



**Newly qualified teachers 'classroom practices as supported by  
initial teacher education**

**By**

**SENE VAN HEERDEN**

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**Supervisor: Professor Yusuf Sayed**

**Co-supervisor: Dr Zahraa McDonald**

**Mowbray campus**

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### **Declaration**

I, SENE VAN HEERDEN, declare that the contents of this thesis represent my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Abstract

The objective of initial teacher education is to prepare teachers to teach effectively in schools. The quality of schools of a country depends on the quality of teachers (Femin-nemser, 2001). Provision of good teachers is, thus, crucial for the quality of teaching in schools. This research seeks to explore newly qualified teachers experiences of learning to teach and how it supports their classroom practices. A mixed method study with an interpretivist emphasis was conducted with teachers, who were in their first year of teaching. Data generation ensued through questionnaires and discussions whereby only some aspects of these were used to complement the main data generation which was the focus groups.

Pedagogic Content Knowledge is a knowledge base that allows teachers to effectively pass their content knowledge on to students. Drawing on existing literature, a conceptual framework was developed. The study used the content analysis method where data was categorised according to the themes. The findings show that the Newly Qualified Teachers found their Initial Teacher Education to have had both positive and negative influences on their classroom practices. The heavy administrative duties, adapting to school contexts, relationships with people of influence like lecturers during Initial Teacher Education and mentor teachers, teaching practice (which had the most profound influence on their classroom practice) and the professional knowledge and skills as taught during Initial Teacher Education all played a part in supporting the classroom practices of Newly Qualified Teachers. The implications for policy makers, initial teacher education providers and mentor teachers therefore suggest some adjustment to the structure of Initial Teacher Education programs that would enable improving the development of Pedagogic Content Knowledge including enhanced involvement of schools in Initial Teacher Education to support classroom practice of Newly Qualified Teachers.

**Keywords:** Pre-service teacher, teacher education, newly qualified teacher, pedagogical content knowledge, classroom practices.

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## **Dedication**

To my beloved parents: Elijah van Heerden and Patricia Christine van Heerden who instilled in me the values of good education. I am eternally grateful for their unconditional support, guidance, inspiration and love through the years and during this journey.

## List of acronyms and abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CITE	Centre for International Teacher Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoE	Department of Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ISPFTEDSA	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
MRTEQ 2011	Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications 2011
MRTEQ 2015	Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications 2015
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NRF	National Research Foundation
NSE	Norms and Standards for Educators
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ST	Student Teacher
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SASA	South African's School Act of 1996
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

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## **CHAPTER 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction and background**

This study reports on the experiences of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) of their initial teacher education (ITE): in what ways do the experiences of learning to teach (in a Bachelor programme) support their classroom practice: “Worldwide, education systems and the general public desire and demand teachers to be able to teach an increasingly diverse student population and an evolving curriculum” (Kind, 2014; Rooft & Miller, 2013). The objective of initial teacher education is to prepare teachers to teach effectively in schools. Teaching encompasses more than conveying knowledge; it requires teachers to possess content knowledge and be able to re-construct forms of that knowledge in collaboration with learners. Most teachers undergo an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme in South Africa.

ITE prepares student teachers to qualify as teachers. Baxen and Botha (2016), observe that in South Africa ITE programmes in the past were built around “separatist frameworks”; where educational institutions trained student teachers based upon race and what schools they would end up teaching at. Although on paper, liberation in 1994 changed the whole system to a democratic form; in reality much of the thinking and lecturing perpetuated patterns of behaviourist, segregationist instruction.

A key challenge for ITE programmes is that teachers are often not equipped with the necessary content knowledge, or understanding of their subjects, to be able to fulfil their responsibilities meaningfully (Pryor et al., 2012). Pryor et al., (2012), argue that teaching practice should be about preparing student teachers for the classroom; to give them the appropriate skills or subject matter knowledge and experience in teaching in the classroom to enter the teaching profession. Developing these skills should be the main goals of all ITE programmes.

Teaching is centred on a unique knowledge set. Such a knowledge base for teaching is “a codified or codifiable aggregation of knowledge, skill, understanding, and technology, of ethics and disposition, of collective responsibility as well as a means for representing and communicating it” (Shulman, 1987: 7). Shulman’s notion

of PCK has grown and developed. In this project the consensus model of PCK (2015), is employed since it includes 'beliefs' which are central to how PCK develops and is utilised. NQTs need to know the 'what' of subject matter knowledge/content and curriculum knowledge, and once situated in particular teaching contexts, they need knowledge of those contexts and of their learners. They need the know-how of general pedagogical knowledge and PCK. They should be aware of teaching and professional identities in the contexts in which they teach and should be able to engage in self-reflection on their daily teaching. Part of the Consensus model of PCK (2015), helps to develop notions of teaching and identity. Teachers need to acquire a range of complex and multifaceted skills. Experiences of learning to teach would thus presumably encompass the acquisition of this unique knowledge set.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

The Centre for Development Enterprise (CDE, 2015:1) notes that "one of the greatest challenges facing the South African education system is the production of a sufficient number of qualified, competent teachers, who are able to provide quality teaching for all school subjects and phases". NQTs should be prepared for "classroom management, lesson planning, uplifting the motivation of learners, dealing with individual differences among learners, assessing learners' work, developing good relations with parents, and overcoming the disparity between their idealistic expectations and classroom realities" (CDE, 2015:1).

The CDE (2015), cautions that if the above challenges are not addressed "expanding teacher education provision will only reproduce more poor quality teachers with inadequate subject and pedagogical knowledge, and limited teaching experience, which leaves them ill-prepared for the challenges of classroom teaching". This study seeks to determine how the skills and knowledge that are/are not learnt during the ITE period influences classroom practices of NQTs. According to Hattie (2012), learning to teach is dynamic; because there are influences from students, curriculum, policy, leadership, school environments and NQTs' personal beliefs about teaching and learning. The working hypothesis of this study is that practices of newly qualified teachers are intimately linked to the kinds of preparation they receive during their

university training. If teachers reflect on their current practices, they reflect on the quality of preparation they previously received.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to understand which elements associated with an ITE programme support NQTs' classroom practice. In order to do so, NQTs were selected and asked to describe (i) aspects of their experience of learning to teach and (ii) the ways in which ITE supported classroom practice. In assuming that the skills required to teach are complex and dynamic, the model of teacher knowledge known as Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is drawn on to examine the experiences of learning to teach.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study is significant in that it is a comprehensive examination of experiences of NQTs classroom practices in light of their Initial Teacher Education from the perspective of NQTs. This study examines the personal, contextual and professional aspects of learning to teach. The related literature shows research that has been conducted on aspects of learning to teach. This study contributes to the research on learning to teach; by considering it from a perspective of NQTs themselves. The research has the potential to feed into and influence on-going deliberations regarding the review of ITE in South Africa. The variety of experiences emerging from this study inform teacher educators, school managers as well as departmental officials about the range of needs and types of skills and knowledge NQTs report, and how this does or does not support classroom practice. This study identifies how NQTs interpret their experiences of how Initial Teacher Education supports their classroom practice.

## 1.5 Research Question

The study comprises two phases. The first phase covers the NQTs experiences of their final year as students. The second phase concerns the views of the NQTs of their ITE in light of first year in the classroom.

The main **research question** is:

- **In what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor programme support Newly Qualified Teachers in their classroom practices?**

The following **sub research questions** guide the study:

1. What are the views of student teachers in terms of their learning experience in a Bachelor programme?
2. What are the views of NQTs on how their B.Ed. program supported their first year classroom experience?

## 1.6 Structure of Thesis

### Chapter 1

In this chapter the background problem is stated and the aim of the study is presented. This chapter provides a brief overview of the ITE programme, and sets out to discover whether the programme adequately prepares NQTs for classroom practice. The purpose of this study is set out as well as its significance in the broader field of research on teaching and learning.

### Chapter 2

This chapter provides the basis of this research, and a brief historical overview of the predicament of South African education and teacher training sectors existing during the apartheid and post-apartheid eras and how this impacts NQTs classroom practices.

### Chapter 3

The conceptual framework is presented which forms part of the literature review for this study and is divided into three sections. The first section reviews literature that pertains to Pedagogic content Knowledge (PCK) and the consensus model of 2015 as it the conceptual framework used in this research. The second section covers ITE and student teachers and newly qualified teachers, and the notion of learning to teach. The chapter concludes with a discussion on induction and mentoring of NQTS in the school environment, and how this impacts their classroom practices.

### Chapter 4

In this chapter the research design for this study is defined as a qualitative study. The research methods and procedure used to collect the data are explained, together with the rationale for their use. The data collection instruments are detailed, including the questionnaire and focus group interviews.

### Chapter 5

In this chapter the findings are reported upon and written up according to the two interrelated research questions that guide this study. Analysis and discussion of the findings are included here. Themes emerge from this discussion.

### Chapter 6

The conclusion provides a summary of the research, recommendations for future study and practice and contribution of the results.

## **CHAPTER 2: Policy Contexts and Landscape**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this research is to elicit NQTs' experiences about their ITE and how it supports their classroom practices. This chapter begins with a brief outline of the education policies in South Africa which shape and influence teacher education. Practising teachers have been educated or trained within a historically dysfunctional society and teacher community over decades; which has misshapen generations of educators. These asymmetrical attitudes have warped the minds of racist pedagogues at tertiary level who have spawned many teachers with the same authoritarian outlooks. What happens in schools and tertiary institutions today, cannot be separated from this tradition because it is believed that many of the teachers trained pre-1994 still perpetuate the thinking of pre-1994 rule; even if unconsciously. This chapter begins with the apartheid era, spanning the period 1948 to the early 1990s; highlighting key factors that guided the formulating and implementing of racist policies in South African education. The education and ITE fields, with which this research is specifically concerned, are expanded on in terms of how these fields were distorted.

### **2.2 Education policy during Apartheid (1948-1990's)**

The state of South African education has become a heated topic of discussion in various fields in contemporary society. Many liberal educationists thought OBE would bring forth the butterfly from its chrysalis but too few observers realized how entrenched Nationalist doctrine had become in the minds of South Africans (Spaull, 2013). When OBE did not revolutionize education it was too hastily dispensed with without a full admission of the gravity of changing decades of prejudice. Evidence of the high rate of failure in the matriculation examination and a high dropout and grade repetition rate throughout schooling was unfairly placed at the door of the ANC revisionists who wished to liberate education (CDE, 2015). Notable failure rates confirmed the results from research conducted by the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) which reported on South Africa's Education Crisis. The quality of education in South Africa 1994-2011 (Spaull, 2013), is close to breaking point. Racist



critics of ANC revision trumpet such failure as proof of white superiority. To gain a full understanding of where South Africa as a nation and specifically, the education system is today, it is necessary to understand the history of the country, the after effects of apartheid and how such socially diseased systems affect the country to this day (Spaull, 2013). Although the policy of segregation has been replaced by one of integration and equality for all, on paper, the damage left behind from apartheid continues to have a large effect on the country, and critics of ANC policy and intentions for egalitarian ideals, revel in the national failures (Spaull, 2013). The effects of racism continue to hinder the country's ability to transform as effectively and quickly as the world and people of South Africa feel it should. The history of education in South Africa continues to have an impact on the education system today.

From the 1950s up to the early 1990s, the education system in South Africa mirrored its apartheid policy. The Bantu Education Act (No. 47) of 1953 widened the gaps in educational opportunities for the different racial groups in South Africa. The act stated that students of different races were not allowed to study in the same schools. It also prohibited mathematics and science from being included in the curriculum of the Black education system. The Act was created in the belief that mathematics and sciences were not necessary in preparing young Black South Africans for the low-wage labour they were being trained to perform. The White education system received the highest amount of funding and resources, while the funding and resources allocated to the Black education system were minimal in comparison. Black schools had inferior facilities, were often without text books, and teachers had low, or poor, professional qualifications (OECD, 2008).

Teacher training in apartheid South Africa reflected the policy that ruled the country. Teachers were trained according to their classified races. Addressing the injustices of the past education system was one of the most daunting tasks the government faced in the early 1990s. The manner in which ITE was structured under apartheid, produced many adverse outcomes; such as the ever growing number of teacher colleges that were over-producing primary school teachers; despite the demand for high school teachers trained in Mathematics, Science and Languages (DoE & DHET, 2011). This was especially the case in the black rural areas (DoE & DHET, 2011).

The situation at the end of the 1980s saw more than 127 teacher training colleges (CHE, 2010) emerge, in addition to the numerous universities, technikons, private colleges, distance learning institutions, as well as organisations and other institutes that were offering ITE programmes (CHE, 2010). Different levels and types of ITE qualifications and standards were produced (CHE, 2010). Such replication and multiplication of facilities were inevitable because each race group had to have its own institutions; to prevent what Afrikaner fascists regarded as the danger of contamination to the *Herrenvolk* or ruling white class.

### **2.3 Education policy since 1994**

In 1994, after the ANC came into power, the new constitution was laid out for South Africa. The DOE (1995a) set out a broad national vision for promoting equity and access to education, and for quality education for all. Due to the past history of restricted educational access for Black children, the White Paper positioned education as a key lever to accelerate equity of learning outcomes for all, and transform the attitudes, aspirations and careers of black citizens. The ANC, as the newly elected government, now had the immense task of unifying and restoring equality between the different 'nations' (Sayed, et al., 2016).

The White Paper on Education and Training (DoE 1995), focused on redressing educational inequalities and was promulgated by the Apartheid Government. Its intention was to provide equal education and development that would benefit all South Africans: it recognised teachers as important pillars of a national human resource development strategy and emphasised their need to be trained as professionals who were self-confident (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013). The changes wrought by Minister Bengu during this time saw the development of a national department of education united with provincial departments of education; which previously were divided along lines of race and ethnicity.

The South African Qualifications Authority Act (SAQA) established a South African qualifications Authority (DOE, 1995b). SAQA oversaw the development of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) covering standard setting and quality assurance. The SAQA Act provides for the establishment of an authority whose responsibility was establishing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (Sayed & Kanjee, 2013). One of the main objectives of the NQF was to create an integrated national framework for learning. Rectifying the past discriminations in education, training and Employment is another objective of the NQF.

The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa was designed to develop a teaching profession ready and able to meet the needs of a democratic South Africa in the 21st century (The National Policy Framework, 2006). The policy's objective is to create a community of competent teachers dedicated to providing education of high quality, with high levels of performance, as well as ethical and professional standards. Concisely, it committed to providing more and better teachers, and hoped to implement such ideals in a short time. But the changes could not be effected quickly nor could the entire population of educators be educated in a critical and constructivist paradigm overnight.

With regards to NPFTEDSA, (1996: 6) the principles that underlie the expectation of a teacher are:

- A specialist in a particular learning area, subject or phase;
- A specialist in teaching and learning;
- A specialist in assessment;
- A curriculum developer;
- A leader, administrator and manager;
- A scholar and lifelong learner; and
- A professional who plays a community, citizenship, and pastoral role.

However admirable these prerogatives were, and however applauded they were internationally, the business of changing educators' minds, proved daunting. The overriding aim of the policy is to properly equip teachers to undertake their essential and demanding tasks; to enable them to continually enhance their professional competence and performance, and to raise the esteem in which they are held by the

people of South Africa. (NPFTEDSA, 1996) because teachers are integral to the learning process, they are encouraged to reflect on their training and practices in order to become more effective teachers. The policy adds that evidence shows that the development of teachers to be professional requires their input and reflection upon their training at tertiary level. Teachers who are able to create a Freirean learning environment of enquiry and debate require well-synchronised activities and a sound Practicum (NPFTEDSA, 1996). It should be noted that the policy does not spell out exactly how this may be achieved. Challenges have been detected in terms of limited conceptual knowledge and poor understanding of the subjects teachers teach (NPFTEDSA, 1996). The central debate in teacher education is that, in terms of pedagogical content knowledge, that ‘special amalgam’ of knowledge unique to teachers, (Shulman, 1987), gets lost in ITE programs as they unpack and make meaning of the policies for their programs.

The National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) was established and “charged with the task of proposing policies for the transformation of higher education in South Africa” (Sayed et al., 2016:184). The NCHE proposed that teacher training colleges be incorporated into universities arguing that this would be more cost-effective, reduce the number of primary school teachers, more qualified subject specialist teachers would be the outcome, all of which would imply both greater efficiency and equity (Sayed et al., 2016:184). By December 2000, 23 teacher training colleges were subdivisions of the different universities and technikons (DoE & DHET 2011). The teacher training colleges that were not merged were retained by the particular provinces and became campuses of Further Education Training (FET) colleges, teacher development institutions, education resource Centre’s, high schools, provincial education offices, or were used by other governmental departments (DoE & DHET, 2011).

In 2009 the DoE, which was responsible for basic education and higher education, split (Bailey, 2014). The new Department of Basic Education (DBE) focused on school curricula, whereas the new Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) focused specifically on higher education, which included initial teacher education. One of the DHET’s responsibilities was and is supporting tertiary institutes to meet the policy requirements; as well as monitoring and evaluating the quality of

teacher that is produced (Sayed et al., 2016). It is perhaps at this point to question whether or not, the DHET is fulfilling their roles and responsibilities concerning Higher Education Institutions and overseeing them.

The National Department of Education had the responsibility to develop norms and standards, frameworks and national policies for the system as a whole; and these were born out of the 1996 Constitution which required a transformed and democratised education system; in line with the values of human dignity, equality, human rights and freedom, non-racialism and non-sexism, as well as the right to basic education for all (OECD, 2008). Norms and standards for teacher training were declared in 1998 and revised in 2000 (NSE 2000) and in accordance with the guidelines that were propagated in this policy, all new teacher education programmes had to be designed accordingly (Robinson, 2003). Robinson asserts in 1995 that teacher education programmes began to become a regulatory framework, published for debate in 1998 and gazetted as the Norms and Standards for Educators in 2000. A framework and process approving teacher education programmes, outlining the types of qualifications the Department of Education were considered for funding; and employment was created for the first time by this new policy (2003).

#### **2.4 History of the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualification (MRTEQ)**

The DHET replaced the NSE with the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) policy; justifying this in terms of the need to provide teacher education providers with clear guidelines on the development of ITE programs as well as to shift away from 'an overt outcomes-based approach' to a 'balanced' approach (DHET, 2011). The Policy on Minimum requirements for Teacher Education Qualification, replaced the Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE), published in February 2000 (DoE 2000a). The act provides a basis for the construction of core curricula for initial teacher education; as well as for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs that accredited institutions must use in order to develop their programs; leading to teacher education qualifications.

Initial education programmes globally are geared towards providing prospective teachers with opportunities to “develop knowledge and skills in traditional coursework” (Hodges & Hodge, 2015:102). These are universal practices, not peculiar to South Africa. Grudnoff, Haigh, Hill, Cochrane-Smith, Eil & Ludlow (2016), observe for New Zealand that ITE programmes are about providing enriching experiences that build trust and encourage engagement in the learning process; alongside being able to “equip those entering the teaching force with the knowledge and skills needed to be able to perform the duties of a successful teacher” (Pryor, Akyeampong, Westbrook & Lussier, 2012:10).

The National Qualifications Framework Act 67 of 2008 describes the minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications in South Africa and clearly identifies which diplomas, certificates, and/or degrees qualify or are used to qualify individuals to work as teachers in South African schools and the conditions under which they do so (DHET, 2011a).

The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications, 2014) (MRTEQ) set out the knowledge standards for teachers and these are:

- Integrated and applied knowledge
- Disciplinary learning
- Pedagogical learning
- Practical learning
- Fundamental learning
- Situational learning

Each of these components plays a significant role in developing prospective teachers during teacher education; through the acquisition of practical and theoretical knowledge in order to provide NQTs with the appropriate competencies and skills to teach. The updated policy envisioned “addressing the critical challenges facing education in South Africa... especially the poor content and conceptual knowledge found amongst teachers, as well as the legacies of apartheid” (DHET, 2011).

The MRTEQ (*see appendix C for full list*), retained the seven roles of the NSE with the exact definitions (DHET, 2011), and added a new list of an additional 11 competencies. Having MRTEQ ensures that prospective teachers are developed in a more standardized manner than was previously the case during the Apartheid era. MRTEQ (2011) acknowledges that the legacies of apartheid persist in post-apartheid South Africa, and that pre-service teachers need to be educated to bring about transformation (DHET, 2011). However, it does not provide teacher education providers with details, pedagogies, theories, and structures for how to go about doing so.

In 2015, MRTEQ (2011) was updated to the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ 2015), due to the need to revise and re-align these with the 2013 Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (DHET, 2015). The updated MRTEQ policy continues to emphasize that its somewhat vaguely defined purpose is to create “teachers of high quality, in line with the needs of the country” (DHET, 2015:8). In order to create policy that can work, it is essential that the theories the policy makers base their reforms on, take into account the ways in which teacher knowledge, beliefs and context influence their teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1998).

Following the NSE and MRTEQ, South African universities generally provide two kinds of teacher preparation qualifications or programs: a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and a one-year Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) (Green, 2014). Green (2014) adds that 13 of the more than 21 universities offer Foundation Phase teacher preparation programs. The first stream being the completion of a Bachelor of Education; allowing the student to specialize in one of the following: Grade 1-3 (foundation phase, Grade 4-6 (intermediate phase), Grade 7-9 (senior phase and Further Education and Training, Grade 10-12. The second stream allows a student teacher to first obtain an initial Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Social Science; which is then followed by a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and specializes in the same learning phases as with the Bachelor of Education.

Teacher education programs offered at HEIs can broadly be separated into Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programs and Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) programs. South Africa is not unique in expressing public concern about the appropriateness of ITE provision. Other countries soon initiated reviews of their own ITE programs. Shortly after South Africa's HEQC (2012) review, the Australian federal government established a Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group to investigate the quality of ITE. Recently England has pursued a school-based model of initial teacher education seemingly to minimize university involvement, driven by the political conviction that the school is the most effective place for learning how to teach (McNamara, Murray & Jones, 2014).

The Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) developed by government in 2011 was initiated with its main intention being "to improve the quality of teacher education and development in order to improve the quality of teachers and teaching" (Bernstein, 2015:1). The cornerstone of the Norms and Standards in Education policy (NSE) was its definition of the roles and competencies required of teachers. The policy laid out seven roles and their associated competencies for educator development. ITE providers were to shape their programs according to these roles and competencies to produce the kind of teacher envisioned by the document. The NSE document does state almost categorically that the roles and competencies should inform the exit level outcomes of a qualification and its associated assessment criteria. The NSE was then replaced by the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualification (MRTEQ) in 2011 by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

For ITE providers, the NSE and its replacement MRTEQ policy documents became crucial to the ways in which they set-up and run their programs. The roles and competencies from the NSE are still reflected in the MRTEQ policy; and it is essential to note the ways in which the policy has influenced the B.Ed. program under discussion in this research. The roles and competencies are split into three main components: practical competence, foundational competence and reflexive competence. The B.Ed. program structure is set up as follows: the main aim of the B.Ed. (General Education) programme is to train beginner educators for the General Education and Training Phase (GET). The option a student teacher chooses in



application or registration enables a student to specialise in the Foundation Phase or the Intermediate Phase. Besides the modules or subjects which are split between content knowledge and educational theory, there are other components. School visits and Practice Teaching form part of the Teaching and Learning modules. These practical module/s are prerequisite pass requirements to be able to advance to the next year of study. It is here that the reflexive competence is most clear as students are required to continually reflect on their practices.

Multilingual requirements to obtain the degree require students to meet the multilingual requirements of the provincial language policy and the policy of mother-tongue-based multilingualism in South African schools. This implies taking and passing at least three languages as follows:

- At least one language as a language of learning and teaching (pass mark of 60%),
- a second language as a professional communication medium (pass mark of 50%),
- a third language, at the level of basic communication skills (pass mark of 50%).

Despite the government's commitment to multilingualism and the promotion of language rights in all spheres of public life, the education sector has not been able to reflect the multilingual nature of South Africa. The Department of Basic Education is implementing a program where primary school children in government schools will have to learn an indigenous African language (Magcaba, 2013). The move within basic education is paralleled by at least one initiative in higher education; as the University of KwaZulu-Natal has announced its intention to make isiZulu language classes compulsory for all first-year students from 2014 (Davis 2013).

Teacher education went through a transformation since the apartheid era: from Christian teaching values to professional teacher training. There has been substantial change in the way education was controlled by the government to a democratic government that decentralised education. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) ensures that every subject in each grade has a single, comprehensive and concise policy document that provides details on what teachers need to teach and assess on a grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject basis. This curriculum review aims to lessen the administrative load on teachers, and ensure that there is clear guidance and consistency for teachers when teaching. It

should be noted that CAPS is meant to be a guide according to what teachers teach (curriculum) and not how teachers teach (teaching methods).

The policy on The Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (DHET 2011) was created with a prospect for universities to restructure their curricula for prevailing qualifications and/or plan for new qualifications (Rousseau, 2014). All ITE programmes were required to be redesigned highlighting “subject content knowledge, how to teach that content knowledge, and the practice teaching component” (Bernstein, 2015:2). But in reality students from rural poor areas were ill-prepared for university and manifested far higher drop-out rates than learners from no-fee paying secondary schools. Those most in need of support and advancement appear to be the most disadvantaged, again. The policy known as the minimum requirement for teaching qualification, (MRTEQ), (*see appendix C for full list*), sets out eleven competencies of a newly qualified teacher. The following six key competencies to this study define what NQTs say about their classroom practice in light of their teacher education.

