

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context

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Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree *Magister Educationis* in Curriculum Development at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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*“You will not succeed
by your own strength or
by your own power,
but by my Spirit”,
says the Lord all powerful.*

- Zachariah 4:6 NCV

*“I have walked that long road to freedom.
I have tried not to falter;
I have made missteps along the way.
But I have discovered the secret
That after climbing a great hill,
one only finds that there are
many more hills to climb.*

*I have taken a moment to rest,
to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me,
to look back on the distance I have come.
But I can rest only for a moment,
for with freedom comes responsibilities,
for my walk is not yet ended.”*

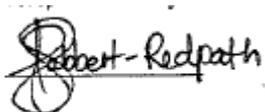
~ Nelson Mandela (2011:107)

DECLARATION

I, Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath student number 20876033 declare that “A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context” is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

The content of this dissertation is my own original work and that the content has not been submitted by me at any other University for an academic qualification.

Signature



Date

2013/10/25

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I would like to give all the glory and the honour of this study to my Creator and Saviour. Nothing is impossible with God by your side. Thank you Lord that this never ending, seemingly impossible study are completed. All I am are because of You. Without You Lord, none of this would have been possible. Thank you Lord for showing me that if You bring me to it that You will get me through it. Thank you for never leaving me and loving me beyond my understanding. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to honour You through my studies. Help me to never discard what you have entrusted to me. Thank you for making me a life long learner and for placing me in a working environment where I can blossom, learn and enjoy every day.

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DECLARATION

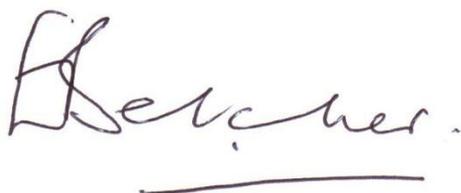
I hereby certify that the Master's dissertation named below has been properly language edited.

Title of dissertation

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within
a Higher Education context

Student

Ms Jackie Slabbert-Redpath



ELLA BELCHER
Stellenbosch
25 October 2013

SUMMARY

In terms of assessment practices, in all facets of education there is a strong focus on assessment at the end of learning. New trends in the literature motivate for the continuous use of assessment strategies in classrooms, with a learner-centred approach.

Many questions arise on this topic: When lecturers review their own higher education classroom assessment practices, what will be the extent of their discovery? Are they still inclined to do assessment after teaching and learning has taken place? Or are they moving towards continuous classroom assessment practices in line with the new trends? Is there still a place for classroom assessment at the end of teaching and learning? Should the one or the other be used or should there be a balance between the various strategies? With students perceiving assessment as being judgemental and oppressive and as the most political of all educational processes (Reynolds *et al.*, 2000:268), how does the power struggle unfold in the classroom?

By means of participatory action research I encouraged lecturers to reflect critically on their own classroom assessment practices. The lecturers engaged in critical discourses regarding their teaching, learning and assessment strategies and subsequently engaged in transformative actions resulting from their critical reflections. The aim of the research was to determine whether an emancipatory praxis had been developed and whether their reflections had brought about change and improved their classroom assessments. I wished to understand how the changes they had experienced were infused with theories of empowerment, emancipation and liberation.

The nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment was investigated to determine the status of classroom assessment in a specific higher education context and to see how the balanced assessment system is reflected and how classroom assessment develops as an emancipatory praxis.

Key words that guided my study were: curriculum, praxis, critical theory, self-reflection, action, classroom assessment, assessment for learning, assessment of learning, assessment as learning, Higher Education context, participatory action research and critical discourse analysis.

OPSOMMING

Wanneer daar teruggekyk word na assesseringspraktyke in alle fasette van opvoedkunde, kan 'n sterk fokus op assessering wat aan die einde van leer plaasvind opgemerk word.

Nuwe tendense in die literatuur motiveer die gebruik van deurlopende assesseringsstrategieë in klaskamers wat leerder-gesentreerd is.

As dosente hulle eie klaskamer assesseringspraktyke in hulle hoër onderwys klaskamers evalueer, wat sal die gevolg van hulle ontdekking wees? Is dosente nog steeds geneig om te assesser nadat onderrig en leer plaasgevind het, of het hulle aanbeweeg na deurlopende assesseringspraktyke in lyn met nuwe tendense? Is daar nog plek vir assessering wat aan die einde van onderrig en leer plaasvind? Moet die een of die ander gebruik word om 'n balans teweeg te bring tussen verskeie strategieë? Assessering word gesien as 'n praktyk wat oordeel vel oor studente en hulle onderdruk, dit word ook gesien as die opvoedkundige proses met die meeste politieke mag (Reynolds *et al.*, 2000:268). Hoe ontvou hierdie krag struweling in die klaskamer?

Ek het met behulp van deelnemende aksie navorsing, dosente oortuig om krities te reflekteer oor hulle eie klaskamer assesseringspraktyke. Die dosente was betrokke met kritiese diskoers analise aangaande hulle eie onderrig, leer en assesseringstrategieë en was op die beurt betrokke met transformerende aksies as gevolg van kritiese refleksies wat gedoen is.

Die doel van die studie was om te sien of 'n bevrydende praxis ontwikkel is en of die refleksies wat gedoen is veranderinge en verbeteringe in klaskamerassessering teweeg gebring het. Ek het gehoop om te verstaan hoe die veranderinge wat ervaar is verweef is met teorieë van emansipasie, bemagtiging en bevryding.

Die kurrikulum as 'n praxis se aard in klaskamer assessering is ondersoek om te bepaal wat die status van klaskamerassessering in 'n spesifieke hoër onderwys konteks is, hoe die gebalanseerde assesseringstelsel reflekteer en hoe klaskamerassessering ontwikkel as 'n bevrydende praxis.

Sleutelwoorde wat my studie gelei het is: kurrikulum, praxis, kritiese teorie, self-refleksie, aksie, klaskamerassessering, assessering van leer, assessering vir leer, assessering as leer, hoër onderwys konteks, deelnemende aksie navorsing en kritiese diskoers analise.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS	Pages
Declaration.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v-vi
Language editing.....	vii
Summary.....	viii
Opsomming.....	ix
Table of contents.....	x-xiv
Overview of the study.....	xv

LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 3.1	Research design of the study research.....	39
Figure 3.2	The continuous cyclical process of action research.....	42
Figure 6.1	Visual proposal for improved model for the ICNL courses.....	122

LIST OF TABLES:

Table 2.1	Summary of the curriculum as praxis.....	24
Table 2.2	Classroom assessment strategies.....	29
Table 4.1	Gender distribution.....	56
Table 4.2	Home language distribution.....	56
Table 4.3	Qualification distribution.....	57
Tabel 5.1	Summary of the trends discourses.....	105
Table 6.1	Competency placement of new lecturers.....	121

CHAPTERS:

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE PROBLEM

1.1	Background to the problem statement.....	1
1.2	Review of the scholarly literature.....	6
1.3	Research questions.....	7
1.4	Purpose of the research.....	7
1.5	Concept clarification.....	7

1.6	Research design and methodology.....	9
1.6.1	Research paradigm.....	10
1.6.2	Methodology.....	10
1.6.3	Researcher's role.....	10
1.6.4	Participant selection.....	11
1.6.5	Methods of data generation.....	11
1.6.6	Methods of data analysis.....	12
1.6.7	Trustworthiness.....	13
1.6.8	Ethical aspects of the research.....	13
1.7	Conclusion.....	14

CHAPTER 2 - CURRICULUM PRAXIS AND BALANCED CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

2.1	Introduction.....	15
2.2	Curriculum praxis.....	16
2.2.1	The technical interest.....	16
2.2.2	The practical interest.....	18
2.2.3	The emancipatory interest.....	19
2.3	Classroom assessment.....	24
2.3.1	Clarrification of key terminology.....	25
2.3.2	The status of classroom assessment.....	26
2.3.3	The balanced assessment system.....	28
2.3.4	The students' role in classroom assessment.....	30
2.3.5	The lecturers' role in classroom assessment.....	34
2.4	Conclusion.....	37

CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction.....	38
3.2	Research design.....	39
3.3	Qualitative methodology: Participatory action research.....	40
3.4	Paradigmatic position	43
3.5	Participant selection.....	44
3.6	Process of data generation.....	45
3.7	Data analysis method.....	47
3.8	Researcher's role.....	48
3.9	Trustworthiness.....	49
3.10	Ethical aspects of the research.....	50
3.11	Conclusion.....	52

CHAPTER 4 – SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION DISCOURSES

4.1	Rationale and methodology.....	53
4.2	The systemic oppression discourses.....	54
4.3.1	Context: North-West University Vaal.....	55
4.3.2	Context: The student profile of North-West University Vaal.....	56
4.4	The participants' profile.....	57
4.4.1	Participant 1: Sally.....	57
4.4.2	Participant 2: Concerned.....	58
4.4.3	Participant 3: Albert Einstein.....	59
4.4.4	Participant 4: Pringle.....	60
4.4.5	Participant 5: Lira.....	62
4.4.6	Participant 6: Luther.....	63
4.4.7	Overview of participants' perceptions on the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning.....	65
4.4.8	A discussion on participants' perceptions on the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning.....	66
4.4.9	Overview of the participants' perceptions on the systemic oppression discourses.....	67
4.4.10	Discussion on the participants' perceptions on the systemic oppression discourses.....	69
4.5	Conclusion.....	70

CHAPTER 5 – DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1	Introduction.....	71
5.2	Reflection and action: The narrative discourses.....	73
5.2.1	Participant 1: Sally.....	73
5.2.2	Participant 2: Concerned.....	81
5.2.3	Participant 3: Albert Einstein.....	87
5.2.4	Participant 4: Pringle.....	93
5.2.5	Participant 5: Lira.....	99
5.2.6	Participant 6: Luther.....	99
5.3	Trends in the participatory action research process.....	101
5.3.1	Participant 1: Sally.....	101
5.3.2	Participant 2: Concerned.....	102
5.3.3	Participant 3: Albert Einstein.....	102
5.3.4	Participant 4: Pringle.....	103
5.3.5	Participant 5: Lira.....	104
5.3.6	Participant 6: Luther.....	104
5.3.7	Summary of the trends discourses.....	104
5.4	Hidden discourses: Unveiling the narrative reflections.....	106

5.4.1	Participant 1: Sally.....	105
5.4.2	Participant 2: Concerned.....	106
5.4.3	Participant 3: Albert Einstein.....	107
5.4.4	Participant 4: Pringle.....	108
5.4.5	Participant 5: Lira.....	109
5.4.6	Participant 6: Luther.....	109
5.4.7	Summary of the hidden discourses.....	109
5.5.	Conclusion.....	110

CHAPTER 6 – FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1	Introduction.....	111
6.2	Overview of the study.....	112
6.3	Findings.....	112
6.3.1	The status of classroom assessment.....	112
6.3.2	The balanced assessment system unfolded.....	113
6.3.3	Classroom assessment as emancipatory praxis	114
6.4	Self-reflection on the study.....	117
6.5	Recommendations.....	118
6.5.1	Recommendations in terms of the research questions.....	118
6.5.2	The gaps and suggestions to NWU’s ICNL process.....	119
6.5.3	Recommendations for further research.....	123
6.5.4	Recommendations regarding the future of classroom assessment.....	123
6.6	Conclusion.....	123

REFERENCE LIST.....	125
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BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	132
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ADDENDUMS

ADDENDUM A - APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL (NWU) 2012.....	138
ADDENDUM B - RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL (NWU) 2012.....	139
ADDENDUM C – ETHICS DOCUMENTS.....	140
• Annexure A: Consent of lecturers to participate in the research.....	141
• Annexure B: Self-reflection sheet: participant video 1.....	143
• Annexure C: Reflection sheet: researcher and academic mentor video 1.....	148
• Annexure D: Self-reflection sheet: participant video 2.....	152
• Annexure E: Reflection sheet: researcher and academic mentor video 2.....	157
• Annexure F: Role clarification.....	161
• Annexure G: Permission to ads to release video footage.....	162
• Annexure H: Participant profile.....	163

- Annexure I: Systemic oppression discourses.....165
- ADDENDUM D – TURNITIN REPORT.....168

Chapter 1

- INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE PROBLEM

Chapter 2

- CURRICULUM PRAXIS AND BALANCED CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

Chapter 3

- RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 4

- THE SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION DISCOURSES

Chapter 5

- DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

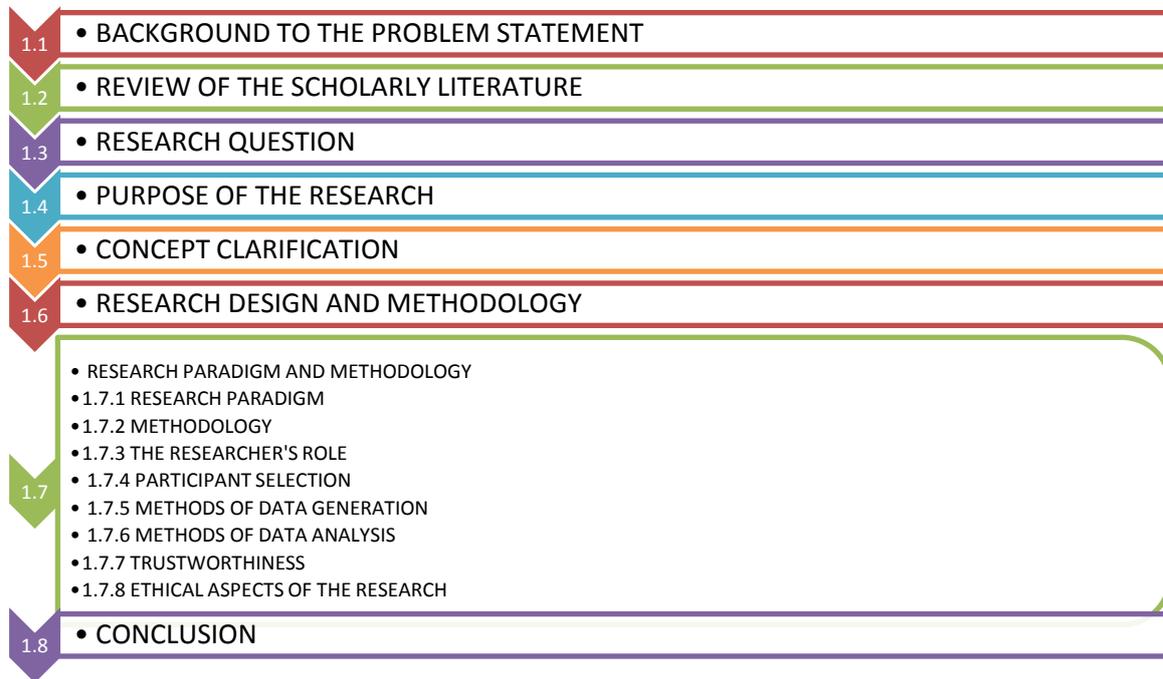
Chapter 6

- FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE PROBLEM

CHAPTER LAYOUT



“Assessment is the most political of all educational processes, it is where issues of power are most at stake.”
- Heron (In Reynolds and Trehan, 2000:268)

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

International development and research in the field of assessment indicates a shift in focus from traditional testing practices to a more constructive assessment approach that is aimed at enhancing learning (Geyser, 2011:90). Assessment should be an integral part of teaching and learning and should be utilised constructively (Biggs, 2003a; Boud & Falchikov, 2006) and not simply as an add-on at the end of a learning experience.

The paradigm shift in assessment originates in the changing perspectives of the nature and purpose of assessment. This paradigm shift in assessment is separated by the shift in emphasis between traditional testing in contrast to alternative assessment. Traditional assessment is completely summative by nature, and is marked by a final examination and based on the individual judgement of the educator. It is driven by the students' ability to demonstrate knowledge acquisition (achievement). Alternative methods assess the level of understanding and learning inside a content area (Cizek, 2000; McMillan, 2003; Rodriguez, 2004). The main shift in focus can be summed up as an emphasis away from assessment as an add-on at the end of a learning experience, which is seen as separate from the learning experience, towards continuous assessment that motivates and encourages deep learning.

Reynolds and Trehan (2000:268) make a bold statement by stating that “assessment is not simply another aspect of educational method. Its function in providing the basis for granting or withholding qualifications makes it a primary location for power relations.” More than any other aspect of education, assessment embodies power relationships between the lecturer and their students, the institution and the students or the institution and its staff. The effects of assessments are experienced by students as being considerably significant (*ibid*:268).

As assessors, lecturers must ask themselves whether their assessment serves a purpose and whether it is educationally useful. They must understand how the assessments they are using fit into the bigger picture of the curriculum and why they should concern themselves with when, how and why assessment takes place. Assessment is a crucial dimension of the curriculum, setting the standard of what is to be learned and exemplifying the level at which knowledge is to be taught, learned and constructed (Hoadley & Jansen, 2012:197).

To some lecturers, the curriculum outcomes are the focus of their teaching, and to others the outcomes are the learning content (Geysler, 2011:91). Grundy (1987) states that an educational practitioner’s approach to the curriculum (and thus also assessment, as assessment is integrated into the curriculum) will determine the teaching and learning experience. The practitioner’s approach will determine whether students will be seen as a product (where the curriculum focuses on input or plan, with a strong inclination towards control), or as part of the curriculum process (with a strong focus on the outcomes to be achieved and understanding) or whether the student will be part of the curriculum praxis (with a strong focus on autonomy, emancipation and responsibility). Grundy (1987:99) further states that the practical interest (curriculum-as-process) is compatible with the emancipatory interest (curriculum-as-praxis) but not with the technical interest (curriculum-as-plan).

The students’ views of the curriculum are shaped by their perceptions of assessment, because to them assessment defines the real curriculum and what should be learned. Lecturers think that assessment is the end of teaching and learning, while for students it is the beginning – they only learn what they will be tested on. When assessments are linked to learning outcomes, assessment is aligned with the teaching and learning. Students then learn to focus on the knowledge and skills that will help them to achieve the learning outcomes (Geysler, 2011:91).

Stiggins (2002:758) distinguishes between two types of classroom assessment practices: *assessment of learning* and *assessment for learning*. The two assessment practices can be viewed as complementary purposes of assessment, and both should be included in teaching and learning units and structures (Geysler, 2011:91). Thus a balance of both assessment practices is needed. Stiggins (2002:763) proposes a **balanced assessment system**, where both *assessment of* and *assessment for learning* are used to benefit students. Stiggins (*ibid*:763) argues that *assessment of learning* is dominant in higher education institutions (for example in South Africa the occurrence of bi-annual examinations during June/July and November/December), and is used to determine improvement in the levels of student achievement. *Assessment of learning* lacks the capacity to inform daily instruction decisions and

diagnose student needs during learning due to its summative nature. Thus there is a need for the use of assessment *for learning* to support student learning throughout the learning process.

Assessment *of learning* refers to strategies designed to confirm what students know and to demonstrate that they have achieved the learning outcomes. Assessment *of learning* is used to certify proficiency, progression and placements (Biggs, 2003b:761).

The Assessment Reform Group (ARG) (2002) defines assessment *for learning* as “the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.” Lombard (2010:56-57) refers to the five factors that have an impact on the functional learning value of assessment:

- Clarifying, understanding and sharing learning intention
- Engineering effective classroom discussions, tasks and activities that elicit evidence of learning
- Providing feedback that moves learners forward
- Activating students as learning resources for one another
- Activating students as owners of their own learning

In this study, the term ‘teacher’ refers to an educator in a school-based context engaged in teaching and learning activities. The term ‘lecturer’ refers to an academic staff member of a university engaged in teaching and learning activities. The term ‘learner’ refers to an individual who are engaged in learning activities in a school context. The term ‘student’ refers to an individual who are engaged in learning in a higher education context.

When looking at the key characteristics of assessment *for learning*, one will notice that the whole process of assessment *for learning* is learner-centred, which means that this approach to assessment is fair, and helps students to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and critical thinking skills – it motivates them intrinsically (Stiggins, 1999a:195, 2001:7, 2002:760; Wiliam, 2011b:5; Carless, 2007a:41). It is also aimed at improving their understanding through self-regulation (reflection) (Klenowski, 2009:266; Taras, 2002:506; Sadler, 1989:120; Carless, 2007a:7) and it improves social discourse and empowers students (Leahy, Lyon, Thompson, & Wiliam, 2005:21; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:146, 2009:28). Various elements of empowerment, reflection and engagement in critical social discourse about learning play a part, emphasising the critical theory paradigm in assessment for learning.

Paulo Freire (2000:92) argues for the development of critical thinking skills in students. Such skills allow them to recognise the connection between individual problems and social contexts, and to take ownership of their own learning, making it learner-centred. In critical pedagogy, understanding of the curriculum requires that students and lecturers engage in critical discourse, so that curriculum role-players become curriculum constructors by means of dialogue of content, which should enhance critical thinking. Stiggins (1999b:25) argues strongly for a partnership between curriculum and assessment specialists in the development of classroom assessment practices. Grundy (1987:30) states that the ultimate power resides with the ones formulating the curriculum. In the South African context, lecturers at higher education institutions are directly involved with the development and management of curriculums and

have the authority to alter curriculums if it is necessary, as opposed to teachers at school level that must follow the prescribed curriculums as prescribed by the Department of Basic Education.

Jonathan Jansen (2011:1), the Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State, contends that university lecturers cannot teach because most of them were never intended to teach – although they have the necessary subject knowledge, they never acquired the skills and knowledge of how to teach, and evidence of this can be seen in their daily teaching, learning and assessment approaches: the ‘dumbing down’ of university teaching to improve throughput rates. Ferman (2002:146) notes that “the most university lecturers are not trained teachers and their knowledge of pedagogy tends to be patchy”. Dreyer and Van der Walt (1996:469) refer to the fact that “most lecturers have little or no training in tertiary teaching” and that they “teach as they were taught”. Botha, Fourie and Geyser (2005:63) note that “too often, young and inexperienced lecturers, who have not even had the time to frame their qualifications, are pushed in front of a sea of staring students, handed a piece of chalk, and told to teach them something”.

As a former staff member of the Academic Development and Support (ADS) unit on North-West University’s Vaal Triangle campus (NWU VTC), where I worked with lecturers every day, this statement by Jansen (2011) greatly concerned me. At ADS I was involved in the improvement and development of higher education assessment on a daily basis. From my personal experience it appeared to me that the statement made by Jansen was true, due to the fact that most of the lecturers I worked with favoured a classroom assessment approach of assessment *of learning*, and were not aware of the value of assessment *for learning*. Although ADS made a valuable effort towards the professional development of lecturers regarding awareness of assessment *for learning*, the classroom assessment practices were still inclined towards the assessment *of learning* approach. The assessment practices of lecturers were not balanced, formative assessment had been neglected (Stiggens, 2002:759, Nakabugo & Siebörger, 2001:53) or not fit for purpose (Klenowski, 2009:263), and lecturers were mainly concerned with their throughput rates and learner achievement. The perceptions and attitudes of lecturers were quite troubling; lecturers need to be made aware of the value of assessment and the benefits to learning. It was only when I accepted a lecturing post a few months later that the full extent of what Jansen (2011) had said became apparent to me. Jansen’s statement can be seen as a call for lecturers to free their students from the oppression of old beliefs and traditions regarding teaching, learning and assessment practices and beliefs about the curriculum. This view links directly to critical theory that aims to free individuals from oppression, thus empowering them through critical self-reflection and critical discourse (Freire, 2000).

