm the important use of triangulation towards reducing the several biases that often affect the dependability of the results. It originated from the work of (Campbell & Fiske, 1959) through their idea of ‘multiple operationism’ towards validating the research results.

Denzin (1978) identifies four basic types of triangulation: *data source triangulation*, *investigator triangulation*, *theory triangulation* and *methodical triangulation* while Miles and Huberman (1994) distinguished five kinds of triangulation in qualitative research by adding data type triangulation. However, despite the dissimilarities, the most significant issue among them is that triangulation enhances the validity and confirmability of research findings (Kopinak, 1999, p. 171).

In my study, I triangulated data by employing various theoretical perspectives (cf Chapter on Literature review) several data sources (student teachers, mentors and lecturers) each in their setting and multiple data collection techniques (semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, and documentary analysis). Methodological triangulation is the use of more than two methods in studying the same phenomenon under investigation (Mitchell, 1986). By making such combinations, I hoped to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method and single-theory studies. Each of these strands was important and beneficial in its unique way towards the findings of my research. Using data triangulation enabled me to draw comparisons of qualitative data received from semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and direct classroom observation. Consequently, I was able to re-confirm trends, identify consistencies or inconsistencies and uncover the deviant dimension of the study whose focus was on the persistent theory-practice gaps perceived as emanating from the constraints of every day instructional practices in ESL. Employing several theoretical principles served as critical ways of enriching and widening my understanding of the subject under study. As articulated by Denzin, (1970) in Thurmond (2001), theory triangulation helped me in several ways including to see problem (theory – practice gaps at hand using multiple lenses. Use of multiple data sources was important in this study as additional sources of information often gave more insight into a topic and helped to capture data from different dimension of the issues under study.

Triangulation in my study entailed the cross-checking of the consistency of specific and factual data items from various participants via multiple methods at different times (Guba & Lincoln 1989; Patton 1990). This was consistent with the view that a larger pool of relevant data practically guarantees that areas of convergence and divergence will be discovered: areas of convergence and divergence that may not have been identified or noticed in the data from a single study. If the results obtained through a particular data analysis technique, for example thematic analysis, were congruent with the results obtained by analyzing the same transcripts using a different technique, for example focus group discussion, it was reasonable to argue that the analysis and interpretation of the data was sound. These types of data triangulation come as the result of the idea that the robustness of data can vary based on the

time data were collected, people involved in the data collection process and the setting from which the data were collected (Begley, 1996).

3.9 Data analysis

Cohen et al. (2011, p.537) define data analysis as “a rigorous process which involves organizing, accounting for, and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.” Merriam’s (1998) view about data analysis is similar to that of Stake (1995, p.71) who defines it as “a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations.” Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p.153) describes data analysis as “the process of systematically searching and arranging interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that the researcher accumulates to increase his/her understanding of them and to enable him/her to present what he/she has discovered to others.” The definitions above indicate that the data collected during the research process is raw data that cannot speak for itself. Instead, the data needs a process of categorization that aims at making sense of the messages in the data (Bonilha 2012). Thomas (2006) says the categorization allows the researcher to reduce textual data into meaningful format and to convert it into findings (Patton 2002, in De Vos et al. 2012).

Gray (2004) recognizes two main approaches for analyzing qualitative data: content analysis and grounded theory. The former method attempts to identify specific categories and criteria of selection before the analysis process starts, while in the second method (grounded theory), no criteria are prepared in advance. All the measures and themes come out during the process of data collection and analysis. Hence, grounded theory is an inductive approach and content analysis is more deductive. Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.23) define grounded theory as a theory that is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Analysis of data using grounded theory technique involves three stages: Open coding, in which the data is categorized into units; Axial coding, in which the relationships between categories are identified and finally selective coding, where the core categories are integrated to produce a theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The constant comparative method also represents an

important approach for analyzing qualitative data. It starts with collecting data from the field; identifying key issues or activities in the data that would be a focus of categories; writing about the formed categories with an attention to describe all existing issues and constantly looking for new incidents; working with the data in an attempt to develop a model to capture social processes and relationships. When analyzing data, the qualitative researcher attempts to make sense and interpret the phenomena in terms of the meaning the participants place on them (Creswell, 2009).

I analyzed data in my study by using the constant comparative method that yields from the grounded theory approach. The analysis process started with transcribing, coding, categorizing the data into different sets and then comparing them. Afterwards, I critically analyzed the similarities and differences of the formed categories with the aim of finding out the actual meaning of the data. The main purpose was to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data. I achieved this through a process of inductive analysis of the data Maree (2012). The themes used in the result chapter had developed from the questions posed and the analysis process.

A major feature of qualitative analysis is coding data, a method that I used in this research to organize data and come up with categories. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p.349), “coding is the analysis strategy many qualitative researchers employ in order to help them locate key themes, patterns, ideas and concepts that may exist within their data”. In addition, Marshall and Rossman (2006, p.160) see data coding as “the formal representation of analytic thinking, whereby generating categories and themes constitute the tough intellectual work of analysis”. These ideas helped me to code the raw data from semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and classroom observation in order to come up with themes and categories (Marshall and Rossman, 2006, p. 160). Coding is not merely a technical task, therefore when data is coded, new meanings and understandings may develop, thus making it necessary to adjust the original plan. In accordance with Corbin and Strauss (2008), data coding in this research started soon after the first interview since the first data serves as “a foundation for data collection and analysis. I did an inductive analysis to reveal the themes that emerged from the interview data. Marshall and Rossman (2000) distinguish

between deductive and inductive sources of themes. I analyzed the spoken and the written data for this study to uncover the tacit ideologies at work in participants' talk. The words and terms our participants employed were important because words are a powerful tool for characterizing, sanitizing or intensifying a categorization or an interaction. The process of data collection was done in line with research ethics detailed in the section below.

3. 10 Ethical Considerations

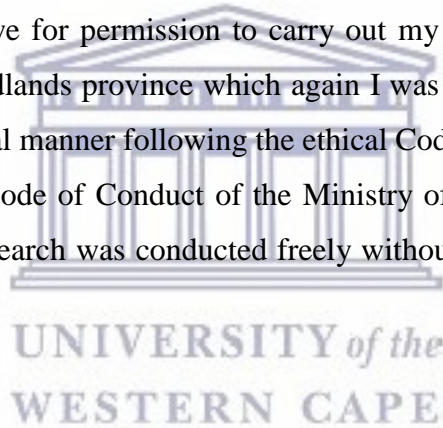
Simons (1995) in Pring (2000, p. 142) defines Ethics as “the search for rules of conduct that enable us to operate defensibly in the political contexts in which we have to conduct educational research”. Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p. 49) define ethics in research as “the principles of right and wrong that a particular group accepts” whereas Johnson and Christensen (2010, p. 99) give a clear definition of ethics when they state, “Ethics are the principles' and guidelines that help uphold the things we value.” Chilisa (2005) says that “ethical issues in research include codes of conduct that are concerned with protection of the researched from physical, mental, and/or psychological harm”. This is particularly important if one's research involves human participants he or she address individuals' rights to dignity, privacy, confidentiality and avoidance of harm (Glesne & Peshkin 1992; Punch 1986).

The British Educational Research Association (2004, p. 6) considers voluntary informed consent to be the condition in which participants understand and agree to their participation without any duress, prior to the research getting underway. They should confirm that they understand, what they research is about, why their selection, what their involvement would entail and that participation is anonymous and voluntary (Anderson and Arsenault 1998). Stake (2003, p.154) says “qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world, thus their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict”. His statement rings well with Silverman's (2000, p. 201) reminder that, “researchers should always remember that while they are doing their research, they are in actual fact entering the private spaces of their participants”. Creswell (2003) also states that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informants. He cautions researchers to be aware of these and other issues before, during, and after the research had been conducted. I was indeed

aware of the ethical issues to consider and thus responded in accordance with all ethical guidelines as discussed below.

3.10.1 Permission

Before any educational research takes place, it is paramount for the researcher to gain permission from all participants taking part in the research. By giving their permission, participants are indicating that they have understood the research that I am carrying out and give their permission for their data to be used. This is consistent with Silverman's (2010) view that researchers who intend to carry out research must get the backing of the academic institution in order to earn the confidence of the participants. In keeping with this advice, I applied for Ethical clearance (which was granted) from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) before the study commenced. I then applied to the ministry of Primary and Secondary education, Zimbabwe for permission to carry out my study in high schools in Gweru urban district of the midlands province which again I was granted. The study was therefore conducted in an ethical manner following the ethical Code of the University of the Western Cape as well as the Code of Conduct of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe. My research was conducted freely without deception by giving all information (Silverman 2010).



3.10.2 Access

Since I had the permission letter from the ministry to carry out my research, it was very easy to gain access to the research sites. Also, this being a case study about student teacher practices and one that is framed within the teacher education institution where I am employed and responsible for TP supervision, access and acceptability was not a problem because I had the mandate to visit the student teachers regularly to perform my normal supervisory duties. Similarly, the research was conducted in accordance with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education school calendar as well as Great Zimbabwe University's Teaching Practice Itinerary so, no disturbances were created during the process.

3.10.3 Consent

Informed consent is a central canon of research ethics policy and as such, it is imperative that participants get detailed information about the study (Halse & Honey 2005). When carrying out research about human beings, participants should be informed about the research and why they are researched (Gilbert 2008; Halse & Honey 2005). In keeping with this principle, information statement explaining the purpose of the study was availed to all participants. Thus, I fully informed participants in this study about the nature of the study and they confirmed their understanding by completing consent forms before the start of research (see Appendix 6.1). During data collection, I followed the UWC regulations on collection and managing personal information by gathering it only from those who gave their consent. I further collected data that were relevant to my study and used it only to the closely defined purpose of my thesis. I did not collect sensitive data and all data were kept confidential.

3.10.4 Confidentiality

Cameron and Price (2009) says that a number of different obligations guides researcher conduct for an example, the safety and confidentiality of participants. Additionally, Coffee & Johns (2000) in (Kakabadise & Kakabadse & Kouzmin 2002) reiterate that during the research process, there might be some sensitive and confidential information that if not carefully handled may cause discomfort. In line with the views presented here, I kept the confidentiality of all the participants and practicing schools by giving them pseudo names to protect their identity. I assured participants of the confidentiality of their participation in the interview and the background of the research. I further explained the aims of my research to provide the interviewees with relevant and necessary information about the research.

3.10.5 Safety/harm

Stake (1995; 2003) point out that it is important that researchers go beyond standard ethics requirements and to exercise great caution to minimize risk by, for example, maintaining an active dialogue with the research participants, providing feedback, and in particular for the researcher “to listen well for signs of concern including harm. Harm refers to psychological as well as physical injury. With regard to this, researchers must respect human rights and the law and wellbeing of their participants at all times. In this study, I ensured the safety of participants by carefully and truthfully informing them about the research before they could

sign the consent forms of participation and conducting my interviews in safe places such as offices within the institutional premises.

3.10.6 Equity and respect

All participants were equally and fairly treated with respect and dignity and were to make decisions for themselves. No one was unjustly favoured or discriminated against. .

3.10.7 Anonymity

Foreman-Peck and Winch (2010, p. 119) point out the importance of anonymity when they state that such promises are given to protect the identity of the participants. Researchers must do all they can to protect the anonymity of participants and keep any personal data private. Participants give information in good faith, and it would be unethical for a researcher to mention participants within research or leave data in places where others could access it, This is necessary to protect them from any harmful consequences of sensitive or negative findings, or indeed the stigmatization of institutions or communities. Throughout this research, the anonymity of all participants was upheld, with no personal information, including their name or school mentioned.

3.10.7 Validity and Reliability

In this research, validity and reliability, synonymous with verifiability and consistence, were achieved using triangulation. I believed that this was in keeping with what Denzin's (1978, p. 291) definition of triangulation as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon"? He goes further to purport that it is a vehicle for cross validation when two or more distinct are found to be congruent and yield comparable data. Campbell and Fiske (1959) add that more than one method should be used in the validation process to ensure that the distinct variance reflected that of the trait and not of the method.

In keeping with ethical guidelines, I have furnished below the summary of the steps I followed in my study:

- All the consent forms filled in by participants will be included in the appendices in the final thesis document.

- I safeguarded participants' work voluntarily and allowed them complete consent forms before the research commenced.
- All participants and other members in the research site were treated with dignity, fairness and respect. I remained objective and open minded to participants' choices, beliefs and views.
- All my data were secured- I kept soft data under a password so that it was not accessible to unauthorised persons. Hard data were kept under lock and key.
- I ensured that participants were not subjected to prejudice or harm by keeping their identities anonymous unless otherwise required by the concerned parties.
- I also ensured that my study would not damage the school reputation, but instead, would enhance the school's standing.

In the last section below, I summarize the issues discussed in the methodology chapter.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the research methodology and methods I employed to carry out the study. I adopted and described the interpretive paradigm and qualitative approach as the over-arching theoretical frameworks underpinning my study. This was followed by a detailed description of the implementation of the case study design and research methods. This description included information about aims of the study, participant selection, data collection, triangulation and data analysis procedures for this study. The ethical considerations for this study were also been outlined in this chapter. The primary focus of this chapter was to provide descriptions for the research process and its applicability to the research questions in question. The following chapter reports in detail on the findings of this my research study using a structured narrative format.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The aim of my qualitative study is to examine the relationship between theory and practice as could be established through; the B.Ed. secondary student teachers' instructional practices in English during their Teaching Practicum period, critiques and interviews with; lecturers who teach on the university-based programmes and the school-based mentors who assist the student teachers during the same period. In chapter three, I presented the relevant methodological framework that I employed during the research process including the research questions, the data collection instruments and the subsequent type of data collected, the methods used to analyse data in response to the major and sub research questions. In this chapter then, I present and analyse the data collected from twenty one participants comprising; seven student teachers of English, seven university lecturers and seven school based mentors.

4.1 Overview

I begin this chapter by describing what my presentation and analysis of data entail and then provide an outline of the analytic procedure required for qualitative data analysis, locating it in relation to other qualitative methods that search for themes and patterns. Subsequent to this, I provide a summary of the six steps that I followed in presenting and analyzing data, then move on to present a research question/instrument matrix indicating the research questions and the subsequent data gathering instruments I used to elicit data for each research question. Momentarily, I briefly deliberate on the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. Afterwards, I present and analyse my data according to emerging themes.

4.2 Data analysis

Cohen et al. (2011, p. 537) describe data analysis as “a rigorous process which involves “organizing, accounting for, and explaining the data; making sense of the data in terms of participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.” Bogdan and Biklen (2007) describe data analysis as a systematic process of sifting and

arranging all information obtained from interview transcripts, field notes and other material collected to increase understanding of the data to enable the presentation of what have been discovered. Marshall and Rossman (1999, p.150) add that data analysis is “the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data”. Marshall and Rossman (1999) further argue that qualitative research data collection, analysis and recording operate as interrelated procedures that are ongoing rather than isolated incidents. Hatch (2002, p.148) says that analysis is “a means of organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, mount critiques, or generate theories. It often involves synthesis, evaluation, interpretation, categorization, hypothesizing, comparison, and pattern finding. Wolcott (1994) calls it “mind work”. Researchers always engage their own intellectual capacities to make sense of qualitative data.”

4.3 Qualitative data analysis

My qualitative study is interpretive in nature and consequently, its analytic framework entails a network of linked concepts and classifications, leading to the understanding of its underlying process. This means, it brings out a sequence of events or constructs and how they each relate with one another. In that case then, I presented and analyzed my data using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) analytic method comprising six phases of conducting qualitative thematic analysis. According to them, thematic analysis is a method used for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun and Clarke’s 2006, p.79). Braun and Clarke (2013) further express that thematic analysis is advantageous for use in analyzing qualitative data because; it works with a wide range of research questions from those about people’s experiences or understandings to those about the representation and construction of particular phenomena in particular contexts. It can be used to analyse different types of data from secondary sources such as media to transcripts of focus groups or interviews, work with large or small data sets and can be applied to produce data -driven or theory-driven analyses. Additionally, I adopted this approach because it offers an accessible and theoretically flexible method to analyzing qualitative data. It is comprehensive in nature and involves analyzing data with little or no predetermined theory, structure or framework and uses the actual data itself to derive the structure of analysis. It

relies on inductive reasoning in which themes emerge from the raw data through repeated examination and comparison. The technique uses a set of codes to reduce volumes of verbal or print material into more manageable data from which researchers identify patterns and gain insight.

4.4 Six phases of data analysis

Below is a summary of the six phases that I followed to present and analyse my data;

- Data familiarization
- Initial code generation
- Initial theme searching from data transcripts
- Theme reviewing for fine tuning and reviewing
- Theme defining and naming
- Report production

4.5 Research question/Instrument Matrix

A matrix is an organizational tool that presents connections between available research articles and specific aspects of a chosen topic by having articles on one side and the specific parts of a topic on the other side. Each cell in the matrix is a visual representation of potential inter- sections between different parts of the larger topic. Data matrices are a means of integrating large amounts of qualitative data to help develop understanding of its meaning. They can also be used for presenting data in a report, enabling readers to see how they have arrived at an interpretation (Nadin & Cassell 2004; Miles, and Huberman, 1994). The use of a matrix in my study is valuable because; it enables me to compare data for different data sets or ‘cases’ in the data and to explore relationships in the data that help to explain what was happening in the instructional process of student teachers of ESL.

Table 2: Below is a summary of the research/ question instrument matrix

Research questions	Research instrument used
<u>Major question</u>	Documentary analysis Semi-structured interviews

<p>What theory-practice gaps exist in pre-service teacher classroom practices in ESL at secondary school level and why do they arise?</p>	<p>Lesson observations Focus group discussions</p>
<p><u>Sub-questions</u></p> <p>(i) To what extent do student teacher practices on TP reflect the ESL theoretical content knowledge and pedagogies learnt at the university?</p> <p>(ii) Can there be a shared understanding of student teachers’ expected pedagogical practices between university lecturers and school based mentors?</p> <p>(iii) How can the university curriculum and the school curriculum support effective teacher development in ESL?</p>	<p>Lesson observations Documentary analysis <i>(student teachers lesson plans and schemes of work)</i></p> <p>Semi-structured interviews, <i>(lecturers, mentors and student teachers)</i></p> <p>Documentary analysis <i>(lecturer and mentors’ written feedback)</i></p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews with; <i>(lecturers mentors and student teachers)</i></p> <p>Focus group discussions <i>(Students)</i></p>

As I have pointed out in my Methodology Chapter, and again finding it worth repeating it in this chapter, I employed semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, lesson observation and documentary analysis to achieve triangulation which Denzin (1978, p.14) describes as, “the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon and a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources.” Jick (1979) and Thietart et al (2001, p. 83) say ‘triangulation is significant in qualitative research because it allows the researcher to benefit from the advantages of the

two approaches, counterbalancing the defects of one approach with qualities of the other. By its nature, my study looks for rich insightful data about participants' perceptions, insights, attitudes, experiences, or beliefs about the theory- practice relationship in ESL teaching from the beginning to their practicum period. For that reason, I needed to fully utilize each instrument to get desired data. Accordingly, I observed twenty eight lessons (four for each student teacher) to establish how the *which* and the *what* aspects of the teacher knowledge base (described in my Literature review Chapter above) were reflected in the instructional practices of student teachers. I again examined and analyzed student teachers schemes of work and 'detailed lesson plans, lecturers and mentors' supervision feedback on student teachers' pedagogic practices, to ascertain the degree of consistency or inconsistency that obtained. Focus group discussions and interview data for student teachers and lecturers were transcribed using audio recordings and field notes written during the discussions.

Familiarizations with the data was crucial for me to begin appreciating the nuanced meanings coming through. I did this by reading and re-reading the transcribed texts, listening to the audio-recordings before trying to decipher the meaning. I then employed coding to organize data and to come up with emerging themes and categories. This phase of my study involved generating succinct labels (codes) that identified important features of the data that I considered as relevant to answering my research questions. It required coding the entire data sets, and collating all the codes and relevant data extracts, together for later stages of analysis. Smith (2012, p. 46) defines the 'coding' of qualitative data as, "the process of separating out ideas so that themes or perspectives relevant to the research questions can be identified". This view of data coding chimes in well with the views of Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p. 349) who point out that "coding is the analysis strategy many qualitative researchers employ in order to help them locate key themes, patterns, ideas and concepts that may exist within their data". Greg (2012, p.17), sees themes as "patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated with a specific research question".

After acquainting myself with the data, I then summarized the findings across the various data sets by employing the comparison method approach based on the idea that themes represent the ways in which texts are either similar or different from each other. Glaser

(1978, p.56:72) and Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 84-95) refer to this approach as the "constant comparison method. Through the use of the constant comparative analysis, I was able to compare and contrast the views, experiences, feelings and ideas of student teachers, mentors and lecturers relative to the student teachers classroom practices in ESL during the practicum period. In the analysis of results, vignettes or the actual words written or spoken by the participants as responses to the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions will be given. Individual interviews were captured verbatim and were indented for ease of identification.

4.6 Anonymity and confidentiality of participants

It is ethically important in my study to safeguard the identity of participants and in view of that therefore, I used pseudo names for all participants to hide their identity. For lecturers and mentors, the first letter represented the participant's designation then a hyphen followed by the first two letters of the participant's real name. For example, if the mentor's name was Sarah, it was coded as M-Sa. For student teachers, letters st were used to represent their designation followed by a hyphen then the first two letters of their real name for an example student teacher Dennis was referred to as St-De. Tables 4.3-4.5 below show how the three groups of participants were coded.

Table 3: Codes for student teachers

Code	Meaning
ST-Be	Student teacher Bertha
ST-Ca	Student teacher Cape
ST-Fa	Student teacher Faro
ST-Ar	Student teacher Arnold

ST-Nk	Student teacher Nkopa
ST-Fo	Student teacher Fontana
ST-Am	Student teacher Amelly

Table 4: Codes for school based mentors

Code	Meaning
M-Ce	Mentor Cell
M-Na	Mentor Nabre
M-Go	Mentor Gore
M-Mu	Mentor Musha
M- Vi	Mentor Vickton
M-Ne	Mentor Nefa
M-Pl	Mentor Plum

Table 5: Codes for university language lecturers

Code	Meaning
L-Ts	Lecturer Tsine
L-Go	Lecturer Goode

L-Si	Lecturer Sithosa
L-Nh	Lecturer Nhau
L-Nd	Lecturer Ndera
L-Et	Lecturer Ethel
L-Ze	Lecturer Zero

I then coded the collected data and labelled it as data sets as can be seen in the table below

Table 6: Codes for data from the research instruments.

Code	Meaning
Data set DA-ST	Data from documentary analysis of student teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans
Data set DA-M	Data from documentary analysis of mentors' reports on mentoring
Data set-DA- L	Data from documentary analysis of lecturers' supervision feedback
Data set- FGD	Data from Focus Group discussions
Data set- LO	Data from Lesson observations

Data set-SSI-ST	Data from semi-structured interviews with student teachers
Data set SSI-M	Data from semi-structured interviews with school based mentors
Data set SSI-L	Data from semi-structured interviews with language lecturers

Using the above presented data sets, I was able to establish the kind of data obtained from each of the research instruments used. The voluminous data from various data sets were then summarized to come up with what I considered relevant themes and categories. Table 6 below summarizes the themes and categories that emerged from gathered data sets and upon which the subsequent data analysis and discussion was organized. In this phase, themes are typically refined, which sometimes involves them being split, combined, or discarded.

Table 7: Final coding: emerging themes and categories.

Themes	Categories
Theme 1: Challenges in integrating theory into practice (<i>Episteme</i> and <i>Phronesis</i>)	-Theories too abstract to be applicable -Lack of alignment between the university and the school curriculum -Uncertainty, complexity and the instability of actual practice situations.
Theme 2: Perceived quality of mentoring and supervision	-Inadequate time of mentoring and supervision by lecturers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of proficiency about TP mentoring, supervision and assessment. -Lack of incentives and motivational support.
Theme 3: Nature and quality of communication and dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of proper communication between the university and the practicing schools -Lack of partnerships between school and teacher education institution
Theme 4: Deficiencies in teacher knowledge base for ESL instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Inadequate Content knowledge -Inadequate pedagogical knowledge skills -Inadequate general pedagogical knowledge. -Low proficiency levels in the target language -Student teacher disillusionment
Theme 5: The Post –Method Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Particularity -Practicality
Theme 6: Theoretical input versus practical and teacher development input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gap between theoretical input and teacher development -Lack of awareness on the language specific challenges encountered during TP

<p>Theme 7: Lack of clearly defined TP supervision and assessment goals</p>	<p>lack of supervision induction workshop for newly appointed lecturers and mentors.</p> <p>Inadequate knowledge on the differences between supervision and assessment.</p> <p>-Supervision by non-subject specialists.</p> <p>Lack of knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers.</p> <p>-Inadequate supervisory and mentoring skills</p>
<p>Theme 8: Nature and quality of feedback</p>	<p>No post TP feedback</p> <p>Inadequate time for quality feedback from both lecturers and mentors</p>
<p>Theme 9: Match and mismatches between lecturer and mentor qualifications.</p>	<p>Lack of shared understanding.</p>
<p>Theme10: Student teachers' financial constraints</p>	<p>Lack of resources and other basic needs</p>
<p>Theme 11: Attitude problems</p>	<p>Preconceived ideas about student teacher practices and mentors practices.</p> <p>Low regard mentors for what mentors say.</p> <p>-Student teachers defensiveness</p>

Theme 12: Language Teacher development curriculum issues	Some modules not always relevant to student teachers' needs
Theme 13: The Social Constructivist model of practice	Lack of partnership between the university and practicing schools Sharing challenges and successes
Theme 14: Reflective practices for improved teaching	Failure to reflect upon own teaching. Lack of clear understanding about reflective practice

4.7 Quantity of data presentation and analysis

Typical of case studies, my study used a multi-method qualitative approach to allow cross-validation of important emerging issues that attempt to understand the meaning participants ascribe to their lived experiences. Consequently, the process involves generation of voluminous amounts of data which in my view is insurmountable to present and analyse. For that reason, I will, in my presentation and analysis, take only small amounts of those excerpts, statements and vignettes that confirm the views, perceptions and feelings of participants about a specific theme. This is consistent with the view of Taylor and Bogdan (1998, p.156) who point out that;

“There are no guidelines in qualitative research for determining how many instances are necessary to support a conclusion or interpretation. This is always a judgment call.”

Based on my judgement, I understand that a single incident or illustration is adequate to build a conceptual category. By the same token, the best insights might come from quite a small amount of data. The following views of Bleich (in Cooper 1985, p. 261) provide further support to my position:

“More is known about response and reading processes from small numbers of detailed reactions than from large numbers of one- word judgments. In this way, the process of teaching the development of detailed subjective response is simultaneously research into the nature of response processes.”

In sum and spirit, this can act as rich underpinnings to my research practices with which I will be amply equipped to propose subject-centred conceptualizations of my phenomenon of investigation, which would by pointing out how my resistance to the arrogant discourse of quantitative researchers can provide the stimuli and synergy for me as well as my subjects to foster our voice, agency and inter- subjectivities in developing ourselves. In the light of this, Canagarajah (1999, p. 185) articulates that:

“It is difficult for any institution to enforce its own desired meanings and thought. The hybridity of language enables subjects to represent alternate meanings denied by dominant institution, if they can negotiate the inherent tensions strategically.”

Therefore, it is argued that the researcher is not obliged to write a narrative ‘in which everything is said to everyone’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998:, p.349). Having said that, I now move on to the succeeding section where I describe the themes that emerged from various data sources.

4.8 Qualitative thematic analysis

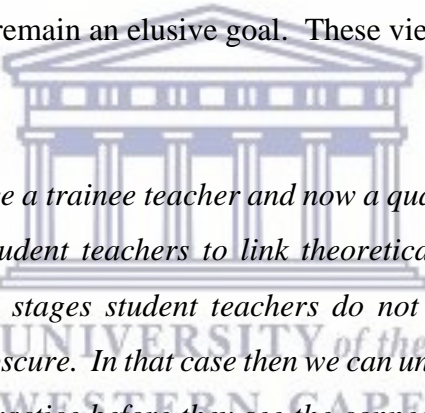
Theme 1: Challenges in integrating theory into practice (*Episteme* and *Phronesis*)

In this theme, I report on participants’ responses about the obstacles faced in integrating theory into practice. I have presented below three sub-themes that emerged from theme 1.

1.1 Theories too abstract to be applicable

Data from the three groups of participants showed that integrating theory into classroom practice presented a host of challenges for student teachers. Various reasons (peculiar to each group of participants) were given. As an example, lecturers indicated that many student

teachers did not take their work seriously as they did not go into the library to consolidate what they got from their lectures and when the lectures were over, they forgot about everything and never minded to re-visit the taught areas. For that reason whatever information they had in mind remained too abstract and thus became very difficult to apply in real classroom situations. Participants seemed to agree that it was difficult for novice teachers to apply theoretical understanding to practical use because; learning and understanding theories and methods were often taxing and led to disinterest, especially when these were limited to lectures and reading. Student teacher participants said that they sometimes did not fully grasp what some lecturers taught due to sentence and lexical complexities and unfamiliar contexts. It was reported that theoretical knowledge was sometimes forgotten before students went on TP and thus started their practicum with a deficit of knowledge making it very difficult to engage in a meaning pedagogical practice hence linking theory to practice remain an elusive goal. These views are well articulated by **M-Ne** in the excerpt below:



*Using my experience both as once a trainee teacher and now a qualified teacher, I think it is difficult if not impossible for student teachers to link theoretical knowledge to practical realities because at those early stages student teachers do not see the relation because everything seems abstract and obscure. In that case then we can understand student teachers 'problems. They need time to practice before they see the connection between the two. **M-Ne***

*Yes TP is a worthwhile experience because I get a lot of practical knowledge that often leads to a deeper understanding of a concept through the act of doing and personal experience.” However, it is difficult to think of what we learnt from the university and apply it in the classroom because we do not remember anything. **ST- Fa***

I think there is something that must be done especially on the teaching of literature. Our lecturer always said things that we did not understand. When we asked her some questions about what she had taught, she usually got emotional and would just give us difficult questions to go and research. The way she taught would not make anybody understand

anything. So, I think something should be done about that because now we cannot apply anything since we understood nothing from the start. **St-Be**

When I was at the university, I did not see anything wrong in my studies but now, I see that many of the modules that we did were not necessary and cannot be applied to the classroom situation. When we come for TP, we discover that the classroom is a completely different situation altogether and you do not know what to link and to what. In the end you simply do what is required by both the school administrators and the lecturers even if you do not see sense in it. **St-Fo**

The problem is that when we are at the university, we never think we will be confronted with a difficult situation that requires us to link and apply our previous knowledge with the current situation to solve emerging problems. Most of us only got to realize that we needed to find out more about TP and its challenges before we came here. **FGD**

Student teachers often complain that lecturers sometimes take so many things for granted. They think that student teachers get to the TP well prepared to handle the classroom forgetting that most of these are only young boys and girls from high school who have never had any experiences in temporary teaching. In that regard, to expect them to be able to effectively integrate theory into practice is being rather too zealous. **M-Na**

Modern trend requires teachers who spend more time on TP so the one year spent on TP pushes them on the platform where they can master the desired skills and thus should be able to integrate theory into practice. **L-Ts**

The problem with our student is that they compare themselves with diploma student teachers who they think fare much better than they. Yet they forget that they are very different in terms of both qualification and exposure. B.Ed. Pre-service teachers have A-level and I think those extra two years at high school should equip them with analytical skills to see things differently and to transfer those skills to any practical situation. **L-Si**

Integrating theory into practice should not be a big issue because a degreed teacher must be competent enough to look at issues in depth. L-Nh

1.2 Lack of alignment between the university and the school curriculum

What came out of this category is that the theory practice gaps sometimes continue to exist due to lack of alignment between the university curriculum and the school curriculum. Participants put their views about curriculum alignment in different ways. Student teacher participants said that their pedagogic studies English module needed to incorporate the aspect of essay marking so that they would not be found wanting in that respect. All of them seemed to agree that there were some short-comings in the university curriculum. They suggested that everything relating to language teaching and learning at school be brought to their attention for familiarization to avoid the shock that they sometimes experience on practicum. Mentors suggested that the university needed to take their student teachers to various schools to see for themselves how the school curriculum was aligned to the university curriculum to determine the gaps. These sentiments are reflected in the extracts below:

*Sometimes we cannot match the issues that we do at the college with what we find in the schools for example, at college we do Heritage Studies and African-American and Caribbean Literature but here we do not see the place of such modules in the school curriculum and how they could be linked to secondary school subjects. At the university we did not do any Shakespearian text **St-Am***

*Some lecturers penalize us for code-switching during ESL lessons yet the new constitution of Zimbabwe stipulates that mother tongue shall be used as a language of instruction from grade zero to form two. Most of us teach form ones and twos so when we now try to explain difficult concepts in the pupils' mother tongue for purposes of clarity in the presence of some lecturers, we are reprimanded and sometimes we get very low marks because of that. They believe code-switching is a linguistic tool used to aid learning. **FGD***

The type of activities and assignments that we are given by some lecturers are not aligned to what we find here for instance, in the Language and linguistic module back at the

university, we grapple a lot with aspects such as articulation of speech sounds, maxims and so forth yet schools concentrate on teaching to make pupils pass the national examinations.

St-Fo

In many cases we are found wanting in our teaching. We need to always emphasize to our students that colleges and universities have the autonomy to plan and design their own curriculum for the preparation and development of teachers hence curriculum developments for the university and the schools are done separately by people with different academic qualifications and orientations although both groups make concerted effort to match the two. For those reasons therefore, there could be some rare anomaly on aligning the two separately developed curricula- **L-Et**

Though we try our level best to design a suitable curriculum that prepares effective student teachers who we think are well versed with the demands of the school curriculum in place, we sometimes feel let down by our politicians who just get up one morning and make pronouncements about changes in the school curriculum without consultation with institutions that produce the teachers who will implement that curriculum. Such a scenario is likely to cause unnecessary mismatches between our curriculum and the school curriculum. **L-Go**

Yes there is a thin extent to which there are mismatches between what we do and what schools expect. We concentrate on exposing our student teachers to a variety of modules hoping that such wide range of disciplines broadens and deepens their teacher knowledge base to enable them deal with any eventualities in the school situation. Unfortunately, unexpected pronouncements and circulars from the ministry of primary and secondary education about the school curriculum like the one we have just had (Review of the school curriculum- December 2016) makes it difficult for us to change our curriculum so abruptly to match the one under review given the fact that we are guided by university regulations which we can only change after three years. **L-Ze**

1.3 Uncertainty and the complexity of actual practice situations

On this category, participants unanimously agreed that issues emerging during classroom practice were so complex and so unpredictable that a novice teacher would not get an immediate solution to some of the situations. Participants further expressed that it would require a lot of experience for any teacher to successfully deal with any difficult issue. Less experienced teachers such as student teachers would continue to have pedagogic problems resulting in the continued theory- practice gaps. This was well evidenced in the following excerpts:

While we learn so much at the university, it is surprising that most of what we learn do not apply in the classroom. Sometimes you discover that you do not have any skill to deal with what you are facing. I think lectures should do something about it. ST-Fo

I can't say the university adequately helped me or prepared me because after learning those courses I still had difficulties dealing with some situations in the classroom. Mostly with language work, how to deliver a lesson, the language lesson. So I needed something from the university, something on pedagogy ST-Ca

Students sometimes find classroom pedagogy very difficult because they expect classroom issues to occur smoothly according to their plans, forgetting that teaching is not only an art but also a guessing game where practitioners should be ready to deal with any pedagogic problems that crop up during the instructional period. L-Nh

Teaching English is complicated because it is not our mother language. If a pupil asks a difficult question that I have not expected, it is usually very difficult to answer such questions correctly due to problems of language. One needs to be very fluent in English before you can teach and answer questions effectively. St-Nk

I think it depends on the emphasis given to them by the lecturer during tuition. Some lecturers emphasize on the theories focusing on the main features of the theory without

emphasizing on the pedagogical implications of the theory so that the student may be aware of how important the theories are. M-Mu

What makes teaching ESL difficult is that most lecturers and mentors never write comments about teaching a particular subject like English. Instead, they write general comments that is pedagogical in nature for example; your work is not up to date, your objectives are not behavioural, improve your evaluation and so forth. The comments are applicable across disciplines so we do not know how to improve the teaching of ESL if no reference is made to that subject in our schemes or lesson plans. St-Ar

Some of our lecturers and mentors often assume that student teachers know why we teach them and why our teaching is informed by different theories. Those assumptions are dangerous and that is why we get so many failures in English at O-level. ESL educators must do a lot of research to find out what should be done about curriculum design and implementation to unify the two. What I think is that as a university or as a department we should spear head the teaching of ESL by carrying out research to find out the gray areas so that we can do something about that. L-Nd

Theme 2: Perceived quality of mentoring and supervision

In this theme, I report on participants' views about the quality of professional support that student teachers got from mentors and lecturers during the practicum. What emerged from this theme was both positive and negative. Participants seemed to agree that there were so many factors affecting mentoring and supervision during the practicum period including; the level of education of the stakeholders, the degree of commitment towards one's work and even knowledge base about the issues at stake. From a positive perspective, participants seemed to indicate that a good practicum was depended on the quality of mentors and lecturers. Student teacher and mentor participants stressed the point that where there was good relationship and effective communication between all stakeholders, the work was enjoyable, fulfilling and this would always make somebody want to discover and learn more. Further, student teacher participants seemed to appreciate constructive feedback given to some of them by some mentors and lecturers. They believed that it was very beneficial and

contributed towards improved pedagogy. From a negative viewpoint, Participants indicated that mentoring and supervision were not proficiently done due to; lack of training, motivation and incentives on the part of the mentors and inexperience, inadequate time, and manpower on the part of lecturers. Four categories came out of this theme and are discussed below.

2.1 Inadequate time for mentoring and supervision by lecturers and mentors

On this category, participants unanimously agreed that if mentoring and supervision of student teachers were done properly, then their pedagogical practices would improve thus minimizing the theory-practice gaps. However, all participants concurred that this was not the case during TP. Lecturers also held the view that with the often demands of their heavy work and research, they often found it difficult to carve out sufficient time to reflect deeply upon student teaching and would thus not spare time for a post lesson discussion with both the mentor and the student. Instead, they preferred to hurry to the next school before the day was done so they could meet the day's target about the number of students seen. According to some lecturer participants, this situation was exacerbated by shortage of lecturers who normally would not match the enormous number of students on TP. It was reported that the lecturers on TP supervision who usually would be less than the required number, always tried their best to see all the students in that specific area and therefore would not have much time with students and mentors.

On the other hand, mentors pointed out that much as they wanted to guide the novice teachers effectively, they were constrained and tied up by their own heavy work load and thus had very little time to provide adequate supervision to their students. It emerged from this theme that at times student teachers were seen as relief teachers who were there to lessen the mentor's overload. In that case mentors did not have time to assist students but to relieve themselves by shading their load to the student. The sentiments above are reflected in the participants' views below:

There is a challenge of mixing lecturers who come to assess. One lecturer's views and ideas would be different from the views of others such that the student ends up being confused.

*When we try to get clarification from them at the same time explaining what language lecturers expect, such lecturers always say they are behind time so they go. **St-Fo***

*Mentors were very keen to give professional assistance to us but were often deterred by so many factors including their overloaded time table. As a result they did not work to their maximum ability. **FGD***

*My relationship with my mentor was rocky. We actually had some conflicts here and there but now we are okay. However, because there were sour relations at first, she wanted to fix me by not giving me the professional assistance I wanted. Even after we amended our relations she never taught me anything. She always said that she was busy with something else. **St-Fa***

*That is what makes the difference between us and the teachers colleges who hold mentor training workshops which we don't do here at GZU. Mentors who are trained are better placed to assist student teachers. We used to do it in the past when we had fewer students than we have now. The university now finds it very difficult to have workshops in some areas due to inaccessibility of the roads. **L-Nd***

*We try our level best to help and guide the students but in many cases we are constrained by a myriad of factors including our own work load and other school related work. **M-Mu***

*I don't think lecturers did justice because sometimes they would just come in for a few minutes, just check your files and correct just a few things and you won't have time to ask what you don't know for, they'll be rushing, going somewhere. **ST-Fo***

*In many cases we have shortage of lecturers so when we get to a school we try our best to see all students by observing their lessons and documents but we will not spend much time on post lesson conference with the student and the mentor. **L-Ze***

Most of the lecturers are always in a hurry when they come to supervise us. They always say that they are behind time and would not spare a minute to answer any question. This

makes our teaching very difficult because even if there is something you do not know and you need clarification from the lecturer, you won't have them since they will be gone ST-Fa.