NQTs must:

1. Have sound subject knowledge.
2. Know how to teach their subject(s), and how to select, sequence and pace content according to both the subject and learner needs.
3. Know who their learners are and how they learn, understand their individual needs, and tailor their teaching accordingly.
4. Have highly developed literacy, numeracy and IT skills.
5. Have knowledge of the school curriculum and be able to unpack its specialised contents, and be able to use available resources appropriately, so as to plan and design suitable learning programmes.
6. Understand diversity in the South African context, in order to teach in a manner that includes all learners, and must be able to identify learning or social problems and work in partnership with professional services to address them. (DHET, 2011).

It should be noted that the ITE providers in South Africa today shape and design their programs according to policy. National policy has been the main impetus for change and development of teacher training. It can also be said that the kinds of

knowledge that teachers are required to have stem in part from the directives of policy which has paved the way from the Apartheid inequalities to the democratic principles employed in theory, if not in practice in education today, policy that continues to inform revisions and updates of ITE programs in the future.

## **2.5 Conclusion of Chapter**

This chapter provides an overview of South African education policies which affect teacher education between 1948 and the present day. It examined teacher education and training which experienced a variety of barriers, and had an impact on the education system with the intention of segregation of education along racial and ethnic lines. Other issues dealt with in this chapter addressed a range of aspects to give perspective to the South African education context, namely: government and policy approach, and education policies on the general education and training sector implemented since 1994. The scope and purpose of these policies explain what and how deficits facing the education system have been dealt with or are still evident in education today. The DHET's ITE policies list roles, competencies, and knowledge bases for teachers, the key policy affecting NQTs, namely the MRTEQ (2011) and MRTEQ (2015), continue to emphasise the need to change South African education in general and teacher education, by combating the aftermath of apartheid. In the following chapter, the literature review as well as a discussion of the conceptual framework will follow.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the variables of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) which are at play in the process of learning to teach. These variables, give important insights into the experiences of NQTs. They are instrumental in shaping their professional practice. This literature review gathers, describes and reflects upon academic research relevant to the topic of this thesis. The concepts of teacher knowledge, in particular, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Shulman 1986, 1987) and its impact on the practices of NQTs are *ad rem* in building up a context for the topic of this research project. The contribution of initial teacher education to the cultivation of PCK is central. The context in which teaching takes place is an important factor to consider when investigating teacher practice (Abell, 2008). The chapter synthesizes the work of several authorities in the field to create a theoretical framework to guide answering the research question, *in what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor of Education programme, support NQTs in their practices in the classroom?*

### **3.2 The PCK Summit Consensus model – A Conceptual Framework**

The consensus model provides a useful way of understanding the link between knowledge and practice. It provides a definition of PCK that highlights it as a topic, teacher and context specific and includes both Reflection on Action and Reflection in Action (<http://pcksummit.bsccs.org/>). The consensus model for PCK shows that as knowledge is translated into practice, various forces come into effect; in the form of amplifiers and filters. These are linked to beliefs, orientations and learning context. In the visual representation of PCK below the double arrow between classroom practice and topic specific professional knowledge indicates that the two influence each other.

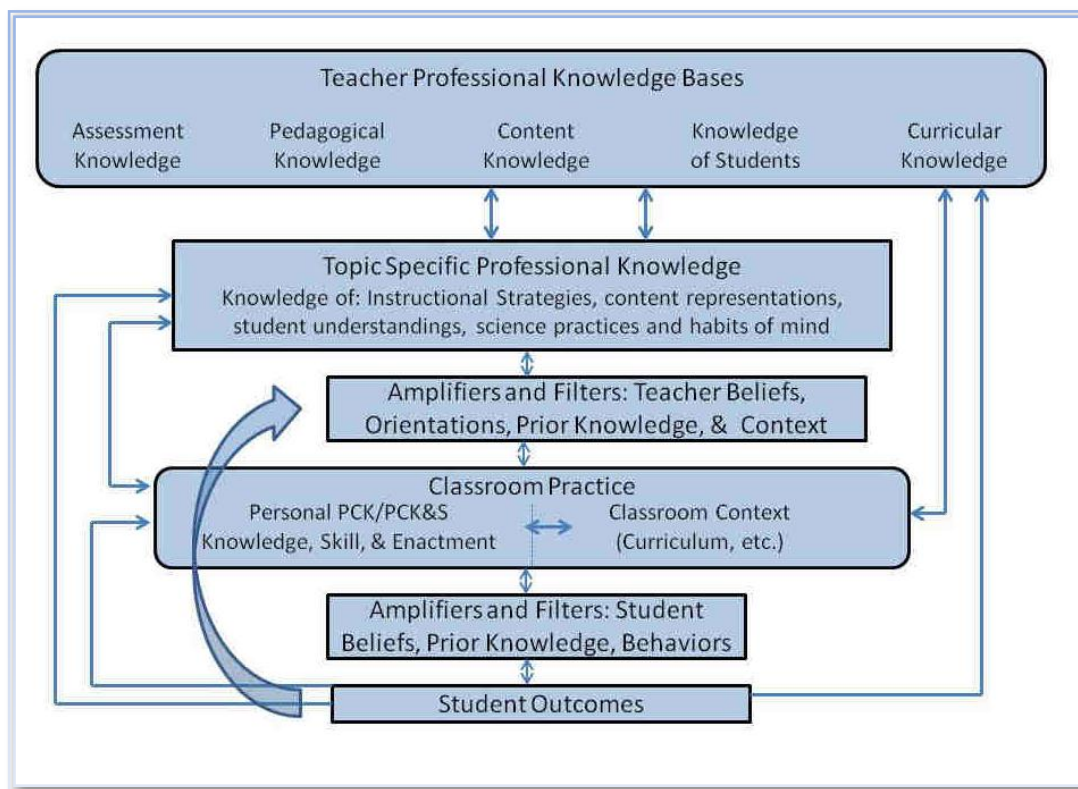


Figure 3.1: Consensus model for PCK (<http://pcksummit.bsccs.org/>)

The model of the PCK summit in some way returns to the initial model from Shulman both in terms of PCK and base knowledge; it incorporates new elements that were brought by other models. The PCK summit model embodies the development of PCK with practice in the classroom and integrates the beliefs of teachers and students; taking into account the filter of the context. Student outcomes fall outside the scope of the present study and are not included here. PCK currently has been considered the best theoretical framework in which to examine and understand the skills of teachers, systematizing empirical data and enabling the documentation and exchange of ideas on knowledge relevant to Teaching Practice (Fernandez, 2013).

The PCK Summit Consensus Model (Gess-Newsome & Carlson, 2013), as depicted in Figure 2 above uses Shulman's professional knowledge base for teaching (Shulman, 1986 & 1987) as a point of departure; to show the relation between what teachers as professionals know (or need to know), their classroom practice and student outcomes. At the first level of their model, they list the teacher professional knowledge bases: which are similar to what Shulman cited: for example pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, assessment knowledge, knowledge of students and curricular knowledge, but do not include pedagogical content knowledge at this level.

The next level of the PCK Summit Consensus model moves to the topic specific level. This level proposes an altered knowledge base for each topic that is taught. This is called Topic Specific Professional Knowledge (TSPK). TSPK is transformed as it is enacted in the classroom. This transformation process is influenced by factors which are called amplifiers and filters; for example, the teacher's beliefs and orientation to science teaching for example or the various contextual factors which play a role in teaching. The model reserves the term PCK for classroom practice and uses the 'personal PCK' to highlight the individual nature of PCK. Personal PCK is defined as: 'Personal PCK is the knowledge of, reasoning behind, and planning for teaching a particular topic in a particular way for a particular purpose to particular students for enhanced student outcomes. Personal PCK is the act of teaching a particular topic in a particular way for a particular purpose to particular students for enhanced student outcomes.' (Gess-Newsome & Carlson, 2013:10).

Another component of PCK is, in essence, a product of transformation from the other teacher knowledge domains. Grossman (1990) defines PCK as consisting of four critical components: (1) conceptions of purposes for teaching subject matter, (2) knowledge of students' understanding, conceptions, and misconceptions of particular topics in a subject matter, (3) curricular knowledge, and (4) knowledge of instructional strategies. In the field of science education, Magnusson et al., (1999), present a modified version of Grossman's PCK conceptual framework (see Figure 4) by (i) adding a fifth dimension: knowledge of assessment of scientific literacy, and (ii) by renaming Grossman's conceptions of purposes for teaching subject matter into orientations to teaching science.

Student outcomes are included in the last part of the model. This aspect has not been investigated in many PCK studies (Abell, 2008) and it is depicted here as the ultimate outcome of teaching endeavour. The model proposes another set of amplifiers and filters between classroom practice and student learning; which include student beliefs, prior knowledge and behaviours. Multiple interactions between the different levels are acknowledged and arrows are used to indicate these; as per Figure 3.2. The next category of knowledge refers to a specific understanding of learners' characteristics and how these characteristics can be used to specialize and

adjust instructions in the classroom (Shulman, 1987). Rahman, Scaife, Yahya and Jalil (2010), suggest two different elements of knowledge of learners (KLS): the empirical (or social knowledge) and cognitive knowledge of learners. According to Rahman et al. (2010:87), empirical knowledge “is the knowledge of what children of a particular age range are like, their social nature, how they behave in classrooms and schools, their interests and preoccupations, how contextual factors such as non-routine events or adverse weather can have an effect on their work and behaviours, and the nature of the child-teacher relationship”.

Rahman et al. (2010), maintain that cognitive knowledge of learners consists of two elements. First, there is the knowledge of theories of child development, which informs practice. The second element is context-bound to a particular group of learners: the kind of knowledge that grows from regular contact with these learners, of what they know, of what they can do, and of what they are likely to be able to understand. From this kind of knowledge come the skills and processes of adaptation activities and representations to the needs of particular learners; differentiation for differing abilities. This summit model covers all manner of subjects; the Topic Specific element shows that many authors feel differently when it comes to language teaching because of the nature of language itself. Learners have different strategies for learning languages and expectations of school (Shulman, 1987 & Rahman et al., 2010).

Rahman et al. (2010), claim that there is often a mismatch between ways of learning at home and ways of learning at school. This mismatch contributes to learners falling behind and failing to meet their full potential as learners (Rahman et al., 2010). These authors acknowledge that it is not easy to give individual attention to each and every learner; especially in large classes. A study in Tanzanian primary schools (Kambuga, 2013), where classes ranged from 50 to 120 learners, shows that large numbers of learners in classrooms make it impossible for teachers to pursue teaching adjusted to learners’ level of cognitive development. Kambuga (2013), notes, that the absence of individual attention for each learner in their classrooms was underlined by the fact that, they did not even know the names of their learners.

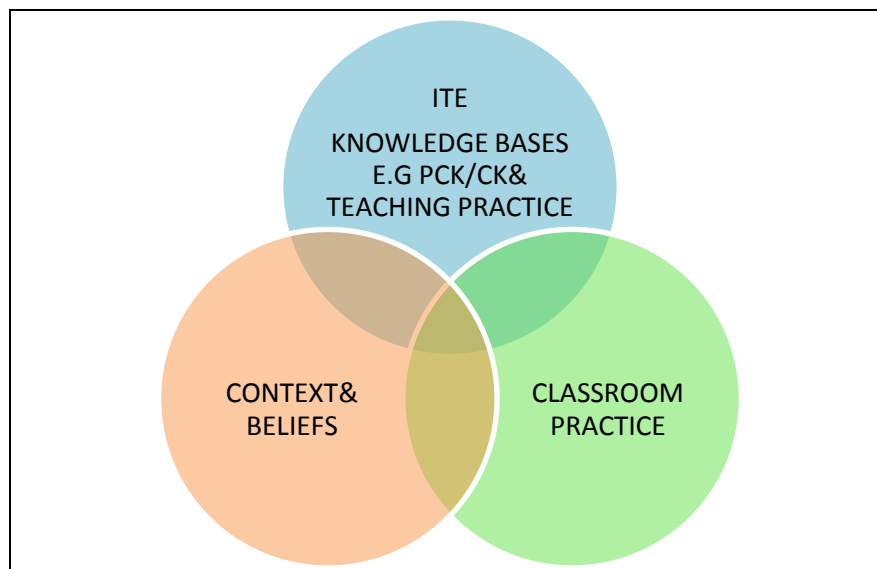
Shulman's original version of PCK does not account for, or include, beliefs; however, this study supports the importance of beliefs to teacher learning, as explained below. Teachers' beliefs are complex and are recognised as influencing teaching decisions and practices (Grossman, 1990). Because this study looks at how NQTs learn to teach, it is important to scrutinise their beliefs about teaching. The choice of content and pedagogy, the decisions made about texts, learning objectives, methods of assessment, espoused purposes for teaching subjects, goals set for students and the nature of a subject, as well as the beliefs for teaching a particular subject (Grossman, 1990 & Turner-Bisset, 1999) are considered relevant to PCK; with specific regard to the category of teachers' SMK.

Underlying teachers' behaviour and practices in the classroom, there are beliefs and knowledge and related constructs which influence what teachers do (Karaata, 2011; Hang & Song, 2011; Melketo, 2012). Yero (2002) delineates four particular aspects that relate to experiences of NQTs embedded in teachers' beliefs. First, teachers' beliefs include a personal definition of education that shapes, and circumscribes, what the teacher decides to do, and not to do. Second, each teacher has a set of beliefs about the nature of knowledge and skills and how learners acquire them. Third, each teacher has a set of beliefs and assumptions about the nature of learning. Fourth, each teacher has a set of values that determine the priorities in the classroom.

To understand what teachers do, it is useful to explore what teachers believe, what they know, their attitudes and their feelings (Borg in an interview with Birello, 2012). In this interview, Borg claims that a large number of educational reforms failed to have desired impacts in trying to get teachers to change because they were targeting behaviours without taking into consideration teachers' beliefs (Birello, 2012). Borg makes it clear that it is not possible to explain what teachers do in relation to one single set of beliefs: "there are sets of beliefs interacting such as beliefs about learners and learning, beliefs about assessment, beliefs about different aspects of languages etc." (Birello, 2012:92) Contemporary researchers continue to question how the beliefs of teachers are responsible for teachers' decision-making; the component is still considered to be under-researched (Abell, 2008).



The impact of teachers' beliefs upon content cannot be ignored; considering that a teacher's beliefs can influence both the choice of content and the pedagogy through which it is taught; the decision made about texts, learning objectives, methods of assessment, espoused purposes for teaching subjects, goals set for students and the nature of a subject (Grossman, 1990). As the beliefs of teachers towards the content for teaching CL interact with the outcomes of PCK, the inclusion of this category of teachers' knowledge was warranted in this research. The conceptual framework developed for this study was based on the elements that have been discussed; in conjunction with the literature reviewed in this chapter. An overview of the conceptual framework for this research project is represented below:



**Figure 3.2 schematic diagrams showing the interdependence of the elements involved in learning to teach.**

### **3.3 How Pedagogical Content Knowledge Develops in NQTs**

Researchers report that teacher-training programs can never completely address all the components of PCK that a teacher needs (Magnusson, Krajcik, & Borko, 1999) because PCK is continually evolving. The student teaching internship affords an opportunity for the mentor teacher and teaching intern to collaborate about PCK. Conceptions of purpose for teaching subject matter, knowledge of student understandings, curricular knowledge, and knowledge of instructional strategies are components of PCK.

The development of PCK is largely experiential; teachers gradually construct their own unique PCK using not only their knowledge of the content and pedagogy that they gain through pre-service and in-service training, but also their experience in the classroom as both a teacher and a student, the advice from trusted colleagues, as well as personal beliefs and perceptions of science and science education (Appleton, 2008). Teacher experience seems to be the single greatest determining factor in the creation of PCK; and a firm grasp of the subject matter is generally considered to be a prerequisite for its subsequent development (van Driel et al., 1998).

PCK is a dynamic, rather than static, aspect (Abell, 2008), of teacher knowledge that is moulded through experience and beliefs. Grossman (1990) postulates that PCK develops through three distinct avenues: (1) apprenticeship of observation, (2) disciplinary background, (3) professional, development. Grossman (1990) posits that the instructional strategies, knowledge of student understanding, and curricular knowledge NQTs were exposed to as students contributes to their initial PCK: “Experiences as students provide prospective teachers with memories of strategies for teaching specific content, to help shape their own expectations of students, [and to use] particular texts and topics [because they are] likely to remember aspects of the curriculum”.

A second source of PCK deals with the disciplinary background of the teachers themselves. A teacher’s comprehension and background of subject matter would “affect their conceptions of what it means to teach a particular subject [and to the] selection of particular curricula and to their critiques of specific curriculum materials” (Grossman, 1990:12). Curricular knowledge as well as the conceptions (teaching orientations) of teaching can be attributed to the teacher’s disciplinary background and knowledge of content.

Professional coursework in education as well as professional development programs that cater for developing strategies of methods is another arena which PCK can cultivate. Exposing teachers, new and experienced, to a variety of instructional strategies and approaches to learning enhances their understanding of the professional knowledge base. Classroom experience constitutes another avenue for

PCK to develop. Teachers, as they become acclimatised to the classroom environment, begin to realize and acknowledge student conceptions and misconceptions; NQTs learn to suit their instructional strategies to match the learning needs of the student.

Teaching experience becomes a critical and major source of PCK. Many researchers agree that the development of PCK is embedded in classroom practice (van Driel et al., 2002) because teachers derive PCK from their own practice and formal training. They suggest that successful teachers have well-developed PCK and that it is possible to enhance novice teachers' PCK through intensive intervention with short-term skills-oriented workshops (Clermont, Krajcik & Borko, 1993).

There is evidence that professional development programs are capable of improving teacher content knowledge, as well as teachers' understanding of student thinking and concept development, classroom practice and student outcomes (Hill, 2009). In addition to strengthening teachers' content knowledge, there is also a need for professional development that can enhance a teacher's PCK (Appleton, 2008; Goodnough & Hung, 2009), and in fact, quality pre-services or in-services have been found to increase PCK (van Driel et al., 2002).

### **3.4 Initial teacher education**

The period of teacher preparation including subject area courses, pedagogy courses, school experiences, and practice teaching is usually approved by many educators in the world for the training of teachers. Darling-Hammond (1998) argues that teachers who have had formal preparation have been found to be better able to use teaching strategies. Teacher education then becomes the cornerstone for the full-preparation of effective teachers. Since initial teacher training courses began in the middle of the 20th century, they have been described as a transmission and positivist model (Allen, Ambrosetti, & Turner, 2013). The implicit goal was for the university to provide the theory, skills and knowledge; and the school was to provide the context for applying, practising and integrating these theories, skills and knowledge (Allen,

2009). The professional aspects of teaching is a highly complex and contentious activity (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

The literature regarding the professional knowledge and skills for teaching is extensive, and ranges in detail and structure (AITSL, 2011; DET, 2004). Two authorities, however, introduce a different dimension to the theory-practice divide debate. Gees cited by Rosaen & Schram (1998), notes that the process of becoming a teacher involves an interaction of 'learning' and 'acquisition' of the teaching culture. The 'learning' is the theoretical aspect that is usually covered in training colleges; while the 'acquisition', which tends to be practical, is covered in schools through induction and other related professional activities. Through teacher education institutions, pre-service candidates of the teaching profession are taken into a process in which they are equipped with certain skills and knowledge to be able to graduate as a teacher ready to work at schools. During teacher education, the pre-service teacher gains experiences at schools through school experience and practice teaching courses.

The OECD reports that Musset (2010), categorizes the current teacher education in OECD countries as: subject-matter (content knowledge), teaching techniques (pedagogical knowledge), and practical school experience with some involving research skills, cognitive content, behavioural and social sciences, and child development. In South Africa, there are two streams for qualification to become a teacher. The first stream is completion of a Bachelor of Education, allowing the student to specialize in one of the following, Grades 1-3 (foundation phase, Grades 4-6 (intermediate phase), Grade 7-9 (senior phase and Further Education and Training, Grades 10-12. In the second stream the student first obtains an initial Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Social Science, which is then followed by a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and specializes in the same learning phases as with the Bachelor of Education.

There is a considerable body of both national and international educationalists that criticise the Initial Teacher Education programs. These criticisms range from such issues as: the theory/practice divide; a lack of preparation for 'real teaching'; lack of collaboration and cooperation between the university and schools where TP is

carried out; failure to recognise that learning to teach goes beyond initial teacher preparation, and is a career-long process (Adoniou, 2013; Hammerness, 2013).

The following are some examples of the positive influence of ITE, the strong focus on content knowledge and curriculum and assessment planning; meaningful feedback; and planning activities. What is commonly agreed is that Teaching Practice (TP) is an important element in a student teacher's initial education and development. TP at present in South Africa is considered as including scientific, procedural and pedagogical components, as well as components which focus on the cognition and emotions of Student Teachers (STs).

It is imperative to listen to the dilemmas, doubts, fears and successes of student teachers regarding their teaching practice (Caires, Almeida & Vieira 2012). Despite increased awareness that becoming a teacher is a lifelong process (Caires et al., 2012) several key questions remain unanswered or have been superficially approached. Aspects such as: 'Who' are these teacher candidates (their educational background, school biography/early school experiences, reasons for choosing the teaching profession)? 'How' do they experience their TP (feelings, thoughts, and attitudes)? 'What' are their main difficulties and concerns while coping with the constraints and challenges of teaching practice and their teaching career? 'Which' conditions determine the positive/negative resolution of these difficulties and concerns? 'Who' are the student teachers' 'significant others' during this process? 'Which' gains do they most frequently perceive as resulting from their first encounter with teaching? (Caires et al, 2012). While reform of Teacher Education is an on-going task, it is not central to this study which seeks to determine what STs reported of their experiences in learning to teach, in a Bachelor program, particularly during TP.

#### **3.4.1 Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Initial Teacher Education**

Ginsberg and Rhodes (2003), contend that improving teacher preparation is among the most prominent reforms suggested for education because pre-service teacher education programs contribute to the development of PCK through several sources.

Understanding how to develop teachers with adequate PCK is necessary to inform the design of pre-service teacher preparation programs; yielding better-prepared teachers. Lederman, Gess-Newsome, and Latz (1994), point out that making learning more meaningful improves the development of pre-service teachers' practical knowledge base. Such improvement takes place in the following areas: (a) general education courses, (b) content courses, (c) methods courses (including field experiences), and (d) teaching internship. Experience in these areas affects the initial and emerging development of PCK.

This review of relevant literature has shown that to teach effectively, teachers need to have both content knowledge and pedagogy of the topics that they teach; together with knowledge of their learners' abilities (Deubel, 2009). The elements of PCK shown here, knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of teaching strategies and knowledge of learners' conceptions and knowledge of student summarise the views and constructs of PCK used by several researchers in this domain. The PCK summit consensus model is an amalgamation of all the models represented in the literature and is used in this investigation. These elements form the core of the conceptual framework that was used in the development of data collection instruments; as well as analysis of data for this study.

### **3.4.2 Novice versus Expert PCK**

Following the arguments made by Shulman and Park and Oliver (2008), becoming a teacher is inextricably tied to the transformation of content; this PCK is acquired with practice, experience and critical engagement. In researching professional development in Higher Education, this link between PCK and the quality of teachers is generally emphasised by exploring cases of excellence among expert teachers; in order to understand the ways in which pedagogic knowledge and content knowledge work in the arena of the lecture theatre or the seminar room. Lenze and Dinham (1994) investigated new faculty members' PCK and found that the participants in their study varied in terms of their levels of PCK; even though they were all relatively inexperienced. The participants tended to mention their academic skills or literacies necessary for managing course content more than the "substantive course content".

Lenze and Dinham (1994), consider that this emphasis is possibly the result of new teachers correlating student failure with student deficit. Lenze and Dinham (1994) note that frequently a new faculty indicates that they drew their knowledge about student problems from their own experiences as students. It is here that the importance of having mentor teachers becomes clear. As the NQTs are new to teaching and the classroom, their PCK is at the 'novice' level. Mentor teachers who have much more experience can be said to be at the 'expert' level and therefore arguably are the best resources for an NQT in terms of improving or building up their PCK.

### **3.4.3 Knowledge of Practice**

NQTs are expected to be equipped with the necessary knowledge for classroom tuition. Different viewpoints are expressed about the importance of teacher knowledge. Feiman-Nemser (2001), suggests that the knowledge of NQTs should encompass knowledge of students, curriculum and school context. Consensus exists that teacher knowledge should encompass the theoretical as well as the practical skills of teaching. Shulman (1986:13), states that the "teacher is not only a master of procedure but also of content and rationale, and capable of explaining why something is done" and that the "teacher is capable of reflection leading to self-knowledge, the metacognitive awareness that distinguishes draftsman from architect, bookkeeper from auditor".

The result was the concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), the notion of teachers possessing a specific knowledge base that is unique to educators and is a critical component of effective teaching practices (Shulman, 1987). In an attempt to highlight the importance of content, and to bring it back into teacher preparation programmes, Shulman posited a form of knowledge which is 'an amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers' (Shulman, 1987). This new knowledge, which he called Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), distinguishes the teacher from the subject matter specialist. In this definition, PCK refers to the transformation of content into a form that makes learning possible. PCK is one of

the seven fundamental knowledge domains in his professional knowledge base for teaching (Shulman, 1987).