Internationally, 26 studies were found to be directly relevant to the research topic: those of Klenowski, 2009; Carless, 2005, 2007a, 2007b; Leahy *et al.*, 2005; Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & William, 2004; Black & William, 1998a, 2009; Taras, 2002, 2009; Stiggens, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2009; William, 2008, 2011b; Rust, 2002; Reynolds & Trehan, 2000; Yorke, 2003; Boud & Falchikov, 2006; Gibbs, Angelides & Michalides, 2004; MacLellan, 2001. All of these studies emphasised the value and importance of the use of formative assessment and assessment *for learning* or the use of a balanced assessment system. Some studies (Carless, 2007b:172; Klenowski, 2009:263) indicated that there were misconceptions between the definitions of assessment *for learning* and formative assessment. Other issues raised were the confusion of using summative assessment for formative purposes and the need to

bridge the divide between summative and formative assessments in an understandable way. Taras (2009:3017) states that there is ambiguity between summative and formative assessment in their use and in the context in which they are used in formal and informal classroom assessments. According to Klenowski (2009:263), there is a misunderstanding of the principles and a distortion of the practices that the original ideas of assessment *for learning* promote. There is also a reluctance to change from a test culture to assessment *for learning*. Where assessment *for learning* was implemented, in some cases it converted to assessment *as learning* (Klenowski, 2009:263). Assessment *as learning* is formatively inclined, and focuses very strongly on self-assessment and critical reflection. In cases where the instrumental approach of formative assessment was used, it resulted in restricted and undesirable practices. In the UK and Hong Kong, the implementation of assessment *for learning* was introduced from a macro-level (government policy), and in some cases there was great reluctance to change, and certain barriers to change were experienced (Klenowski, 2009:263; Carless, 2005:39). This reluctance can be addressed through systematic changes to assessment and professional development to change the perceptions of lecturers so that they become more open to the use of assessment for learning.

Throughout the studies reviewed, quantitative research designs where statistical information was used to illustrate the effectiveness of assessment for learning were the most commonly used. This points to a gap in the scholarly literature seeing that assessment for learning and critical theory both encourage the use of discourses and peer collaboration. The lack of qualitative studies highlights the need for more critical discourses and lecturer involvement in classroom assessment practices.

In higher education, the use of criterion-referenced assessment as part of formative assessment is not well understood. The words and principles are often misunderstood and the practices are distorted from the original ideas – some implementations of assessment for learning are seen as being mechanical or superficial, without the teachers' or learners' buy-in (Klenowski, 2009:263). This can be explained as follows: "Within universities, especially the more prestigious ones, traditional forms of assessment have been largely taken for granted and developments of informative assessment ignored" (Carless, 2006:4). This implies that formative assessment is unlikely to be a priority for undergraduate teaching in research-intensive universities. The reasons for reluctance are not elaborated on in this dissertation.

It appears that this topic has not received much attention locally. I was able to locate nine studies that were indirectly relevant to my study (Beets & Le Grange, 2005a, 2005b; Botha, Fourie, & Geysers, 2005; Nakabugo & Siëborger, 2001; Jansen, 1998; Pryor & Lubisi, 2002; Vandeyar & Killen, 2007; Quick & Siëborger, 2005; Dreyer & Van der Walt, 1996). Only two relevant studies (Koen, 2011; Meyer & Niven, 2007) could be found. Koen's (2011) study is relevant, whereas Meyer and Niven's study is directly relevant to the proposed study. Although Koen's thesis theme, 'Exploring Assessment for Learning in one Higher Education Classroom', may sound directly relevant to my study, her focus is on her own classroom where she used a case study design and an interpretivist approach. Koen's focus was on the purpose and integration of assessment *for learning*, and the preparation of future life orientation teachers regarding assessment *for learning*. Meyer and Niven's (2007) study was situated in the South African higher education classroom, and Meyer and Niven's methodology and educational philosophy link directly with this study. They used participative action research and critical pedagogy, although their focus was more on feedback than on a balanced assessment system. This is the only study that I came across that

is similar to my study in design, methodology and context. This suggests that the topic of the critical reflection of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment in higher education in South Africa should be opened to more dedicated research to further the understanding of this matter within a South African context.

I noticed that the international and national studies did not address the issues of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment in higher education. The majority of the above-mentioned studies (Klenowski, 2009; Leahy *et al.*, 2005; Black *et al.*, 2004; Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 2009; Stiggens 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2009; Wiliam, 2008b; 2011b) focus on assessment *for learning* at a school level. A problem identified in the works of Black and Wiliam (1998a, 2009) and Wiliam (2008, 2011a) is a lack of comprehensive supporting, underpinning theories and transparency. Another gap found in the scholarly works is that there are seldom links to critical theory, and a lack of reporting on how successful assessment for learning is on the micro-level of implementation in the higher education curriculum, how students and lecturers perceive the use of classroom assessment in the higher education curriculum, or how students are involved in classroom assessment in higher education.

Based on the above discussion, I wish to formulate the purpose of this study as follows: The purpose of the study was to reflect critically on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context. The aims were to determine the status of classroom assessment in a specific higher education context, to reflect on the curriculum praxis of balanced assessment in a specific higher education context and to reflect critically on classroom assessment as emancipatory praxis in a higher education context.

1.2 REVIEW OF THE SCHOLARLY LITERATURE

The present review is thus limited to the realm of curriculum praxis and the nature of classroom assessment. Studies of other assessment-related issues that commonly pertain to education or related fields of teaching and learning are excluded.

The literature review will cover two main topics, namely curriculum praxis and the nature of classroom assessment. Curriculum praxis will be sub-divided into three main categories based on the works of Grundy and Habermas (*In Grundy, 1987*) as the technical interest, the practical interest and the emancipatory interest. The second topic, namely the nature of classroom assessment, will be sub-divided into five categories: a concept clarification, an outline of the status of classroom assessment, a reflection on the balanced assessment system, the students' role in assessment and the lecturers' role in assessment.

I utilised both primary and secondary sources and consulted recently published articles, appropriate books and journals, as well as literature from the EBSCO host, Eric, Sabinet, NEXUS data bases and the Internet (Google Scholar). The key words that assisted me in my search for information were classroom assessment, curriculum praxis, assessment for learning, authentic assessment, assessment in higher education, classroom assessment strategies, day-to-day assessment, balanced assessment system, participatory action research, critical theory, discourse analysis, video analysis, learner-centred

assessments, criteria-referenced assessment, assessment and motivation, theories of educational assessment and assessment competencies.

The study can be placed among the broader scholarly literature on higher education and curriculum studies in South Africa that are concerned with the nature of classroom assessment and emancipatory actions aimed at improving teaching and learning through assessment.

The literature review concludes with a discussion of the limitations of (gaps in) the existing scholarly literature and emerging issues. The practical significance of the research problem is that it addresses a gap in the literature by placing classroom assessment within the critical context of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following primary research question directed this research:

- What is the nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context?

The following secondary questions emanated from the primary question:

- What is the status of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context?
- How does the balanced assessment system unfold within selected classrooms in a higher education context?
- How does classroom assessment develop as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context?

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the emancipatory research was to determine the status of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context by means of a literature review. The literature review will cover selected higher education curriculums in the South African and international higher education settings. The emancipatory research aims of the study were to make use of participatory action research by means of self-reflections by lecturers to change their own classroom assessment practices.

In the first part of my research I sought to investigate whether the balanced assessment system unfolds in selected higher education classrooms within a particular higher education context. I did this by means of a literature review and empirical research.

In the final part I reflected on how and whether lecturers renew or change their own classroom assessment to develop emancipatory curriculum praxis in their selected higher education context. This was done by means of empirical research.

1.5 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

The concepts central to this study are classroom assessment, critical reflection, curriculum praxis, the higher education context and Institutional Course for New Lecturers (ICNL) Phase II.

1.5.1 Classroom assessment

Assessment can be defined as a process of gathering evidence and making judgements about performance (Lombard, 2010:34). The assessment process includes gathering, analysing, interpreting, recording, reporting and using information about learner achievement. For the purpose of this study, classroom assessment is seen as all the processes of assessment that occur inside the classroom (this refers to contact time between the lecturer and the student). Classroom assessment is also linked in the literature to formative assessment and day-to-day assessment (Stiggins, 2001:5; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:140; Wiliam, 2011b:10). Formative assessment can be regarded as the frequent interactive assessment of students' progress and understanding to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately (Wiliam, 2011b:10).

1.5.2 Critical reflection

The process of reflection is an integral part of teaching and learning. Reflection can be seen as the act of 'looking back' on experiences to learn from them. A reflection is a construction of knowledge about oneself about the world. Critical reflection is the process of analysing, reconsidering and questioning experiences within a broad context of issues (e.g. issues related to social justice, curriculum development, etc.) (Anon., 2012:1).

1.5.3 Curriculum praxis

The term 'praxis' is explained by Schwandt (2007:240-244) as "putting theory into action". He notes that a synonym for praxis is practice. Practice is about action and doing, and theory is about knowledge and thinking.

In the context of this study, the concept of curriculum is defined as a term which includes all aspects of teaching and learning, such as the intended outcomes of learning, learning programmes, assessment and methodology (Graham-Jolly, 2009:252).

To bring higher education and the curriculum together, one can define the higher education curriculum as a vehicle that promotes the development of students and is largely built around projects of knowledge (Barnett, 2009). This indicates that a reflection (purpose of inquiry into the curriculum) can increasingly serve students' learning and lecturers' teaching, learning and assessment practices.

1.5.4 Higher education context

For the purpose of this study, higher education in this context refers to the university (tertiary education) classroom where undergraduate and postgraduate students and lecturers engage. Bitzer (2009:57) states that a university concerns itself with the generation and dissemination of knowledge, the training of professionals and educating people. The university as an organisation and the various structures and disciplines are excluded from this concept for the purpose of this study. What happens in the classroom and in the curriculum was reflected upon during this study.

1.5.5 Institutional Course for New Lecturers (ICNL)

Since neither training nor instructional experience is a prerequisite for appointment in an academic position at North-West University NWU, the ICNL provides fundamental knowledge and skills about

teaching principles and practices, as well as cursory training in research. It is compulsory for all new lecturers to attend this course.

Phase I of the ICNL, presented by the Institutional ADS Office, consists of information sessions and workshops dealing with different aspects of research and of teaching and learning, including mini-contact sessions presented by the new lecturers themselves (NWU, 2012a:5).

Phase II, a mentoring programme, is organised by the ADS office of the relevant campus. Phase II includes the compulsory attendance of three workshops on (i) the writing and use of a study guide, (ii) group-work as teaching tool, and (iii) e-learning (NWU, 2012a:5). At the Vaal campus, lecturers need to complete an online portfolio to demonstrate their competence in specific areas of development, for example eFundi usage and functionalities, setting and evaluation of examination papers, development of study guides, and the use and interpretation of Turnitin.

Phase III is presented by the School of Philosophy (Potchefstroom campus). It deals with the philosophical foundations and ethical aspects of science. It aims to help lecturers gain an understanding of the theoretical underpinning of their subject fields.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Throughout the studies that I reviewed, quantitative research designs statistical information was most commonly used to illustrate the effectiveness of assessment for learning. There were also indications of qualitative studies, but the tendency was towards quantitative research designs. The main methodologies used were experimental and survey research with some exceptions of phenomenological (Stiggins, 1999a, 1999b, 2002, 2006, 2009; Klenowski, 2009), narrative (Stiggins, 2005), ethnographic (Stiggins, 2001) and action research (Taras, 2002, 2009; Carless 2005, 2007a, 2007b). The majority of the studies concerned with assessment for learning were underpinned by social constructivist theory (Stiggins, 1999a, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2009; Taras, 2002, 2009; Carless, 2005, 2007a), with a few exceptions of pragmatism (Carless, 2007b) and interpretivism (Stiggins, 1999b; Klenowski, 2009). A problem identified in the works of Black and Wiliam (1998a, 2009) and Wiliam (2008, 2011a) is that there is a lack of comprehensive support underpinning theories and methodologies. Their rationale is that the theoretical underpinning is not missing, it is just not organised in a way for it to be a stand-alone theory (Taras, 2009:3020). Meyer and Niven's (2007) study was the only theory that shared the same context (higher education), methodology (participatory action research – PAR) and philosophical underpinning (critical theory) as my study. This indicates a gap in the existing scholarly literature pertaining to the unique research design of combining PAR and critical theory within the topic of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment.

1.6.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

As was the case with the literature proposal to locate this study in the critical paradigm, it made sense, paradigmatically, also to position the research design in the critical tradition.

Creswell (2009:6) defines a paradigm as a “worldview” of a proposed study. He describes the paradigm as a general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher has. The beliefs of

the individual researcher will motivate the use of a research approach. In this study I worked from the critical perspective. Critical theory is based on the principles that social reality is historically created and that people produce and reproduce it (Maree, 2007:62). People take actions to change their circumstances and their attempt to do so might be restricted by a mixture of cultural, social, political and economic powers (*ibid*:62). The critical researcher aims to bring about change by means of social critique and discourse to bring oppressions and injustices to light and emancipating those who are caught by them. Critical theorists claim to disclose the needs and struggles of the people whether or not the people are aware of them (*ibid*:62).

My personal assumption is that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. The goal of the research was to rely on the participants' view of the situation being studied; in this case, lecturers in a specific higher education context. The participatory action worldview provides a voice for the participants, thus raising their consciousness or advancing an agenda for change to improve their professional lives. It becomes a united voice for reform and change. It also means that the participants may help to collect data, analyse information and reap the rewards of the research (Creswell, 2009:9).

1.6.2 METHODOLOGY

The participatory action research (PAR) approach was used in this study. Maree (2007:126) describes PAR as the study of social issues that constrains individual lives. According to McNiff and Whitehead (2006:8), action research can be “a powerful and liberating form of professional inquiry because it means that practitioners themselves investigate their own practice as they find ways of living more fully in the direction of their educational values”. She continues to say that they are not told by others what to do; they make their own decisions and are free. McIntyre (2008:1) states that PAR becomes a dialectical process, changing the researcher, the participants and the situation in which they act.

The social issue that was addressed in this study was the critical reflection of lecturers on their own application of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment in a higher education context. The participants were the new lecturers participating in the ICNL Phase II compulsory course.

The rationale for using PAR in this study was to determine how classroom assessment is reflected in a specific higher education context. PAR is a methodology to implement action for change, meaning in this context that lecturers can change and become empowered by renewing their classroom assessment practices. This links directly with the research paradigm of critical pedagogy, which proposes that there are social, economic and political powers that can have control over people in society and that this can cause injustices and oppression. These injustices can be brought to light by means of reflection, critique and critical discourse. The idea is that once people are aware of the powers that are oppressing them, change can be proposed and implemented, and by the very nature of that, they will be emancipated.

The intention of the study was for each participant to reflect critically on their own actions and practices to implement change and improvement in terms of their own classroom assessment.

A deviation from the original PAR cycle are included (Chapter 4) and will include a brief discussion on the deviation discourses which occurred. I will provide a rationale for the chapter and give the reader insight

into the background and context of the research participants' environment and the research participants and their perceptions on key issues related to this study. The chapter gives voice to the participants as they are co-researchers and after various interactions with them and issue which concerned them.

1.6.3 THE RESEARCHER'S ROLE

The methodological approach in this study, PAR, has two distinguishing features: the active involvement of participants in the research process and the commitment to action for social change (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011:48). My approach as a researcher was therefore to work with people.

The participatory aspect of the research involved me, along with the participants, in the research process. I used to work at ADS which made me an insider to the ICNL processes, seeing that ADS organised and conducted these ICNL processes. I accepted a lecturing position in Potchefstroom, which means that I am no longer positioned as an insider at ADS. The lecturer participants were still seen as insiders due to their personal involvement with the process. When I accepted the lecturing position, I also had to undergo the ICNL processes and this made me an insider from another angle. The level of participant involvement was high due to the lecturers' intention to change, emancipate or improve their classroom assessment practices. PAR aims at more than merely conducting research; it includes an element of action resulting in social change. The element of action is important, and there was active interaction between myself and the participants that influenced the learning process and the self-reflection capacity of both parties (Hennink *et al.*, 2011:48; Freire, 2000:80). My role as researcher was primarily that of a facilitator or agent of change and the creator of a platform for critical discourse. This links with critical pedagogy, where the praxis (Freire, 2000:87) is described as the instrument to make discourse possible and to provide a space where the two dimensions of praxis, namely action and reflection, can be found.

1.6.4 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Due to the nature of my previous work situation (I worked at Academic Development and Support [ADS] at the Vaal Triangle campus of NWU), I made use of purposive sampling or criterion-referenced selection. The criterion for the selection process was that the participants were new lecturers in any academic field (interdisciplinary) at the NWU VTC. For the purpose of the study, only the group of lecturers who indicated that they wanted to have their class sessions video-recorded (for ICNL Phase II purposes) were considered for the study due to the availability of their video materials and they were duly selected for the study population.

1.6.5 METHODS OF DATA GENERATION

According to Maree (2007:81), qualitative studies do not treat data collection and data analysis as two separate processes, but see them as an on-going, cyclical and non-linear process. The reason for this is that most studies are directed by the saturation of data. This refers to the peak where no new facts or information is brought to the fore.

The first stage of the research consisted of the analysis of the first video-recorded sessions. Based on the video recordings, the participants conducted self-reflection. When the participants had finished the first self-reflection, the academic mentors and I followed the same procedures. The participants, academic mentors and me reviewed the video material and made recommendations on how the participants used

classroom assessment in their lecture rooms and how they could improve their practices. In order for the participants to have developed professionally, they were encouraged to go back to the videos and view the comments and reflections they, I and the academic mentors had made. The participants could decide whether they would use the feedback to improve the process of assessment in their lecture rooms. After the first video recording had been reflected upon, I conducted a feedback session with the participants discussing the first video recording and their findings. The participants then decided on a suitable time for the next video recording to be made and their subsequent class session was captured. The process of reflection was repeated for the second video recording as well.

1.6.6 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis strategy used in this study was critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis is concerned with studying and analysing written texts and spoken words to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias, and how these sources are initiated, maintained, reproduced and transformed in specific social, economic, political and historical contexts (Maree, 2007:102). In the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment, both assessment and the curriculum can be used (intentionally as well as unintentionally) as tools for oppression and power. The theoretical underpinning of this study was critical pedagogy. The use of discourse analysis is ideal in relation to the underpinning theory, as both the underpinning theory and data analysis aim to discover injustice and oppression, and to change and emancipate in social, economic, political and historical contexts. The data analysis strategy thus complemented the underpinning of the study and was the most appropriate strategy to use.

Throughout the study the video recordings were used by the participants, academic mentors and me. At the data analysis stage my reflections, the self-reflection sheets of all participants and those of the mentors were used.

After coding all the data, I summarised and organised the data by categorising it and searched for patterns, themes and relationships (Merriam 2009:176). The data of each individual participant was analysed and then the data for the group as a whole was considered. During the categorising component, I worked inductively with the emerging categories to find themes or issues that occurred and recurred in the data, and these became the categories of the data. I continued to categorise until all the codes had been classified into categories. Once the categorisation has been completed, the original data sets were consulted to determine whether the correct insights had been captured and the correct categories had emerged from the data (Maree, 2007:110; Merriam, 2009:182). The next step was to structure the categories into meaningful units and to develop a visual representation of the categories.

The data was interpreted according to the underpinnings of the study and textual critical discourse analysis. The interpretations would explain why things were as they had been found, how this links with the underpinning of the study, how it correlates the existing knowledge, and how it brings about ways of understanding the research problem.

1.6.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In qualitative studies, it is of great importance that one's study should adhere to the principles of trustworthiness. Guba and Lincoln (*In Schwandt, 2007:299*), developed four criteria for trustworthiness,

namely credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability and identified the strategies to establish trustworthiness (Schwandt, 2007:299; Kefting, 1991:217).

I took the following precautions to ensure the trustworthiness in the study:

In order to ensure credibility (parallel to internal validity), the participants were highly involved in the data collection due to the nature of the methodology of the study, which was participatory action research. The participants were part of the data collection process (video self-reflections) as well as the data analysis process (member checks), as both these processes were on-going and simultaneous (Maree, 2007:99; Merriam, 2009:170).

In order to ensure transferability (parallel to external validity), I made use of rich, thick descriptions. Schwandt (2007:299) and Merriam (2009:227) define a thick description as a description of the setting and participants of the study, along with a detailed description of the findings with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participants' self-reflection video sessions during feedback sessions.

Ensuring dependability (parallel to reliability) entails proving that the process was logical, traceable and documented (Schwandt, 2007:299). I used the following strategies to make sure that dependability is achieved: crystallisation and an audit trail. I used one main collection strategy of video analysis to make sure that there was a variety of data from different sources. If the data from both sources led to the same conclusion, the results could be interpreted as reliable.

To ensure conformability (parallel to objectivity), I made use of crystallisation of multiple methods to ensure that the data supported my analysis and interpretation of the findings (Kefting, 1991:214).

1.6.8 ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH

Ethical approval was sought from NWU's Ethics Committee who granted it before the commencement of the study (Ethics code: NWU-00125-12-S2). Approval was also sought from the Director of ADS VTC and from the participants to use their videos in the study. This approval was duly granted.

The participants and relevant academic mentors were informed about the intended study, including why and how they had been chosen to participate (Punch, 2006:56). The participants were selected according to the criteria discussed in the section on participant selection of this chapter. Participation was strictly voluntary and lecturers were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

During the data collection stage the video recordings of the lecturers were used, and during the data analysis stage these recordings were kept confidential and anonymous by assigning codes (aliases) to the participants (Cresswell, 2009:91). Each lecturer (participant and academic mentor) also completed a consent form to participate in the research (*ibid*:91).

1.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I introduced the layout of the study, and explained what was done. I included the background to the research problem, the research questions and the purpose of the research, and

clarified key concepts. I also gave a broad overview of the research design, methodology, research paradigm, participants, data collection, data generation and data analysis.

The structure of the following chapters is provided below.

The next chapter, Chapter 2 deals in part with theoretical aspects of this study and provide a review of the scholarly literature on curriculum praxis and classroom assessment.

Chapter 3 provides a description of the research design, methodology and the paradigmatic position used for the study. This includes the description of procedures applied as a result of the chosen design and methodology, such as the sample, data generation, data analysis, interpretation strategies and the accompanying ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed rationale for the deviation from the study and the systemic oppression discourses that are in line with participatory action research and the alignment with the rest of the study.

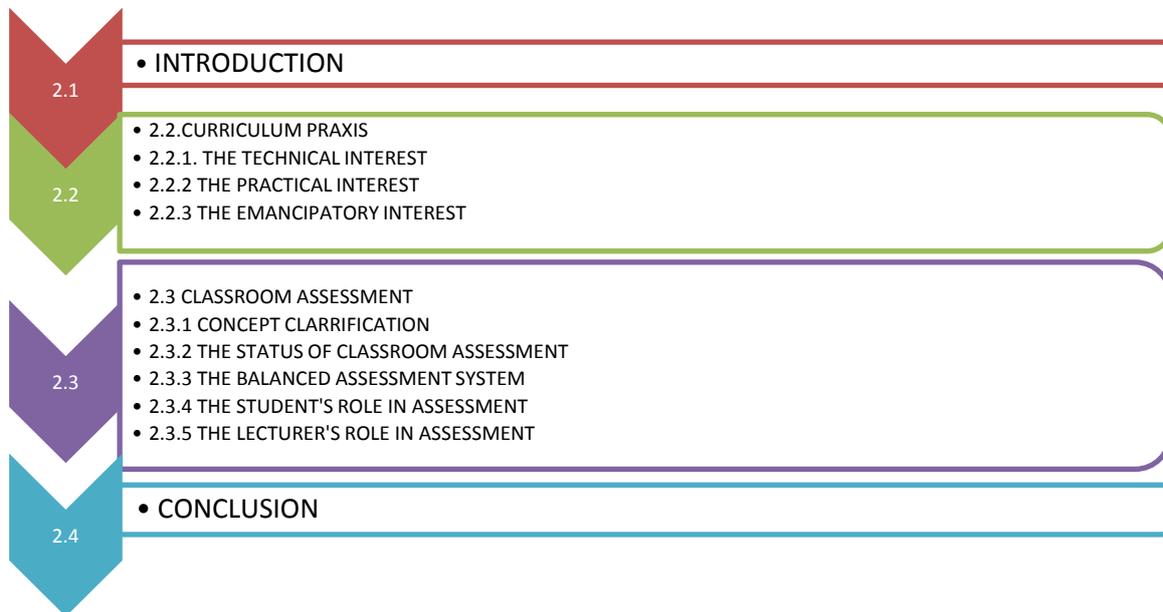
Chapter 5 presents the results of the data generated and interpretations to answer the research question of the study. This involves the presentation and analysis of the data gathered by means of video material reflections.