In analyzing the concerns and sentiments presented by stakeholders, it is prudent to say that there are so many missing gaps in the supervision and mentoring of student teachers whose professional development is mostly determined by the quality of professional assistance given. Consequently, any attempt to minimize or to close the theory –practice remains an elusive goal.

2.2 Inadequate knowledge about TP supervision by inexperienced lecturers and mentors.

On this category, all participants concurred that TP supervision was not properly done because of lack of adequate knowledge and experience by both some mentors and lecturers. Participants were of the view that newly qualified mentors and new lecturers who are recruited straight from high schools and have never had any tertiary experience were likely to cause problems due to lack of proficiency in the mentoring and supervision business. Participants further said that some new lecturers did not know the difference between supervision and assessment and due to that, they were confusing the two phenomenon by doing vice-versing. Participants seemed to agree that such a scenario was likely to cause confusion and disinterest in the student teachers resulting in poor concentration hence theory – gaps. Additionally, participants seemed to indicate that novice lecturers such as those who had been recently recruited straight from schools with no tertiary experience did not appreciate how serious supervision and assessment of student teachers meant in teacher preparation. Participants seemed to allege that student teachers treated like secondary school pupils who could just be reprimanded if they made mistakes. According to participants, theory practice-gaps were likely to prevail because lecturers did not practice what they preached- they showed a disparaging attitude and seemed to have forgotten that students learnt better when they were respected and allowed the autonomy to discover their own knowledge. These sentiments were well evidenced in the statements below:

*Mentors and lecturers come from different educational backgrounds thus have different academic and professional orientations and experiences which are reflected in the way they treat student teachers. Some are lazy, others are inexperienced or even not knowledgeable about mentoring and supervision. All these have a profound influence on how the whole business of mentoring and supervision begins. Others may have the zeal but are not very clear on what they have to do. **L-Ze***

*Both lecturers and mentors are to blame on the quality of mentoring and supervision. Some mentors especially the newly qualified ones are more or less like the student teachers because they do not have adequate knowledge about mentoring and they do not appreciate its significance since they have never been schooled into it. New and young lecturers who do not have tertiary experience cannot distinguish between supervision and assessment. When they are supposed to supervise they assess and vice versa and surely you can see the confusion and chaos that is created-**L-Go***

*The fact that mentors have the experience is not a guarantee to good mentoring because in many cases we find that some mentors do not take their work seriously, others are lacking in both methodology and content especially those who entered their training with o-level. Some mentors are shamefaced to supervise student teachers with degrees when they themselves have a lower qualification. As a result they don't assist them effectively. Yet others think that they are over loaded and having adequate time to assist student teachers is a night mare and it is an extra load on top of an already overloaded person. **L-Ts***

*I do not know whether my mentor knew what mentoring is because she always asked me a lot of questions about teaching. She even went to the extent of using my scheme book for teaching her lessons. **St-Fo***

Mentors don't all do their work, the majority do not take it seriously and the reason is that some are not willing to assist the graduate student teacher especially when they (mentor) have diploma qualification, some are not confident, others feel that lecturers do not recognize them because at times lecturers behave in a manner that frustrate mentors thus

*making them harbor the belief that lecturers are not interested in what they do so they also ignore student teachers. However, when mentors are roped in especially during the post lesson conference, you normally find that they are very keen to help the mentee and they also make meaningful comments. **L-Et***

*Some of us are new in this business of mentoring. I have taught for more than seven years now but have been teaching in schools where there are no student teachers. I therefore need some senior mentors to help me because I do not know what to look for in the student's practices. **M-Go***

*New or inexperienced lecturers need thorough induction on supervision and assessment before they can be allowed to take part in all TP activities. You will notice that they give very high marks to a student who is not a high flier and the comments they give do not correspond with the mark awarded. **L-Si***

*By virtue of their experience in the field, mentors are supposed to groom the student teacher to grow professionally. However, the reports that we here from the student teachers is that the moment mentors get a mentee, they abdicate all the work to the student teacher. The reason being that the mentors see student teachers as relief teachers. When you look at the way many students do their work, you really feel that they are not assisted. One reason why mentors don't take the work seriously is that maybe they do not know their roles, or there is nothing to motivate them. **L-Nh***

*Some mentors know what they are doing while others don't. Many of these mentors started work long back and things are changing and they are lagging behind time. Sometimes when you try to tell them that this is how things are done now, it does not go well with them and they will not take it because they don't believe. They think you want to know too much. They need some upskilling. **St-Fo***

Modules are taught differently at the university. One of our language lecturers taught us to use a content based approach to ESL instruction and when i did that in the classroom, the

lecturer who supervised me was very skeptical about it thinking that I was now teaching a content subject instead of English. For that reason he gave me very low marks and I was demoralized. I therefore suggest that student teacher be supervised by lecturers who are specialist in the subject areas. ST-Ca

We do not know the criterion used by school heads to select mentors for student teachers because we are not told. However, if I were in a position to select one then of course I would choose one with a proven record of being an effective and committed teacher. This would help to solve some of the problems that student teachers encounter with their mentors. M-Pl

2.3 Lack of incentives and motivational support for the mentors

It was reported that some mentors went out of their way to assist student teachers but the only disheartening thing was that they did not get any appreciation from the training institution or from the ministry of education. In that regard, all participants seemed to share the view that mentors needed some recognition of some kind so that they would be motivated to continue with their good work. It emerged on this category that lack motivational support explained why some did not do their work whole heartedly. As a solution to that problem, one lecturer pointed out that Teacher Development Department needed to hold some workshops where all matters pertaining to TP for example talking about lecturer and mentor expectations, and what they think they want in order to assist student teachers effectively.

Sometimes you feel you are not part and parcel of the whole exercise because there is no appreciation even by word of mouth. M-Ne

My own mentor worked so hard that she was always there for me and she went to the extent of buying manila and magic markers for me when I was financially constrained. Such mentors need a token of appreciation .St-Am

Many mentors do not do their mentoring properly because they are not motivated to work for nothing. L-Ts

Some mentors see the business of mentoring as a bother since they consider it as an extra job. Others want to be paid and yet others lack the confidence to supervise students. L-Si

Every time I went to my mentor to tell her that the school head said we should go for the lesson together, she told me it was not her business to do so since she was not paid and she would tell me to go alone. And some of the things I would go and ask from the mentor, she wasn't in a position to give me good answers. St- Fa

Some mentors are not very keen to help our student teachers because some of our lecturers have a disparaging towards mentors whom they see as ignorant and not very highly educated. Additionally, the mark that mentors give to student teachers during their supervision period is not considered by the university. A myriad of such issues will can make them disheartened henceforth ceases to what they are expected to .L-Nd

Theme 3: nature and quality of communication and dialogue

By nature and quality of communication and dialogue, I mean, a good and effective way of sharing experiences through discussion and negotiation, where partners in communication rituals gain insights that could positively contribute towards mutual understanding leading to the development of common meaning. In this study, the envisaged communication and dialogue needs to prevail between the department heads of the training university and heads of the practicing schools to educate stake holders on what exactly they need to know and do about the whole business of TP. The same effective communication and dialogue is expected to prevail between lecturers, mentors, and student teachers. That communication and dialogue is essential for the successful outcome of TP goals.

However, most participants felt that, the kind of communication that occurred between themselves and either mentors or lecturers was rather pitiable and ineffective as many schools did not receive the TP handout on time with some students alleging that they had never heard about the handout and did not receive it. Consequently, this poor and ineffective communication threw stakeholders into disarray and confusion since there were so many

conflicting views. Student teachers pointed out that the disarray militated against their work as it led to reduced concentration and poor instructional performance. Two sub-themes namely; ineffective and poor communication and improper communication emerged from this theme and are discussed below:

3.1 Ineffective communication

I think those problem of miscommunication arose because the university did not tell our schools what was expected so the mentors usually wanted us to do what the school expected. I solved the problem by doing what the lecturers wanted because I wanted some marks. FGD

When we got to schools, there was confusion because while we knew we were supposed to use the university format in scheming and planning, some mentors told us that it was wrong. When we sought clarification from the lecturers who had come to supervise us, they declined to comment and therefore referred us to the TP office, a thing which became another problem as we did not have the money to phone that. ST-Be

There was confusion even among lecturers because what one lecturer expected in our classroom records was not what another lecturer expected and as if that was not enough some mentors also expected us to do something completely different from what the lecturers wanted. St-Ar

I feel that lack of effective communication portrays schools as uncooperative organisations with no sense of responsibility and development whatsoever yet schools are and remain effective systems that continuously pursue quality teaching and improvement provided they get clear and adequate information well in advance. M-Na

Very few lecturers can engage in dialogue with both the student teacher and the mentor to clarify obscure issues. If you try to engage them in dialogue you are accused of being defensive. St Fa

In some cases there was poor communication and dialogue between the mentor and the student especially when they have had some tiffs and squabbles. L-Ze

There were few instances when lecturers and mentors could not engage in meaningful dialogue as each of them believed he/she was being undermined by the other. LTs

Student teacher participants further indicated that there was need for lecturers and mentors to engage in dialogue and agreed on what needed to be done before the commencement of mentoring and supervision. This was seen as a good intervention strategy to avoid the conflicting views among stake holders.

On the other hand, lecturer participants seemed to bemoan the fact that student enrolment during TP had reached such alarming levels that it had become very difficult for the school of education to communicate with all schools on time before TP began given the fact that student teachers were scattered all over the country. This situation was reported as unfortunate because the student teachers, who all had the responsibility to give a handout to their school heads and mentors as early as possible, did not do so for the reasons of keeping schools unaware of what was expected.

This view can be discerned from the statements below:

However, we have noted over the years that student teachers keep the handout to themselves thereby depriving the school heads and mentors of the necessary information which help them to work. L-Nd

It is difficult to ensure that all mentors and school heads get the handout if we don't deploy students. Student teachers find for themselves places to teach in their homes areas so they are scattered all over the country. We do not know where exactly they will be teaching until such time when they can inform so we cannot sent the handout. L-Nd

In past, TP used to be an enjoyable and fulfilling exercise when we managed to supervise and assess all our students well and on time because we deployed them to two or three nearby districts that were accessible. Now with the soaring number of students on TP every year it has become virtually impossible to do the same and that is also why some student do not receive communication early enough **L-Ze**

One cannot expect effective communication to take place between the university and practicing schools given the fact that the TP personnel are also overloaded with their work and so balancing two different workloads is a big challenge. If possible, TP coordinators should be relieved of their lecturing duties so that they concentrate on TP issues alone and that way they have adequate time to liaise with school heads, mentors and students. **L-Et**

I think the university should establish a better system of communication which allows information to move faster and easier. **St-Ce**

I told my mentee to use the school format on scheming because by that time we had not received any information regarding the way students should scheme. **M-Pl**

However, despite all the sentiments and concerns, participants agreed that more creative ways of working could be initiated and established if mentors and lecturers worked in unison. Further, it was decided that the university needed to make concerted effort to build linkages with practicing schools so that the information about expected standards of pedagogy could be well articulated. In view of what I interpreted as grave sentiments emerging from participants, it is judicious therefore to assert that theory-practice gaps obtain in ESL instructional practices right from the start before student get in their classrooms. This is due to the nature and quality of communication between the university and the schools.

3.2 Impolite communication to the student teachers.

From this category, there were grave sentiments that some lecturers did not show respect in the way they addressed student teachers especially when they (student teachers) were rated below average in ability. It was unanimously agreed that some lecturers' uncouth behaviour

caused anger and emotion on some student resulting in them (student teachers) losing confidence and determination and concentration. Student teacher participants said that loss of confidence and concentration made their minds go blank forcing them to forget their routine. These sentiments are revealed in the excerpts below:

*It is ridiculous that the lecturers who teach student teachers to observe the maxim of politeness in a conversation are the very same people who dress us down in front of our pupils and the mentor when we make what they describe as critical mistakes. One lecturer shouted at me before my mentor and my pupils and it made me very angry resulting in my failure to concentrate on my work for the whole week. **ST-Nk***

*I think one of the things that the department of Teacher development should do to improve the quality of its student teachers and to minimize the theory practice gaps is first and foremost to educate some of their lecturers to be mindful, conscious and to appreciate the fact that their student teachers are in the process of learning to teach and like any learners, they are prone to mistakes. **M-Ce***

*If the lecturers could do the assessment in a friendly manner with the student teacher rather than always find faults on the student. We also need respect from the assessors. **FGD***

*The lecturers should be considerate the way they approach the student instead of shouting and embarrassing students in front of pupils or other colleagues. **FGD***

It is evident from the above statements that impolite communication to the students by some lecturers were a major contributing factor to the theory –practice gaps because no sane person can work at the best of their ability when they are sad and when they lack the enthusiasm to do what they are expected to do.

Theme 4: Deficiencies in the teacher knowledge base for ESL instruction

Lack of adequate teacher knowledge base was cited as one of the big factors which militated against effective ESL classroom practices. Participants felt that student teachers' ESL

instructional practices were characterized by a lot of inadequacies in all aspects of the student teacher knowledge domains that included content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and the general pedagogic content knowledge and knowledge about the curriculum.

4.7.1 Content knowledge

Participants felt that in many cases during the ESL instructional process, student teachers showed limited knowledge and understanding of the subject (English) they taught including knowledge of the central facts, concepts and procedures. It was discerned from lecturer critiques that sometimes student teachers failed to give explanatory frameworks that connected ideas and knowledge from different disciplines. Such inadequacies prevented them from maximizing their potential in the teaching and learning opportunities. Further, lecturer and mentor reports seemed to suggest another aspect of teacher content knowledge especially the picture about students' failure to interpret the syllabus accurately in order to put it in to practice effectively. Stakeholders expressed grave concern about student teachers' inability to do a number of things including; interpreting of the syllabus, formulating good objectives and connecting facts, concepts and ideas their concerns as reflected in the following statements from students and mentors:

One cannot teach what they do not know. Instead people should teach what they know and understand so that they can illustrate, demonstrate and exemplify fully for the benefit of the students. If they are found wanting in content mastery in their own area, then they are just operating at the same level with those that they teach and it becomes problematic. L-Ts

Oh-it was difficult to understand the syllabus and to use it for scheming as required by some mentors because, a list of skills, functions and concepts are provided in that syllabus and one would not know what to do with those items. I think lecturers should have gone through the whole syllabus with us so that we know exactly what we were supposed to do. Lecturers just told us to have the syllabus document in our TP file and that is what we did. We did not know that we were supposed to use it for scheming. ST-Fa

English as a subject has a lot of work to do as compared to other subjects so the University should keep on encouraging the students to work hard and to give us the content of English.

St-Nk

Sometimes we do not know what to teach because the content of English is difficult to get so we end up teaching the usual topics like composition and comprehension. **St-An**

If any teacher, whether qualified or under training fail to comprehend the syllabus specification, yaa-a whole purpose of teaching is already defeated before lessons can be taught. In this area, student teachers are found wanting and the university needs to do something. **M-Ne**

The teacher should seriously revisit the objectives especially for comprehension. Assumed knowledge should not focus on what is being taught. The teacher should teach the lesson to demonstrate her skills, not to make a pupil a teacher. **DA-L**

Your lesson objectives for comprehension need to focus on comprehension skills according to Bloom's taxonomy of objectives. Your questions should be clear, simple and straight forward - leading pupils to get the right answers. **DA-L**

Do not just rely on information from books since it could be limited. Be innovative and resourceful enough to get the content of your lesson from various sources even from the culture of the pupils-remember Grellet says bring the whole world into the classroom. **DA-L**

I don't think student teachers are adequately trained because they appear to be very nervous and confused in front of the class. They do not know where and how to introduce the subject. Lecturers need to assist them on subject content. **M-Na**

The problem with many of our students is that they want to be spoon-fed not knowing that it is their responsibility to get information from the library, journals, periodicals and so forth

and so on. The content of what to teach can be obtained from anywhere but they want it from the lecturer. L-Si

The teacher is advised to use a variety of teaching strategies and continual formative assessment throughout lessons and should identify students who need support. However, it was good to note that pupils were provided with effective, timely feedback throughout the lessons, affirming those demonstrating progression towards learning goals and supporting those experiencing difficulties. L-Ze

As a teacher you should have the subject content on your fingertips. Your lesson today shows that you did not know what you wanted to teach. I did not see the reason why you invited the pupils to write meaningless statements on the board. Please take your work seriously by planning your lessons well before you teach, collecting your media and selecting the appropriate content for the lesson. Your evaluation also needs to improve. DA-L

The responses above seem to confirm that student teachers had problems in the of ESL content knowledge which in itself is a problem that creates ineffectiveness on the part of the teacher. By the same token lack of teacher efficacy usually results in gaps.

4.7.2 Pedagogical content knowledge

It emerged in this theme that there were many challenges that student teachers encountered in their classroom practice. These problems were attributed to inadequacies in pedagogic content knowledge (PCK) - a teacher knowledge domain that was viewed very highly by both lecturers and mentors. Reports from lecturer and mentor participants about students' teaching seemed to suggest that there were gaps in ESL teaching because teachers did not have the conceptual understanding of the ESL subject content that they taught. Specific areas of concern were; student teachers' failure to: devise suitable activities that enabled them to achieve stated objectives, use appropriate teaching procedures and strategies that were linked to classroom activities and objectives. Lecturer and mentor participants seemed to indicate that student teachers needed to be well acquainted with how multiple lesson aspects interacted during classroom practice in order to utilize them fully. These concerns about

student teacher inadequacies in PKC are reflected in the excerpts from mentor's critiques below:

Topics are logically arranged but media need elaboration, pupils activities are just too much for a single lesson, lesson should be pupil centred, evaluation should be more objective and balanced, DA-M

In your teaching please try to link both your strategies and activities to your stated objectives to achieve coherence and cohesion. In today's lesson all these aspects were disjointed and one wonders whether it was one lesson or many. DA-M

Please make sure that your explanations are clear and concise to avoid confusion among pupils. Your explanations and demonstrations in today's lesson were rather vague and that is why pupil's maintained grave silence because they did not comprehend what you were saying. DA-L

You should make your lesson as interactive as you can, this is the only way you can see that pupils are actively engaged in the learning process. However, this can only be possible if you maximally utilize all the aspects that come into play during the instructional process DA-L

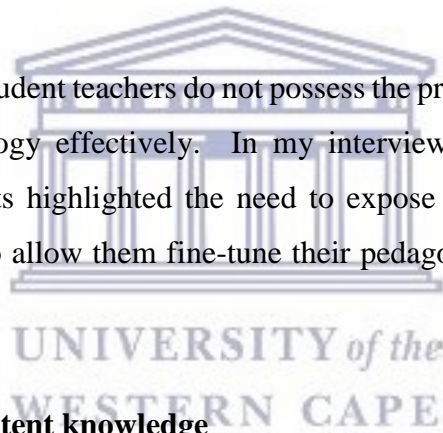
Your lesson was good on paper but practically ineffective because you failed to; use appropriate strategies during lesson delivery, manage learner behavior as some became a bit rowdy, provide productive learning opportunities and to maximize the amount of time available for instruction. DA-L

Your explanations and demonstrations were sometimes not very clear and resulted in pupils' failure to comprehend the concepts. You are encouraged to rehearse them before you deliver your lesson otherwise you confuse the pupils. DA-L

In all your teaching, you should ensure that all aspects of the lesson interact simultaneously to achieve the stated lesson objectives. In today's lesson, the objectives, strategies and pupil activities were disjointed. Lesson objectives were not only too many but also not measurable, strategies used were not linked to stated objectives and pupil activities would not keep them engaged. DA-L

Differently developed teachers- they are difference in the sense that those developed through the diploma are well informed in pedagogical knowledge since they spent a long time on TP gaining a lot of hands on experience while our own have more subject content and have a broader view issues gained in the first two years of university tuition. However, they are lacking in pedagogical content knowledge because we give the little time on that issue. L-Nd

The above excerpts show that student teachers do not possess the pre-requisite PCK to enable them handle classroom pedagogy effectively. In my interview discussions with them, lecturer and mentor participants highlighted the need to expose students teachers to real classroom situations in order to allow them fine-tune their pedagogical content knowledge skills.



4.7.3 General pedagogical content knowledge

Teachers play various roles in a typical classroom, but one of the most important one is that of classroom manager responsible maintaining order and discipline. The 'ability to manage the classroom depends on the teachers' general pedagogical content knowledge which is one of the many domains of teacher knowledge that teachers require in order to teach effectively. As I have come to understand, it involves the general principles of classroom organization. It emerged in this category that, student teachers had limitations in many areas of classroom practice including; instructional options, management of group work and pupil responses. Participants reported that student teachers sometimes failed to establish fair rules that could be followed resulting in student teachers failing to give pupils regular feedback regarding pupil's behaviors in class. It was agreed that student teacher's failure to control

the class firmly resulted in them struggling to teach, and pupils learnt much less than they could have learnt. Participants further highlighted that this was in contrast, with well - managed classrooms that provided an environment where teaching and learning could flourish. A further analysis of lecturer and mentor reports showed that student teachers sometimes failed to make teaching and learning an interactive process because they lacked rich repertoire of choices to enable them make on- the -spot decision when deemed necessary. Reports further showed that student teachers sometimes had problems with managing group work and pupils 'responses. In group work for example, pupils turned rowdy and chaotic but teachers did not seem to see hence did nothing. It was reported that they focused mainly on maintaining the flow of instructional activities and worrying about pupils mistakes which they over emphasized according to one lecturer critiques discussed below:

Effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a poorly managed classrooms and lessons delivery too cannot run smoothly in disorganized and confused classes. Could you therefore ensure that you become a little more organized? DA-L

Please ensure that you organize your students well so that they do not disturb the smooth flow of the lesson. In today' lesson, some pupils were rather uncontrollable resulting in a lot of disturbances to whatever you wanted to do. DA-L

Your teaching was generally ok but you should pay serious attention to the way you manage your group work and pupils responses. Poor classroom management usually compromises instructional practices in various ways including repeated failure to; maximize opportunities for student learning and achievement of intended lesson objectives. DA-L

Teacher questions students effectively, thereby allowing her to gauge understanding and providing students with opportunities to demonstrate their achievement of course content. Learning goals are explicitly stated at the beginning of each lesson according to the syllabus outcomes and objectives. However the teacher is advised not to argue with pupils as this may show inability to control the class. Group work should also be well managed to avoid disorder.

4.7.4 Low proficiency levels in the target language

On this category, reports from participants showed that student teachers encountered a lot of challenges in using English during the pedagogical process. Participants attributed this to low proficiency levels in the target language (English) was seen as a big barrier to effective teaching and learning. It was noted that both teachers and the learners did not seem to possess the prerequisite proficiency to operate effectively in the classroom. It was further noted that some student teachers grappled with expressing themselves in a manner comprehensible to the learners. As a result, they sometimes ended up saying something they did not intend to say or they usually resorted to code switching. In addition to the above point, an analysis of supervisors' critiques, revealed a common trend where student teachers' use of language was characterized by several grammatical, lexical, and phonetic errors. In many cases, those errors significantly contributed towards student teachers' difficulties in providing clear explanations and task instructions of language points. The following excerpts confirm the student teachers low proficiency levels in the language of instruction:

“As a teacher you are a role model so you should also provide model English during your teaching. In today’s lesson, your use of language was flawed with so many grammatical and lexical errors.” L-Si

The teacher should check all the sentences to ensure; accuracy of facts, correct spelling and correct word order before she puts them on the board otherwise pupils will internalize wrong things. DA-L

Improve your language use during lesson delivery otherwise you spoil the pupils. Today’s lesson was marred with a lot of lexical errors and you even accepted wrong answers from the pupils. M-Na

Give activities that make pupils interact by using language. This is the only way pupils can improve their own language especially if you ensure that they have access to good English input and instruction. You also need to improve your command of English. DA-L

Using English to teach English is a big challenge to some of us because we sometimes fail to put across our ideas and concepts to pupils because we run short of the necessary vocabulary. FGD

During the first school term of my TP, I faced serious challenges in teaching oral work. I failed to express myself in a manner that made my pupils understand what I wanted to say. I also had problems with marking compositions because I did not know how to write meaningful comments, how to indicate to the pupil what kind of mistakes they had made. St-Am

Grammar usage was my biggest problem during TP because did not know how to correct some of the sentences constructed by pupils especially those items in present or past participle for example, do we say the lesson has began or begun? ST-Fa

I think something should be done in our pedagogics module because we faced many problems in teaching and marking compositions. St-Fo

There were also many incidents in student teachers' documents where many words including continuous, accommodation, occasion, in order writing and receive were wrongly spelt as *continuos, accomodation, occassion, inorder, writting and recieive. DA- St*

Lecturer and mentor reports indicated that high linguistic proficiency levels in (English) was beneficial to student teachers and their learners as it assisted both groups to maximize their potential in the pedagogical process. For the learners, participants felt that it helped them to understand English grammar better and to improve their overall communication and problem-solving skills while for the student teacher, it was beneficial for use in a variety of classroom purposes including; the elaboration of language syllabuses, the designing of appropriate learning materials, lesson planning and scheming, the teaching and learning and the assessment of learning results. One lecturer summarized it all by articulating that,

The importance of high proficiency levels in the language of instruction cannot be over emphasized. First and foremost, it enhances the educational attainment through improved communication ability. When Students' proficiency in English Language is high, it will definitely influence and improve the academic performance of such students. Where proficiency in the target language is lacking in any academic setting, it will definitely lower the academic performance of such students. Lack of proficiency in English language is one of the factors contributing to poor performance in English in our country and it creates big gaps in student career opportunities. L-Si

The responses above seem to confirm that student teachers have problems in using the target language to express themselves well and to put across their ideas effectively. It was therefore obvious that instructional practices were heavily compromised by low proficiency levels in the language of instruction. From that stand position, there is no doubt that teacher efficacy is affected hence gaps are created.

4.7.5 Student teacher disillusionment

From this category, it emerged that some students were disillusioned by the reality of the TP experiences which they believed had a lot of some good and many negative surprises including their inability to mark compositions and to give meaningful comments as required by the school head, failure understand some concepts in the classroom and the amount of work they had to put up with. They pointed out that during their time at the university, they did not know about the complexity and challenges presented by TP as they had never experienced it. They wished the university had schooled them in all these issues to avoid surprises. They seemed to lament over the many opportunities lost at college in which they were supposed to fruitfully utilize to discover and explore the theories and perspectives of teaching either by researching in the library or by asking lecturers. This situation was seen as a barrier that contributed negatively on their practices resulting in theory-practice gaps. They pointed out the vicissitudes and realities of teacher-life in the classroom as very difficult but at the same time giving one the necessary experience to cope with complex issues. This unpleasant realization combined with other issues such as lack of funds to buy necessities, rowdy pupils in the class, and sometimes trying to meet the demands of the school and the

university made them very disappointed and disillusioned. The following strands evidence that:

*If there could be a way of reducing fees it would be better for us as we sometimes get stressed by many things including; how to get fees, how to mark difficult compositions how to scheme and teach effectively. With all these things in mind, you will not be able to concentrate and sometimes you tend to vent the anger and stress on the pupils. **ST-Fo***

*The university programmes are some kind of crash programmes and most of the time students are lazing around the campus. When they now go for TP, this is only when they realize the mammoth task awaiting them yet very difficult to accomplish. As a result, a lot of them experience some kind of disillusionment or shock. **L-Nh***

*TP was a good experience in that you get the opportunity to practice but it had its negative effects that weighed down on us resulting in a lot of distress. Firstly, the work was just too much for one person because apart from our own work, there were other school related activities such as meetings, sporting and co-curricular activities that we had to take part in. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they wanted, and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantments, **St-Fa***

*School administrators, lecturers and mentors required us to be highly organized, articulate, and hardworking yet such expectations were a bit awkward and difficult for us beginning teachers. We were to learn a lot first before they expected too much. **FGD***

*Sometimes you are just criticized for something that you do not know and it really dampens our spirit because there is no one to ask. Lecturers are too busy to listen to anything and mentors say your lecturers should have taught you that. **FGD***

Another thing that was worrying is that we were always working from morning till half past four in the evening. No time to refresh and when night fell, we started planning about tomorrow and sometimes you here that lecturers are around so such a packed program

caused a lot of anxiety in us and most of the time you would wish you had not registered to be a teacher. St-Am

At first the mentors did not do their job. They would be relaxing and expected us to do everything for them. Then when on lecturers, came, they demanded many things for us to do and it was difficult to cope with the situation so we ended up being frustrated by that situation. St Fa

From the responses given above, it is clear that student teachers' period are loaded with pleasant and unpleasant experiences and there is no doubt that unpleasant times negatively affect their instructional operations leading to the theory practice gaps.

Theme 5: The Post Method Pedagogy

As I said in my Literature review chapter of this thesis, and worthy of saying that again in this chapter, the Post method pedagogy puts the teacher at the center of language instruction and values their beliefs, experiences and knowledge. Further, it encourages them to develop and create their own methods gained through experience based on their classroom context and knowledge of other methods and approaches. In that sense, post method teachers become autonomous, analysts, strategic researchers and decision –makers who are empowered to try out things and identify problems which they could analyse to find solutions. That way, they gain the pre-requisite knowledge, skills and expertise enabling them to close the theory practice dichotomy.

From that perspective, my central focus on this theme was placed on trying to establish whether stakeholders' practices in teaching, mentoring and supervision were relational to the tenets of the Post- Method pedagogy particularly the three principles of practicality, plausibility and particularity. One interesting thing that I noted in my discussions with stakeholders is that they all expressed ignorance about knowledge of the post method pedagogy but it was ironical that the responses had some if not many, elements of the parameters of practicality and particularity were fairly dominant in stakeholders' practices,

perception and beliefs while very minimal of the parameter of possibility was discernible. I now move forward to describe what I thought was linked to the parameter of practicality.

Practicality

It emerged from participants that classroom experiences made student teachers realize that some ways of solving classroom problems taught at college did not always work in real classroom situations and that pedagogical problems were not always solved by adherence to prescribed notions. As a result, they felt that sometimes there was need to devise one's way of looking at things by studying and analyzing it in order to get to the crux of the matter. That way, they managed to solve their own pedagogic problems. A case in point was reported by one student teacher who said that he managed to solve classroom management problems related to indiscipline and truancy by using practical experiences. He reiterated that he first counseled them and then asked them to say freely why they were somewhat stubborn. The freely told him their grievances which they said was why they behaved the way they did.

In classroom practices, mentors and student teacher participants seemed to agree that using experts' ideas was employed only when there were visitors like supervisors who wanted to see it done otherwise in the majority of cases, they did what was practical. Some mentors even said that if they confined themselves to prescribed theories then their pupils were not going to pass the examinations. The participants proposed a number of reasons behind developing and following their own way of teaching rather than simply following experts' standpoints. Most participants pointed out that Examinations played a critical the role in determining the child's future career. Therefore, it was reported that all stakeholders in the education sector-parents, teachers' student and even the ministry of primary and secondary education were interested in high pass rates. Consequently, such public interest had profound influence on how teachers taught and how learners learned. As some students put it:

Most of the schools are result oriented. Instead of adhering to prescribed ways of teaching and assessing, they try to use Dewey's philosophy of "that which works". When we then want to teach as we were told at the university, it becomes problematic because some mentors

think that we are wasting time and we would not cover the syllabus before examination time comes. In that case then we are compelled to do what works. FGD

One mentor mentioned that she had respect for theories but she had problems with them in that they were developed far away from us and also by people whose cultural, social and, religious orientations were very different from our own so it was only reasonable to think that such theories would not wholly apply to our situation and when they don't then, we do what is practical. M-Pl

I have never had about the Post Method Condition so can you briefly explain. L-Nd

Yes we learnt quite a lot about theories of second language acquisition but when we come to schools for teaching, we don't really see where these theories come in so we don't worry about them. Most of what we do is learning to teach by discovery. In other words you just discover that pupils are enjoying the lesson and are actively engaged in it without the application of any specific theory. St-Fo

I can hardly remember any theory but I managed to teach my classes by just using common sense to judge what was reasonable and permissible. St-Fa

During my first days on TP, I did not know anything so I at first, I started by collecting information from university through a colleague. Then later on I started to think for myself and i realized i did not need anything from college in other words I would actually discover what to do in the classroom because the knowledge you had did not work? St-Be

Teaching practice simply means being practical in what one does instead of being idealistic. Student teachers should learn to deal with pedagogical issues practically and that does not require Piagetian theories. If one is teaching in a typical remote rural area where the parents are impoverished and schools not well resourced what theories can be applied in such situations? L-Go

We develop our student teachers in ideal situations which do not exist in the rural areas where the majority of student teachers will be deployed. Student teachers should be trained to cope with the various teaching environments they find themselves in. We of course must be mindful of the fact that they are going to meet challenges so we should prepare them to teach in those areas and if we do it that way, maybe the gaps will be minimized. They must be reflective enough to see their problems so that they can rectify them. L-Nd

Having described what I discerned as aspects of the principle of practicality from participants' articulations, I now move on to describe and present what emerged from participants on the parameter particularity.

Particularity

Particularity involves the teachers' ability to be sensitive to the local educational, institutional and social contexts in which second language, in this case English learning and teaching takes place. It deals with the dichotomy of theory and practice which is teacher generated. It further recognizes that no theory of practice can be fully useful and usable unless it is generated through practice.

From this theme, responses from student teacher participants show that the parameter of practicality was actualized when they went on TP to experience the hands on approach in real classroom situations. Once at their schools, they were required to observe the mentor teach, then got their chance to teach and reflect on their practice by doing formative and summative evaluation in their schemes and detailed lesson plans. This way, they were able to see their weaknesses and therefore to look for a workable pedagogic solution. On the other hand, lecturer and mentor participants seemed to share the view that student teachers were required to continually observe model lessons, teach their own lessons incorporating the good aspects they have observed and reflect, on their own action to find possible solutions. Participants therefore believed that this was a prerequisite for the development of context-sensitive pedagogic theory and practice. Lecturer participants pointed out that attempting to derive a theory of practice enabled student teachers to understand and identify problems, analyze and assess information, consider and evaluate alternatives, and then choose the best available

alternative that is then subjected to further critical appraisal. Since the particular is so deeply embedded in the practical, and cannot be achieved or understood without it, the parameter of particularity is intertwined with the parameter of practicality as well. Some of the points raised above are typified in the statements below;

I think a theory of practice involves continual reflection and action **ST-Na.**

The student teachers' continual reflection and action constitute one side of practicality. **L-Si**

TP is good because you learn so many things. Sometimes you discover that certain things work well others don't. For example you see your colleague using a teaching strategy and when you tried it in your own class, especially for classes that have been strimmed, it does not work for you and your scholars. **St-Fo**

Sometimes what works in one class does not work in another class even if students are at the same level and at the same school. You have to investigate with ways of teaching, of your pupils and their learning to and develop your own style of teaching and learning. **St-Nk.**

TP affords student teachers the opportunity to try out things and to see differences and similarities in the way schools operate for example what is applicable in one school may not be applicable in another school especially if such schools fall under different responsible authorities. It is the student teachers' responsibility to note such things and to act or behave accordingly. **L-Nh**

Yes TP was a worthwhile practical experience because it helped me to work with; other teachers, fellow student teachers and school pupils and also to have experience of what the mentors will say. It prepared me actually for the world to come; for what I'll do after I've done my programme. **St-Be**

Our programmes begin from a point where student teachers are developed not trained and I think you understand what I mean. What that means and which I think student teachers are not aware of is that, they have been given the necessary expertise in the first two

years to enable them to handle classroom pedagogy and to use that knowledge to deal with particular situations and problems. L-Si

The presentations above seem to confirm the presence of the parameter of particularity where teachers have to be sensitive to particular scenarios when dealing with particular issues. It was apparent that while stakeholders in this study were aware of some theories save the Post Method pedagogy, sometimes, (if not many times,) they reported the realization that things do not always work the same in all situations. Instead, they needed to study the situations first to establish what was particular about the situation and when they were confronted by difficult pedagogical situations, they tried to devise their own theories and practice what they theorize.

Theme 6: Theoretical input versus practical and teacher development input

From this theme, participants expressed the view that while teachers' educators strive to respond to the needs of student teachers, the dichotomy between the theoretical input provided in the teacher education classroom and what was practiced and experienced in the practicum classroom remained a serious problem. Participants showed a wide range of conceptions of the value and application of theory to practice and this also varied within each group. They felt that student teachers had to be trained in skills to act in the classroom in accordance with their renewed teacher knowledge base. Student teacher participants echoed that teacher educators needed to ensure that the instruction they offered met the expectations of and the requirements of the practicing schools. According to them, what was taught during university tuition needed to be well-aligned with bottom-up practices and innovations in teaching and learning situations in schools to minimize the gaps? Participants' views are typified in focus group discussions with student teachers and interviews with lecturers' statements below:

Some lecturers penalize us for code-switching during ESL lessons yet the new constitution of Zimbabwe stipulates that mother tongue shall be used as a language of instruction from grade zero to form two. Most of us teach form ones and twos so when we now try to explain difficult concepts in the pupils' mother tongue for purposes of clarity in the presence of some

lecturers, we are reprimanded and sometimes we get very low marks because of that. They believe code-switching is a linguistic tool used to aid learning. **FGD**

When theory is taught, it is in a way that is far removed from practice, or too abstract to be meaningful. At that time, the student teachers think it seems irrelevant. This is exacerbated by the fact that some lecturers teach without emphasizing the significance of the information they are imparting. Actually, they do not care how these should be used in practice'. This is a serious issue that various departments need to address. **L-Et**

I think student teachers struggle to see the relationship between theories/theoretical information and practice as a result of the mismatch between theoretical input and practical output in which they fail to restructure the theories that were instructed to them while at the university. **L-Nh**

Yes there is a gap due to the way we train our teachers. We develop them in ideal situations which do not exist in the rural areas where the majority of student teachers will be deployed. Student teachers should be trained to cope with the various teaching environments they find themselves in. We of course must be mindful of the fact that they are going to meet challenges so we should prepare them to teach in those areas and if we do it that way may be the gaps will be minimized. They must be reflective enough to see their problems so that they can rectify them. **L-Nd**

While theories or theoretical knowledge provided the basis for understanding the reality of teaching, it seemed reasonable therefore, to assume that the content studied in the teacher education classroom correlated with what the student teacher experienced in the classroom during TP but that was not the case because sometimes student teachers fail to show that. **M-Pl**

Theme 7: Lack of clearly defined TP goals

It emerged from this theme that critical theory –practice gaps persistently obtained in student teachers ESL instructional practices because; what was theoretical preached at the university

could not be easily translated into practice due to many prohibiting factors including; lack of clearly defined TP mentoring, supervision and assessment goals, lack of adequate knowledge not only of one's roles and responsibilities but also about mentoring and supervisory skills, supervision by non-subject experts and lack of appreciation on the work done. Participants showed grave concern that the issues to be addressed to make things workable were so many and needed serious intervention.