Mastery of content knowledge, by itself, does not necessarily equate into individuals becoming successful teachers. In order to be successful, teachers must know how to transform such content knowledge into an “understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction” (Shulman 1987: 8). PCK is rooted in the teacher’s knowledge of subject matter, pedagogy and context. The domains of teacher knowledge are important to comprehend PCK. The domains of teacher knowledge, especially content knowledge and pedagogy, are the foundations for PCK.

Content knowledge is an essential element for PCK to develop (Grossman, 1990). Having sufficient knowledge of the subject matter allows the teacher to identify misconceptions students might have during instruction; a lack of content knowledge hinders the transformative process. Research has produced several key characteristics of PCK that are relevant for its development and sustainability. Content knowledge is critical and is seen as a necessary prerequisite for PCK development since it lays down the foundation of the knowledge base (Abell, 2008 & Kind, 2009). Classroom experience is a vital component that shapes PCK since “perceptions of science alter [as teachers gain experience that results in] moving from thinking of science as a subject that they learned at a high level, to realizing how the subject is interpreted for school contexts” (Kind, 2009: 186).

PCK is the knowledge required to master the content of a subject such as grammar and vocabulary. It is the knowledge to deliver the content matter of a particular subject to learners in the most appropriate, effective, organized, and tailored way (Park & Oliver, 2008). PCK includes a considerable change in a teacher’s understanding: “from being able to comprehend subject matter for themselves, to becoming able to elucidate subject matter in new ways, reorganize and partition it, clothe it in activities and emotions, in metaphors and exercises, and in examples and demonstrations, so that it can be grasped by students” (Shulman, 1987).



PCK emphasises the manner in which teachers relate their subject matter knowledge (what they know about what they teach) to their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching, how their learners' learn and the learners' conceptions) and how subject matter knowledge is part of the process of pedagogical reasoning". PCK, according to Kwong et al., (2007), is that "distinctive knowledge domain of teaching that differentiates the expert teacher in a subject area from the subject expert". Kwong et al., (2007), assert that; "while general pedagogical knowledge can be generically applied to all teaching subjects, much of PCK is specific to individual topics in subjects".

Darling-Hammond (2000) indicates that "an emerging consensus is that teachers' knowledge of discipline-specific pedagogy is critical to being able to present topics within a range of subjects in a manner that learners will comprehend". Kagan (1992) and Reynolds (1992), assert that "studies have shown that novice teachers often struggle to present concepts in a manner understandable to their students because they have little or no PCK at their disposal". Mishra and Koehler (2006) cite Rohaan, Taconis and Jochems (2009), who regard PCK as that knowledge which "involves knowledge of teaching strategies that incorporate appropriate conceptual representations in order to address learner difficulties and misconceptions and to foster meaningful understanding".

Carpenter, Fennema, Peterson and Carey (1988), consider PCK to be the knowledge held by a teacher, which "includes knowledge of the conceptual and procedural knowledge that students bring to the learning of a topic, the misconceptions about the topic that they may have developed, and the stages of understanding that they are likely to pass through in moving from a state of having little understanding of the topic to mastery of it".

#### **3.4.4 Knowledge of the teaching context**

Hudson (2012) asserts that every school context is different with regard to the socio - economic status, geographical location, population and culture of the individual school community. A case study of ten new teachers in a private school in South Africa found that NQTs struggled to "appropriate the discourse community of the

school", that they were subjected to 'institutionalised bullying', given loaded timetables and more difficult classes, and expected to be more heavily involved in administrative and extramural activities than other teachers (Whitelaw et al., 2008).

'Novice-oriented cultures' are those where "school ethos and modes of work tend to be determined by the high proportion of young teachers. With a shortage of experienced colleagues, mentoring, observation and feedback are at best limited, and advice based on practical experience can be hard to come by" (Whitelaw et al., 2008). A third form of professional culture, the 'integrated culture', is more inclusive and supportive of new teachers, in that it contains structures that are deliberately aimed at integrating staff, such as "formal one-to-one mentoring, direct help with classroom instruction, and opportunities to be observed teaching and to observe others" (Ashby et al., 2008).

The school context often has a direct effect on a new teacher's performance: for better or worse. Case studies of teacher induction from New Zealand suggest that a lack of resources might undermine one teacher's confidence but stimulate another teacher to develop alternative materials; high levels of support from school leadership might improve a teacher's confidence, but only if other factors do not counteract it (Haigh & Anthony, 2012).

Relevant literature highlights challenges of various kinds faced by novice teachers; such as inadequate preparation which can lead to reality shock and isolation, the theory practice gap etc. Teacher preparation programs have been criticized for being too theoretical and not equipping students with the basic repertoire of practical skills of teaching; such as how to plan and implement the curriculum within their classrooms (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

### **3.5 Newly Qualified Teachers**

#### **3.5.1 Terminology**

The definition of novice teachers varies from country to country. In some places novice teachers are referred to as NQTs; meaning those who have recently graduated from higher education. Strong (2009), uses the term 'beginning teachers'

and asserts that in some places it refers to first year teachers only; in other countries it denotes teachers in their first two or three years as professional educators. In South Africa the term 'novice teachers' refers to NQTs who have been teaching for less than five (5) years. Arends and Phurutse (2009), state that beginning teachers are defined as NQTs who have recently joined the profession and have less than four years of teaching experience. This review of relevant literature reveals that there are two dominant terms for NQTs: one based on years of service and, the other upon the date on which qualifications were attained. This study considered NQTs in terms of experience of less than five years and what the first year of that teaching period was like. In terms of learning to teach, two methods are discussed in the literature: mentoring and induction. Mentoring is seen as a bridge (Ingersol & Strong, 2011), while Steyn (2004), identifies it as an on-going process and Feiman-Nemser (2001), regards it as a transition for training and real-world practice.

### **3.5.2 Expectations of the NQT**

A significant body of literature on teacher training, formation and induction shows that the transition from teacher education to actual professional practice is often a frustrating and difficult process (Schollaert, 2011). A great deal of the disjunction and disorientation felt by NQTs results from the sudden shift in role in this transitional period: the ST changes into a NQT within months; from being taught to teaching others. The NQT suddenly has the full-time responsibilities of a teacher, multiple expectations and the need to reconcile the gap between what was learnt in theory at university and what was experienced in practice.

NQTs need to be allowed time to grow; it can take between three to five years for NQTs to become effective practitioners (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1995). Teachers who are regarded as experienced and effective are expected to remain current in their knowledge and skills through continuous development (Bak, 2010). From the time they enter the profession, NQTs assume full-scale and full-time responsibilities; similar to those of their more experienced colleagues. But NQTs are in the process of learning to become teachers and improving their practice. The expectations placed upon them are unrealistic

(Tikkle, 2002) Issues of didactic competence, authority and effective classroom management continue to plague NQTs and impact upon practice. Ligadu (2012) cites Hargreaves and Fullan's observations that learning to teach has become more complex and multifaceted; noting that teachers are tasked with integrating information and communication technologies and managing a diversity of learners, from different backgrounds and with special needs, as well as considerable administrative duties. Feiman-Nemser (2001), maintains that it is erroneous (i) to consider NQTs as competent professionals who need no more than to refine existing skills and (ii) to treat their learning needs as a deficiency in training, because there are some aspects of the teaching profession that cannot be learnt outside the classroom itself.

### **3.5.3 Induction and mentoring of NQTs**

Induction and mentoring can be regarded as important processes employed by schools to provide support and guidance to NQTs adapting to the formal environment of teaching. There are many different definitions of teacher induction and mentoring. The following are some of the examples of the definitions in the relevant literature. Killeavy (2006) refers to the induction phase "as a bridge between initial or pre-service teacher educations". Killeavy highlights the advantages of the induction phase; by stating that induction provides a supportive space for NQTs to analyse and evaluate their practice, seek assistance and engage in critical dialogue with colleagues. Steyn (2004) refers to teacher induction "as an on-going process which includes both formal and informal elements of socialisation and professional development, extending from pre-service training into the teaching profession". Feiman-Nemser (2001) refers to induction, "as a transition from pre-service preparation to practice, from a student of teaching to a teacher of students". Based on the above definitions of induction, it is evident that schools have an essential role to play in developing and assisting NQTs; by providing an environment, in which NQTs can learn the craft survive and succeed as seasoned teachers.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This chapter discusses pre-service teachers as well as NQTs, and the knowledge bases and competencies for effective teaching. This chapter emphasises the importance of PCK as the overarching knowledge base for all of the others. The chapter begins with a presentation of the conceptual framework that was used for both the collection and analysis of the data. The PCK summit consensus model then becomes crucial to understanding the connectedness of all the elements as mentioned above, that is, teacher beliefs, knowledge bases and classroom practices and contexts which impact the ways in which NQTs experience teaching. This in turn can then be linked back to their ITE programs and the impact of said programs on how NQTs develop.

This literature review identifies factors that, according to recent research, inhibit or support NQTs' ability to implement what they have learnt in their teacher education. Well-developed PCK is likely to lead to better TP. This research seeks to add to the body of research on teacher knowledge and development, especially NQTs in a South African context and how this impacts on their practice.

Well-developed PCK attests to the effective integration of various knowledge bases. Effective teaching requires the teacher to be proficient in all of these knowledge bases in order to be regarded as having well-developed PCK. Knowing and understanding the above helps with answering the research question of this thesis, as PCK is embedded within knowledge bases which form the foundations of the coursework in ITE programs. It is what is embodied in these ITE programs that inform classroom practices. In the next chapter, a discussion will follow that presents the methodology at play in this thesis.

## **Chapter 4: Research Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter sets out and explains the conceptualisation, design and application of the research methodology and methods that were used to generate data for this study. A research design, according to Babbie and Mouton (2015:74), is a blueprint of how the researcher intends to conduct the research. In this study the research design comprises the research paradigm, research methods, research questions and sampling, research instruments, access to the research site, validity, reliability and trustworthiness, ethical issues and study limitations. A mixed method research design which focused on a longitudinal cohort study method was selected and adapted to suit the parameters of this investigation. Although a mixed method design was selected, more data from qualitative methods were used during the presentation of findings. This was due to the adoption of an interpretive paradigm. From the methods, in-depth rich data were gathered about the pre-service teachers' perceptions of their ITE, and from NQTs about their viewpoints and teaching practices.

This chapter details the methodological approach selected and adapted to answer the following research question, in what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor of Education programme, support NQTs in their practices in the classroom? The formulation of this question required intense examination of the focus area and was intended to examine the process of learning to teach. This was done in a two pronged manner. Firstly, the views of student teachers in terms of their learning experience during their undergraduate education programme were gauged. Secondly, what NQTs' views were of their Bachelor programme in light of their first year in the classroom was determined.

### **4.2 The interpretive paradigm**

“Qualitative research may be conducted in an interpretive way that relies on multiple types of subjective data and investigates people in particular situations in their natural environments” (Christensen et al. 2011). The genesis of the research

questions during the study is congruent with qualitative criteria research: given its focus on exploring phenomena (Christensen et al. 2011). This study was located within an interpretative paradigm which scrutinizes the knowledge base that NQTs bring to their professional practice in learning to teach. In adopting an interpretative stance, this study evokes an overtly subjective appreciation of information gathering. There are “great endeavours to get inside the person and to understand the person from within” (Cohen et al., 2011). An interpretative design enables a “researcher to gain new insights about a particular phenomenon, develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon and discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon” (Cohen et al., 2011). Choosing an interpretative paradigm was pertinent to this study which seeks to assess, interpret and reflect upon, the experiences of NQTs.

Interpretivist paradigms study “individuals who possess many characteristics, different human behaviours, opinions, and attitudes” (Cohen et al., 2011). The primary focus of qualitative methods is on the evidence that enhances the understanding of a researcher about the issues under study. By adopting and adapting an interpretive paradigm, this study can perceive a situation from different perspectives and seek solutions to problems in multifaceted ways. The purpose of epistemology in an interpretive paradigm is to gain new knowledge; by exploring the phenomena from different angles. In this important respect the social context is unlike that of natural science. The philosophical viewpoint of this study is aligned with interpretivist epistemology, subjectivist or constructionist ontology and qualitative methodology; used to produce and analyse narrative and numeric forms of data as they arose in the course of fieldwork, compilation of the literature review and formulation of questions.

### **4.3 Research Design**

There are two main research approaches which may be used in the collection of data in a research project in the Social Sciences; the quantitative method, which collects numerical data, and qualitative research that gathers non-numerical data to answer a given research question (Christensen et al., 2011). A mixed methods approach was used for this study, to answer questions more effectively and

efficiently. According to Orb and Eisenhauer and Wynaden (as cited in Amakali, 2013), qualitative research serves the purpose of describing a phenomenon from the participants' point of view through interviews. The use of the data collected aims to shed light on these teachers' perceptions of learning to teach and how this supports their classroom practice. The complexity of researching teacher perceptions of their ITE first as students then retrospectively as newly qualified teachers in their first year of teaching led the researcher to choose a mixed-methods approach. Creswell (2012) identified the mixed-method approach as appropriate when conducting research of a complex nature where the researcher believes both quantitative and qualitative measures will provide a more accurate and complete picture. The study did rely heavily on the qualitative aspects of the research and used the quantitative data as a way to first, get an overview of the cohort in question, and secondly, to supplement the qualitative data.

“Qualitative research is an interpretative research approach that relies on multiple types of subjective data and investigates people in particular situations in their natural environment” (Christensen et al., 2011:52). The primary focus of qualitative methods is on the evidence that enhances the understanding of the issues under study. According to Stephanus, (as cited in Amakali, 2013:38), “qualitative research deals with in-depth understanding of the issue being studied. It relies primarily on individuals who are able to provide data about their experiences and it works appropriately with small numbers of people”. According to Chipangura (2013:23), qualitative research produces “more in-depth and comprehensive information; uses subjective information and participant observation to give a description of the context being studied and provides various ways in which data can be analysed”. Qualitative research permits the data to unfold in a natural manner; together with acceptable and detailed information in the form of a comprehensive written description. Qualitative research enhances the examination of complex questions which are not entirely perceptible by using quantitative methods.

A qualitative method collates, compares and contrasts participants' observations, in-depth interviews or focus groups to collect a range of subjectively-based data and search out contradictions, obvious similarities and the natural emergence of unexpected patterns (Babbie & Mouton, as cited in Khomba, 2011). Given its



inherently subjective nature, qualitative research relies upon inferences, silences and suggestions that lie behind the texts and dialogues of the participants being studied; and it often recruits a small number of research participants in the research process, thus making it suitable for the in-depth gathering of information that is required for a study of this nature (Hofstee, as cited in Khomba, 2011). This methodology was selected to undertake an investigation of NQTs' experiences in order to ascertain the support of ITE programmes in their classroom practices. This methodology provides rich information surrounding the phenomenon under review.

The supplementary quantitative component of this study creates scope for plausible general statements or predictions about the perceptions of student teachers regarding their experiences in learning to teach in the first part of the research. The quantitative components supplement the main study which is largely qualitative. The reason for combining methods in this particular study was to add scope and breadth to the findings. The intention of collecting data is to assess, collate and examine participants' perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings, experiences and teaching strategies; in an attempt to reconstruct their construction of the phenomenon of learning to teach.

Qualitative and quantitative researchers in the social sciences undertake investigations to elicit perceptions in connection with their experiences of different social phenomena (Rowley, 2014). The questionnaires in the current research were used to elicit NQTs' perceptions of their ITE during their final year before professional practice. The data in the questionnaire was also used for the researchers' preparation and understanding of the cohort, as well as to support the research.

#### **4.4 Research strategy**

The practice of learning to teach, and of becoming a teacher, is a complicated and difficult process to define. There is no single, pre-determined or correct way to learn to teach. The process is constantly changing; even after student teachers have completed their qualification. The recognition of the notion of the process of becoming a teacher implies inherent progression. Student teachers acquire content

knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge for various subjects during lectures at university. Teaching practice experience is the situated application of theory to practice; in the process of “learning to teach”. Change over time is a longitudinal phenomenon. Utilizing a longitudinal study allows for observation of the same participants in a transitional phase; from ST to NQT, from learner to professional (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond & McCroskey, 2008).

Learning to teach is a longitudinal phenomenon which requires longitudinal observation and assessment to track the gradual changes and alterations that take place over time. Roth (1999) explains that researchers interested in the practical teaching component of a programme often use longitudinal studies which employ continuous or repeated measures to follow particular individuals over prolonged periods of time, often years or decades. They are generally observational in nature, with quantitative and/or qualitative data being collected on any combination of exposures and outcomes, without any external influenced being applied. This study tracks, monitors and defines change over an extended period of time. Data were collected at various stages over a two-year period; providing multi-wave data for analytical purposes. (See appendix F for a graphic representation of data).

#### **4.5 Sample and target population**

Sampling (Landrenau as cited in Chipangura, 2013:24) refers to “a process of selecting a portion of the population in your research area which will be a representation of the whole population”. A study population is described as “that aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected” (Babbie & Mouton, 2015:174). Creswell (2012:142) defines a population as “a group that has the same characteristics”. By examining these factors, it can be concluded that a population is a group of subjects in which a particular study is being conducted.

Nghaamwa 2013 defines a sample as a portion of elements taken from a population which is considered to be representative of the population. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), sampling in qualitative research derives from where a particular group is identified, and are aware that it does not represent the total population; rather it simply represents itself. Purposeful sampling was selected in this

study. Purposeful sampling is concerned with the identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals who are especially knowledgeable about, or experienced with, a phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2012). “Purposive sampling occurs when the researcher specifies the characteristics of the population of interest and then locates individuals who match the characteristics” (Christensen 2011:159). This finding correlates with Patton (as cited in Creswell, 2012:206) who asserts that “in purposeful sampling, researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon. The standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are information rich”. This sampling method is suitable for this study because the focus was solely on teachers who have been in the profession for just a year.

My study used purposive sampling, as it sought NQTs who had done the undergraduate Bachelor of Education in a Western Cape campus. The institution used in this study is one of four main Universities in the Western Cape providing ITE. This site was selected as it is one of the ‘traditional’ universities with an education faculty offering ITE. The NQTs who were enrolled at this institution suited the focus of this research which sought to understand the ways in which learning to teach at such an institute supports NQTs classroom practices. The full-time NQTs at the various schools in the city of Cape Town who had attended the same ITE programme were identified as a potential population for this study. In order to be part of the population, the newly qualified teachers had to be full-time teachers in their first year of teaching. The NQTs were first approached during lectures in their fourth year of their Bachelor program and agreed to participate.

It was essential to interview them in their final year of their Bachelor program as they had the most recent and total experience of, and exposure to, both the coursework and practicum experiences from the initial learning to teach experience. The intention of the proposed study was to garner the views of student teachers in terms of their learning experience in a Bachelor programme and then to find out their views about their Bachelor program experience in light of their first year in the classroom. Participants were all drawn from a single B.Ed. program in the Western Cape.

The cohort numbered sixty-seven in total of the 4<sup>th</sup> years and all sixty-seven answered the questionnaires which was set up to gain some descriptive and general information about the group: this was the initial data collected from the group during their final year of ITE and the only quantitative data in this study. From the cohort of sixty-seven, focus group interviews were conducted with a smaller group of seven student teachers. These focus group interviews were conducted in the beginning of their final year and towards the second half of the year. Once the cohort qualified and began teaching in their first posts, four agreed to participate in the study and thus group interviews were conducted with them. Once again, there were two focus group interviews, one done in the first half of the year and the other in the second half of the year.

The set of criteria outlined were the basis of selecting teachers as participants in this study:

- A full-time, first year teacher
- Graduated from the same ITE programme
- Were willing to participate.

The teachers selected for the study are all teachers situated in the education districts of the Western Cape Education Department in the Western Cape. The reason for these choices was that the researcher is familiar with the area. The four NQTs who participated in the study were teaching at schools classed between quintiles 3 and 5. The quintile system assigned all government schools into one of five categories; with quintile 1 schools designating the poorest institutions, while quintile 5 denoted the most affluent public schools. The quintile to which a school was assigned was based on the rates of income, unemployment and illiteracy within the school's catchment area.

I then drew my sample from that cohort that were prepared in foundation phase teaching and who were willing to participate as NQTs. The persons selected as research participants were chosen for their suitability in advancing the purpose of the research. The students enrolled for the Foundation Phase programme were all female. The Foundation Phase programme prepares them to teach in Grades R to Grade 3. They were representative of the three language groups in the Western

Cape; English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. After official written permission to proceed with the study was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department (see Appendix A), various teachers were approached for their permission to partake in the project. Permission was received from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (see Appendix B).

#### **4.6 Data collection methods**

Data collection can be defined as “the process whereby information is gathered and measured on variables of interests in an established systematic fashion that enables the answering of stated research questions, test hypothesis and evaluate outcomes” Nghaamwa (2013:30). Data collection methods for qualitative research indicate there is direct contact with people on a one-on-one basis, or a direct interaction with the selected individuals in a group location (Hancock as cited in Chipangura (2013:23). The term ‘method of data collection’, refers to the way the researcher obtains the empirical data to answer the research question (Christensen et al., 2011).

The researcher chose the qualitative method from various procedures for acquiring information. There is no single prescription for which data collection instruments to use; rather the choice of instrument is guided by ‘fitness for purpose’ (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011:235). In this study, some information from the questionnaires was paired with focus group interviews conducted when NQTs were in their last year of their ITE; and then again during their first year of teaching. The quantitative stage of the data collection followed a questionnaire survey design which, according to Creswell (2003:153), “provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitude, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population”.

Mouton (2001) indicates that questionnaires are appropriate tools when one needs to make more general statements about larger populations. (See appendices G & H). These were used as the means of collecting data from the participants. The questionnaire administered gathered biographical information that could be used to gain an understanding of the cohort in general before selecting the participants for the focus groups.

#### 4.6.1 Questionnaires

Rule & John (2011), state that questionnaires are printed sets of field questions to which participants respond on their own, self-administered way or in the presence of the researcher. The questionnaires used a four-point Likert scale with categories: strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, agree=3, strongly disagree=4. The reason for using a four-point Likert scale rather than the standard five-point Likert scale is because the five-point scale includes a neutral category which is not relevant to this study. The questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics; to determine whether the classroom practices including PCK are influenced by such factors as race, gender and other variables. It should be noted here that these variables provided the researcher with valuable background information of the cohort; although such variables were not of themselves what the study sought to define. The questionnaires focussed on two broad aspects:

- Questionnaire 1: Experiences relating to the academic programme.
- Questionnaire 2: Teaching practice and confidence to teach.

Though questionnaires that were issued to the student teachers in their final year of ITE covered a variety of aspects, only some aspects of Questionnaire 1 relating to their experiences of the academic program and Questionnaire 2, relating to their experiences of teaching practice and their confidence to teach, were used to complement the findings.

This study is based upon material from a set of questionnaires administered to a cohort of student teachers at an ITE institution in Cape Town. The class numbered 102 in total but only 67 completed the questionnaire. This was done to gain a clearer idea of what a cohort of people in foundation phase stated in their questionnaires about learning to teach and their classroom practices. Some of the questions covered in the questionnaire that were of particular importance to the study were as follows: teacher beliefs, teaching strategies, aspects of PCK for foundation phase teaching, issues of language teaching learned in ITE that were useful for classroom practice in the first year of teaching. The data provides a rich, in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under review. (See appendix G attached). The collection of data

began during the participants' final year of ITE. The collection of data continued into their first year of teaching for at least nine months. (See appendix H).

#### **4.6.2 Focus group Interviews**

Yin (2011:135), drawing on Benner, maintains that research interviews aim at understanding interviewees "on their own terms and how they make meaning of their own lives, experiences, and cognitive process." The underlying concern is that research interviews enable participants to engage in conversations about, and interpretations of, their lived experiences and to express their own viewpoints (Cohen et al., 2000). Creswell (2012) describes a focus group interview as the process of collecting data through interviews with a particular group of people; typically four to six, of whom the researcher asks a small number of general questions and elicits responses from all individuals in the group. The aim of the focus group is not to achieve absolute consensus about, or solutions to, the issues discussed, but to highlight different viewpoints on an issue, to highlight contradictions or inconsistencies.

An instrument was designed to guide the discussion in the focus groups. Amongst the issues probed are such matters as the challenges of constructing knowledge in the classroom or application of learning from ITE in terms of language teaching. (See appendix 2 attached). A main strength of a focus group is the inter-participant interaction that generates group data and valuable insights. Cohen et al. (2011) argue that the planned nature of focus groups makes them artificial in a sense but the benefits outweigh artificiality for giving insights that may not have been possible from other types of interviews; encouraging groups rather than individuals to express views; being economical with time; and producing substantial amounts of data in a short time.

Notable demerits of a focus group discussion, however, are that the emergence of a group culture and group dynamics may impede individual expression and result in suppression of dissenting voices. The discussions may be dominated by one person; resulting in one voice being heard over others (Cohen et al., 2011). Focus groups can be difficult to schedule; data gathered may be difficult to analyse and may not be

generalizable. Four participants purposively drawn from the initial sample of participants used in the focus group interviews from 2016 took part in the focus group discussions of 2017.