Chapter 6 presents the findings and concluding discussion on the study. In this chapter I examine the implications and make recommendations that arise, based on my reflection on the research process and research findings. I also identify areas for future research.

CHAPTER 2

CURRICULUM PRAXIS AND BALANCED CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

CHAPTER LAYOUT



“Change is evolutionary, not revolutionary; persistence is essential, and patience is a virtue. There is no ‘there’ in an educational change process. What matters is ‘getting there’, in fact to lots of ‘theres’. Educational change is, fundamentally, the accumulation of small ongoing improvements that are rooted in a deep understanding on the part of teachers and motivated by deep understanding on the part of the students. A journey worth taking.”
~ Earl (In Manitabo, 2006:70)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The review of the scholarly literature will be divided into two main area categories, namely curriculum praxis and the nature of classroom assessment. Curriculum praxis will be discussed based on the works of Grundy (1987) who based her arguments on the work of Habermas, as the technical interest, the practical interest and the emancipatory interest. Classroom assessment will be subdivided into a concept clarification, the status of classroom assessment, the balanced assessment system, the student’s role in classroom assessment, the lecturer’s role in classroom assessment and classroom assessment in higher education.

The present review is thus limited to the realm of curriculum praxis and the nature of classroom assessment. Studies of other assessment-related issues that commonly pertain to education or related fields of teaching and learning are excluded.

2.2 CURRICULUM PRAXIS

When defining a complex word like curriculum, various discussions and debates can take place if the context of the study and the perception of the authors are not clarified.

The term 'praxis' is explained by Schwandt (2007:240-244) as putting theory into action. He notes that a synonym for praxis is practice. Practice is about action and doing, and theory is about knowledge and thinking. He indicates that praxis is deeply informed by critique. In the context of this study, with underpinnings from critical pedagogy and participatory action research, it is appropriate to consider Freire's (2000:87) view of praxis. Freire explains that praxis has two dimensions, namely reflection and action. He continues by saying that liberation is a praxis, and that the actions and reflections of men and women upon their world are needed to transform it (*ibid*:79).

With regard to curriculum, Grundy (1987:5-7) states that one can view curriculum as a social construct which is part of the culture of our society, and which includes the reflections of a particular social milieu and the educational practices of certain institutions. Grundy (*ibid*:6) notes that the curriculum is not something sitting on a shelf but that it is the actions of people involved in education; it cannot exist apart from human interaction. Grundy (*ibid*:6-7) notes that the context of the institution defines the nature of the curriculum.

In the context of this study, the concept of curriculum includes all aspects of teaching and learning such as the intended outcomes of learning, learning programmes, assessment and methodology (Graham-Jolly, 2009:252, 2012:236). If one considers the definition as proposed by Graham-Jolly, one can understand the curriculum as an experience, influenced by teaching, learning and assessment practices and that every role player's experience will be unique.

The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas introduced the theory of knowledge-constitutive cognitive interest (Grundy, 1987). This theory is concerned with how knowledge is constructed. Habermas (*In Grundy 1987*:8) states that knowledge is something which people construct together.

Habermas categorises three basic cognitive interests: technical (empirical-analytic), practical (historical-hermeneutic) and emancipatory (critical) interest in which knowledge is created and organised. Habermas points that both knowledge and action are needed to compose the life structures of species. Neither knowledge nor action is sufficient in itself to ensure preservation. Both knowledge and action as they interact in educational practice are determined by a specific cognitive interest.

For the purpose of this study all three above-mentioned interests will be discussed for the reader to gain a better understanding.

2.2.1 The technical interest

The technical interest is concerned with the need for the preservation of those aspects of human society that are the most valuable and of worth to survive and to be reproduced (Grundy 1987:10-11). To achieve this, a basic orientation toward control and management is used. This form of knowledge is also referred to as 'positivism'. This means that the world of tomorrow is predicted or anticipated, based upon how we

experience the world today. Prediction is thus a form of control, and it can be assumed that there is a relationship between knowledge and power (control). Habermas makes a stronger claim that there is a possible relationship between prediction and control (Grundy, 1987:12).

Habermas indicates that technical rules are based on technical knowledge and we interpret how students learn by these rules. If students follow these rules they will also presumably learn. This links to Tyler's theory (Grundy 1987:12) of curriculum-as-plan (or curriculum-as-product) where the focus is on the plan (rule or product), and where the teacher is seen as the transmitter of knowledge which is laid down in the curriculum (Hoadley & Jansen, 2009:29-45). The curriculum is designed by experts before teaching and learning begins and translates into specific objectives.

The focus is on input and the prescribed plan is copied into the brain of the learner or the learners are seen as 'containers' that need 'filling' (simple linear process where the curriculum-as-planned is learned without adaptations) by non-thinking teachers who in turn have to follow a specific recipe to eliminate any weaknesses. This links with the banking theory described by Freire (2000:72), where the students "patiently receive, memorise and repeat", and education becomes an act of depositing knowledge. Tyler (*In* Hoadley & Jansen 2009:80-85) explains that curriculum-as-plan is a specific and detailed plan that coaches teachers through a process of teaching. This kind of plan aims to reduce the size of the 'gap' between the plan and practice. It is very useful for less experienced or less knowledgeable teachers, and is useful to make teachers more accountable. His detail might frustrate other teachers (*In* Hoadley & Jansen 2009:35-45). If we use a cooking metaphor to explain Tyler's approach to the curriculum, it could be seen as a prior well-researched recipe that explicitly tells a person what is going to be made. A list of ingredients and the methods of how the ingredients must be mixed and baked will be included. The chef (teacher) will keep the recipe (Hoadley *et al.*, 2012:73).

Beets and Le Grange (2005a:1199) note that when assessment practices are embedded in behaviouristic pedagogies of teaching and learning, the focus is on effective teaching rather than on effective learning. The tendency of behaviourism is to give priority to teaching objectives rather than the processes and learner performance is viewed as an outcome of teaching. It is assumed that teaching causes learning, and assessment within such a paradigm is then understood as an occurrence separated from teaching and learning, which happens at the end of learning. When looking at the descriptions and perceptions of this approach, I would like to link it to assessment of learning (AOL) as the key characteristics of AOL are that it is product-oriented, promotes extrinsic motivation and is summatively inclined (Lombard, 2010).

The nature of AOL can be described as strategies developed to measure what students know, and to identify whether they have met the curriculum outcomes or teaching goals at the end of a cycle or programme. It certifies proficiency, gives information to report progress and provides evidence of achievement about placement, advancement or qualifications. The teachers' role in AOL is far-reaching and affects students critically; teachers thus have the responsibility to report learning accurately and fairly (Manitoba, 2006:55). According to Manitoba (2006:55-56), effective AOL requires that teachers provide

a rationale for undertaking a specific assessment at a specific time, providing descriptions of intended learning, providing processes for students to illustrate their knowledge and skills, using a variety of strategies for assessing the same outcomes, descriptions of the assessment process,

transparent approaches to interpretation, public and defensible reference points for making judgements and strategies in event of disagreements about decisions.

2.2.2 The practical interest

The basic orientation of the practical interest is towards understanding. It is not based on understanding of rules to enforce or manage an environment but rather to understand the environment as a function, to be part of the environment and to interact with it. Habermas (*In Grundy 1987:13*) states that the practical interest is an interest in taking the right action (practical action). Human action is to be understood by breaking it down into smaller parts to experiment with and to analyse.

These actions described by Habermas (*In Grundy 1987:14*) arise as a result of interaction, and “interaction is then understood as not something done upon an environment but with an environment”. There is an important link between the practical interest and assessment, as the word ‘assessment’ is derived from coming from the Latin *assidere* which means ‘to sit with’. This understanding indicates that assessment is something we do with students and not to them (Lombard 2010:34).

Habermas further states that “access to the facts is provided by the understanding of meaning, not observation” (*In Grundy 1987:14*). The practical interest stimulates subjective rather than objective knowledge which can be understood as knowledge of the world as a subject as opposed to knowledge of the world as an object. Habermas (*In Grundy, 1987:14*) defines the process as “a practical interest with a fundamental interest in understanding the environment through interaction”. This links with the Stenhouses’ view (*In Hoadley & Jansen, 2009*) of the curriculum-as-process, where the curriculum focuses the research of the teacher in the process of teaching and learning, where teachers mediate learning and are participants in curriculum making (Hoadley & Jansen, 2009:80-85). Therefore the curriculum should be an intelligent proposal or recommendation rather than a plan with specific objectives and will be tested and validated by every teacher in their own context (*ibid:27-56*). According to Hoadley and Jansen (*ibid:27-45*), the focus in curriculum-as-practice (or curriculum-as-process) is on outcomes (what is learned), where thinking teachers adapt the plan and take things like resource constraints and learner interpretations into consideration and reflect on what learners learned (the learning process).

Lawrence Stenhouse (*In Hoadley & Jansen, 2009*) wanted a ‘guideline’ that directs teachers, which is flexible enough to allow them to make changes according to their own talents, strengths, learner needs and prevailing circumstances and which are not only concerned with closing the ‘gap’. He saw this as a space where innovation occurs and the lack of detail is welcomed by talented and skilled teachers or less hardworking teachers (who do not hold themselves accountable). Hard-working and less experienced teachers find the lack of detail intimidating and frustrating. A metaphor of cooking was used to enhance the understanding of the process as experimental cooking, where the new and innovative recipes come from. New recipes may have mistakes but the focus is not on the end product or the initial recipe but on the cooking process (or journey of discovery) (*ibid:27-85*).

The curriculum itself is therefore a process, not just a product; as it develops, lecturers need to research as they teach, evaluate as they research and change course in the process of teaching (not research, develop, teach, then evaluate). The process of teaching should be descriptive and subjected to ongoing

change. It should be related to what happens in practice; developed and adapted as the lecturer teaches and mediates learning (*ibid:72*). The lecturer is then seen as a participant in the development of the curriculum, the curriculum which is then seen as an 'intelligent guide' or a proposal rather than a fixed plan with pre-set objectives. This also includes assessment which, instead of being used explicitly for evaluation and grading, should be used in a developmental way to aim at improving a learner's capability to learn as part of the learning process. Assessment should not only be used to let students fail or pass (*ibid:69-71*).

Beets and Le Grange (2005a:1199) explain that when assessment practices are embedded in constructivist and interpretivist pedagogies of teaching and learning the shift moves from teaching to learning. Assessment in this paradigm includes ways in which assessments inform learning in a continuous, formative manner. The assessment for learning principles (ARG, 2002) are linked with the constructivist paradigm (*ibid:1199*), as the focus of the assessment for learning (AFL)

- is to be part of effective planning of teaching and learning,
- should focus on how students learn,
- should be recognised as central to classroom practices,
- should be regarded as a key professional skill for lecturers,
- should be sensitive and constructive as assessment has an emotional impact on students,
- should take into account the importance of learner motivation,
- should promote commitment to learning goals and shared understanding of the criteria by which students are assessed,
- should provide constructive feedback to learners on how to improve performance,
- should develop learners' capacity for self-assessment and become reflective and self-managing and
- should recognise the full range of learners' achievements.

The nature of AFL is continuous and it takes place throughout the learning process. It is developed to gain an understanding about each student's learning to enable teachers to decide what they can do to help students progress to eliminate confusion, preconceptions and 'gaps'. A wide variety of evidence is collected to allow for better decisions about how to move learning forward (Manitoba, 2006:29). The teachers' role in AFL would typically be to align instruction with learning outcomes, identify the learning needs of specific students or groups, select and adapt materials and resources and provide immediate feedback to students to direct their learning. AFL should create and use a variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies to help move learning forward (with specific reference to peer assessment as well as self-assessment and to develop good questioning skills for both the lecturer and student) (*ibid:29*).

2.2.3 The emancipatory interest

Grundy (1987:19) describes the emancipatory cognitive interest as the "fundamental interest in emancipation and empowerment to engage in autonomous action arising out of authentic, critical insights into social construction of human society". Emancipatory interest generates critical theories, which are concerned with people and societies of people and how oppression and falsification operates to obstruct and prevent freedom (*ibid:18*).

Paulo Freire, a Brazilian teacher, introduced critical pedagogy in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, making him the father of critical pedagogy, which is the theoretical underpinning of this study. Freire worked towards educational and social change in societies (Hoadley *et al.*, 2009:84). Freire (2000) seeks to open the way to acute awareness of the various forms of bondage and inspires change to enable and inform the oppressed towards practices of freedom.

The work of Paulo Freire, in my opinion, should not be seen as providing a teaching method or strategy, but rather as an overarching philosophy or social theory. Freirean pedagogy states that there are power struggles in societies, where various role players are either oppressed or oppressors. All of these role players are dehumanised, since either their humanity has been stolen or they are the reason for the distortion (Freire, 2000:44-45). All human beings yearn to be free, and sooner or later the oppressed will struggle against those who are oppressing them. Only the oppressed can understand the terrible significance of an oppressed society and the necessity for liberation (*ibid*:45).

According to Freire, in seeking their humanity, the oppressed must liberate themselves and their oppressors as the oppressors cannot fulfil this role. The oppressors are themselves dehumanised; as they dehumanise others, they are unable to lead this struggle (*ibid*:46). Freire (*ibid*:44) refers to people who have become dehumanised as people whose humanity has been stolen; people who have been subjected to oppression, injustices, exploitation and the violence of their oppressors. Their longing to be equal, empowered, changed and liberated and to function and live as free human beings can be described as their yearning for humanity.

The irony then, when the powers of oppression are reversed, is that the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, themselves tend to become oppressors or 'sub-oppressors' (*ibid*:45-47). Their ideal is to be free but their model for freedom is imprinted in the image of the oppressor. The oppressed individual who is now the 'new boss' is more tyrant towards their former comrades, indicating that the oppression remains unchanged. The rationale behind this can be described as their 'fear of freedom' which influences the oppressed, where they have internalised the image of the oppressor. To be free they will have to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility (*ibid*:45-47).

In most situations, the oppressed have become accustomed to the structure of domination in which they are engrossed, and they have become resigned to it, and are distant to the pursuits of the struggle for freedom because they feel incapable of running the risk it requires. When they discover the desire within themselves to be free, only then will they realise that this desire can be realised (*ibid*:47). Yet the oppressed are in torment for they are experiencing a duality; the desire to be free against their fear of freedom (Freire, 2000:48). As long as the oppressed live with their duality, emancipation and liberation is not possible.

Freire (*ibid*:49) states that liberation is painful, because in order to become liberated, one must perceive the reality of oppression, not as a closed world which cannot be exited, but rather as a world which can be transformed. This thought is the motivation for liberating action; the understanding that the oppressor is reliant on the oppressed and without them, the oppressor cannot exist. This in itself creates liberation.

Freire (2000:51) explains that liberation can only be done by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.

The same is true for the oppressor: when they discover themselves to be oppressors, it does not necessarily lead to unity with the oppressed (*ibid*:49). If the oppressor feels guilty or experiences anguish, and still remains in their role of oppressor, because they are held in a position of dependence they are dehumanised and not free. The only way for the oppressor to live in unity with the oppressed is to fight at their side to transform the situation, and become liberated by the dehumanisation and distortion of oppression (*ibid*:49). Only when the oppressor sees the oppressed as persons who have been treated unjustly, robbed of their voices and cheated in the sale of their labour, true unity will be achieved. Liberation will occur and all parties will be freed, transforming oppression (*ibid*:50).

The power struggles, and oppression as discussed in this section, are embodied in our curricula and in our classrooms. If we look at the approaches to curriculum discussed in the technical and practical interest, various power struggles between students, lecturers and the higher education institutions are apparent. Also, the whole nature of assessment (whether it occurs inside or outside of the classroom) can be perceived as a tug of war between relevant parties. In the technical interest, the power resides with the ones responsible for the formulation of the objectives, meaning that students have no powers to determine the objectives as the objective formulators have control.

Emancipatory curriculum, or curriculum-as-praxis, has a fundamental orientation towards emancipation. The emancipatory interest is incompatible with the technical interest but is compatible with the practical interest (Grundy, 1987:99). Grundy (*ibid*:99) states that is not to be assumed that if a lecturer has an orientation towards the practical interest that over time it would develop naturally into the emancipatory interest. In order for a lecturer to transform their practice, a transformation of consciousness is needed to understand how one acts and perceives the 'world'. It is unlikely that one cognitive interest would dominate a teacher's curriculum practice all the time. It appears to be the case that one cognitive interest characterises a teacher and will be the predominant and preferred way a teacher constructs his or her knowledge.

The emancipatory interest is seen as the most difficult of the conceptual categories to understand. The concern is with emancipation, which Habermas (*In Grundy 1987:18*) writes are a fundamental human interest – the idea and awareness of being free. The notion of freedom is fundamental to the act of speech and understanding. The concept of freedom is linked to truth and justice (*ibid*:18), therefore the emancipatory interest gives rise to autonomous, responsible actions based on decisions informed by knowledge.

To understand Habermas's connection of speech in the context of emancipation (*In Grundy, 1987:106*), it must be noted that Habermas connects speech and the intention to communicate. He implies that when people are able to communicate, it is implied that they will know the difference between true and false statements. Freire (2000:87-88) also links freedom with dialogue as he states that "the word is more than just an instrument which makes dialogue possible ... there is no true word that is not at the same time a praxis. Thus to speak a true word is to transform the world." Freire (*ibid*:30-32) refers to oppression as the

“culture of silence”, where the oppressed are not permitted to voice their discontent. Both Habermas and Freire connect speech and freedom. Emancipation becomes the act of finding one’s voice (Grundy, 1987:107).

It is important to note that dialogue and critical discourses are strongly motivated by Freire (2000:75-81) when he states that through dialogue the teacher-student and students-teachers must engage in dialogue with each other, where the teacher are also being taught, and the students in turn are also being taught to teach. By dialogue they are all jointly responsible for a process of growth invoking the medium of critical reflection of both students and the teacher. The teachers constantly reform their reflections in the reflection of the students. This creates knowledge, unveils reality, and students will relate to the problems and challenges. Their responses to the challenges induce new challenges following new understandings. Education thus becomes the practice of freedom, opposed to education as the practice of dominion.

Grundy (1987:19) declares that Freire’s critical pedagogy must be authenticated, indicating that groups or individuals must not only concur with belief but must be involved in self-reflection, so that the knowledge generated by the critical-emancipatory interest is an authentic insight to help deepen their understanding of themselves. The nature of emancipatory interest is concerned with empowerment, where individuals or groups must take control of their own lives in responsible and self-sufficient ways. Grundy (*ibid*:19) notes that there is a mutual relationship between self-reflection and action. This is in line with Freire’s pedagogy (2000:65) which states that it is

... only when the oppressed find the oppressor out and become involved in the organized struggle for liberation that they begin to believe in themselves. This discovery cannot be purely intellectual but must involve action, nor can it be limited to mere activism, but must include serious reflection: only then will it be a praxis.

When we look at the curriculum-as-praxis, using the cooking metaphor, the approach would be similar to the approach used in the practical interest where the focus would be on the process of cooking and encourage experimentation. Mistakes would be welcomed and would be used to develop deeper understanding of the cooking, food and the world. All involved in this process can participate freely in discourses regarding cooking and eating, and politically conscious questions can be raised. Reflections on the experiences of the participants can be used and can raise issues of empowerment and social consciousness, to see if the participants have changed their consumption behaviour (Hoadley *et al.*, 2012:74).

To have a curriculum informed by praxis would mean that elements of action, reflection and praxis must be visible. This means that our curriculum will promote praxis instead of a product-or-process approach. It suggests that the curriculum itself will develop through continuous action and reflections. Our curriculum would not only be a set of plans that must be implemented, but must rather be an active process in the real world in which emancipation and change enable social construction, and discourses are visible (Grundy, 1987:114-118).

Beets and Le Grange (2005a:1199) point out that assessment in the emancipatory interest can be seen in the light of assessment as learning (AAL). Assessment as learning concedes that the student is central to the learning process; that the processes of self-regulation and understanding are fundamental to learning.

The nature of AAL is to focus on students and the emphasis is on assessment as a process of metacognition. AAL developed from the construct that learning is not the transfer of knowledge from individuals with knowledge to other individuals without the knowledge. It can be seen as a process where individuals construct their own meanings and knowledge by means of interaction with other individuals, knowledge or content. This means that students are the critical connectors between learning and assessment. Students must have the skills to understand and make meaning of information, relate it to what they already know and apply the knowledge to their new context and content. Students monitor, self-regulate (Zimmerman, 1994, 2000) and manage their own learning. They start to self-reflect on their learning and this leads to a deeper understanding and critical thinking (Manitoba, 2006:41). It will also lead to students taking the responsibility for their own learning and will improve classroom participation by students. Students will become adaptive, flexible and take the responsibility and decisions regarding their own learning. The teachers' role in promoting the development of independent, expert learners (Ertmer & Newby, 1996:1; Manitoba, 2006:43) through AAL will be

to model and teach skills of self-assessment and internal feedback, guide students in setting goals, and monitor their own progress towards them, provide them with examples of good practices and quality work, teaching them how to work effectively with other students, providing regular opportunities to challenging practical skills and competence and to monitor the students' metacognitive processes and learning and providing immediate feedback and by creating safe learning environments where students feel encouraged to take chances and implement changes.

Some authors only use the two categories of AOL and AFL and do not acknowledge AAL. Various authors do not acknowledge the difference between AAL and AFL due to their interrelatedness (Manitoba, 2006:13). At first I did not understand the practice of differentiating between AFL and AAL, but during the review of the scholarly literature it became apparent to me that if I viewed curriculum as product, process and praxis, each curriculum approach should have an associated classroom assessment strategy linking with the main underpinnings of the curriculum approach. In view of the curriculum which encapsulates assessment as well, it became apparent to me that one's perception towards curriculum defines one's perception of assessment. An academic cannot favour a product approach to curriculum and make use of AFL or AAL. Grundy (1987:99) states that the technical interest is not compatible with the emancipatory interest but it is compatible with the practical interest. If one considers the characteristics of both the practical and emancipatory interest in terms of AFL and AAL one sees that there are many similarities between the two curriculum approaches and classroom assessment strategies. The emancipatory interest and AAL highlight the best qualities concerning the practical interest and AFL but include issues of social responsibility and emancipation. I would like to keep to the two main categories of classification of product/AOL on the one end of the scale and the process/AFL and praxis/AAL on the other end of the scale (see Table 2.1). Although the process/AFL and praxis/AAL approaches are different, for the purpose of the scale/balance metaphor they are sorted into the same side and seen as interrelated to each other due to their compatibility. Table 2.1 below provides a summary of curriculum as praxis. Various authors (Grundy 1987:14; Lombard 2010:34; Freire 2000:48;

Gibbs *et al.*, 2004:183) highlight an important linkage between the practical interest, assessment, praxis and critical pedagogy, namely that it is something done with people, and not to them.

Table 2.1: Summary of the curriculum as praxis

Differentiation	Curriculum-as-product	Curriculum-as-process	Curriculum-as-praxis
Alternative names	Curriculum as plan Technical interest Empirical-analytical Technical/instrumental reasoning	Curriculum as practice Practical interest Historical-hermeneutic Interpretive/hermeneutic/constructivism reasoning	Critical curriculum Emancipatory interest Critical pedagogy
Main authors	Habermas Grundy Freire – banking theory Taylor	Habermas Grundy Stenhouse	Habermas Grundy Freire
Underpinning theories	Positivism Behaviourism	Constructivism Interpretivism Cognitivism	Critical pedagogy
Basic characteristics	Control, prediction, rules, linear, plans, management, power, memorisation, repetition, depositing knowledge, teacher source of knowledge.	Understanding, enlightenment, communication, flexible, experimenting, analyse, interaction, shared responsibilities, discourses, student-centred, teacher mediator	Autonomy, liberation, freedom, change, justice, reform, democracy, praxis, action, reflection, critical dialogues, student-teachers and teacher-students
Focus	Effective teaching	Effective learning	Emancipation from oppressive powers or conditions
Assessment linked to curriculum	Assessment of learning (AOL)	Assessment for learning (AFL)	Assessment as learning (AAL)

Due to various factors in our teaching and learning environments, it is not always feasible to make use of either a technical or a product approach to the curriculum or only a practical/emancipatory approach to the curriculum, as the content, context and diversity of the students in our classes constantly change. Stiggins (2001:13) refers to the balanced assessment approach by which he encourages teachers and lecturers to not merely make use of or get stuck in one type of approach but to consider the use of a balanced classroom assessment system, so that when lecturers are forced to work in a technically informed curriculum they ensure that they also balance their practices with practical and emancipatory approaches so as to gain the advantages these approaches hold.