Stakeholders indicated that they were not very clear (each group in its peculiar way) on what exactly they were supposed to do and sometimes why they were supposed to do what they were expected to do. Some mentors for example, pointed out that it took a long time before they knew that they were supposed to give feedback about the student's teaching and knowing exactly what they were supposed to do was another night mare. Others indicated that they had never been involved in mentoring before and thus needed some upskilling to help them manage TP. Mentors further reiterated that their work was not recognized and appreciated by some lecturers and this was reflected in the behaviour of some lecturers. Lecturer participants expressed the sentiments that some novice lecturers and mentors were not very clear on the difference between supervision and assessment and often used and applied these interchangeably thus creating confusion. Student teachers were resentful of being supervised by non-ESL or language specialists as their advice differed tremendously from what they were taught at college. Lecturers Participants' sentiments are revealed in the following excerpts:

“There are so many things that are taken for granted in this TP business. We are never told beforehand that we would be mentoring somebody. Additionally, it is assumed that we know what we are supposed to do when sometimes we don't.” M-Ne

Sometimes we get confused and surprised to find out that a lecturer tells you to do what other lecturers prohibit and usually that happens when we are supervised by lecturers who are non-experts in the subject because they are not well versed in how languages are schemed and planned. If it was possible we would be happier to be supervised and assessed by our own lecturers from the language section.” FGD

We do not know whether something cannot be done about the confusion that seems to exist among lecturer and mentors. What one lecturer expects from us is not wanted by another lecturer so we do not know how to solve that problem. FGD

The university should not allow non-English subject specialist, to supervise and assess student teachers of English because quite often there is confusion between what we were taught by our lecturer and what the supervising lecturer wants. ST-Am

“Sometimes it pains us to realize that our work is not appreciated either by the ministry of education nor by the lecturers and this makes us lose interest in this TP issue”. M-Vi

From the above participants’ responses, it is evident that there is goal ambiguity, which is likely to result in ineffective actions which can confuse or even infuriate mentor and student teachers often needlessly. Thus, the confusion can lead to escalation of a conflict, which makes resolution more difficult. Finally, participants unanimously agreed that there was need for rigorous induction workshops about the whole TP business well before the deployment of student teachers to; equip stakeholders with the necessary policies and procedures of TP management and to identify their different needs, expectations and abilities(if any) of novice lecturers and mentors. One lecturer summarized it all by saying:

Mentors and lecturers need mentoring and supervision training in order to be aware of what they need to do. Experienced university lecturers should move from one district to another holding meetings or workshops with mentors to educate them on what is expected. If we do not do that then we should not assume that they know. Some of those mentors have also just completed their teacher education courses and may not be well versed with the idea of mentoring. L-Nd

Theme 8: Nature and quality of feedback and support

The results obtained from this theme showed variations in the way express their views but the overriding issues were that; unanimously agree that the nature and quality of feedback

that student teachers got from mentors and lecturers played a significant role in shaping the quality of the instructional process that obtained in the classroom. Responses further indicated that effective feedback helped practicing teachers to envisage their evolving style, clarified what they needed to work on, and concretize their own. It was also discernible from responses that constructive feedback from both lectures and mentors allowed a dialogue to take place between student teachers and supervisor thus promoting thinking and reflection that evoked and explored understanding. Three student teachers indicated that their mentors just gave oral comments but never sat down to observe a lesson and give feedback. For the majority of students, always getting feedback after each lesson was a good thing for them as helped them better understand what they were to learn, what high-quality performance looked like, and what changes were necessary to improve their learning to teach. All the participants concurred that the feedback provided by lecturers and mentors enhanced student understanding and knowledge of pedagogical skills.

However, participants expressed grave concern about the nature and quality of feedback that student teachers got from mentors and supervisors. It was felt that in most cases the feedback which was meant to provide information that helped student teacher learners to confirm, refine, or restructure various kinds of knowledge, strategies, and beliefs was either inadequate or ineffective and student teachers consequently lapsed into ESL practices that were marred with a lot of challenges leading to serious theory-practice gaps. Student teacher participants attributed this lack of ineffectiveness to a number of factors including; mentors' lack of adequate linguistic command to and inadequate knowledge about the content of the ESL discipline. Inadequate linguistic command was seen as a major handicap that inhibited mentors and lecturers to critique a student teacher's lesson in a manner that was comprehensible enough to bridge the gap between the language of the master and novice. It was felt that good feedback constituted positive and negative evaluation that provided advice and suggestions for future use.

Participants indicated that the university needed to revisit its supervision policy where ESL student teachers were supposed to be supervised by ESL lecturers who were experts in their discipline as they were believed have adequate knowledge of the ESL content and expertise

in framing feedback statements. It was further alleged that lecturer experts in ESL were believed to have the capacity to write good quality external feedback and information that helped students troubleshoot their own performance and self-correction. The excerpts provided below illustrate the issue at hand.

I think the reason why mentors also do not want to write much is that they too struggle with the target language to write effective and meaningful comments. Giving oral comments is just a strategy to avoid putting something in writing as they fear that lectures also read their comments which may be heavily flawed with so many types of errors. FGD

There was need to have a post TP feedback in order to get a clear insight about the challenges that student teacher faced during TP. Such insight would then help lecturers to find a lasting solution to the problems. L-Ts

The university should change its policy on TP and allow a situation where all TP stakeholders meet together to make a critical evaluation of what might have happened L-Go

Sometimes mentors just give oral feedback which is difficult to remember given the amount of work that we have to put up with. We cannot force them to put it in writing as they say they are busy. St-Fa

Some feedback we get from mentors and supervisors is not clear due to incomprehensible language and in most cases such feedback would be from a non ESL expert lecturers. FGD

Sometimes we are not aware of the nature of professional challenges different student teachers faced except only those challenges that are communicated to us. Such failure to have feedback from student teachers can be a big contributory factor towards the theory – practice gaps that ensued in student teachers practices in ESL. L-Si

We always try to provide feedback to student teachers each time we observe their teaching. Feedback allows dialogue to take place and this is very helpful in improving their teaching. M-Na

Constructive feedback from mentors and lecturers is very helpful. In the first term we were just wondering in the dark not knowing what to do but as the year progressed, we at least had found direction after a series of feedback from them. But, the problem is that lecturers are hard to come by during the TP period and when you see them, they are in a hurry.

FGD

Some lecturer participants seemed to bemoan the fact that TP at GZU was a one-off phase done once and for all and valuable only at the time of its occurrence. Otherwise once it was over, no other considerations were made irrespective of whatever challenges may have emerged. As a way of solving the problem, most participants expressed the views that post TP workshops were necessary for all stakeholders to air their views about their experiences and to highlight and reflect on the mostly taken for granted myriad of challenges encountered during TP. Such sentiments perceptions and views are revealed in the following two excerpts:

*Yes I think there is need to change our policy regarding student's final year when they come to finish the remaining modules. I think this year should be used to look at various challenges persistent during the practicum period so that we deal with them once and for all. If we don't, they always remain unsolved and when a new group of student teachers go for TP, they would continue to face similar problems. Our feedback is not adequate. **L-Ts***

*I think we should adopt the procedure of mounting a series of workshops where our student come back to the university to present the various challenges they faced during their teaching. Lecturers for various disciplines would then be able to deal with specific challenges. Without that we will continue to have challenges. **L-Nh.***

Theme 9: Match and mismatches in lecturers and mentors qualification

From this theme, most participants held the view that the levels of academic, professional qualifications and educational orientations of both the mentor and lecturers had a significant impact in the way they mentored and supervised student teachers. It was reported that high qualification was viewed as an indication of capability and evidence of one's knowledge of

the subject matter, skills and competence, while the opposite was the case for low qualification. In this study, what participants described as low qualification was “O-level plus a diploma in Education and high qualification was designated as A Master’s degree plus PhD. Participants seemed to share the view that there were gaps in the knowledge base among the lecturers, mentors and student teachers especially with regard to varying academic and professional qualification resulting in a wide variation in the depth and rigour in the way they viewed how pedagogic content knowledge in ESL was delivered. Congruently, the kind of professional support given to practicing students’ teachers and their capacity to conceptualize that support was largely depended on the level of understanding, which the concerned parties had. In that scenario, critical theory –practice gaps are a norm.

It emerged that where there were matched expectations between the lecture and the mentor, student teachers explained a high degree of support in their learning to teach, whereas mismatched expectations explained a high degree of challenge regarding the type of content to be taught and the strategies used to deliver that content. Student teacher participants reported that there was a bit of confusion in that regard and they attributed this to the level of academic qualification and professional orientation.

The following excerpts by participants confirm the above views:

We do have a shared experience in as far as classroom practice is concerned. However, there may be problems regarding the level of knowledge base between the two groups of people. While both groups know what is expected, the levels at which they operate is problematic because some mentors’ diploma qualification may be too low to match the lecturer’s level of operation hence the gaps. We need workshops may save as a standardized phenomenon and in-service upskilling between the two to avoid the extremes of what might emerge. L-Si

I think mentors know what they are doing, but perhaps those who started work some twenty or more years ago need in-service training to update their pedagogic content knowledge and skills to keep abreast of events. With so many things changing and with that maybe they

may not be aware new developments in ESL teaching. That is perhaps why there appears to be no shared understanding between lecturers and mentors. FGD

Whether or not lecturers have a shared understanding of expected pedagogic standards we do not know but there were some contradictions between them. What some mentors required us to do was different from what lecturers wanted. FGD

Shared knowledge is there but it cannot be put into reality as there might be problems in the level of knowledge base between lecturers and mentors. The level at which both operate is so different that it is difficult to synchronize. Workshops might serve as a standardizing phenomenon. L-Go

I do not think that some mentors share the same knowledge that lecturers have about the way things should be done. I say so because my mentor was always asking me questions wanting to know how we did things. St-Ar

Theme 10: Student teachers' financial constraints

Financial constraints were regarded as constituting a barrier to effective classroom pedagogy. Most of the students highlighted that they did not have money to buy their necessities including the materials to prepare instructional media. This implied that some of the classroom related things that they should have done if they had money, were avoided. Some mentors also believed that student teachers' financial constraints was a critical barrier which immeasurably compromised student teachers' ability to meaningfully involve themselves in the effective pedagogy. In the words of one lecturer;

Our students do not get an allowance so even if they had wanted to buy something to boost their instructional performance, they wouldn't due financial constraints. Lack of finances makes them stressed and once that happens then they lose focus of what and how they teach hence creating gaps. L-Nh

*Sometimes we feel sorry for these student because they are not financially adequate to afford some of the things that we want them to purchase for example, pieces of manila magic and felt markers. **L-Ze***

*I think some those problems arose because students do not concentrate on their work due to financial constraints. The university should do something to ensure that at least they are given some allowance. **L-Go***

*Sometimes student teachers appear not to do well not because they are incompetent. Rather, they have been stressed by a number of factors including financial constrains which they spend time brooding over. **L-Ts***

*Sometimes lecturers come when we are not in good especially when our parents fail to send us money for our needs. In such circumstances it is very difficult to concentrate with our work and that has in my times resulted in poor performance. **FGD***

*The university should help to solve our monetary problems by reducing the fees. Most of the time we will be thinking of how to get the fees especially if parents are not working. It is really stressful but we cannot tell our lecturers that that is what is worrying me so I cannot concentrate. **FGD***

*Some of these students teachers fail to operate at the best of their ability because; they are hungry and cannot afford some basic things. Why can't the ministry of education give them just a little to enable them survive the harsh economic situation. We really feel for them because sometimes they even fail to conduct their parents that they need food. **M-Vi***

The presentations given above serve to confirm that student teachers have financial constraints negatively affect their instructional performance as they sometimes spend time brooding over those problems. It is therefore a reality fact that working under stressful situations sometime comprise the work and in this case there will be lack of teacher efficacy

leading to the gaps. Having talked about students' financial problems, the next section deals with how the attitude of participants affect their actions or that of the other.

Theme 11: Attitude problems

In this study, beliefs held by stakeholders about each other contributed towards the potential conflict among them and resulted in restricted instructional, mentoring and supervisory practices. Negative lecturer attitudes towards mentors is seen in this research as constituting a barrier to effective mentoring and supervisory practices. Some lecturers looked down upon mentors whom they regarded as lowly qualified and so incapable of a meaningful pedagogical contribution. It emerged that some lectures therefore did not bother to share with mentors the performance of student teachers so they could discuss and rectify areas of weaknesses. This negative attitude also meant that mentors were not given the opportunity to communicate their expectations, beliefs and views about the efficacy of student teachers. These sentiments are revealed in the statements below:

I do not listen to what mentors say about the student because we have come to realize that mentors always want to cover up for student teachers even if they (student teachers) are wrong. L-Sm

Some of the mentors work so hard to bring us to the level we are at now but when lecturers visit us, they do not seem to appreciate what has been done. In that case, mentors usually get discouraged and they stop giving us the assistance that we need. St-Nk

Some mentors write very weak reports about the student teachers practices such that we cannot consider their reports or mark for the final assessment of our students otherwise we are lowering our standards. L-Ts

We don't consider the marks that mentors award to our student teachers because they are sub-standard since they are only produced by teachers who operate at the same level as our students. L-Ze

Some of these mentors have not received proper induction workshops on how to assist and mentor a novice practitioner so we can't quite trust their practices. L-Go

Sometimes we think lecturers unfairly treat student teachers regarding their work. When we try to intervene by at least trying to explain to the lecturer why the student did one two and three things, we quickly notice that the lecturer is not amused and perhaps that is why we are said to be protecting the student teachers even when they are wrong. M-Ne

11.1 Preconceptions about student teacher practices

It emerged from this theme that some lecturers and mentors had negative attitudes towards student teachers. As a result, they do not listen to whatever student teachers tell them. Lecturer and mentor views about students seem to give a blanket condemnation on them. Student teachers are said to be liars, lazy, irresponsible and defensive when it came to work preparation. These preconceptions acted as barriers towards the provision of effective professional assistance thus compromising student teachers instructional performance resulting in the theory- practice gaps. These sentiments can be discerned in the excerpts below;

We have known over the years that most students are lazy and defensive. They always try to give lame excuses when you want to find out why they did not do the work. L-Ze

Some student teachers team up against their mentors –saying all sorts of nasty things and when those mentors get wind of that, tiffs and squabbles begin and nothing good can be expected from such a situation-M-Na

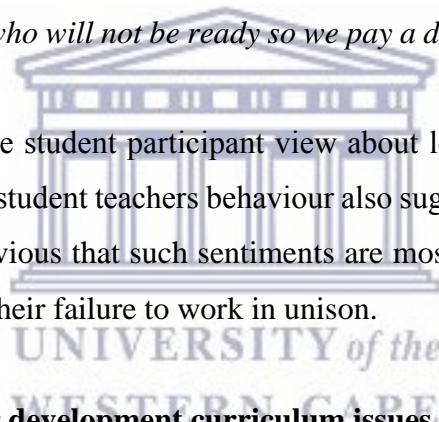
What surprises me most is that back at the university we often visit lecturers in their offices and they treat us with dignity and appear to be very friendly and helpful. But when they now come for TP, they become real monsters because they don't show mercy, they say they are in a hurry, they don't listen to what you say ash-I don't know whether it is their attitude towards us or towards TP. St-An

Many lecturers do not want to listen to what student teachers tell them about the challenges we encounter in our teaching. They have simply developed a negative attitude towards all student teachers. St-Fa

Even if they have genuine complains, we do not take it seriously because some of them take advantage of that by telling all sorts of lies to divert the lecturers' attention from them and when we try to show sympathy, they make a fool out of you by moving about boastfully telling their friends that lecturers are easy to deal with when you don't have the required documents. L-Nh

Student teachers always complain that we do not give them enough time to prepare before we go to supervise and assess them yet even if you give them a whole year of planning you will still find some if not many who will not be ready so we pay a deaf ear to their plea..L-Et

The excerpts above demonstrate student participant view about lecturer's attitude towards them. Lecturers' comments on student teachers behaviour also suggest a somewhat negative attitude towards them. It is obvious that such sentiments are most likely to create animosity between parties resulting in their failure to work in unison.



Theme 12: Language Teacher development curriculum issues

12.1 Irrelevant teacher education modules

Student teacher participants felt that the language teacher education curriculum needed to be revised in order to remove some of the modules which they believed had no significance with what was going on in the classrooms. Cases that were cited were the literatures of regions or countries which had no relations with Zimbabwe. Students preferred to be given more time with courses to do with pedagogic studies in English which they say had a direct influence on their teaching. Some participants had this to say:

We think that there are too many literature modules some of which are not very relevant to our situation. If we were in a position to decide then we would advocate for the teaching of poetry and drama only because these are very difficult to teach in schools. FGD

I can't remember some of them. I think Caribbean literature. Because at school they don't teach Caribbean literature so I don't see the reason why we should learn it, because we are not going to apply it anywhere else. St-Be

Not all the modules are relevant so some of these like the linguistics and the Afro-American and Caribbean should be scraped off. St-Ca

I think there is something wrong with our language curriculum modules because you will not find them on offer at school. St-Fo

I think our time table is also overloaded and students cannot have enough time to concentrate on their areas of specialization. Modules such as the Heritage studies one should just be put aside because it's not very relevant, its content is taken care of by the indigenous languages and history. L-Nh

The above sentiments mainly came from student teacher participants who felt that some of the modules they learn at college did not help them during TP. They preferred to have them replaced with pedagogics studies, grammar and poetry modules. The next section looks at the social constructivist framework.

Theme 13: The Social Constructivist model of practice.

In my interactions with participants, I noted some measure of constructivist practices and lack of it in what participants said. Significant among these responses were the reports that collaboration and mutual support by colleagues, mentors and lecturers tended to boost student teachers' confidence to improve their practices. Participants further indicated that student teachers who had a good working relationship with their mentors and other teachers appeared to fare well in their teaching despite the host of challenges while student teachers with a rocky relationship with other stakeholders did poorly. Some of what participants said can be discerned from the vignette below:

*For me, TP experiences were not only enjoyable but also very fulfilling because both my mentor and head of department were very helpful and co-operative. With my mentor, we collaborated and supported each other when there was need. **St-Ar***

*My mentor was so helpful and cooperative that it made my life easier because I managed to tackle most of the challenges through her and other teachers. She even went to the extent of buying manila and magic markers for me when I got financially constrained. **ST-Am***

*Sometimes it is difficult to work with student teachers who do not co-operate. It is a reality fact that where there is effective collaboration and mutual support between, people their work becomes easier and more enjoyable and beneficial to both parties. **M-Na***

*I think if the three groups (student teachers, mentors lecturers) put their heads together, to share our knowledge, experiences and concerns that will do everybody a lot of good. As you know, listening to others and respecting differences becomes important and useful in communities of sharing and members feel that the differences and challenges encountered are opportunities to expand knowledge and understanding. Student teachers will learn that their strengths and weaknesses are valuable and that every individual has knowledge to offer the other members of the professional community. **L-Si***

*If stakeholders get into the habit of sharing ideas for successful teaching, mentoring and supervision practices with one another, they will have a wider base of knowledge to bring to the classroom. A variety of pedagogical approaches will be available since they will put their heads together to come up with the best of whatever they will be discussing. They student teachers will all have resources to rely on when the need additional input or advice in effective teaching. **M-Na***

*Collaboration between the student teachers and mentors will allow both parties to move forward effectively and to evaluate their pedagogical practices in their respective classrooms. That way they provide each other with a rich array of resources for themselves to use in classrooms. **L-Ze***

It was good that we found the three of us teaching at one school where it was possible to share notes and ideas otherwise it could have been a serious problem. FGD

However, while participants seemed to suggest that co-operation, interaction and collaboration among stakeholders in this study was very beneficial in creating knowledge, they at the same time seemed to bemoan the fact that their tripartite relationship was devoid of these aspects hence a lot of challenges. Some lecturer and student participants expressed the view that there was disharmony as well as a disjuncture between mentors and student teachers and that affected their instructional and mentoring practices respectively. Student teachers did not get the confidence to teach and to try out new things. When they felt stranded during lesson delivery, mentors did not come to their aid when they encountered challenging tasks such as marking discursive composition.

Student participants seemed to concur that stakeholders needed to collaborate and cooperate with each other in order to construct knowledge and to make things easy for themselves. Mentors could learn not only from one another but also from lecturers and vice versa and this would help them grow into better mentors and supervisors. In that case, participants further indicated that there was need to find a platform on which lecturers' mentors and student teachers meet together to share the challenges and successful pedagogical strategies. It was unanimously agreed that such arrangement would go a long way in alleviating some of the challenges that lead to theory practice gaps. The implications of these findings for the university-school partnership include the increased need for university and school administrators to support school and student teachers' benefit from the collaboration; and to create more time for the involvement of all participating parties so that they can better implement the collaboration activities. Having deliberated on what I thought was related to the Social Constructivist model, the next section now looks at reflective practice in language teacher development practices.

Theme 14: Reflective practice for improved teaching

It emerged from this theme that student teacher, mentor and lecturer participants were generally aware and knowledgeable about the significance of reflective practice in promoting

effective learning teaching and mentoring especially if it was continually applied in the classroom. They seemed to suggest that reflective practice should be incorporated into university module and taught as a subject so that student teachers got well acquainted with it. Lecturer participants on the other hand, seemed to assume that student teachers knew about reflective practice as it was perceived as a common discourse in the university. Lecturers and mentors agreed that critical reflection made teachers more focused in their teaching relationships. The sentiment are confirmed in the following excerpts:

Reflective practice is understanding one 'teaching in terms of its successes and failures' so if student teachers can see and evaluate themselves then they are reflecting. M-Ne

Well, reflective practice could mean the ability to continually evaluate the effects of one decisions and choices on learners. L-Nd

In fact, reflective practice is beneficial to all stakeholders because it provides them with opportunities to validate the experience they have gained over the years which in turn would make them effective student teachers, mentors and supervisors. L-Si

After teaching all my lessons, I would normally reflect on work by evaluating the lessons to see whether they were successful or not, If they were successfully I would proceed to do the next lesson plans and if not I would re-plan the lessons and teach them again or at least give pupils some remedial work. St-Am

I think we need to give them assignments on reflective practice so that they will get to know a lot about it through researching. If just continue to say it by word of mouth they will also continue to ignore it yet it is very beneficial to their practice. L-Ts

We heard about reflective practice from one of my lecturers but we are not very clear what it entails and how we should use it. FGD.

In line with the usual talk about lesson evaluation where students' teachers are expected to point out the strengths and weaknesses, it is also sensible to ascertain that student teachers understood the concept of reflective practice and its significance in the classroom. L-Ze

Teacher reflects on her teaching performance and develops an accurate self-analysis as a result, enabling her to identify areas in her practice where she feels professional learning would be helpful. Teacher is actively committed to keeping up with current educational initiatives and pedagogy. L-Si

Reflective practice cannot just happen from the blue. It has to be taught and emphasis must be given to acquaint student teachers with its significance in their teaching. Unfortunately, our secondary student teachers do not have the professional issues module, where it is incorporated but the primary one has. Maybe when we change the regulations then only can we incorporate that module. L-Nd

The interpretation derived from the participants' responses show that reflective is important if effectively practiced in the classroom. However, it merged that lecturers do not emphasis how it could be used to improve trainee teachers' pedagogic practices.

After having presented and analyzed data that emerged from the fourteen themes that i found, the next and final section of this chapter, concludes and closes the chapter.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have described the process of how I presented and analyzed data generated through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, lesson observations and documentary analysis. In my presentation and analysis, I adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) pragmatic and analytic framework of conducting qualitative thematic analysis and it enabled me to generate/formulate several categories under which similar themes or categories were collated. Key themes (interchangeably treated as findings of the study) that emerged from the corpus data served to exemplify and support my belief that there are critical theory-practice gaps at various levels in the whole process of English Second Language Teacher

preparation and development right from the initial university based tuition through to student teachers' pedagogical practices during the TP period. In that case then, all the stake holders- student teachers, mentors and lectures directly involved in this enterprise are not any exception.

Several factors including; ineffectiveness and inadequacy instructional, mentoring and supervision practices, deficiencies in the knowledge base of participants and their failure to use plausible theoretical frameworks such as constructivism and reflective practice, poor communication between the training institution and practicing schools, lack of constructive and subject specific feedback for the purposes of reflection for improving practice invariably contributed to the myriad causes of the theory practice dichotomy. In view of these findings, the implication is that, there is need for all stake holders in this study to transit from generic teaching, mentoring and supervision to specific practices informed by constructivist and reflective models which can provide a robust focus for developing pre-service secondary teachers of English. It is my belief that the constructivist theory complements mentoring and supervision within the school based practicum experiences, as it can be used to build upon prior understandings towards developing the mentee's knowledge and skills for teaching.

The outcomes of my study are significant to me and other language teacher practitioners because they provide a better and deeper understanding of insights into the origin and nature of challenges that influence the theory –practice gaps in ESL practices. In addition, the results are a contribution to debate about improving the ESL teacher development programmes to promote learner autonomy and academic achievement. It is hoped that knowledge of these challenges on the part of participants directly involved in this valuable pedagogic enterprise will help them seek intervention strategies to curb the challenges thus minimizing the gaps. That way, the process of improving and shaping the character and content of the language teacher development programme occurs through developing conceptions of teaching, supervision and assessment which have wider scope and plausibility than our traditionally narrow ideas.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In my data analysis chapter, I made an attempt to address issues underlying theory and practice gaps. Theory- practice gap, as a matter of fact, is a topic of particular significance in teacher development and teacher education covering all levels of conceptualization and all types of stakeholders. Apparently, it involved all from student teachers to lecturers and mentors. Most interestingly, I now believe that it involved me as lecturer, student supervisor and even as a researcher. As regards students, the fundamental gaps that I propose to discuss in this chapter revolve around “missing the mission of liberal arts education and remaining with shallow lenses into their practice” while lecturers as well remain steeped in rigid perspectives bordering on inflexibility and pursuit of tired attitudes towards students and mentors. From my findings, there is an extent to which ‘theory-practice divide’ in teacher education should not be viewed simply as an acceptance of a body of knowledge but instead, an acceptance of the teacher educator’s authority to determine what is relevant educational theory. This is the context in which mentors were the somewhat unfortunate participants almost brought into the mix of something they were completely unprepared for yet unfortunately coming into the line of fire by lecturers and sometimes by student teachers. Lecturers felt they had the authority or legitimacy to determine what was worthwhile knowledge and practice and the question that remains to be answered is that did they? In my discussion therefore, I challenge this legitimacy even as I employ postcolonial theory to understand the origin of the curriculum in postcolonial Africa. The purpose of my qualitative study is to investigate the relationship between theory and practice as can be ascertained through the B.Ed. secondary student teachers’ instructional practices in English during their Teaching Practicum period. My findings however, indicated that there was a viable theoretical or even fundamental question to interrogate. By clearly indicating that gaps existed between theory and practice, participants, in a way, made me extrapolate that they were bringing into focus the more significant question of the acceptance or rejection of the authority of the teacher educator across the educational spectrum. My study attempts to

answer one major research question (cf Chapter 3: item 3.1.1) and three subsidiary research questions (see Chapter 3: items 3.1.1.1-3.1.1.3).

The investigation hopes to establish and document the consistencies or otherwise existing between the current framing theories that underpin the B.Ed pre-service secondary programme, the theoretical knowledge acquired during university based tuition and the expected standards of Teaching Practice pedagogical efficacy reflected in the student teachers' ESL practices. The Teaching Practice period provides the micro window into the Teacher Development arena providing the opportunity to view the protagonists in the persons of student teachers, lecturers, practicing school teachers as mentors and the instruments used in the process. Findings should then shed light that can inform approaches to the improvement of language teacher education programme(s) at university and eventually at national level based on strategic advocacy.

In chapter four, I presented and analyzed data thematically based on and supported by Braun and Clarke's (2006) analytic method of conducting qualitative analysis. In this chapter then, I present a comprehensive discussion of my research findings by relating the emergent themes to the existing literature in the field of English language Teacher Development (ELTD) in general and to the major theoretical principles that inform my study in particular.

Given the above expressed objective, I propose to discuss in this Chapter, the significance of my findings in light of what is already known about the research problem that I intent to investigate. I further resolve to explain any new understanding or insights about my research problem. My data discussion Chapter therefore is divided into five sections, with the first section being the introduction while the last section is the concluding part. The other three middle sections constitute the main parts of my data discussion. In the first main section, I provide a brief discussion on the philosophy that underpins teacher development programmes at GZU – how what the student teachers learn in their initial university based phase influence practices during the teaching practice or practicum period. This is followed by an overview of my conceptualization of the theory - practice gaps in ESL as described by linguistic scholars. The third main section is a discussion of findings in relation to the

literature about language teacher education. In the succeeding section, I now discuss Teacher development programming at GZU.

5.2 Teacher development programming at GZU

Pre-service teacher effectiveness during TP depends on a number of factors including the kind of teacher preparation that student teachers undertake in their initial university based instruction. Accordingly, teacher education institutions have a significant mandate to design and implement teacher development programs that are not only suitable for the ‘needs and realities of modern classrooms but that also enhance and reflect the roles and competencies required of teaching practitioners. This is more so with GZU teacher programming model which in many ways attempts to hone in on the theories, knowledge and practices that bolster student teacher efficacy. The teacher development curricula are therefore normally designed to incorporate three distinct yet interrelated domains, namely subject matter (content); theories of teaching and learning pedagogy and professional experience (the practicum). There is general agreement that these domains are interdependent (Darling-Hammond 1999). First, the GZU teacher education curricula is designed according to a theory-led and not an integrated practice-led approach wherein the theoretical aspect is covered during the first two years of students’ university-based studies followed’ followed by school based practical ‘application’ in the third year of the B.Ed programme.

The university’s department of Teacher Development is responsible for the preparation and development of all pre-service student teachers and thus sets the theoretical foundations on the teaching of ESL alongside other languages and disciplines. The philosophy underpinning course/programmes is based on liberal education which involves learning that empowers student teachers and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. In that regard, the university coursework covers a wide range of disciplines that provide student teachers with broad knowledge as well as in-depth study in specific areas of interest. According to the American association of universities, (cited by Bobby 2004), liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world

settings. With reference to my study, the English language courses cover various aspects of second language teaching as well as linguistics and literary studies. Additionally, related disciplines such as general pedagogy, humanities, foundational and practical modules, communication skills, Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills, and Heritage studies are included. While the major focus necessarily rests on theory, practical studies do, also provide an indispensable and mandatory constituent of university-based teacher education programmes. With this kind of teacher preparation and development programmes, GZU hopes that the theoretical knowledge that student teachers acquire is directly connected to the quality of competences, knowledge, skills and abilities they can use throughout the Teaching practice period.

Having discussed the framing theory at GZU, I now move on to discuss the theory practice relationship.

5.3 Theory-practice

After discovering the extent to which theory practice gaps pervaded all aspects of student development, I felt that I needed a more elaborate instrument to handle my discussion more comprehensively. In this pursuit, I started looking for more literature that could give me a better handle to what I was beginning to see as very interesting data. Therefore, I went back to refresh myself with the basics of theories and theoretical frameworks. I revisited the point that theories were abstract sets of beliefs that informed how certain things were done; for example, in the justification for practitioner action with the implication that it could be used to generate hypothetical solutions to problems and it could be ‘applied in practice. Practice on the other hand, is the process of actively carrying out an idea as distinct from the process of having an idea. In the same endeavor, I found Kessels and Korthagen’s (2001) detailed discussion on the concept of theory-practice relationship where they used the expressions *Episteme* and *Phronesis*. For them, Episteme is theory with a big “T” and implies the theoretical expert knowledge derived from scientific understanding. It is propositional and as such, is applicable to a variety of situations and formulated in abstract terms. It is cognitive in nature (Kessels and Korthagen 2001, p. 21). Phronesis is a theory with a small “t”- it is practical wisdom, knowledge of particularities of a situation and knowledge of the concrete

not the abstract. It is perceptual and uses rules only as summaries, guides and requires enough experience (Kessels and Korthagen 2001, p. 27).

From my understanding of the above discussion, the concept of practice perhaps can be best translated as a ‘concrete practical professional undertaking’ in a real learning professional situation, a learning environment with materials, tools and actors in which a career is practiced. The professional worker in that environment has been developed to act professionally, on the basis of practical knowledge. A teacher (in this case a student teacher) can also be considered as someone who practices a profession (Verloop, 1995). In the context of my study, what Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon (1998) have voiced assumes particular relevance. They are of the view that; the university provides the *Episteme*- theory, skills, and theoretical knowledge about teaching through coursework and the school provides the *Phronesis*- the field setting where such knowledge is applied and practiced; and the beginning teacher provides the individual effort that integrates it all (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon 1998; 160). Theoretical knowledge includes the exploration of language learning/teaching theories and content knowledge.

Practical knowledge is acquired through reflecting on prior experience as language learners, teaching observations, and direct teaching experiences (Drever & Cope, 1999; Golombek, 1998; Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Roberts, 1998). However, it is important to highlight that not all campus activities are theoretical, (Carr, 1987), or that all classroom activities represent practice only, which they do not (Carr, 1987). While it may sound obvious that theory can be translated into practice, Dye (1999) laments that turning theory into practice is not a mechanistic straightforward process? In support of this, Zeichner et al. (1987) seem to justify Day’s claim above by pronouncing that “the realization of teacher education goals in terms of integrating theory and practice is occasionally impeded by the conformist and conservative influence that practical training can have on student teachers”. Student teachers often indicated that knowledge acquired in teacher training did not enable them to handle the uncertainty, the complexity and the instability of actual practice situations (Zeichner & Gore, 1990; Harris & Eggen, 1993; Oosterheert, 2001).

Additionally, student teachers' inability to effectively translate theory into practice is exacerbated by the common misconception that theory is "good" when it is "relevant" to conventional practice, where the criterion for "relevance" lies in theory's potential as a pedagogical intervention (Deng 2004). So, teacher candidates typically see researchers in the role of producing the theoretical knowledge that should be easily translatable into Practice (Gravani, 2008, p. 655). Therefore, they evaluate a theory's "goodness" by its immediate applicability to their own classroom practices (Kennedy 1999). In line with the above, Korthagen et al. (2006, p.1020) point out that no coherent body of knowledge exists about central principles underlying teacher development programs that are responsive to the expectations, needs and practices of student teachers.

In view of the points I have presented above, my conception of the theory-practice gap can therefore be illustrated. With that, I feel persuaded to say that there is an inadequate relationship between the two and that student teachers should find it difficult to gain confidence in their ability to integrate theory into practice during the practicum period. Consistent with the practicalities of Episteme and Phronesis, the mentoring teachers are equally expected to remain in the same quandary as student teachers since transiting from theory with capital 'T' to the theory of small 't' is not a mechanistic straight forward process. It is precisely because of this delicate situation that this coursework–practicum dichotomy in learning to teach ESL continues to persist. Having said that, I am inclined to believe that it is against this background that the succeeding discussion of findings in the next section can be understood.

5.4 Discussion of findings

Findings of the study, interchangeably as well as concurrently referred to as emerging themes, indicated that there are critical theory-practice gaps in the Language Teacher Preparation and Development at GZU. Fourteen themes emerged from the analysis of data and these were identified as obstacles to effective instructional, supervision and mentoring practices. These themes provided insights into participants' experiences, perceptions beliefs and attitudes about the theory practice gaps hence were deemed to constitute that which could be used to shed light on my research questions. I found that the gaps exist at various levels

across the whole spectrum of teacher preparation and development stakeholders and contexts from lecturers themselves to practice school-based mentors and student teachers. I consider it pertinent to mention here that the themes were developed from recurrent issues that emerged from the participants. These themes, each with its accompanying sub-categories will be used to expedite the discussion of the findings. In order to articulate the immediacy and primacy of my findings, I propose to bring in data strands which I deem vital to my discussions in this chapter. They are meant to help me walk my epistemic terrain in the shoes of my participants, whose voice and agency are precious to me.

- Challenges in integrating theory into practice (*Episteme* and *Phronesis*)
- Perceived quality of mentoring and supervision
- Nature and quality of communication and dialogue
- Deficiencies in teacher knowledge base for ESL teaching
- The Post Method pedagogy
- Theoretical input versus practical and teacher development input
- Lack of clearly defined TP goals
- Nature and quality of feedback and support
- Match and mismatches in lecturers and mentors qualification
- Student teachers' financial constraints
- Attitude problems
- Language Teacher development curriculum issues
- The Social Constructivist model of practice
- Reflective practices for improved teaching

The length of this list demonstrates the theoretical point of questioning the legitimacy or suitability of the educational content used as the teacher education curriculum. Postcolonial theory explains this very well remembering that the colonial past and postcolonial present are at play across these curriculum spaces and manifest in ordinary ways in the everyday pedagogical and practice dilemmas encountered by, in this case, student teachers, lecturers and even mentors. I will not weave this theoretical projection into my discussion but just

premise it on the motif. As I said in the introduction, I want the reader to remember that the extent to which ‘theory-practice divide’ in teacher education should not be viewed simply as an acceptance of a body of knowledge but instead an acceptance of the teacher educator’s authority to determine what is relevant educational theory.

5.4.1 Challenges in integrating theory into practice (*Episteme and Phronesis*)

Findings emerging from these themes were all largely premised on the broader issue around “*Episteme and Phronesis*” – *integrating the theory of capital ‘T’ and small ‘t’*. This was why gaps were identified across a whole spectrum of stakeholders and contexts and in all cases, again, largely in rather harmonious ways. Practically because the colonial past and postcolonial present, lecturers appeared to have had too many assumptions about the extent to which student teachers’ learning and understanding were congruent to the theoretical underpinnings of the teacher development programme (neither their fault nor making). Student teachers on the other hand, appeared to lack the degree of introspection required at this level of professional pedagogical development. Yet this is precisely because the basis of this whole curriculum structure is the one that is not consistent with the post-colonial present – many students, different teacher development programmes and above all lack of enough incentives for practioners across the board. Practicing schools –based mentors for their part, operating as what can be described as far away removed decontextualized agents, even have greater challenges to cope with. It emerged that lecturers made too many assumptions about student teachers’ learning and understanding during university based tuition not surprisingly because they assumed that since ‘A’ and not ‘O’ Level qualifications are the threshold for B.Ed. Pre-service entry, these students could more readily transfer knowledge from the face-to-face modules to the teaching practice contexts. All this can be said to be a far cry from the underlying theoretical facts of postcolonial theory and the curriculum.

Lecturers over-estimate students’ ability to synthesize the Liberal Education on which the university curriculum is premised assuming that their teaching (although steeped in the transmission mode) helped students develop critical thinking and transferable pedagogical

skills that would empower them to handle classroom pedagogy when they go for teaching practice. Often, the folly of such assumptions and the under-estimation of the episteme/Phronesis dichotomy manifest themselves abundantly during students' teaching practice. The concept of theory practice gap exemplified in Episteme and Phronesis dichotomy amply summarizes this dilemma. The unavoidable consequence is that the practice schools-based instructional practice is generally marred with miscues and conceptions replete with pedagogical assumptions that are a far cry from the face-to-face introductory theory based professional orientation at university which practically was not really developed by lecturers in the post-colonial context but largely a vestige of the postcolonial curriculum. This is where, straight away, the mismatches and gaps that begin to manifest themselves have to be understood within the wider scope of curriculum legitimacy in the postcolonial context.

Lecturers again further mistakenly believe that the diversity of experiences student teachers bring including their own educational background, personal and university experience and TP experiences would constitute a wide enough knowledge base in ESL to enable them translate into practice the theory they have learnt from the university. These views are well articulated by *M-Ne* who seems to point out that lecturers should not expect student teachers to have the ability to translate theory into practice since this is not a straight forward mechanistic process. She uses a tone that appears to blame lecturers for not realizing the need to give student teachers adequate grounding in theoretical knowledge which she thinks can be effectively used after some time during the teaching experience (see Chapter four item 1.1).

This mentor perspective was further corroborated specifically by student teachers who looked at this theory - practice gap as a point of extreme difficulty since students discovered that they could not quickly see university narratives speaking directly to the TP expectations. This is why **Fa**, another student, felt that the TP experience was an eye opener as far as getting school-based experience was concerned. What I can only repeat here for emphasis is that 'theory-practice divide' in language teacher education can be viewed not simply as an acceptance of a body of knowledge but instead an acceptance of the teacher educator's authority to determine what is relevant educational theory.

She appeared to acknowledge and appreciate the significance of TP as a worthwhile experience that provided a lot of practical knowledge leading to a deeper understanding of pedagogic rituals. Yet she at the same time lamented the complexity of trying to think of what she learnt at the university in order to link it with what happens in the classroom.

From what student *Fa* said, I noted that student teachers had real problems understanding the link between university-based narratives and TP expectations. Another student teacher *Be*, appeared to express bitterness about the way lecturers themselves failed to bridge the theory practice gap. Speaking about the teaching and learning of Literature, she seemed to declare that nobody could understand anything as long as Episteme and Phronesis were not harmonized. *St-Fa and St-Fo* sentiments are well articulated in Chapter 4 item 1.1.

Another student teacher *Fo* expressed this in a different way when she observed that TP experience was a rude awakening opening their eyes for the first time to the glaring commissions and omissions replete in the university based narratives. She poignantly stated that while at the university, she did not see anything wrong in her studies but only became awakened during TP when she realized that many of the modules that she/they did were not necessary and could not be applied to the classroom situation. In the excerpt below, she narrates the unfortunate and unavoidable scenario where many student teachers resort to what I would call “survival skills” where they do things in order to please their supervisors at the expense of learning to do the right thing.