Morgan, cited by Cohen et al. (2011), suggests several factors to consider in running focus groups. Among these are the number of groups for a topic and the size of the group. He contends that a group size of four to twelve participants is ideal. So, the group size used in this study was within the acceptable range: it allowed for diversity of views. Participants were drawn from different schools in different socio-economic areas. This variety of backgrounds enhanced the success of the group discussions (Cohen et al., 2011); several contextual issues emerged from the process. The same process that was followed for the student teachers was also followed with the NQTs.

Two focus group interviews were conducted with the student teachers. The first one was conducted in the first half of the year and the second focus group interview was conducted in the second half of the year. An effort was made to ensure that the interviews would be about an hour long in order to avoid fatigue and boredom. The spacing of the interviews allowed participants to reflect on their ITE; especially with regards to learning to teach. The interview guide had open-ended questions. The main advantage of open-ended questions was that they allowed participants to reveal their own perspectives. Development of the schedule was informed by the literature review and advice from colleagues. The second interview was conducted at a time when participants were at the end of their ITE and were in a better position to reflect on, and discuss, their experiences more elaborately.

The same process was followed in 2017. The first session was conducted early on in the beginning of their first year of teaching. The focus group interviews were a little longer because the groups were smaller; which made for richer data collection. The second and final data collection session was conducted towards the end of NQTs' first year. This allowed the researcher to observe the development of the participants; especially with regards to their PCK growth over time. Participants were eloquent in their explanations of their classroom experiences of learning to teach. All the interviews began with an explanation on the purpose of the interview and issues pertaining to ethical considerations. The beginning teachers were given an



opportunity to ask any questions they had about the study and their role in it. Efforts were made to ensure that the interviews were conducted in amenable environments which were free of noise and provided some privacy. Each of the interviews was tape/audio recorded; after seeking permission from each participant at the onset of the interview to tape the interview. During the interview the interviewer took notes where necessary. All the interviews were later transcribed.

#### **4.7 Data Analysis**

Flick (2014:5), defines qualitative data analysis as “the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it”. Individuals attach meanings to their responses which could be either subjective or social. Analysis of qualitative data attempts to realise and define topics in a specific environment and in terms of certain activities. The aim is to attain generalizable declarations through the comparison of different material. When the process of data collection was over, the raw data were processed: questionnaires through MS Excel and focus group interviews were transcribed. Transcription is the process of transforming interview notes and audio recording into texts (Johnson & Christiansen, 2012). Thematic analysis was used to organize the transcribed data.

The analysis of data through identification of themes, patterns and categories is known broadly as qualitative content analysis (Grbich, 2007), and more specifically as thematic analysis when the descriptive approach is utilised. Thematic organization and analysis is the process that identifies analyses and reports upon the occurrence of themes in the data collected from the research areas. Thematic analysis may be defined as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006) that is often selected because of the potential for use as a flexible and useful research tool. The thematic analysis of content renders rich, detailed accounts of the data that are complex in nature (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Qualitative research requires consideration of context and particularities and is, therefore, particularly suitable for the investigation of a practice, such as teaching. Holland, Thompson and Henderson (2006:1), explain that “qualitative longitudinal research is predicated on the investigation and interpretation of change over time and process in social contexts”. Qualitative data sets consisted

of documents such as transcripts of the focus group interviews. A process of qualitative documentary or content analysis was chosen after considerable reflection, reading and testing.

Qualitative thematic content analysis was chosen for its capacity to “unobtrusively explore large amounts of textual information in order to ascertain the trends and patterns of words” (Grbich, 2007:112), and for its suitability for use in the analysis of varied modes of textual information (Flick, 2014 & Grbich, 2007). Qualitative content analysis is a well-documented method of analysis involving the coding and categorising of material, with the support of a theoretical framework. The SPSS for Win XP computer package was used for organisation and analysis of data. This instrument was specially chosen so that it could be used for a large number of statistics teachers. The percentage of variables in each category clarified the frequency of each variable highlighting if there was further need for attention on specific issues. Converting data to a percentage is one way of using absolute frequencies.

#### **4.8 Trustworthiness of Data**

A crucial aspect of qualitative research, in respect of its usefulness and the integrity of the findings, is trustworthiness which speaks to the “truth value” and the “transparency of the conduct of the study” (Connelly, 2016:435). Researchers are required to set out the procedures and criteria used in the study; for the research to be classified as trustworthy. A transparent explication of protocols comprises a valuable form of quality control because transparent methodology shows that the investigation was conducted in an open and ethically responsible manner. Findings can be trusted and add to the existing body of knowledge if the means of gathering information is made clear at the start of the research project. Credibility is enhanced by scrutinising the data, data analysis, and conclusions to see whether or not the study is correct and accurate. This double check is one method used by qualitative researchers to establish trustworthiness. Connelly (2016:435) describes credibility as “the confidence in the truth of the study” and identifies techniques used by researchers to establish credibility: “prolonged engagement with participants, persistent observation if appropriate to the study, peer-debriefing, member-checking,

and reflective journaling”. In the case of this study, peer-debriefing was one of the methods most often used. As this study takes from a much bigger study, peers involved in the bigger study were consulted to ensure trustworthiness.

In qualitative studies, transferability denotes whether the research results can be reliably applied or transferred to other contexts and settings. Connelly (2016:436), explains that qualitative researchers “focus on the informants and their story without saying this is everyone’s story” and support the study’s transferability with “a rich, detailed description of the context, location, and people studied, and by being transparent about analysis and trustworthiness”. In qualitative research, the term ‘dependability’ refers to “the stability of the data over time and over the conditions of the study. It is similar to reliability in quantitative research, but with the understanding [that] stability of conditions depends on the nature of the study” (Connelly, 2016:435). Connelly suggests that procedures for dependability include maintenance of an audit trail of process logs and peer-debriefings with a colleague. An audit of sort was conducted in terms of the bigger study and only after this was done, the researcher was able to ensure that data used from the bigger study had undergone rigorous inspection thus ensuring trustworthiness. This study diverged from traditional approaches to qualitative analysis which proposes that data collection and analysis often take place simultaneously; in order to remain objective.

Analysis of evaluation reports commenced after the two-year period of collection. The project aimed to build rapport with participants through prolonged engagement; in order to access detailed and reliable data. The above processes were used to ensure trustworthiness and reliability of data gathered for the study.

#### **4.8 Researcher’s Position**

Positionality is important when negotiating acceptance and when conducting studies such as these. Considering the lens used in this qualitative study, the background and prior experiences of the researcher had to be acknowledged and minimized. The research took pains to be reflective of her background each time interviews were

conducted and reflective on the kinds of questions asked and included in the study. Qualitative research is interactive and attains its own distinctive form, shape and argument as patterns emerge in the data. The questions that emerge and the paths that are followed, depend on what emerges as contradictory, markedly similar or suddenly significant. In collection and analysis of data, the interpretative framework acted as a lens for observing and collating data. Although the researcher was inevitably influenced by personal values and beliefs, past experiences and own opinions, all biases were accounted for and monitored in this study as far as possible; to minimise the influence of personal bias upon the development, argument and findings of the study.

#### **4.9 Limitations**

Limitations are factors that necessarily constrain the study and which are generally out of the control of the researcher. The methods of the study and its design were limited to one university. The study sought to define the experiences of a selected cohort of participants; by assessing their views of the ITE programs they completed first as final-year STs and later as NQTs in their first year of teaching. The data collection, analysis, results and findings may not be transferable to other universities, and are not necessarily applicable to other teaching subjects. This study considered newly qualified teachers who had gone through a Bachelor programme only: the results and insights gleaned from this study do not apply to those students who become teachers through other types of programmes such as the PGCE or through the Diploma course. This study does nevertheless provide important insights that can be transferred with caution to other campuses and/or programmes. In qualitative research, according to Harland (as cited in Chipangura, 2013) the researcher's induced bias may be difficult to avoid or detect; the research findings unavoidably incorporate or at least reflect a degree of bias.

There are further limitations to this study. The questionnaire does not state anything in particular about a specific teacher but captures, summarizes and interprets the views of a large cohort of people; this study cannot reflect all the individually-held views of the teachers being interviewed. Another limitation is that, in terms of the study, the sample chosen is limited to those who have jobs as teachers in foundation

phase; especially those teaching language and those who agreed to be part of the study.

#### **4.10 Ethical considerations**

Ethics implies a set of moral standards accepted and employed by a community of people to regulate the conduct of individual members. Ethical standards are used to distinguish what is good from what is unacceptable behaviour (Siseho, 2013). According to Bailey, Hennink and Hutter (2011), ethical issues have the following aspects:

1. Informed consent. Individuals should be provided with sufficient information about the research, in a format that is comprehensible to them, and they need to make a voluntary decision to participate in a research study.
2. Self-determination. Individuals have the right to determine their own participation in research, including the right to refuse participation and withdraw at any time.
3. Minimization of harm. Researchers should not harm participants or put them at risk.
4. Anonymity. Researchers should protect the identity of research participants at all times.
5. Confidentiality. Researchers should ensure that all data records are kept confidential at all times.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:70), state that informed consent entails informing the research participants about the overall purpose of the investigation and the main features of the design, as well as of any possible risks and benefits from participation in the research projects. Informed consent involves obtaining the voluntary participation of those individuals involved, and informing them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Permission had to be obtained from all ten of the NQTs who participated in this study, and was obtained. (See appendix D attached). The aim was to seek their consent, ensure voluntary participation and provision of information, as well as to grant them enough free room to withdraw from the research participation at any time they wished.

Plowright (2011) posits that there are issues linked with how the researcher manages the data collected. Confidentiality and anonymity are important factors to take into account once the data have been collected, stored and analysed. Confidentiality and anonymity were stringently respected during the process of data collection, storage and during analysis of the data. Only my supervisor and I had access to any documentation used in this study.

Researching teaching and learning in primary schools is a sensitive matter and involves ethical issues. The Department of Education, parents and teacher organizations in South Africa are wary of who observes teachers during teaching and for what purpose. To overcome potential challenges, I adhered to the Faculty of Education, Cape Peninsula University of Technology Research Ethics Guidelines. I stated explicitly that this study was about the experiences of NQTs learning to teach, and that it was not about evaluating or judging the quality of their teaching. I ensured that the participants had received a full disclosure of the nature of my study, the risks, benefits and alternatives. I provided opportunities for them to ask questions at any stage of this study. It was crucial that I clearly explained the goal of my study and provided detailed accounts of data I wished to collect, the processes I would engage with and what benefit it would bring about without injuring or damaging participants' dignity (Cohen et al., 2011).

#### **4.11 Conclusion of Chapter**

The purpose of this mixed method study was learning in what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor program support NQTs in their classroom practices. This study was framed within an interpretative paradigm. Data were drawn from questionnaires and focus group interviews. The participants had completed questionnaires which formed the quantitative data used in the study to compliment the qualitative focus group interviews. Content and thematic analysis was used. This study adds to the cumulative knowledge base about ST and NQT attitudes to ITE training. Having elucidated the methodology that went into this study, the next chapter then delves into a thorough discussion of the findings and how these relate to the research questions.

## **Chapter 5: Findings and Discussion**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the data gathered in accordance with the methodology defined in the previous chapter; in order to answer the research question: in what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor programme, support newly qualified teachers in their practices in the classroom. This will be achieved by examining student teachers' experiences of their initial teacher education in preparing them to teach. The second section outlines data collected from a sample of those same student teachers in their first year of teaching. The data presented in this chapter represent perceptions of those who participated in the study.

The evidence from the data gathered over two years entails, qualitative and quantitative data from questionnaires of student teachers' experiences as well as focus group interviews in their final year; and focus group interviews with NQTs. The goal of gathering the data collected is to acquire a sense of the NQTs' experiences of learning to teach.

The chapter will show findings for the two sub-questions that have guided the study:

- What are the views of student teachers related to their learning experience in a Bachelor programme?
- What are the views of NQTs about their B.Ed. program experience in light of their 1st year in the classroom?

The data are drawn from the questionnaires and focus group interviews as outlined in chapter four. The chapter is divided into themed sections.

The chapter begins with a section that will focus on student teachers' experiences during their ITE. The chapter moves on to focus on newly qualified teachers teaching experiences in their classrooms in light of their training. Lastly, the chapter will focus on consolidating the experiences of student teachers and newly qualified teachers. Reporting of results is done according to the structure which has been described in the research methods. Data were analysed, described and synthesized or compared with the literature reviewed. Evidence from two different stages in the process of

learning to teach; first as student teachers and then, once they qualify, as newly qualified teachers are thus presented in the chapter.

When examining participants' comments (both as student teachers and newly qualified teachers) and grouping them according to common categories and themes, it was discovered that they articulated an assortment of experiences. After analysing participants' responses, three prevalent themes emerged: the knowledge and skills developed during coursework of the initial teacher program; the teaching practicum and its influences and the development of a professional identity. In the section devoted to NQTs, the first two themes are the same; only from different vantage points. The third theme in the NQT portion is the influence of school context and culture and the development of a professional identity as a teacher. In section one, these themes came up in discussion with the student teachers as being the most salient on how they reflected on their initial teacher education program and readiness to teach. In section two, these themes were prevalent as they reflected how their teacher education impacts their classroom practice.

## **5.2 Student teachers' views of their learning experience**

### **5.2.1 Theme 1: Knowledge and skills developed through the coursework**

The first context for learning to teach is the university or campus-based experience. The understood goal was that the university would provide the theory, skills and knowledge; and the school was to provide the context for applying, practising and integrating these theories, skills and knowledge (Allen, 2009). The decision to teach represents the student teachers' first perception of their concept of teaching. Before they decided to enrol in a teaching degree, the student teachers had to report on what they knew about teaching and what their expectations of the program were. "Identifying the extent of student teachers' skills and knowledge about teaching is important for both student teachers and teacher educators. A sense of their confidence about aspect of teachers' work is important for student teachers because it can highlight areas where they need further skills and professional development" (Naylor, 2015). All the student teachers in this study reported multiple reasons for



wanting to teach and varying expectations of their ITE. In the focus group interviews they did indicate whether they learnt any specific skill but acknowledged the exposure to the teaching practice process in terms of theory as an example. Here are two instances of student teachers' beliefs about teaching and their expectations.

#### 5.2.1.1 Sub- theme 1: Preparedness to teach

In this sub-theme, preparedness to teach relates to how they feel that their coursework has imparted the knowledge and skills necessary to equip them for the classroom. Additionally, this could also include what the STs felt could have been either added to their ITE or expanded upon for better clarity. As the STs were at the end of the four year program, on the cusp of heading into classrooms of their own, determining their levels of preparedness to teach then becomes essential to this study's research question.

*ST1 – I feel quite prepared to walk into a classroom next year. I know it is going to be overwhelming I must work and I might fail a few times but I also know if I'd just sit down I have all the theoretical knowledge behind me and I have all the clips that teachers were given. Also my experience is going to help with the confidence and I really feel like they [lecturers] have tried their best to prepare us.”*

This student teacher was positive about the experience, especially with reference to the university's influence in her relating the theory into practice. She indicated that her bachelor program prepared her for the classroom and that she would be able to cope with the dynamics within that context. She also mentioned that like everyone else she was also a little scared of the idea of being alone in her own class and having to do things by herself but she realised that all new teachers would feel like that in their first year of teaching. Ultimately she was confident and excited about the next year and was even anxious to try out her skills on her own.

Others students echoed her

*ST2- " I think all the more, we are all the more ready here and I feel like whatever we got taught in class was like you said a new way of thinking and I found out the way I would teach especially during practical's"*

*ST 5– “My whole beliefs changed as well like, I thought you just walk into the class, you teach you do your thing and that's it. But now I see there's more.*

*There's a lot of theory that actually backs up what they're doing in class and we learnt a lot about child development which helped a lot because we learnt about all the differences that a child might have and how to teach diverse classrooms".*

Student teachers' knowledge of the CAPS curriculum and child development proved to be among the highest as being useful or very useful. Relatively, most of the student teachers indicated that teaching for inclusive education to be very useful at 33 (64%). Following closely behind this was the content knowledge for foundation phase teaching at (51%). On pedagogical content knowledge for foundation phase subjects, again the number here is quite high; meaning most student teachers found this very useful too, at 24 (48%). The last item they were questioned about related to teaching in a multilingual setting, and here the number is lower at 20 (40%) of the student teachers found this useful.

	Not at all		Somewhat Useful		Useful		Very Useful	
	Frq	V/P %	Frq	V/P %	Frq	V/P %	Frq	V %
Content Knowledge for Foundation Phase subjects	1	1.9	2	3.8	23	43.4	27	51
Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Foundation Phase subject	0	0.0	4	8.0	22	44.0	24	48
Knowledge of the CAPS curriculum	0	0.0	6	11.3	22	41.5	25	47
Child development	0	0.0	4	7.4	10	18.5	40	74
Learner assessment	0	0.0	6	11.5	18	34.6	28	54
ICT (information and communication technology) skills	6	11.5	14	26.9	21	40.4	11	21
Classroom management	2	4.0	7	14.0	22	44.0	19	38.0
Teaching for inclusive education	0	0.0	2	3.8	17	32.7	33	64
Teaching in a multilingual setting	2	4.0	8	16.0	20	40.0	20	40.0
Integrated teaching and learning	0	0.0	9	18.0	16	32.0	25	50.0

**Table 5.1: Aspects of knowledge and skills developed Q1 Experiences related to the academic programme (B.Ed.): N= 58**

This suggests by and large that their Bachelor programme adequately prepared them to teach. This is an indication that in spite of the comments by student teachers who participated in the focus group interviews, the quantitative data indicates that

most of the student teachers found their courses during ITE to have usefully developed their knowledge and skills to prepare them to teach and that the main area of deficiency is being prepared for multilingual teaching. However, not all shared the same views. There were some student teachers who said they would not be able to implement their knowledge and skills as taught in their coursework portion of their program. This is what they articulated:

*ST6- "I had the expectation that we are actually going to work with children and everything and then the first year we had subjects that I won't even teach in the foundation phase"*

*ST5 – "I'm still a bit nervous also I feel like we learnt a lot and obviously had a lot of opportunities, but I feel like the subjects aren't really equally weighed. So I feel a lot more confident to teach certain areas than other areas, like I feel confident to teach Math because our lecturer gave us a sound knowledge of what to do where I actually feel like my home language lessons I don't know more about conducting these lessons".*

*ST2 – "I came to university to get a theoretical base because I taught for four years before I came to university. What I realised is that university doesn't prepare you for running a classroom, it gives you a lot of content and theory to back-up what you're supposed to be doing, but there's a lot of things that I feel you can only get in practice".*

Other than these three cases, in general the student teachers presented confidence about teaching however; it was primarily nervousness that made them less confident. The first student teacher mentioned she was prepared in general but that the first year of teaching was a wasted year as what was learnt was of no use to her classroom practice in terms of knowledge and skills. On the contrary, the second student teacher said that while she learnt a lot in her Bachelor program, her readiness in some areas was more than in others and this was due to the preparation given by the different lecturers. There were different reasons provided by the student teachers who were not confident; they indicated that some lecturers did not prepare them adequately; therefore they were not ready to teach, lacked teaching techniques and were not prepared for the classroom.

Another student teacher presented her exasperation about her ITE experience, since she comprehends and is knowledgeable but doubts herself based on what she was taught during a particular phase of the B.Ed. programme. This is her account:

*ST7 – “Yeah because this year is actually basically the first year in English were we’ve done practical stuff. The other years we’ve literally done literature, like essays and books written....(indistinct) and those kinds of things which are stimulating but not what you’re going to do in the classroom. So your fourth year is basically the first time where they’ve been saying this is how you conduct your English lessons, and this is how you do a phonics lesson, which they probably should have done from the first year.”*

She stated she did not learn relevant things in terms of exactly how to teach a language lesson, that learning this only in the final year was not acceptable as there was not enough time. There were individuals who agreed and shared the same views in terms of the first year being a waste of time, invalid and affecting them negatively. Therefore, it can be said that, in relation to preparedness to teach, the student teachers mostly felt their ITE had adequately prepared them to teach and that it was largely an issue of confidence that hampered their classroom practices. The majority noted that the influence of lecturers and the ways in which they presented subjects also impacted their classroom practices. The example given was the differences between the ways in which the English language and Afrikaans lecturers presented lectures. Here, the Afrikaans lecturer seemed to have better prepared them in comparison to the English language lecturer.

#### **5.2.1.2 Sub- theme 2: Access and relationship with lecturers**

The section focuses on data giving insight into student teacher’s views on their relationships with lecturers during the course of their ITE which affects how knowledge and skills are developed. Classically, students in this study were presented with knowledge through lectures and tutorials. Lecturers delivered content en masse in lecture theatres. Tutorials and group activities allowed knowledge to be socially constructed, with assignments and examinations being the form of assessing student teachers’ knowledge. Lecturers then become important not only in the

delivery of knowledge but in the relationships they forge with students; to the extent that it can impact both negatively and positively on student teachers. Most respondents were confident that the experience they had at university in terms of what was taught to them was more than adequate.

They indicated the frustration of their first year of studies as being a repeat of their high school subjects, but towards their final year, realised the importance of that year of establishing their subject matter knowledge; as it worked to improve their competence especially in language teaching. Most of the student teachers credit their lecturers as being well versed in their subject and in the ways in which they ensured the student teachers were prepared to teach these subjects. They expressed some frustrations regarding particular lectures of particular modules; in particular the language modules which were more a matter of the lecturers' teaching style. The majority of the student teachers felt they had sufficient knowledge and skills to step into a classroom and teach and they relate this to their lecturers and their competence.

*ST1- "I was amazed about the lecturers because it really, it, like we have really good lecturers, who have supported us through the past few years and like they had a lot of confidence I think".*

#### **5.2.1.3 Analysis and Discussion of Theme 1**

Theme 1 covered the knowledge and skills as gained from ITE by looking at two main things that is the STs' preparedness to teach which encompassed not only their actual coursework but also, the methodologies and teaching strategies and other resources they had ready to head into the classroom with them. The second thing, it covered was the STs' views of what their lecturers imparted to them and even how access to these lecturers supported them and how these could be improved upon or not in terms of future students.

Despite the growth in knowledge about the process of becoming a teacher (Caires et al., 2012), several key questions remain unanswered or have been superficially approached. Student teachers' responses to whether they felt prepared by their

teacher education programs were diverse. Teaching requires that teachers use multiple types of knowledge (Shulman 1987), as discussed in the literature review section of this thesis. As noted in work of Beck and others (2007), even when teachers felt prepared for their first teaching experience, they often highlighted areas they would need further instruction on in the midst of their first year of teaching. This is consistent with the student teachers' remarks within the current study. Student Teachers, who stated they felt prepared for their first year, also noted areas they would have liked to have received more instruction on during their teacher preparation programs.

Most of the student teachers described their campus-based experience as one of transmission delivery. The student teachers were expecting to be guided by the lecturers, the unit outlines and assignments. The majority of them stated this was the case. Most of the student teachers felt their ITE was important for learning the theory and rhetoric of teaching. Most of the student teachers reported being able to make the theory and practice links based on their campus-based experiences. During the latter part of their coursework, over half of the student teachers reported being more confident about voicing an opinion, seeking clarification, trying new methods and they were more reflective about their practice. "Teaching and learning involves teachers and pupils constructing shared meaning and understanding of the content to be learned with purposeful communication" (Bell, 2011:29).

### **5.2.2 Theme 2: The experiences of the teaching practicum and its influences**

The teaching practicum forms a part of the ITE program and as stated in the literature review, is largely regarded by students as being the most useful part of their program as it allows them to take everything they have been taught and put it in practice. There is little doubt that exposure to teaching practice in 'real time' grooms student teachers to be cognisant of various classroom situations, interacting with diverse pupils from diverse backgrounds, and developing the skills and methods required for their future work. However, teaching practice (TP) depends in many cases on the kinds of infrastructures and services that are available in the schools that student teachers enter. In schools where learners struggle with their

performance, commentators normally point to geographical location, different kinds of available educator expertise, the lack of resources, issues with discipline (Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009).