2.3 CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

The present review is thus limited to the realm of the nature of classroom assessment. Studies of other assessment-related issues that commonly pertain to education or related fields of teaching and learning are excluded since they fall beyond the scope of the main research questions.

The literature review in this section will cover five areas: clarification of the key terminology, the status of classroom assessment, the balanced assessment system, the students' role in classroom assessment and the lecturers' role in classroom assessment.

2.3.1 Clarification of key terminology

The terminology that will be clarified in the following section are: balanced assessment system, formative assessment, summative assessment, assessment of learning, assessment for learning and assessment as learning. The reader will be primed on the paradigmatic position within which this study was conducted.

Stiggins (2002:763) refers to a 'balanced assessment system' when he notes that both approaches, namely assessment of learning/product/traditional and assessment for learning/process/alternative are of equal value and each has its own place in teaching and learning.

Formative assessment concentrates on learning from assessment and refers to assessment taking place throughout the process of teaching and learning on a daily scale (Geysler, 2011:93). It is meant to assist in the process of continuous and future learning. It feeds directly back into the teaching and learning cycle and points out a student's strengths and weaknesses and provides immediate feedback. It assists in the decision making by learners regarding their willingness to do summative assessments (assessments done at the end of a learning experience).

Summative assessment fulfils the traditional role of measuring student progress at a certain stage or level, and provides feedback on the progress made. Results from tests feed into an evaluation, like a mark in a grade book or a report card grade. Assessments, whether formative or summative in nature, help assessors to evaluate and make a judgement on student achievement. Also known as assessments of learning, they reflect the level of student learning at a particular point in time (Stiggins, 2002:761). Taras (2002:508) notes that a summative assessment-driven paradigm is currently dominating higher education. This notion is in line with the traditional examinations at the end of semesters at universities and associated policies that prescribe these examinations where learners are forced to "get down to learning" (Gravett & Geysler, 2011:200).

Assessment of learning (AOL) entails that the learners' interaction with learning is limited to the product of their learning. Assessment of learning is summative in nature and is used to endorse students' knowledge and skills and to establish whether the curriculum goals have been achieved. Lecturers use this form of assessment to provide accurate and sound statements of students' proficiency and performance, so that the recipients of the information can use the information to make reasonable and justified decisions (Manitoba, 2006:14).

In assessment for learning, the focus is on the learning. Learners form an integral part of the learning process by being central to the learning process and engaging in learning activities. Assessment in this instance is no longer an 'add on', but an integral, seamless part of the teaching and learning events. In assessment for learning, there is an integral relationship between continuous teaching, learning and assessment activities. Lecturers use this assessment to get information to modify and differentiate teaching and learning activities and use the resulting information to determine not only what students know, but to gain insights into how, when and whether students apply what they know. Lecturers can use this information to streamline instruction and resources and to provide feedback to students to help them advance their learning (Manitoba, 2006:13).

Some authors identify only two categories of classroom assessment purposes: assessment of learning and assessment for learning. It was also my perception for a long time, but after the review of the literature on the curriculum, it became apparent to me that the third purpose of assessment as learning should be included. As understood from the literature review on the curriculum praxis, assessment for learning falls under the umbrella of the curriculum-as-process approach. The curriculum-as-process approach is compatible with the curriculum-praxis approach. Assessment as learning falls under the curriculum-as-praxis scope, thus making AFL and AAL compatible modes of assessment. To clarify and link these terms with the literature review and in the context of the study, it is understood that the ideal classroom assessment would be for lecturers to use AFL and AAL strategies in a balanced format with AOL. It is not possible in the real world (classroom) to expect lecturers to use only the one or the other classroom assessment approach. We as lecturers have to use assessment in line with prescribed university structures and rules, the students in our classes and the socio-cultural backgrounds of students (Beets & Le Grange, 2005a:1200).

Due to the content of certain subject areas such as mathematics and accounting, the curricula in these areas are mostly structured in a product approach (technical interest) (Jansen, 1998:326). The most effective way for a mathematics teacher would be to use most elements from the products approach. In spite of their product approach curriculum, good mathematics teachers would use not only the AOL classroom assessment strategies but combine them with AFL and AAL approaches to allow their students the opportunity to gain the benefits derived from these approaches.

Although I constantly mention that the curriculum-as-product approach (technical interest) is incompatible with the curriculum-as-process (practical interest) and curriculum-as-praxis (emancipatory interest) approach (Grundy, 1987:99), it should be understood in the context of the curriculum. In the previous section I made certain linkages with the curriculum and classroom assessment practices and drew the inferences that an individual lecturer's perception regarding the curriculum affects the way they use assessments in their classrooms. In my view, if a new inexperienced lecturer, unsure and naively follows the prescribed curriculum to the point (if it is curriculated in a technical fashion) and does not know they can alter, rewrite or even have a perception of their own, they would typically revert to AOL as they are unaware of the existence of 'something else'. With experience, it is assumed that once they become aware of the 'something else' they will change their ways. Manitoba (2006:13) holds the following view of assessment as learning:

[It is a] process of developing and supporting metacognition for students. Assessment as learning focuses on the role of the student as the critical connector between assessment and learning. When students are active, engaged and [act as] critical assessors, they make sense of information, relate it to prior knowledge and use it in their new learning. This is the regulatory process in metacognition. It occurs when students monitor their own learning and use the feedback from this monitoring to make adjustments, adaptations, and even major changes in what they understand.

2.3.2 The status of classroom assessment

In this section I will outline the status of classroom assessment and make statements about the status of classroom assessment practices in the higher education context and at school level. The status of

classroom assessment in the higher education context has not received enough scholarly attention and thus the status of classroom assessment in a school level context are included due to the similarities of the classroom situations.

Pryor *et al.* (2002:673) state that assessment, especially in Africa, is one of the most frequently criticised aspects of the education system. Reynolds and Trehan (2000:267) claim that assessment is the most political of all educational processes, for it is where issues of power are most at stake. I argue that lecturers assessing students are in positions of power if we consider the higher education context.

The international status of classroom assessment is described as practices in mayhem and disarray, and being dismal (Knight, 2002:275; Stiggins 2001:5). Black and Wiliam (1998a:141) describes assessment practices as 'a poverty of practice'. Stiggins (2001:5) contends that this has been the state of affairs of classroom assessment for decades and that harm has been done and is being done to students. Knight (2002:278) specifically refers to summative assessment as being in disarray since it is not delivering what it should deliver. He emphasises that it should include elements of reliability and validity. Popham (2006:84) emphasises the need for assessment literacy in teachers.

Another implication noted is the lack of change in classroom assessments. In this regard Vandeyar and Killen (2007:101) state that "they have not necessarily resulted in major changes at classroom level – some educators still apply the pedagogical practices they used a decade ago". The reluctance of many South African educators to change their classroom assessment practices in response to new policies and curriculum guidelines may be due to their ingrained perceptions of assessment (*ibid*:101). This links with the lecturer's role in assessment where the lecturer has a certain belief about himself/herself as an assessor. Many South African teachers are unwilling and unable to adapt their assessment practices according to the changing demands of the workplace or higher education. It seems that some are unaware of the need for change and that the perceptions they hold regarding teaching, learning and assessment are no longer relevant (*ibid*:111).

It appears from the literature that the state of disarray regarding assessment practices has been disregarded by governments (Stiggins, 2001:6, 2002:759, 2008:287; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:142), policy makers (Black & Wiliam, 1998a:142), school leaders and the measurement community alike. Although assessment has many audiences, including legislators, accreditors and the general public, in the final analysis it is the teacher and the student, working together, who must make the difference between mediocrity and excellence in learning (Cross, 1996:404).

The neglect of classroom assessment practices includes the following effects: unacceptably low levels of assessment literacy among practising teachers (Black & Wiliam, 1998a:141; Stiggins, 1999a:198, 1999b:23, 2001:6; Wiliam 2011b:5), inaccurate assessments (Stiggins, 2001:5, 2006:17), and failure of large numbers of students to activate their full academic potential (Stiggins, 2001:5). Stiggins (2001:5) ascribes this status of classroom assessment to a failure to balance the use of summative and formative assessment, norm-referenced in contracts to criterion-referenced assessment to improve teaching and learning.

The literature discussed above focused on school-level classroom assessments. Next classroom assessment in higher education is considered. Too often, teaching, learning and assessment in higher education is reduced to examination-driven teaching and subject-based memorisation, where students rely on textbooks. The reasons for this state of affairs vary greatly. The lecturer is seen as the transmitter of knowledge with surface learning being the order of the day (Botha *et al.*, 2005:70). Their view seems to be that students just need to be in class and that no interaction is required. Content is covered in class and most of the learning happens at home (Botha *et al.* 2005:72). Lecturers seem to adopt 'survival' or coping strategies to overcome issues of too-large classes, resulting in inferior teaching and learning (Ecclestone & Swann, 1999:387, Botha *et al.*, 2005:75). Schratz (1992:81) describes the neglect of teaching, learning and assessment as practices where the textbooks are regurgitated and lecturers rely on notes created and prepared when then they were younger and more ambitious. Lecturers dwell on their field of research specialities without bothering to translate ideas, materials and jargon to students. Classes are turned into "rap sessions" which can be entertaining or educationally progressive and lecturers fail to prepare for classes and treat their classes to an "off-the-top-of-the-head ramble" which confuses students. In such cases, dramatic shifts are needed. Schratz (1992:82) calls for university developmental programmes aimed at improving the competencies of lecturers in teaching, learning and assessment.

Cross (1996:403) refers to a first wave of change in assessment regarding a shift from assessment for accountability towards assessment for improvement. This movement entails change from doing assessment to using it to improve student learning (Cross, 1996:404). Beets and Le Grange (2005a:1206) state that assessment is to be understood as a process of learning. In the South African context the culture and immediate environment of the learner, which is informed by traditional African values, must be understood as well.

2.3.3 The balanced assessment system

This section begins with an investigation of previous research related to the balanced assessment system (Crooks, 1988). The term 'balanced assessment system' was introduced by Stiggins (2001:13) to explain the paradigm shifts in assessment. These shifts include the balance of summative assessments with formative assessments, the balance from teaching to learning (Leahy *et al.*, 2005:19) and the balance between large-scale testing with continuous classroom assessment (Stiggins, 2006). Cross (1996:403) indicates that there is a shift from assessment for accountability towards assessment for improvement. Beets and Le Grange (2005b:115) refer to the shift as a promise of liberating assessment practices from its behaviourist orientations. Carless (2005:47) argues for a move away from the dominance of summative tests and examinations in favour of greater integration of assessment with teaching and learning, and a focus on learning processes as well as products.

The balanced assessment system can also balance the usage of assessment *of learning* (Stiggins, 2002:759; Leahy *et al.*, 2005:19; Taras, 2009:3016) with the usage of assessment *for learning* (Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 2004:10; Stiggins, 2002:761, 2006:15, 2009; Leahy *et al.*, 2005:19-24; Wiliam, 2011b; Klenowski, 2009:263; Taras, 2002:508, 2009:3016; Carless, 2007a:40). As standardised testing is carried out at least once a year, it is important to take note of the challenges that occur and the actions that take place during the rest of the year, and the day-to-day classroom practices (Stiggins, 1999a:192,

1999b:23, 2001:5, 2002:763, 2006:17; Klenowski, 2009:264; Carless, 2007b:176). Student achievement suffers because once-a-year tests are incapable of providing teachers with the moment-to-moment and day-to-day information on student achievement about which they need to make important decisions. Teachers must rely on classroom assessment to do this (Stiggins, 2002:764). If assessment is not working effectively in a day-to-day classroom situation, it will not work at any other level (Stiggins, 1999b:23). In order to turn the current day-to-day classroom assessment into a more powerful tool for learning, lecturers can implement assessment for learning. Assessment for learning is student-centred and serves to help students learn more effectively.

During the third International Conference for Assessment for Learning (2009), assessment *for learning* was redefined as “part of every-day practice by students, teachers and peers that seeks, reflects upon and responds to information from dialogue, demonstration and observation in ways that enhance on-going teaching and learning” (*In* Klenowski, 2009:264). When teachers/lecturers use assessment for learning, they will make use of the key characteristics of assessment for learning (Leahy *et al.*, 2005; Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Black *et al.*, 2004:11-16; Stiggins, 2002:761; Brown, 2004, Boud & Falchikov, 2007).

There is little disagreement between the authors regarding the number of strategies, but the core strategies that are acknowledged are the following: sharing learning goals (targets/intent) with students (Stiggins, 2002:761; Leahy *et al.*, 2005:21; Carless 2005:42, 2007a:6); the use of high-quality samples of students’ work (Carless, 2007a:6); the use of questioning (Black & Wiliam, 2004:11) involving students in peer assessment and self-assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998a:143, 2004:14; Leahy *et al.*, 2005:23; Taras, 2002:505); providing feedback to students (Leahy *et al.*, 2005:22; Wiliam, 2011b:4-7; Taras, 2002:505; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:143, 2004:13) to help them learn how to generate their own feedback (Taras, 2002, 2009; Carless, 2007a, 2007b); teaching one facet of quality at a time (Stiggins, 2006); teaching students how to improve their own work (Carless, 2007a); and the use of summative assessments in a formative way (Black & Wiliam, 2004:15). See Table 2.2 for a breakdown of the central strategies used in this study for the self-reflections of lecturers and their academic mentors to be performed later in the qualitative research part (see Annexure B to E).

Table 2.2: Classroom assessment strategies (Adapted from Meyer <i>et al.</i> , 2010:56-57)	
LEARNING TARGETS/GOALS WITH STUDENTS (LEARNING INTENTIONS, OUTCOMES)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Achievable learning targets should be articulated in advance to produce students with a clear idea of what will be learned and why. ✓ Learning targets direct attention, mobilise effort, increase persistence. ✓ Learning targets transfer some responsibility to students, enabling them to be active participants in the learning process. ✓ They focus on the purpose of learning rather than on the completion of an activity. <p>Learning targets should be SMART</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Specific</i> (clear, concise, related to work) • <i>Measurable</i> (one should be able to see when they have been achieved) • <i>Achievable</i> (they must be within the grasp of the student) • <i>Realistic</i> (they must be a short step within the learning process) • <i>Time-related</i> (short-term) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Learning targets should be appropriate in number – not too many. ✓ They are referred to regularly. 	

VERBAL QUESTIONING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Apply questioning techniques such as probing, prompting, seeking clarification, redirecting. ✓ Verbal questioning should be seen as dialogue, rather than inquiry. ✓ Allow waiting time: to grasp the questions, to think. ✓ Cognitive complexity of questions should be noted. ✓ Note the framing of questions.
FEEDBACK
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Relates to the outcomes and assessment standards and helps clarify good performance. ✓ Should be descriptive rather than judgemental. ✓ Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance. ✓ Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning. ✓ Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem among learners. ✓ Provides valuable information for teachers that can be used to help shape their teaching. ✓ Teaches/ students how to generate their own feedback regarding their own work and encourages them to do so. <p>Feedback conditions (Brown and Glover, 2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient feedback is provided often enough, and in enough detail. • Feedback is provided quickly enough to be useful to learners. • Feedback focuses on learning, rather than on marks or learners. • Feedback is linked to the purpose of the assessment task and to criteria. • Feedback is understandable to learners. • Feedback should be acted upon by learners to improve their learning.
PEER ASSESSMENT AND SELF-ASSESSMENT
<p>The lecturer's knowledge, expertise and skills contribute to successful peer- and self-assessment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ raising awareness about the benefits of peer assessment and self-assessments; ✓ providing guidance on materials for conducting peer assessment and self-assessments; ✓ helping learners understand the significance of peer assessment and self-assessment results. <p>Benefits of peer assessments and self-assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interpersonal relationships are improved. ✓ Students are more likely to focus on the task. ✓ A sense of ownership inspires students to assume more responsibility for their own learning behaviour. ✓ It nurtures self-directed learners – reliance on lecturer is reduced. ✓ Students gain understanding of how they are learning, as opposed to what they are learning. ✓ Students begin to understand the purpose of learning. ✓ By realising there are various ways of tackling tasks, students develop skills that help them become critical thinkers.
THE FORMATIVE USE OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Summative assessment should become a positive part of the learning process. ✓ Learners can be engaged in the reflective review of summative results, and can plan revisions more effectively. ✓ Learners could be encouraged to set own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process.

2.3.4 The students' role in classroom assessment

In this section I discuss previous research related to students' role in classroom assessments. Carless (2007b:171) states that students are central to the process of teaching and learning; they need to take responsibility for the regulation of their own learning and do not blame failure on the teacher. When classroom assessment is student-centred, it informs students of their own learning (Stiggins, 2005:328, 2006:15; Carless, 2007b:44).

Student-centred learning has promoted and brought about greater classroom involvement and participation in assessment (Taras, 2002:506-7). Cross (1996:404) states that students are rarely involved after they provide the assessment data as they are seen as the subjects of assessment. She contends that students are equal partners in assessment – they must share the responsibility for the quality of learning and must be included in the entire assessment process. When lecturers are teaching in a learner-centred way, it requires them to understand their learners. This will assist them in determining where learning starts, as well as in designing learning experiences at the correct levels and using

appropriate teaching and learning methods (Criticos, Long, Moletsane, Mityane, Grösser & De Jager, 2012:166).

There seems to be a significant connection between assessment and motivation of students (Stiggins, 1999a:195, 2001:7, 2002:760, 2005:324, 2006:13; Carless, 2007b:179). An improvement in marks means an improvement in their self-esteem (Black & Wiliam, 1998a:142, 2004:18). The boundaries between student motivation, self-regulation and performance are very closely linked to each other. In most of the literature reviewed, the authors largely link self-regulation, goal-orientation and goals or values to motivation. Miltiadou and Savenye's (2003) differentiation appears to be the most comprehensive. From the literature I found:

The six motivational constructs are (a) self-efficacy, (b) locus of control, (c) attributions, (d) goal orientation, (e) intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation and (f) self-regulation. The motivational constructs are then grouped according to a common lineage. They are (a) an individual's perception about their ability to perform a task (*self-efficacy, locus of control and attributes*), (b) an individual's reasons or purpose for engaging in a task (*goal orientation and intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation*) and (c) an individual's strategies for performing and completing a task (*self-regulation*) (Pintrich, 1999:462, Miltiadou & Savenye, 2003).

(a) *Self-efficacy* is a major component in Bandura's social cognitive learning theory. Bandura (*In Miltiadou et al., 2003*) explains that self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in their ability to control their thoughts, feelings and actions and by doing this they are influencing or achieving the outcomes.

(b) An individual with internal *locus of control* believes that their successes or failures are due to their own making due to their efforts and their abilities. Individuals with an external locus of control are more likely to believe that external factors such as luck, difficulty of tasks and people's actions, among other things, cause the success or failure rate (Miltiadou *et al.*, 2003).

(c) *Attributes* are classified into environmental and personal factors. Environmental factors include the feedback the teacher provides and social situations. Personal factors include personal biases, casual patterns, preferences, individual differences and prior knowledge. The actual attributes an individual will make in terms of their success or failure are, for example, a bad mood, a difficult tests and lack of effort (*ibid*).

(d) *Goal orientation* is concerned with the drive to achieve a specific target. An individual with a learning goal orientation aims to master a specific task and to develop themselves regardless of the amount of effort it requires (*ibid*).

(e) A student's reasons for participating in tasks are highly influenced by their levels of *intrinsic or extrinsic motivation*. When students participate in tasks out of curiosity, interest, or to exercise their capabilities it is perceived as intrinsic motivation. These students do not need incentives because the tasks themselves are rewarding to them. When students are participating in a task because they believe

participation will be rewarded or praised or they will avoid punishment it is seen as extrinsic motivation. The student needs an external stimulus to complete the task (*ibid*).

(f) *Self-regulation* refers to a student's ability to understand and control their own learning. Zimmerman (1994) states that students who are self-regulatory control their own learning, use metacognitive strategies like planning and monitoring to achieve their goals and are intrinsically motivated (*ibid*).

The positive emotional dynamics of assessment contribute to growth, success and confidence. Another link is the one between assessment and student decision-making (Crooks, 1988). When students are motivated and perceive the potential benefit(s) of classroom assessment, they will be motivated to 'take the risk' and make an attempt (take action) (Klenowski, 2009:264; Taras 2002:505, 2009:3016). Students then become partners in the exploration of knowledge and in pushing the boundaries of what is knowable (Gibbs *et al.*, 2004:183).

This leads to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy and self-regulation (Stiggins, 2009:421; Carless 2007a:17), according to which students take control of and reflect on their own learning (metacognition). Self-regulated learning describes a person's drive to become more educated on their own by the way they are motivated intrinsically to improve themselves. These types of learners take the responsibility and direction for their own learning (Zimmerman *et al.*, 1994:3, Zimmerman 2000).

The ideal student is often seen as a self-regulated learner. This describes a student who has knowledge of effective learning strategies and cognitive and metacognitive strategies and knows when and how to use them to regulate their learning (Pintrich, 1999:459-460, Zito *et al.*, 2007:78, Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994:3, Zimmerman 2000). Self-regulation refers to the skills of the student to monitor, control and regulate their cognitive activities and actual behaviour (Pintrich, 1999:461). Pintrich (1999:461) indicates that the metacognitive control or self-regulating includes three types of strategies: planning, monitoring and regulating. These students will know when to break complex problems into smaller bits, when to look for alternatives, when to skim and when to read for deeper understanding; they will complete difficult tasks to their satisfaction, are likely to be effective learners and have a lifelong motivation to learn (Slavin, 2003:262). Rather than relying solely on teachers, parents or other external change agents to impart knowledge, they take an active role in their own learning (Zito, Adkins, Gavins, Harris & Graham, 2007:78). Self-regulated learners are motivated by learning itself and not by external stimuli such as grades or other people's approval (Slavin, 2003:262).

Self-regulated learners and effective (expert) learners are mostly mentioned in the same breath. There are various similarities between them and they might seem inseparable. If a learner is self-regulating, he/she must also be an effective learner. The differentiation comes into play at self-regulation. A learner must first be an effective self-regulating learner and can then become an expert learner – not the other way around. Learners can be self-regulating but it does not necessarily make them expert learners. If their self-regulatory efforts are unsuccessful, they will not become expert learners. If, however, they are effective self-regulated learners they will be expert learners (Zito *et al.*, 2007:78, Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994).

Pintrich *et al.* (1999:463, 2002:148) define self-efficacy as “people’s judgements of their performance capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required if wishing to attain designated types of performances in a specific domain”. Research has shown that self-efficacy influences the achievement behaviour of students in terms of their choice of activities, persistence and effort. If students hold a low efficacy for accomplishing a task, they may avoid it, but if they believe they are capable they will participate. Students with high self-efficacy who encounter difficulties will work harder and persist longer than students with low self-efficacy (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002:162).

It is thus, important that self-regulation and self-efficacy must be in place for a learner to be seen as a self-driven, motivated expert learner. This links with Freire’s critical theory that human activity consists of action and reflection, praxis to transform one’s world (Freire, 2000:125). Reflection in turn leads to higher-order thinking skills, problem solving and life-long learning (Taras, 2002:508; Klenowski, 2009:267, Carless, 2005:40, 2007a:2). Cross (1996:405) notes that for most who choose an academic life, learning comes easily, and almost by definition, academics find learning enjoyable and they are successful at it. But it is not the case for many of our students.