St-Fo further expressed the sentiment that TP was a rude awakening when teacher candidates discovered that classrooms were completely different contexts with so much classroom management and however teacher candidate planned, it was not easy to think of what they were taught at the university and immediately apply it in a lesson. She seemed to imply that teachers had a challenging task which requires them to act at classroom events as they happened rather than as has been taught. Her views commensurate with the views of Epstein (1990) who states that teachers’ reactions to a pedagogic situations are holistic and gestalt reactions involving cognitive, emotional, motivational and behavioural. For that *reason, was*

not going to be easily integrated into the learning process. In the end student teachers simply do what is required by both the school administrators and the lecturers even if you do not see sense in it. Apparently this situation was a real pain for all student teacher participants as they echoed the same in the focus group discussion which revealed that the theory practice gap was not only an issue but a daunting one as expressed in the excerpt below:

The problem is that when we are at the university, we never think we will be confronted with a difficult situation that requires us to link and apply our previous knowledge with the current situation to solve emerging problems. Most of us only got to realize that we needed to find out more about TP and its challenges before we came here (FGD).

Mentors had a sympathetic view looking the dilemma that student teachers had as a result of lecturer attitudes.

Mentor *Na* for example, pointed out that Student teachers often complained that lecturers sometimes took so many things for granted especially by assuming that student should be able to handle classroom pedagogy given the knowledge they have from the university. She goes further to say that lecturers are somewhat overzealous to think that student teachers can easily translate theory into practice an issue that she thinks needs a lot of experience to achieve.

This is illustrated by one lecturer *L-Nh* who unfortunately thinks this is not a big issue by declaring that integrating theory into practice was not be a big issue because a degreed teacher must be competent enough to look at issues in depth.

The extent to which lecturers are oblivious of the seriousness of the dilemma that students face is illustrated by the following somewhat insensitive if not outright arrogant comment by another lecturer who tries to be pedantic about what “A Level studies are supposed to bestow on B.Ed student teachers. As pointed out by *L-Si*, B.Ed. pre-service teachers have A-level and that those extra two years at high school should equip them with analytical skills to see things differently and to transfer those skills to any practical situation.

As if that was not enough, *L-Si* again reiterated that student teacher missed the whole point of their own preparation programme when they compared themselves with Diploma student teachers whom they believed fared better than themselves. He appeared to buy the idea that degreed students should be proud to have an advantage in terms higher qualification (A-level) and wide exposure both which should have enable them to operate at a much higher level than their diploma counterparts. He believed that the extra two years at high school should equipped student teachers with analytical skills to see things differently and to transfer those skills to any practical situation (cf Chapter 4.8 theme1. 1)

However, at least some lecturers appreciated and recognized modern educational teacher development trends that emphasized the length of TP in acknowledgement of the need to close the theory practice gap as can be ascertain in the excerpt below.

Modern trend requires teachers who spend more time on TP so the one year spent on TP pushes them on the platform where they can master the desired skills and thus should be able to integrate theory into practice. L-Ts

Once again it shows the extent to which lecturers take so many things for granted by assuming that a one year TP stint makes it possible for student teachers to master the desired ability to translate theory into practice. Through these interviews, one aspect began to emerge that lecturers themselves might not have been very clear about the underlying differences between the University-based Bachelor of Education pre-service teacher development programme and the College-based Diploma teacher-education course. That Diploma teachers are better trained means they have been taken through step-by-step mechanistic procedures involved in the teaching profession from scheming, planning, marking, recording marks etcetera. Not that they may not be taught about assessment principles instead of being taught about marking. Teacher candidates are even trained on how to introduce, develop and end/ conclude lessons. On the other hand teacher development at university level will emphasize the different types of assessment, for an example, assessment for learning versus assessment of learning or even assessment as teaching and

learning. In this case marking cannot be prescribed because it would depend on the particular type of assessment. The statements above highlight the level of assumptions lecturers sometimes can make on student understanding. These assumptions could be a major contributing factor to the theory practice gaps that manifest themselves in student teachers' practices.

In order to solve the problem of lecturer assumption, Kumaravadivelu, (2012) proposes a situation where teacher educators are encouraged to operate as transformative agents considering issues like social transformation, teachers' agency, subjectivity, self, identity, values and beliefs with a view to empower teachers and transform them into reflective practitioners confident to cope with language classroom challenges. In that case then, the emphasis on student teacher learning should be on creating thoughtful, autonomous teachers who do not rely on a portfolio of teaching and motivational strategies, but rather challenge their students to invest in their education in meaningful ways that can produce authentic language outcomes that coincide with student language goals. In support of the above, Safari & Pourhashemi, (2012) say the aim of student teacher tuition should not be on the improvement of their communicative and linguistic competencies but to create social space and opportunities for them to interrogate, criticize, and analyse the status quo. That way student teachers' instructional practices could bridge the gap between theory and practice.

I can say it was unfortunately reported that student teachers failed to link theory into practice due to lack of seriousness. In my view, this in itself was a manifestation of the theory practice gap. I find it pertinent to refer back to Kessel and Korthagen's (2001) discussion of the concept of theory-practice relationship using the expressions *Episteme* and *Phronesis*; especially looking at *Episteme* as theory with a big "T" implying the theoretical expert knowledge derived from scientific understanding. The important aspect I thought was being missed by my participants, especially lecturers was the propositional nature/staple of *Episteme* that made them applicable to a variety of situations and formulated in abstract terms but remaining cognitive in nature (Kessel and Korthagen 2001:21). This becomes crucial when we place *Phronesis*, a theory with a small "t" into the fray.

The important fact is that it is practical wisdom, knowledge of particularities of a situation and knowledge of the concrete not the abstract. This was crucial in understanding the dilemma here. If we miss the technical difficulties of understanding the theory with capital ‘T’ and its co-theory with small ‘t’ we could find ourselves saying that teachers displayed serious knowledge deficiencies either by forgetting what they had learnt, or by not beefing up the lectures in the library information and even by not understanding what some lecturers would have said. We would even find ourselves saying that they were not serious with their work and that it all works against the spirit of successful teacher development. When Dyer et al (2004); Huggest, along with Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) say that the problem for teacher training lies partly with student teachers’ will to change, not with their technical capacity to do so, I am left to feel rather diffident as to whether to agree with them or not.

My interviews with student teachers left me without any shred of doubt that they were willing to transform from novice to professional teachers – their will to change was not in doubt. If anything, they very much wanted to see the school-based mentors change their perception of them. They instead felt they lacked the technical capacity not having been given the mechanistic step-by-step training to impress their hosts in the teaching practice schools. This is a level of theory practice gap that requires to be bridged. The student teachers needed to be reminded they were to translate and transfer knowledge without going through mechanistic training. If I were to allude to any form of not working hard, this is where I could fault them since they are expected to have greater control over their own development. This is where I agree with Dyer et al (2004); Huggest, along with Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) that the nature of teachers’ knowledge and skills, and how they are applied, are embedded in and shaped by teachers’ attitudes and beliefs and those attitudes and beliefs themselves reflecting contexts in which teachers have grown up, taken their professional training, and now practice’ (p.40-41).

In the context of postcolonial theory, we begin to see that student teachers are not to blame at all in fact, the postcolonial present is the elephant in the room, so to speak. If we avoid being parochial as to play a blame game, we can surely begin to see possibilities of developing our own theories based on findings from the global south. The student teachers

in my study unnecessarily compared themselves to the Diploma trained teachers who they sometimes practiced with in the same schools. While I expected them to feel confident that they were superior to Diploma teachers, I found they were worn down by mentors' comments that tended to praise the mechanist diploma student teachers. As a way of concluding this section of my study, I need to reiterate another time that theory practice gaps exist and will continue to prevail in ESL teacher development practices unless the university embarks on uncompromising pedagogical intervention strategies to the problem especially by acknowledging the power relations existing between colonial curriculum discourse and postcolonial quandaries. Having said that, I now move on to examine the next theme.

5.4.2 Perceived nature and quality of mentoring and supervision

As I have said, I want the reader to remember that I am further premising my discussion with postcolonial theory together with the call that 'theory-practice divide' in teacher education can be viewed not simply as an acceptance of a body of knowledge but instead an acceptance of the teacher educator's authority to determine what is relevant educational theory. It is important at this moment to state that Postcolonial theory is a literary theory or critical approach that deals with literature produced in countries that were once, or are now, colonies of other countries. Many African countries including Zimbabwe fall in this category. The education system in such countries is influenced by policies enacted during the colonial period and that although African countries became independent, the continued use of these policies means that they are still culturally, economically, and politically dependent on colonial masters. I do not infuse these to my text closely because I did not start with them from the earlier chapters but use them as additional theoretical points for argumentative support for my discussion. What I am doing therefore, is to leave discussion intact while inviting the reader to consider the additional theoretical rider above.

Before I get started with my discussion in this section, it is important to define the terms; mentor, mentoring and supervision in order to have a convincing picture of what they mean in this context. McGaha and Lynn (2000, p.43) describe a mentor as, "an experienced teacher

who will give time, patience, and understanding to the novice teacher”, thus the mentor makes up one of the two supervisors in the student teacher triad. Literature about mentoring places the mentor as the most influential person for the student teacher during the TP experience (Anderson, 2007; Chambers, 2009). Supervision in this context refers to the act of assisting and assessing student teachers’ performance. Its main concern is the improvement of classroom practice for the benefit of students, regardless of what else may be entailed.

Findings from this section indicated that although all participants acknowledge that effective mentoring and supervision was crucial for the development of student teachers, it was not systematically done leading to less impact on the intended purpose. What stood out prominently was the issue of inadequate dedicated time for constructive supervision by both lecturers and mentors. Mentors said they were not allocated any time to supervise students every time having to squeeze this into their own scheduled full time teaching. Lecturers on the other hand always were in a hurry to finish and go to the other school complaining they had many schools to cover on any given single supervision trip. This means that heavy work load for both mentors and lecturers, large numbers of student teachers to deal with, and number of and distances between schools all militated against effective mentoring practices. The large numbers of GZU student teachers on TP as referred to earlier, made it rather difficult for lecturers to cope with the situation hence it was practically difficult to find time for the critical post-lesson discussion with both the mentor and the student teachers. This was another real theory practice gap – everybody knew what needed to be done to make the supervision effective but practically it was just not possible. Student teachers were the losers because unlike the teachers college that enrolled only the number they could cater for; the university was more interested in numbers as a source of revenue.

The situation was more desperate with student teachers in rural schools that are further apart from each other usually with as few as one student teacher at a school. Findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Maphalala (2013); Du Plessis, (2011); Aldridge, Fraser & Ntuli, (2009) ; Mafumbate & Chando (2014) ; Lai (2005) who all point out that effective mentoring plays an important role in enhancing novice teachers’ opportunities to learn within the contexts of teaching. However, they lament the existence of critical challenges in the

mentoring process which they say can only be minimized or curbed if colleges /university and practicing schools work together in strong partnership or blended supervision. Mafumbate and Musingafi (2014) further claim that collaboration and blended supervision harmonizes the diversity of supervisory belief-systems between and among student teachers, mentors and college lecturers. Additionally, Mawer (1996) points out that the quality of the mentoring would, in turn, affect the quality of the subject taught and received by the pupils in the school. Similarly Tannehill and Zakrajsek (1990) note that success for the student teacher on Practicum is directly related to the quality of mentoring received. Lastly, I am inclined to conclude by pointing out that adequate mentoring and supervision of a novice teacher during the practicum period is very crucial and thus must be situated in such a way that both the mentor and lecturer find the right mix between giving the student teacher support while empowering them(student teachers) with responsibility (Mawer,1996). By ensuring that the quality of mentoring and supervision is of a high standard, they help to ensure that the novice teacher can optimize their teaching performance on all levels. To link this to the additional theoretical points above, I add that, a more genuine reflective review by Higher Education be the only real solution to filling the theory practice gaps in our postcolonial present circumstances. Having discussed the time constraints in supervision and mentoring, I now move on to discuss how inadequate knowledge about TP on the part of lecturers and mentors again influence student teachers' instructional practices in ESL.

Now I know that the quality of mentoring and supervision practices by lecturers and mentors have been affected by underlying theoretical factors such as the colonial curriculum in postcolonial present and teacher educator's authority to determine what is relevant educational theory. This is what made mentors and lecturers appear not to be reading strictly from the same page and yet unfortunately not appreciating the fact. I can say it unnecessarily made the two parties to be critical of each other. Some lecturers expressed their misgivings about the mentors whom they said were not very helpful, always Finding ways of defending or protecting student teachers from lecturer criticism. Ironically lecturers said mentors did not appear to know what to point out in their reports. I felt that lecturers were not being very fair since I am aware there is no structure yet to induct mentors of the university expectations.

Mentors seemed to be saying that lecturers had unfair expectations from them as if they had given them any induction of what was expected. (Inwardly, I could feel them saying: what is the theory and what are the practices and how are we supposed to know?). In other words what were the teacher educator's authority to determine what relevant educational theory is. Episteme Phronesis gaps were difficult to bridge on the part of both lecturers and mentors. The ultimate victims or losers were the student teachers in that theory practice gap conspired against their will to transit from novice to professional. I will use the next section to discuss another theme.

5.4.3 Nature and quality of communication and dialogue

Communication is the process of sharing information, thoughts and feelings between people through speaking, writing or even body language. Effective communication extends the concept to require that transmitted content is received and understood by someone in the way it was intended. The goals of effective communication include creating a common perception, changing behaviors and acquiring information. In the context of my study, effective communication and dialogue between the teacher development institution and the practicing schools is very crucial in order to have a shared understanding about managing TP. This unfortunately is where the postcolonial reality plays the devil's advocate not to mention the teacher educator's authority to determine what relevant educational theory is. The university communicates to practicing schools, the aims and objectives of TP, and its expectations on the roles and responsibilities of the student teachers, mentors and lecturers - the people directly involved in the pedagogic enterprise assuming it has authority but when the other parties cannot fathom the expectations, clearly there is a problem. The practicing schools through the mentors on the other hand, do not appear to readily understand what is expected of them in order to respond accordingly. This way, both parties cannot readily gain insights that could positively contribute towards mutual understanding leading to the development of common meaning. La Plant (1979) summarizes it all by expressing the idea that the ideal communication produces lasting outcomes affecting all corners of the educational process but unfortunately the assumption is that there are no underlying complex theoretical issues.

The underlying theoretical points highlighted above made findings under this theme indicate that there was ineffective and improper communication between the university and practicing schools. (Apparently not any fault of neither of them. Some mentor and student teacher participants reported that they did not receive the TP handout on time and when they got it later, lecturers were already visiting schools for supervision and most student teachers and mentors were found before having interpreted the handbook fully to set their stages fully operational and this led to unnecessary disharmony between lecturers, mentors and student teachers. (I can only wonder whether lecturers really believed in what they were doing, or in the structure of the programme; otherwise why would they do that?) Apparently, this handbook needed careful unpacking with the help of the lecturers to both mentors and student teachers yet this was not possible due to time constraints. What appeared to be assumptions on the part of the university was that as soon as practicing schools received TP handbooks, everybody became ready, was itself a big theory-practice gap. There was no appreciation of the Episteme Phronesis gap to devastating consequences. It came as no surprise that both mentors and student teachers reported of being thrown into disarray and confusion most of the time when lecturers came on the first round visits. Student teachers and mentors pointed out that there were many conflicting views about what needed to be done regarding the format of scheming and planning for student teachers, nature of assistance by mentors and supervision or assessment by lecturers. That situation impacted negatively on their work each in their own way resulting in reduced effort to operate at maximum capacity and according to university expectations.

In a focus group discussion for example, student teacher participants pointed out that the problem of miscommunication arose because the university did not tell practicing schools what was expected resulting in mentor teachers dictating what the school expected student teachers to do irrespective of whether that was in line with university expectations. This was a serious weakness on the part of the university which made some of them find ways of dealing with the situation without necessarily attempting to get the communication channels fixed. When asked how they finally solved the problem, most of the student teachers said they did what the lecturers wanted because they (student teachers) wanted some marks. *FGD* (cf Chapter 4 theme 3.1)

Student teachers *-Be and -Ar* further underline the extent of the problem by indicating that lack of communication created confusion as some visiting lecturers appeared to have no clear knowledge of what was expected, (*-Be*) and had different understandings of the same (*-Ar*). When they sought clarification from the lecturers who had come to supervise them, it is reported that the lecturers declined to comment and therefore referred student teacher back to the TP office making it more difficult for student teachers who did not have adequate finances to phone or to visit the TP department. *St-Be* (see Chapter 4: theme 3.1).

One mentor (*-Na*) was even frustrated by this lack of communication as she felt it made host schools look uncooperative and was worried this did not create the correct image. cf Chapter 4: theme 3.1.

Reports from participants further indicated that there has been poor and inadequate communication between the university and the practicing schools. This situation has therefore weighed heavily on student teachers and mentor practices. In addition to inadequate and poor communication, improper communication between some lecturers and student teachers occurred when some lecturers behaved in a somewhat discourteous manner, when they were dealing with student teachers who they perceived as under performers. Specifically, two student teachers said they were dressed down and shouted at in the presence of mentors and pupils when they (student teachers) failed to submit the required classroom documents to the lecturer. The consequential effect was that the mentors, student teachers and their pupils were all subjected to emotional stress, anger and anxiety- a very uncondusive learning atmosphere that may lead to reduced concentration and poor performance on all the affected people. As a way of confirming the communication dilemma between student teachers and lecturers, *ST- Nk* pointed out how ridiculous it was for lecturers who always advise student to observe the maxim of politeness during a conversation yet when they (lecturers) find themselves in a situation that requires them to do as they preach, they act or behave contrary to what they always about. *ST-Nk* was referring to an incident when he was dressed down by a lecture after failing to fulfil lecturer expectations on classroom pedagogy.

Looking at the above except closely, I would rather say: we are yet again in a serious practical theory-practice gaps demonstrating that Episteme is easier said than Phronesis on the ground. This is contrary to what literature says about the effect of good communication and dialogue in work places, collaborative relationships and positive student - teacher rapport during instructional practices. Sometimes incidents of downright improper communication tantamount to unprofessionalism and disrespect were reported and this were likely to create theory practice gaps. What the participants mentioned above is supported by sentiments that came out from the focus group discussions where student teachers expressed the wish that they be respected by lecturers following an incident when one lecturer shouted at a student teacher before her mentor and pupils for failing to submit the required documents.

Incidents such as the one reported above are completely inconsistent with the decorum and politeness expected of lecturers who, during the university tuition always preach to students about the benefits of good rapport between the instructor and the instructed yet when they are confronted by a reality situation they behave contrary to what they say. In support of the need for a good rapport, Taylor (2008) adds that the in-field and on-campus components of teacher education will remain disjointed while they are taught and overseen by people who have little ongoing communication with each other.

Literature supports the benefits of effective dialogue between the concerned parties. In this regard, communication and dialogue between the university and practicing school is essential for the successful achievement of Teaching Practice goals. Consistent with this is the studies carried out by Kheswa (2015) in which he sought to establish how effective communication impact on goal performance. Results showed that through effective communication, human relations can be improved and the objectives can be achieved because of dialogues, which are aimed at developing responsible and accountable citizens (Arlestig 2008). To that end, lecturers, mentors and student teachers need to understand what is expected of them at all times in order to act and behave accordingly. Watkins and Whalley's (1993) add that communication is needed at many levels and at various times as it is the process of imparting or interchanging ideas, thoughts, opinions or information by speech, writing or signs. They further reiterate that those involved in the communication need to clarify what is communicated, to whom, when and then plan a method and means for various occasions as

people communicate different needs at different occasions. Quick & Sieborger (2005, P. 3) indicate a need for better communication between student teachers, supervisors, liaison people and university lecturers. Marais & Meier (2004, p. 230) and Maphosa, Shumba & Shumba (2007, p. 305) emphasize that lecturers and teachers (mentor teachers) have to work together in order to ensure their efforts are coordinated, thus improving the quality of mentorship in schools. In addition, Fullan (1993, p.121) reiterates that the collaboration of universities and schools in pre-service teacher education programs results in the creation of well-designed field-based teacher education that “benefit[s] mentors as much as neophytes, university professors as much as teachers.” Similarly, Smedley (2001) notes that cohesive school university networks benefit all stakeholders and enhance the relationship between theory and practice through increased experience of current practice and methodologies that are currently successful in schools. While school and university partner-ships have the potential to bridge the theory practice gap, they also open opportunities for the sharing of knowledge and skills between sites and simultaneously renew the settings that are part of the partnership (Stephens & Boldt, 2004).

In order to curb the problems I have presented above, it is in the interest of the university to establish a plan for continuous improvement of communication and dialogue between itself and the practicing schools and to evaluate the impact, of such improvements. This can make all stakeholders capable of engaging in positive and constructive communication (Bernhardt 2014; Zepeda 2013). The role of effective communication is further emphasized by Lunenburg & Ornstein (1996, p. 176) who point out that “Communication is the lifeblood of the school; it is a process that links the individual, the group, and the organization”. A gap in meaning between the intended and the received message can cause problems in the outcome of even the best teaching decision.

5.4.4 Deficiencies in the teacher knowledge base for ESL

After having brought in data excerpts in the above three sub-themes to underline the immediacy of reference, I now move to the other sub-themes with a style of referring to data only without bringing in the excerpts (unless in specific cases when that might be deemed necessary) to avoid sounding repetitive.

A significant component of conceptualizing the ESL teacher knowledge base is for teacher educators to understand the knowledge domains that constitute the language teacher knowledge base and how each domain shapes, influences and functions in the teaching learning process. More specifically, how they apply their knowledge in making decisions, for example, about lesson design or making on – the - spot judgements in the classroom. In my study, deficits in student teacher knowledge base for ESL emerged as one of the most critical factors that negatively affected pre-service teachers’ESL classroom practices resulting in theory practice gaps. Seminal among the factors were student teachers’ inability to integrate theory into practice and to make informed on-spot pedagogical decisions. Making good pedagogical decisions hinges on the quality of the pedagogical knowledge held by the pre-service teacher and supposedly acquired through teacher preparation and development.

In the next section, I will discuss four domains of teacher knowledge base and how they impart on student teacher *learning to teach*.

5.4.4.1 Content knowledge

As I indicated in the Literature Review Chapter of my thesis, the teacher knowledge base which encompasses several knowledge domains including content knowledge, is one of the framework guiding this study. The content of ESL includes but not limited pedagogically based descriptions of phonology, syntax, and discourse as well as an understanding of the nature of second language learning. Having sound content knowledge of ESL further involves understanding the principal approaches of language teaching, curriculum development and many other aspects. Pre-service teacher effectiveness during TP largely depends on the kind of teacher preparation and they have gone through in their initial university based instruction. Accordingly ,teacher education institution have a significant mandate to design and implement effective, teacher development programs that are appropriate to the ‘needs and realities of modern classroom, that enhance and reflect the roles, competencies and a broad range of skills required of teaching practitioners to enable

them to maximize the diverse learning needs of pupils. Their potential also needs to be fostered through their teacher education programmes to ensure they have the characteristics needed for effective teaching including the ability to analyse and evaluate specific learning pedagogic episodes, in combination with contextual and situational factors. Teacher education programs should embrace the kind of knowledge about language that enable student teachers to connect relevant information to their specialist knowledge of the teaching - learning process in order to guide subsequent teaching actions. To achieve such set goals, teacher education programs need to be categorically clear and explicit on the kind of knowledge about the language that pre-service teachers should acquire, how language is learned, as well as knowledge of grammar and how language works. While this is the case with GZU teacher programming model, which in many ways attempts to hone in on the theories, knowledge and practices that bolster student teacher efficacy, the findings of my study proves otherwise.

Participants felt that in many cases during the ESL instructional process, student teachers showed limited knowledge and understanding of the English language subject that they taught including the central linguistic, grammatical and communicative protocols, concepts and procedural knowledge. Lesson critiques of student teachers by lectures, revealed how lecturers sometimes had misplaced dissatisfaction with students' work. They felt students failed to link connected ideas and knowledge from different disciplines or theory to practice because of, instead their (lecturers') failure to critically analyse the language content gaps as one of their students' main source of difficulties. Lectures said that students' inadequacies prevented them from maximizing their potential in the teaching and learning opportunities. Furthermore, lecturer and mentor reports seemed to suggest that student teachers exhibited content knowledge gaps by failing to interpret the syllabus accurately in order to break it into appropriate teaching units. What they did not appear to understand was that ability to work around the syllabus and teaching units was not a simplistic mechanistic process. A good grasp of language and pedagogical knowledge needs to precede that process. I considered it rather simplistic that both lecturers and mentors said they were gravely concerned about student teachers' lack of the required classroom skills starting from the interpretation of the syllabus to formulating good objectives and logically connecting facts and concepts. For

example, asked to talk about what exactly they appeared to complain about regarding the language content knowledge mastery, some lecturers like *L-Ts* felt that student's biggest problem was that they were trying to teach what they didn't know (cf Chapter 4.item 4.1). *L-Ts* felt that because of lack of adequate language content knowledge, student teachers sometimes appeared to be operating at the level of some of their students. On the other hand, student teachers *St-Fa* acknowledges how difficult it is for student teachers to integrate theory into practice especially when confronted by something that lecturers have not specifically talked about during university tuition such as using the syllabus to scheme. This demonstrates a real student teacher dilemma where they lack logical and practical wisdom to transfer their university acquired knowledge and skills into practical problem-solving skills, and an ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-classroom settings (cf Chapter 4.item 4.1).

Mentor *M-Na* uses a tone that condemns the University for not working hard enough to ensure that students bridge the language content knowledge gap for them to get to the desired mastery level where they can apply their cognitive knowledge and ability to see the connection between the Episteme and Phronesis (cf Chapter 4.item 4.1). *St-Nk* and *St-An* both underline the fact that English as a subject involves a lot of work starting from the necessary mastery required before the application and points out that in many cases student teachers lack the mastery and end up resorting to the usual and ordinary comfort areas of traditional composition and comprehension teaching (see Chapter 4. item 4.1). . Furthermore, participant responses confirm that student teachers had a fundamental underlining language and syllabus content knowledge deficiency which, coupled with the perfunctory coverage of the pedagogical modules created a huge problem of theory practice relationship. I am therefore convinced that this is the genesis of our student teachers' lack of efficacy as the lecturers' miscuing of the problems equally exposed. Having discussed the deficiencies in student teacher' content knowledge, I will now move on to the section on pedagogic content knowledge.

5.4.4.2 Pedagogical content knowledge

Shulman (1987) reiterates that teacher-development programs should not separate the what (content) from the how (pedagogy) when preparing teachers for the field. Shulman says that good teachers, according to should move beyond simply knowing their subject matter, and knowing how to teach but need to transform the subject matter through teaching. More concretely, he says good teachers find “ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible thus he introduces the concept of pedagogical content knowledge PCK. In my study, PCK emerged as one area where student teacher had a lot of challenges. An analysis of documents by lecturer (*DA-L*) revealed student teachers’ major handicap in applying PCK during lesson delivery wherein they lacked the ability to give clear explanations and demonstrations. In many cases however, these weakness resulted in ineffective poor performance. Lecturer critiques further showed student teachers’ incompetence in selecting and using appropriate teaching strategies, coupled with their failure devise adequate or relevant activities (see Chapter 4 item 4.2). It looked like student teachers were unable to maximally utilize all the aspects that came into play during the instructional process. An analysis of documents by mentors seems to echo the same sentiments as those of lecturers. Mentors appear to bemoan student teachers inability to select and use suitable teaching strategies and relevant activities which do not actively engage them in meaning interaction and collaborative activities. This lack of sound PCK does not augur well with the Social Constructivist approach which maintains that, knowledge is constructed as one interacts with one’s environments through processes of discourse, negotiation, and consensus building (Syh-Jong, 2007; Tobin & Tippins, 1993). I am predisposed to believe that these all these and other weaknesses not only highlighted student teachers’ shortcomings regarding their pedagogical content knowledge but also impacted negatively on their teaching efficacy as well as on student learning.

It emerged in this sub-category that there were many challenges that student teachers encountered in their classroom practice. It was noted that in the teaching of ESL, this could hardly be separated from the challenges encountered in the ESL mastery itself. Both lecturers and mentors critically viewed student teachers’ inadequate pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), a teacher knowledge domain central to teacher efficacy. Reports suggested that gaps in this area were because teachers did not have the conceptual

understanding of the ESL subject content that they taught. Specific areas of concern were: failure to devise suitable activities to achieve stated objectives, using appropriate teaching procedures and strategies linked to the learning outcomes. Lecturer and mentor participants indicated that student teachers did not have a clear conceptualization of how to integrate the multiple lesson aspects into a monolithic pedagogical outfit for the best outcomes. They said for example that student teachers could not regulate adequate content and select or design appropriate media. As indicated above, these issues are linked to language content knowledge at the same time. Again, student teachers appeared to struggle with constructive and student-centred approaches ending up exhibiting safe talk tendencies (Hornberger and Chick 2001) such as, inappropriate jingles, non-responsiveness to pupils' genuine language needs and inconclusive group work.

Lecturers pointed out that student teachers did not possess the pre-requisite PCK to enable them handle classroom pedagogy effectively. Some lecturers attributed student teacher inadequacy to the way they were developed especially the short time spent on TP. Lecturer *Nd* for example, expressed the tone that there was need to pay more attention to TP by increasing the practicum period to allow more time to expose students teachers to real classroom situations thus helping them fine-tune their pedagogical content knowledge skills. Her such sentiments are expressed in the statement below;

There are difference in the sense that those developed through the diploma are well informed in pedagogical knowledge since they spent a long time on TP gaining a lot of hands on experience while our own have more subject content and have a broader view issues gained in the first two years of university tuition. However, they are lacking in pedagogical content knowledge because we give the little time on that issue. L-Nd

5.4.4.3 General pedagogical content knowledge

Participants pointed out that teachers (including student teachers) played various roles in typical classrooms, the most important of which includes that of classroom manager responsible for maintaining order and discipline. Mentor and lecturer participants said that student teachers' 'ability to manage the classroom depended on their general pedagogical

content knowledge which however was lacking in their practices leading to ineffective lessons. It emerged in this category that, student teachers had limitations in many areas of classroom practice including; instructional options, management of group work and pupil responses. Participants reported that student teachers sometimes failed to establish fair rules that could be followed resulting in failing to give pupils regular feedback. It was agreed that student teacher's failure to control the class firmly resulted in their struggling to teach effectively, and pupils learning much less than they could have. Participants further highlighted that this was in contrast, with well -managed classrooms that provided an environment where teaching and learning could flourish. A further analysis of lecturer and mentor reports showed that student teachers sometimes failed to make teaching and learning an interactive process because they lacked a rich repertoire of choices to enable them make on-the-spot decisions when deemed necessary. Reports further showed that student teachers sometimes had problems with managing group work and pupils 'responses. In group work for example, pupils turned rowdy and chaotic but teachers did not seem to see hence did nothing. It was reported that they focused mainly on maintaining the flow of instructional activities and worrying about pupils mistakes which they over emphasized.

5.4.4 3 Low proficiency levels in the target language

On this theme, participants unanimously agreed that a good language facility on the part of both teachers and learners played a significant role in the daily communication and classroom discourse process. They pointed out that when teachers and learners both had adequate language command, they each were able to fulfill their roles wherein teachers as facilitators in language instruction would provide learners with the tools necessary to communicate while learners would fulfill their role by using the input they were given as they interacted with others in the target language. However, while the points presented above were highly appreciated, the reality on the ground was that of student teachers who sometimes struggled to articulately put across their content to the limited attendant of English Language learners (ELLs) who grappled worse with the language. Participants seemed to bemoan the lack of adequate linguistic command by most student teachers with the resultant effect that sometimes explanations, demonstrations and questionings techniques by teachers remained somewhat obscure if not vague. It was further reported that owing to in some student

teachers' low proficiency levels in the language of instruction, they sometimes ended up saying what they did not intend to say resulting in learners' failure to comprehend the content that teachers wished to put across.

Inability to express themselves well, and to put across a desired message impacted negatively on their teaching and learning thus reducing their efficiency. Reduced effectiveness on the part of the teachers usually create gaps between theory and practice, In such case cases pupils usually maintained grave silence during class and group discussion. Cassels and Johnstone (1983; 1985) Pollnick & Rutherford, (1993) add to the above sentiment by saying that, "learning academic courses through the medium of English poses problems for students whose mother tongue is not English. At this point, it is important to note that the Zimbabwean situation is similar in many ways to many other bilingual contexts characterized by teachers who are ESL users of English while students are English language learners (ells). Implicit in the situation is that ells' proficiency in English is insufficient for them to academically succeed in English-only classrooms and this could be another area of theory-practice gap.

In addition to what I have submitted above, an analysis of supervisors' critiques, revealed a common trend where student teachers' use of language in their classroom documents were marred with several grammatical, lexical, and spelling errors. Sometimes group discussions showed limited pupil-pupil interaction due to limited language proficiency and in many cases that significantly contributed towards student teachers' difficulties in providing adequate model English biennial input. My findings under this section appear to be consistent with several other findings such as those of; Ngwaru's (2002); Thondhana (2000) whose studies about the challenges faced by ESL in academic writing in Zimbabwe revealed that limited proficiency in the language of instruction was an overriding inhibiting factor in the learners' performance in essay writing resulting in poor overall academic achievement. Another study by Fradd (1987), indicate that second language teachers who work with English language learners often tend to use "brief utterances such as 'What is this?' or 'What color is that? Students learn to reply in like form, in one- or two-word utterances.

He further says “not surprisingly, little curriculum content or social expectation is communicated in this type of verbal exchange.” Conversely. Roy-Campbel and Qorro (1987) and Qorro’s (1999) studies in Tanzania revealed that when students have a firm grasp of their specialized subjects, that understanding gives them a firm ground on which to build the foundation for learning a second or foreign language. Having discussed the findings that emanated from the above theme, I now propose to discuss findings about the post method pedagogy.

5.4.5 The Post –Method Pedagogy

Findings that emerged from this sub-category were quite interesting to me as a researcher. I found out that stakeholder practices were consistent with the theoretical positions of the Post method pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 1994; 2003; 2006) that they professed ignorance about especially practicality and particularity which I discuss in the two sections that follow. What was interesting was the realization that if they had known about Post method, they could have enhanced their practice by strengthening their “practical wisdom, knowledge of particularities of a situation and knowledge of the concrete not the abstract” (Korthagen and Kessel 2001, p.27). This was instead a case of failure to link practice to theory and not theory to practice.



5.4.5.1 Practicality

Findings under this sub-category indicated that both lecturers and student teachers seemed to be aware of the limitations of the methods and were thus advocating for agency in the way language teacher education should be programmed. Some lecturers seemed to point out that the way student teachers were developed was so idealistic that it was difficult for them to deal with the actual contextual learning situations especially in the rural settings. This is evidenced through the following excerpts:

We develop our student teachers in ideal situations which do not exist in the rural areas where the majority of student teachers will be deployed. Student teachers should be trained to cope with the various teaching environments they find themselves in. We of course must be mindful of the fact that they are going to meet challenges so we should prepare them

to teach in those areas and if we do it that way, may be the gaps will be minimized. They must be reflective enough to see their problems so that they can rectify them. L-Nd

Teaching practice simply means being practical in what one does instead of being idealistic. Student teachers should learn to deal with pedagogical issues practically and that does not require Piagetian theories. If one is teaching in a typical remote rural area where the parents are impoverished and schools not well resourced what theories can be applied in such situations? L-Go

This is what I interpreted to suggest that lecturers were bemoaning the limitations student teachers had regarding theory to their practice (and calling idealistic) reflecting the lack of clarity on how theories could actually strengthen practice. The overriding message I derive from lecturers' submissions is that of Dewey's (1933) idea of that which works. This appears to be in keeping with Kumaravadivelu's (1994) description of the Post method as the construction of procedures and principles by the teachers themselves based on their prior and experiential knowledge and certain strategies. In short, the focus on teaching should not be on how methods work for student teachers but on how student teachers work to construct and implement methods (Arikan, 2006, p.7) and by extension how a good theoretical grounding can help them. Further, findings from student teacher participants indicated that, they developed their own way of teaching not necessarily based on what they remembered having learnt from the university. But of course one can only realize the limitations of something if one is operating from a very informed position. To me, this position is arrived at after being exposed to different situations and experiences. What and how exactly they did it remains unknown. However, student teachers *Fa, Fo and Be* indicated their appreciation of what they learnt from the university but equally pointed out their dilemma in failing to transfer that knowledge and apply it into practice. Instead, they said that they devised their own way of doing things.

This was the height of the tragedy to think that student teachers got to the point where they started to teach without any theoretical basis instead gauging learners' response as they trudged along. Lack of understanding of the theoretical basis of practice left them unable to

develop coherent methodologies in the process casting a huge shadow of doubt on their practice. These student teachers' submissions underline why I said earlier that the theory practice gap was a huge topic in teacher development that I was not even aware of myself. The lack of clarity in this area has left the little understood theories and theoretical knowledge acquired from the university appearing to have little significance in the practical realities of the school situations. Student teachers seemed to indicate that while they thought they had learnt quite a lot from the university, they could not see how that knowledge could be translated into practice and hence they devised their own ways of teaching particular to situations. It was going to be helpful if they were aware of the principles of the theory espoused by Kumaravadivelu's (2012) of practicality because their practice then could have had a formula. I could have said that they were breaking the well-established division of labour between the theorists as producers of knowledge and teachers as consumers of that knowledge because that division did not give room for self-conceptualisation and self-construction of pedagogic knowledge on the part of the teacher. Sadly that was not the case instead just being acts of desperation by people with some vague ideas about what to do. Abad (2013) adds that post method advocates for a pedagogy where teachers are not mere technicians who replicate prescribed curricular and enact imposed policies.

The suggestion that teachers should construct their personal theories by testing, interpreting, and judging the usefulness of professional theories proposed by experts creates only a narrow space for teachers to function fruitfully as reflective individuals. The pedagogy of practicality, therefore, attempts to overcome some of the deficiencies intrinsic in the theory versus practice, but I dare say only when the practioners is aware of the theorists' theory-versus-teachers'-theory dichotomies (Kumaravadivelu, 1999b). Having discussed this sub-category, I now move on to examine how the parameter of particularity was reflected in student teachers 'practices.

5.4.5.2 Particularity

Findings under this sub-category revealed that all mentors and four student teachers had never heard about the Post method pedagogy and thus could not say anything about it. Three student teachers confirmed having read about the post-method pedagogy in their library but

reported that they did not know how to apply it in the classroom. Four lecturers out of seven confirmed knowledge of this framework but again they had not pursued its principles as the basis of their teaching – lost opportunity. However, while most participants were not aware of this framework, my analysis of their submissions revealed that there were elements in student teachers practices that I am convinced replicated the parameter of particularity. This is where I believe it could have enhanced their methodologies if they were aware. One dominant issue that emerged is that their TP experience afforded student teachers an opportunity to learn many things about teaching, including learner behaviour, capacity and attitudes. That practical learning in turn contributed towards the development of knowledge, skills and method to deal with their particular classroom situations. In my discussion with student teachers, they pointed out that classes and schools are so diverse that what worked well in one class or one school did not work equally well in a different class. They were indeed learning and they could have learnt much with a clearer idea of the theory and practice gap the TP opportunity was designed to plug. I can say that brought in the issue of particularity where student teachers said they were learning to devise their own pedagogic ways of dealing with issues based on their understanding of learners' language needs and the contexts of the learners. In other words I can say they were able to use their different experiences including personal, experiential and conceptual to help them conduct situation specific lessons. This could have been consistent with Kumaravadivelu's (2003) view that "for any language pedagogy to be relevant, it must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in particular sociocultural milieu." Elliott, (1993) adds that the teacher' ability to be sensitive is consistent with the hermeneutic perspective of situational understanding which claims that a meaningful pedagogy cannot be constructed without a holistic interpretation of particular situations and that it cannot be improved without a general improvement of those particular situations.

In other words, context-sensitive pedagogic knowledge can emerge only from the practice of particularity. Becker (1986) reinforces that by saying that "because the particular is so deeply embedded in the practical, and cannot be achieved or understood without it, a pedagogy of particularity becomes in essence a pedagogy of practicality as well. It starts

with practicing teachers, either individually or collectively, observing their teaching acts, evaluating their outcomes, identifying problems, finding solutions, and trying them out to see once again what works and what does not. Student teachers confirmed this by repeatedly saying that TP had indeed afforded them the opportunity to try out things and to see differences and similarities especially in the way schools operated. Some examples were that what was applicable in one school was not necessarily applicable in another school especially if schools fell under different responsible authorities. They started to appreciate that it was the student teachers' responsibility to note such things and to act or behave accordingly. They appeared to have learnt a lot; again enthusiastically reporting that the TP experience was good because they learnt so many things including discovering that certain things worked well while others did not even if planned and applied in the same way.