### 5.2.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Preparedness for teaching practice

This section presents the findings pertaining to the student teachers' experiences of teaching practice as it relates to knowledge and skills development. What they have learnt during teaching practice would assist them in being ready to teach. It was found that although there were mixed responses most of the student teachers indicated they were confident that teaching practice was the best part of their ITE in terms of having the opportunity to practise teaching, even though there were challenges with how they experienced teaching practice. A student teacher also understood it would take time to become an effective teacher, since the learning process does not stop subsequent to completing the B.Ed. programme. The questionnaires present data reporting the views of student teachers on their preparedness for teaching practice. This is depicted in Table 5.2 below:

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Frq	V/P %	Frq	V/P %	Frq	V %	Frq	V %
My lecturers prepared me for Teaching Practice	1	1.7	5	8.6	39	67.2	13	22.4
The number of visits from lecturers/evaluators was sufficient	6	10.3	15	25.9	29	50.0	8	13.8
Feedback I received after formal lesson evaluations was useful	3	5.2	11	19.0	23	39.7	21	36.2
Feedback I received after teaching practice was useful	37	63.8	9	15.5	1	1.7	5	8.6
The lesson design we were given for Teaching Practice by lecturers was useful	1	1.7	7	12.1	30	51.7	20	34.5
I was able to give feedback to my lecturers about my experiences of teaching practice	1	1.7	9	15.5	34	58.6	14	24.1

**Table 5.2: Characteristics of Teaching practice, Q2 Teaching practice & confidence to teach (B.Ed.): N=58**

This table shows that the majority 39 (67.2%) felt that their lectures prepared them for teaching practice, whereas 30 (51.7%) just over half felt that the lesson designs given them for teaching practice were useful. In addition more than half 34 (58.6%) had opportunity to give feedback to lecturers regarding their experiences and this is key as the literature shows that teachers who are reflective practitioners are better as they improve upon their practices. In addition, the study asked how often student teachers engaged with the learners to determine their readiness to teach in the classroom. The largest number of student teachers indicated their involvement with learners in the classroom during teaching practice is illustrated in the Table 5.3 below:

	Always		Often		Seldom		Never	
	Frq	V %	Frq	V %	Fr q	V %	Fr q	V %
Helped learners who had particular learning difficulties	33	56.9	22	37.9	3	5.2	0	0
Demonstrated empathy towards learners	43	75.4	13	22.8	1	1.8	0	0
Facilitated group work	38	65.5	20	34.5	0	0	0	0
Encouraged learner participation.	48	82.8	10	17.2	0	0	0	0
Facilitated peer learning	31	53.4	25	43.1	2	3.4	0	0
Differentiated instruction to meet learners' individual needs.	30	51.7	27	46.6	1	1.7	0	0
Used different types of feedback to assess learners	20	34.5	30	51.7	7	12.1	1	0
Integrated technology	23	39.7	25	43.1	10	17.2	0	0

**Table 5.3: Student teacher engagement in classroom activities during teaching practice. Q2 Teaching practice & confidence to teach (B.Ed.): N=58**

Student teachers' engagement in classroom activities in table 5.3 demonstrates the majority 48 (82.8%) being *always* actively involved, whilst a relatively large number are *often* participating. Four of the five activities the student teachers were *always* involved in, were above 50%. The largest number of student teachers 48 (82.8%) indicated they were *always* actively engaged in encouraging learner participation in contrast to 1 (1.7%) who were *seldom* able to differentiate instruction to meet learner



needs engaged, followed by 43 (75.4%) who were *always* facilitating group work. The two activities with lower student teacher engagement shows that there were less students who were seldom or never able to engage with learners in any form, during teaching practice. This suggests that by and large, student teachers were actively engaged with learners during teaching practice, in classroom activities in order to acquire the necessary skills to be ready to teach.

**5.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Relationships with mentors and the support they provide**

Mentor teachers play a huge role in the life of student teachers while pursuing a B.Ed. degree. The relationship between a student teacher and her mentor hinges on the qualities of a good mentor (Coe et al., 2014). Sometimes the dialogue can be both supportive and threatening for the student teacher since the power relationships with the mentor may be imbalanced. The quality of their mentor support had a huge impact on their perception of their development supporting the international (TALIS, 2008), findings (Jenson et al., 2012).

	Always		Often		Seldom		Never	
	Frq	Valid %	Frq	Valid %	Frq	Valid %	Frq	Valid %
My mentors were happy to give me advice	40	69.0	16	27.6	2	3.4	0	0
My mentors inspired me to teach	39	67.2	17	29.3	2	3.4	0	0
My mentors gave me feedback on my work	26	44.8	24	41.4	6	10.3	2	3.4
The evaluations of my mentors were fair	31	53.4	23	39.7	4	6.9	0	0
My mentors were empathetic	30	51.7	24	41.4	3	5.2	1	1.7
My mentors gave me too much work to do	4	6.9	12	20.7	25	43.1	17	29.3
My mentors did not pay attention to me	4	6.9	8	13.8	14	24.1	32	55.2
My mentors often seemed unhappy about my work	4	6.9	4	6.9	6	10.3	44	75.9

**Table 5.4: Relationships with Mentors (Q2 Teaching practice & confidence to teach (B.Ed.): N=58**

The data in this table indicate a variety of descriptions generated by student teachers, concerning mentors. The table showed that in most instances, mentors

were more than 50% in the *always* category for being happy to give student teachers advice, to inspire them to teach, gave feedback with fair evaluations and were empathetic. What featured seemingly unanimously was that the mentors seldom or never gave them too much work or were unhappy about student teachers' work and in addition, did not pay them attention. In contrast, the information supplied by student teachers in the qualitative data showed, most of them articulated that their mentors could have been more supportive toward them. Nevertheless, the focus group interviews and questionnaire provided a sense that most mentor teachers are supportive and help student teachers within the context of the classroom. The student teachers perceive mentors as knowledgeable and bearers of many years of experience. Therefore, the mentor can influence their teaching practice in a positive way or mar their experience. Four student teachers narrated their experiences. This is one account of a student teacher:

*ST3 – “My mentor teacher allowed me to like teach what I like, I’d just pretend the kids were mine and it was very interesting, I loved it and I think I found my teacher vibe. She made me do things like organize an outing and stuff but I couldn’t do it every day because she like needed to track like the learners progress and do assessments.”*

This student teacher believed her mentor was supportive during her training as a student and produced an encouraging impression on her. She mentioned she developed a good relationship with her mentor. There is also an indication that she learnt a lot from her mentor since the mentors knew her learners and knew how to teach. She also indicated that her mentor would throw her in the deep end, but she appreciated that because that was when she learned the most. Two other student teachers conveyed similar experiences to the above excerpt, these are their accounts:

*ST4 – “I know my mentor teacher had high expectations of me being in my fourth year. She expected me to know things like I expected her to support me. She was amazing. She worked with me a lot”.*

*ST7- “The kids didn’t listen to me because I am more soft spoke and I took it very personally and it hurt, but my mentor teacher she said you know that it will get better the more I work at it and she helped me through.”*

The three student teachers' statements above offer different narratives about their experiences, which were generally positive. They articulated things their mentors did, such as "my mentor teacher was very helpful", and "I have been so fortunate to get an amazing mentor teacher." A range of respondents thus reported that mentors were helpful and provide ideas about how things ought to be done which influenced student teachers constructively. There were however other respondents who reported a different experience. The following excerpts are from student teachers who did not have the support from their mentors or who had a bad experience with mentors. Here the importance of building a great relationship with the mentor teacher becomes crucial:

*ST5 – "I wish I could be a mentor teacher and I will just treat that person as a teacher because now we're not always getting treated as a teacher and also just give them space to do their own thing, to be creative to use what they have. Also one thing that I would do that I didn't get a lot was comments on my lessons, the teacher there just signed the letter and didn't leave any comments, so I didn't know what I had to do to improve on my lesson".*

*ST2- "I thought I would have a different experience than before like have more control of the class, but the teacher there was strict about like I'm not allowed to be left alone with the class because there has to be a teacher there the whole time, like even to take them to the bathroom like I can't take them to the bathroom, the teacher has to be there. I just felt like they don't actually trust me with the children, like I don't have the opportunity to discipline or find my own teaching self".*

Mentors have great influence and these students look to them for acceptance by allowing them to engage with their environment within the classroom context. They could develop the essential skills through lessons learnt or they could become absorbed within the system of the school. The support given by mentor teachers also affects their confidence levels in their abilities to manage a class.

### **5.2.2.3 Sub-theme 3: The development of PCK**

Student teachers indicated that teaching practice does not give them enough time to develop their PCK sufficiently as they are not given enough opportunities to teach and therefore cannot assess their abilities or the learners' grasp of concepts taught.

Due to their perceived lack of good English lecturers, one participant noted that she was:

*ST2-“Finding it difficult in English teaching in teaching practice, different like teaching sounds and like plurals. We didn’t get taught how to teach it.”*

Many students agreed that they had to teach themselves a certain concept before they would then teach it in a classroom during their teaching practice experience. This lack of knowledge of methodology/pedagogical content knowledge is highlighted by another student who agreed:

*ST4-“You sometimes have to think for yourself and find a different method to teach a concept”*

Other experiences were that the mentor teachers often would not allow student teachers to come into their classrooms and teach using methodologies taught in ITE as this would be ‘disruptive’ to the mentor teachers’ class and way of doing things. Only a few of the student teachers could implement (practice) strategies and methodologies they had learnt during training. One participant said she enjoyed her last teaching practice experience because:

*ST5- “The teacher was happy for me to teach using whatever methodologies we learnt in ITE and even asked about some of the methodologies so she could incorporate them into her teaching”*

Many of the participants complained about the time allocated to teaching practice. Firstly, most felt that ITE should place students almost immediately in the first term and throughout the year so that student teachers can see all the facets of school life there is and secondly because doing this would mean more teaching time for them. An almost universal experience was that apart from their “critique” lesson, most found that they were usually doing work the teacher could not get to, like admin, book marking and general class sitting. When asked how this impacted their experience and practice of PCK, then almost all the participants acknowledged that

this meant no real reflection on their teaching strategies, methodologies or practice could be done. One student teacher noted:

*ST3- "There is not enough time to judge whether what we learnt is useful as we don't get to teach much, I mean real teaching"*

Even when the opposite is true, when a few student teachers were placed in classrooms where the teacher gave lots of lee-way or were absent from school and therefore they had the class to themselves, some participants realized that much of what they learnt was 'thrown out the window' as they tried to "manage" the class and get done with work that needed to be done for the day and therefore felt unable to judge what PCK skills, especially in language teaching, as learnt in ITE were utilised, in what ways and with what success and whether at the end of the practicum, they could say their PCK skills have improved, grown etc. The one thing all participants agreed on is expressed by the statement made below by one of the participants:

*ST1-"I will develop more when I am on my own"*

#### **5.2.2.4 Analysis and discussion of Theme 2**

It is noted by Yero (2002), who gives an example that if a teacher believes a programme he or she has been told to use is based on a solid foundation, and it corresponds to his or her beliefs, he or she will notice ways in which the programme works. On the other hand, if the teacher believes the programme does not work or is useless, that teacher will notice evidence supporting that belief. Similarly, Smith and Sutherland (2007), claim that most of the pedagogical and curricula decisions made by teachers are solidly grounded in their beliefs and that they do not necessarily align with the tenets of the working curriculum.

The findings also indicate the importance of the teaching practicum in facilitating student teachers' experience and opportunities to bridge that theory practice divide, before they begin their careers and are 'alone' in the classroom. This study notes

that while it is impossible for ITE programs to cover every possible scenario the findings do indicate that student teachers would prefer to spend a lot more time practice teaching than is currently provided for. It should be noted that the concept of PCK whether in relation to language teaching or any other subject teaching, is complex and differs from individual to individual and is understood in different ways. Student teachers felt that mentor teachers should play a better role in helping student teachers fine tune their PCK as well as the more general classroom practices. In the interviews student teachers indicated that they found their teaching practice experience helpful and beneficial since they felt prepared to teach for the most part. On the issue of mentors, most important is that, a school mentor must want to take on a supportive role and understand the importance of their potential impact on student teacher development. In the UK the House of Commons Education Committee (HCEC, 2012), recommended that mentors should have at least three years' training experience and should have completed specific mentor training. Fortunately for the students in this study, they had good mentors for the most part and were able to work with them and build relationships that helped them in the process of learning to teach.

What was also evident was that the student teachers learnt about their personal teaching styles during the practical training; which some authors say is inextricably linked with professional teacher identity during the micro-teaching sessions at university. Santagata et al. (2007:125) noted that student teachers need "concrete images of innovative and alternative teaching methods". Pinder (2008) found that student teachers benefit from observing others but specifically from having post-observation discussion with teachers to explore some of the issues raised and to reflect on the lesson. This is certainly what all participants found. If they could have met with the teacher at the end to discuss any issues they wanted to develop, their observations were extremely helpful to their progress. By the fourth year of their Bachelor program the student teachers had identified the school practices and structures that would enable them to feel in harmony with their teaching and learning environment. Observing and practising in contrasting schools allowed them to find the approaches that matched their values and beliefs for education and to develop their own approach in the classroom.

While the current trends in education both nationally and internationally lean towards teachers being reflective practitioners, the onus is also on the ITE programs to produce the best possible teachers with the skills and tools to assist them especially at the beginning of their careers. This study notes that while it is impossible for ITE programs to cover every possible scenario, the findings do indicate that student teachers would prefer to spend a lot more time practice teaching than is currently provided for.

### **5.2.3 Summary of student teachers' views**

In this section the views of student teachers in terms of their learning to teach experience in their ITE program have been discussed. In order to do this, some themes were covered which include, things like how the knowledge and skills as taught them in their ITE programs prepared them to teach and what role the access and relationships to their lecturers has contributed to their learning to teach. Additionally, theme two looked specifically at the teaching practicum and how prepared they were for what was expected of them there, also, the relationships built with mentor teachers and how this supported or not, their experiences of learning to teach. Finally, then a discussion how PCK is developed within the opportunities granted by teaching practice. Combine this with the support from mentors whom the literature says, their PCK is at an advanced level compared to the entry level PCK the students come into their classrooms with and how they could foster development of PCK within these STs.

Each student teacher's journey is unique and offers insights into personal and professional challenges leading to transformational learning (Illeris, 2014) through experience and reflective practice. Among other policies, the DBE (2015), in a discussion on the improvement of ITE stated that, "MRTEQ was an important response to the issue of teacher education quality, as it set minimum standards for ITE qualifications and also required that all ITE programs must be strongly focused on developing teacher knowledge and practice."

The majority of student teachers were positive and enthusiastic about their teaching practice experience and that they would be ready for the classroom whenever the opportunity arose. The evidence provided largely in the tables presented in section 1, indicated that student teacher engagement in classroom activities contributed to the experiences and acquisition of the necessary skills for teaching. Most were confident that the experience they had at university in terms of what was taught to them was more than adequate. They indicated the frustration of their first year of studies as being a repeat of their high school subjects, but towards their final year, realised the importance of that year of establishing their subject matter knowledge as it worked to improve their competence especially in language teaching.

Most of the student teachers credit their lecturers as being well versed in their subject and in the ways in which they ensured the student teachers were prepared to teach these subjects. While they may have expressed some frustrations regarding the language modules which were really more a matter of the lecturer's teaching style, it is reasonable to say that the majority of the student teachers felt they had knowledge and skills to step into a classroom and teach.

### **5.3 NQTs' views of their B.Ed. program experience in light of their 1st year in the classroom**

#### **5.3.1 Theme 1: Knowledge and Skills as developed through ITE**

This section presents findings pertaining to Newly Qualified Teachers and the perceptions of their development of relationships with mentors and lecturers during ITE as newly qualified teachers or 'novice' teachers. It also addresses the influence ITE has/had on their classroom practices. The data were obtained largely from the focus group interviews conducted with four students in the beginning of the year and towards the end of the first year of being a teacher. It should be noted that the researcher acknowledges that the sample is small, but this was one of the major limitations of the study. As a longitudinal study, by the time the cohort was in their first year of teaching, many did not want to participate due to the demands of teaching and the researcher had to respect that.



Empirical evidence reveals that beginning teachers are less effective in promoting student learning than more experienced teachers as they are still learning to teach (Welchsler et al., 2010). The key issue in the transition from teacher education to actual professional practice is this idea of the theory-practice dilemma and the ways in which new teachers in their first year/s of teaching experience use what they had learnt from ITE or not in their classroom practices.

#### **5.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Teaching strategies and issues of assessment**

The NQTS were asked not only about their strategies but mostly importantly about *how* they were taught to teach language and in addition, how they would teach a particular concept. Here again, as with what was found in teaching strategies most found that their English language instruction was poor and did not provide them with as much resources, notes and methodologies of how to teach as their Afrikaans lectures.

*NQT1- "For language teaching we were taught a top down approach so you start with a text and experience the whole lesson through the text and for Afrikaans we were taught a balance literacy approach....I found this confusing during teaching practice as you had to do your lesson plans according to how each lecturer for the different subjects wants it done"*

On asked what approach this participant uses now in her language teaching this is what she said:

*NQT 3- "Now, I use a balanced approach. Bring in bits of both top down and bottom up approaches...in reality you kind of have to use a bit of both"*

This teacher is expressing a view that the other participants shared. While they were for the most part able to use what they had learnt during their ITE, there were situations where they had to make judgements about how to teach that content knowledge in way that ensures the learners are grasping the concepts being taught. Another response was:

*NQT4- "in our Bachelor we had a particular module about being assessors and there they taught us that you not trying to catch the child out, but all that stuff that we learnt there is like the Utopia, like if you go to a school they will not let you mark the way you want to"*

This teacher like the other participants felt they were still learning about assessment, pedagogy, and planning respectively. The ITE knowledge is based on a 'perfect world' scenario but in what they called the 'real' world, they had to adopt the schools practices especially in terms of assessment and the way it is carried out. The other participant had this to say about her ITE experience and its influence on her classroom practice:

*NQT4 – "I am still equally passionate about what I learnt at university, I haven't given up on the ideas I have learnt then, I have realised that it is a lot more difficult than you think it is to implement. But I haven't given up yet, I know some people throw it out the window quite quickly"*

Another participant, on being asked whether she was comfortable knowing what she had to do with regards to content knowledge as opposed to actually doing it, said:

*NQT2- "I think so yes. Content knowledge is not a problem. I feel confident in that but in terms of the way in which learners learn, not really because there are so many of them and there is not enough time to address all their needs and I think that it's quite sad".*

The participants did all acknowledge that the way they teach has developed dramatically from the beginning of the year to the end of the year, as evidenced by one participant:

*NQT1 – "I have thrown out all the regulations, I think, with regards to time and that out of the window and when I close my classroom door I do what my kids need to know and what the department wants, and not what I was taught. Well not what I was taught but I mean in a timeframe that fits the children".*

In contrast, another participant explained how concepts learned in her ITE were ones she still uses and works for her practice. Here is what she said:

*NQT3- "I find what works; when I do it is to let them have concrete experiences, not always concrete but some experience with the concepts not just writing, obviously writing and talking about it. So we did an assessment on 3D objects and we haven't taught it a lot so what I did we watched a video and we spoke about it. And I showed them we've got these little objects that we can use and show them. But then they could work with it and they could come and feel it and they could do things. And when we did the assessment I thought no I can't just let them because they have to fill in the roles and slides, the faces, the corners, I can't just think they must remember that from the little that we did so I passed around the shapes down the row and they got so excited just for that small thing, they passed it on...so any time they can experience things I let them".*

Considering all evidence, teachers' felt their pedagogical knowledge changed from different influences, demands and experiences. This may explain why the teachers mostly felt they were still developing their pedagogical knowledge. The quote from the teacher above described how she had learnt different pedagogical approaches whilst practising in order to cope with new situations that have arisen in her classroom.

#### **5.3.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Access and relationships with Lecturers**

This section presents the findings pertaining to the views of NQTs of their learning experience in their bachelor program and how it supports their classroom practices. While each participant had different personality traits; they all possessed an ability to develop positive professional relationships with peers, colleagues and pupils. McNally et al. (2008), argues that relationships almost define the job at these early stages of professional development. The NQTs expressed different views about the relationships they had established with lecturers and even some learners. All participants recorded that it was important to develop a strong network of support of contemporaries and colleagues. Here is what some NQTs had to say about their lecturers:

*NQT3- "Our maths lecturer taught us everything, I use all the approaches she taught us. She showed us how amazing and dynamic it can be"*

*NQT2-"I feel like we had a very good lecturer in our Afrikaans module. I find that I can take it with me what I learned"*

*NQT1-"Our lecturer was very passionate about maths. She came from teaching for how many years so she knew how to do everything in the classroom, she knew the challenges about it, so that really helped and if you speak to any of us most people are passionate to teach maths because of her"*

The participants here felt supported through university coursework and like the majority, felt it was helpful in developing their professional identity. These participants appreciated the collaborative teaching techniques their lecturers exposed them to. The Mathematics lecturer in particular seems to have the most positive influence on these NQTs in terms of preparing them to teach Mathematics. Moving to the issue of mentor teachers whom the participants had the most to say concerning mentors, a school mentor must want to take on a supportive role and understand the importance of their potential impact on NQT development. The next two sub-themes relate to the experience of the Teaching practicum and its uses for classroom practice of the NQTs.

#### **5.3.1.3 Sub-theme 3: The relationships with mentors during teaching practice and its effects on their current practices**

Moving to the issue of mentor teachers whom the participants had the most to say concerning mentors, a school mentor must want to take on a supportive role and understand the importance of their potential impact on NQT development. The following are some accounts of the experiences of mentor teachers and its impact on their classroom practices:

*NQT4-"I was lucky, in my second year, I landed in teaching practice with a teacher that's doing her Masters in Mathematics Education so we loved being a pair together cause her class was trained in the latest methods. She understood where I was coming from"*

What is evident here is that the mentor has the power to nurture confidence or create fearfulness in student teachers which they carry with them into their professional practice.

*NQT1-“If you have a mentor teacher then you someone who you can talk to about your frustrations and your ideas and what they think. Sometimes you have an idea that you have for the classroom and then you can discuss it with them and get more, get their views”.*

This participant was expressing the point that mentor teachers can have such an influence in the life of an NQT were they open to being there for the mentee. The participants all agreed that the kind of experience you had in your teaching practice throughout ITE, was dependent on the mentor teachers you were placed with. Where good experiences are spoken of, these NQTs noted using some of the tips and practices of the mentor teacher in their own practice. Where the experiences were negative, the NQTs reported just following the dictates of those mentors for the duration of their teaching practice, knowing that in their ‘own classrooms’ they would do things differently.

#### **5.3.1.4 Analysis and discussion of theme 1**

From their interviews it is evident that these four NQTs had a passion for their work as teachers. The challenges faced were varied, but by reflecting on and verbalising the mismatch between their personal and professional expectation and the lived experiences, they clarified their own values and beliefs. They identified the environment in which they felt they would flourish, using their experiences of the teaching practicum from their ITE and used their experiences thereof to inform their decisions about their practices in the classroom.

The data revealed that factors relating to school environment and how this matched the personal and professional philosophy of each participant played a critical role in how successfully participants developed in their first term of teaching. Successful schools recognise that continuing professional development is important throughout a teacher’s career.

Firstly, the interviews had some strong examples and views of the coursework covered in terms of both pedagogical and subject knowledge. Subject knowledge, that is knowledge of the specific subject a teacher teaches, featured dominantly. As teachers become more experienced, they can build up a body of explicit knowledge related to their subjects. Interestingly, in the case of pedagogical knowledge, the pattern is not as simple. The literature describes many overlapping theories of pedagogical knowledge. Shulman (1987) included general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge; where general pedagogical knowledge contained the strategies that transcended subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) was specifically about the methods of teaching a particular subject.

The latter seemed to form the basis of the focus group interviews conducted with the participants. Put simply, learning to teach can be fluid where teaching techniques can work for one class/subject/time frame and then be less effective for a different class/subject/time frame. Participants were aware that pedagogy changes and this was evidenced in their responses. The participants noted times when they had to seek out new knowledge by watching other teachers or doing research on a topic to use in the class. Although in the interviews both subject and general pedagogical knowledge were linked, general classroom skills, for example, can be applied to all teachers in any classroom; behaviour management, child psychology, knowledge of pupil's contexts (Shulman, 1987). In addition to the discussed types of knowledge, participants also discussed knowledge that was related to the school, in particular how some knowledge was school specific and shaped by the needs of the school.

Through reflective conversations improvement can be brought forward and it is the quality of the conversation that is important. Sometimes the dialogue can be both supportive and threatening for the beginning teacher since the power relationships with the mentor may be imbalanced. Good mentors know how to engage in critically constructive feedback. They should be fruitfully supportive and catch up regularly with a running specialised dialogue about how to apply theory to practice. Allowing

NQTs to try out new ideas and analyse the effect the approaches have on pupils' progress is an important part of transformational learning.

### **5.3.2 Theme 2: The influences of the school culture and context on classroom practices.**

School culture, environments and contexts play a very integral part of how NQTs are able to transfer their learning from their ITE programs to their classroom practices. It can be said that school culture and context can hinder or support NQTs in their first years of teaching.

#### **5.3.2.1 Sub-theme 1: School culture and context**

Most of the participants found the adjustment to the school culture or environment a challenge. Though ITE prepared them for what to expect and which theories or methodologies to use in certain subjects, the reality is often the opposite. When first interviewed at the beginning of their first year of teaching, the NQTs found that the schools dominated what you teach, what methods you use to teach different concepts. The literature notes that NQTs experience a 'washout' effect once teaching in a class of their own, due to strong school culture and this was evidenced in the data collected from the interview conducted. The NQTs spoke of the rigidity of the more experienced teachers who are opposed to change and therefore resulted in them being unable to put into practice strategies and methodologies taught in ITE as one participant noted:

*NQT3- "I feel like everything went towards theory and how to put it into practice but when you go into a school environment, it's like..! This is what we do; this is how we do it.."*

Another participant agrees and stated that her experience was summed up in a nutshell.

On the issues of the school environment, all the NQTs agreed that it was one of the things that frustrated them and that they wished they could change. Here are two statements made by some NQTs.