The literature shows that students display a preference for classroom discourse (Stiggins, 2006:15; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:144, 2004:19; Carless, 2005:42, 2007a:42), and this is in line with social constructivism, which is the underpinning theory of assessment *for learning* (Taras 2009:3016; Carless 2005:44). In the study of Botha *et al.* (2005:73), the students expressed an interest in more interaction, such as class discussion, which stimulates them and forces them to think. Freire (2000:71) states that education suffers from narration sickness: the teacher talks and ‘fills’ the students with his/her narration and education becomes an act of depositing. He contends that liberating education consists of acts of cognition, not transferrals of information (Freire, 2000:79) and a teacher must not only be the-one-who-teaches but must be in dialogue with the students.

Gibbs *et al.* (2004:184) refer to practices where teachers and scholars engage as interactive partners, collaborating in educational projects and authentic problems as critical thinkers, co-authors of knowledge and mutual learners. The requirements are dialectical reflections on behalf of the university and action. This links with Freire’s (2000:80) concept of students-as-teachers and the teacher-as-a-student.

When students are actively involved in classroom assessment practices (Stiggins, 2005:327; Stiggins & Chappius 2005:13), record keeping (Stiggins, 2001:14, 2005:328; Carless, 2005:44), and are part of the communication process (Stiggins, 1999b:25, 2001:14, 2005:328, 2006:15; Black & Wiliam, 2009; Klenowski, 2009:266; Carless, 2007a:2), classroom assessment becomes student-centred and deeper learning is promoted.

Botha *et al.* (2005:60) refer to the work of Biggs (1987) and describes a student who uses a deep learning approach as follows: he/she is interested in academic tasks; gets a certain satisfaction from completing the task; searches for meaning in the tasks; personalises the tasks to give them meaning and to link them to an authentic setting; integrates and sees relationships between knowledge and tries to theorise about the task. On the other hand, students who adopt a surface approach to learning see the task as a demand or goal that needs to be met, does not connect the parts of the task to each other, is worried

about time at task, avoids personal connotations and meanings from the task to their real life and relies on the reproduction and memorisation aspects of the task (Botha *et al.*, 2005:60).

Biggs (2003) refers to constructive alignment where students construct their own meaning when the teaching methods and assessment task align with the learning activities and outcomes. Freire (2000:71-74) states that the emancipatory interest creates student engagement where students are not the receivers of knowledge but active co-creators of knowledge.

2.3.5 The lecturers' role in classroom assessment

In this section I discuss previous research related to the teachers'/lecturers' role in classroom assessment. The literature points to the need for assessment competence or literacy by teachers and students, and states that the need is growing daily (Stiggins, 2006:19, Stiggins & Duke 2008:290, Popham 2006). The lecturers' perceptions regarding themselves as assessors determine the level and effectiveness of classroom assessment. Vandeyar and Killen (2007:101) note that "all pedagogical acts are affected by the conceptions teachers have about the act of teaching, the process and purpose of assessment and the nature of learning". Such perceptions act as darkened lenses through which educators view and interpret their own teaching environment and act as impediments to change. This affects the status of classroom assessments as discussed in 2.3.2.

Any efforts to eliminate and change educators' perceptions and pedagogical practices by means of professional development are destined to fail unless these perceptions of educators are voiced, acknowledged, contested and eventually changed (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007:101). Pryor *et al.* (2002:675) claim that even when there is a willingness from teachers to embrace new ideas about assessment, their enthusiasm is hindered by the lack of training and the deep-rooted perceptions of teachers which are in conflict with the underpinning values of the new assessment order.

Gipps *et al.* (1995) refer to four major perceptions teachers hold about assessment: (1) it is valuable because it can provide feedback and information regarding teaching and learning; (2) it is an important process for student accountability for own learning; (3) it is a process making schools and teachers accountable for learning and (4) it is of no use to teachers and learners. Vandeyar and Killen (2007:102-111) note that these different perceptions lead to different assessment practices. There is strong evidence that teachers tend to hold a single, rather than multiple perceptions about assessment.

Vandeyar and Killen (2007:107-108) report another barrier relating to teacher perceptions: experienced teachers' resistance and reluctance to accept change. They found that some teachers were still embracing old educational paradigms because they were struggling to grasp changes and new implementations in the curriculum. These teachers were all following a product approach to the curriculum and they did not approve of the view that classroom assessment should support learning. They reported that these teachers "reinforced differences between learners", "their assessment practices were driven by ignorance and prejudice" and they "did not have a deep understanding of assessment practices" (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007:107-108). Pryor *et al.* (2002:677) refer to teachers' lack of a sense of themselves as agents in the educational process. Carless (2005:39) states that assessment has usually been the feature most resistant to reform.

Teachers' willingness to engage with the changes in assessment is influenced by their deep-rooted beliefs of what the purpose of assessment is, thus they have particular perceptions about what is expected from them when engaging in assessment (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007:111). The problem South African teachers are faced with is that they lack the knowledge and skills to change their teaching and assessment practices.

The problem stated is that there is a lack of professional development (Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Carless, 2007a:40; Wiliam, 2011:5; Klenowski, 2009:265; Stiggins, 1999a:192, 1999b, 2002:765, 2008:290, Vandeyar & Killen, 2007:103) and improvement in professionalism through competencies (Stiggins, 2002:765) and licensing requirements (Stiggins, 2002:765, 2008:290). Popham (2009:4) notes that assessment literacy should be considered a significant area of professional teacher development. Teachers need to be trained and retrained to understand new forms of assessments and learning resources and opportunities for teacher dialogue and exchanges must be implemented as teachers co-learn (Ferman, 2002:146).

It is estimated that most teachers will spend one third of their time on assessment-related activities during their teaching careers (Stiggins, 1999b:23, 2001b:6, 2008:286). Thus the call for improved professional development of teachers to address issues of the diversity of teaching methods and using different assessors (Black & Wiliam, 2004; Stiggins, 2001:8, 2005:327, Beets & Le Grange, 2005b:118), teaching styles (Taras, 2009:3017; Carless, 2005:46), accountability, (Leahy *et al.*, 2005:24; Stiggins, 2002:759, Gibbs *et al.*, 2004:191) transparency (Pryor *et al.*, 2002:676) and successful classroom practices (Taras, 2009:3019).

Dreyer *et al.* (1996:469-470) claim that lecturers select approaches and teaching methods that reflect their own preferred ways of approaching tasks (support their own learning styles). They state that lecturers favour students who approach learning in the same way they do (*ibid*:469-470). Lecturers should acknowledge students as unique and must have a critical awareness of their own teaching and learning preferences to create the best teaching and learning conditions possible for their students.

Issues such as the needs of individuals, self-reflection (Beets & Le Grange 2005a:1202), staff motivation and integrating assessment with teaching and learning practices (Carless, 2005:47, 2007a:9) must be addressed. This needs to be done so that teachers can collaborate and interact (Stiggins, 2001:14, 2006:14; Carless, 2005:46, Stiggins & Chappius 2005) with students to meet the standards of 'success for all' (Stiggins, 2001:10, 2002:764, 2008:291; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:143; Wiliam, 2007:36) through co-operative teaching and learning.

Pintrich *et al.* (2002:156) argue that learners are more likely to learn from an enthusiastic model (teacher/lecturer) than from a less enthusiastic model because an enthusiastic model inspires students to pay better attention, motivates them to obtain certain skills and strategies and promotes task values. The element of enthusiasm helps produce higher student achievement, and helps foster students' interest and motivation in learning. Students perceive the teacher to believe in their successes. Stiggins (2006:6-7)

emphasises that teachers must be “committed to a mission of maximizing the success of each student in mastering the standards”.

Student-involved classroom assessment opens the assessment process and invites students in as partners, monitoring their own levels of achievement, and under the mediation of their teacher students are invited to play a defining role in developing the criteria of assessment (Stiggins & Chappius, 2005:13).

Pryor *et al.* (2002:684) comments that reflection is one of the sources of assessment, and if teachers do not think back or accurately retrace their steps, assessment cannot exist. Assessment relies on reflection. Schratz (1992:83) refers to a practice called ‘reflection-in-action’ and describes reflection-in-action as an action research strategy where self-reflective enquiry is undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their practices.

Quality issues (reliability, validity, and record-keeping) are important in any classroom assessment and will be introduced briefly, as it falls beyond the direct scope of the study. When teachers make decisions about students’ learning and they make inferences about what students know and can do by evidence collected through assessment. If the assessment process is reliable, the inferences about a student’s learning should be similar when they are made by different teachers, when the learning is measured using various methods, or when students demonstrate their learning at different times (Manitoba, 2006:9).

Classroom teachers’ concerns with validity have to do with the quality of the inferences they make about students’ grasp of content, as well as the quality of their pedagogical decisions and actions, including the assignment of grades (McClure, Sonak & Suen, 1999:478). Validity in classroom assessment is about the accuracy of the interpretation and the use of assessment information, if assessments measure what they are supposed to measure (Manitoba, 2006:11).

My study can be placed among the broader scholarly literature on higher education and curriculum studies in South Africa that are concerned with the nature of classroom assessments and emancipatory actions aimed at improving teaching and learning through assessment.

Based on the existing literature as well as emerging issues in this field, limited research appears to have been conducted on the following: the changes on assessment (Klenoswski, 2009:265); student involvement with assessment which is rare in higher education (Taras, 2002:503; Carless, 2007a:15); the lack of transparency (Taras, 2009:3021); the lack of discussion on the relationship between theory and practice (Taras, 2009:3018) and paradigm shifts in classroom assessment (Geysler, 2011:91). Beets and Le Grange (2005b:118) prefer alternative assessment practices to conventional ones so that assessment can be liberated from its behaviourist roots. The practical significance of the research problem is that it addresses a gap in the literature by placing classroom assessment within the critical context of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within the higher education context.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes with a brief overview of the reviewed scholarly literature. The literature review was divided into two main area categories, namely curriculum praxis and the nature of classroom assessment. Curriculum praxis was discussed based on the works of Grundy (1987) who used Habermas's concepts of technical interest, practical interest and emancipatory interest to convey a clear understanding of various perceptions regarding the curriculum.

From the review of the scholarly literature, it is evident that lecturers' perceptions regarding the curriculum will be in line with their beliefs about classroom assessment. If lecturers regard the curriculum as a linear product, they will mostly also favour an AOL approach to classroom assessment. If they implement the curriculum as a learning process, they might support an AFL approach. When lecturers adopt an approach where they focus on emancipating students from oppressive powers this is seen as an emancipatory approach, which is in line with AAL principles. When using the balance metaphor, the two sides of the scale are AOL (curriculum-as-product) on the one side and AFL (curriculum-as-process) and AAL (curriculum-as-praxis) on the other. AFL and AAL are complementary in nature and compatible with each other, but AFL and AAL are not compatible with AOL.

The second part, on classroom assessment, was subdivided into concept clarification, the status of classroom assessment, the balanced assessment system, the student's role in classroom assessment, and the lecturer's role in classroom assessment.

In the next chapter the research design and methodology I used to conduct my study are discussed. The chapter commences by introducing the qualitative research design and the qualitative methodology of participatory action research (PAR) I utilised in the study. In this chapter I elaborate on my paradigmatic position and the rationale for using critical theory during this research. I explain how my participants were selected, the ways in which the data were generated, the methods used to analyse the data and the role I played in the research. Issues of trustworthiness are also addressed. The chapter concludes with a review of the ethical aspects of this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER LAYOUT

3.1	•INTRODUCTION
3.2	•RESEARCH DESIGN
3.3	•QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY
3.4	•PARADIGMATIC POSITION
3.5	•PARTICIPANT SELECTION
3.6	•DATA GENERATION
3.7	•DATA ANALYSIS METHOD
3.8	•RESEARCHER'S ROLE
3.9	•TRUSTWORTHINESS
3.10	•ETHICS
3.11	•CONCLUSION

*Liberation can only be done by means of the praxis:
reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.*
~ Paulo Freire (2000:51)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will explain the qualitative research design and methodology used for this study. I will elaborate on what primed the inclination for the design, methodology and the paradigmatic position of the study. I used qualitative research due to the applicable nature of the research where it is used to address and improve a particular problem (Merriam, 2009:4). This design best suited the study because it enabled a critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment in a higher education context. I indicated earlier on that critical theory was used as the underpinning theory for the study in order to determine the change in classroom assessment. Lecturer involvement to change classroom assessment practices were crucial, which made making participatory action research ideal and well suited as a methodology to use. The lecturers reflected upon their classroom assessment practices making mind shifts and changes possible.

Considering the insights gained from the literature review it is important to note that lecturers need to determine their own personal curriculum stances and perceptions as their views of their classroom assessment practices will be determined by how they perceive and approach their curriculums. Their perception of the curriculum will influence their classroom assessments.

Existing political and social situations must be changed in order to free individuals from dominating powers (Freire, 2000). This means that the oppressed (lecturers, in the context of this study) will have to carefully reflect on their approaches, taking their context, content and students into account and establish the nature of oppression they are knowingly and unknowingly exposed to or possibly inflicting.

The procedures used during participant selection, data generation, data analysis and how they are connected to the underpinning theories of my study are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

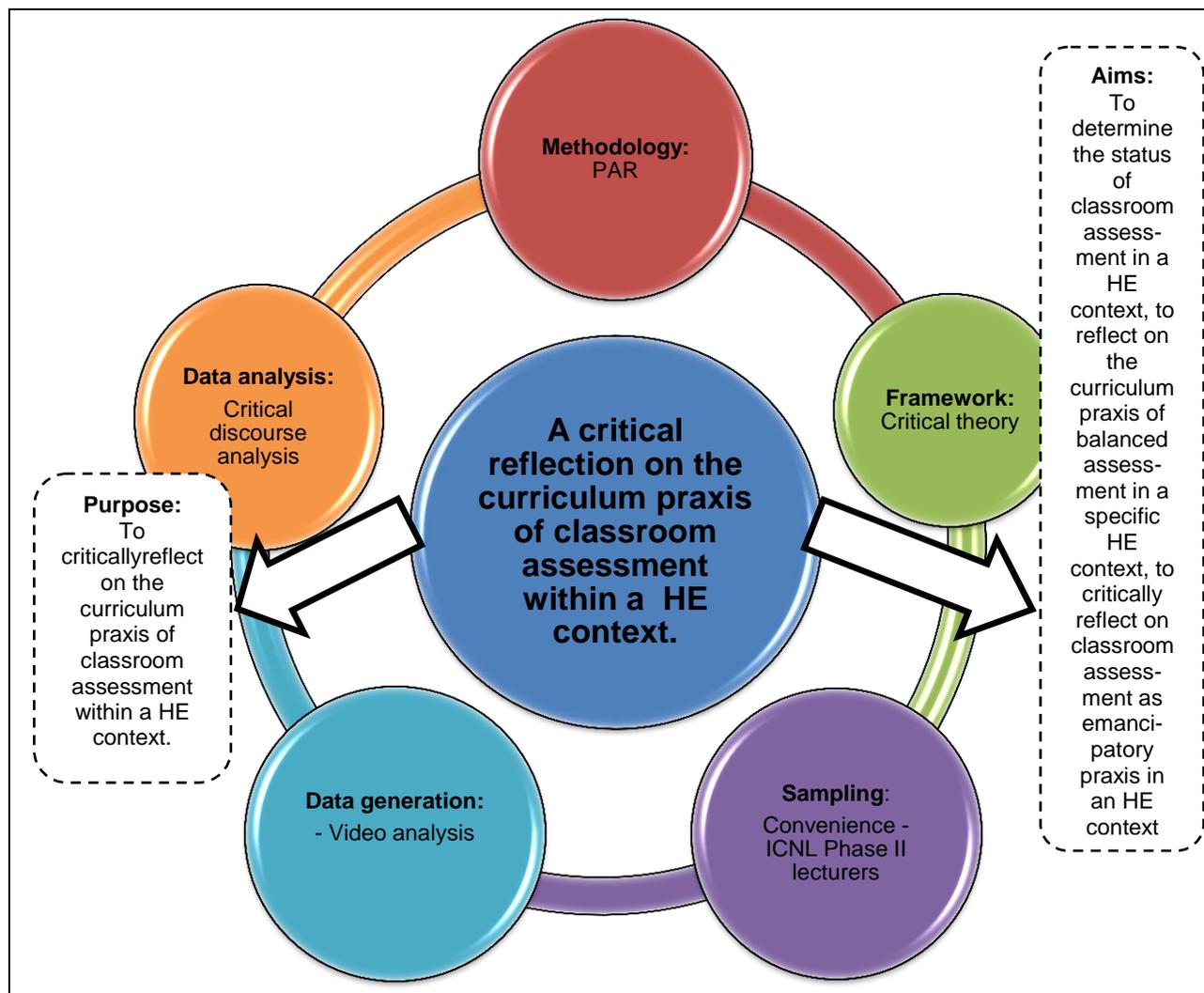


Figure 3.1: Research design of the study

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design of a study can be explained as the plan on how to conduct research; it involves the intersection of philosophy, methodology and specific methods (Cresswell 2009:9). Qualitative studies require a combination of theoretical claims and empirical evidence to produce an argument that answers the research question and problem of the study (Schwandt, 2007:265). According to Punch (2009:112), a research design situates the researcher in the empirical world and connects the research question to the data. The research design is the basic plan for a piece of research and includes the methodology, the paradigmatic position, the question who and what will be studied and the tools and procedures to be used in collecting and analysing the empirical materials.

The design of my study is qualitative in nature and will be explained in depth in the following paragraphs in terms of the following key elements: the methodology, the paradigm and empirical evidence in terms of sampling, methods of data collection and data analysis.

3.3 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY: PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

The term 'action research' was coined by a social psychologist named Kurt Lewin in the 1960s to describe a specific type of research in an experimental approach of social science with programmes of social actions to address social problems. He developed a model of cycles which involved planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Schwandt, 2007:3). Lewin's work was followed by Stephen Corey who applied this methodology for studying educational issues. Elliot and Adelman (1976) used action research to examine classroom practices. In the field of curriculum studies, the most well-known action researcher has been Lawrence Stenhouse (1983) who used action research for emancipation and intellectual and spiritual autonomy in curriculum contexts (Koshy, 2010:3).

Mills (2007:5) defines action research as research done by teachers for themselves to gain insight, developing reflective practices and effecting change in their school environment to improve student outcomes and the lives of those involved. My study looked at the nature of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context, meaning that lecturers were involved in reflecting on and changing their classroom practices. Pring (2007:133) states that action research aims not to produce new knowledge but to improve practice, namely the educational practices which teachers are engaged with. Furthermore he states (*ibid*:135) that action research is where teachers review their practices in the light of evidence and of critical judgement of others to examine if the values they hold are regarded as intrinsic to the transactions they are engaged with. This links with the theoretical underpinning of critical pedagogy that was put forward by Paulo Freire. Freire (2000:83-94) believes that for educators and authentic revolutionaries, the object of action is the reality to be transformed together with other people (by means of action and reflection). He believes that education is the practice of freedom, as opposed to education as the practice of dominion (Freire, 2000:81). According to McNiff *et al.* (2006:8), action research can be "a powerful and liberating form of professional inquiry because it means that practitioners themselves investigate their own practice as they find ways of living more fully in the direction of their educational values". She continues to say that they are not told by others what to do; they make their own decisions and are free. McIntyre (2008:1) argues that action becomes a dialectical process, changing the researcher, the participants and the situation in which they act. Freire (2000:79) states that liberation is a praxis where men and women reflect upon their world in order to change it.

Strains of Lewin's approach are still used today in modern forms of action research. Various forms of action research exist, namely action inquiry, action science, participatory inquiry, pragmatic action research, collaborative inquiry, co-operative inquiry and participatory action research (Schwandt, 2007:3). A qualitative strategy of inquiry was used in this study. The mode of inquiry was PAR.

Maree (2007:126) describes PAR as the study of social issues that constrain individual lives. PAR stresses 'equal' collaboration, which means that the participants have an equal stake in the research and their participation is a vital part of the design. PAR does not separate the inquiry from the action, nor does it separate the researcher from the researched. Collaborative participation becomes central to the

research and means that the participants are co-researchers in the study and the researcher a collaborating participant in the action research (Punch, 2006:136-137). In the stages discussed in the next paragraphs and later in this chapter, the roles of each stakeholder in this PAR study will be discussed and clarified clearly.

PAR focuses on life-enhancing alterations ensuing in the emancipation of the researcher and is a process of using research principles to gather information and to change facets of day-to-day practices (McMillian & Schumacher, 2006:414). PAR is a dynamic process for personal and professional development (James, Milenkiewicz & Buckham, 2008:7). PAR helps teachers develop in their professional capacity through critical reflection; discourses and real life issues are being studied in the long term thus enabling them to become experts in their field and this motivates them (James *et al.*, 2008:7, Koshy, 2010:9-21). PAR was significant in my study since I needed lecturers to reflect on their own classroom assessment practices through various stages in order to note if changes have occurred in their perceptions and practices and also if they themselves understand the changes that occurred in order to enhance their understanding of curriculum praxis and classroom assessment. If they understand the process of participatory action research they will be inspired to continue using the principles of PAR if it renders positive and life-enhancing results.

As mentioned above, PAR addresses specific practical issues. The identification of specific practical issues is the first stage of the cyclical process of action research (see Figure 3.2).

McNiff *et al.* (2006:11) defines action research as a process with several stages. It starts with taking action (what is done in practice to improve something), doing research (finding out and analysing your practices to look for improvements) and telling a story and sharing your findings (sharing with others what and how you have gained knowledge regarding your improvement).

The action research process consists of a continuous spiral or process starting at the self-reflection stage, moving on to researching, planning, action and practice (intended action) and the start of a new cycle beginning at reflection again (Punch, 2009:136). Punch (2009:137) refers to seven additional important features of participatory action research: it is a social process; it involves participation, both practical and collaborative; it is emancipatory; it is critical; it is recursive; and it aims to transform both theory and practice. These features link directly with critical pedagogy, whose aim is to change by means of action and reflection, putting theory into action (praxis), emancipating and liberating individuals from that or those who oppress them.

The stages of the continuous spiral route in the cyclical process are concerned with the challenges or social issues. The social issue that was addressed in this study were the critical reflection of lecturers on their own application of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context. The next stage of the action research cycle was reflection, which was concerned with looking in order to act and to locate resources. The participants were the new lecturers participating in the ICNL (Institutional Course for New Lecturers) Phase II compulsory course. I selected this group of lecturers due to convenience and access I had to them. Stage 3 had to do with research – the collection, analysing and internalising of data. Stage 4 was related to the formulation of an action plan by each lecturer. The final

stage involved the intended action. In this study, stages 1-5 were done during Phase I of the data collection process (ICNL video 1) and were repeated from stages 1-5 during Phase II of the data collection process (researcher video 2). The study ends with recommendations and no implementation.