Again examples offered were where sometimes one saw a colleague using a teaching strategy effectively and went to try the same in own class, especially for classes that had been streamed but got disappointed to find it did not work for them and their children. The philosophy of particularity was clearly a lived experience because many of this category of participants became aware that often what worked in one class did not work in another class even if students were at the same level and at the same school. They said they were happy to learn that they had to experiment with ways of teaching, their pupils' styles or references, and develop their own style of teaching and children's preferred style of learning. I am able to confirm that that there was an extent to which students felt that the TP experience was a worthwhile practical experience because it helped them to work with other teachers, fellow student teachers and school pupils and also to have experience of what the mentors say. It prepared them for the world to come. It indeed plugged the theory –practice gap. I started to appreciate that despite the misgivings expressed in general by student teachers and mentors, TP was actually an important aspect of teacher development but perhaps the participants had no opportunity to reflect and my research gave them that opportunity as evidenced when one lecturer said:

Our programmes begin from a point where student teachers are developed not trained and I think you understand what I mean. What that means and which I think student teachers are

not aware of is that, they have been given the necessary expertise in the first two years to enable them to handle classroom pedagogy and to use that knowledge to deal with particular situations and problems. L-Si

I now propose to look at the difficulties encountered in linking the university and school curriculum in the next section.

5.4.6 Theoretical input versus practical and teacher development input

Suggestions of lack of alignment between the university and the school curriculum were made. Based on the technical discussion about the difficulties in conceiving the transition from Episteme to Phronesis, this theme of theory versus practice and development was hardly surprising. Students saw some of the university assignments and modules as lacking in clarity because they would have wanted them to overtly relate to or link the theoretical expert knowledge with the practical concrete classroom situations. When modules looked at language policy issues, and processes of curriculum review, Heritage studies and Afro-American and Caribbean literature, student teachers reported that they did not see the relevance of such knowledge or modules describing them as having no place or relevance in the schools. Students did not see how these helped them develop the ability to acquire pre-requisite values and skills that could be transferable during the practicum period. The big gap here was the inability to appreciate the broad base of the curriculum meant to cater for a wide knowledge base and transferable skills.

Another theory practice gap that appeared was at a technical content level of how to deal with the language policy issues. It was reported that lecturers discouraged student teachers from code switching during ESL lessons. Myers (2008, p. 43) defines code switching as “a linguistic term usually used when learners of a second language (L2) include elements of their mother tongue in their speech. Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2003) submit that code-switching refers to a switch in language that takes place between sentences, also called an *intersentential change*. Code-mixing refers to a switch in language that takes place *within* the same sentence also called an *intrasentential change*. Bearing this in mind, the linguistic situation in Zimbabwe where English exists side by side with a number of indigenous

languages, there should not be much reason for student teachers not to code-switch as long as that can facilitate the learning of the target language. Many teachers therefore are right to see code switching as a valuable linguistic tool that is used during the instructional process to clarify and explain difficult concepts to the learner.

When student teachers reported that lecturers penalized them for code switching in ESL lessons believing that code-switching prevented the use of learner centred and interactive teaching and learning, as researcher I could not understand the link the lecturers were referring to and concluded that they were making assumptions reflecting the theory practice gap on their part. I could not see how they thought code switching could become a barrier to critical thinking and understanding of academic English just as I could not quite see how it was a major handicap towards developing and improving the target language against what literature and experience suggest. Of little concern, but not surprisingly, was the contradiction between what the lecturers and mentors said they believed – that code-switching was permissible according to the newly enacted language policy and the literature on language policy and yet they discouraged their students from practicing the same. There was, in actual fact, a big issue of the extent to which pedagogy was readily informed by theory in our midst.

My study has not looked at this rather broad issue but submits that there is a big theory practice gap that looms in most of the ways theory and research are applied in the academic field. I can say there is still a lot of what could be called something like “following popular culture” in education that sometimes leaves a lot to be desired. Mentor beliefs about code switching seems to concur with the views of Nyawaranda (2000) who says that, “code switching is done in order to accommodate the pupils’ lack of proficiency in the official language of instruction though the practice in turn impedes and compromises the quality of learning as well as pupil achievement in public examinations”. Macaro (2005, p.72) also observes that code-switching is a common phenomenon in the second language classroom where the learners share the same mother tongue, and that code-switching by second language teachers, has no negative impact on the quantity of students’ L2 production“, but may actually increase and improve L2 production if expertly done. In my opinion, such a

contentious situation between stake holders is itself a theory practice gap that needs to be bridged. In accordance with the above, Sachiko (cited in Nyawaranda, 2000) says that there are differences in opinion among teachers on the role of the mother tongue in instruction and these opinions reflect the differences in the teachers' wider beliefs about the best way to learn a language. The next section discusses how lack of clearly defined TP goals affect student teacher practices.

5.4.7 Lack of clearly defined TP goals

It became apparent that theory practice gaps pervaded all areas of practice from lecturer perceptions to clarity about what details to provide in instructions and what to take for granted. Participants, pointed out that lack of clearly defined TP goals on the part of the university was a major barrier contributing to reduced student teacher effectiveness during their pedagogical practices. The most commonly cited issues were to do with mentoring and supervision which stake holders believed could not just happen easily without training or induction. Participants provided insight into the practices they viewed as essential for their success in the teaching, mentoring and supervision roles. Specifically, mentor and student teacher participants queried about lack of training and induction to educate them on what exactly they were supposed to do. They felt that induction programs served as critical pathways for student teachers and mentors as the former entered the teaching profession, moving them beyond pre-service learning experiences and supporting their development. Mentor participants felt that induction workshop were needed to provide them with a systematic structure of support that helped them to be efficacious, become familiar with the nitty grits of what were expected of them. This would make them refine their practice, to better understand their mentoring responsibilities. Almost all of the mentor teachers believed a teacher mentoring program that had well-defined goals was necessary for helping beginning teachers to become fully fledged teachers. Some of the lecturers and student teacher participants considered that an induction course or workshops where all stake holders met together to share their experiences, concerns views and perceptions about TP were needed to provide full information about on how different stake holders contacted their TP business.

Mentors indicated that the most difficult parts of their duties involved scheduling conflicts with the mentee, receiving little support from administration (for example limited release time to meet with beginning teachers), and having no guidelines or preparation for what they were expected to do. Additional comments made by mentors suggested the need for more time for novice teachers to be able to reflect upon their teaching practices. Mentors further voiced some frustration by stating that the work they did was not appreciated by both their own ministry in general and the GZU lecturers in particular. Participants expressed sentiments that clearly underlined the fact that School based mentors were very important because they had the skills to support student teachers to enhance their professionalism by acquiring the necessary competences. Of course, from our understanding of particularity above, challenges were still encountered because-even if mentors were effective classroom practitioners that may not be a guarantee to being effective mentors. Instead mentors needed mentoring training in order to be aware of what they needed to do. University lecturers needed to move from one place to another holding meetings or workshops with mentors to educate them on the university expectation. They suggested that it was even ridiculous that a number of things were taken for granted by the university. They were never told beforehand that they would be mentoring students until student teachers were brought to their school. As a researcher and member of the lecturing team I felt somewhat ashamed of our practice. Mentors said that things turned somewhat comic when sometimes they got confused and surprised to find lecturers contradicting each other but speaking with unfettered authority about areas where they were not authorities. This often happened when non-ESL experts came for TP supervision. It was understandable when, in FGDs student teachers requested that they always were supervised by ESL specialists.

5.4.8 Nature and quality of feedback

Findings from this theme indicated variations in stakeholders' views, perceptions and experiences about the nature of and quality of feedback provided during TP. First, all participants were in unanimous agreement that; constructive and regular feedback during TP is one of the most powerful influences on students ESL practices as it provides direction to follow, motivates the teacher learner and encourages them to forge ahead.

However, each group of participants had its own different narratives and views about the nature and quality of feedback provided during the practicum period. Student teachers for an example, indicated that the feedback from both lecturers and mentors was insufficient and in some cases not related to the specific ESL subject. Owing to that, constructive feedback was minimal and thus impacted negatively on their practices. They further reported that even if they had many burning issues to ask from lecturers that were not possible because, as discussed above they had no adequate time. Student teachers also raised the issue that sometimes they got general pedagogic feedback that was not specifically related to the actual ESL subject and they remained unsure whether they were doing well in ESL practices or in general pedagogy. Student teachers seemed to point out the fact that feedback needed to provide information specifically related to the subject taught in order to reduce the discrepancy between current understanding and performance. Student teachers further lamented that some mentors did not have adequate time to examine their documents and to observe lessons due to their own heavy workload. As a result, there was also minimal feedback from some mentors. As if that was not enough, student teachers reported that some mentors did not want to provide detailed written reports preferring to give verbal feedback.

On the other hand, lecturers seemed to admit that; they did not have enough time to discuss important issues with both the mentor and the student teachers and as such, they would just check the student teacher's documents, observe the lesson and go. According to lecturers, this situation was exacerbated by the high number of student teachers on TP that was not proportional to the number of lecturers who supervised them. For that reason then, lecturers were always in a hurry in order to supervise as many student teachers as possible and again due to time constraints, they could not make regular visits to individual students. As the year progressed, they had started picking direction. Mentors had their side of the story saying they were aware of their roles as mentors but could not function effectively due to a myriad of constraints including the overloaded time-table and other school related work which they had to deal with.

However, despite their workload, they tried their level best to assist student teachers. Mentors were real cadres who unfortunately were not given the recognition they deserved.

They said they tried their level best to help and guide the students but in many cases amid a myriad of factors including their own workload and other school related tasks. The success of the teacher development model that utilizes mentors depends on mentor integrity especially given the heavy supervision load that lecturers have. Students admitted that it was the constructive feedback from mentors and lecturers that helped bridge the theory practice gap for them. In FGD they all agreed that during the first term they were just wondering in the dark not knowing what to do but as lecturers sometimes questioned the wisdom of University's administrative and management style of enrolling huge numbers of students at the cost of efficiency?

This left lecturers always having to hurry to the next school to cover the so many student teachers. They wondered whether the University was not producing sub-standard or mediocre teachers who operated at the level of temporary teachers. They pointed out that accountability was diminished and it was possible some lecturers could have been taking advantage of that abnormal situation by hiding behind the so called busy schedules when actually they are engaged in their personal business. They said it was a pathetic situation that the university had to do something about. Findings on this theme were consistent with literature that considers academic and professional feedback as an essential part of effective learning and learning to teach because it helps students or novice practitioners to understand the subject being learnt and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their teaching. Bellon *et al.* (1991) reinforces this saying feedback is more strongly and consistently related to achievement than any other teaching behaviour because it can improve a student teacher's confidence, self-awareness and enthusiasm for teaching. However, important as constructive and regular feedback is, my discussion and interaction with student teacher participants showed they lacked this adequate feedback from both mentors and lecturers resulting in minimal guidance and direction.

This affected their pedagogical practices including lack of confidence, failure to reflect upon their practices and dealing with complex pedagogical issues. In Hattie and Timperley's (2007) view, they took very long to be able to answer three major questions: 'Where am I going?', 'How am I going?' and 'Where to next?' Failure to provide adequate feedback is

contrary to Socio-cultural theory on feedback, which highlights human intentions and possibilities and how it can be developed (Vygotsky, 1978). Dialogue in the form of feedback between supervisors and student teachers is fundamental to a novice teacher thus lecturer and mentor actions on feedback should support student teachers to proceed through zones of proximal development to the next zone of proximal development in which outcomes are achieved. In line with the Socio-cultural theory on feedback, Wooley, Wooley & Hosey, (1999) state that student teachers' beliefs are changed as a result of the influence of their cooperating teachers through modeling, giving feedback and encouraging them to take risks

As a way of summarizing this section of my study, participants and I are in total agreement that the kind of feedback needed to be improved. Many theory-practice gaps need to be plugged and lectures need to offer genuine support and report back accurately that there is need to re-examine numbers and time allocated to field support. All things being equal, I advocate that lectures and mentors work together in sharing ideas about constructive feedback to support student teacher development in ESL practices. Cogan (1973) and Gold hammer (1969) advocate for reflective practice, collegiality and collaboration, or simply blended supervision which leads to constructive feedback. From a social constructivist view this should be formative not summative and directed at the appropriate level (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Additionally, feedback should relate to student teachers' beliefs and perceptions of their performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Tillema & Smith, 2000). That way it reflects the ongoing learning and feedback processes in these learning theories. After discussing the findings of this section in my study, it is important that I examine the qualification of lecturers and mentors and the influence this has on student teachers practices in ESL.

5.4.9 Matches and mismatches in lecturer and mentor qualification

Findings on this theme seemed to indicate participants' belief that there was a big gap in qualifications, educational background and experience between lecturers and mentors. Some lecturers believed that they had high qualifications such as master's degrees and PhDs, which were associated with a wide and broad knowledge base, skills and competences in their area of specialization. Mentors on the other hand had what some participants regarded as minimum qualifications of a Diploma. In that regard, lecturer and student teacher

participants seemed to share and buy the view that the big difference in qualification affected the type of feedback student teachers received from the two groups of supervisors. The implication that I derive from lecturer and student teacher sentiments is that effective and adequate professional support lead to improved student teacher efficacy while ineffective and inadequate support lead to critical theory practice gaps and therefore the call that lecturers and mentors standardized their approaches to supervision were important.

What they seemed to say was that lecturers might have assumed that mentors understood pedagogical issues at the same level and therefore should have been able to support the students better. This is why some student teachers felt that some mentors did not want to commit themselves to writing detailed reports about their mentoring practices for fear that lecturers would scrutinize that and may raise some queries if the report was found wanting. Instead, it was reported that some mentors were more comfortable in giving their feedback through a verbal discussion an issue that was attributed to lack of confidence due to the gap in qualification. Student teacher and lecturer participants felt that some mentors especially those who trained more than twenty years ago were lagging behind the paradigm shift or current trends in teacher preparation development such as reflective practice constructivism and the post method pedagogy. Instead, they were still deeply steeped in the traditional behaviorist mode of teaching which they in turn expected student teachers to follow. From my point of view, lecturer and student teacher participants seemed to indicate mentors did not quite conceptualize and appreciate some the issues that lecturer expected and that explained why there were differences in opinions about pedagogy and vast differences in how they awarded marks after lesson observation.

However, while the above submissions by lecturers and student teachers could be true in one way or the other, I have a different opinion in which I feel that mentors were unfairly represented in this scenario. While it is true that their qualification may not match those of lecturers, but at least they are all specialist teachers in their subject area (English) and have experiences in teaching, marking and setting examination items in that area. I am convinced that such vast experiences in dealing with curriculum and pedagogic issues obviously make them proficient enough to deal any related professional expectation. Ironically, not all

lecturers who supervised student teacher participants in this study were specialist in English and for that reason, they too may also not have been very conversant with the nitty grits of teaching English resulting in gaps. Mentors' somewhat reported unwillingness to show commitment in their mentoring practices may have been due to other different factors such as lack of motivation. I want to say I do not quite buy into the discussions in this theme where most participants held the view that the levels of academic, professional qualifications and educational orientations of both the mentor and lecturers had a significant impact in the way they mentored and supervised student teachers. In the next section, I discuss the next theme.

5.4.10 Student teachers' financial constraints

This might appear a side issue to student practices but came up time and time again as students pointed out they were seriously handicapped to follow through on what they wanted to do because of financial constraints. University students on TP in Zimbabwe are not paid any allowance by government or the university. For that reason they usually get into serious financial difficulties that constraint their work as a result leaving them struggling to get enough money to buy necessities including food, toiletry and school related materials. In addition to their failure to get materials for use in the classroom, financial constraints affected them both socially and emotionally. Socially, student teachers reported that when they did not have money, they usually kept to themselves and avoided interacting with other students. Emotionally, they were always brooding over their problems and would lose focus of what they had to do. Loss of focus in whatever one was supposed to do was associated theory practice gap.

Lecturers pointed out that failure by government to pay university student teachers was likely to breed a negative attitude towards the profession lack of motivation. Mentors too echoed the same sentiments as lecturers and wished if something could be done for student teachers to lessen their financial problems. When asked how lack of finances caused the theory practice gaps in ESL teaching, all participants seemed to be pointing out and sharing the view that student teacher sometimes got overwhelmed with a mix of situations where on the one hand, they were thinking about their financial problems and the effect thereof and on the other hand, lecturers or school heads could just come in unexpectedly and demand to see

their work which in many cases would not be up to date. Mentor participants felt that if such situations were not managed carefully, it prohibit student teachers to operate at their maximum capacity thus resulting in poor performance at work and bad relationships with other members. At least both the university and the ministry needed to be aware that for student teachers to do the work seriously and professionally, they need the inspiration to concentrate fully. Accordingly, their welfare should be reasonably fulfilled hence the need to give them some form of remuneration or at least a small thank you token of appreciation for their services. On the other hand, qualified mentor teachers were not able to carry out their tasks well without the proper conditions that support their task. Therefore, the university needs to continually improve the quality of communication, show appreciation for the service rendered so that they too get motivated to continue to provide professional mentoring tasks. Having talked about students' financial problems and its effect on their classroom practices, I now move on to discuss the next section deals with how the attitudes of participants affect their actions.

5.4.11 Attitude problems

What came out of this theme is rather unfortunate. While all the three groups of stakeholders needed to work together in harmony for their own good, there appeared to be animosity among themselves as each group recounted how wrong the other group was. Lecturers for example, seemed to have a somewhat disparaging attitude towards mentors, as could be discerned both from what they said about them and how they treated them during supervision. In that regard, lecturers saw mentors as people who unjustifiably defended student teachers even if they (student teachers) were wrong. For lecturers, that was a grave mistake that would never make student teachers realize their mistakes or weaknesses. Some lecturers further allege that mentors defended student teachers as a cover up for their own weaknesses in assisting the student teachers. Apart from their defense for student teachers, some mentors were reported to use student teachers as relief teachers who helped to lessen their work load. Consequently, some student teachers got so engaged in the mentor's work that they failed to cope adequately with their own pedagogical responsibilities. Many lecturers thus believed that mentor behaviour had a serious effect on student teacher

performance as they (student teachers) falsely believed they could be successful in their TP by getting favours from mentors or lecturers.

Additionally, lecturers also felt that some mentors operated at the same level as student teachers because they were diploma holders, a qualification which was lower than that of their mentees making them deficient in the type of content needed to assist student teachers. On the other hand, student teachers too did not have kind words for both lecturers and mentors. Lecturers were described as people who were impatient and who did not want to listen to what students and mentors said about student teaching. As if that was not enough, some lecturers were said to be very temperamental and insensitive as they could dress down student teachers before their mentors and the class, especially if student teachers failed to perform to lecturer expectations. Additionally, student teachers felt that lecturers unjustly condemned them as lazy, defensive, less serious and as people who wanted to be spoon-fed and to get high assessment marks which they had not worked for. Student teachers seemed to appeal for lenience in the way lecturers treated them especially given the fact that integrating theory into practice was not a mechanistic process.

While it was a good idea to share their views with mentors about student teacher performance, it emerged that some lecturers did not bother to do that with mentors for the reasons best known to them. To me, such lecturer behaviour is itself an indication of theory-practice – gaps because lecturers know what needs to be done –in this case to discuss with mentors, share the students’ area of weaknesses so that possible solutions could be sought to rectify the problems but lecturers decide to remain mum. Such an attitude deprived mentors of the opportunity to communicate their expectations, beliefs and views about the efficacy of student teachers. Lecturers were further portrayed as unpredictable because back at the university, they were said to be warm and friendly but during supervision they are harsh and uncompromising. Mentors have not been spared by student teachers. While some mentors did a good job, others were reported to be lazy, and were said to take advantage of TP to assign all their work to student teachers. Findings seemed to indicate that mentors did not have confidence with student teachers thus forbade them to take necessary pedagogic decisions during their absence as they thought student teachers were lazy and uncooperative.

Mentors blamed lecturers for student teachers' inability to handle classroom pedagogy and expressed the wish that something more serious be done back at the university to produce a well prepared student teacher.

Mentors also blamed student teachers for not maximizing their potential to achieve the best. What emerged out of this theme is rather unfortunate because, all stakeholders, each group in its own way, appeared to be apportioning blame on each other. Lecturers displayed what I consider an unfair treatment of mentors because they do not appreciate the fact that mentors had their own workload and often times sacrificed themselves to do the little they could to assist student teachers whom they sometimes said were not very cooperative. Lecturers and mentors perception of student teachers is also unfortunate as they fail to appreciate the fact that student teachers are novice teachers who are in the process of learning to teach which in itself a complex phenomenon difficult to achieve. Spending two years at the university is not a guarantee to success in teaching during practicum. After all, they spent two years of learning abstract knowledge which is difficult to translate into theory as had been said above. While they are reported as lazy, my interaction with them portrays a completely different scenario where they show the zeal to learn and to cooperate with mentors and lectures but sometimes do not know how best to do it because lecturer are untouchable and fearsome during supervision visits making it very difficult for student teachers to access them when they want them.

Problems of attitude on the part of all stake holders is itself a big theory practice gap because every group knows the right thing to do but they do not do it perhaps because they do not take it seriously or it is just difficult. As a way to curb this problem I think the university needs to mount workshops in which the three groups meet to share ideas challenges and experiences so that they chat the way forward together. As it is now these people are far away removed from each other in body and spirit and almost work as separate entities.

5.4.12 University based curriculum issues

There were variations in what participants said about curriculum issues. Student teachers felt that the university curriculum especially pedagogic modules needed to be revised to

incorporate certain aspects such as marking compositions which they believed presented the biggest challenge as they did not know how to write meaningful and helpful comments that would make pupils improve. For them, this situation created theory –practice gaps as they felt they had no theory about composition marking and hence had nothing to put into practice. In addition to the above sentiments, student teachers felt that there were too many literature modules some of which they believed were not very relevant to their situation. Instead, they preferred to be given more time with courses to do with pedagogic studies in English which they believed had a direct influence on their teaching. They expressed the view to learn more on drama and poetry as these were very difficult to teach yet they received little attention at the university. On the other hand, some lecturers felt that the university timetable was so overloaded that it did not give student teachers enough breathing space to handle their work well- a situation which, they believed compromised student teacher efficacy. Other lecturers felt the need to expose student teachers to rigorous micro-teaching before they went for TP so that needy areas could be grey areas could be identified and rectified. They suggested that if streamlining was possible then some of the modules should be scrapped off to allow more time to concentrate on their areas of specialization. Mentors on their part felt that a lot should be done to make student well versed with the school curriculum so that they were not found wanting. In my view, lecturer and student teacher sentiments regarding this issue can be said to be unfortunate because both groups do not seem to appreciate or understand the philosophy of liberal education underpinning the university curriculum in which there is a broad base of disciplines which help students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.

5.4.13 Social Constructivist model of teaching

Social constructivism is one of the main framing theories of this study. It advocates that knowledge is understood as being constructed by an individual's interaction with the social milieu in which he/she is situated. This socially interactive component has the potential to result in change in both the individual and the milieu (Vygotsky 1978). In the context of my study, Constructivism is one of the themes that emerged from the data collected from

participants. Findings under this theme denoted what I considered as aspects or features of Social Constructivism wherein student teachers who; engaged in positive working relationship with their mentors, interacted quite often with colleagues and other school personnel and co-operated with fellow students, mentors and lecturers not only enjoyed TP as a fulfilling experience but also performed better in their teaching as reflected in their TP reports. These are discerned in student teachers *Ar* and *Am* who pointed out the fulfilling and enjoyable experiences that TP provided. They cited and appreciated the quality of assistance their mentors and heads of department provided. What seems to emerge from those student teacher participants is the fact that if novice teachers is that sound instructional-mentoring characterized by collaboration and support provide a powerful lever for closing the theory practice gap and ensures that student teachers students, , have a real opportunity to succeed. (cf Chapter 4 theme 13).

The above statement by student teachers give credit to their respective mentors who were conscious of the fact that student teachers needed help not just to monitor, but also to explore, interpret and explain the how and why of what went on. This is consistent with the views of Tomlinson, (1995: 44); Husbands, (1995: 31) who point out that adequate mentor support makes teaching flow naturally into the next phase of the teaching cycle, namely, the (re)planning of the next piece of teaching. It is also commensurate with what David and Hall (2003) say when they see TP as a socializing experience into the teaching profession that involves rigorous professional negotiation that leads to the development of confidence TP. They further allege is one of the most crucial components of Teacher preparation because it is a window through which alternative means can create opportunities for teachers to move toward more theoretically and pedagogically sound instructional practices within the settings and circumstances of their work (Derrick and Dicks, 2005; Clarke & Collins 2007; Farell 2008; Kombo and Kira 2013). It is very a beneficiary experience for student teachers to show the integration of the knowledge about teaching and it encourages them to think critically, to constantly redefine the context and the process of the learning experience (Staynoff 1999). On the other hand, lectures and mentors whose cognition were guided by constructivist framework, did not have problems with student teachers and above all helped their mentees and supervisee in much better ways than did those mentors and lecturers who thought

otherwise. Also substantial among stakeholder's responses were those reports that collaboration and mutual support by colleagues, mentors and lecturers tended to boost student teachers' confidence and morale leading to improved efficacy. Further, my findings are consistent with the findings of Lesgold, (2004); Johnson & Johnson, (2002, 2003, 2004), who all point to the benefits of greater participation and socialization. Research further point out that interpersonal relations, as one of the keys, takes place through collaboration and dialogic action with others in solving problems, producing a product or discussing a subject. During lesson observation, I noted that some student teachers made an effort to make their lessons as constructivist as possible by encouraging interactive learners, dialogic activities and active participation in knowledge creation by engaging learners in communicative tasks.

It is expected to heighten student teachers' individual awareness of community issues, to motivate them to create opportunities, embrace new ideas and give direction to positive change (Chapman1999). However, while participants seemed to suggest that co-operation, interaction and collaboration among stakeholders in this study was very beneficial in creating knowledge, they at the same time seemed to complain the fact that their tripartite relationship was devoid of these aspects hence a lot of challenges. Some lecturer and student participants expressed the view that there was disharmony between mentors and student teachers and that affected their instructional and mentoring practices respectively. Student teachers did not get the confidence to teach and to try out new things, because when they got stuck during lesson delivery, some mentors did not come to their aid when they encountered challenging tasks such as marking discursive composition.

Lecturer *Si*, *Ze* and mentor *Na* summarized it all by pointing out that there was need for TP stake holders (student teachers, mentors lecturers) to put their heads together and share knowledge, experiences and concerns that could do everybody a lot of good. They believed in constructive dialogue where, listening to others and respecting differences became important and useful in communities of sharing. They also entertained the thought that the differences and challenges encountered were opportunities to expand knowledge and understanding where student teachers could learn that their strengths and weaknesses were

valuable and that every individual had knowledge to offer the other members of the professional community. *L-Si ; L- Ze* and *M- Na* (see Chapter 4:theme 13).

Student participants seemed to concur that stakeholders needed to collaborate and cooperate with each other in order to construct knowledge and to make things easy for themselves. Mentors could learn not only from one another but also from lecturers and vice versa and this would help them grow into better mentors and supervisors. In that case, participants further indicated that there was need to find a platform on which lecturers' mentors and student teachers meet together to share the challenges and successful pedagogical strategies. This view by participants is also shared by Tomlison (1995) who points out that mentors find that just as student teachers learn more about their subject by teaching, so analyzing and talking about teaching is a natural opportunity to deepen teaching sensitivity and skill. It was unanimously agreed that such arrangement would go a long way in alleviating some of the challenges that lead to theory practice gaps. The implications of these findings for the university-school partnership include the increased need for university and school administrators to support school and student teachers' benefit from the collaboration; and to create more time for the involvement of all participating parties so that they can better implement the collaboration activities. Having deliberated on what I thought was related to the Social Constructivist model, the next section now looks at reflective practice in language teacher development practices.

5.4.14 Reflective practice

Findings from my study showed that there are critical theory-gaps in student teachers' instructional practices. I noted that the gaps emanated largely from student teachers' inability to integrate theory with practice which itself is a multi-factorial problem that requires a rigorous and continuous review of pre-service language teacher education curriculum to alleviate the persistent gaps. In my Literature Review Chapter, I indicated and confirmed with views of various authorities that employing reflective practice is a vital part of pre-service teacher learning that can help to minimize the gaps between theory and practice. With this in mind, I am bound to believe that teacher education institutions including GZU have a major responsibility to expedite a reflective, self -monitoring practice in student

teachers during the initial phase of preparation. This is meant to promote such a practice as a critical and active habit that improves the pre-service teachers' pedagogical ability. The above statement is commensurate with Moon's (2004) view that reflective engagement helps pre-service teachers to actively consider and reconsider beliefs and practices that allow them to move towards metacognition in teaching. In expressing a point that seems to agree with that of Moon above, Korthagen (2009, p. 104) adds that, 'theory can only become useful if student teachers themselves develop a wish for a more profound understanding'.

An interesting factor that I also noted in my study is that the participants rarely appreciated the extent of theory practice gap. I might have missed it myself but thanks to my own awakening and introspection, as I progressed with my investigation, it all became very clear. From my interaction with all participants, I noted that student teachers appreciated and acknowledged the benefits of reflective practice towards personal development although they expressed concern that it was rather difficult to apply.

The fact that student teachers had an idea of what reflective practice is, how it positively impacted on their performance and that some practiced it in their classroom while others did it outside classroom settings in collaboration with other school teacher colleagues or mentors was interesting to me. This fits well in Schon's (1986) point that, "reflective practice involves thoughtfully considering one's experiences in applying knowledge to practices while being coached by a professional" I thought to myself that if only they were well versed with it, then, they could have done very well in their TP. I noted that practitioners including mentors who reflected upon their work developed a necessary sense of self-efficacy that helped them to create personal solutions to mentoring problems. Findings from this theme is an indication that Reflective practice is an important tool in practice-based professional learning settings where people learn from their own professional experiences, rather than from formal learning or knowledge transfer.

Alongside my view is the view by Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2011) who contend that reflective teaching offers teachers the opportunity to renew their practice and to understand the effects of their teaching. Those of them who reflected upon their mentoring practices

stood a better chance to help their mentees while lectures who reflected upon their practices continued to give quality supervisory assistance to the student teachers they supervised and assessed. It was reported that student teachers who engaged in effective reflective practice did much better in their instructional practices than those who did not. This is consistent with the opinion that the primary benefit of reflective practice for teachers is a deeper understanding of their own teaching style and ultimately, greater effectiveness Clandinin & Connelly, (1995); Lytle & Cochran-Smith, (1992). A specific example was two students, whose relationships with mentors was very positive. They would normally sit down together to discuss issues pertaining to their classrooms and they said they found their work improving or, that is what they felt. This is consistent with the view that the collaborative model of reflective practice enriches students' personal reflections on their work and provides students with suggestions from peers on how to refine their teaching practices (Syrjala, 1996).

It further emerged that for reflective practice to make a difference, the university and the practicing schools needed to instill a culture of reflection within their staff so that they speak with the same voice when they were mentoring and supervising. It was noted that reflective practice should take place at all levels from the student teacher, the mentor and the lecturer. At both an individual and organizational level, the impact of reflective practice should be a process of continual questioning of assumptions and accepted ways of doing things, leading to transformation and improvement on an ongoing basis, the epitome of the “learning organization” For reflective practice to make a difference, the university and the practicing schools need to instill a culture of reflection within their staff It was noted that reflective practice should take place at all levels from the student teacher, the mentor and the lecturer.

From this theme, all participants seemed to acknowledge the significance of reflective practice in all pedagogic activities. Student teachers in particular, pointed out that they had a general understanding of reflection practice and seemed to have learnt to reflect through various opportunities, in their different contexts and through collaboration with colleagues and mentors. It was said that those student teachers who reflected upon their work developed a sense of self efficacy that helped them to create personal solutions to problems and that they performed better in their instructional practices than those who did not. Lecturers

pointed out that reflective practice is an important tool in practice-based professional learning settings where people learn from their own professional experiences, rather than from formal learning or knowledge transfer.

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Based on all that I have said above, reflective practitioners at all levels are likely to make better decisions, in whatever they do if they consider reflection as an integral part of practice. In order to deliver a culture of reflective practice in a better way therefore, it is suggested that reflective practices should be prevalent in practices of all stakeholders at all levels of the hierarchy, and not only student teachers. This will ensure that a thoughtful, reflective approach to service delivery is valued for its contribution to good thinking, good decision-making, and excellence in quality of teaching, mentoring and supervision. Unless practitioners develop the practice of critical reflection, they remain trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions and expectations. Reflective practitioners move beyond a knowledge base of discreet skills to a stage where they integrate and modify skills to fit specific contexts and eventually to a point where the skills are internalized enabling them to invent solutions to problems (Barbara Larrivee 2010).

This study has implications for the ways in which pre-service teachers learn about reflection, raise questions about reflective innovative mentoring and supervision practices. Exploring areas that need improvement in teaching practice can invite educators grow professionally, and seeing the strengths allows celebration of their success. This, in fact, is the main idea behind this fancy name for learning about own teaching: being objective and finding out what works and why. Teachers have a tendency to share information with each other and collaboratively solve problems related to teaching and learning. Reflective practice is a process that facilitate teaching, learning and understanding, and it plays a central role in teachers' professional development.

An exploration of the nature of reflective practice shows that a common element is the need for individuals to be aware and able to monitor their own thinking, understanding and knowing about different kinds of knowledge upon which they can draw to help develop their practice. Social interaction as a means of developing abilities in this area is considered important. In order to help students identify their own understanding of their practice and engage in reflection on this, a placement in which they work in close collaboration with a critical partner from their peer group and members of school staff was introduced to their programme. The aim of the collaboration is to enable deeper thinking about practice in an

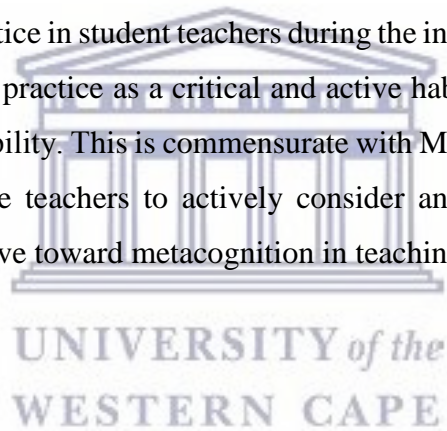
atmosphere of supportive and constructive but honest feedback. Research conducted on reflective teaching as an essential part of teachers' professional development, (Griffiths 2000; Akbari 2007; Killen 2007; Conley et al., 2010; Jacobs, 2011) have indicated how the pre-service teachers can be supported by the practice in this teacher preparation program. Reflection is a professional motivator to "move on and do better within practice" with the goal of learning from experiences and examining oneself (Bulman, Lathlean, & Gobbi, 2011). Nevertheless, ESL/ EFL professionals can react, examine and evaluate their teaching to make decisions on needed changes to improve attitudes, beliefs, and teaching practices through reflection (Pacheco, 2005). In order to do this, teachers, in this case student teachers are forced to look back into their own teaching practices, beliefs, attitudes, goals, as well as those beliefs and attitudes of their learners, colleagues, and of the teaching community itself. Also, Farrel (2016) mentions that the use of reflective practice in teacher development is based on the belief that teachers can improve their own teaching by consciously and systematically reflecting on their teaching experiences. In addition, if teachers share their reflections, they can attain different perspectives about their works (Farrel, 2016).

5.5 Conclusion

In the foregoing discussions about theory-practice gaps, I have expressed in a variety of forms, that the gaps represent and present an undesirable rift and a complex situation in the whole process of teacher education in general and language teacher development in particular. I have also highlighted that the divide lies between university based and the professional based activity. It turned out in the discussion, that the complex nature of the theory practice dichotomy exists in different ways across all stakeholders directly involved in the TP triad. As I have come to understand, what makes the situation more complicated is that these stakeholders, are contributors of the persistent gaps, of course each in their own peculiar way, yet they seem not to be aware of that and ironically, continue to apportion blame on the other particularly on student teachers. Based on my analysis of the data, several related issues in participant practices including among others, lack of knowledge on how to reflect upon own teaching, inability to integrate theory into practice, type of feedback, student teachers' pedagogical practices, mentoring and supervision practices by school mentors and university lecturers and co-ordination of TP activities were identified as having

been very prominent barriers to student teacher efficacy that invariably contributed to the persistent theory practice gaps. Notwithstanding these problems, it turned out from my findings that if; communication and co-ordination between the university and practicing schools improve and triad work together in harmony, use in their practices frameworks of teaching, mentoring and supervision based on the Post method pedagogy, Reflective practice social Constructivism, it may lead to improved student teacher efficacy that in turn can minimize the gaps.

The teaching model presented outlines an approach to reflective learning that recognizes the need for students to engage with feedback in the classroom, to reflect on it and to feed forward to the next assessment, thus completing the learning cycle. With this in mind, I am bound to believe that teacher education institutions have a major responsibility to expedite a reflective, self-monitoring practice in student teachers during the initial phase of preparation. This is meant to promote such a practice as a critical and active habit that improves the pre-service teachers' pedagogical ability. This is commensurate with Moon (2004) that reflective engagement helps pre - service teachers to actively consider and reconsider beliefs and practices that allow them to move toward metacognition in teaching.



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapter, I discussed the findings of my study in relation to the major question on theory - practice gaps in ESL pedagogy and the subsidiary questions that together guided my study. In this chapter, I conclude my research by confirming that the research problem has been examined and the research questions and objectives have been addressed. I noted in the preceding chapter that, the theory practice relationship in ESL pedagogy had a huge significance especially in the way teacher development challenges can be understood. According to Hopkins & Dudley Evans's (1988) model, it is therefore important to restate as well as reinforce the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem and the research questions that the study attempts to answer when writing the concluding chapter. This is what I propose to do in this concluding chapter in order to remind my readership about where the research started and how it developed and ended. I provide a summary of all the five chapters to show how my research unfolded from the somewhat tentative early steps in Chapter one to the more confident Chapter five where I could go out of the "epistemic straight jacket" to look for more literature. I will thus attempt to confirm the coherence of my research plan and design by showing how the research problem, research questions and objectives were perceived and the methodology executed in order to arrive at the understanding I have so far gained on the theory-practice gaps in ESL teacher development pedagogy as revealed by the participants during the practicum period. Based on the results of my study, I will give a set of recommendations intended for the university teacher development department to re-structure both university based modules and TP processes. I therefore begin this chapter by giving a brief overview of the nature, purpose, research questions and objectives of my study before adopting Hopkins & Dudley Evans's (1988) model of concluding a PhD thesis, which includes the following subheadings:

- Summary of chapters and restatement of findings
- Relationship with previous research
- Limitations of the study
- Implications of findings

- contribution to research
- Recommendations for research for action.
- Conclusion

6.1 Overview

My research is a qualitative intrinsic case study which focused on “*Improving B.Ed. Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language at secondary school level in Zimbabwe*” It examined the theory- practice gaps probably existing in student teachers’ endeavor to translate theoretical knowledge of ESL into practice during TP. Guided by several theoretical perspectives including Social Constructivism, (Vygotsky 1978 ; Richardson 1997 ; Arends 1998), mentoring models (Padua 2003) Reflective Practice (Schon 1983 & 1987; Dewey 1933 ; Farrell 2004), the Teacher knowledge base (Borg 2003; Farrell 2003; Prabhu 1991 and Shulman 1986,1987 & 1991) and the Post method pedagogy, Kumaravadivelu (1994, 2006 ; 2008 & 2014), I employed semi-structured interviews, lesson observations, document analysis and focus group discussion to elicit data from twenty one participants over a year. The purpose was to establish and document; the nature and type of gaps existing and why they arise, the extent to which student teachers’ practices reflected the theoretical knowledge acquired during University tuition and the quality of professional support student teacher get during the period under review. I analyzed thematically according to and supported by Braun and Clarke’s (2006) analytic method of conducting qualitative analysis.

Since my investigation was qualitative in nature and thus concerned about studying participants in their natural school setting, I identified TP as a crucial stage of the Teacher Preparation and Development process which ensures that student teachers acquire teaching competencies (Calderhead and Shorrock, 1997) and where the three groups of participants stated above interact as they each execute their roles and responsibilities. The practicum is also a key site for determining student teacher suitability, or otherwise, for entry into the profession. The quality of the practicum may likely define the quality of teacher education (Zeichner, 2010).

Kiggundu and Nayimuli (2009, p. 347) view TP as “... a form of work-integrated learning that is described as a period of time when students are working in the relevant industry to receive specific in-service training in order to apply theory in practice” For student teachers, TP provides them with authentic hands-on experience in teaching- demonstrating their practical knowledge wisdom and skills that each individual student teacher holds and that cannot easily be transmitted from one student teacher to another. The view presented above is resonated by Ngidi, and Sibaya (2003) and Marais and Meier (2004) who explain that Teaching Practice grants student-teachers experience in the actual teaching and learning environment. Therefore, it is an important component of becoming a teacher.