*NQT1- “[I] think that on a social level it can be difficult coz like when are you being too pushy or too like it’s hard to gage what our direction should be coz everyone’s like no we must listen to the experienced teachers. I’ve learnt so much from experienced teachers but when you start to say ok I’ve actually got something new for today but you guys aren’t listening to me so it’s a difficult dynamic”.*

*NQT4 –“I think the teachers just need to move away from what they, the normal like every year it’s the same thing and every day we do the same thing. That whole thing we need to move away from that and get new ideas. I think they don’t, they have their meetings where they discuss everything but I don’t think they’ve come up with new ideas that they want to implement in their classrooms”*

These two NQTs highlighted their discontent with the school environment and the fact that they could not implement teaching strategies and other things from the ITE, which is something they expressed when they were student teachers in their final year going through the teaching practicum. This affected their beliefs about their abilities to play the role of teacher in charge of their own classroom as they had to follow the existing and somewhat dated practices in the schools they teach in. Other issues that came up in the interviews were things like how to deal with parents and how much that impacts teaching.

*NQT3- “that I’ve seen like how the teachers have to deal with the parents and working with parents who are over involved and working with parents who are not involved at all. My expectation of teaching it’s changed a lot because I didn’t think about how parent’s involvement could be such a big role”.*

In addition, a challenge that came up was the matter of inclusivity in the classroom. Here one teacher related her experience:

*NQT2 – “I have a learner in my class who has a learning disability and disturbs the class and it’s very difficult for me to include her in the classroom.*



*Sometimes I get so frustrated. She has Asperger's so working with children like that in a mainstream classroom, that's quite difficult"*

This issue above was not the only incident; the other teachers related similar problems and felt that while the theory relating to diversity and inclusivity was taught in their ITE, practical, physical aspects were not. This made for feelings of frustration and helplessness and affected their management of the class, in terms of how to deal with those issues when they arose and what to do with the rest of the class whilst you are attending those learners.

When asked what the main thing preventing them from teaching to their full potential in their schools one participant notes:

*NQT2 - "I think it's like, the school has their work sheets and everything that they already set up and that all the teachers just decided that that's how it should be done, so you don't get the opportunity to do differently in your class".*

Some participants also felt that this affected the enjoyment and excitement of teaching and what they thought they would be able to do in their own classrooms. One participant said:

*NQT1 - "There's a post opening up at the school end of next year and I have to really consider if I want to teach in that kind of environment, because I don't, emotionally I don't enjoy it!"*

Even while expressing their frustrations about the school culture they found themselves part of; most of the NQT's were understanding and sympathetic. Their first few months of teaching exposed them to the pressures and stresses of what teaching entails, the long hours, heavy administration required by the department, dealing with classroom management and discipline, as well as the expectations of school heads.

*NQT4 - "I can understand their reasons behind it but it doesn't make it right. I mean, they don't have to change everything, just changing one little approach at a time would make a huge different"*

#### **5.3.2.2 Sub-theme 2: The impact administrative duties have on classroom practices**

A key issue that was found in the data was related to the administration tasks that teachers are required to fulfil every day. Many NQTs expressed shock at the amount of administration they had to get through from the very beginning of the day and that ITE does not cover this very integral part of being a teacher, for example, the grappling with different forms and documentation that the department of Education requires for each student. Such duties take up so much of their teaching time and most of the frustrations lie in not knowing how to deal with all the administration. They are overwhelmed by having to complete their administrative tasks on time, in the wake of having to be an effective and efficient teacher. An NQT spoke about the deficits in the ITE program like its inability to prepare them for the administrative side of teaching.

*NQT2- "It was more of the admin, and like the official forms that we have to do. And like teachers just use abbreviations and I'm like what are you talking about? They asked me to do all the absentees for all the Grade 1 classes and then the summaries. I was what is this here? I don't even know what this is. And then the other assistant said and she had to teach me how to do the absentees and where to find everything and then this term ok we need a new absentee list for this term and then fill it in in our book. I don't even know like how to do this. I don't know what to do so I just left like a blank column. So I think things like that, the forms, and the admin; that would have been nice too"*

Another NQT said:

*NQT3 -"I was so excited to teach all this great stuff and thought I was going to change the world, and then I saw the admin..."*

Several of the NQTs also stated that one of the reasons administrative tasks are so problematic for them was not just that ITE ill-prepared them for what to expect, but

also that in the schools, they were just expected to know what to do and how to do it. There was no help given or orientation and in some cases where it was done, it was quick and they were expected to know what to do. One participant observed:

*NQT1- "They want us to fill all these forms and do the admin correctly, but they don't give us help in learning what we need to, so you are in trouble if you don't do the admin and you are in trouble if you do it incorrectly!"*

These administrative tasks also put a lot of stress on these NQTs' free time. Their free time is mostly filled catching up on files and other administrative tasks leaving less time for lesson planning and teaching effectively. One NQT's account stated that she felt:

*NQT2- "I am never up to date, I can't keep up, I just do what they say"*

Another NQT, overwhelmed by the avalanche of administrative work was frustrated and felt isolated:

*NQT4- "I'm just told to do it, I find it really annoying"*

Her frustrations with the schools communication around administration and operational procedures have not affected her ideas and beliefs about teaching but having these things to do limit teaching time and that was crucial with her.

This section highlights newly qualified teachers experience regarding administrative tasks required of them other than teaching. They expressed anxiety that they have to do so much administrative work since it invades their teaching time. All the responses described by the teachers are in unison and they feel that it is unnecessary to complete so many files for any intervention taken with a learner.

### 5.3.2.3 Sub-theme 3: The impact of ITE coursework and theory on newly qualified teachers' classroom practices

Most of the participants found the adjustment to the school culture or environment a challenge. Though ITE prepared them for what to expect and which theories or methodologies to use in certain subjects, the reality is often the opposite. When first interviewed at the beginning of their first year teaching, the NQTs found that the schools dominated what you teach, what methods you use to teach different concepts. The literature notes that NQTs experience a 'washout' effect once teaching in a class of their own, due to strong school culture and this was evidenced in the data collected from the interviews conducted. The NQTs spoke of the rigidity of the more experienced teachers who were opposed to change and therefore resulted in them being unable to put into practice strategies and methodologies taught in ITE as one participant noted.

*NQT1- "I feel like everything went towards theory and how to put it into practice but when you go into a school environment, it's like they say... This is what we do; this is how we do it..."*

This teacher felt frustrated by her situation and a sense of hopelessness. Another teacher has a similar experience:

*NQT3- "It's hard to implement the stuff we've learnt because when you get to a school, they're like what's been implemented has been done for years."*

This teacher felt exasperated by the fact that she was restricted to sticking with strategies and methodologies which were contrary to what she had learnt and was eager to put into practice. When asked what the main thing was that prevented them from teaching to their full potential in their schools one participant noted:

*NQT4- "I think it's like, the school has their work sheets and everything that they already set up and that all the teachers just decided that that's how it should be done, so you don't get the opportunity to do differently in your class".*

Some participants also felt that this affected the enjoyment and excitement of teaching and what they thought they would be able to do in their own classrooms. One participant said:

*NQT2- "There's a post opening up at the school end of next year and I have to really consider if I want to teach in that kind of environment, because I don't, emotionally I don't enjoy it!"*

#### **5.3.2.4 Analysis and Discussion of Theme 2**

As was noted in the literature reviews in chapter 3, that teacher preparation programs have been criticized for being too theoretical and not equipping students with the basic repertoire of practical skills of teaching. The Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2013), argue that quality teachers depend on the extent to which novice or newly qualified teachers are prepared at university to deal with "classroom management, lesson planning, uplifting the motivation of learners, dealing with individual differences among learners, assessing learners' work, developing good relations with parents, and overcoming the disparity between their idealistic expectations and classroom realities". While experienced teachers may consider these expectations to be routine, new teachers who have not yet learned to prioritize tasks may find them dichotomous and burdensome (Bainbridge, 2011).

The literature also says that since teaching is an activity driven venture built on social interactions, teachers are in a constant state of adjusting and reinforcing their beliefs in response to experiences they encounter in the classroom. This was evident from the data as the NQTs have to continually balance their beliefs about teaching and learning with their practices. Sometimes this was a successful endeavor as related in the findings and other times, they met with resistance and issues they deemed themselves to be ill prepared to deal with. Positive experiences reinforce the teachers' established belief structure. Negative experiences, on the other hand, cause the teacher to undergo a re-evaluation of his/her actions and beliefs that mirrors Cochran et al.'s (1993), "knowing in action" model of understanding, which is based on shaping teachers' beliefs through an active process of reflection.

An environment where it is acceptable to ask for help and share strategies is described by Hattie (2012), as one of the signposts of excellence in education: the quality of the support-mentor in school is a key influence on outstanding development of the NQT. Teacher participants offered an insight into what they feel they are still learning from their ITE coursework and theory and also from what transpires in the classroom as they teach. Each aspect is important and offers an indication of what the teachers perceive are the key parts of their knowledge base.

Boakye and Ampiah (2017:2) say that newly qualified teachers experience challenges, such as the “lack of administrative support as well as in areas such as curriculum, lesson planning, assessment, management, time, and school culture.” Therefore, there was a host of problems they encountered in their first year of teaching; however, with proper support they could rise above this. As a result, the administrative tasks were taking up much of their time, which encroached on their contact time with learners in the classroom and as one NQT frustratingly said, she cannot wait for the next term to pass so she can do things her way. She also said she would be more prepared for the expected and the unexpected. Unfortunately, she did not elaborate on this because of the feeling of being overwhelmed. This could negatively influence the learners since newly qualified teachers are inundated with tasks they were not prepared for.

It seems as if a number of newly qualified teachers experience the administrative tasks as cumbersome. According to Vikaraman et al. (2017:158), what is seemingly of great importance for newly qualified teachers are, “classroom management, motivating students, differentiating student learning, problems and needs, assessing student progress, interaction with colleagues and parents, receiving appropriate advice on school culture, goals and instructional resources, using effective instructional strategies or methods and emotional support.” It is evident that the teachers teaching in their first year consider all these tasks daunting and they would certainly require mentor support to surmount during their first few years of teaching.

PCK is a dynamic, rather than static, category (Abell, 2008) of teacher knowledge that gets moulded through experience and beliefs. Grossman (1990) posits that the

instructional strategies, knowledge of student understanding, and curricular knowledge that beginning teachers were exposed to as students contributes to their initial PCK. “Experiences as students provide prospective teachers with memories of strategies for teaching specific content, to help shape their own expectations of students, [and to use] particular texts and topics [because they are] likely to remember aspects of the curriculum” (Grossman, 1990:10-11).

### **5.3.3 Summary of Section Two**

This section concludes by summarising the experiences NQTs reported of their views on learning to teach in the light of their ITE. While the literature supports the idea of newly qualified teachers experiencing a ‘washout’ effect from their ITE in their classroom practices, the evidence presented in this section suggests that there is some level of retention from their teacher education programme. In this reflection the data suggest that they felt their ITE could improve on some areas and things that they could take away from and use in their classroom practices.

From the data provided, it appears the NQTs point to the key component of the ITE, being the teaching practicum as they found this to be the most effective way to gain experience and confidence to practise their knowledge and skills. Some suggestions included increasing the amount of time spent in teaching practice during ITE and the improvement and selection of mentor teachers. In addition, the improvement of the general support systems at both the schools they completed their teaching practice in and those they were able to get posts in. Here they referenced things like being prepared for the administrative tasks and dealing with diversity and inclusivity in their classrooms.

The NQTs from this particular institution seemed to mostly express an understanding about and a usefulness of the coursework and theory as learnt in ITE as being useful for their practice. The data suggest that this can be attributed to their feelings of having what they termed good lecturers who made the learning of certain subjects or modules supportive to their practice. Where their ITE or Lecturers are not supportive,

were in the areas of things like assessment, dealing with the heavy load of marking and the adjusting to school environments.

#### **5.4 Blended discussion and conclusion**

In this chapter, student teachers and NQTs reflections on learning to teach were presented. The chapter was divided into two sections. The first section presented data related to research question one, which was:

- What are the views of student teachers in terms of their learning experience in a Bachelor program?

The second section presented data with regards to research sub-question two, which was:

- What are the views of NQTs about their Bachelor program experience in light of their first year in the classroom?

Teaching practice proved to be a vital aspect of ITE for the development of prospective teachers to acquire the practical aspect for learning to teach. The majority of student teachers indicated confidence in their readiness to teach in terms of their ITE preparation in the acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills. Though contradictory statements were made regarding relationships with lecturers and mentors, overall they indicated that on the whole they had supportive experiences. These supportive experiences are what stood them in good stead in their classrooms as NQTs. The NQTs acknowledge the necessity of their coursework and theory from their ITE as it underpins what they do in the classroom, but they also realised that they had to temper that knowledge with the realities of the classrooms they were teaching in. It is in this balancing act that is, managing the general classroom practices with the methodologies and pedagogies of teaching that they were able to reflect on what they had learnt in ITE with what they could actually practise in the classroom.

However, their statements when interviewed in the focus groups as NQTs, their responses were ambiguous as well since they were overwhelmed with their experience in the classroom. They indicated that what they learnt during the B.Ed.



programme could not have prepared them for the reality of the classroom which some called 'culture shock' or 'reality shock'. The vicissitudes in their transition from student teacher to NQT meant that school culture and context heavily impacts the ways in which they were able to apply many of the things that ITE had taught them. Having to 'toe' the line and follow pre-set classroom practices of the different schools they found themselves in, affected morale and motivation in the beginning of their first year as noted by the statements made in the findings. However, a change occurs whereby confidence reasserts itself and a renewed vigour from around mid-year saw them beginning to insert much of the knowledge and skills from ITE into their practices, amalgamating them with newly practices gleaned from colleagues and mentors in the school environment. Even administrative tasks are accepted as par for the course and are tackled perhaps not with enthusiasm but with a 'necessary evil' kind of view. Despite the NQTs being more engrossed with their school environment and having to cope, they showed enthusiasm and determination about their classroom practices and a hope for the future.

Research into learning to teach has been identified as idiosyncratic, dynamic and complex (Morrison, 2013). Shulman (1987) characterizes teaching as being a "learned profession" (9) that requires teachers to possess "complex bodies of knowledge and skill needed to function effectively" (4) in the classroom. This collective knowledge base of teaching, therefore, is a significant and integral aspect of teaching. As was already stated in the findings chapter, teachers' beliefs include a personal definition of education that shapes and circumscribes what the teacher decides to do and not to do. Second, each teacher has a set of beliefs about the nature of knowledge and skills and how learners acquire them. Third, each teacher has a set of beliefs and assumptions about the nature of learning. Fourth, each teacher has a set of values that determine priorities in the classroom.

Positive experiences of their ITE reinforce the teachers' established belief structure. Negative experiences, on the other hand, cause the teacher to undergo a re-evaluation of his/her actions and beliefs that mirrors Cochran et al.'s (1993), "knowing in action" model of understanding, which is based on shaping teachers' beliefs through an active process of reflection. It was evident from the participants' responses that they regarded themselves as generally lacking pedagogical

knowledge for teaching some subjects like Language, in particular, English. They highlighted that the critical reason behind this was that they were required to teach multilingual classes for which they had not been trained. They revealed that, in order to cope with the challenges, they were sometimes compelled to formulate their own methods of teaching, thus deviating from those stipulated in the curriculum policy. Since pedagogical knowledge requires teachers' understanding of learners' cognitive and social development, it is critical that the methods of teaching and learning that they use are strategized for the accomplishment of the purposes and values as anticipated (Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2008).

The findings also revealed that while teachers did possess pedagogical knowledge through their training and their experiences during teaching practice in their ITE, their pedagogical knowledge for teaching in multilingual classrooms was lacking. They were compelled to rely on experiential and situational knowledge to assist them in the selection and adaptation of their pedagogical knowledge to inform their pedagogical content knowledge in order to teach their learners.

Teacher participants offered insight into what they feel they are still learning and developing. Each aspect is important and offers an indication of what the teachers perceive are the key parts of their knowledge base. The teacher participants describe their knowledge in both similar and contrasting ways to the theoretical models presented in chapter 3. Firstly, the interviews had examples of both pedagogical and subject knowledge. Subject knowledge, that is knowledge of the specific subject a teacher teaches, featured dominantly. As teachers become more experienced, they can build up a body of explicit knowledge related to their subjects. In the case of pedagogical knowledge, the pattern is not as simple. The literature describes many overlapping theories of pedagogical knowledge. Shulman (1987) included general pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge; where general pedagogical knowledge contained the strategies that transcended subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) was specifically about the methods of teaching a particular subject.

The latter seemed to form the basis of the interviews conducted with the participants. Put simply, learning to teach can be fluid where teaching techniques can work for

one class/subject/time frame and then be less effective for a different class/subject/time frame. Participants were aware that pedagogy changes and this was evidenced in their responses. The participants noted times when they had to seek out new knowledge by watching other teachers or doing research on a topic to use in the class. Although in the interviews both subject and general pedagogical knowledge were linked, general classroom skills, for example, can be applied to all teachers in any classroom; behaviour management, child psychology, knowledge of pupil's contexts (Shulman, 1987). In addition to the discussed types of knowledge, participants also discussed knowledge that was related to the school, in particular how some knowledge was school specific and shaped by the needs of the school.

The issue of how knowledge is developed in their classroom practice was evidenced strongly through the findings, producing data that suggested the presence of both school and external knowledge. Banks et al.'s (1999), model included a similar aspect that was entitled "school knowledge". Banks et al.'s model elaborated how school knowledge is where subject knowledge is transformed for use in schools. In the literature, the PCK summit model (Gess-Newsome & Carlson, 2013) calls it Topic Specific Professional Knowledge (TSPK). TSPK is transformed as it is enacted in the classroom. This transformation process is influenced by factors which they call amplifiers and filters, for example, the teacher's beliefs and or the various contextual factors which play a role in teaching.

In this study, school knowledge then could be for example, when the participants discussed the issue of how books or how many times they had to be marked and marked in a particular way and also, having to follow the set structures of the grade like using the same worksheets even when you would rather use a different method. External knowledge here overlaps with knowledge of educational contexts (Shulman, 1987) and with regards to the consensus model; this would be an amplifier to the transformation process TSPK as mentioned in the passage above. So in this sense, curricular knowledge is a knowledge base that influences or impacts your classroom practice. The teacher who stated that she learnt the national curriculum (CAPS) had no or no good knowledge base for the curriculum used at the school where she was teaching; this in turn affected her ability to transform her TSPK in her practice.

The results/ findings showed that as teachers become accustomed to their teaching practices, their knowledge of student understanding continues to develop due to their high teacher efficacy levels on their teaching abilities. To go a step further, because teachers will continue to have a new group of learners every year, their knowledge of learner understanding becomes the driving force in their sustained growth of PCK. Closer examination of the qualitative data revealed that as teachers gain experience their primary conduit for further developing PCK is through knowledge gained about students and their learning. One of the NQTs stated that it was also crucial to keep in mind, the prior knowledge of the learner. The knowledge of student understanding, a key component of the consensus PCK model, becomes a critical aspect responsible for bolstering and strengthening PCK as teachers gain classroom teaching experience.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion of findings and conclusion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The chapter summarises the thesis in order to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1, and to reach a conclusion concerning the findings. The previous chapter discussed the results of the study. This chapter concludes the thesis and puts forth recommendations, based on the conclusion, for initial teacher education providers, schools as well as Departments of Education. Finally, some suggestions for further research will be proposed and policy recommendations. These suggestions are critical issues which emerged through the study, but which were beyond its scope.

The purpose of the study was to find out in what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor program support NQTs in their classroom practices.

The study's sub research questions:

1. What are the views of student teachers related to their learning experience in a Bachelor programme?
2. What are the views of NQT's about their B.Ed. program experience in light of their 1st year in the classroom?

Data were gathered in response to these questions; questionnaires and focus group interviews. These data were discussed in chapter five where themes were drawn out from the analysis. This chapter will discuss the key findings from the study and the implications of these for research and initial teacher education institutions. In the past, universities and teacher education courses have been criticised for a lack of practicum, too much/little theory, transmission delivery style, fragmented coursework, university and school tensions and inconsistent and conflicting expectations from student teachers (Beck, 2007). In this study, these reproaches were evident but not for all of the participants and not all of the time.

The data revealed that for some of the participants in this study, the theory was considered essential while others felt the theory was excessive. The majority felt the knowledge and coursework portion of their ITE supported their classroom practices,

others felt it was challenging. The most impactful thing on their classroom practice was their teaching practice experience which allowed them the space to 'try out' the methodologies and techniques imparted to them from their ITE. This was tempered by things like the restrictions imposed on them by mentor teachers whose classrooms they were in and the inadequate time set aside for teaching practice. Finally, this study also found that the impact of school culture and context played a major role in how experiences of learning to teach could support their classroom practices. Here, managing the classroom, discipline, heavy administrative duties and the strong school culture which dictates what is to be taught and in what ways, challenged their classroom practices.

## **6.2 Discussion of key findings that emerged**

The findings of the study highlighted the encounters of NQTs with the dichotomies and constraints of their school environments and the influences of their ITE. In chapter five three overarching themes are described. Each relate to aspects of learning to teach. These three aspects are the knowledge and skills developed in the coursework portion of the initial teacher program; the teaching practicum and its influences section of ITE; and the development of PCK. The types of professional knowledge and skills that had to be learnt during ITE are illustrated to have influenced what supports NQTs classroom practice. During the time that the participants were students as well as NQTs, the study found that, the majority of the students felt prepared to teach and that the knowledge and skills developed during ITE were adequate. The lecturers were well versed in the subject matter which helped them in their classroom practices. While this is true, Beck (2007), notes that while student teachers generally indicate preparedness to teach, they invariably indicate some areas where they could get further instruction and this study found this to be the case. Some examples that were mentioned in chapter five were being well prepared in certain subjects like language and Mathematics as well as methodologies and teaching strategies to deal with learners in the classroom.

The study also found that a significant contributor to the NQTs' perceptions of what supports their classroom practice from their ITE was the teaching practicum. All the

participants both as STs and NQTs expressed the view that the teaching practicum was essential to their classroom practices. Teaching practice provided access to what they termed the 'real' world experience of teaching in that they gained exposure to things like dealing with the administrative tasks, book marking, assessment planning and general classroom management that ITE, (campus-based) learning cannot provide.

The third theme that emerged from the study, the development of PCK found that, in terms of learning to teach, PCK played a role as well as the, different influences and demands impacted their classroom practices. Some of these were the very dominant school culture which shaped what they could teach and how. The long hours, heavy administrative duties, classroom management and discipline as well as the expectations of the school head all influenced their classroom practices. In the beginning of their first year of teaching, they found it challenging and adjusting was difficult. The 'wash-out' effect was experienced by the majority because of these issues. It is also evident that the development needs of NQTs were not being met by schools; as evidenced by the numerous unaddressed concerns which the NQTs were grappling with.

However, when interviewed later in the year, they reported that they were able to use their ITE preparation and most were beginning to assert an identity of their own. Most reported feeling confident in their teaching and were using whatever methodologies and other knowledge as taught in ITE to support their classroom practices. The literature review noted that ITE only provides initial PCK through instructional strategies, knowledge of student understanding and curricular knowledge, to name a few. PCK is dynamic and gets moulded through experiences and beliefs, it is part and parcel of the learning to teach program and as such cannot be seen as something that is separate. It is something that is practiced and ever changing to meet the needs and demands of situations facing teachers on a daily basis in the classroom. As explicated in the literature review, more experienced teachers PCK is different to NQTs PCK and thus the importance of mentor teachers in the development of NQTs.

### **6.3 Significance of the Research**

The significance of my study, and therefore its contribution to theory, is the proposition that NQTs' approaches to learning to teach were pivotal to what they learned from their initial teacher education program and to their vision of teaching. Overall, the majority of participants within this study felt prepared for their first year teaching experience, which speaks to the effectiveness of the B.Ed. program they completed. As with many ITE programs, areas of improvement for the teacher training program were listed by participants. In summarising, it became obvious that for some NQTs the mix of their personal aspects, the context or their professional knowledge and the influence of school culture and context, played equal parts in supporting their classroom practice, both undesirably and in some instances positively. No one thing can be said to be the main influence on classroom practice.

However, it should be noted that if we make the claim that learning to teach is bound together with PCK, then no discussion of either can be considered without the other as both are developmental and emerge with experience and practice. The PCK Consensus Model's notion of 'amplifiers' and 'filters' was useful to frame the influence of learning to teach and context on practice. The study has re-affirmed the value of research into the experiences of learning to teach to identify how teachers teach and to understand why they teach the way they do so as to understand how to support the classroom practices of NQTs. If change is to be sought, then ITE programs and more critically, ongoing professional development programs for NQTs in South Africa, would have to focus more on the development of content knowledge, specifically PCK as Lee Shulman (1987), states that it is a specific knowledge base that is unique to educators and is a critical component of effective teaching practices.