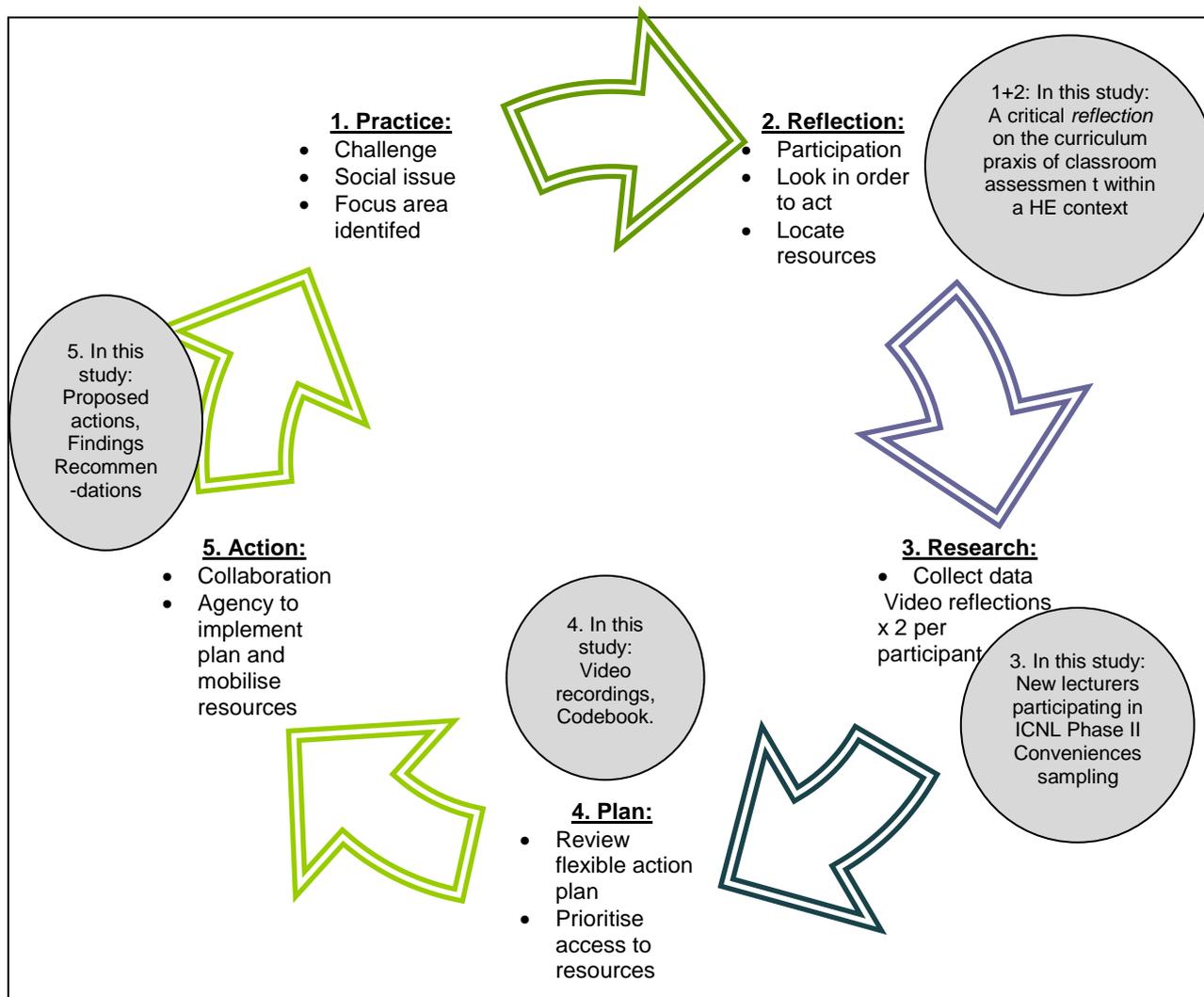


Figure 3.2: The continuous cyclical process of action research

Adapted from Maree (2007:128)

The rationale for using PAR is that the actions (stages in the cyclic process) have the distinct purpose of addressing an identified problem – in this study, how classroom assessment was reflected in a higher education context. It is a methodology to implement action for change, meaning that lecturers can change and become empowered by renewing their classroom assessment practices. The impact of reflection can also change the researcher in terms of his/her understanding and perception of the phenomenon under study. This links directly with the research paradigm of critical pedagogy, which proposes that there are social, economic and political powers that can have control over people in society and that this can cause injustices and oppression. These injustices can be brought to light by means of reflection, critique and critical discourses. The idea is that once people are aware of the powers that are oppressing them, change can be proposed and implemented, and by the very nature of that, they will be emancipated. The theoretical underpinning of PAR stems from the critical pedagogy that was put forward by Paulo Freire. Freire (2000:54) states that the pedagogy of the oppressed has two distinct stages: the first step deals with the oppressed and their uncovering of their oppressive world and through praxis they commit

themselves to transformation. In the second stage the reality of the oppression has been transformed and the oppression ceases to belong to the oppressor but becomes a pedagogy belonging to the process of permanent liberation. Freire (2000:65) continues that it is only when the oppressed become involved in the organised struggle for their liberation that they begin to believe in themselves. This must involve an action and serious reflection; only then can it be a praxis.

After the first two processes of reflection (captured on video) by the participants, the academic mentor and me, recommendations were made and made available to the participants to reflect on their actions and practices. The intention was that they would implement the recommendations in their planning and the gains would be noted in the next video session. The intention of the study was for each participant to reflect critically on their own videos to implement change and improvement in terms of their own classroom assessment. The methodology of the study was linked with the theoretical underpinning of critical theory, which aims to undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation (*ibid*:75). Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it (*ibid*:79).

3.4 PARADIGMATIC POSITION

In a similar disposition to the literature proposal to locate this study in the critical paradigm, it made sense, paradigmatically, also to position the research design in the critical tradition.

Creswell (2009:6) defines a paradigm as a “world view” of a proposed study. He describes the paradigm as a general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher has. The beliefs of the individual researcher will result in the use of a research approach. In this study I worked from the critical perspective. Critical theory is based on the principles that social reality is historically created and that people produce and reproduce it (Maree, 2007:62). People take actions to change their circumstances and their attempt to do so might be restricted by a mixture of cultural, social, political and economic powers (*ibid*:62). The critical researcher aims to bring about change by social critique and discourse to bring oppressions and injustices to light, thus emancipating those who are caught up by it. Critical theorists claim to disclose the needs and struggles of the people whether or not the people are aware of them (*ibid*:62).

The underlying epistemological values in critical theory are framed by social and economic contexts with emphasis on ideological critique and praxis; findings are value-mediated and socially constructed (Potgieter, 2012). The ontology of critical theory is that reality is shaped by historical, social, political and economic values or person(s) in society and power (*ibid*). To gain knowledge of the world, the methodological value is always participatory and aims to emancipate. It concerns itself with dialogic (discourses), dialectical (argument and controversy) aspects and by critical action research, change of social institutions for justice and emancipation (*ibid*).

My personal assumption is that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. The goal of the research was to draw on the participants’ view of the situation being studied; in this case, lecturers in a specific higher education context. The participatory action world view provides a voice for the participants, raising their consciousness or advancing an agenda for change to improve their lives. It

becomes a united voice for reform and change. It means that the participants may help to collect data, analyse information and reap the rewards of the research (Creswell, 2009:9).

3.5 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The type of sampling used in this study was non-probability sampling as the research design of this study was qualitative in nature. Merriam (2009:77) states that generalisation of statistics in probabilistic sampling is not a goal of qualitative research.

Due to the nature of my previous work situation (I worked as an academic advisor at Academic Development and Support [ADS] at the Vaal Triangle campus of NWU from 2008-2012), I made use of purposive sampling or criterion-referenced selection. The criterion for the selection process was that the participants must have been new lecturers in any academic field (interdisciplinary) at NWU VTC. The other two campuses of NWU were excluded from the study due to the lack of access to video material. As a former staff member of ADS, I had access to the video material. For the purpose of the study, only the group of lecturers who indicated that they wanted to have their class sessions video-recorded were considered for the study due to the availability of the video material and thus convenience sampling was used. Merriam (2009:78) lists convenience sampling as a type of purposive sampling. Convenience sampling makes no pretence of identifying a representative part of a population, meaning that those who are selected are selected by chance (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:206). From the study population (*ibid*:206), a minimum of six new lecturers participating in ICNL Phase II of NWU's Vaal Triangle campus were selected. The first video recordings were collected in 2012. There was a population of 13 new lecturers who participated in the ICNL Phase II programme. Initially, six lecturers agreed to participate in the study but two withdrew during the study, leaving four lecturers to complete the study.

For the sample selection of the participants, the first six video recordings that were recorded in the first semester of 2012 were selected according to date. The second round of video recordings took place after the study was approved, and it involved the same participants on the Vaal Triangle campus who participated in the first round. The academic mentors had already given feedback on the participants' video material of their contact sessions (during ICNL Phase II). During the study, they reviewed the video material, used the self-reflection sheets and made their feedback study-specific instead of ICNL Phase II-specific.

The participants in this study gained the following: the participation helped them to reflect more regularly on their teaching, learning and assessment practices, and it helped them to grow personally and professionally because the key characteristics of assessment are not subject-specific skills but rather the classroom assessment and teaching skills that were gained.

Their participation in my study was just as important as the role I played during the research – if the selected participants did not participate willingly in the study, it would very likely have limited the study.

3.6 PROCESS OF DATA GENERATION

According to Maree (2007:81), qualitative studies do not treat data collection and data analysis as two separate processes, but see them as an on-going, cyclical and non-linear process. The reason for this is that most studies are directed by the saturation of data. This refers to the peak where no new facts or information are brought to the fore.

The first stage consisted of the analysis of the video-recorded sessions. Based on the video recordings, the participants wrote self-reflections. Based on their reflections, they were provided with several criteria, which are discussed below.

The self-reflection sheets were developed and pilot tested on a group of three colleagues to see if the questions were clear and understandable. The pilot test of the self-reflection determined whether the self-reflection sheet was clear and easily understood. Modifications were made to the self-reflection to clarify vagueness. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:235) note that the importance of pilot testing is to identify the changes needed. Feedback will be provided to improve clarity and format. It will provide an initial idea of the pattern of response, amount of time needed to complete the self-analysis and will indicate whether revisions will be necessary.

When the participants finished the first self-reflection (see Addendum C: Annexure B), the academic mentors and I followed the same procedures (see Addendum C: Annexure C). We reviewed the video material and made recommendations on how the participants used classroom assessments in their lecture rooms and how they could improve their practices. In order for the participants to develop professionally, they were encouraged to go back to the video recordings and view the comments and reflections made by the academic mentors and me. They were required to reflect on and self-regulate their classroom assessment practices. They could contribute to the self-reflection by adding information to their self-reflection sheets which they might have felt contributed to the study. The participants decided whether they would use the feedback to improve the assessments in their lecture rooms. The process was repeated twice (see Addendum C: Annexure D-E).

Rosenstein (2002:2) conducted a review on the use of video techniques for research. She classified the use of video into three areas, namely as a tool for observations (data collection and analysis), as a feedback mechanism, and as a means of distance learning (video conferencing). For the purpose of this study, I refer to the first two uses discussed by Rosenstein as they both fit in with the study.

Rosenstein's (2002:3) first use of video recording indicates that it is relevant for observations as the video material can be collected and analysed. First, I collected the data by means of video recording and next the participant, the mentor and I evaluated the videos by means of reflection sheets. To clarify this aspect, the video recordings were viewed so that they could be analysed for the data collection method of video observations.

According to Rosenstein (2002:6-12), the advantages of using video for observations (for data collection and analysis) are:

- It gives permanent revisable documentation from the field, multiple views and more in-depth detail, and allows one to see verbal and non-verbal communication (Maree 2007:100).
- It serves as a data collection tool and for reflection purposes.
- It can provide feedback to participants.
- It can be used for professional development purposes, peer reviews and positive reinforcement.
- Video captures valuable information on emotional and communication issues.
- It captures everything in view.
- It provides a visual document.

According to Rosenstein (2002:6-8), the disadvantages of using videos for observations are:

- It depends on the eye and hand of the recorder – is the video recorded in an objective way?
- It can exclude possibly important information if the camera is switched off too early.
- The faces of the participants captured are on video, which may have privacy implications for the participants.
- Ownership of data: to whom do the data (video recordings) belong?

I did not have any control over the quality of some of the video recordings captured by ADS for ICNL Phase II. I captured the second round of videos and I tried to adhere to the principles noted above as much as possible. The issue of the participants' faces was addressed by only using the data from the reflections and not any video footage. ADS have ownership of the first video recordings and I had to include this in the forms I submitted to ADS to have the video recordings released (see Addendum C: Annexure G). I have ownership of the second set of video recordings and if a participant were to request a copy of the footage, for any reason, I would be more than willing to supply them with a copy.

Rosenstein's (2002:16) second use of video, namely video used for feedback, is divided into three additional areas, but I will refer only to its use for performance assessment feedback, as this is most relevant to the study. When videos are used as a performance assessment tool, an individual's behaviour in terms of the skills displayed is reviewed as in the case of teaching. In professional development programmes, this method is used to make performers aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and it stresses self-reflection. In this study, videos were used to collect and analyse data and the footage was used for feedback to participants as indicated by Rosenstein.

Video recording was used because such recordings can be reviewed as often as necessary, which would not have been possible if the participants had been observed without it. Information which might have been missed in the first viewing of the video can be seen – it provides further information, thus enhancing the original data. The issues of representativeness, trustworthiness and interpretation are of concern. Rosenstein (*ibid*:8) notes that participants are only self-conscious in the presence of the observer/video camera for 20 minutes, and then they fade into the background. This means that after 20 minutes the recorded behaviour is an accurate (representative) account. Trustworthiness of interpretation can be verified with the participants by doing a 'reality check' with them when feedback is given (the participants will look at the comment made and determine whether the data were understood correctly).

The video recordings of the participants' class sessions for the first semester were captured by the ADS unit. The video material is stored on the unit's SHARE space (NWU's file-sharing system) and can be retrieved by getting access to the specific video folder. The video material was captured by a video assistant and me as part of our responsibilities towards the ICNL Phase II programme. The video material for the observations was captured in real-time class sessions of the participants. The videos for the second round were captured as soon as possible after the proposed study had been approved. Most of the sessions were captured in English, and the reflections done in the language the participants felt the most comfortable expressing their opinions in. The data were used in their original context. The duration of the data collection was two semesters.

The qualitative data (videos and self-reflections) were crystallised along with the literature review to answer the research questions. Maree (2007:38) describes crystallisation as the internal validity measure in qualitative research, where findings are compared to verify the results. The term 'crystallisation' (Maree, 2007:81) is used as opposed to 'triangulation' since there are more than three sides from which to approach the world (Merriam, 2009:216). The results will be used in the discussion of the research findings.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The data analysis approach involved an inductive strategy. Maree (2007:99) states that the main purpose of inductive analysis of qualitative data is to allow research findings to emerge from frequent, dominant or significant themes of inherited raw data without the restraints of structured orientations. The data collection, processing, analysis and reporting will be on-going and will be done simultaneously (Maree, 2007:99; Merriam, 2009:170), which means that it will be a non-linear process.

The data analysis strategy used in this study was critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis is concerned with studying and analysing written texts and spoken words to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias, and how these sources are initiated, maintained, reproduced and transformed in specific social, economic, political and historical contexts (Maree, 2007:102). Maree (2007:102) explains:

Critical discourse analysis tries to illuminate ways in which the dominant forces in society construct versions of reality that favour their interest and to uncover the ideological assumptions that are hidden in the words of our written text or oral speech in order to overcome various forms of power 'over' or to gain an appreciation that we are exercising power 'over' unbeknown to us.

The theoretical underpinning of this study is critical pedagogy. The use of discourse analysis is ideal in relation to the underpinning theory, as both the underpinning theory and data analysis aim to discover injustice and oppression, and to change and emancipate in social, economic, political and historical contexts. The data analysis strategy thus complements the underpinning of the study and is the most appropriate strategy to use.

Du Preez and Simmonds (2011:327) describe the use of critical discourse analysis as a process of analysing the discourses embedded in the narratives and analysing the processes from the position of the

researcher. When I scrutinised the data, I first identified the main discourses in the narrative, then interpreted the patterns and trends discourses and finally discussed any hidden discourses from the original data.

Throughout the study the videos were used by the participants, academic mentors and me. The various data sets (video 1 and the self-reflection sheets, video 2 and the self-reflection sheets) were kept separate and marked with topographical information about the data set.

The inductive codes used came directly from the data and were developed from reading the data, noting the issues raised by participants (Hennink *et al.*, 2011:218). The value of using inductive codes is that they reflect on the issues of importance to the participants themselves, which might be different from those anticipated by the researcher. Inductive codes allow the data to 'speak for itself' (*ibid*:218).

The data were interpreted according to the underpinnings of the study and critical discourse analysis. Through the interpretations an attempt was made to explain why things are as they were found, how this linked with the underpinning of the study, how it correlated with the existing knowledge, and how it could bring about ways of understanding the research problem, namely what the nature of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment is within a higher education context.

3.8 RESEARCHER'S ROLE

The methodological approach in this study, namely participatory action research (PAR), has two distinguishing features: the active involvement of participants in the research process and the commitment to action for social change (Hennink *et al.*, 2011:48). My approach as a researcher was to work with people.

The participatory aspect of the research involved me, along with the participants, in the research process. The level of participant involvement was high due to their intention to change, emancipate or improve their classroom assessment practices. PAR therefore aims at more than merely conducting research; it includes an element of action resulting in social change. In my study the element of action was important as there was active interaction between the participants and me that influenced the learning process and the self-reflection capacity of both (Hennink *et al.*, 2011:48; Freire, 2000:80). My role as researcher was primarily that of a facilitator or agent of change and the creator of a platform for critical discourses. This links with critical pedagogy, where the praxis (Freire, 2000:87) is described as the instrument to make discourses possible and where we can find the two dimensions of a praxis, namely action and reflection.

During the data generation process I played an important part in the self-reflection of the participants of the video analysis (reflection) by preparing the relevant documentation tools to be used (see Addendum C, Annexures A-I). As the underpinning of this study was critical pedagogy, the participants, academic mentors and I contributed to the data collection and reflections of the study. They were active participants in the study and were actively involved in the data collection and analysis. I played the main role in the data analysis process as the data were coded, categorised, sorted into meaningful units and crystallised to validate the data.

To avoid any confusion, a role clarification of the other role players in the intended study is included to describe the role of the academic mentors and video assistants (see Addendum C, Annexure F).

Participants' academic mentors: Each lecturer participating in ICNL Phase II was allocated an academic mentor by their school director or faculty dean to guide them continuously throughout the ICNL phases. During Phase II the lecturer presented a contact session which both the academic mentor and an academic advisor (ADS) were required to attend. The lecturer received feedback from both the academic mentor and the academic advisor, and this concluded the ICNL Phase II. The academic mentors had already given feedback on the participants' video material of their contact sessions (during ICNL Phase II). During the study, they reviewed the video material and used the self-reflection sheet that was developed to make their feedback specific to the study instead of to ICNL Phase II. They provided comments on the second video which I recorded. That was the extent of their role in my study.

Video assistants: Due to the lack of capacity, ADS VTC took the initiative of video recording the contact sessions of the ICNL Phase II as from 2011 and did not arrange for the academic mentor and an academic advisor (ADS) to attend the contact sessions of lecturers participating in ICNL Phase II. The reasons for this were that both the academic mentors and the academic advisor could view the sessions at a time convenient to them, and that the video material could be reviewed if necessary. The video assistants recorded these sessions and stored the video material on SHARE. The video assistants were employed by ADS VTC and did not play any further role in my study. I made use of this video material which they captured for ICNL Phase II during my study. I captured the second video recording.

3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In qualitative studies, it is of great importance for one's study to adhere to the principles of trustworthiness. Guba, along with Lincoln (*In Schwandt, 2007:299*), developed four criteria for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (*Schwandt, 2007:299; Kefting, 1991:217*).

I took the following precautions to ensure the trustworthiness in the study:

In order to ensure credibility (parallel to internal validity), the participants were highly involved in the data collection due to the nature of the methodology of the study, which was participatory action research. The participants were part of the data collection (video reflections) and data analysis processes (member checks), as both these processes were on-going and simultaneous (*Maree, 2007:99; Merriam, 2009:170*). The participants and academic mentors were asked to help with the validation process (member checking) by providing written and oral comments, assessing research findings, interpreting and drawing conclusions.

Merriam (2009:215-229) contends that qualitative researchers can never capture the objective 'truth' or 'reality', but they can use a number of strategies to ensure the credibility and consistency of their findings such as triangulation, member checks, adequate engagement in data collection, the researcher's position and reflexivity, peer review, audit trail, rich and thick descriptions and maximum variations. In the study I made use of an audit trail to track, describe and document how the data were collected and categorised, and how decisions were made throughout the study. Another strategy used was crystallisation, where

multiple methods, multiple sources of data, multiple investigators and multiple theories are used to confirm emerging findings. In the study I made use of two sets of video analysis (reflections). Maree (2007:81) states that triangulation is based on the assumption of a fixed point or object that can be triangulated and proposes that we do not triangulate but rather crystallise, because we recognise that there are far more than three sides from which to approach the world (Merriam, 2009:216). Crystallisation enables us to move from a two-dimensional object towards the idea of a crystal, which allows for a variety of shapes, dimensions and angles. Crystallisation provides a more complex, clearer and deeper understanding of the research problem. The findings from the literature review and the empirical research were crystallised to determine the nature of the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context.

In order to ensure transferability (parallel to external validity), I made use of rich, thick descriptions in my dissertation. Schwandt (2007:299) and Merriam (2009:227) define this as a description of the setting and participants of the study, along with a detailed description of the findings with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participants' self-reflection video sessions. This was done by creating a 'thick' description of the sending context so that someone in a potential receiving context may assess the similarity between them and the study (Merriam, 2009:227).

Ensuring dependability (parallel to reliability) entails proving that the process was logical, traceable and documented (Schwandt, 2007:299). I used triangulation (crystallisation) and an audit trail to make sure that dependability was achieved. Merriam (2009:223) describes an audit trail as a detailed description of how data were collected, how categorisation was done and how decisions were made throughout the study. I used two sets of video analysis to make sure that there was a variety of data from different sources. If the data from both sources led to the same conclusion, the results were interpreted as reliable. I coded the data by using multiple coders and asked independent coders to code some of the research data, which I then compared to my own codes and categories.

3.10 ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH

Whenever human subjects are involved in research studies, the ethical implications must be considered. Research involves collecting data from people about people (Creswell, 2009:87). Ethical approval was sought and granted from NWU's Ethics Committee before the commencement of the study (NWU Ethics number NWU-00125-12-S2 – see Addendum B). Approval was sought and granted from the Director of ADS VTC and from the participants to use their videos in the study on approval of the research proposal (Addendum A) and ethical application (see Addendum C, Annexure A). Raw data, including videos and transcripts, will be stored securely for the appropriate period of time according to the requirements of the Ethics Committee.

The participants and academic mentors in this study were informed about the intended study, including why and how they were chosen to participate (Punch, 2006:56). The participants were selected according to the criteria discussed in the section on participant selection of this document (*cf.* 3.5). Participation was strictly voluntary and lecturers were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Due to the nature of participatory action research, the participants and academic mentors were actively involved in the research process. This means that the lecturers were identifiable and anonymity could not have been guaranteed during data collection. However, during the stage where the videos of the lecturers were used, and during the data analysis stage the videos were transcribed and the responses were kept confidential and anonymous by assigning aliases to the participants (Cresswell, 2009:91). Due to the nature of the video material used, the lecturers were not addressed by their names but by their assigned codes (aliases). Only the transcripts of the video material were used and included in the dissertation to protect their identities. Each lecturer (participant and academic mentor) completed a consent form to participate in the research (Creswell, 2009:91). The participants, academic mentors, my supervisor and I had access to the videos. Confidentiality was guaranteed, since only I as the researcher had access to the final data obtained (findings). I undertook to make the results of the study available to the participants once the study had been completed.

The issue of ownership of data (Punch, 2006:56) was dealt with as follows: ADS have ownership of the first videos captured by them and I have ownership of the second videos I captured. Permission was sought from the participants and ADS to use the videos. Informed consent was given and participation was voluntary (see Addendum C – Annexure A). The research results were reported and disseminated in such a way that no participants were harmed or their identities exposed. None of the videos or excerpts thereof will be used for the purposes of conference or other similar presentations.

Researchers must avoid falsifying or inventing findings, as this is regarded as scientific misconduct (Creswell, 2009:92). This research was based on sound data and findings obtained from the actual empirical study.

My relationship with the participants was one of honesty and trust. Although I am part of the research process due to the participatory nature of the action research (Denscombe, 2010:129), I strove for bias-free writing with no discrimination against or oppression of any lecturer (Punch, 2006:57). Intervention, advocacy and conflict of interest were dealt with in a careful, professional manner when it occurred, and I consulted my study leader as a counsellor on ethical matters.

The participants are the main beneficiaries of the study as the study was situated within a participatory action research methodology, which is highly dependent on the changes and professional development of lecturers and which makes the process continuous. Another advantage is that the study addressed practical problems in a positive way, feeding the results directly back into practice (Denscombe, 2010:134). Feedback was given throughout the study to help lecturers develop and emancipate themselves from out-dated traditions and beliefs concerning classroom assessment. The participants played an important role in the data collection and data analysis processes. Disadvantages for the participants might have been an increased work load due to the participatory nature of the action research (*ibid*:134).