Lecturers on the other hand, get a chance to gauge the efficacy of their student teachers and the effectiveness of the university programmes. This is achieved through supervision and assessment when they follow up student teachers during the practicum period. Mentors on their part, get a chance to use their experience and expert knowledge and skills in content area to demonstrate their ability to build capacity in student teachers. Mtika (2008) confirms the above statement when he points out that, the mentor is expected to impart practical knowledge and should be competent in subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Mentoring is the most effective way of training as well as developing quality teachers and it has been applied with success in the areas of the medicine, building and the military (Strong and Baron, 2004).

Having these three groups of stakeholders as participants in my study was very crucial for me to establish the source and causes of the theory- practice gaps. My study was therefore motivated by an intrinsic desire to produce empirical data that could be considered, among others in the on-going teacher development curriculum improvements. In that quest, my study was designed to provide answers to the following research questions and objectives:

6.1.1 What theory-practice gaps exist in pre-service teacher classroom practices in ESL at secondary school level and why do they arise?

6.1.1.1 To what extent can student teachers’ practices on TP reflect the ESL theoretical content knowledge and pedagogies learnt at the university?

6.1.1.2 Can there be a shared understanding of student teachers' expected pedagogical practices between university lecturers and mentors?

6.1.1.3 How can the university curriculum and the school curriculum support effective teacher development?

Accordingly, my study was carried out with a view to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the factors that contribute to the theory practice-gaps in ESL during TP.
- To examine student teachers' views and perceptions about; their ability to integrate theory into practice and the quality of professional/pedagogical support they get from lecturers and mentors during TP
- To analyze and document the consistencies or inconsistencies existing between theory and practice as reflected in mentor and lecturer critiques and interviews on student teachers pedagogical practices.
- To ascertain whether or not mentors and lecturers read from the same page regarding the expected standard of pedagogy in ESL

My discussion remained moored to literature about the relationship between theory and practice in ESL Teacher Preparation and Development in general and the theoretical frameworks reviewed and presented in my chapter two in particular. I however went on to review more literature when I wanted to get a better handle on the data I had found. In particular I reviewed literature on Episteme and Phronesis (Kessels and Korthagen 2001) that I found speaking to the nature and kind of my data comprehensively. Having said this, I now move on to the next section.

6.2 Summary of chapters and restatement of the findings

In this section, I propose to make a summary of all the chapters that make up my entire thesis and to restate the results of my study. The purpose is to provide my readership with a shortened version of how the whole research process progressed from the initial stage to the final stage. This is significant as it allows my readership to quickly ascertain any omission

or glitches that may be dominant in my research. In the next section I now summary the chapters.

6.2.1 Summary chapters

My study comprises six chapters beginning from the introductory Chapter one, which sets the tone of the entire thesis through to Chapter five that discusses the data before this concluding final Chapter six. In chapter one, I outlined the purpose of the study, statement of the problem, background to the study, theoretical framework, research questions, significance of the study and the study focus showing in the process, my motivation for carrying out the research and how I located the study within the broader context of ESL Teacher development. I outlined the choice of the research setting and overall data collection strategy where I provided a description of my work in relation to the research problem that I investigated.

The background of my study describes the structure of teacher preparation and development models in Zimbabwe in general and the language teacher preparation and development at GZU in particular. Concurrently, this part of my study discusses the challenges and experiences that teacher educators (myself included) face during the whole process of preparing and developing a pre-service novice teacher to a qualified knowledgeable teacher with the necessary expertise to handle classroom pedagogy especially, trying to make them see the link between /and integrate theoretical knowledge and / into real school based practical knowledge during the practicum phase. As both an ESL teacher and teacher educator, I have discussed what triggered in me the intrinsic motivation to carry out the study. In the theoretical framework section, I briefly outlined and indicated the significance of the several theoretical perspectives guiding my study. In particular, I mentioned that the use of some theoretical frameworks in teacher education curricula including those mentioned in my literature review Chapter, provided teacher educators, mentors and student teachers with deep knowledge to refine their epistemological and ontological agendas for teaching and learning hence contributing towards reducing the theory-gaps.

The statement of the problem “*There are theory- practice gaps in student teachers practices in ESL during TP*” is the area of concern my research tries to address. On this issue, I argue that, the hypothetical theory-practice gaps are prevalent in student teachers pedagogical practices in ESL and that the gaps can be unveiled through engaging student teachers, mentors and lecturers since these are the participants directly involved in the pedagogic enterprise. I further argue that, these gaps can be minimised if all stakeholder participants try among other things, to move away from traditional one –size fits all theories to newer theoretical perspectives that are sensitive and responsive to the diverse needs of different learners/teacher learners in their different socio-cultural, political and educational orientations. I am inclined to believe that participant views, perceptions, opinions and ideas can confirm the truth of the problem statement of my research. Finally, I discussed my interest and motivation in carrying out this study by reiterating that, the debate about the theory-practice dichotomy prevalent in student teachers practices during TP is what prompted me to carry out this study with a view to establish the nature of / and causes of gaps in student teachers ESL practices. As a former teacher and ESL teacher educator, in both cases gaining a deeper insight into factors that affect classroom rituals can help improve the GZU language teacher preparation and development which in turn contributes towards improving student teacher efficacy. Having outlined the major aspects that constitute my chapter, I now move on to summarise my Chapter two.

In Chapter two, I made a critical review of related literature pertaining to the theory –practice gaps in student teachers practices in ESL. In that same chapter, I provided a description of the several theoretical frameworks that guided my study and concurrently reviewed the relevant literature in order to situate/locate my study in that broader perspective. This is in consistent with what Ridley (2008,p.1) says when he expresses that, “the literature review is ...”where there is extensive reference to related research and theory in one’s field; it is where connections are made between source texts the researcher draws on, where he/she positions himself/herself and the research among other sources, ground the proposed study in the relevant previous work, and gives the reader a clear sense of the theoretical approach to the phenomena that the researcher proposes to study” (Maxwell 2005, P.123). Both the

theoretical perspectives and the literature show how my research on theory-practice gaps fits into other researches already known. In this respect, the two provided me with the opportunity to engage in a written dialogue with other researchers in the area of language teacher preparation and development while at the same time showing that I had engaged with, understood and responded to the relevant body of knowledge underpinning my research. In that endeavor, I indicated that, the long standing goal of teacher education is to link theory and practice for effective pre-service teacher development and that achievement of this goal can be revealed during the Practicum period when student teachers get the hands on approach in real classroom based experiences (see Chapter 2 item 2.1).

The literature further asserts that student teachers' ability to teach effectively during the practicum period depends on the interplay of many factors including among other factors; their teacher knowledge base, their proficiency levels in the language of instruction and the nature and quality of professional support in respect of mentoring, supervision and feedback. The literature I reviewed revealed that if these factors are not given special and specific attention, the goals of language Teacher Education remains elusive. As I have pointed out earlier on, language teaching stems from the independent efforts of teachers in their own classrooms and this independence is not brought about by imposing fixed ideas and promoting fashionable formulas (see Chapter 2 item 2.2.1). The literature I reviewed further affirmed that, moving away from the use of traditional theories that are neither suitable nor responsive to the educational and linguistic needs of learners of a particular society are some of the practical solutions towards mitigating the theory practice-gaps. Instead, different teacher education curricula should adopt, incorporate and adapt into teacher education programmes only those theories that are sensitive and responsive to the diverse needs of different people in their different socio-cultural, political linguistic and educational orientations.

In my literature search for such theories, I identified several of them including; the Teacher knowledge framework, Reflective practice, the Post method pedagogy Social constructivism. I have discussed details of these in (Chapter 2 items 2.2.1 to 2.2.4). The implication in that view is that stakeholder' participants need to be well versed with the application of those

theories so that they improve their own practices which in turn would impact positively on student teacher efficacy. This is compatible with Korthagen's (2006) view that, "teacher educators and teachers need to be aware of, and familiar with, the different theoretical frameworks that inform and shape educational theory and research in teacher education. Such an awareness according to Korthagen (2006) can instill in teacher educators and teachers a critical astuteness that will be concerned with determining the most effective, relevant and best, practice in the classroom, and while at the same time ensuring that education practice is not directed by ideological and political concerns but rather by educational principle. It is necessary for teacher educators and teachers to recognize and be aware of the theoretical assumptions that influence the nature of educational theory and practice in teacher education in order to ascertain the impact of these assumptions on the theory and practice of teaching in the classroom.

In Chapter three, I chose to discuss the Interpretivist qualitative case study methodological framework that I employed to carry out my study. Thus, I believed that it is a suitable paradigm that would allow me to study and observe student teacher participants in their natural school setting in order to make meaning by drawing inferences from what they said and did (Myers 2009; Aikenhead, 1997). Interpretivist qualitative case study design was a blueprint that furnished me with the necessary information required for planning, guiding and developing out my research. In that regard, I was able to; purposefully select student teachers and lecturer participants each from their respective population, choose and describe suitable multiple data collection instruments described in section 6.2 above, describe the procedures I followed in collecting, analyzing, interpreting and discussing my data. I employed purposive sampling in corroboration with the views of Reeves and Hedberg (2003; 32) who argue that, "the interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals" The use of the Interpretivist methodological framework was a vital part of my study which helped me to answer the stated research questions and to identify possible solutions to mitigate the identified problem. The interpretivist qualitative case study methodological framework further helped to determine and confirm the validity and dependability of my research. Having provided a summary of chapter three, I now move on to give a summary of my data discussion chapter.

Chapter four, was the focal point of my research in which I presented and analyzed data gathered from twenty one participants stated in section 6.2.above. I employed thematic analysis based on and supported by Braun and Clarke's (2006).

In Chapter five, I provided a detailed discussion of the results of my study by relating the evolving themes to the current literature in the field of English language Teacher Development (ELTD) in general and to the major theoretical principles framing my study in particular. In order to make clear the discussion of findings, I provided a short discussion about liberal education, a philosophy which underpins teacher development programmes at GZU (see Chapter 5 item 5.2). This discussion was facilitative of my understanding the theoretical foundation upon which student teachers of ESL at GZU in Zimbabwe are prepared and developed and how this influenced their classroom practice while on TP. I further provided the concept of "theory- practice dichotomy" based on and supported by Kessels and Korthagen (2001) who employ the metaphors *Episteme* and *Phronesis* to refer to abstract theories learnt through university tuition and practical wisdom acquired in real hands on experiences respectively. Details are provided in (Chapter 5 item 5.3).

The concept of Episteme and Phronesis was important to understand as to why it is very hard for student teachers to translate theory into practice and also why teacher educators remain steeped in the traditionally oriented practices. I pointed out that fourteen themes emerged from my analysis and presentation of data. The major finding was that, there were serious theory- practice gaps in student teacher practices in ESL during TP and that these gaps prevailed in the whole spectrum of the teacher preparation and development process involved in the pedagogic initiative. Findings were discussed in relation to the research questions and existing literature in the field of English language Teacher Development. I also took care of any new understanding or insights about the problem that emerged thereafter.

Chapter six was the concluding chapter of my study in which I reflected on the overall study process as a journey. In this chapter, I provided a short description of a summary of what transpired in each of the six chapters that constitute my study, I draw conclusions by confirming whether the research questions have been addressed and answered then make a

list of recommendations. The chapter further discusses the main findings that emerged from the study and the implications of those findings in relation to teacher preparation and development in Zimbabwe. Based on the results of my study I make recommendations and draw the conclusions. This chapter also suggested possible routes for further research and made appropriate recommendations for teacher development stakeholders.

6.2.2 Restatement of findings

It is important to reiterate that my findings in study are both positive and negative. These will be outlined in the succeeding section beginning with the negative and followed by the positive results. The main research question and problem statement which are stated above in sections 6.1.1 and 6.2.1 respectively were addressed through engaging research participants in interviews, focus discussions, lesson observation and by analyzing their documents to get their views, perceptions opinions and ideas on the causes of theory practice gaps. While addressing these, I at the same time attended to subsidiary questions in 6.2.1.1-6.2.1.3 above. The findings revealed that, there are critical theory –practice gaps in student teachers’ classroom practices in ESL during TP. It further emerged in my study that the gaps were prevalent at every stage of the whole process of Teacher preparation and development from the initial university based instruction, through the practicum period to the final phase of that process and that it involved all stakeholders in this triad (student teachers, mentors and lectures).

It is important to mention that the gaps originated as a result of how the whole process of Teacher preparation and development is managed for an example - the way lectures are contacted back at the university, how student teachers’ understand and conceptualize the content presented to them, lecturer expectations of student teachers and mentors, how TP is perceived and managed by student teachers, mentors and lecturers and even how TP is coordinated. I am inclined to believe that the gaps occur and continue to exist because; stakeholders who are directly involved in the student teachers pedagogic initiative are not doing everything they could to minimize the gaps or do not do things as expected to improve what they are doing. The results of the study further revealed that lecturers had too many assumptions on student teacher’ pedagogical proficiency and ability to integrate theory

into practice, there was inadequate mentoring, supervision, feedback and support by both lectures and mentors sometimes due to circumstances beyond their control.

On the part of the University for example, the findings indicated lack of: proper co-ordination and clear communication and dialogue between the university and practicing schools. The resultant effect was that school based mentoring, supervision and feedback efforts which could have taken center stage were sometimes fragmented, with mentors often getting so overwhelmed that they lacked the enthusiasm to give student teachers the support they needed to progress as classroom instructors. The findings further showed that sometimes there was/were; improper communication between lecturers and student teachers - an issue which often caused disharmony among participants. Student teachers lacked the ability to integrate the theoretical knowledge acquired during university tuition into practical school based teaching probably owing to their deficiencies in teacher knowledge base for ESL teaching and a weak relationship between coursework at university and practice in schools. This appears to be commensurate with the views of Darling –Hammond (2006, p.6) who expresses that: “One of the perennial dilemmas of teacher education is how to integrate theoretically based knowledge that has traditionally been taught in university classrooms with the experience -based knowledge that has traditionally been located in the practice of teachers and the realities of classrooms and schools”. Lecturers, mentors and student teachers did not seem to read from the same page as regarding what each one of them had to do.

Additionally, my findings also revealed that so many things were taken for granted, wherein the university expected mentors to give student teachers the best professional support which I am convinced they could, all things being equal. However, such university expectations about the roles and responsibilities of mentors seemed to suggest that the two parties worked together in harmony and treated each other as equal partners in the TP business yet, when lectures were in the reality school situation where they also needed to liaise with mentors about student teachers’ work, they would not co-operate and sometimes seemed to treat mentors as outsiders who had little relevance. I am inclined to believe that the scenarios mentioned so far constituted theory practice gaps.

On the positive note, findings revealed that despite the gaps described above, student teachers made some considerable progress in their classroom practice. I noted that those student teachers who reflected upon their teaching and had a good relationship with their mentors and fellow student teachers improved their teaching through the assistance of their mentors and lecturers and also through their own initiatives. The findings of my study in many ways correlate with the findings of other researchers which I intend to indicate in the succeeding section.

6.3 Relationship with previous research

My study is in many ways related to those of other researchers exploring the theory- practice dichotomy that persistently exist in student teachers practices during TP. As I indicated in my data discussion Chapter, the overriding issue is that there are critical theory practice gaps in student teachers practices. The gaps are prevalent at all levels of the teacher development processes. Findings of my study indicated that many stakeholders are in one way or the other directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously involved in creating those gaps. One of the findings of my study is, the student teachers' inability to translate theory into practice.

This is consistent with the findings of Wren & Wren (2009) and Darling-Hammond (2006) which revealed that student teachers complained that they could not integrate theory into practice and attributed that to the failure of teacher educators who too did not execute their lectures in a way comprehensible to their student teacher learners. Correspondingly, Berger (2009) points out that college based studies are not relevant in the classroom context and student teachers are not willing to use them and in the long run this leads to theory practice gaps. Another fundamental cause of theory practice gap is what has been named as *feed-forward problem* where at the time of exposure student teachers resist to be given learnings and later make protestations that the same learning have not been provided in stronger doses (Katz et al, p. 21; Bullough, Knowles,& Crow 1991, p.79).

In keeping with the position stated above, Korthagen et al (2001) points out that in order for student teachers to learn anything during teacher education, they must have personal concerns about teaching or they must have encountered problems otherwise they do not perceive the usefulness of the theory. Korthagen's (2001) is similar to one of my findings where student teacher participants (*Fa* and *Ca*) lamented that what they learnt at the university had no relevance with classroom rituals (see Chapter 4 item 1.3). Another of my findings was that of deprived coordination and partnership between the university and the practicing schools where practitioners from both ends practiced on the bases of assumptions. Lecturers assumed that mentors knew their roles and responsibilities regarding mentoring and supervision of student teachers while mentors assumed that lecturers knew that they (mentors) needed to be inducted. Inadequate conceptualization of what stakeholders had to do was another significant barrier leading to theory practice gaps.

However, while theory practice gaps are a perennial problem (Darling –Hammond 2006; Dewey 1904; Shulman 1998; McNarama, Jones & Murray, 2014) that will remain to worry stakeholders in the field of education, many researchers of this problem have indicated a degree of optimism towards the eradication of the problem. Westbury et al. (2005) for example, reiterate that “overcoming the perceived gap between theory and practice in pre-service professional education has been attempted by many” the dominating view is that theory and practice should be integrated. Leinhardt et al. (1995) and Chen et al (2010: 91) reveal that the quality of teacher education programmes can be improved only if the teacher educators help student teachers to identify the gap between teaching and theory and continually facilitate them in connecting their learnt theory and practice. Hill (2000) augments that several models of professional education stress the continuing cycle of interplay between theory, practice and reflection as the way to engender changes in students' attitudes and practices. In an effort to improve the quality of instruction in teacher education programs, reflective practices have been adopted in tandem with practicum and other field teaching experiences for pre-service teachers (Demirbulak, 2012; Farrell, 2007).

One of the flagship studies in this trajectory of research is that of Farrell (1999) who points out that, Reflective dialogue between students, mentors and lecturers can give rise to a

fruitful relation between theory and practice, and can in this way support the students' acquisition of adequate teacher knowledge base. Insight into these relations' importance may give rise to a more productive interaction between theory and practice. Constructive and lasting changes require that we create cultural and organizational conditions that support these changes. Many argue that one of the major reasons for the perpetuation of the theory-practice gap in the practicum is the continuing separation of teacher education responsibilities between universities and schools (Zeichner, 2010). There is need for a “stronger partnerships between schools and teacher education institutions” Indeed, the forging and fostering of school-university partnerships has been identified as one of the critical components in creating more powerful and more effective teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Louden & Rohl, 2006). Partnership arrangements that meet certain criteria, including a genuine engagement in the learning process, have been shown to deliver the most positive results to pre-service teachers.

Richards (1991) claims that through the reflective process, student teachers and practitioner teachers consciously challenge their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs in light of an experience in order to achieve a higher level of awareness of decision-making, self-evaluation and action-planning. As a consequence, reflection enables practitioners to integrate new knowledge and experience within their existing cognitive frameworks. Constructivism therefore, has important implications for teaching (Hoover, 1996). First, teaching cannot be viewed as the transmission of knowledge from the enlightened to the unenlightened; constructivist teachers do not take the role of the "sage on the stage." Rather, teachers act as "guides on the side," who provide students with opportunities to test the adequacy of their current understandings. In line with the above literature, I also noted in Chapter two of my study that, adopting and adapting theoretical framework such as the Post method pedagogy, Reflective Practice, Social Constructivism and the Teacher knowledge framework for use in language teacher education curriculum can go a long way in mitigating the theory-practice dichotomy. In short, teacher education institution should refrain from employing standardized curricula and testing which have marginalized culturally and socially responsive educational reform discourses.

My belief on the point stated above is that the mentioned theoretical frameworks embrace the tenets of culturally relevant language teacher education. Social Constructivism for example, is based on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning. It emphasizes the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding (Derry, 1999; McMahan, 1997). The Post-method condition is a practice-driven construct which calls into question the traditional conceptualization of teachers as a channel of received knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, 2003a). It raises serious questions regarding the traditional dichotomy between theorists and practitioners with a view to empowering teachers whereby they can “theorize what they practice and practice what they theorize” (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p.545).

Schon (1993) suggests that reflective teaching practice is a continuous process that involves learners thoughtfully considering one’s own experience in applying knowledge to practice while being taught by professionals. It helps the individual’s to develop their own personality. Gibbs’ (1988) reflective practice suggests that individuals develop analysis of feelings, evaluation of experience. Engaging in reflective practice is associated with the improvement of the quality of education, stimulating personal and professional growth and closing the gap between theory and practice.



6.4 Limitations

The major limitation I encountered was that of not getting funding from the university to conduct my research project. As a result, the study was confined to only two urban high schools in the central business district of Gweru in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe and it included a small sample of only twenty one participants. Due to the above stated facts, the results of my study can neither be generalized to mean the same elsewhere nor can it be representative of the situation prevailing in the many diversified schools in Zimbabwe. I however understand that I could have obtained more data than I collected if I had included a larger sample.

6.5 Implication of findings

My research has been an eye opener to me and to other stakeholders in language teacher education who may have a chance to read it. I have identified three key requirements that need to be done to mitigate the problem. Firstly, I consider it important to raise the awareness among all stakeholders directly involved in the teaching practice business that there are critical gaps in the whole process of the teacher preparation and development. Secondly, teacher education institutions, policy makers, administrators, heads of schools as well as teachers and other stakeholders need to understand the importance of TP and reflect current practices and possibly recognize the critical need for action to improve the quality of current language teacher programme practices which in turn can improve the quality of teachers. Next, practitioners including lecturers and mentors need the knowledge and expertise necessary for assisting student teachers to develop from novice teachers to full-fledged professional practitioners.

6.6 Contribution of the study

My study can make a significant contribution to the area of language teacher preparation and development at secondary school level at GZU in Zimbabwe. It is an investigation into a very specialized topic which is not common and yet very difficult to manage. Due to its unique and precise nature, my study contributes towards stakeholders' awareness and insight into the kind and origin of factors that contribute to gaps in student teacher practices. In the Zimbabwean context, I have not come across any study that dealt specifically with the theory-practice gaps in student' practices in English Language Teacher Preparation and Development during the practicum period.

However, I want to acknowledge that some related publications on: mentoring (Jeko 2013; Manwa and Manwa & Mukeredzi 2016; Musingafi and Mafumbate 2014), supervision & assessment (Maphosa and Ndamba 2012; Muyengwa & Bukaliya 2015) do exist and a number of handbooks for student teachers written by various universities. Therefore, my study is the first I know of in Zimbabwe that has investigated the theory-practice gaps in student teacher practices in English language during the practicum and offered an insight into the causes of gaps. Thus, it contributes empirical evidence that can be useful in future

reforms in ESL Teacher Preparation and development at GZU in particular and in other Zimbabwean teacher education institutions in general.

My study involved all key participants in the practicum. In this way, it brought together all their views, perceptions and perspectives and highlighted the lack of coordination and convergence in their practices as one of the constraints to student teacher pedagogical practices during TP. Involving all the key participants in TP also provided the necessary data source triangulation that enhances trustworthiness in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Berg 2007; Glesne 2011; Yin, 2003; Stake, 2006; Creswell, 2007). Similarly, my study involved the use of multiple techniques in data generation. Through such triangulation, my study validates the feasibility of combining several sources to generate rich data and enhance the trustworthiness of a qualitative study. In terms of the substantive findings, my study has suggested that in circumstances and contexts where student teachers are not appropriately prepared for TP, parameters of practice are not clearly defined, support is insufficient and coordination between the partners is poor; the students learn mainly procedural pedagogical knowledge and may not be able to develop any discernible pedagogical reasoning as intended by the university (GZU) and the field of language teacher development.

Therefore, my study adds important information to the field that enhances our understanding of the complex inter-related issues that need to be considered when planning a practicum, in English language and other subjects. My theoretical framework is hybrid in nature and this is important in looking at an issue from different perspectives 'I have outlined most of such contributions in the discussion chapter; thus in this section I highlight the key ones. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. In view of findings from my study, the next section makes the necessary recommendations.

6.7 Recommendations

- That the university makes concerted effort to ensure that effective communication and collaborative relationship takes place between itself and practicing schools to avoid disharmony.
- That the ESL Pedagogic studies module be re-visited to incorporate important aspects of the teacher knowledge base, reflective practice, and the Post method which student teachers require to enable them to incorporate theory into practice.
- That the quality of mentoring, supervision and assessment be redefined and improve through incorporating Constructivist and reflective practices into the ESL Teacher development curriculum.
- That the university holds workshops to induct novice teachers, lecturers and mentors with the nit grits of TP supervision.
- That existing practitioners be given quality training and opportunities for skills development to enhance their ability to apply scientific evidence and pedagogic knowledge at every stage of intervention development, adaptation, implementation and evaluation.
- That mentors and lecturers make concerted effort to keep abreast of other newer theories of second language (English) teaching than resorting to traditional theories and methods.
- That student teachers be encouraged to improve their proficiency levels in the target language to promote effective and smooth communication in the classroom.
- That both lectures and mentors be familiar and well versed with their subject content but also with all issues to do with TP.
- That government remunerate practicing teachers to motivate them to want to work and to enable them acquire instructional materials and resources to use during the instructional process.

6.8 Conclusion

This qualitative case study about improving teacher development practices during TP sought to examine the theory–practice gaps prevalent in student teachers practice in ESL. At the

onset of my research journey, I stated the problem statement and four questions that my study attempted to answer as the study unfolded. In this conclusion section of the study, I am predisposed to believe that both the problem statement and the four research questions have been attended to and answered. My study has revealed that there are critical theory practice gaps in student teacher practices in ESL during TP. I identified fourteen categories of emergent themes including; challenges in integrating theory into practice (*Episteme* and *Phronesis*) the nature of and quality of mentoring, supervision, deficiencies in teacher knowledge base for ESL teaching, nature and quality of feedback and support, Nature and quality of communication and dialogue between the university and practicing schools and inability to align the university curriculum with the school curriculum.

The study further revealed that, the findings, interchangeably called emergent themes emanated at different levels of the teacher preparation and development involving all stakeholder participants and their respective responsible authorities. The results of this is evident to the fact that some overhaul transformation is needed in teacher education institutions in order to bridge this theory –practice dichotomy. In line with this view, my research asserts that any effort to mitigate the problem requires all stake holders to have a deeper insight and knowledge, about the source and cause of the theory-practice gaps in order to tackle it firmly and cooperatively through adopting and adapting current theories that are accessible and insightful to the diverse socio-cultural, political and educational orientation of different people. The implication is that teacher education must make concerted effort to employ theoretical models relevant to individual societies. Research further suggests that the theory practice gap can be bridged through collaborative relationship between lecturers and mentors both who should be equally committed and need to view the role of the other as equal. They then should be actively engaged in continuous communication informing one another about student teacher progress and development. Additionally, quality integration of theory and practice aspects on the part of lecturers is required in order to promote effective teaching hence reducing the ever growing gap.

6.9 Personal Reflection

There is a saying which expresses that “research is a journey into the unknown and no-one knows what will be discovered along the way” While this could be true, the same was not the case for me when I started my research journey. To begin with, I held a strong view that student teachers do not possess the necessary proficiency to mediate effective classroom pedagogy, which in turn develops the intellectual abilities necessary for learners' to interact efficiently within the increasingly complex of socioeconomic circumstances in the country. My intention therefore was to investigate into the phenomenon in order get a deeper insight into why student teachers had that deficiency and to establish how best this could be eradicated. Undertaking this research study has been an invaluable learning experience where I have learnt a number of issues. Chief among the issues was that theory practice gaps in student teachers’ practices in ESL emanated from different strands involving student teachers, mentors and lecturers. I have gained some understanding of the Interpretivist research and of the cyclical, sometimes disorganized, nature of the research process. I have further learned, for example, that things do not fit neatly into categories, research can be frustrating and sometimes tedious and that there is so much to be learnt to make teacher education viable and responsive to the needs of student teachers.

My research study has furthermore provided some key ideas which have helped me examine my own professional values and guidelines for possible changes to my own future practice. Thus, I intend to explore further the impact of other language teacher education courses with which I may be involved, since I now have a growing awareness of how impact might be affected by process factors. With the knowledge I have gained in my study, I have begun to question how my colleagues and I deal with TP problems that we come across as lecturers, how much attention we pay to our student teachers’ beliefs about teaching, how much we value what they bring to the classroom and the role that affective factors might play in relation to their experiences of our language teacher education courses. The research process has encouraged me to view my own Language teacher context within the wider educational field and provided a wealth of resources from which I can learn in order to improve the quality of ESL teacher education and development.

On personal and professional levels I have greatly benefited from the research experience through improving my time-management skills. Specifically, the research process required

extensive preparation and planning for each stage of the study had to be conducted in an organized manner from time perspectives. Initially I encountered some challenges in terms of ensuring the progress of the study according to my timeline. These challenges mainly arose at literature review and methodology stage of the research. I had initially underestimated the duration of time required for literature review and was constantly behind the schedule in terms of the number of literature reviewed. The issue has been dealt with through re-adjusting the time-plan for the study, as well as, increasing the level of personal discipline in terms of following set plan.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Permission request letter- Head Office

Faculty of Education

Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa

Tel. 021-9592449/2442

Fax: 021-959 3358



Great Zimbabwe University

PO Box 1235

Masvingo

21 October 2015

The Director

Policy Planning, Research and Development,

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education,

Ambassador House, Kwame Nkrumah Avenue,

P O Box 121 Causeway.

Harare.

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request to conduct PhD research in two High Schools in the Gweru urban district of the Midlands Province.

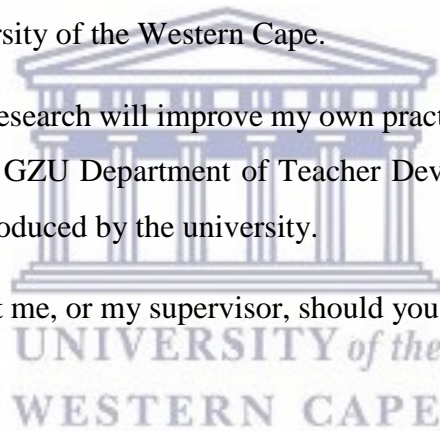
I am writing to apply for permission to conduct my PhD research in two High Schools in Gweru district of the Midlands province between January and December 2016. I am a student with the University of the Western Cape (UWC) South Africa, and a lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU).

My research topic is, 'Improving Pre-service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second language: A Case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation in Zimbabwe'.

I will conduct it under the guidance of my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam of the University of the Western Cape.

I hope that the findings of this research will improve my own practices as a teacher educator and inform decision making at GZU Department of Teacher Development, resulting in an improved quality of teachers produced by the university.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, should you have questions about this request.



Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in anticipation

Sincerely

Cathrine Ngwaru

Cell: 077 761 3547

Email: ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

If you have any questions to ask, do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, on the number and email furnished below:

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Sivakumar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

Appendix 2

Acceptance letter from Head Office

All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary
Education"
Telephone: 799914 and 705153
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"
Fax: 791923



Reference: C/426/3 Midlands
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
Harare
ZIMBABWE

13 April 2016

Cathrine Ngwaru
Great Zimbabwe University
P. O. Box 1235
Masvingo
ZIMBABWE



**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE:
GWERU DISTRICT: [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] HIGH SCHOOLS**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research in the above mentioned schools in Midlands Province on the research title:

**"IMPROVING PRE-SERVICE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: A CASE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
TEACHER PREPARATION IN ZIBABWE"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Midlands, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research.

You are required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

E. Chinyowa

Acting Director: Policy Planning, Research and Statistics
For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

cc: PED. – Midlands Province

706600216



Appendix 3

Permission request letter – Provincial Education Director (Midlands)

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

Great Zimbabwe University

PO Box 1235

Masvingo

21 October 2015

The Education Director

Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

Midlands Province

P O Box 737

Gweru.



Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for permission to conduct a PhD research at GC and GN High Schools, Gweru district.

I am writing you to request permission to conduct my research at GC and GN High Schools in Gweru between January and December 2016. I am a PhD student with the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, and a lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU).

My research topic is, 'Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language: A Case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation in Zimbabwe' and I will conduct it under the guidance of my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam of the University of the Western Cape.

I hope that the findings of this research will improve my own practices as a teacher educator and inform decision making at GZU department of Teacher Development, resulting in an improved quality of teachers produced by the university.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, should you have questions about this request.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in anticipation

Sincerely

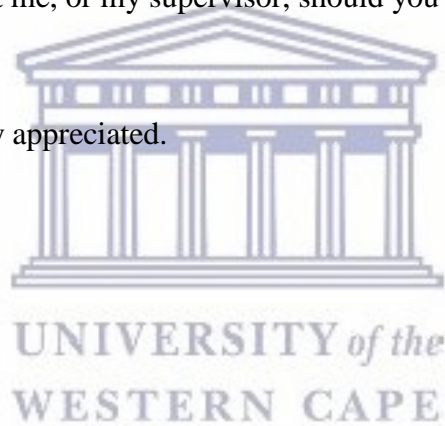
Cathrine Ngwaru

Cell: 077 761 3547

Email: ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

If you have any questions to ask, do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, on the number and email furnished below:

Supervisor: Profession Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam





Signature

Tel: +27 21 959 2449

ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



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WESTERN CAPE

Appendix 4

Acceptance letter from the Provincial Education Director (Midlands)

*All communications should be addressed to "The Provincial Education Director"
Telephone:054- 222460*



Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P.O Box 737
GWERU

Fax: 054- 226482

18 May 2016

Mrs Cathrine Ngwaru
P O Box 1235
Masvingo



RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT [REDACTED] HIGH SCHOOLS : GWERU DISTRICT: MIDLANDS PROVINCE:

Reference is made to your application dated 13 April 2016 on the above. Please be advised that permission has been granted to you by the Provincial Education Director to carry out a research on:

The title of the dissertation "IMPROVING PRE-SERVICE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE; A CASE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER PREPARATION AT GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY IN ZIMBABWE"

The permission has been granted on these conditions:

- a) That in carrying out this research you do not disturb the learning/ teaching programmes in the schools.
- b) That you avail the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education with a copy of your research findings.
- c) That this permission can be withdrawn at any time by the Provincial Education Director or by any higher office.

The Provincial Education Director wishes you success in your research work and in your University College studies.

**A CHEMHURU
FOR PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR: MIDLANDS PROVINCE**



Appendix 5

5.1 Permission request – Headmaster

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

Great Zimbabwe University
PO Box 1235
Masvingo
21 October 2015



The Headmaster
GC High School
Gweru.

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request to conduct PhD research at GC High School

I am writing you to request permission to conduct my research at GC High School in Gweru between January and December 2016. I am a PhD student with the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa, and a lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU).

My research topic is, “Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language: A Case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation in Zimbabwe” and I will conduct it under the guidance of my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam of the University of the Western Cape.

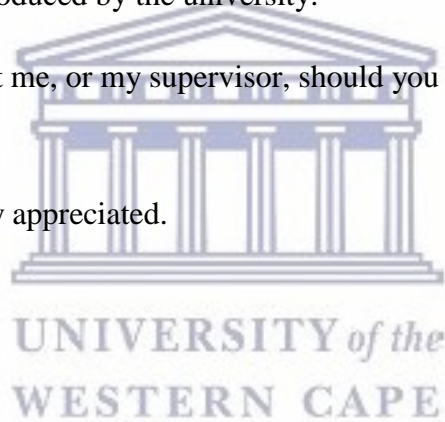
While inside the school, I intend to work primarily with four pre-service student teachers from GZU, observing their practices in the classroom, as well as interviewing them, their mentor and holding discussions with each one of them. My data collection methods will also include photographs, audio-video taping and note writing.

I hope that the findings of this research will improve my own practices as a teacher educator and inform decision making at GZU department of Teacher Development, resulting in an improved quality of teachers produced by the university.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, should you have questions about this request.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in anticipation



Sincerely

Signature_____

Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Cell: 077 761 3547

Email: ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

If you have any questions to ask, do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, on the number and email furnished below:

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Signature 



UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

5.2 Permission request – Headmaster

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

Great Zimbabwe University

PO Box 1235

Masvingo

21 October 2015

The Headmaster

GN High School

Gweru

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request to conduct PhD research at GN High School

I am writing you to request permission to conduct my research at GN High School in Gweru between January and December 2016. I am a PhD student with the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa, and a lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU).

My research topic is, “Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second Language: A Case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation in Zimbabwe” and I will conduct it under the guidance of my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam of the University of the Western Cape.



While inside the school, I intend to work primarily with three pre-service student teachers from GZU, observing their practices in the classroom, as well as interviewing them, their mentor and holding discussions with each one of them. My data collection methods will also include photographs, audio-video taping and note writing.

I hope that the findings of this research will improve my own practices as a teacher educator and inform decision making at GZU- department of Teacher Development, resulting in an improved quality of teachers produced by the university.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, should you have questions about this request.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in anticipation

Sincerely

Signature_____

Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Cell: 077 761 3547

Email: ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

If you have any questions to ask, do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, on the number and email furnished below:

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Signature

S. Siobhán



UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

Appendix 6

Information Sheet

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently studying for a PhD in Language and Literacy with the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. I have several years' worth of experience in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to students at various education levels, namely primary school, secondary school and teacher training institutions. As a result, I have developed a keen interest in examining the constraints faced by student teachers, experienced teachers and learners in ESL instruction. In view of this, I am carrying out a research study involving pre-service secondary teachers of ESL, undertaking the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree at Great Zimbabwe University (GZU). The focus of my study is on the discrepancy between the theoretical knowledge that students get from the university and the practical knowledge they need to handle classroom pedagogy during Teaching Practice (TP). I am therefore kindly inviting all participants of this study to familiarise themselves with the content of this information sheet and to ask questions on anything that they might not have fully understood.

Research Title: Improving Pre-Service Teacher Development Practices in English as a Second (ESL) Language: A Case of Secondary School Teacher Preparation in Zimbabwe.

I hope that the results of the study will enhance my own practices as a teacher educator thus improving the quality of ESL programmes at GZU. Further, I hope that the results of this research will improve pre-service teachers' practices in their career as qualified teachers.

Your participation will be highly appreciated

Thank you in anticipation

Sincerely,

Signature-----

Cathrine Ngwaru

Cell: +263 777 613547

Email:ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

Should you have any queries regarding this information sheet you may contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the number and email address below?

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam



Signature---

Tel: 021-9592449

Email: ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

Appendix 7

Statement by the researcher

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

I, the undersigned, have accurately read out the information sheet to the participant and to the best of my ability made sure that the participant understands what he/she is expected to do.

I confirm that I have given the participant an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and that I have answered all the questions asked by the participant correctly.

I confirm that the participant has not been coerced into giving consent, and that the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Researcher: Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Signature: _____

Date: _____ (day/month/year)

Should you have any queries in this regard, you may contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the number and email address furnished below:

Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Cell: +263 777 613 547

ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam



Signature: _____

Tel: +27 21 959 2449

ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



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Appendix 8

Appendix 8.1

Consent form (student teacher)

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

I, _____ have read the foregoing information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and the researcher answered all my questions to my satisfaction.

I voluntarily consent to be a participant in this research project.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____ (day/month/year)

Should you have any queries in this regard, you may contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the number and email address furnished below:

Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Signature: _____

Cell: + 263 777 613 547

ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Tel: +27 21 959 2449



Signature:

ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



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Appendix 8.2

Consent form (mentor)

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

I, _____ have read the foregoing information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and the researcher answered all my questions to my satisfaction.

I voluntarily consent to be a participant in this research project.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____ (day/month/year)

Should you have any queries in this regard, you may contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the number and email address furnished below:

Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Signature: _____

Cell: + 263 777 613 547

ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

Supervisor: Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam

Tel: +27 21 959 2449



Signature:

ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



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Appendix 8.3

Consent form (lecturer)

Faculty of Education
Private Bag X17 Bellville 7535 South Africa
Tel. 021-9592449/2442
Fax: 021-959 3358

I, _____ have read the foregoing information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and the researcher answered all my questions to my satisfaction.

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this research project.