### **6.4 Recommendations**

#### **6.4.1 Policy makers**

It should be noted that in the chapter that explicates education policy, it was ascertained that, government provides a broad overview of the minimum requirements for teacher education qualification. It is left to the service providers to interpret and incorporate these requirements into the design of their ITE programs. This means that there is not much uniformity in the different ITE programs available



in the current, each emphasises different aspects of teacher education. There is a need for policy makers and ITE providers to consult on an on-going basis with the common aim of gaining a better fit between the policy expectations of government and the content of ITE programs regarding the development of teacher knowledge so as to better impact student teachers. The DHET therefore needs to provide more specific detail on the knowledge's (exact theories and pedagogies) for teacher educators to draw from in order to make ITE programmes successful and of value to pre-service teachers. One of the consequences of ITE policies providing a detailed body of knowledge, and pointers to practice, would be that B.Ed. programmes could have greater uniformity in terms of content and the quality of teachers produced, teachers who are adequately and equally equipped to teach, which ultimately enhances teaching and learning.

#### **6.4.2 ITE providers, and Mentor Teachers**

Based on evidence from interviews, the relationship student teachers had with mentor teachers during teaching practice greatly shaped how they learnt to teach. Moreover NQTs drew on their relationships with mentor teachers during teaching practices to inform their classroom practice. Evidence from both student teachers and NQTs suggests however that the relationship varies from one teaching practice encounter to the next. There appears thus to be a need for teacher education providers to standardise the interaction with mentor teachers. This may include developing systems that ensure student teachers' not only have input into the choices of schools for teaching practice, but also that school choices are informed in a systematic manner. There is also the need to capacitate schools to handle induction and the relevant needs of NQTs, employing mentoring as a support for NQTs.

One example for doing this is through including workshops with mentor teachers within the teaching practice model. During workshops mentor teachers could be briefed about what student teachers are meant to learn during teaching practice and how much input is expected from them. Student teachers could also be part of this interaction to ensure both parties are part of the decisions that are made regarding their teaching practice experience. It is also important to note that there are some

ITE providers who are already engaging with mentor teachers in this manner. Another example could involve a selection criterion for suitable mentor teachers to ensure that mentoring teachers and student teachers are well-matched.

#### **6.4.3 Future Research**

As stated earlier in the chapter, PCK is developed over time with experience. ITE only provides PCK and NQTs are expected to continue to develop their PCK through, reflective practices and working with mentors, as their PCK has advanced with experience in order to ensure best classroom practices. CPD courses and training of NQTs is one way to foster the development of PCK. Future research should examine NQTs', PCK development throughout their teacher education program, including student teaching. Surveys of new teachers suggest that student teaching is the most important part of their teaching training experience (Levine, 2006). During that time; NQTs are expected to gradually take on increased responsibility for teaching often, planning and implementing multiple lessons. Therefore, they may have occasion to progress to the advanced level, where they constantly use a variety of tools and thoroughly consider the results of student outcomes. Future research must document more closely the PCK preparation of NQTs, as well as their knowledge development from freshman year to graduation, to further understand the role of pedagogic content knowledge coursework and student teaching in PCK development. Such research should also document the types of student teaching experiences that positively interact with PCK development.

#### **6.5 Conclusion**

This chapter summarised the discussion emanating from the findings and recommendations based on the conclusions. Understanding the development of PCK during experiences of learning to teach within specific initial teacher education contexts is critical to the ways in which NQTs' classroom practice is supported. Using a mixed method research design, this study examined the views of NQTs of their ITE and how it supports their classroom practices. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data revealed that participants had both positive and negative experiences in learning to teach which impacts their classroom practices. Learning to

teach is complex and no one thing was noted as being the sole item responsible for what supported NQTs in their classroom practices. These were related to the knowledge and skills as taught in ITE, the relationships developed with lecturers and mentors, the highly impactful teaching practicum, effects of school culture and context.

Some of these issues highlighted in the findings where recommendations can be applied are, the need to capacitate schools to handle induction and the pertinent needs of NQTs, employing mentoring as a support for NQTs, the need to strengthen the partnership between schools and ITE institutions in teacher preparation and the improvement of the ITE programs in general. Results pointed to the importance of ITE coursework in learning to teach which in essence supports NQTs in the development of their PCK. Findings from this study help establish an empirical basis related to initial teacher education components and practices with the potential to support NQTs' classroom practice.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: WCED Ethical Clearance



Directorate: Research

[Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Audrey.wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za)

Tel: +27 021 467 9272

Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

wced.wcape.gov.za

**REFERENCE:** 20170719 –3082

**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A T Wyngaard

Ms Sene Van Heerden

32 Second Avenue

Rondebosch Close

Rondebosch East

7780

**Dear Ms Sene Van Heerden**

**Research Proposal: investigating pedagogical content knowledge of newly qualified foundation phase language teachers in the Western Cape**

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **24 July 2017 till 29 September 2017**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services**

**Western Cape Education Department**

**Private Bag X9114**

**CAPE TOWN**

**8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

**Directorate: Research DATE: 20 July 2017**

## Appendix B: Focus Group Interview Schedule



### FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS WITH NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

#### Overall research question of the study:

- **In what ways do the experiences of learning to teach in a Bachelor programme, support Newly Qualified teachers in their practices in the classroom?**

#### The sub-questions of the Study:

- 1. What are the views of student teachers related to their learning experience in a Bachelor programme in becoming a teacher?**
- 2. What are the views of NQT's about their B.Ed. program experience in light of their 1st year in the classroom?**

#### Purpose:

The focus group will comprise of 3 to 5 participants. The purpose of this data collection method is to yield the collective experiences of teaching rather than just an individual point of view. Such situation may tease out variety of different experiences but it can also help NQTs realise that what they are experiencing is shared among other NQTs.

#### Interview topics:

1. Tell us about your experiences and impressions of your first few months of teaching in your current job (listen for motivation and beliefs and probe more)
2. Tell us about your expectations of teaching before you started your current job this year (listen for motivation and beliefs and probe more).
3. Have these expectations changed? (Listen for causes of the changes and probe more)
4. Tell us about your learning in the ITE programme, specifically on maths (or language), and how you have applied some or all of this
5. Tell us about your pedagogical teaching challenges in the classroom and whether the ITE programme prepared you to deal with them (Listen specifically for the CK and PCK in mathematics and language)
6. Tell us about the key obstacles that you encounter that hinder you implementing your knowledge in the school?
7. In what ways did the ITE programme assist you to address some of these challenges?
8. Is there anything else you would like to add, or ask us?

## **Appendix C: Competencies of a Beginner Teacher**

## **Appendix C: Basic Competences of a Beginner Teacher**

The following are the minimum set of competences required of newly qualified teachers:

1. Newly qualified teachers must have a sound subject knowledge.
2. Newly qualified teachers must know how to teach their subject(s) and how to select, determine the sequence and pace content in accordance with both subject and learner needs.
3. Newly qualified teachers must know who their learners are and how they learn; they must understand their individual needs and tailor their teaching accordingly.
4. Newly qualified teachers must know how to communicate effectively in general, as well as in relation to their subject(s), in order to mediate learning.
5. Newly qualified teachers must have highly developed literacy, numeracy and Information Technology (IT) skills.
6. Newly qualified teachers must be knowledgeable about the school curriculum and be able to unpack its specialised content, as well as being able to use available resources appropriately, so as to plan and design suitable learning programmes.
7. Newly qualified teachers must understand diversity in the South African context in order to teach in a manner that includes all learners. They must also be able to identify learning or social problems and work in partnership with professional service providers to address these.
8. Newly qualified teachers must be able to manage classrooms effectively across diverse contexts in order to ensure a conducive learning environment.
9. Newly qualified teachers must be able to assess learners in reliable and varied ways, as well as being able to use the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning.
10. Newly qualified teachers must have a positive work ethic, display appropriate values and conduct themselves in a manner that befits, enhances and develops the teaching profession.
11. Newly qualified teachers must be able to reflect critically, in theoretically informed ways and in conjunction with their professional community of colleagues on their own practice in order to constantly improve it and adapt it to evolving circumstances.

## Appendix D: Cape Peninsular University of Technology Ethics Clearance



<i>***For office use only</i>	
Date submitted	17 Aug 2017
Meeting date	17 Aug 2017
Approval	P/Y✓/N
Ethical Clearance number	EFEC 4-9/2017

### FACULTY OF EDUCATION


### RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This certificate is issued by the Education Faculty Ethics Committee (EFEC) at Cape Peninsula University of Technology to the applicant/s whose details appear below.

**1. Applicant and project details (Applicant to complete this section of the certificate and submit with application as a Word document)**

Name(s) of applicant(s):	Sene van Heerden	
Project/study Title:	Investigating pedagogical content knowledge of Newly Qualified Foundation Phase language teachers, in the Western Cape	
Is this a staff research project, i.e. not for degree purposes?	No	
If for degree purposes the degree is indicated:	M.Ed	
If for degree purposes, the proposal has been approved by the FRC	Yes	
Funding sources:	NRF	

**2. Remarks by Education Faculty Ethics Committee:**

This Master's research project is granted ethical clearance valid until 12 September 2019.		
Approved: ✓	Referred back:	Approved subject to adaptations:
Chairperson Name: Chiwimbiso Kwenda		Date: 13 September 2017
Chairperson Signature:		
Approval Certificate/Reference: EFEC 4-9/2017		

EFEC Form V3\_updated 2016

## Appendix E: Participant Consent Form



Centre for International Teacher Education



### **Participant Consent Form**

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You are invited to participate in a study on *Professional Development of Teachers in South Africa*. This study is being conducted by the Centre for International Teachers Education at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

#### **Purpose and objectives**

The purpose of this study is to explore how newly qualified teachers experience their first year of teaching in relation to the initial teacher education programme they have completed.

#### **Importance of this research**

This study will allow us to tease out the underlying challenges in preparing teachers for a teaching career.

#### **What is involved?**

- Attending two workshops. The first workshop will be organized at the beginning of the second term. The second workshop will be organized at the end of the third term.
- At each workshop you will be asked to complete a survey form about your experiences of your first year of teaching. The time needed to complete the survey form is approximately 45 minutes.
- At each workshop you will be asked to participate in a focus group interview that will last from 30 to 60 minutes.
- During the second term, you will be asked to record two pedagogical moments in the reflective journal.

#### **What are the benefits?**

You will receive an honorarium for participation in the research.

#### **Voluntary participation**

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Even if you decide to participate, you may still withdraw at any time without any consequence or explanation. If so, you will be asked to sign a release form and all the data gathered from you up to that point will be erased.

#### **Anonymity**

In any papers or presentations made as a result of data collected in this project, your name will be changed and any description identifying you or people related to you will be changed to protect your and their anonymity - unless you give express permission to be identified and have permission to share the identity of people related to you.

#### **Confidentiality**

Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will always be protected. This will be done by storing all recorded data in a locked filing cabinet. Any typed data will be held in a password protected computer storage device.

#### **Dissemination of Results**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways, (1) conference presentations, (2) scholarly papers, and (3) policy briefs.

**Contact**

If you have any further questions you may contact **Prof Yusuf Sayed** at e-mail [cite@cput.ac.za](mailto:cite@cput.ac.za)

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study, that you agree to participate and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

**Please indicate your preference with an [X]**

- I volunteer to participate in the study on experiences of newly qualified teachers

- I wish my identity to be known to the investigators in this study

---

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Revision to consent form if required:

- I wish my identity to be known to the investigators in this study.

- I wish to remove myself from the study and have all/portions of my data destroyed.

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<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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***A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the research assistant***

## Appendix F: Data Collection Plan

	<b>What are the views of student teachers related to their learning experience in a Bachelor programme in becoming a teacher?</b>
<b>Collection methods</b>	Questionnaires
<b>Why is this data being collected</b>	Data are being collected in order to ascertain the biographical information of the cohort; in addition, some qualitative information was obtained relating to their experiences of language teaching.
<b>Data sources</b>	The whole cohort
<b>Frequency of collection</b>	Once
<b>Collection methods</b>	Focus-group interviews
<b>Why is this data being collected</b>	This data are being collected to gain rich data on the views of the participants relating to their ITE in particular the development of their PCK
<b>Data sources</b>	A sample
<b>Frequency of collection</b>	Twice
<b>Sub-question 2</b>	<b>What are the views of NQT's about their B.Ed. programme experience in light of their 1st year in the classroom?</b>
<b>Collection methods</b>	Focus-group interviews
<b>Why is this data being collected</b>	This data are being collected to gain more in-depth and rich conversation and understanding of the practices of the NQTs in light of their ITE; with regards to the development of their PCK, especially in language teaching.
<b>Data sources</b>	The sample
<b>Frequency of collection</b>	Twice



## Appendix G: Questionnaire 1



CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

# Questionnaire 1: Experiences related to the academic programme

## B.Ed. Foundation Phase 4<sup>th</sup> year

### *The purpose of this questionnaire:*

- *This questionnaire is being administered by the Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE) at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), Mowbray.*
- *This questionnaire is part of a study examining student teacher experiences of teacher education.*  
*You have already completed Questionnaire 1, exploring your motivation to become a teacher.*  
*This questionnaire explores views about your learning experiences in the B.Ed. Foundation Phase programme. These include questions related to your beliefs about language and teaching language/s as well as beliefs about Mathematics and teaching Mathematics.*
- *Thank you for participating in this study. Your participation is **very important** as you are helping us to understand how teacher education is experienced.*

### *How to complete the questionnaire:*

- *The questionnaire consists of **16** pages (including this one). Expected completion time is **30-45 minutes**.*
- *There will be specific instructions for each question. Please follow these instructions by marking the appropriate answer with a cross (**X**), or writing out your answers in the boxes provided.*
- *Please, answer the questions carefully with as much detail as you can.*
- *If you have any questions, please raise your hand and the assistant will come to your desk to help you.*

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND YOU MAY, AT ANY STAGE, WITHOUT PREJUDICE, WITHDRAW YOUR CONSENT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY**

## A. Biographical Information

These questions are about you and your background. When you respond to the questions, please circle the relevant answer or mark the appropriate choice with a cross. Where applicable write out your answers in the space provided.

1. Are you male or female?

1 Female	2 Male
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2. How old are you?

1 17-20	2 21-25	3 26-30	4 31-35	5 36-40	6 older than 40
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3. How do you describe yourself?

1 Black African	2 Coloured	3 Indian	4 White	5 Other
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4. What is your primary home-language?

1 isiXhosa	2 Afrikaans	3 English	4 isiZulu	5 Sesotho	6 Setswana
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7 Sepedi	8 isiNdebele	9 Tshivenda	10 Xitsonga	11 siSwati	12 Other
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5. How are you paying for your university tuition?

1 Myself	2 Funza Lushaka	3 NSFAS loan	4 Private bursary/scholarship	5 Student loan from the bank	6 My family	7 Other
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6. Are you working part-time while you are studying?

1 Yes	2 No
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7. What kind of high school did you attend?

1 No-fee public school	2 Fee paying public school	3 Low-fee private school	4 High-fee private school
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5 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Which subjects did you take in Gr 12? *Please select all the relevant subjects*

1 Accounting	12 Economics	23 Mechanical Technology
2 Agricultural Management Practices	13 Electrical Technology	24 Music
3 Agricultural Science	14 Engineering Graphics and Design	25 Physical Sciences
4 Agricultural Technology	15 Geography	26 Religion Studies
5 Business Studies	16 History	27 Technical Mathematics
6 Civil Technology	17 Hospitality Studies	28 Technical Sciences
7 Computer Application Technology	18 Information Technology	29 Technical: Civil Technology
8 Consumer Studies / Home Economics	19 Life Orientation	30 Technical: Mechanical Technology
9 Dance Studies	20 Life Sciences / Biology	31 Tourism
10 Design Studies	21 Mathematical Literacy	32 Visual Arts
11 Dramatic Arts	22 Mathematics	33 Other (please specify) _____
34 Home Language: _____		35 First additional (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) language: _____

9. Do you have a post-matric qualification?

*Please select the option(s) that applies to you.*

1	No
2	Diploma (Specify: _____)
3	Degree (Specify: _____)
4	Other (please explain) _____

10. Are you the first person in your family to study at University? *Please select only one option*

1 Yes	2 No
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## B. The B.Ed. Foundation Phase Programme

*These questions are about the B.Ed Foundation Phase programme. When you respond to the questions, please mark the appropriate choice with a cross (X), or write out your answers in the box where applicable.*

11) Did your courses, from the start of the B.Ed. programme, cover the following aspects? If they did, how useful did you find it in terms of developing your knowledge and skills as a teacher?

*For each cross (X) you make in Part A, please indicate (in Part B) how useful you found that aspect in terms of developing your knowledge and skills as a teacher.*

Aspects	Part A - Aspects	Part B - Usefulness				
	Yes, covered aspect	we this	1Not at all	2Somewhat useful	3 Useful	4Very useful
a) Content Knowledge for Foundation Phase subjects						
b) Pedagogical Content Knowledge for Foundation Phase subject						
c) Knowledge of the CAPS curriculum						
d) Child development						
e) Learner assessment						
f) ICT (information and communication technology) skills						
g) Classroom management						
h) Teaching for inclusive education						
i) Teaching in a multilingual setting						
j) Managing diverse learner needs in the classroom						
k) Integrated teaching and learning						
l) Knowledge of the Constitution						
m) Teaching democratic values and practices						
n) Managing relationships with parents						

12) How often do your lecturers use the following teaching strategies?

Please provide an (X) for your choice in each row.

	1Never	2Occasionally/ Sometimes	3Very often	4All the time
a) Formal lectures				
b) Group work: (Class discussions, intergroup activities, brainstorming)				
c) Independent learning: (project work, research, presentation by students)				
d) Demonstrations / Modeling				
e) Micro-teaching / Glaskas / Fish bowl				
f) E-learning/use of educational technologies				
g) Other: Please specify:				

13) How helpful have the teaching strategies (that your lecturers use) has been for your learning?

Please provide an (X) for your choice in each row.

	1Not at all	2Somewhat helpful	3Helpful	4Very helpful	5Not applicable
a) Formal lectures					
b) Group work: (Class discussions, intergroup activities, brainstorming)					
c) Independent learning: (project work, research, presentation by students)					
d) Demonstrations / Micro-teaching					
e) Micro-teaching / Glaskas / Fish Bowl					
f) E-learning/use of educational technologies					
g) Other: Please specify:					

14) What forms of assessment were you introduced to during the B.Ed. programme? How useful were the forms of assessment for your development as a teacher?

For each cross (X) you make in Part A, please indicate (in Part B) how useful you found that aspect in terms of developing your knowledge and skills as a teacher.

Forms of assessment	Part A	Part B Usefulness			
	Yes, this assessment was used by lecturers <sub>1</sub>	1 Not at all	2 Somewhat useful	3 Useful	4 Very useful
a) Assignments/projects/ research/ practical work (Individual)					
b) Assignments/projects/ research/ practical work (Group)					
c) Portfolio					
d) Written tests and examinations					
e) Oral presentation (individual and group)					
f) Tutorials					
g) Other: Explain:					

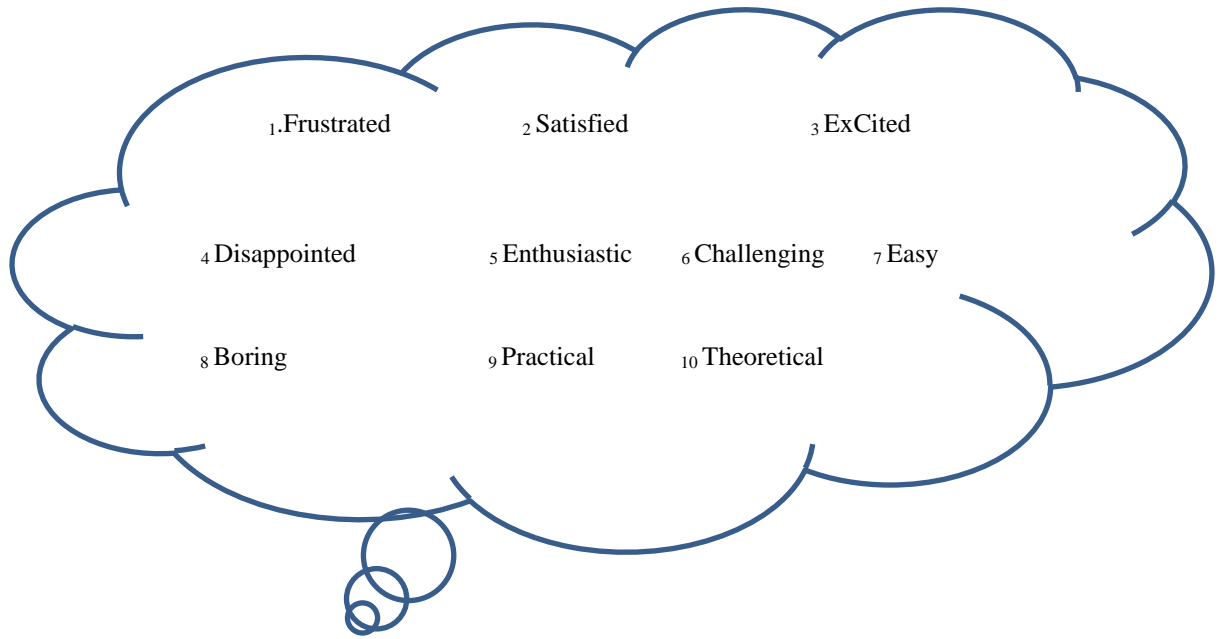
15) Approximately how many hours do you spend in total on assignments per week?

1 1-3 hours	2 3-6 hours	3 6-10 hours	4 More than 10 hours
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16) In an average week, approximately how many hours do you spend in total (after classes) on academic work?

1 1-3 hours	2 3-6 hours	3 6-10 hours	4 More than 10 hours
-------------	-------------	--------------	----------------------

17) **Circle TWO** words that **BEST** describe your experience of the academic programme. *Write one sentence with each of the words you circle to illustrate what they describe about your experience.*




## C. Learning about language and teaching language/s in the Foundation Phase

*These questions are about what you have been taught and what you learnt about language and teaching languages in the Foundation Phase in the B.Ed. programme. The questions relate to LITERACY as a major component of teaching languages in the Foundation Phase. When you respond to the questions, please mark the appropriate choice with a cross (X) or write your answer in the box where applicable.*

18) To what extent have you been taught to **develop** the following skills *in learners* during language teaching?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>
a) Speaking.				
b) Listening with comprehension.				
c) Recognising sounds (phonics).				
d) Reading aloud.				
e) Writing.				

19) To what extent have you been taught to **assess** the following skills *in learners* during language teaching?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>
a) Speaking.				
b) Listening with comprehension.				
c) Recognising sounds (phonics).				
d) Reading aloud.				
e) Writing.				



20) To what extent do you **require** additional development to teach the following skills *to learners* during language teaching?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat at <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>	I don't know <sub>5</sub>
a) Speaking.					
b) Listening with comprehension.					
c) Recognising sounds (phonics).					
d) Reading aloud.					
e) Writing.					

21) What LISTENING AND SPEAKING lesson strategies have been taught to you by your lecturers in the B.Ed. programme? How useful were the strategies for your development as a teacher? *For each cross (X) you make in Part A, please indicate (in Part B) how useful you found that aspect in terms of developing your knowledge and skills as a teacher.*

	Part A Aspects	Part B Usefulness			
<b>Lesson strategies</b>	Yes, this assessment was used by lecturers <sub>1</sub>	1Not at all	2Somewhat useful	3 Useful	4Very useful
a) Whole class teaching.					
b) Group learners according to their ability					
c) Use of multimodal and visual texts.					
d) Use of drama and role play.					
e) Use of the chalkboard.					
f) Use of the whiteboard.					
g) Have learners work individually.					
h) Have learners work in pairs					
i) Have learners work in groups					
j) Use of worksheets					

	Part A Aspects	Part B Usefulness			
<b>Lesson strategies</b>	Yes, this assessment was used by lecturers <sub>1</sub>	1Not at all	2Somewhat useful	3 Useful	4Very useful
k) Use of prescribed textbooks					
l) Use of educational technology					
m) Facilitate a class discussion					

22) What READING AND WRITING lesson strategies have been taught to you by your lecturers in the B.Ed. programme? How useful were the strategies for your development as a teacher? For each cross (X) you make in Part A, please indicate (in Part B) how useful you found that aspect in terms of developing your knowledge and skills as a teacher.

	Part A Aspects	Part B Usefulness			
<b>Lesson strategies</b>	Yes, this assessment was used by lecturers <sub>1</sub>	1Not at all	2Somewhat useful	3 Useful	4Very useful
a) Whole class teaching.					
b) Group learners according to their ability					
c) Use of multimodal and visual texts.					
d) Use of drama and role play.					
e) Use of the chalkboard.					
f) Use of the whiteboard.					
g) Have learners work individually.					
h) Have learners work in pairs					
i) Have learners work in groups					
j) Use of worksheets					
k) Use of prescribed textbooks					
l) Use of educational technology					
m) Facilitate a class discussion					

23) To what extent have you been prepared (in the B.Ed programme) to use the following teaching strategies when teaching language/s to learners?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>
a) Explicitly state learning goals.				
b) Start from learners' prior knowledge.				
c) Group learners according to their ability.				
d) Read for enjoyment.				
e) Use language to develop concepts.				
f) Storytelling.				
g) Allow learners to follow their own interests and ideas.				
h) Allow for interpretations and comments from learners themselves.				