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted the methodological facets of research design, methodology and procedure and included the paradigmatic position of the study. It addressed issues of participant selection, data

generation, analysis methods and the role I played during the study in detail. Sensitive issues such as trustworthiness and ethical behaviour were addressed. This concludes the information on how the empirical part of the study was dealt with.

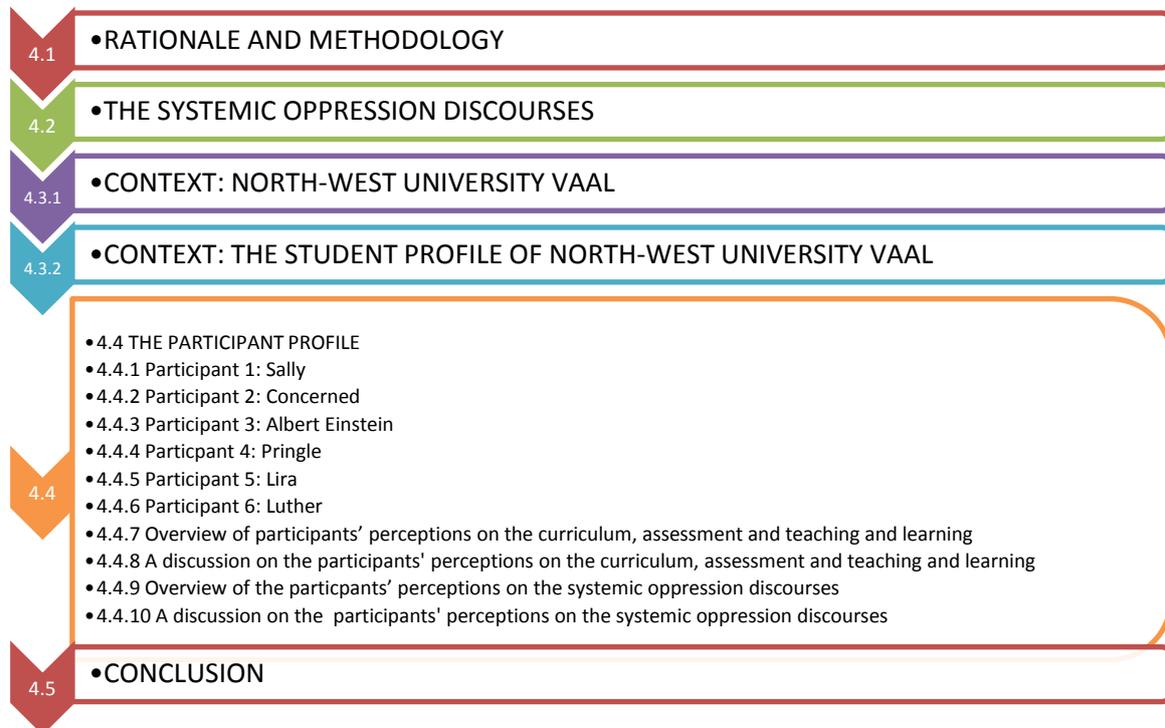
In the next chapter I will look at a deviation from the original PAR cycle and will include a brief discussion on the deviation discourses which occurred. I will provide a rationale for the chapter and give the reader insight into the background and context of the research participants' environment. I will also introduce the research participants and their perceptions on key issues related to this study. The chapter gives voice to the participants as they are co-researchers and after various interactions with them, I decided to give voice to an issue which concerned them.

After Chapter 4 I will include the information generated from the systemic oppression discourses and move on to the data analysis and interpretation to gain insight into the worlds of my participants.

CHAPTER 4

SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION DISCOURSES

CHAPTER LAYOUT



“I knew as well as I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away another man’s freedom is a prisoner of hatred; he is locked behind bars of prejudice and narrow-mindedness. I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else’s freedom, just as sure as I am not free when my humanity is taken from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.”

~ Nelson Mandela (2011:107)

4.1 RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY

Participatory action research (PAR) is defined by Carr and Kemmis (1986:162) as “research which is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, and the situations in which those practices are carried out”. In this study, lecturers from the Vaal Triangle campus of NWU were asked to do self-reflections on their own classroom assessment practices to identify problems, plan interventions, implement changes and evaluate the changes they have made. The research question aimed to reflect on the professional development of lecturers and whether change occurred in their classroom assessment practices during the span of the study. Reason (1988:1) states that co-operative enquiry is a form of education, personal development and social action.

A noteworthy feature of PAR is that it is a method used for improving educational practices, which involves action, reflection, gathering evidence and implementing changes (Koshy 2010:1-2). It is participatory and collaborative research undertaken by individuals with a common purpose; it is situation-based, and it develops reflection based on the interpretations made by the participants. Knowledge is created through action to the point of application which involves problem solving, which leads to problems being solved in practice, thus the improvement of practices and findings emerge as the action develops, but they are not absolute or conclusive (Koshy 2010:1-2).

The PAR methodology was selected in the study due to its flexible nature: a wide range of methods can be used, or existing methods can be modified to better address the research question (Barbour 2009:177). Other reasons for using PAR are the desire for change which is born out of disenchantment (*ibid*:171) and linking the features of PAR with critical theory. Freire (2000:37) states that when one is engaged in the process of liberation, one cannot remain passive in the face of the oppressor's violence. In this study, lecturers might feel oppressed or controlled by the system which they have to adhere to or by their own assessment practices (Barbour 2009:180).

The advantages of using PAR as a methodology can be that it explains social situations while implementing change and that it is problem-focused, context-specific and future-oriented. The aims are to be educative and empowering, to ensure that the processes of identifying, planning, action and evaluation are interlinked, and that the researcher and researched are equally involved as co-researchers and co-subjects (Barbour 2009: 173). Due to the flexible nature of PAR, continuous evaluation and modifications can be made as the study progresses, there are opportunities for theory to emerge from the research as opposed to following a pre-formulated theory, the study can lead to open-ended outcomes and a story can be brought to life (Koshy 2010:25).

4.2. THE SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION DISCOURSES

In the initial communication I had with possible participants, various possible participants immediately declined the offer to participate in the study. Some of them displayed an openly hostile behaviour towards my pursuit. Some of my current participants also listened with what seemed to be a heavy heart and only after a discussion consented to participate in the study. It became apparent to me that something bothered them tremendously. After discussions with my current participants I realised that the lecturers felt alienated and oppressed.

Due to the flexible nature of PAR (Koshy 2010:25), I decided to modify the PAR process and include a deviation in the cycle to discharge the negative perceptions as it could have a negative impact on my study or even derail it completely.

I explained to the current participants the purpose, value and benefits my study could have for their professional development as lecturers and emphasised that I was working on my study as an independent researcher to complete my MEd. I had no affiliations with any parties and funded my research personally.

I developed an open-ended questionnaire to gain more insight into the perceived systemic oppression issues (see Addendum C: Annexure H-I). The purpose of including the systemic oppression discourses were to give a voice to the participants' struggles which is in line with the underpinning theory of this study of critical theory that aims to liberate the oppressed and emancipate the dehumanised. The issue of systemic oppression was discussed and finalised to empower lecturers to move on to reflect critically on their own classroom assessment practices and empower them to overcome this barrier of systemic oppression. Freire (2000:39) states that the more involved a person becomes, the more they enter into the reality of better transformation. I was not afraid to confront, to listen or to see the worlds my participants unveiled. I was not afraid to enter into a dialogue with them. I did not see myself as a liberator of the oppressed but I was determined to listen to them, support and encourage them, and would fight by their side.

4.3.1 CONTEXT: NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY VAAL

The Vaal Triangle campus is located on the banks of the Vaal River in Vanderbijlpark. The Vaal Triangle campus is the smallest of the NWU's three campuses (NWU:2013a). The Vaal Triangle campus has a unique claim to fame: it was established because business and industry around Vanderbijlpark indicated that there was a need for such an institution.

Its history began in 1963 when the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) began presenting refresher courses for cost accountants in the Vaal Triangle on request. Three years later, in 1966, lecturers commuting from Potchefstroom began presenting a part-time BCom degree in Vanderbijlpark. This was followed in 1970 by part-time lectures for a BA degree (NWU:2013b).

During 1976, part-time lecturers were appointed to offer a programme for a BSc degree and the first three permanent professors were transferred to Vanderbijlpark. In January 1977, full-time lectures started with six permanent lecturers for 52 full-time students. In 1978, the campus extended its academic offerings by introducing a BEd degree and Higher Education Diploma (NWU:2013b).

In 1983, the campus was officially named the Vaal Triangle campus and a Vice-Rector was appointed. In 1984, student numbers stood at 1 140 and the first graduation ceremony was held. In 1992, due to a decline in student numbers, English was introduced as an additional medium of instruction, making the campus more community-oriented. The year 1994 marked the start of wide-ranging transformation on the campus (NWU:2013b).

By 2003, student numbers had increased to 2 247. At the time of the merger in January 2004, when the Vaal Triangle campus became one of three campuses of the NWU the student numbers of this campus had grown to 3 038 (NWU:2013b). This campus has experienced record growth in the past few years: in 2012, there were 6 100 students (NWU:2013a), and in 2013 there were 6 527 registered students.

Academically, the focus of this campus is on programmes in economic sciences, commerce, information technology and education, social sciences, languages, and the humanities. These are offered by two faculties, namely the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology and the Faculty of Humanities (NWU:2013b). The Faculty of Economic Sciences and Information Technology consists of

three schools: Economic Sciences, Accounting Sciences and Information Technology. The Faculty boasts research expertise in Serious Games, Mobile Technology and Multilingual Speech Technology (NWU:2013b). The Faculty of Humanities has four schools: Languages, Behavioural Sciences, Basic Sciences and Educational Sciences. World-class research is conducted in the following research areas: Multilingualism, Understanding and Processing Languages, Positive Psychology, Resilience, Public Affairs Research on Service Delivery and Water Research (NWU:2013b).

4.3.2 CONTEXT: THE STUDENT PROFILE OF NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY VAAL

In order to understand the context that shapes the worldviews of my participants, it was important to get an idea of the profile of the NWU Vaal students. The information provided in Tables 4.1-4.3 was generated from NWU's management information system regarding the gender-, the home language- and qualifications distributions (report generated 2013/06/26):

Table 4.1: Gender distribution				
NWU Vaal	Male	Asian	54	
		White	478	
		Coloured	32	
		Black	1834	
			2398	2398
	Female	Asian	63	
		White	912	
		Coloured	78	
		Black	3076	
			4129	4129
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON 2013/06/26:				6527

NWU Vaal	Afrikaans/English	8
	Afrikaans	1244
	African languages	4
	Asian	1
	Black languages	23
	Chichewa	1
	Chinese	2
	English	738
	French	5
	Greek	2
	Ndebele	19
	Northern Sotho	41
	Other	4
	Polish	4
	Portuguese	3
	Semitic	1
	Sepedi	188
	Sesotho	1422
	Shona	8
	Spanish	2
	Southern Sotho	466
	Swati	64
	Swazi	3
	Tigrigna	1
	Tsonga	92
	Tswana	
	Urdu	1
	Unknown	31
	Venda	74
	Xhosa	375
	Zulu	798
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON 2013/06/26:		6527

NWU Vaal	General (Normal undergraduates)	3659
	Curriculum (Curriculum or modules students)	56
	Honours degrees	449
	Masters degrees	185
	PhD	113
	Post graduate degrees	118
	Professional degrees	1713
	Undergraduate (Extended programmes)	234
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON 2013/06/26:		6527

4.4 THE PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE

The participants in the study are introduced below, followed by a short overview of their views on the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning. The overview will be followed by the participant's systemic oppression discourses. The participants' responses are quoted verbatim and unedited. (See Addendum: Annexure C, H-I).

4.4.1 Participant 1: Sally

Sally has a PhD and at the time of the research she was in her fifth year of teaching at NWU. She completed all the phases of ICNL and taught two modules during 2012 and three modules during 2013. Sally participated in the study until the end.

Sally's perception about the curriculum was that it is set in place to ensure that students meet the requirements to obtain their degrees. She stated that modules are structured to aid teaching and learning and knowledge generation. Sally emphasised that assessment is very important although many people do not plan it thoroughly. She referred to continuous assessments that have to be done during the semester to track students' progress and commented that their progress should not only be tested at the end of the semester. Sally stated that classroom assessment would help lecturers identify the 'gaps' in their teaching that should be addressed.

Sally's perception about teaching and learning was that lecturers should use various teaching and learning strategies and understand that teaching methods, media and students are not the same as years ago. There are different academic requirements in classrooms today than those of 50 years ago.

With regard to the systemic oppression discourses, Sally described her experience of the ICNL processes as "interesting". She noted that the additional work relating to the completion of the courses and further paperwork was not favourable. She commented on the different ways campuses conduct the related training and called for a uniformed approach. Sally noted that her learning gains were that she recognised the importance of planning and communicating these plans with students to encourage them to come to classes prepared. She indicated that the university prepared her adequately for her role as a lecturer and felt empowered when she attended certain workshops and seminars where teaching and teaching aids were illustrated to motivate her to think differently about her teaching.

Sally did not feel oppressed or alienated by ICNL but felt the process was very time-consuming and it annoyed her at times.

Sally would tell her colleagues that ICNL is a good way of learning about all the aspects the university and its structures and would suggest that new colleagues plan ahead as the workload accompanied by the courses are weighty. She suggested that new lecturers should attend as many conferences and seminars as possible. Sally suggested that ADS should make the course less demanding and time-consuming and that all the campuses align in terms of the courses regarding the content and effort needed to ensure consistency.

4.4.2 Participant 2: Concerned

Concerned holds an MA degree. She moved from another higher education institution to work at NWU and has higher education teaching experience. During 2012 she taught five modules and during 2013 she taught four. At first, Concerned was very hesitant to participate, but she participated in the study up to its end. Concerned completed Phase II of ICNL and still needed to complete Phase I and Phase III.

Concerned's impression of the curriculum was that the transfer of knowledge poses a problem. She felt that there is a lack of consistency where some lecturers are proactive by stimulating critical thinking and others adopt a spoonfeeding approach to ensure better pass rates. She stated that "the curriculum is fine but the systems and processes are far from it". On assessment she commented, "I could repeat everything I said about the curriculum and change it to assessment." She noted that assessment depends on the approach adopted, because classroom assessment is useful and efficient if students are forced to think. She argued that it is not effective if students are given an assessment that simply requires regurgitation. Her perception regarding teaching and learning was that students should not be spoonfed or rely on hand-outs, and that they should become more critical and less passive because they are not encouraged to think or to find information. They are encouraged to "swot and spit out" and this needs to change.

In Concerned's response related to the systemic oppression discourses she described her experience of the ICNL processes as "condescending", "degrading" and "very frustrating". She referred specifically to Phase II by saying, "I was hoping for upliftment, guidance and support – something I believed ADS stood for, but to my dismay, I had negative experiences from the start." She stated that the process left her "bitter" and "angry" because she was treated as if she did not know anything and was being bombarded with new tasks. She noted that she felt that there was no consistency between what the ADS staff communicated to her.

She revealed that her learning gains entailed a few things. She indicated that she understood the benefits of such a process but was not appreciative of the "prescribed manner" in which the course is conducted. She referred to the way in which the course coordinator treated her as "inconsiderate" and as though she were "a child that needs punishment". She continued by saying that her appointment had not been "by chance or from a lucky packet" and that she felt that the people who appointed her had a reason for choosing her. She noted that Phase II "transforms lecturers into robots and leaves little space for innovation".

Concerned felt that the university prepared her to a certain extent for being a lecturer by providing her with useful feedback but this was not adequate because she felt that if she dealt with her students the

“way ADS deals with lecturers, the other campuses would be filing numbers instead”. She noted that she had to do many exaggerated and unnecessary tasks and she felt that there are better ways of enhancing lecturers’ skills and that Phase II does not encourage lecturers.

Concerned did not feel empowered by the ICNL courses and the words she used to describe her experiences of Phase II were “demoralising”, “insulted” and “frustrating”. She referred to Phase II as “daunting”, “inconsistent” and much of it as “a waste of my time”. She felt that ADS could help lecturers if the process were more “friendly”, “understanding” and “realistic”. She referred to the process as a “boot camp rather than a support system”. She said she felt oppressed because the course coordinator was an authoritarian figure rather than a supportive one. Concerned felt that there was a lack of consistency in what the course coordinator was doing and the additional tasks and templates she needed to complete.

She emphasised that she would like ADS to know about the frustrations and concerns that were mentioned. She was very worried about her anonymity and decided to tell me so that I could voice her concerns to relevant stakeholders. She ended her statement by saying that “a colleague left the university partially due to ICNL Phase II”.

4.4.3 Participant 3: Albert Einstein

Albert Einstein holds an MSc degree and has 14 years teaching experience. She taught two modules during 2012 and two modules during 2013. She completed ICNL Phases I-II and she was still busy with Phase III. Albert Einstein participated in the study until the end.

Albert Einstein quoted from Wikipedia when asked about her opinion of the curriculum. She referred to the Latin meaning of *currere*, the word from which ‘curriculum’ is derived. She wrote that “curriculum is prescriptive, and is based on a more general syllabus which merely specifies what topics must be understood and to what level to achieve a particular grade or standard. In its broadest sense a curriculum may refer to all courses offered at a school ... A curriculum may refer to a defined and prescribed course of studies, which students must fulfil in order to pass a certain level of education.”

Albert Einstein mentioned the value of continuous assessment and noted that formative assessment is very important in the classroom. She indicated that summative assessment is very important at the end of each study unit and that she uses it in the form of class tests, homework and semester tests. She stated that feedback is vital to students.

Albert Einstein provided a very extensive personal teaching and learning philosophy. Her philosophy referred to students’ adaptation in their first year and the inclusion of SI facilitators to support students. She also mentioned her supportive relationship towards students. She affirmed that lecturers should be well-prepared for classes, that they should communicate the outcomes of lessons clearly during class and that lecturers must be willing to reteach if it is necessary. Students should be actively involved in learning and motivated to come to class prepared. Albert Einstein regarded the development of critical thinking skills, relating theory into practice and being able to evaluate themselves and their peers as extremely important. She felt that students should be taught how to be leaders and taught life skills. Albert Einstein continued by stating that the university should keep up to date with trends and technology in

teaching students. Students in turn should move away from lecture-centred learning to self-learning. She commented that lecturers should encourage students to work independently and to appreciate the value of group work and conflict management. She referred to the continuous evaluation of students and the importance of self-regulation.

Albert Einstein's stance on the systemic oppression discourses: She felt that she had learned a great deal and had changed certain of her teaching strategies. Her learning gains were that she incorporated more formative assessments into lectures and tried to improve active learning. She felt that being at university and her years of experience prepared her well for her role of lecturer. She did not feel empowered by ICNL because she felt that the extra workload was immense. She felt the amount of effort required to complete ICNL Phase II was wasteful. She stated that she felt oppressed due to the unnecessary work.

She would advise colleagues to get the course done as soon as possible and would like ADS to know that Phase II is excessive. She suggested that they should focus on the important issues and praise people when they do something right. She noted that ADS should "not let them feel as though their best is still pathetic". ADS should consider showing them videos of excellent lectures and information on good practices.

4.4.4 Participant 4: Pringle

Pringle holds a BA Hons degree and has had no prior formal teaching experience. In 2011 she was appointed as a Supplemental Instruction facilitator and started lecturing during 2012 where she taught three modules. She taught three modules during 2013 as well. Pringle completed ICNL Phase I and III and was still busy with Phase II. Pringle also participated in the study until the end.

Pringle's view on curriculum was that "it is a predetermined set of various things that a child or young adult will learn. The curriculum ranges from all the learning material to the learning objectives and essentially teaching a child or young adult the basic aspects of the particular level that they are at."

Pringle wrote that assessment in the classroom does not necessarily need to be summative assessments where students have to give back the answers generated from questions. She stated that it does not have to be only formative assessment in the form of qualitative feedback, but that the lecturer should combine these to assess students' understanding of the content to note their learning gains. Without assessment lecturers will not be able to determine if anything was learned or not.

Pringle's teaching and learning perception included a success for all approach. She acknowledges that a variety of teaching and learning styles should be used. She ended by stating that "education is the key to a better society and ultimately to become better people, not only to accumulate knowledge but to improve society at large".

Pringle's experiences of ICNL were described in detail according to the phases. Her experience of Phase I was that it was very informative, as the structures, organisation, vision, mission and processes of the university were explained to them. She specifically pointed out that the explanations regarding research, resources and the NWU Teaching and Learning policy were very informative. She valued the micro-

lesson which incorporated elements of all they did during the course in Phase I. Her experiences of Phase II were described as both positive and negative. She listed the positive aspects as the workshops presented which aided her in the completion of the ICNL Phase II requirements. The aspects that she perceived as being negative were that the phase was very time-consuming, and had nothing to do with teaching, learning or assessment. Phase III helped her to understand how lecturers teach and do research, based on their own convictions without having knowledge about it.

She indicated that one of her learning gains from ICNL was that she understood how not to incorporate her own convictions into teaching, learning, assessment and conducting research. She noted that she still had to learn a great deal in developing students that are well-balanced.

Pringle felt that she was inexperienced and unprepared for her teaching and lecturing role when she was appointed. She felt there were some facets that were lacking. She did receive some assistance from the university, but it is the supportive role her academic mentor played in her development that helped prepare her for her task as lecturer and researcher. Later, after the completion of ICNL, she felt empowered.

In discussing her perception of the systemic oppression discourses, Pringle noted that she did not feel alienated or oppressed during Phase I and III, but her experience of Phase II was not the same as the other two phases. She gave a detailed description of her concerns. She felt annoyed by the templates the ADS staff drafted and forced lecturers to use. She indicated her irritation at the inconsistent way in which some lecturers may use their own templates while others are forced to use the ADS templates. She saw the templates as “time-consuming” and “not practical”. She explained a disturbing situation regarding deadlines. The previous year she asked for extension for the submission of a task (she was busy with her own post-graduate studies). The director accommodated the request without any objections, but the course coordinator sent her an “unpleasant email whereby a new deadline of within the next three days [was] forced upon me”. She stated, “I thought long about this process and I will not tolerate this treatment that I received in 2012 therefore I will not attend any more workshops or ask for their assistance in this regard, nor will I attend their certificate ceremony.”

She indicated that there were inconsistencies in the communication regarding compulsory and non-compulsory workshops which were presented by ADS. In explaining more issues of inconsistencies she experienced, she commented, “I have never in my whole life experienced a process that changed so much, and I spoke to many of my colleagues in my faculty and even with people from the other faculty.” She noted that “one lecturer who enrolled for the ITEA process has honestly said that it was the biggest mistake that she had ever made due to all the trouble and problems that she encountered with the coordinator of ITEA / ICNL 2 and the process”. As a final remark on this matter she said, “[O]ne of my colleagues in my school has resigned and she made it known that ICNL II was one of the biggest reasons for her resignation, and I believe that this is not the only lecturer that the university will lose on the Vaal Triangle campus as a result of it, and if I don’t complete or is regarded competent at the end of 2013 I might also consider to leave this institution.”

Pringle commented on her experience of video recording, and noted that she was “extremely demotivated with this process”. She felt scared because “at the onset of arranging for this video recording to take place it was communicated to me that if your class is not up to standard it will be reported to your school director. In this regard I felt that this process is punitive as it was only the 4th month of my teaching experience and I knew that I was not an expert within teaching and learning in higher education.” The video recording had not been captured effectively by the video assistant on the particular day. Pringle voiced her concern to ADS and the outcome of this exercise was that she completed the video session (due to a fault on their part). Then, according to ADS’s criteria where one would be classified as either “non-competent”, “competent” or “more than competent”, she did not even make the criteria. She consulted the ICNL Phase II course coordinator and asked what the outcome was and whether she (Pringle) had to repeat this process, since the report she received only indicated that she had completed it. The answer she received was that she had done the video recording session. Pringle subsequently commented, “I personally feel that if it was not for my academic mentor attending my class that day ADS would have made me repeat it based on the fact that I did not conduct my class based on their way of presenting class.”