Name of participant: _____

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____ (day/month/year)

Should you have any queries in this regard, you may contact my supervisor, Professor Sivakumar Sivasubramaniam on the number and email address furnished below:

Cathrine Ngwaru (PhD candidate, UWC)

Signature: _____

Cell: + 263 777 613 547

ngwarucathrine@gmail.com

Supervisor: Professor Siva Subramaniam

Tel: +27 21 959 2449



Signature:

ssivasubramaniam@uwc.ac.za



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Appendix 9

Interview guide for focus group discussion (student teachers)

We meet once again to discuss as a group, your views, opinions and suggestions about the teacher development programme as a whole and TP experiences in particular. As you are all aware, this focus group discussion interview is part of my Doctoral study with the University of the Western Cape (UWC). Therefore, feel free to participate and to give your honest views about your experiences. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality in keeping with the research ethics.

1. In your view (with reasons) what role do you think TP plays?
2. Do you think you were adequately prepared to meet the classroom challenges? Give specific examples.
3. What do you see as the extent of the link between ESL in schools and pedagogical theoretical knowledge from the university and the classroom situations?
4. What challenges or opportunities did you experience? (Student teachers to reflect on shared experienced challenges and how they individually or together in their schools thought they could tackle the challenges).
5. What do you think the Department of Teacher Development (alone or together with the Practicum schools) could do to counteract the challenges?
6. As objectively as possible and with reasons and examples, who between lecturers and mentors do you think offered more helpful support?
7. Despite all the challenges, you probably could still share some of the effective pedagogies you practiced that could become the basis of best practices going forward. Would you say something about it?
8. Do you think there is a shared understanding of expected standard of pedagogy between mentors and lecturers? Give reasons to support your answer.
9. What views do you have about the traditional methods or approaches of teaching ESL?

10. Have you ever heard of the Post Method Pedagogy? If so, can you explain what it is and its classroom implication?
11. What recommendations would you make regarding the needs of ESL pre-service teachers?
12. What do you think should be done to align the ESL teacher development curriculum with the secondary school ESL curriculum for better effectiveness?



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Appendix 10

Transcription for Focus group discussions

Question 1

- Teaching Practice is a way of preparing the student teachers to be familiar with the work done in the classroom. It is done to put into practice what you have been taught at the University and to familiarize in the future.
- It is done to practice to be closer to an experienced teacher.
- It is to practice what we have been taught at the university.
- It is an opportunity to practice how to teach.

Question 2

- I cannot quite say I was adequately prepared because there are so many things that were inadequately because when I got to schools, I discovered that there were so many things that I did not know for example marking composition and scheming using the syllabus. It was really difficult and to make matters worse, lectures would not spare time to discuss anything since they were always busy.
- During Teaching Practice I encountered challenges but I was able to tackle the problems by consulting other student teacher and fellow teachers.
- We were not well prepared because when we are at the university we do not have an idea of what things to expect and we only got to know that when we were in the real situation
- Sometimes nothing can be done to solve the situation. I mean the situation here needs someone close by so that you know what to expect.
- Some lecturers do not emphasize certain things for an example how we can apply some of the theories of language teaching such as cognitivism. We have a lot of notes on those theories but we cannot apply them in the classroom.
- I think we were not adequately prepared but at least we had an idea of what is expected.

- The department should make sure that at least they sent lecturer we specialize in teaching English to avoid conflicting views between lecturers.
- The University should motivate the student teachers by giving them salaries as other colleges give theirs.

Question 3

- There is a strong link between the two as we were told to be ever prepared for the lesson by both our lecturers and school heads.
- Sometimes I faced some challenges to link with the classroom situation and had to ask other teachers to help.
- Constructive feedback from mentors and lecturers is very helpful that way there is a link. In the first term we were just wondering in the dark not knowing what to do but as the year progressed, we at least had found direction after a series of feedback from them. But, the problem is that lecturer are hard to come by during the TP period and when you see them, they are in a hurry.
- Perhaps the link is that what the university expects us to do is what also the schools expect from us for example scheming, planning and evaluating our lessons.
- I am sure there is a link but I cannot quite say how.
- The problem is that when we are at the university, we never think we will be confronted with a difficult situation that requires us to link and apply our previous knowledge with the current situation to solve emerging problems. Most of us only got to realize that we needed to find out more about TP and its challenges before we came here.
- The link could be there but we could not see it.
- Using English to teach English was a big challenge to some of us because we sometimes we failed to put across our ideas and concepts to pupils because we ran short of the necessary vocabulary.

Question 4

- School administrators, lecturers and mentors required us to be highly organized, articulate, and hardworking yet such expectations were a bit awkward and difficult for us beginning teachers. We were to learn a lot first before they expected too much.
- At our school, our biggest challenge was scheming using a syllabus because lecturers never made mention of that. They only told us that we must be familiar with the ESL Syllabus and that we should have it in our TP file.
- It was good that we found the three of us teaching at one school where it was possible to share notes and ideas otherwise it could have been a serious problem.
- In some cases when things became so tough, we went to ask the head of department. In that case ours was of great help to us and he would even give us samples of his teaching notes.
- Some of the challenges we encountered were caused by mentors who always wanted us to do the work for them. They would usually go for meetings and would require us to manage the class during their absence.
- Finances were a very big challenge. Most of us did not have enough money to buy stationery for use in the classroom for example manila for making group work cards.
- Sometimes lecturers come when we are not in good mood especially when our parents fail to send us money for our needs. In such circumstances it is very difficult to concentrate with our work and that has in my times resulted in poor performance.
- Most of the schools are result oriented. Instead of adhering to prescribed ways of teaching and assessing, they try to use Dewey's philosophy of "that which works". When we then want to teach as we were told at the university, it becomes problematic because some mentors think that we are wasting time and we would not cover the syllabus before examination time comes. In that case then we are compelled to do what works.
- At most schools, they are not worried about theories methods and what have you. They simply try to do what makes children pass the examination or what is relevant to their situation.

- I managed to tackle some of the challenges through my mentor and other teachers who sometimes lent me a few dollars to use.
- Some of our mentors were cooperative such that it made our lives easier working on the challenges.

Question 5

- The university should help to solve our monetary problems by reducing the fees. Most of the time we will be thinking of how to get the fees especially if parents are not working. It is really stressful but we cannot tell our lecturers that that is what is worrying me so I cannot concentrate.
- Some feedback we get from mentors and supervisors is not clear due to incomprehensible language and in most cases such feedback would be from a non ESL expert lecturers.
- We do not know whether something cannot be done about the confusion that seems to exist among lecturer and mentors. What one lecturer expects from us is not wanted by another lecturer so we do not know how to solve that problem.
- The department should look into the issue of non-specialist ESL lecturers supervising us because their comments and advice run contrary to what our lecturer for pedagogic studies module requires.
- If it was possible we would be happier to be supervised and assessed by our own lecturers from the language section.
- If there could be a way of reducing fees as sometimes we get frustrated by lot of stress on how to get fees, scheming and teaching such that you will not be able to concentrate and sometimes you vent the stress on the pupils.
- There is a challenge of mixing lecturers who come to assess. One lecturer's views and ideas would be different from others such that the student ends up being confused.

Question 6

- Mentors were very keen to give professional assistance to us but were often deterred by so many factors including their overloaded time table. As a result they did not work to their maximum ability.
- For me, lecturers were better because at least they always wrote something about my lesson and I would have something to refer to in future.
- I benefited a lot from both my lecturer and my mentor. The mentor was always there for me and she evaluated my work at the end of each day.
- My mentor told me full tips on how to mark a composition of which we were not taught by our lecturer at the University.
- If the lecturers could do the assessment in a friendly manner with the student teacher rather than always find faults on the student. We also need respect from the assessors.
- The lecturers should be considerate the way they approach the student instead of shouting and embarrassing students in front of pupils or other colleagues.
- In most cases mentors were better in that we were familiar with them and at least they did not shout at us.
- If lecturers stop being too harsh I think they could be better because at least they write something down that I will always use. Mentors do not want to commit themselves to writing perhaps because they do not know what to write about.
- Lecturers always want to find faults in us even about the things that they have never mentioned in class. If they were a little friendlier they could give better help but I am sometimes not comfortable with them. Their presence in the classroom is rather oppressive.
- Some lecturers penalize us for code-switching during ESL lessons yet the new constitution of Zimbabwe stipulates that mother tongue shall be used as a language of instruction from grade zero to form two. Most of us teach form ones and twos so when we now try to explain difficult concepts in the pupils' mother tongue for purposes of clarity in the presence of some lecturers, we are reprimanded and sometimes we get very low marks because of that. They do not believe code-switching is a linguistic tool used to aid learning.

- Sometimes you are just criticized for something that you do not know and it really dampens our spirit because there is no one to ask. Lecturers are too busy to listen to anything and mentors say your lecturers should have taught you that.

Question 7

- I can say that I gained confidence from standing in front of pupils and teach them because at first I was frightened and my mentor encourage me to keep trying. Later on I gained the confidence and was able to teach freely with no fear at all. My mentor told me to be calm and to be prepared before conducting a lesson.
- My mentor was a bit difficult so at first things were difficult for me but later on when we mended our relationship, things became easier. So she started helping me.
- It happened that my mentor went on leave for the whole term and I was in charge. From that I gained respect from the pupils.
- I went for a sporting training to some school so I obtained a certificate.
- We got respect from the community as well as from parents who wanted to know more about us because we were humble.
- We managed to switch to a position where the pupils understood what we taught them.



Question 8

- To some extent, I think there is because both groups emphasis on the same things for example; they all talk about the importance of classroom documents and they all want us to do well.
- I don't think there is a shared understanding because the difference in qualification between lectures and mentors is so big that a person with a diploma cannot conceptualize issues at the same level as one with a doctorate.
- The gap in qualification makes it difficult for them to have a shared understanding of expected pedagogy.
- Obviously there is a shared understanding because mentors were once upon a time at college and were given the same things that we are now getting.

- I think there is a shared understanding but there are some constraints which make it appear as if the mentors and lecture are in conflict.

Question 9

- I do not know whether I was doing the right thing but I think I reflected upon my teaching by evaluating my lessons after teaching especially at the end of the day. This is when I had time to see what went right or wrong during the lesson.
- Both lecturers and mentors expect us to evaluate our lessons after we have taught them in order to establish the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson. I can say this is how I reflected upon my teaching.
- I asked my pupils what they liked or disliked about the lesson and from their responses I could tell where the problem was. I would then use that to improve the next lesson.
- We often hear lecturers talk about reflection but we have never really sat down to say exactly what it means in the classroom. If it is the same as lesson evaluation then we are on the right track because that is what we do after teaching the lesson.
- My mentor helped me a great deal on that because after teaching a lesson she would always find time to discuss the outcome of the lesson and she would point out my mistakes. From that discussion I would then try to improve my lesson.
- Some of these things about effective or good lesson can only be discovered when we have taught. Without real classroom experience we would really know what to do. During my teaching I just discovered that some things do not work by following certain formulas and procedures but by just discovering what can work at that time and for that class.

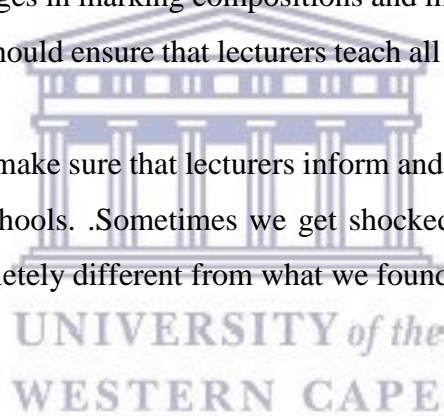
Question 10

- Most students here remain silent and look at each other as if to enquire what that means. Some shake their heads as a way of indicating that they know nothing about it. Only two students seem to have come across it in their reading and had this to say:
- I have come across it in my reading but I have never really bothered to find out more about it since my lecturers have never talked about it.

- I heard about it from one of the lecturers but the context in which it was said had nothing to do with our assignments so I did not worry about it.

Question 11

- English subject has a lot of work to do as compared to other subjects so the University should keep on encouraging the students to work hard.
- The lecturers should teach the students on how to mark compositions because it was a big challenge for me when my mentor asked me to mark pupils' argumentative composition.
- The issue of marking should be included in the Pedagogics studies so that we go for TP well equipped.
- I personally had challenges in marking compositions and interpreting the syllabus so I think the department should ensure that lecturers teach all these issues before we go for TP.
- The department should make sure that lecturers inform and advise us on what we are going to meet in the schools. Sometimes we get shocked to realize that what we expected to see is completely different from what we found.



Question 12

- A student teacher should be in a position to interpret the curriculum well to the mentor so that there will not be problems or misunderstandings between them. But we cannot do that since the lecturers did not tell us how to interpret it.
- Most of the schools are result oriented instead of giving the pupils enough knowledge about the subject such that it becomes difficult for the student teacher to have enough time with the pupils to deliver the skills acquired from the University.
- I think the university should hold workshops in which they invite schools and the two groups should agree on what the university curriculum should include.

- I do not really know what can be done but I think the ministry of higher education can help.

Thank you very much for participating in this discussion as well as sharing your view and perceptions on the questions raised.



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Appendix 11

Teaching Practice supervision form for lecturers and mentors

GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY

ROBERT MUGABE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF.....

TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISION: PROGRAM.....

Name of Student..... Registration Number.....

School..... District.....Form/Grade.....

Subject..... Date.....Time.....

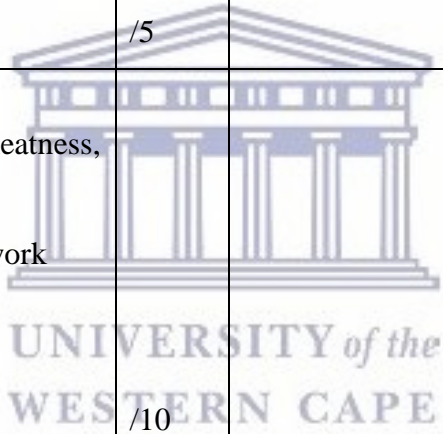
Topic.....

..

Supervision Areas and Skills	Marks	Comments
A. DOCUMENTATION (35)		
TP File	/5	
(i) Presentation, arrangement and neatness		
(ii) Schemes	/10	
-broad aims,		
-logical arrangement of topics		
-summative evaluation	/10	
(iii) Lesson Plans		
-clarity of objectives and Methods		
-Relevance of media		
-evaluation		
(iv) Records	/10	
Usefulness of content in Test		

<p>Record Book, -progress, remedial, Extension, Co-curricular Resource File -Teaching notes -Newspaper cuttings -any other information which Can facilitate teaching</p>		
<p>B. LEARNING ATMOSPHERE (5)</p> <p>(i) Organisation of physical environment (ii) Creation of a positive emotional environment</p>	/5	
<p>C. TEACHING PROCEDURES (50)</p> <p>(i) Effectiveness of introduction</p>	/5	
<p>(ii) Lesson development -clarity of explanations and Demonstrations -questioning technique and Management of learner responses</p>	/20	
<p>Effective use of educational Technology and other media (chalkboard included) -content mastery and confidence in delivery -pupil involvement and interaction</p>	/10	
<p>-command of language and voice Projection</p>		

-teaching strategies and variations -supervision of students	/5	
(iii) Class management -discipline -lesson pacing -motivating students -alertness of learners -attention to individual differences -attire, attitude and personality	/5	
(iv) Conclusion - Highlighting of the main elements of the lesson - Realisation of lesson objectives	/5	
D. Books and marking (10) -Physical condition of books (neatness, covering, labelling) -Adequacy and quality of written work -Meaningfulness of comments -corrections -marking (up to date and thorough)	/10	



Overall Comments/ Suggestions

Supervisor:.....Total Marks /100

Signature:.....

Designation:.....School, University, Provincial Office (delete inapplicable)

Appendix 12

12.1 Sample of lecturer critique on student teacher Nk

Great Zimbabwe University
Robert Mugabe School of education

Department of Teacher Development

Teaching Practice Supervision: program...

B Ed Secondary.....

Name of Student..... Nk

Registration Number.....

School.....GC.....

District Gweru...Form-1B.

Subject...English.....

Date.....13/07/16.....Time.10.30

Topic...Comprehension.....

Supervision Areas and Skills	Marks	Comments
A. DOCUMENTATION (35)		
TP File	3/5	File is neat, generally and fairly well-organized. Clear aims. Topics logically arranged.
(i) Presentation, arrangement and neatness		Evaluation should focus on areas of strength and weaknesses. Please use correct English in our teaching.
(ii) Schemes	6/10	Lesson objectives should not be too many and should focus on lesson content e.g. no pronunciation and spelling in vocabulary lesson.
-broad aims,		
-logical arrangement of topics		
-summative evaluation		
(iii) Lesson Plans		Methods seem vague
-clarity of objectives and Methods	6/10	Methods should be detailed.
-Relevance of media		Lesson evaluation should also focus on teacher`s strengths and weaknesses, not learners only.
-evaluation		Ensure that the content on chart is clear.
(iv) Records	6/10	
Usefulness of content in Test Record Book,		
-progress, remedial,		
Extension, Co-curricular		

<p>Resource File</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teaching notes -Newspaper cuttings -any other information which can facilitate teaching 		
<p>Sketchy B. LEARNING ATMOSPHERE (5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Organisation of physical environment (ii) Creation of a positive emotional environment 	3/5	Test record to follow recommended format,. Fair program, remedial and co-curricular record.
<p>C. TEACHING PROCEDURES (50)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Effectiveness of introduction 	3/5	Some useful resource material but more to be sourced and should have instructions for use to pupils.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) Lesson development -clarity of explanations and Demonstrations -questioning technique and Management of learner responses 	10/20	A conducive learning environment. In the lesson the teacher should have demonstrated how to explain words contextually, which he did not. Teacher should have referred learners to the passage to see how the words are used.
<p>Effective use of educational Technology and other media (chalkboard included)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -content mastery and confidence in delivery -pupil involvement and interaction 	5/10	Chalkboard was not effectively used to explain words. Chart was not clear.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -command of language and voice Projection -teaching strategies and variations -supervision of students 	3/5	Voice clear but overall language needs improvement.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iii) Class management -discipline -lesson pacing -motivating students -alertness of learners -attention to individual differences -attire, attitude and personality (iv) Conclusion - Highlighting of the main elements of the lesson - Realisation of lesson objectives 	3/5	<p>A largely disciplined class that was alert and attentive</p> <p>It was decently dressed and showed enthusiasm</p> <p>Some learning on vocabulary took place</p>
<p>D. Books and marking (10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Physical condition of books (neatness, covering, labelling) -Adequacy and quality of written work -Meaningfulness of comments -corrections -marking (up to date and thorough) 	7/10	<p>Books in good condition.</p> <p>Adequate written work</p> <p>Comments to focus on particular areas of strength and weaknesses.</p> <p>Marking is done but some pupils do not do corrections</p>

Overall Comments/ Suggestions

The student is doing fairly well but should improve on subject mastery

Evaluations should focus on the teacher`s own strengths and weaknesses. Lesson objectives to be fewer and relevant. In actual teaching please guide pupils to arrive at correct material

The records to follow department format

Lesson methods to be clear and detailed.

Supervisor **Nh** Total Marks 57/100

Signature:.....

Designation: Lecturer ~~School, University, Provincial Office~~ (delete inapplicable)



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Appendix 12.2

Sample of lecturer critique on student teacher Ar

Great Zimbabwe University
Robert Mugabe School of education

Department of Teacher Development

Teaching Practice Supervision: program.....

B Ed Secondary.....

Name of Student. - Ar

Registration Number.....

School.....GC.....

District. Gweru.....Form-1D.....

Subject...English.....

Date..16/3/16.....Time 9.00.....

Topic :Verb .forms.....

Supervision Areas and Skills	Marks	Comments
A. DOCUMENTATION (35)		
TP File	4/5	The file is neat and contents is well arranged.
(i) Presentation, arrangement and neatness		The scheme of work is complete. The broad aims are clearly stated. The topics are logically arranged.
(ii) Schemes	7/10	Evaluation should be summative trying to cover a wide range of the work covered. The lesson plans are up to date.
-broad aims,		Most of the objectives are clearly stated and they are attainable.
-logical arrangement of topics		
-summative evaluation		
(iii) Lesson Plans	8/10	The teacher varied the methods and tried to involve the students though only a few were actively participating. Improve on evaluation.
-clarity of objectives and Methods		Most of the record books are kept though they need to be completed with relevant information e.g register, remedial record co-curricular.
-Relevance of media		Provide and keep a resource file to aid you and your students learning.
-evaluation		
(iv) Records	6/10	
Usefulness of content in Test Record Book,		
-progress, remedial,		
Extension, Co-curricular		

Resource File -Teaching notes -Newspaper cuttings -any other information which Can facilitate teaching		
Sketchy B. LEARNING ATMOSPHERE (5) (i) Organisation of physical environment (ii) Creation of a positive emotional environment	4/5	Fairly organised physical environment.
C. TEACHING PROCEDURES (50) (i) Effectiveness of introduction	2/5	The introduction was not effectively delivered.
(ii) Lesson development -clarity of explanations and Demonstrations -questioning technique and Management of learner responses	14/20	The lesson proceeded well with clear explanations. Teacher should ask pupils to help those who would have not pronounced words well and if they all fail, the teacher should do it.
Effective use of educational Technology and other media (chalkboard included) -content mastery and confidence in delivery -pupil involvement and interaction	7/10	The teacher used the chalk board and work cards effectively. The teacher is confident and tried to involve all the students.
-command of language and voice Projection -teaching strategies and variations -supervision of students	3/5	The teacher has to improve as his language as he mixes tenses. Teacher should supervise students when they read.
(iii) Class management -discipline		The class seemed to be disciplined. Though some were not alert when the reader was reading. The

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -lesson pacing -motivating students -alertness of learners -attention to individual differences -attire, attitude and personality <p>(iv) Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlighting of the main elements of the lesson - Realisation of lesson objectives 	4/5	<p>teacher was appropriately dressed. The teacher highlighted the main elements of the lesson.</p>
<p>D. Books and marking (10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Physical condition of books (neatness, covering, labelling) -Adequacy and quality of written work -Meaningfulness of comments -corrections -marking (up to date and thorough) 	7/10	<p>Most of the books are neatly covered though a few need attention. There is adequate work. Some comments are meaningful but need a follow up.</p>

Overall Comments/ Suggestions

Promising to be a good teacher. You are encouraged to vary your objectives. Use all your record books eg the class is weak, therefore the remedial work record should be used.

Supervisor Total Marks 59/100

Signature:.....

Designation: Lecturer ~~School, University, Provincial Office~~ (delete inapplicable)

Appendix 12.3

Sample of lecturer critique on student teacher Be

Great Zimbabwe University
Robert Mugabe School of education

Department of Teacher Development

Teaching Practice Supervision: program... Bed Secondary.....

Name of Student-- Be Registration Number.....

School.....GN..... District. Gweru.....Form 2D.....

Subject...English..... Date. 21/09/16.....Time...11AM...

Topic: Comprehension.....

Supervision Areas and Skills	Marks	Comments
A. DOCUMENTATION (35)		Neatly arranged file.
TP File	3/5	Clear aims
(i) Presentation, arrangement and neatness		Topics well arranged. Fair summative evaluation
(ii) Schemes	6/10	Need for improvement on lesson objectives to reflect comprehensive skills.
-broad aims,		Assumed knowledge not to be about what is being taught for the day.
-logical arrangement of topics		
-summative evaluation		
(iii) Lesson Plans	6/10	Lesson evaluation to focus on what transpired in lesson, not issues of absenteeism.
-clarity of objectives and Methods		Test record to be evaluated
-Relevance of media		Satisfactory test record
-evaluation		Some remedial extension work.
(iv) Records	6/10	
Usefulness of content in Test Record Book,		
-progress, remedial,		

<p>Extension, Co-curricular Resource File -Teaching notes -Newspaper cuttings -any other information which Can facilitate teaching</p>		
<p>Sketchy B. LEARNING ATMOSPHERE (5) (i) Organisation of physical environment (ii) Creation of a positive emotional environment</p>	3/5	<p>Lesson notes to be updated to show 2nd term work. Resources section almost empty</p>
<p>C. TEACHING PROCEDURES (50) (i) Effectiveness of introduction</p>	3/5	<p>Some useful resource material but more to be sourced and should have instructions for use to pupils.</p>
<p>(ii) Lesson development -clarity of explanations and Demonstrations -questioning technique and Management of learner responses</p>	8/20	<p>Conducive environment. A recap of story was made. While it was good to let a pupil take centre stage, I strongly object to the method of making a pupil teach others throughout the lesson.</p>
<p>Effective use of educational Technology and other media (chalkboard included) -content mastery and confidence in delivery -pupil involvement and interaction</p>	4/10	<p>I could not see the student teachers` skills of explanation etc. The teacher`s abdication of her responsibilities was not the way forward.</p>
<p>-command of language and voice Projection -teaching strategies and variations</p>	2/5	<p>The teacher did not teach but made a pupil do her responsibilities.</p>

-supervision of students		
(iii) Class management -discipline -lesson pacing -motivating students -alertness of learners -attention to individual differences -attire, attitude and personality	3/5 2/5	A disciplined but unmotivated class. If some learning occurred, it was not due to teacher`s efforts.
(iv) Conclusion - Highlighting of the main elements of the lesson - Realisation of lesson objectives		
D. Books and marking (10) -Physical condition of books (neatness, covering, labelling) -Adequacy and quality of written work -Meaningfulness of comments -corrections -marking (up to date and thorough)	6/10	Books well labelled and generally neat. Enough written work given but no comment made. Marking satisfactory but some corrections not marked.

Overall Comments/ Suggestions

The student teacher should try to improve on her work.

All documents to be in file.

Resources need attention but should seriously revisit objectives especially for comprehension. Assumed knowledge should not focus on what is being taught. The teacher should teach the lesson to demonstrate her skills, not to make a pupil the teacher.

Supervisor **L- Ze**

Total Marks

50/100

370

Designation: Lecturer ~~School, University, Provincial Office~~ (delete inapplicable)



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<p>Extension, Co-curricular Resource File -Teaching notes -Newspaper cuttings -any other information which Can facilitate teaching</p>		
<p>Sketchy B. LEARNING ATMOSPHERE (5) (i) Organisation of physical environment (ii) Creation of a positive emotional environment</p>	/5	<p>Need to organise the physical environment The learning atmosphere seemed very tense.</p>
<p>C. TEACHING PROCEDURES (50) (i) Effectiveness of introduction</p>	/5	<p>There is need for a short motivating introduction. Doing corrections for the previous lesson took too long.</p>
<p>(ii) Lesson development -clarity of explanations and Demonstrations -questioning technique and Management of learner responses</p>	/20	<p>The lesson was conducted fairly. There is need for giving clear explanations. The students were involved in constructing sentences using the given words.</p>
<p>Effective use of educational Technology and other media (chalkboard included) -content mastery and confidence in delivery -pupil involvement and interaction</p>	/10	<p>The teacher only used the chalkboard. There is need for relevant media. The teacher was confident and involved the pupils in group work.</p>
<p>-command of language and voice Projection -teaching strategies and variations</p>	/5	<p>There is need to improve on the use of English though the voice projection was good.</p>

Appendix 13

This is a summary of the guide used in lesson observations. The purpose of the guide was to provide me with constructive critical feedback aimed at establishing whether there were gaps in student teachers' ESL classroom practices. Based on Grossman's (1990) and Shulman's (1987) idea of the teacher knowledge framework as described in the Literature Review Chapter of this thesis, the observation guide tries to capture the main aspects of the lesson that normally happens during the instructional process. The aspects were deemed important because they are influenced by the teachers' knowledge base observation.

Name of Student teacher-----
Subject-----
Date-----
No of pupils-----

Form/Class Level-----
Topic/Content-----
Time-----

A) Physical Environment	Setting/Classroom	Comments/descriptions
Ambience: Room size/space in relation to number of students Sitting arrangement in relation to effectiveness of pedagogical practice-teacher or child centred? Furniture/other equipment in relation to suitability for children to work –write, share etc. Displays in relation to visibility, relevance, B) Teacher's content proficiency -Selection of;		

topic, content and objectives in relation to suitability and measurability	
- C) Lesson structure - introduction -development -conclusion	
D) Teacher's general pedagogical knowledge classroom management -sitting arrangement -maintaining order -time management setting up groups	
E)Teacher and pupils' linguistic proficiency - use of instructional language -use of questions and type of questions -pupils' use of language -use of language in groups -use of mother tongue -feedback techniques - learning and teaching media provided - general classroom communication	
F)Teacher's pedagogical content knowledge - teaching strategies -type of activities	



Appendix 14

Appendix 14.1 Sample of the notes taken during a lesson

Name of Student teacher.....Ca

Form 3C-----


Subject.....English

Topic/Content-----Oral Work

Date—08/10/16--

Time—9.30am-

No of pupils----44

	Comments/descriptions
<p>A) Physical Setting/Classroom Environment</p> 	<p>The room was big enough to make all pupils comfortable. Pupils were seated in rows leaving enough space between only two rows.</p> <p>Both teacher and pupils would move freely between the rows and they would write and share issues freely. No displays were noted in this classroom.</p> <p>Topic was suitable for the level of the pupils and objectives good and measurable.</p>
<p>C) Lesson structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introduction -development -conclusion 	<p>The lesson was based on the use of language structure-despite the fact that and in spite of” The lesson was divided into three usual phases and follows:</p> <p>Introduction was good and very relevant. Lesson development good and systematic.</p>
<p>D) Teacher’s general pedagogical knowledge</p> <p>classroom management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -sitting arrangement -maintaining order -time management 	<p>The class was well managed during the instructional process. Pupils maintained good order and were learning effectively. The pupils get into their respective groups each time they are required to. However, the teacher needs to manage her time well without concentrating on one issue for a long time.</p>

<p>setting up groups</p>	
<p>E)Teacher and pupils'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - linguistic proficiency - use of instructional language -use of questions and type of questions -pupils' use of language -use of language in groups -use of mother tongue -feedback techniques - learning and teaching media provided - general classroom communication 	<p>There was poor use of language between the teacher and the pupils and among pupils. Teacher`s questioning techniques were varied but not very clear. She needs to improve on the use of language. There was no use of notes language in this lesson. Work cards were used as media but they were not visible from a far. Group feedback was given but the teacher accepted some wrong answers eg “I went home despite the fact that I wanted to go home. Generally, classroom discourse was ok. Although pupils made so many error that went unnoticed by the teacher eg “despite not reading intensively I still failed the test.”</p>
<p>F)Teacher’s pedagogical content knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teaching strategies -type of activities -links and transitions within activities -pair and group work Questions and questioning practices -problems solving techniques used -type of media used 	<p>There were varied teaching strategies ranging from the questioning strategy, discussion and group work. Activities varied from class to group and this made teacher and pupil well occupied throughout the lessons. Some questions asked were sometimes lower than the expected level</p>
<p>G)Teacher’s knowledge of the learning situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --teacher pupil interaction --pupil-pupil interaction --teacher pupil rapport -supervision and monitoring of student learning -creation of knowledge by the learner 	<p>Interaction on the part of the teacher and the pupils was good. Pupil and pupil interaction was observed through group work. Supervision and monitoring of student was also done during group work.</p>

<p>H) Integration of language skills.</p> <p>Receptive skills- reading Listening</p> <p>Productive skill- writing speaking</p>	<p>The language skills were well integrated. In this case there was a lot of speaking and listening on the part of the pupils although they uttered some ungrammatical sentences.</p>
<p>I).Teacher sensitivity to:</p> <p>-Pupil individual differences</p> <p>-Socio-cultural background</p>	<p>It was not clear in this lesson whether there was need to pay individual differences.</p>



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Appendix 14.2 Sample of the notes taken during a lesson

Program..... B Ed Secondary.
 Name of Student teacher----Be Form 1A-----
 Subject-----English Topic/Content-----Summary
 Date-----11/05/16 Time-----8.00am
 No of pupils-----40

	Comments/descriptions
A) Physical Setting/Classroom Environment	The room size is okay for the class. There was enough space for both teacher and pupils to move freely during and after the instructional process. Furniture was also enough for the pupils. There were no displays in the classroom except one HIV/AIDS chart on the wall. It was not clear whether the teacher was proficient in her content as she sometimes asked vague questions eg Do you think this passage is good?
C) Lesson structure - introduction -development -conclusion	The lesson consisted of the usual three phase structure. Teacher introduced the lesson by a recap of the previous in English. Later the lesson was developed first by asking general questions eg how we summarise a passage. How do we know which points to take etc. lesson in The introduction was relevant but not stimulating. The teacher dominated the lesson by talking about how to summary a
D) Teacher’s general pedagogical knowledge classroom management -sitting arrangement -maintaining order -time management setting up groups	The sitting arrangement is okay because pupils are seated in neat rows leaving enough space between the rows. The class sometimes became a bit rowdy especially during group work.

<p>E)Teacher and pupils'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - linguistic proficiency - use of instructional language -use of questions and type of questions -pupils' use of language -use of language in groups -use of mother tongue -feedback techniques - learning and teaching media provided - general classroom communication 	<p>Use of language on the part of both the teacher and the pupils was generally alright but in most cases pupils could not explain issues fully since the language became a barrier.</p> <p>The questioning technique was mostly used and it looked like the teacher did not know other techniques.</p> <p>Group work was done where pupils read a passage and tried to summarise it.</p>
<p>F)Teacher's pedagogical content knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teaching strategies -type of activities -links and transitions within activities -pair and group work Questions and questioning practices -problems solving techniques used -type of media used 	<p>The teaching strategies used in this lesson was that of question and answer strategy. Pupils got into groups to write their own descriptive essays. Forms of media used were; the chalkboard and the work cards that were given to groups.</p>
<p>G)Teacher's knowledge of the learning situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --teacher pupil interaction --pupil-pupil interaction --teacher pupil rapport -supervision and monitoring of student learning -creation of knowledge by the learner 	<p>There was very minimal interaction between the teacher and the pupils since pupils were working in their respective groups. However, pupil-pupil interaction was encouraging since they could talk and discuss issues in their groups. The teacher maintained good relations with all her children.</p>


<p>H) Integration of language skills.</p> <p>Receptive skills- reading Listening</p> <p>Productive skill- writing speaking</p>	<p>There was no reading and in this lesson but at least there was some writing when pupils worked in their groups and when they made their report backs.</p>
<p>I).Teacher sensitivity to:</p> <p>-Pupil individual differences</p> <p>-Socio-cultural background</p>	<p>The teacher was sensitive to pupil individual differences by being very patient with slow learners.</p>



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Appendix 14.3 Lesson observation guide

Programme B.Ed. Secondary
 Name of Student teacher.....Ar Form 3
 Subject----- English Topic/Content---Composition—a
 radio is a better means of mass media than a newspaper. Discuss
 Date-----21/06/16 Time—11am
 No of pupils---42

	Comments/descriptions
A) Physical Setting/Classroom Environment 	<p>The classroom was spacious and all pupils fitted well. There Physical setting is alright. The room is the normal classroom which fit about 45 pupils. There is enough space for both teacher and pupils to move freely between the rows .The room is use friendly.</p> <p>There is adequate furniture for all pupils in the room is adequate for both the teacher and the pupil. The composition topic selected is thought provoking.</p>
C) Lesson structure - introduction -development -conclusion	<p>Teacher introduces the lesson by engaging pupils to talk about forms of mass media i.e. newspapers, TV,.face book etc.</p> <p>Lesson development-Teacher and pupils discuss the advantages of using a radio as a means of mass media and compare it to a newspapers. Pupils get into group and dis cuss the other form of mass media. Students raise the following issues: one does not need to be literate inorder to listen to the radio so its an advantage over a newspaper which requires the ability to read.</p>

<p>D) Teacher's general pedagogical knowledge classroom management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -sitting arrangement -maintaining order -time management <p>setting up groups</p>	<p>The pupils were well seated in rows and the teacher managed to maintain order by repeatedly asking pupils to be quiet. Time management was observed during teaching.</p> <p>Group work was done and pupils seemed to enjoy the lesson.</p>
<p>E)Teacher and pupils'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - linguistic proficiency - use of instructional language -use of questions and type of questions -pupils' use of language -use of language in groups -use of mother tongue -feedback techniques - learning and teaching media provided - general classroom communication 	<p>The teacher was confident and her use of language was good. However, the questioning techniques were a bit confusing because, the teacher repeated the questions and sometimes it was not clear what she wanted. Sometime some pupils grappled with using the language when responding to the teacher's questions. In some cases code switching was done.</p>
<p>F)Teacher's pedagogical content knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teaching strategies -type of activities -links and transitions within activities -pair and group work <p>Questions and questioning practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -problems solving techniques used -type of media used 	<p>Teaching strategies were not varied but the activities were different perhaps according to the level of performance of the groups. Links and transition within activities was very minimal. Questioning practices was okay but in some instances it was a bit vague eg which is clear a radio or a newspaper</p>
<p>G)Teacher's knowledge of the learning situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --teacher pupil interaction 	<p>Teacher pupil interaction was good. The teacher moved around to monitor pupils as they worked in groups. The pupils</p>

<p>--pupil-pupil interaction --teacher pupil rapport -supervision and monitoring of student learning -creation of knowledge by the learner</p>	<p>themselves interacted by discussing given questions in their own groups. New knowledge was created.</p>
<p>H) Integration of language skills.</p> <p>Receptive skills- reading Listening</p> <p>Productive skill- writing speaking</p>	<p>Integration of skills was utilised as there has been lot of talking And listening on the part of the pupils. Late pupils wrote the composition in their books.</p>
<p>D).Teacher sensitivity to:</p> <p>-Pupil individual differences</p> <p>-Socio-cultural background</p>	<p>The teacher was sensitive to pupil's individual differences.</p>



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Appendix 15

GZU scheme of work format

Week Ending	Topic/Content	Objectives	Source Of Matter (SOM)	Instructional Media	Method & Activities	Evaluation
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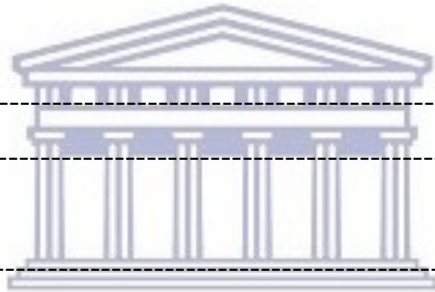


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Appendix 16

GZU's detailed lesson plan (DLP) format

Name of School -----	Form/Class Level -----
Subject -----	Topic/Content -----
-----	Date -----
No of pupils	Time -----
Objectives-----	
Source of matter-----	
Media-----	
Assumed knowledge:-----	
Introduction-----	
Lesson Development	
Step 1-----	
Step 2-----	
Step 3-----	
Step 4-----	
Conclusion.	



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Appendix 16.1

Lesson Transcript for St-Ca

School GC

Form 1

Date.....02/06/16

Topic: Language Structures

Content:

Apologies

Objectives: By the end of the lesson pupils should be able to:

- a) Identify incidents where they have or can make apologies
- b) Say why there is need to apologise.

Teacher: *Good morning everybody.*

Students- *Good morning madam*

Introduction

Teacher--*we all come from homes, we go to church and we go to different gatherings. Now, whenever there are people, so many things happen for example, you can bump into another person or you can step on another person and so forth. When we wrong somebody, what do we usually do in order to maintain good relations with people?*

Response: *Most of the learners put up their hands and one student is chosen to give the answer.*

Student: When we think we have wronged somebody we apologize

Teacher: *Yes, that is good. Any other answer?*

Student 2: *I simply keep quiet.*

Teacher: *Uhm, why do you keep quiet? Student teacher smiles and remains silent. Let's think of many ways of-people when we have wronged them.*

Student 3: I do not think we have other ways of making people happy besides apologies

Teacher: *Now, I want you to get into your groups and get these cards. Students, get into groups of five and discuss the questions on work cards.*

After 5 minutes the teacher asks pupils to go back to their respective places and ask group representatives to report back on their group answers.

Group A: Student representative first reads all the four questions and work cards as follows;

1. Can you think of incidents in the home where you had to apologize?
2. What big mistake in your life did you do that needed you to apologize?
3. At school, what do we apologize for?
4. Think of various situations in life that can make people apologize.

Student group representative reads their responses:

- a. When we break something like cups, dinner plates we apologize.
- b. When we are late for school, when we have made mistakes, when we have not done our work then we apologize.
- c. We apologize when we have said something untrue and then it gets discovered.
- d. When you have bumped into another person. When you used somebody's materials e.g. pen, ruler etc. without that person's permission and they get annoyed.

Teacher: *Those are good answers. Let us have another group.*

Group B representative stands and reads the same questions as the previous ones.

Responses are almost the same and after the fourth question the teacher collects all the work cards and thanks students for their responses.