24) To what extent have you been prepared (in the B.Ed programme) to do the following while teaching language/s?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>
a) Ask questions that get learners to reflect about and interpret what they are reading.				
b) Get learners interested in reading.				
c) Know which learner needs help with reading.				
d) Meet the needs of the individual learners in a language class.				
e) Get learners to speak in the class.				
f) Get learners to feel confident in reading				
g) Get learners to listening				
h) Get learners to write.				
i) Get learners to understand how to put sounds together.				
j) Use language to stimulate learners' imaginations				
k) Teach in multilingual classrooms				

25) What was the *ONE* most valuable thing you learnt about teaching learners to read?

26) What was the *ONE* most valuable thing you learnt about teaching learners to listen?

## D. Learning about Mathematics and teaching Mathematics in the Foundation Phase

*These questions are about what you have been taught and what you learnt about teaching mathematics in the Foundation Phase in the B.Ed programme. When you respond to the questions, please mark the appropriate choice with a cross (X) or write out your answers in the box where applicable.*

27) To what extent have you been taught to **develop** the following mathematical knowledge and skills *in learners*?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>
a) The correct use of basic terminology.				
b) Investigate, analyse, represent and interpret mathematical information.				
c) Number concept, calculation and application skills.				
d) Recognise and use properties of operations.				
e) Rules and how to apply them.				
f) Mathematical communication skills.				
g) Problem solving ability.				

28) To what extent have you been taught to **assess** the following mathematical knowledge and skills *in learners*?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>
a) The correct use of basic terminology.				
b) Investigate, analyse, represent and interpret mathematical information.				
c) Number concept, calculation and application skills.				
d) Recognise and use properties of operations.				
e) Rules and how to apply them.				
f) Mathematical communication skills.				
g) Problem solving ability.				

29) To what extent do you **require** additional development to teach the following mathematical knowledge skills *to learners*?

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat <sub>2</sub>	Moderately <sub>3</sub>	Totally <sub>4</sub>	I don't know <sub>5</sub>
a) The correct use of basic terminology.					
b) Investigate, analyse, represent and interpret mathematical information.					
c) Number concept, calculation and application skills.					
d) Recognise and use properties of operations.					
e) Rules and how to apply them.					
f) Mathematical communication skills.					
g) Problem solving ability.					

30) What mathematics lesson strategies have been taught to you by your lecturers in the B.Ed. programme? How useful were the strategies for your development as a teacher? For each cross (X) you make in Part A, please indicate (in Part B) how useful you found that aspect in terms of developing your knowledge and skills as a teacher.

	Part A Aspects	Part B Usefulness			
<b>Lesson strategies</b>	Yes, this assessment was used by lecturers <sub>1</sub>	<sub>1</sub> Not at all	<sub>2</sub> Somewhat useful	<sub>3</sub> Useful	<sub>4</sub> Very useful
a) Teach a mathematics concept or procedure to the whole class.					
b) Revise homework with the whole class.					
c) Use of the chalkboard to explain corrections.					
d) Use of the whiteboard to explain corrections.					
e) Have learners work individually.					
f) Have learners work in groups.					
g) Have learners complete a test or quiz.					
h) Use of concrete teaching aids.					
	Part A Aspects	Part B Usefulness			
<b>Lesson strategies</b>	Yes, this assessment was used by lecturers <sub>1</sub>	<sub>1</sub> Not at all	<sub>2</sub> Somewhat useful	<sub>3</sub> Useful	<sub>4</sub> Very useful
i) Use of charts.					

j) Have learners solve word problems.					
k) Use of worksheets.					
l) Use of prescribed workbooks.					
m) Use of educational technology.					
n) Facilitate a class discussion.					

31) To what extent have you been prepared (in the B.Ed programme) to use the following when teaching mathematics?

	Strongly disagree <sub>1</sub>	Disagree <sub>2</sub>	Agree <sub>3</sub>	Strongly agree <sub>4</sub>
a) Ask questions that get learners to think about mathematics.				
b) Get learners interested in mathematics.				
c) Know which learners need help.				
d) Meet the needs of the individual learners in a mathematics class.				
e) Get learners to feel confident in understanding mathematics.				
f) Get learners to understand underlying concepts in mathematics.				
g) Create, select and sequence mathematical activities for developing mathematical understanding.				

32) What was the **ONE** most valuable thing you learnt about teaching mathematics?


## E. Invitation to further participate in the research

Would you be willing to participate in a focus group interview? *Please mark with an (X).*

1 Yes	2 No
-------	------

If yes, please provide a cell phone number and email address: Cell

Email

Should you want to provide additional information that comes to mind after you have completed this questionnaire please contact: [cite@cput.ac.za](mailto:cite@cput.ac.za)

For information about the Centre or this study, please contact

**Professor Y Sayed**, South African Research Chair in Teacher Education and Director of Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE) at [sayed@cput.ac.za](mailto:sayed@cput.ac.za)

**Professor A Badroodien**, Deputy Director: CITE at [badroodiena@cput.ac.za](mailto:badroodiena@cput.ac.za)



## Appendix H: Questionnaire 2



CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL TEACHER EDUCATION

## Questionnaire 2: Teaching practice and confidence to teach B Ed Foundation Phase 4<sup>th</sup> year

### The purpose of this questionnaire:

- This questionnaire is being administered by the Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE) at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), Mowbray in collaboration with Stellenbosch University, Tshwane University of Technology and the University of the Western Cape.
- This is the third questionnaire in a study examining student experiences of teacher education. Earlier this year you completed Questionnaire 1, exploring your motivation to become a teacher, and Questionnaire 2, exploring your experiences related to the academic programme. This questionnaire explores your views about your Teaching Practice experiences, and your confidence to enter the teaching profession. In addition, there are also questions about your plans for next year.
- Thank you for continuing to participate in this study. Your participation is **very important** as you are helping us to understand how teacher education is experienced.

### How to complete the questionnaire:

- The questionnaire consists of **20** pages. Expected completion time is **approximately ONE HOUR**.
- There are specific instructions for each question. Please follow these instructions by marking the appropriate answer with a cross (**X**), or writing out your answers in the boxes provided.
- Please answer the questions carefully and complete all the sections with as much detail as you can.
- If you have any questions, please raise your hand and the assistant will come to your desk to help you.

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND YOU MAY, AT ANY STAGE, WITHOUT PREJUDICE, WITHDRAW YOUR CONSENT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY**



## A. Biographical Information

*These questions are about you and your background. When you respond to the questions, please circle the relevant answer or mark the appropriate choice with a cross. Where applicable write out your answers in the space provided.*

1. Are you male or female?

1 Female	2 Male
----------	--------

2. How old are you?

1 17-20	2 21-25	3 26-30	4 31-35	5 36-40	6 older than 40
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3. How do you describe yourself?

1 Black African	2 Coloured	3 Indian	4 White	5 Other
-----------------	------------	----------	---------	---------

4. What is your primary home-language?

1 isiXhosa	2 Afrikaans	3 English	4 isiZulu	5 Sesotho	6 Setswana
------------	-------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	------------

7 Sepedi	8 isiNdebele	9 Tshivenda	10 Xitsonga	11 siSwati	12 Other
----------	--------------	-------------	-------------	------------	----------

5. How are you paying for your university tuition?

1 Myself	2 Funza Lushaka	3 NSFAS loan	4 Private bursary/scholarship	5 Student loan from the bank	6 My family	7 Other
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6. Are you working while you are studying?

1 Yes, full time	2 Yes, part-time	3 No
------------------	------------------	------

7. What kind of high school did you attend?

1 No-fee government school	2 Fee paying government school	3 Low-fee independent school	4 High-fee independent school
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5 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

8. What was the name of the school you attended?

9. Which home language did you do as a subject in Gr 12? *Please select the relevant language(s)*

1 isiXhosa	2 Afrikaans	3 English	4 isiZulu	5 Sesotho	6 Setswana
---------------	-------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	---------------

7 Sepedi	8 isiNdebele	9 Tshivenda	10 Xitsonga	11 siSwati	12 Other
----------	--------------	----------------	-------------	------------	----------

10. Which first additional language did you do as a subject in Gr 12? *Please select the relevant language*

1 isiXhosa	2 Afrikaans	3 English	4 isiZulu	5 Sesotho	6 Setswana
---------------	-------------	-----------	-----------	-----------	---------------

7 Sepedi	8 isiNdebele	9 Tshivenda	10 Xitsonga	11 siSwati	12 Other
----------	--------------	----------------	-------------	------------	----------

11. Did you do Mathematics or Maths Literacy in Gr 12? *Please select only one option.*

1 Mathematics	2 Maths Literacy
---------------	------------------

12. Which subjects other than languages, mathematics, maths literacy and Life Orientation did you do in Gr12? *Please write down the three other subjects you did in Gr12.*


13. What was your average symbol in matric?

--

14. In addition to the qualification you are enrolled in, do you have another post-matric qualification?

1 Yes	2 No
-------	------

15. If you have a post-matric qualification, other than the one you are doing, indicate which.

*Please select the option(s) that applies to you.*

1	Diploma (Specify: _____)
2	Degree (Specify: _____)
3	Other (please explain) _____

16. Are you the first person in your family to study at University? *Please select only one option*

1Yes	2No
------	-----

## B. My experience of Teaching Practice in the B Ed programme

*Teaching practice is the practical competent of the B Ed programme, where students leave the university to work in schools for a set period of time. It is specified as a requirement in your programme outline.*

15) In the table below, list the school(s) you have taught and the medium of instruction for each year of the B Ed programme. *Please write the name of the school(s) in the table below.*

B Ed Year	Name of school	Medium of instruction
B Ed Year 1 (2013)		
B Ed Year 2 (2014)		
B Ed Year 3 (2015)		
B Ed Year 4 (2016)		

16) Think about your most recent Teaching Practice experience. On average, how many hours did you spend teaching every week? *Please select only one option.*

0-5 Hour <sub>1</sub>	5-10 Hours <sub>2</sub>	10-15 Hours <sub>3</sub>	15-20 Hours <sub>4</sub>	20-25 <sub>5</sub>
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17) Below is a list of characteristics about the university programme with respect to Teaching Practice in the course of the B Ed programme? *Please select the most suitable answer.*

	Strongly disagree <sub>1</sub>	Disagree <sub>2</sub>	Agree <sub>3</sub>	Strongly agree <sub>4</sub>
a) My lecturers prepared me for Teaching Practice.				
b) The lesson design we were given for Teaching Practice by lecturers was useful.				
c) The number of visits from lecturers/evaluators was sufficient.				
d) Feedback I received after formal lesson evaluations was useful.				
e) Feedback I received after formal lesson evaluations was fair.				

f)	I was able to give feedback to my lecturers/evaluators after lesson evaluations.				
g)	Feedback I received after teaching practice was useful.				
h)	Feedback I received after teaching practice assessments was fair.				
		<b>Strongly disagree<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>Disagree<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Agree<sub>3</sub></b>	<b>Strongly agree<sub>4</sub></b>
i)	I was able to give feedback to my lecturers about my teaching practice assessment.				
j)	I was able to give feedback to my lecturers about my experiences of teaching practice.				
k)	Completing the portfolio was a valuable opportunity to reflect on my development as a teacher.				

18) To what extent have you learnt about the following during teaching practice in your B Ed programme? *Please Select only one option for each row.*

		<b>Not at all<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>To some Extent<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>To a large extent<sub>3</sub></b>	<b>Completely<sub>4</sub></b>
a)	I learnt to manage the classroom.				
b)	I learnt to build a pedagogical relationship with learners.				
c)	I learnt to teach in a diverse range of schools.				
d)	I learnt to teach in classrooms with learners from diverse backgrounds.				
e)	I learnt to teach large classes.				
f)	I learnt to teach in multilingual classrooms.				
g)	I learnt to manage conflict amongst learners.				
h)	I learnt to discipline learners.				
i)	I learnt about being a professional.				
j)	I learnt to teach languages.				
k)	I learnt to teach mathematics.				

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	To some extent <sub>2</sub>	To a large extent <sub>3</sub>	Completely <sub>4</sub>
l) I learnt to develop assessments (e.g. tests, assignments, etc.).				
m) I learnt to develop assessment memoranda.				
n) I learnt to use assessment results.				
o) I learnt to report assessment results.				
p) I learnt to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses.				
q) I learnt to provide effective feedback during lessons.				
r) I learnt to ask higher order thinking questions.				
s) I learnt to train learners to conduct peer assessment.				
t) I learnt to train learners to conduct self-assessment.				

19) In Teaching Practice during your B Ed programme, which of the following activities have you participated in?

*Please select one option in each row.*

	Yes, I was able to do this <sub>1</sub>	No, I was unable to do this <sub>2</sub>
a) General administrative work.		
b) Invigilating.		
c) Extra tuition.		
d) Continuing Professional Development / In-service training.		
e) Substituting for a teacher other than my mentor teacher.		
f) Engaging in extracurricular sporting activities.		
g) Engaging in extracurricular cultural activities (e.g. choir, art).		
h) Accompanying learners on excursions.		

	Yes, I was able to do this <sub>1</sub>	No, I was unable to do this <sub>2</sub>
i) Communication with parents or guardians.		
j) Home visits.		
k) Other (specify):		

20) How often did you engage in the following actions while on Teaching Practice during the B Ed programme? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	Always <sub>1</sub>	Often <sub>2</sub>	Seldom <sub>3</sub>	Never <sub>4</sub>
a) Demonstrated empathy towards learners.				
b) Identified particular learning difficulties.				
c) Helped learners who had particular learning difficulties.				
d) Facilitated group work.				
e) Encouraged learner participation.				
f) Facilitated peer learning.				
g) Differentiated instruction to meet learners' individual needs.				
h) Asked higher order thinking questions.				
i) Used different types of feedback to assess learners.				
j) Integrated technology.				

21) How would you describe your mentors in the B Ed programme? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	Always <sub>1</sub>	Often <sub>2</sub>	Seldom <sub>3</sub>	Never <sub>4</sub>
a) My mentors were happy to give me advice.				
b) My mentors inspired me to teach.				

	Always <sub>1</sub>	Often <sub>2</sub>	Seldom <sub>3</sub>	Never <sub>4</sub>
c) My mentors provided feedback on my work.				
d) The evaluations of my mentors were fair.				
e) My mentors were empathetic.				
f) My mentors gave me too much work to do.				
g) My mentors did not pay attention to me.				
h) My mentors often seemed unhappy about my work.				

22) How would you describe the learning experiences facilitated by your mentor teachers in the course of the B Ed programme? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	Strongly disagree <sub>1</sub>	Disagree <sub>2</sub>	Agree <sub>3</sub>	Strongly agree <sub>4</sub>
a) My mentors helped me to understand what teachers do in practice.				
b) My mentors helped me understand the language curriculum.				
c) My mentors helped me understand the mathematics curriculum.				
d) My mentors gave me the opportunity to experiment with teaching methods.				
e) My mentors allowed me to work independently.				
f) My mentors allowed me to use teaching methods different to theirs.				
g) My mentors were happy to answer questions.				

23) How would you describe your mentor's interaction with you in the course of the B Ed programme? *Please Select only one option for each row.*

	Strongly disagree <sub>1</sub>	Disagree <sub>2</sub>	Agree <sub>3</sub>	Strongly agree <sub>4</sub>
a) My mentors were interested in what I did.				
b) My mentors encouraged me to share my knowledge of teaching acquired in my studies.				
c) My mentor asked me useful questions that helped me improve my practice.				
d) My mentors were open to suggestions from me.				



24) During teaching practice in the B Ed programme, how helpful were the following people for your professional development? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	1Not at all	2Somewhat helpful	3Helpful	4Very helpful	5Not applicable
a) Lecturers					
b) Evaluators					
c) Fellow students in class					
d) Friends who are teachers					
e) Learners					
f) Mentors					
g) Other teachers in the school I did my teaching practice.					
h) Principal					
i) Other(please specify): _____					

25) What, if anything, is the ONE thing you would improve in relation to teaching practice?


### C. Teaching Language/s in the Foundation Phase

26) During a typical language lesson, how **confident** are you to do the following?

*Please select only one option for each row.*

	Not confident	Somewhat confident	Confident	Very confident
a) Whole class teaching				
b) Group learning				
c) Use multimodal and visual texts				
d) Use drama and play-acting				
e) Use the board for explaining corrections				
f) Have learners work individually				
g) Have learners work in pairs				

27) During a typical language lesson, how **likely** are you to do the following?  
Please select only one option for each row.

	<b>Never<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>Occasionally<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Frequently<sub>3</sub></b>
a) Whole class teaching.			
b) Group learning			
c) Use multimodal and visual texts.			
d) Use drama and play acting.			
e) Use the board for explaining corrections.			
f) Have learners work individually.			
g) Have learners work in pairs			

28) To what extent have you gained the following knowledge and skills in terms of assessing language? Please select only one for each row.

	<b>Not at all<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>To some extent<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>To a large extent<sub>3</sub></b>	<b>Completely<sub>4</sub></b>
b) I learnt to develop assessment memoranda.				
c) I learnt to use assessment results for teaching.				
d) I learnt to report assessment results.				
e) I learnt to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses.				
f) I learnt to provide effective feedback during lessons.				
g) I learnt to ask higher order thinking questions.				
h) I learnt to train learners to conduct peer assessment.				
i) I learnt to train learners to conduct self assessment.				

29). How **confident** do you feel to develop the following skills in your learners during language teaching? Please select only one option for each row.

	<b>Not at all<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>Somewhat confident<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Confident<sub>3</sub></b>	<b>Very confident<sub>4</sub></b>
a) Speaking				

b)	Listening with comprehension				
c)	Sound recognition (phonics)				
d)	Reading				
e)	Writing				

29) How **confident** do you feel to assess the following skills in your learners during language teaching? *Please select only one option for each row.*

		Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat confident <sub>2</sub>	Confident <sub>3</sub>	Very confident <sub>4</sub>
a)	Speaking				
b)	Listening with comprehension				
c)	Sound recognition (phonics)				
d)	Reading				
e)	Writing				

30) How much continuous development would you like to receive as a language teacher in the following areas? *Please select only one option for each row.*

		None at all <sub>1</sub>	Some development <sub>2</sub>	Substantial development <sub>3</sub>	A lot <sub>4</sub>
a)	Teaching learners to speak				
b)	Teaching learners to listen with comprehension				
c)	Teaching sound recognition (phonics)				
d)	Teaching reading				
e)	Teaching writing				

31) Please share with us the **ONE** area of teaching language/s you *feel best prepared for*.



32) Please share with us the **ONE** area of teaching language/s you *feel least prepared for*.


### D. Teaching Mathematics in the Foundation Phase

34) During a typical mathematics lesson, how **confident** are you to do the following?  
Please select only one option for each row.

	Not confident <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat confident <sub>2</sub>	Confident <sub>3</sub>	Very confident <sub>4</sub>
a) Teach a mathematics concept or procedure to the whole class.				
b) Revise homework with the whole class.				
c) Use the chalkboard to explain corrections.				
d) Use the whiteboard to explain corrections.				
e) Have learners work individually.				
f) Have learners work in groups.				
g) Have learners complete a test or quiz.				
h) Use concrete teaching aids.				
i) Use charts.				
j) Have learners solve word problems.				
k) Use worksheets.				
l) Use prescribed workbooks.				
m) Use educational technology.				

n) Facilitate a class discussion.				
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35) During a typical mathematics lesson, how likely are you to do the following?  
*Please select only one option for each row.*

	Never <sub>1</sub>	Occasionally <sub>2</sub>	Frequently <sub>3</sub>
a) Teach a mathematics concept or procedure to the whole class.			
b) Revise homework with the whole class.			
c) Use the chalkboard to explain corrections.			
d) Use the whiteboard to explain corrections.			
e) Have learners work individually.			
f) Have learners work in groups.			
g) Have learners complete a test or quiz.			
h) Use concrete teaching aids.			
i) Use charts.			
j) Have learners solve word problems.			
k) Use worksheets.			
l) Use prescribed workbooks.			
m) Use educational technology.			
n) Facilitate a class discussion.			

36) To what extent have you gained the following knowledge and skills in terms of assessing mathematics? *Please select only one for each row.*

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	To some extent <sub>2</sub>	To a large extent <sub>3</sub>	Completely <sub>4</sub>
b) I learnt to develop assessment memoranda.				
c) I learnt to use assessment results for teaching.				
d) I learnt to report assessment results.				

e) I learnt to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses.				
f) I learnt to provide effective feedback during lessons.				
g) I learnt to ask higher order thinking questions.				
h) I learnt to train learners to conduct peer assessment.				
i) I learnt to train learners to conduct self-assessment.				

37) How **confident** do you feel to develop the following mathematical knowledge skills in learners? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat confident <sub>2</sub>	Confident <sub>3</sub>	Very confident <sub>4</sub>
a) Developing the correct use of basic terminology.				
b) Learning to investigate, analyse, represent and interpret mathematical information.				
c) Developing number concept, calculation and application skills.				
d) Recognising and using properties of operations.				
e) Learning rules and how to apply them.				
f) Developing mathematical communication skills.				
g) Developing problem solving ability.				

38) How **confident** do you feel to assess the following mathematical knowledge skills in learners? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	Not at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat confident <sub>2</sub>	Confident <sub>3</sub>	Very confident <sub>4</sub>
a) Developing the correct use of basic terminology.				
b) Learning to investigate, analyse, represent and interpret mathematical information.				
c) Developing number concept, calculation and application skills.				
d) Recognising and using properties of operations.				
e) Learning rules and how to apply them.				
f) Developing mathematical communication skills.				

g) Developing problem solving ability.				
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39) How much continuous development would you like to receive as a mathematics teacher in the following areas?

*Please select only one option for each row.*

	None at all <sub>1</sub>	Somewhat confident <sub>2</sub>	Confident <sub>3</sub>	Very confident <sub>4</sub>
a) Developing the correct use of basic terminology.				
b) Learning to investigate, analyse, represent and interpret mathematical information.				
c) Developing number concept, calculation and application skills.				
d) Recognising and using properties of operations.				
e) Learning rules and how to apply them.				
f) Developing mathematical communication skills.				
g) Developing problem solving ability.				

40) Please share with us the **ONE** area of teaching mathematics you *feel best prepared for*.


41) Please share with us the **ONE** area of teaching mathematics you *feel least prepared for*.


## E. My Experience of the Academic Programme

*These questions ask about your experiences of the whole academic programme. The questions are asking about your overall general experiences and how it has prepared you to teach in the Foundation Phase.*

42) Please rate yourself against the following statements which are derived from the Basic Competences of a Beginner Teacher (Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (2011: 62)) *Please select only one option for each row.*

	Strongly disagree <sub>1</sub>	Disagree <sub>2</sub>	Agree <sub>3</sub>	Strongly agree <sub>4</sub>
a) I have sound subject knowledge.				
b) I know how to teach my subject(s) and how to select, determine the sequence and pace of content in accordance with both my subject and learner needs.				
c) I know who my learners are and how they learn; understand their individual needs and tailor my teaching accordingly.				
d) I know how to communicate effectively in general, as well as in relation to their subject(s), in order to mediate learning.				
e) I have highly developed literacy, numeracy and IT skills.				
f) I am knowledgeable about the CAPS curriculum, able to unpack its specialised content, as well as being able to use available resources appropriately, so as to plan and design suitable learning programmes.				
g) I understand diversity in the South African context so I can teach in a manner that includes all learners. I am able to identify learning or social problems and work in partnership with professional service providers to address these.				
h) I am able to manage classrooms effectively across diverse contexts in order to ensure an adequate learning environment.				
i) I am able to assess learners in reliable and varied ways, as well as being able to use the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning.				
j) I have a positive work ethic, display appropriate values and conduct myself in a manner that befits, enhances and develops the teaching profession.				



	<b>Strongly disagree<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>Disagree<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Agree<sub>3</sub></b>	<b>Strongly agree<sub>4</sub></b>
k) I am able to reflect critically on my practice, in theoretically informed ways and in conjunction with my professional community of colleagues in order to constantly improve and adapt to evolving circumstances.				
l) I am able to improve the academic achievement of learners.				

43) How have the following aspects of the institutional environment helped your learning in the B Ed programme? *Please select only one option for each row.*

	<b>1Not at all</b>	<b>2Somewhat helpful</b>	<b>3Helpful</b>	<b>4Very helpful</b>	<b>5Not applicable</b>
a) ICT facilities					
b) Library services					
c) Learning resources					
d) Cafeteria					
e) Academic support programme (if applicable)					
f) Other(please specify): _____					

## F. Next Year

44) Do you intend to teach in 2017?

1 Yes	2 No
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45) If **Yes**, which school(s) have you applied to?


## I. Interview invitation

Would you be willing to participate in a focus group interview? *Please mark with an (X).*

1 Yes	2 No
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If yes, please  
provide a cell  
phone number  
and email


address: Cell

Email

Should you want to provide additional information that comes to mind after you have completed this questionnaire please contact: [cite@cput.ac.za](mailto:cite@cput.ac.za)

For information about the Centre or this study, please contact

**Professor Y Sayed**, South African Research Chair in Teacher Education and Director of Centre for International Teacher Education (CITE) at [sayedy@cput.ac.za](mailto:sayed@cput.ac.za)

**Professor A Badroodien**, Deputy Director: CITE at [badroodiena@cput.ac.za](mailto:badroodiena@cput.ac.za)