Teacher: *Let us now look at what we have done in this lesson saying what we have gained.*

Students put up their hands and 3 students are asked to stand and give their views about the lesson.

1st student: *I learnt that when we make mistakes whenever we should apologize.*

2nd student: *I learnt that if you don't apologize to the people you have wronged them may be angry with you can get into trouble.*

3rd student: *I learnt that apologies can make people have good relationships.*

Teacher: *Thank you all for your good responses and I think I can say this is the end of our lesson. Let's clap hands for ourselves.*

Appendix 16.2

Lesson Transcript for St-Be

School GN

Form 1

Date 02/06/16

Topic: Comprehension

Content: Traditional musical instruments.

Objectives: By the end of the lesson children should be able to:

- a) Identify different musical instruments.
- b) Describe where and when the instruments can be used.
- c) Draw some of those instruments.

Introduction

Teacher: *Today we are very lucky to have a visitor from my University. She is my lecturer who has come to see me teach you while you learn.*

Lesson development

Teacher: *We are going to read a passage about traditional instruments but before we begin I want you to look at the chart I will put on the board.*

Teacher puts a chart on the board and different musical instruments are drawn.

There is silence when both the teacher and pupils look at the chart.

Teacher: *Now you have seen the pictures on the chart so I want you to look at the words on the board and tell me whether they correspond with what is on the chart.*

Students look at the list of words:

Marimba

Tambourine

Guitar

Flute

Ngoma

Chipendani

Gourd flute

Teacher: *Now I want you to match the words with the pictures on the chart.*

Few students put up their hands and two are selected to give responses.

Student 1 and 2 are both able to match 4 instruments with the words on the board.

Teacher: *Let's have someone who can do the remaining 3 musical instruments.*

There is dead silence because students do not seem to know both- the type of instrument and the name of the instrument.

Teacher: *It looks like you do not know so let me tell you. Teacher matches the words with the pictures on the chart.*

Teacher: *Let us now think of situations where we use these musical instruments. Who can tell me when we use any two of these instruments?*

Most students put up their hands and one is asked to provide the answer.

Student 1: *We use a guitar, tambourine and flute in church when we are praising and worshipping.*

Teacher: *Very good and lets clap hands for him. Children clap hands.*

Teacher: *Can we have someone else to us where and when we use other instruments.*

Students appear hesitant to say anything. It shows they do not know.

Teacher explains that “ngoma” can be used either in some churches, which allow the use of traditional drums or it could be used at family gatherings e.g. ancestral worship, weddings, funerals and so on.

Students nod their heads in approval to what has been said.

One student asks the teacher where and when “Chipendani” and “Gourd flute” can be used.

Teacher: *Uhm she mumbles and it looks like she does not know what to say.*

She then directs the pupil's attention to the passage in the reader and says: Can you take your Structures and Skills in English book 1 and open on page 112. Read the passage silently and take note of all words that are unfamiliar.

After five minutes pupils are stopped and teacher asks the following questions:

1. What is the passage about?

Students give chorus answer- about musical instruments.

2. What instruments are mentioned in the passage?

Answer: Students repeat the instruments on the chart.

3. In what incidences do we use these instruments?

Students: Again, they give chorus answers.

Teacher: Let us now conclude our lesson.

Students all appear to pay attention.

Teacher: What have you learnt in this lesson?

Students put up their hands and one student is picked to summarize the lesson and she says:

“I have learnt about different instruments that we can use in church or at social gatherings; I have also learnt that these can be made at home or can be bought from factories”.

Teacher. *Okay that is very good. Clap hands for her.*

Teacher. This brings us to the end of our lesson. *Siren rings and all children prepare to go for practicals.*



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Appendix 16.3

Lesson Transcript for St-Am

School GC

Form 1

Date 18/05/16

Topic- Composition: A sad Christmas.

Content: Descriptive composition

Objectives: By the end of the lesson pupils should be able to:

- a) Write a good descriptive composition on the given topic.
- b) Use signposting words to link sentences
- c) Use the correct vocabulary

Teacher: *Life is about good and bad and people do not always choose to be in a situation. Sometimes we are happy, sometimes we are sad. Today we want to write a composition about a sad Christmas.*

Teacher: *Can you tell me what can make an incident sad?*

Student: Most of them put up their hands and three are selected to give the answer.

Student 1: *We become sad when there is an accident that injured people.*

Student 2: *We become sad when we hear an event of death.*

Student 3: *We become sad when people start quarrelling and fighting.*

Teacher: *All those are good answers that I want you to use to write a composition. Now, let us think of a Christmas that we became sad because something undesirable happened.*

Student: They all remain silent and it looks like they cannot come up with a satisfactory answer.

Teacher: Can you not think of any situation?

Students: Very few put up their hands and one is selected to provide the answer. He said: "I can only remember one Christmas when my uncle was thoroughly beaten after saying some nasty things to some people."

Teacher: *Okay, thank you. Let us think of words that we can use to describe a sad incident.*

Students: Again, they remain silent because they cannot think of any word.

Teacher: She gets a bit emotional and says, “Have you not heard about any word that describes sadness?”

Students: Few put up their hands and two are chosen to provide answers.

Student 1. *I can think of three words: Sad, unhappy and umm? Not happy.*

Teacher: *You cannot give us the word “sad” when I have already talked about it. Again, you cannot give us “not happy” because it is one and the same word. Come on let’s think of other words.*

Students: They remain gravely silent to suggest that they were thinking deeply about it.

Teacher: Appears to get stuck because pupils are not forthcoming.

Teacher: Maybe you can do better in your groups so can you quickly get into your groups and give me at least ten words that can describe a sad incident.

Students: They quickly get in groups and most of them take out their dictionaries to find the words.

Teacher: I think I have given you enough time to get the answer, so we can we have report backs.

Student X: Can we give you these words in Shona because we do not have the English words?

Teacher: But, at least you must give us 7 English words and 3 Shona.

Student X: Our group could not find 10 but we have the following 5 words.

- Sad
- Sorrowful
- Unhappy
- Frowning
- Sulk

Teacher: At least you have tried so let us clap hands for them. It looks like you are failing to get the correct words to describe a sad Christmas, so I am giving you that as homework. Meanwhile you write the composition in your books. The siren goes, and the teacher tells pupils that the lesson has ended.

Appendix 16.4

Lesson Transcript for St-Ar

Programme.....B.Ed...Secondary

School.....GC

Form 3B

Date...

Topic: Language Work

Content: Appropriate Register (Talking about something you like or enjoy)

Objectives: At the end of the lesson pupils will be able to:

- a) Use appropriate register in their conversation with others
- b) Talk about what they like and enjoy.
- c) Conduct a dialogue on what they like

Teacher: *Good morning Form 3B.*

We are lucky to have a visitor from my University. She is my lecturer who has come to see us learn, Mrs Ngwaru welcome to 3B.

Teacher: *I want you to get in pairs and talk about anything you like.*

Student: They get in pairs but do not seem to understand what they should do.

Teacher: *Talk to your friend about anything.*

The students, who are in different pairs start talking to each other.

Teacher moves around to listen to what the pupils are saying. He appears to be noting the things that pupils say.

Teacher: *Right, you have been talking to your partner, so I want a volunteer group to come to the front and talk to each other while we listen.*

Students: No pair is willing to come, and they remain seated.

Teacher: *If you do not put up your hand I will just pick a pair.*

Students: One pair volunteers to come forward and they conduct their dialogue as follows:

Sarah (Pseudo name): *What do you enjoy about your teacher?*

Boniface (Pseudo name): Uhm, I have nothing to enjoy.

There is loud laughter from the class possibly because they think the pair is castigating the teacher. The pair in front also laughs.

Teacher: *Ok let us maintain order and the group that is in front thank you and go and take your seats.*

Teacher: *Can we have another group coming?*

No group is willing to come forward, as such, all pupils remain seated and quiet.

Teacher: *Anyway, let us talk about appropriate register (This is a bit vague and pupils remain silent).*

Teacher: *How do you ask for something from your parents?*

Students: Most of them put up their hands and two are selected to respond.

Student 1: *I simply go to them and politely tell them what I want.*

Teacher: *He used the word “politely” and this is a good word. Why do you think I say so?*

Students: Respond in chorus and say, “Because we are talking about register.”

Teacher: *By the way we still have one of the students standing up. What answer did you give us?*

Student 2: *I want to say that when you want something from parents you use kind words so that you get what you want.*

Teacher: *Okay, that is right.*

Conclusion

Teacher: *I want someone to come here and tell the class what we have learnt about.*

Student: Only 3 raise their hands and one is selected and comes to where the teacher is standing.

Teacher: *Tell us what you have learnt.*

Student: *About appropriate register.*

Teacher: *Say exactly what you learnt about it?*

Student: *Student has nothing to say and the teacher asks him to go back and sit down.*

Teacher: *Mrs Ngwaru thank you for being in our lesson.*

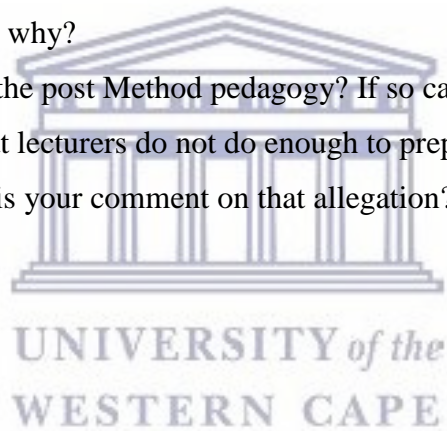
Appendix 17

Semi- structured interview questions for lecturers

This interview guide is part of my Doctoral study at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). Your honest views are sought on the theory-practice gaps in ESL classroom practices during TP. Your responses will be treated with extreme confidentiality in keeping with research ethics. Please answer the questions as fully as you can.

1. What do you understand as the reason for enrolling 'A' Level and not 'O' Level graduates into the B.Ed. secondary teacher development programme?
2. What difference could there be for ESL student teachers developed through the B.Ed. Secondary programme and those trained under the diploma secondary?
3. Do you think this difference could be based on any theoretical assumptions about the B.Ed. Curriculum content as opposed to the teacher development curriculum in the teachers colleges?
4. Literature about teacher education shows that there are gaps between what is taught at the university and what student experience in the classroom during TP. What is your comment about that?
5. Which aspects of ESL teacher development curriculum do you think help develop student teachers' knowledge base?
6. Are you very clear about exactly why our model of teacher preparation has a University-based theoretical component and the school-based practical? Please explain.
7. Using your knowledge and experience of TP supervision, do you consider these components as related and informing each other or as remaining separate entities? Please explain.
8. From your experience of teaching and supervising ESL student teachers on TP, do you believe that they receive appropriate and intended level of development to become desirable professional teachers?
9. What, in your opinion is the professional role of school-based mentors? (Interviewer will tease out to see if lecturers think this role is informed by any theories of learning such as Social Constructivism or Reflective Practice; if lecturers were found not to be aware, it could be pointing to an aspect of theory /practice gap at that level)

10. How, in your opinion, do you think the Department of Teacher Education complement the efforts of the school-based mentors?
11. From your experience of TP supervision, do you think lecturers and mentors have a shared understanding of the expected standard of ESL pedagogy? Please explain.
12. How relevant do you think the theories of language learning are in our situation?
13. In your opinion, how would the aspects listed in the TP supervision guide/ help the student teacher develop from novice to professional?
14. What do you think we can do to improve student teachers understanding of reflective practice?
15. What challenges do you think student teachers have in their instructional practices and why?
16. If you were given an opportunity to improve the B.Ed Secondary program, which aspect would you attend to and why?
17. Have you ever heard about the post Method pedagogy? If so can you please explain?
18. Students often complain that lecturers do not do enough to prepare them for the realities of the classroom. What is your comment on that allegation?



Appendix 18

Full interview transcription from *L-Ts*

1. The reason is that they have mastery of subject content at a higher level as compared to those at the diploma level. The post A-level will then feed back into the school system and come up with specialized expertise since they specialize in the subject area.

2. Now in Zimbabwe at Diploma level, if you are going to teach at secondary school level, you should have two A-levels. Previously they used to take O-level for secondary school teachers' course but since the introduction of the Diploma, A-level is now a required and the reason was about content mastery. Student teachers should be well grounded in terms of teaching-level will be below the required standard.

3. A-level gives them a lot of content. This is what makes them better than diploma teachers. It makes them able to teach well. One cannot teach what they do not know. Instead people should teach what they know and understand so that they can illustrate, demonstrate and exemplify fully for the benefit of the students. If they are found wanting in content mastery in their own area then they are just operating at the same level with those that they teach and it becomes problematic.

4. Ok, here we are offering Honours. So, as the content and the number of modules increase, the higher the qualification becomes. Students need to do the extra year because they are specialists. Also because we are narrowing the content gap. For the diploma, they take the model which they take because at one time there was need for more teachers on the ground and that could only be solved by adopting the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (ZINTEC) model. At the university we are more worried about content. If you look at our pedagogics module, you realize that we are found wanting as compared to diploma students who are well informed in terms of pedagogics because they spent a lot of time doing pedagogics. If it was possible we could also spent more time on pedagogics modules so that we focus on particular skills instead of crowding the modules in one semester. We should have what I can call a post TP pedagogics module so that we focus on the challenges that students encounter during TP.

5. There are so many things which can help to develop the knowledge base for example all the experiences that student teachers get at that university, their own experiences and so forth.

6. I am very clear why there should be a link between the two phases of teacher development (University based component and Teaching Practicum). The thing is, we need a balanced student teacher who has everything that makes them suitable for the profession- they should therefore have adequate theory, content, and expertise. We need to produce a total person who has the necessary skills to have a feel of what they are doing. When they come back from TP, we need to get appropriate and accurate feedback from them so that we know exactly we are missing the point.

7. The ideal thing is that theory and practice should inform each other, we need feedback when student teachers come back from TP but when we look at our modules, students do pedagogics once and for good. If it was possible we could have another pedagogics module after TP because we need feedback from them so that we concentrate on those areas where student teachers have challenges. In that area we are found wanting. We really need to do something just like we did with media. We started this program when we found students wanting. We recommended that through a workshop and we have since improved on that area.

8. You know what, we can have so many eggs in the basket and at times there can be some bad eggs. In that case we have a few who are not good enough and who go on TP quite a bit raw but the only way is to improve. That is, to revisit the pedagogics modules because this is a very significant module in teacher development programmes in general and ESL modules in particular. We could also introduce micro teaching at secondary school level.

9. If we take mentors objectively, then we realize they have the experience on the ground and they can use that experience to guide and assist our students. However, the fact that they have the experience is not a guarantee to good mentoring because in many cases we found that some of the mentors do not take their work seriously, others are lacking in both methodology and content especially those who entered their training with o-level. Some mentors are intimidated to supervise student teachers with degrees when they themselves have a lower qualification. As a result they don't assist them effectively. Some think that they are over loaded and having adequate time to assist student teachers is a night mare and it is an

extra load on top of an already overloaded person. In some cases again, student teachers are seen as relief teachers who are there to lessen the mentor's overload. In that case again mentors do not have time to assist students but to relieve themselves by shading their load to the student. To solve that problem I think mentoring workshops are needed to educate them on the importance of their work and significance of student teachers classroom practices.

10. What I have noticed is that many mentors do not do their work seriously as most of them are not motivated to work. That is why they even do not want to write reports on our student teachers because some do not see the purpose. If I were in a position to make decisions about this issue then my first port of call would be to motivate them by giving them a token of appreciation for their work then of course I will invite them for a workshop about our expectations so that they become well versed in this TP business. While we are convinced that they know what they are doing, let us also be mindful of the fact that some trained a long time ago and to expect them to have the knowledge that we expect I think its expecting too much from them.

11. I think we do but perhaps the level of operation is different. Some mentors are just young and inexperienced, others have trained a long way back so they need some upskilling. Mentors should be inducted every time to make sure that we read from the same page.

12. They are very relevant depending on the situation. Sometimes you realize that in some situations it is difficult as they do not always apply to our situation.

13. I cannot talk about all the aspects listed on that guide but I can only say it covers a lot of aspects which will help the student at least to get some rewards in some areas. If a student is weak in one area at least he or she can get something on a different aspect.

14. I think we need to give them assignments on reflective practice so that they will get to know a lot about it through researching. If just continue to say it by word of mouth they will also continue to ignore it yet it is very beneficial to their practice.

15. Sometimes student teachers appear not to do well not because they are incompetent. Rather, they have been stressed by a number of factors including financial constrains which they spend time brooding over.

16. Yes I think there is need to change our policy regarding student's final year when they come to finish the remaining modules. I think this year should be used to look at various challenges persistent during the practicum period so that we deal with them once and for all.

If we don't, they always remain unsolved and when a new group of student teachers go for TP, they would continue to face similar problems. Our feedback is not adequate.

17. I have come across it in the library and I need to find out more about it.

18. Yes students say whatever they feel like saying but in most cases they are to blame because they don't want to work hard and find out things about themselves, they think the lecturers should always tell them everything. Some of them are just lazy.



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Appendix 18.2

Full interview transcription from *L-Si*

1. A- level holders will have done two extra years of secondary education so they are better in terms of knowledge base. A-level in Zimbabwe looks at the subject in detail for example English literature or literature in English. Students learn to analyse issues or are expected to look at things critically so that they improve on problem-solving skills that will give them a distinct edge both in managing their work and in other positions within the school situation. Then, if that student gets trained as a teacher, I think he or she is at a level where he is more competent to teach at a level. At O-level, they have a thin knowledge base on the subject which they may be required to teach. I think you are also aware that in this country in the past, o-level holders were not allowed to teach a-level because they were deemed to be unfamiliar with what was going on there. Here we are training teachers who are supposed to operate competently right up to A-level so it makes sense to recruit someone who has gone through A-level.

2. Ah these diploma trained spent two or three years and within that period, they do professional courses, content courses and so forth and so on. Ours take four years in which they do so many courses such as content areas, courses in literature and professional courses. Modern trend requires teachers who spent more time on Teaching Practice so, the one year spent on TP, pushes them on the platform where they can master the desired skills. The diploma one have o-level and usually these are the students who will not have done *well at A- level*. The degreed teacher is likely to be more competent because they look at issues in depth. The diploma one will have gone as far as O-level and I think the knowledge expectation at this level is different from the knowledge expectations from a degreed teacher. A degreed teacher is expected to be more versatile, be able to read extensively, should be creative, innovative and should be able to work on their own.

3. I don't think there is any theoretical base but rather the difference is attributed to the knowledge base between the two. The diploma trained teachers go for O-level and may not be comfortable to operate at A-level.

4. Yah the gaps between the two exist but at times, it is to do with people who are lazy. What I have established is that student teachers are not willing to try out what they have learnt at the university so I think basically the problem is with them. If student have done Vygotsky and Piaget's theories, then they should try to implement what they have learnt. In some cases, however, some schools are not well resourced to enable student teachers to get what they want in order to try out things. Student should be rigorously involved in micro and peer teaching where they familiarize themselves with real classroom experience. Lesson talk about it does not help if the lecturer never emphasize about the classroom implication about the theory. Student teachers' knowledge has a lot to do with lecturers.

5. ESL modules - In terms of subject content I think grammar , linguistics and language teaching module and literature modules all help to cater for the linguistic needs of the student teachers. Some universities offer ESL as a course where student teachers would have to deal with certain components which cater for their linguistic requirements.

6. I think I am very clear because in the first place we give our student teachers a lot of theoretical knowledge in respect of content knowledge, professional knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and other related knowledges to equip them with the skills that will finally help them to handle classroom pedagogy. In the school based TP component, we are moving away from the theoretical component to the practical which then enables our students to put into practice what they have learnt at university. The school based experience then enables the student teacher to put the theoretical knowledge into practice. The school is a better place because that is where student teachers get the opportunity to execute their skills so the two phases complement each other. You cannot have a theory and leave it at that. The theory has to be implemented.

7. The two components complement each other. Normally, what should happen is that our student should be well acquainted with what happens in schools through Micro teaching so that when they go there they don't get shocked with what they find.

8. Yah I think we do but in some respect we do not – we do because our subjects cater for subject content and pedagogical content but I am not sure whether our peer teaching offers student teachers a real opportunity to learn how to teach. For diploma colleges, student teachers are well prepared in terms of the opportunities given to them to practice and in that respect, some colleges have a slight urge over us because their students get the opportunity

to practice especially through peer and micro teaching, issues which are taken seriously by the student themselves. This is unlike how it is down at universities. Further, the student teachers at colleges are taken into various schools where they practice how to teach in real classroom situations, they are assessed and given marks before they go for TP and I think that is very important in the professional life of an upcoming teacher as it compels student teachers to take their work seriously. They have sufficient practice.

9. The role of the mentor is to guide the student teachers for content delivery. They are experienced teachers who operate well above student teachers level. They have to check whether student teachers understand what they do. Normally we send out the handouts which spell out the duties of the mentor so that they can help student teachers to implement what they have to. *Probe: Do think they do what they are expected to do?* They don't all do but because some of them do, the majority do not take it seriously and the reason is that some are not willing to assist the graduate student teacher especially when they (mentor) have diploma qualification, some are not confident, others feel that lecturers do not recognize them because at times lecturers behave in a manner that frustrate mentors thus making them harbor the belief that lecturers are not interested in what they. For those and other reasons, mentors also ignore student teachers. However, when mentors are roped in especially during the post lesson conference, you normally find that they are very keen to help the mentee and can also make useful and meaningful comments. Some mentors see student – supervision as a bother or as an extra job. Others want to be paid and yet others lack the confidence to supervise students. What the department can do is to hold some workshops where we discuss matters pertaining to TP for example talking about our expectations, what they think they can do and what they want in order to assist student teachers effectively. We can even invite presenters to say something on TP issues and on what mentors see as their perceive roles. That way they feel that they are part and parcel of the whole exercise.

10. We have always suggested that there should be some workshops to have some kind of standardization so that the three groups of stake holders who meet during TP should know what to expect from the other but it looks like all is in vain.

11. We do have a shared experience in as far as classroom practice is concerned. However, there may be problems regarding the level of knowledge base between the two groups of people. While both groups know what is expected, the levels at which they operate is

problematic because some mentors' diploma qualification may be too low to match the lecturer's level of operation hence the gaps. *Probe: On asked what should be done the lecturer had this to say-* workshops may save as a standardizing phenomenon between the two to avoid the extremes of what might emerge.

12. They are very relevant because they guide us on what direction to take when teaching or planning.

13. The whole TP guide is very good but the problem we have with both mentors and lecturers is that they write comments only on those aspects on the guide and I really wonder whether what they write is what they will have seen. To improve our assessment then we must all agree on how we use the guide to point the strength and weaknesses of the student.

14. We should always be talking about it about giving examples so that student teachers get well acquainted with it. We can also make use of micro teaching to talk about it especially on evaluation.

15. They often complain that they find it very difficult to live on their own without their parents nearby, they have lot of financial constraints which do not make them happy and in some cases they don't operate at their full potential. *Probe: how does that affect the way they teach?* The whole issue is that if one is not happy then they don't concentrate on whatever they do so even their teaching is affected.

16. I would normally look at both components of the teacher preparation to see weak areas. At the moment we need improvement because student are not doing as expected. Mentors too do not have the motivation to work because it does not really help them since they are not rewarded. They need a token of appreciation from the university.

17. I know nothing about it but I would want to find out more on it.

18. The problem with our students is that they compare themselves with diploma student teachers who they think fare much better than they forgetting that they are very different in terms of both qualification and exposure. B.Ed. pre-service teachers have A-level and I think those extra two years at high school should equip them with analytical skills to see things differently and to transfer those skills to any practical situation.

Appendix 18.3

Full interview transcription from *L-Nd*

1. I think there are two major reasons why we enroll A-level students –one is that of maturity and that of subject content. With regard to content, student teachers have to be competent in their subject area so that they become specialists in their own area and in the pedagogical area. The other reason is that O-levels have hardly done much of what they are supposed to have done. In their training, they are sort of drilled and really do not know what they should really know. Degreed student teachers have more exposure and can teach at very high levels whereas diplomas have a lot of constraints regarding their content knowledge. Student teachers on the diploma spent more on the method. It is the way they are trained than having knowledge about what has to be done.

2. They are different in the sense that those developed through the diploma are well informed in pedagogical knowledge since they spent a long time on TP gaining a lot of hands on experience while our own have more subject content and have a broader view of issues gained in the first two years of university tuition. However, they are lacking in pedagogical content knowledge because we give them little time on that issue.

3. I always believe that whatever we do is guided by certain philosophies so in that regard I think it is based on some theory that I may not be aware of at the moment.

4. Yes there is a gap due to the way we train our teachers. We develop them in ideal situations which do not exist in the rural areas where the majority of student teachers will be deployed. Student teachers should be trained to cope with the various teaching environments they find themselves in. We of course must be mindful of the fact that they are going to meet challenges so we should prepare them to teach in those areas and if we do it that way may be the gaps will be minimized. They must be reflective enough to see their problems so that they can rectify them.

5. That is a very difficult question to answer since there is nothing specific to point at. However, every situation that people find themselves in is an opportunity to learn so for student teachers, they must improve on everything, be it in class or in the library or even at the hostels.

6. I am very clear that this program should have two components the theoretical and the practical. The former in is meant to give student teachers sound grounding which they would then use to translate into practice during TP. They can't just start off by teaching when they do not have the philosophy behind the whole thing. The TP component should the give them the opportunity to practice what they have learnt at university.

7. Theory and TP should inform each other. We give them theory which they are going to relate into practice when they go on TP. When they come back they try to consolidate what they have learnt. However, student teachers sometimes find it difficult to link the two because they see the two components as two different things.

8. I think we do but there is a challenge. At teachers colleges they enroll student teachers who are competent and they prove that through interviewing the prospective student teachers. Student teachers at colleges are also more competent than our own because sometimes they also have A-level and they are required to have a minimum of 5 O-levels including English language and mathematics and that alone is an advantage.

9. School based mentors are very important because they have the skills to train student teachers to acquire the necessary competences to be effective professionals. However, there are challenges in mentoring because—even if mentors are effective classroom practitioners, which may not be a guarantee to being effective mentors. Instead, mentors need mentoring training in order to be aware of what they need to do. University lecturers should move from one place to another holding meetings or workshops with mentors to educate them on what is expected of them. If we do not do that then we should not assume that they know. Some of those mentors have also just completed their teacher education courses and may not be well versed with the idea of mentoring.

10. It's unfortunate that the handout we give our student teachers for them to give to their school heads and mentors never reach the intended destination. This handout is meant to educate these stake holders on what the university expects of them. However, we have noted over the years that student teachers do not give out the handout to the intended recipients because they want to keep heads and mentors unaware of what is expected. It is difficult to ensure that all mentors and school heads get the handout if we don't deploy students. Student teachers find for themselves places to teach in their homes areas so they are scattered all over the country. We do not know where exactly they will be teaching until such time when they

can inform so we cannot send the handout. In the past we used to deploy student teachers in one or two provinces and that helped a great deal in communicating our intentions because it was possible to know where each student teacher was going to teach and hence handouts would be easily sent. That situation of course makes them safe from being scrutinized.

Probe- now that you know about it, what have you done to ensure the schools receive the hand out? We now insist through workshops with student teachers that school heads and mentors receive the handout on time but we still have challenges. That is what makes the difference between us and the teachers colleges who hold mentor training workshops which we don't do here at GZU. Mentors who are trained are better placed to assist student teachers. We used to do it in the past when we had fewer students than we have now. The university now finds it very difficult to have workshops in some areas due to inaccessibility of the roads.

11. I think we have a shared understanding in as far as classroom practice is concerned. But, the level of qualification between us (lecturers and mentors) may sometimes create problems in the sense that we do not see all pedagogical issues from the same perspective and as a result there may be some conflicting ideas. As you know and as required by ZIMCHE, lecturers read extensively through research. They also publish their articles and this way they keep abreast of current trends in teacher preparation leading to them having wide and broad base about teacher education issues. The same is not the case with mentors some of whom were trained a long while ago. Such mentors won't be well versed with the ever changing dynamics of teacher preparation. Because of those differences, we are likely to have problems. While both stakeholders know what is expected, the knowledge gap may cause because as some mentors' diploma qualification may not match the lecturer's level of operation hence the gaps. We need workshops may serve as a standardized phenomenon and in-service upskilling between the two to avoid the extremes of what might emerge.

12. They are very relevant as they give us the direction to take when we are doing our teaching business. However, our major problem is that if you just dish out information to student teachers without emphasizing how important and relevant theories are to our understanding of issues then we have serious problems. Our student teachers now are very different from those of the past years. They want to be spoon fed with every information

instead of finding out it for themselves. Sometimes it is also important that we give them assignments on these theories so that they research and get to understand fully.

13. When we devised that supervision form, we had made a lot of consultations with other lecturers from sister universities. We then agreed that having all the aspects we have on it will help us not to be blinkered and focused on one thing but on all aspects of the lesson and the student teacher. So in short I can just say that all those aspects are relevant as they are.

14. Reflection is an issue that has taken centre stage in educational arena and in order for students to take it seriously, we have to include it in one of the modules so that it is studied and applied by them all otherwise we will just be paying lip service and it won't work.

15. They have quite a number of challenges that need to be addressed, the biggest challenge is the language barrier, the negative attitude of some mentors and lectures who do not do what they are expected to do. *Probe-Can you elaborate further the issue of language proficiency?*

The importance of high proficiency levels in the language of instruction cannot be over emphasized. First and foremost, it enhances the educational attainment through improved communication ability. When Students' proficiency in English Language is high, it will definitely influence and improve the academic performance of such students. Where proficiency in the target language is lacking in any academic setting, it will definitely lower the academic performance of such students. Lack of proficiency in English language is one of the factors contributing to poor performance in English in our country and it creates big gaps in student career opportunities. *What about mentors and lectures?*

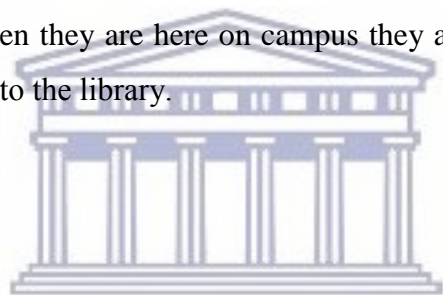
Some lecturers take advantage of the large numbers of students on TP. They are always in a hurry to the next school even if sometimes they will not see those students. I think the university must do something about it.

16. If you were given an opportunity to improve the B.Ed Secondary program, which aspect would you attend to and why? That is an interesting question. First, I will make sure that there is extensive micro and peer teaching for students before they go on TP. This will help them appreciate how easy or difficult it is to stand before a class. When they know what it means then perhaps they will understand our repeated calls to them to be well prepared. Next, I will make sure that reflective practice is taught seriously as part of the pedagogic studies in ESL to ensure sound understanding of its importance and presumably that may improve their

teaching. I will also make sure that workshops are held every time for all concerned parties so that we share the challenges and opportunities. That way I think even the department of Teacher development will be able to review its teacher development curriculum by incorporating into the pedagogic modules, those areas of need. I will also make sure that supervision of student is thorough because that is how student can benefit. As it is now, our supervision is very minimal due to large numbers of student teachers on TP .This year alone we have close to two thousand both primary and secondary spread all over the country and if we consider lecturer - student ratio then you notice the number of lecturers we have are far below the desired number explaining why our supervision is not adequate.

17. Yes I have read widely about it but since it sounds very uncommon in this region. I have never deeply been ingrained into it but it makes a lot of sense.

18. That is what they always say when things become difficult for them so we didn't worry much about what they say. When they are here on campus they always loiter round doing nothing and they even don't go to the library.



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Appendix 19

Semi structured interviews questions for student teachers

This interview guide is part of my Doctoral study at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). Your honest views are sought on the theory-practice gaps in ESL classroom practices during TP. Your responses will be treated with extreme confidentiality in keeping with the research ethics. Please answer the questions as fully as you can.

1. In your view (with reasons) what role do you think TP plays?
2. Do you think you were adequately prepared you to meet the classroom challenges? Give specific examples.
3. What do you see as the extent of the link between ESL in schools and pedagogical theoretical knowledge from the university and the classroom situations?
4. What challenges/ opportunities did you find Student teachers to reflect on shared experienced challenges and how they individually or together in their schools thought they could tackle the challenges?
5. What do you think the Department of Teacher Development (alone or together with the Practicum schools) could do to counteract the challenges?
6. As objectively as possible and with reasons and examples, who between lecturers and mentors do you think offered more helpful support? Give reasons to support your answer.
7. Despite all the challenges, you probably could still share some of the effective pedagogies you practiced that could become the basis of best practices going forward. Would you say something about it?
8. Do you think there is a shared understanding of expected standard of pedagogy between mentors and lecturers? Give reasons to support your answer.
9. What views do you have about the traditional methods or approaches of teaching ESL?
10. Have you ever heard of the Post Method Pedagogy? If so, can you explain what is it and its classroom implication?
- 11) What recommendations would you make regarding the needs of ESL pre-service teachers?
12. What do you think should be done to align the ESL teacher development curriculum with the secondary school ESL curriculum for better effectiveness?

13. Did you mentor allow you to apply they theoretical knowledge you learnt from the university please explain?

14. Lecturers often talk about reflective practice- how did you use your teacher knowledge base to reflect upon your teaching?



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Appendix 20

Semi structured interview guide for mentors

This interview guide is part of my Doctoral study at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). Your honest views are sought on the theory-practice gaps in ESL classroom practices during TP. Your responses will be treated with extreme confidentiality in keeping with the research ethics. Please answer the questions as fully as you can.

1. What qualifications do you hold?
2. For how long have you been teaching?
3. Do you feel comfortable assessing the ESL student teachers? Please explain.
4. What do you think the department can do to improve the TP situation?
5. What aspects of the ESL curricula do you think the student teacher should master?
6. Literature about teacher preparation and development has repeatedly confirmed that there is a mismatch between the knowledge that student teachers receive at the university/college and the knowledge required to handle classroom pedagogy. What do you think could be the reason?
7. In your opinion, what teacher knowledge should student teachers possess to teach effectively?
8. What weaknesses/challenges do you think there are in the way supervision is conducted.
9. From your classroom supervision experiences what ESL courses do you think should be integrated to ESL programs to enhance quality teaching?
10. From your experience of working with student teachers, do you think they are adequately prepared to handle classroom pedagogy?
11. As an experienced mentor teacher, what kind of support do you require for effective supervision of student teachers?
12. What recommendations or suggestions can you make to the department of teacher development to improve the teacher development process?
13. In many cases student teachers on TP are reported to be incompetent in translating theory into practice. What is your comment about that?
14. In your opinion as an experienced teacher mentor, do you think, there is consistency between how pre-service teachers are developed and what practicing schools expect

15. Have you ever heard about; Post method pedagogy, or reflective practice? If yes please explain.



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Appendix 21

Full interview transcription from *M-Ne*

1. BA

2. 22 years

3. Of course I do but sometimes you feel you do not want to be bothered by people who do not appreciate what you do. *Probe: Can you elaborate further?*

Sometimes you feel you are not part and parcel of the whole exercise because there is no appreciation even by word of mouth.

4. It is not easy for them since they have to grapple with many issues at the same time for example, they need to have the confidence, the need to have the content to teach and even the correct method to use. The content they have from college is too abstract.

5. I think they should master the art of presenting content in an effective manner, should know about classroom management and other allied aspects.

6. There are so many factors that contribute to that. What student teachers get from the university does not necessarily guarantee their success in the classroom. They need a lot of knowledge and practical experience.

7. I am not sure what you mean by teacher knowledge but effectiveness can be achieved if the teacher knows her content and appropriate strategies to put across the content to the learners. Of course there will be other things that come into play.

8. Sometimes we think lecturers unfairly treat student teachers regarding their work. When we try to intervene by at least trying to explain to the lecturer why the student did one two and three things, we quickly notice that the lecturer is not amused and perhaps that is why we are said to be protecting the student teachers even when they are wrong.

9. I am not aware of the other courses that student teachers do but I am sure that they do a pedagogics studies module. If they do I think that this is where lectures must emphasize on those aspects of the classroom that student teachers find difficult to handle especially syllabus interpretation.

10. I don't know but I am tempted to believe that diploma student are better prepared than graduate student. I say so because for the many years that I have taught, I enjoyed working with diploma student teachers for they are humble and cooperative.

11. I would require cooperation from both lectures and student teachers because sometimes it is very difficult to work with people who do not cooperate. If lectures could also spare their time to discuss issue of concern. Probe; would you like to elaborate on things that you say are issues of concern. Yes I will point out that when lecturers come, the three of us must come together to discuss how we can help the student. The institution should give them some materials like dictionaries because sometimes they get stranded with difficult words.

12. I would recommend that student be given some TP allowances as they sometimes have some financial problems that they visit schools to have an adequate acquaintance with what goes on in the schools so that when TP time comes, they will be well attuned to the situation.

13. Using my experience both as once a trainee teacher and now a qualified teacher, I think it is difficult if not impossible for student teachers to link theoretical knowledge to practical realities because at those early stages student teachers do not see the relation because everything seems abstract and obscure. In that case then we can understand student teachers' problems. They need time to practice before they see the connection between the two. In that case then it is difficult to talk of consistency.

14. I am not very sure about that one but I think there is no consistency because there are so many issues that need to be adequately addressed. Probe- do you want to elaborate further and say exactly what? Communication or coordination between the schools and the university is still a big challenge and that has negatively affected the way we together with student operate. Sometimes it is assumed that we know what to do when we expect to be advised on what to do with the student teachers.

15. I have never heard about the Post method but reflective practice is understanding one 'teaching in terms of its successes and failures' so if student teachers can see and evaluate themselves then they are reflecting.

Appendix 21.2

Full interview transcription from *M-Na*

1. Diploma

2. 17 years.

3. Of course I do but sometimes the work is just too much as we have our own load and apart from that, sometimes you get upset by the ill behaviour of students. Some student teachers team up against their mentors –saying all sorts of nasty things and when those mentors get wind of that, tiffs and squabbles begin and nothing good can be expected from such a situation.

4. Student teachers often complain that lecturers sometimes take so many things for granted. They think that student teachers get to the TP well prepared to handle the classroom forgetting that most of these are only young boys and girls from high school who have never had any experiences in temporary teaching. In that regard, to expect them to be able to effectively integrate theory into practice is being rather too zealous. If the department can ensure that student teacher concerns are shared then it might help.

5. I am not very sure what the university curriculum entails but what we know from our experience is that anything to do with classroom teaching is important. I think all teachers should have adequate content mastery in order to teach well.

6. I am not sure on that one.

7. I think student teachers need general knowledge about the classroom for example, the content that they are going to teach, the methods they are going to use and even the questions they are going to ask. However, the problem with most young student teachers is that they take so many things for granted wherein they think they can just ask any question when they get into the classroom. When they fail to get their anticipated response from the pupils, they get stuck and confused.

8. I think student teachers need a lot of feedback on what they are doing but this is inadequate given the number of times they are seen. On our part, we always try to provide feedback to

student teachers each time we observe their teaching. Feedback allows dialogue to take place and this is very helpful in improving their teaching.

9. I don't know the courses they do but I think literature can make them improve their language.

10. I do not think student teachers are well prepared. *Probe-can you say why you think so?* Student teachers often complain that lecturers sometimes take so many things for granted that student teachers get to the TP well prepared to handle the classroom forgetting that most of these are only young boys and girls from high school who have never had any experiences in temporary teaching. In that regard, to expect them to be able to effectively integrate theory into practice is being rather too zealous.

11. Sometimes it is difficult to work with student teachers who do not co-operate. It is a reality fact that where there is effective collaboration and mutual support between, people their work becomes easier and more enjoyable and beneficial to both parties. In that case then we will require student who cooperate.

12. If we as stakeholders get into the habit of sharing ideas for successful teaching, mentoring and supervision practices with one another, we will all have a wider base of knowledge to bring to the classroom. A variety of pedagogical approaches will be available since they we will put their heads together to come up with the best of whatever we will be discussing. The student teachers will all have resources to rely on when the need additional input or advice in effective teaching.

13. It cannot be easy for student teachers to link theory with practice because they are in experienced and need time to master the skills of teaching.

14. I don't think I will be in a position to comment on that but judging from what students do then I don't think there is any consistency. *Probe-So you think the preparation they get is not adequate?* I don't think student teachers are adequately trained because they appear to be very nervous and confused in front of the class. They do not know where and how to introduce the subject. Lecturers need to assist them on subject content.

15. I have never heard about the Post method but I Have heard about reflective practice.