Pringle complained about the alarming number of emails she received from ADS. She stated that she received more than 100 emails from the course coordinator during 2012. She stated that the emails confused her because of their length and she even got so “furious” that she went to the coordinator personally. The coordinator confused her even more, with the result that she discontinued Phase II and only resumed it in 2013.

Pringle indicated that she will tell her friends that ICNL Phases I and III are informative and beneficial and that they should get Phase II done as soon as possible. She would like ADS to know that ICNL Phase I is a meaningful process for every staff member employed at NWU. She also wonders why ICNL Phase I and ICNL Phase III have feedback opportunities to evaluate these phases, and why ICNL Phase II does not have an evaluation process. She stated that many lecturers are discouraged about the way that ICNL Phase II is managed. ADS should keep in mind that their requirements within the first six months after employment are overwhelming for new lecturers trying to find their feet in a new environment. She felt that ICNL phase III is important and should be continued.

4.4.5 Participant 5: Lira

Lira has an MSc degree. She taught for 15 years at another higher education institution and eight years at school level. During 2012 she taught three modules and during 2013 she also taught three modules. Lira completed all three phases of ICNL. She only participated in the first part of the study and then withdrew from the study due to her responsibilities towards her postgraduate studies.

Lira’s view of the curriculum was that it was “well-planned, well thought through combinations of topics that need to be studied and understood to enable a candidate to reach the outcomes for the specific module”. Lira continued by saying that change is constant, therefore we need to review our curriculum regularly to ensure that our students meet the requirements of industry. She felt that lecturers were not doing that in all their modules.

She understood that classroom assessment is very important. She felt that the more frequently students are assessed the quicker intervention can occur if sufficient learning did not take place. Challenges exist with the big classes that must be taught, but with creativity these challenges can be overcome.

Her perception regarding teaching and learning was that lecturers need to keep up with the technology used by their students and incorporate it in their teaching. Lecturers should also keep from learning on behalf of the student. The students still need to learn on their own and become independent learners.

Lira's experience of ICNL was "not very positive". She explained that ADS does not differentiate between first-time lecturers and experienced lecturers, with the result that the specific needs of all new lecturers cannot be addressed. She continued that "if it is really your first time teaching you would need to learn how to plan, how to prepare, how to handle discipline in your class, how to set a test, how to mark etc." She said that she felt enough pressure with the preparation for her classes. She had to do everything from scratch. It was very time-consuming, and she had to attend workshops on topics she already had knowledge of and she had to develop files according to ADS's criteria and develop other files according to the criteria of her subject group. After the evaluation of her contact session, she was informed that no learning took place among the students during the class evaluation. She had to go through the process again. She did not agree with remarks that were made. She insisted that she "is not a clone of her mentor, if she does things differently she is not necessarily wrong".

Her biggest learning gains were from the philosophy part (ICNL phase III) where she used it in her studies. She did not feel that ICNL prepared her for teaching. This was rather achieved through the experiences of the 26 years she had been teaching.

She did not feel empowered by ICNL. She felt "harassed". She stated that she understood the need for such a course. She felt that the content and timing must be better chosen – for example, examination times must be used for workshops. Lira felt that the process was oppressive due to the fact that "my mentor was part of the process left me an outsider that can't do anything right. After I complained to the dean things changed and I felt part of the team."

Lira would tell her colleagues about ICNL and emphasise that "you have to do it. Get it over and done with as quickly as possible." Lira would like ADS to know that they should differentiate between the experiences of lecturers and that they should choose times when lecturers do not have classes for workshops.

4.4.6 Participant 6: Luther

Luther has an MA degree and many years of teaching experience from various other higher education institutions. During 2012 Luther taught eight modules and during 2013 he taught five modules. Luther completed ICNL Phase I successfully and was still busy with Phase II at the time of the research. He had not completed ICNL phase III yet. Luther only participated in the first part of the study, and he did not respond to my request to return the data for the first video. Luther's mentor completed the evaluation of the first video. Due to the timeframes I had to adhere to I had to withdraw Luther from the study due to his lack of participation.

Luther's perception regarding the curriculum was that it was "very much outdated and difficult to change or adapt. Older lecturers tend to be complacent with the content and resist changes. Theories change and it is not reflected in the content".

Luther's perception on assessment was that it is very difficult, seeing that assessments have to be done during lectures and very little time is allowed for lectures. Luther stated that ADS demanded more and continuous assessments. Luther's perception regarding teaching and learning was that students do not prepare for lectures and that makes it very difficult to apply the facilitator role.

Luther described his experience of ICNL as "horrific". He did not elaborate on this. His learning gains were better with the workshops that are not compulsory for the above-mentioned phases. When asked about how he would feel about it if the university prepared him adequately for his role as lecturer. Luther felt that the university tried their best and their intentions were good. He stated that "we just do not have the time to spend all those hours on all those sessions while completing core business". Being harassed by ADS to do everything and constant changes in the content and requirements of these phases make it impossible to keep up. Inadequate and inaccurate communication from ADS makes it even worse and these communications are being ignored by lecturers.

Luther felt empowered in a way. He stated that "the workshops do so. Unfortunately it is only effective once you started using the actual tools e.g.: eFundi, quizzes, Turnitin, etc. If you worked with it, it is easier to grasp and take in." He further states that "if one get bombarded with the massive content of these sessions to complete the phase you just don't care. Rather do the basics in ICNL and do not make these tools compulsory [compulsory]. We do them at our own leisure [leisure] anyway as they are helpful."

Luther stated that he felt oppressed and alienated. He commented that lecturers are not able to absorb all the details of all the tools provided (during the workshops) and are harassed to attend in each phase. Time slots do not suit all lecturers, especially if they teach many modules. He noted that it also does not help to victimise certain personnel. Luther claimed that there seemed to be an intentional mission to discredit or negatively influence certain lecturers while others were blatantly favoured. He felt that if lecturers attended a number of workshops earmarked as compulsory and then find out that they were not compulsory "and you did not complete others that are, you get disponded [despondent] and want to abstain". All of this was also done via very negative feedback and inconsistencies in facts.

In referring to ICNL, Luther would tell his colleagues that "you can no longer say: Do it and finish it as quickly as possible seeing that stays a nightmare no matter which way you turn. Rather say: try and avoid it as much as possible because it keeps on changing and you never get to finish anyway." He commented that as a result of certain personnel in ADS, the whole department was being branded as bad whilst they have some wonderful personnel which do fantastic work. He noted that "unfortunately the former harasses you so much that the latter seems to fade into the abyss [abyss]".

Luther would like ADS to know that they should stop making it as difficult as possible for the lecturers to "get the necessary skills they want. Do not force it on them." He would like the course to be much shorter

and maybe a one day event. He felt that they (lecturers) spend “years trying to complete it”. He felt that highly experienced lecturers are being harassed to complete workshops of skills that have been mastered years ago. Furthermore, these lecturers are then victimised and told that they do not know their course content, their lectures are bad and that they do not know how to lecture.

4.4.7 Overview of participants’ perceptions on the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning

From the information supplied by Sally, it seemed that Sally understood the curriculum-as-a-plan. Sally seemed unsure whether she had a personal opinion about the curriculum and teaching and learning. It is not uncommon for new lecturers who do not have a teaching qualification or much teaching experience to have this view of the curriculum. She understood the value of continuous assessment and knew that assessment should not be used as an add-on. Sally noted that assessment helps lecturers identify ‘gaps’ that need to be addressed in the classroom, which echoes Stenhouse’s approach to curriculum. She wrote about immediate feedback which is in line with AFL and AAL. She was aware that various teaching and learning methods and media are needed to address the needs in the classrooms. It seems that Sally has not yet established her personal approaches to the curriculum and assessment.

From Concerned’s responses to curriculum, it is clear that she perceived the curriculum-as-a-plan, as proved by her reference to pass rates and the fact that she does not see the systems and processes as part of the curriculum. Concerned made the link between curriculum and assessment, stating that one’s perception about the one will be the same as the other. She noted something that is very important: the development of critical thinking skills and the lecturer not being the source of knowledge.

Albert Einstein did not know how to explain what a curriculum is, and used an extract from Wikipedia to guide her answer. The answer provided by Wikipedia referred to a curriculum as “prescriptive” in line with the work of Ralph Taylor, referring to the curriculum-as-a-plan. I am not sure whether this is Albert Einstein’s perception about curriculum and whether she knew that she could have her own perception regarding the curriculum. It appears as if Albert Einstein was aware of the components of AFL but that she was more inclined towards summative assessments, although she did refer to continuous formative assessments and feedback which were in line with the practical interest. Evidence of Albert Einstein’s years of teaching experience emerged in her teaching and learning philosophy. Various concepts of AFL strategies were evident from her philosophy.

Pringle’s perception of the curriculum appeared to be in line with the curriculum-as-a-plan. Pringle described a linear curriculum process. Her view of assessment is closely related to AFL as she gave indications of various facets of AFL in the description of this process. In commenting on her perception of teaching and learning, she referred to various teaching and learning strategies that should be used. What was very important is that she highlighted the concept of social responsibility, which was in line with the emancipatory interest. Pringle’s views were inconsistent as her perception intensified as she wrote. I think this is due to her inexperience and the fact that she did not know how she perceived the curriculum.

It was not easy from Lira's perception of the curriculum to pinpoint her stance. She noted that it must be a well-planned, well thought through combination of topics that needs to be studied and understood to enable a candidate to reach the outcomes for the specific module. I suspect that, due to Lira's experience, she understands the curriculum as a product or process. If one considers Lira's understanding of assessment as the "more frequent[ly] students are assessed the quicker intervention can occur if sufficient learning did not take place". The references suggest that she understands the curriculum as a product or process and is aware of AFL strategies. This understanding might have been enhanced by her extensive experience. She noted the importance of classroom technology, meaning that she was prepared to do more than required for student involvement and to enhance student-centredness.

Luther's perception regarding the curriculum was that it was "very much outdated and difficult to change or adapt". He stated that "older lecturers tend to be complacent with the content and resist changes ... change is not reflected in the content". Luther's saw the curriculum as a linear, unchangeable plan that needed rules, permissions and prescriptions to change. It seems that Luther was not aware that he could change the curriculum or take responsibility for it.

Luther's perception of assessment was that it was "very difficult seeing as very little time is allowed for lectures and assessments have to be done during lectures" and "ADS demands more and continuous assessments". It seems that Luther was unsure about how he perceived assessment; he appeared as if he was not using formative assessment yet. Neither did he seem to be encouraged by the advantages it holds. I assumed that Luther's stance would be in line with traditional assessments. Luther's perception regarding teaching and learning was that there is "too little time in lectures. Students do not prepare for lectures and that makes it very difficult to apply the facilitator role." Luther did not display any practical interest in why students are not coming to class prepared. He also did not seem to take any responsibility for encouraging the effective use of classroom assessment and classroom time planning.

4.4.8 A discussion on participants' perceptions regarding the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning

The participants in this study ranged between lecturers with no teaching experience to lecturers with many years of teaching experience. Some of them had completed the ICNL phases and some of them had not yet completed them. It appeared as if none of these lecturers were aware of the curriculum-as-a-process or even the curriculum-as-a-praxis. Most of them regarded the curriculum as a book or study guide they kept on their desks – something that needs to be reproduced. They understood the curriculum as a linear process in whose development they were not involved. They were not aware that they could have an opinion, perspective or stance regarding the curriculum.

All of the lecturers who participated had a relatively good idea about the value and importance of assessment. Some of the lecturers, specifically those with more teaching experience, were more inclined towards AFL strategies that they had discovered during years of practice. Some of the lecturers had become aware of the benefits of AFL through their participation in ADS workshops. As in the case of the curriculum, many of the lecturers were unaware that they could have a perception, stance or opinion about assessment.

The majority of the lecturers who participated in the study did not link the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning with each other. This appears to be very problematic as it is not clear whether they perceived these as separate entities. It is cause for concern that only one lecturer knew that one's perception regarding curriculum will influence how one perceives assessment. This indicated major gaps in the knowledge of our frontline lecturing staff and must be addressed by the ICNL process.

Most of the views of the participants were in line with a product approach. Some of the participants appeared to understand the value of the strategies of AFL. The problem regarding this approach is that one cannot see the curriculum as a product but use AFL, as it approaches are not conceptually or methodologically compatible with each other. A paradigm shift towards a balanced approach is thus needed. The participants did not understand what the curriculum entails, its underpinnings and the fact that they should have a view, perception or understanding of it. Another contributing factor could be NWU's inconsistent communication through policies not stating the explicit university approaches regarding the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning.

Based on the participants' experiences it seemed that the university via the ICNL processes does not give clear guidelines and directions to new lecturers regarding their stance on curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning. It is evident that this could contribute to new lecturers being confused and unsure how to approach these issues. New lecturers will not be able to formulate their own opinions and perceptions regarding curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning if they do not understand how NWU perceives the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning. The lecturers who participated in this study were ill-informed about the fundamental nature of their daily teaching, learning and assessment practices and remained within the 'culture of silence'. This state of affairs caused serious discrepancies that need to be addressed urgently.

4.4.9 Overview of the participants' perceptions on the systemic oppression discourses

It seems that Sally did not feel oppressed by the system – she only highlighted her unhappiness about the increased “paperwork” and the additional time ICNL consumed. She wondered why all the campuses were not aligned in terms of the ICNL courses regarding the content and effort needed to complete them.

Concerned felt oppressed by ICNL Phase II. She used various strong words such as “degrading”, “bitter”, “angry”, “bombarded”, “punishment”, “prescribed”, “demoralised”, “insulting”, “frustrating” and “daunting”. All these words reflect the emotions experienced by a person who is feeling powerless and alienated. Her main concerns were that she felt exploited when she was naïve and new, that she experienced the lack of consistency, and that she felt that the treatment she received from a ‘support unit’ was prescriptive, authoritative, degrading and non-developmental.

Albert Einstein stated that she felt oppressed due to the additional unnecessary load of work. She commented, “Praise people when they do something right, don't let them feel as though their best is still quite pathetic.”

Pringle gave a very detailed description of her experiences. She indicated that her experiences of Phases I and III were positive. She implied that she had experienced Phase II as oppressive. Pringle described the templates she was forced to use as “inconsistent”, “time-consuming” and “not practical”. She indicated that she was “so upset with how [certain things were] managed”. As an example she related her experience regarding deadlines and the “unpleasant email” in which a “new deadline were forced upon me”.. She stated, “I will not tolerate this treatment that I received” and “I will not attend any more workshops or ask for their assistance.” In commenting on the workshop communication inconsistencies she said, “I have never in my whole life experienced a process that changed so much.”

Pringle noted that a certain lecturer who had enrolled for another ADS process said that it was the “biggest mistake that she has ever made due to all the trouble and problems that she encountered with the coordinator of ITEA/ICNL 2 and the process”. She stated that “one of my colleagues resigned and ICNL 2 was one of the biggest reasons for her resignation”. Pringle remarked that if she does not complete or is not regarded as competent at the end of 2013 she might also consider leaving this institution.

Commenting on her video-recording experience, Pringle noted that she was “extremely demotivated with this process”. She felt scared as “it was communicated to me that if your class is not up to standard it will be reported to your school director.” She felt the process is punitive as it was only the fourth month of her lecturing and she knew that she was new and inexperienced. She experienced a problem (not her fault) with the video recording and felt demotivated as she was not judged according to set criteria. She believed that if her mentor had not been present during the episode, ADS would have made her re-do everything as “I did not conduct my class based on their way of presenting class”. Pringle complained about the alarming number of emails she received from ADS. She claimed that she had received more than 100 emails from the course coordinator during 2012. She stated that the emails had “confused” her and made her so “furious” that she had postponed Phase II until 2013.

Lira’s experience of ICNL was “not very positive”. She felt “harassed”. She explained that ADS did not differentiate between first-time lecturers and experienced lecturers. She said that she felt pressured enough with the preparation for her classes. She felt that the process was very time-consuming. She had a bad experience when her class was evaluated and she was told that no learning had taken place among the students and that she had to repeat the process. She did not agree with some of the remarks that were made. Lira felt that the process was oppressive due to the fact that her mentor was part of the process that made her feel like an outsider that can’t do anything right.

Luther described his experience of ICNL as “horrific”. He said that he was being “harassed by ADS to do everything and constant changes in the content and requirements of these phases make it impossible to keep up. Inadequate and inaccurate communication from ADS makes it even worse and is thus being ignored by lecturers.” Luther used language such as the following: “If one gets bombarded with the massive content of these sessions to complete the phase you just don’t care.” Luther felt that “victimising certain personnel does not help”. Luther claimed that there seemed to be an intentional mission to discredit or negatively influence certain lecturers while others were blatantly favoured. He experienced this particularly in the context of workshops earmarked as compulsory. Luther stated that when he found

out that some of the workshops he attended were in fact not compulsory, and that some of the workshops he did not attend were compulsory, he “got disponded [despondent] and wanted to abstain”. All of this was done via very negative feedback and inconsistencies in facts.

Referring to ICNL, Luther would tell his colleagues that “you can no longer say: do it and finish it as quickly as possible seeing that stays a nightmare no matter which way you turn. Rather say: try and avoid it as much as possible because it keeps on changing and you never get to finish anyway.” He stated that as a result of certain personnel in ADS, the whole department was being branded as bad. He noted that “unfortunately the former harasses you so much that the latter seems to fade into the abbys [abyss]”.

Luther indicated that he would like ADS to know that they should stop making it as difficult as possible for the lecturers to “get the necessary skills they want. Do not force it on them.” He would like the course to be much shorter and felt that lecturers spend “years trying to complete it”. He felt that experienced lecturers were being harassed to complete workshops on skills that had been mastered years ago. Furthermore, these lecturers were then victimised and told that they did not know their course content, that their lectures are bad and that they do not know how to lecture.

4.4.10 Discussion on the participants’ perceptions on the systemic oppression discourses

From the responses I received from the participating lecturers in this study, it is evident that they felt that ICNL Phase II was a systemic process which was oppressing them. ADS (Academic Development and Support), a supporting unit established for helping, supporting and developing lecturers, is perceived by most of the lecturers in this study as being exactly the opposite of what its name suggests.

Freire (2000:49) states that once the oppressor understands itself as an oppressive power, it should enter into a radical posture, into true solidarity with the oppressed, by fighting by their side to transform the objectives of reality which has made them “objects”. The oppressor must start to see the oppressed as persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voices and cheated.

The critical oppression discourses from ICNL Phase II show that it is seen in terms of the vast and unnecessary workloads, too much time consumption on task, the need for alignment in terms of Phase II across all campuses, the lack of respect showed, belittlement of lecturers, dominating behaviour and the lack of people skills from certain ADS staff, inconsistencies in communication regarding which workshops are compulsory or not, non-transparent completion criteria of the phase, lack of support and general inconsistencies.

Freire (2000:81) states that education is the practice of freedom. Lecturers experience a great deal of pressure in their classrooms as they seek to free the minds of their students – they should not be oppressed by the same system from which they are trying to emancipate their students.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the deviation from the initial planning of the study, to voice issues of concern of my participants. The flexible nature of PAR and the infusion with critical theory which gives voice to participants in situations of powerlessness and oppression allowed these systemic oppression discourses to be included.

The context of the campus, its history, the student profile, as well as the participant profile and their perceptions were included. The rationale for the inclusion of the chapter was also provided. The next chapter will commence with the data analysis and interpretation of the data gathered.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CHAPTER LAYOUT



“To be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedoms of others.”
~ Nelson Mandela (2011:107)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the data presentation and analysis. I will critically analyse the self-reflections completed by me, the participants and their academic mentors by employing critical discourse analysis. Punch (2009:198) describes critical discourse analysis as an aim to show non-obvious ways in which language is immersed in social relations of power, dominion and in ideology. Freire (2000:87) states that “[a]s we attempt to analyse dialogue as a human phenomenon, we discover something which is the essence of dialogue itself: *the word*”. Freire (*ibid*:88-89) states that

[i]f it is in speaking their word that people, by naming the world, transform it, dialogue imposes itself as the way by which they achieve significance as human beings. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity. And since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflections and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person’s “depositing” of ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be “consumed” by the discussants.

The review of the scholarly literature (*cf.* 2.2.3) has shown that both Habermas (*In Grundy*, 1987:106) and Freire (2000:87-88) connect speech with freedom. Through speech, human beings communicate through words. Freire (*ibid*:87) indicates that “to speak a true word is to transform the world”. He continues by

saying that an unauthentic word is unable to transform reality and when a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers as well.

Michael Foucault's approach (*In Fairclough 1992:37*) to discourse analysis is widely referred to as a model for social science researchers. Foucault examines how historically and culturally located systems of power/knowledge construct subjects and their world (Punch, 2009:198). Although the works of Foucault (*In Fairclough 1992:55-56*) refer to the discursive nature of power, the political nature of discourses and the discursive nature of social change, he contradicts himself (*ibid*) by referring to 'rules' of practices. Foucault (*ibid*) writes from a one-sided oppressor perspective when referring to the power struggles. He neglects the practice of change and struggles and affirms that 'resistance' has no power to transform structures.

Fairclough (1992:73-100) sketches a three-dimensional framework for the analysis of discourse. The dimension is discourse-as-text (the linguistic features and organisation of concrete instances in discourse), discourse-as-discursive-practice (discourse as something which is produced, circulated, distributed and consumed in society) and discourse-as-social-practice (the ideological effects and hemogenic processes in which discourse is seen to operate) (Blommaert, 2005:28-29).

Wodak and Meyer (2001:10-11) state that in critical discourse analysis (CDA), language is not powerful on its own. It gains power by the use powerful people make of it. CDA mostly chooses the perspective of those who suffer and critically analyse the language use of those in power, who are responsible for the existence of inequalities and those who should have the means to improve conditions.

CDA emphasises the need for interdisciplinary work in order to gain a proper understanding of how language functions in constituting and transmitting knowledge in social institutions or in exercising power (*ibid*). Wodak *et al.* (2001:11) comment that, in a CDA perspective, it is very rare for text to be the work of only one person:

In text discursive differences are negotiated, they are governed by differences in power which are themselves in part encoded in and determined by discourses and by genre. Therefore texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance. A defining feature of CDA is its concern with power as a central condition in social life, and its efforts to develop a theory of language which incorporates this as a major premise. Not only the notion of struggles for power and control, but also the intertextuality and recontextualization of competing discourses are closely attended to.

Wodak *et al.* (2001:11) further discuss power, stating that power does not originate from language but language is used to challenge, undermine and change the distribution of power. Language provides a means for differences in power and social hierarchical structures.

In this study, considering the work of Fairclough (1992), I first looked at the narrative discourses, then analysed the trends in the discourses and returned to the original data sets in an attempt to discover whether there were any hidden discourses in relation to my theory. Discourse analysis does not only use words but uses their meanings, constructs and perceptions and develops an understanding of ongoing courses of interaction (Punch, 2009:198). Words were also dismantled to show connections to power and

ideology. The critical discourse analysis was done with the review of the scholarly literature and the systemic oppression discourses in mind.

In part one, in the data collection instrument I used for the first video sessions, I included a section on the participants' perceptions regarding the balanced assessment system. I did not include this section in the second data collection instrument as most of their understanding regarding the balanced assessment system did not change (*cf.* 2.3.1; 2.3.3). I did not analyse the perceptions of the participants in part one, as the participants were given a booklet with literature on the terms discussed. I used their perceptions at a later stage to establish whether their perceptions and practices were aligned. The rest of part one (for both video reflections) included the classroom assessment strategies of sharing learning targets and goals with students, verbal questioning, feedback, self- and peer assessment and the formative use of summative assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3) for participants to reflect upon regarding their own classroom assessment practices (see Table 2.2).

The second part of the data collection instrument I used in both video sessions included reflections on the students' role in classroom assessment (*cf.* 2.3.4).

The third part of the data collection instrument I used in both video sessions included reflections on the lecturers' role in classroom assessment (*cf.* 2.3.5).

The fourth part of the data collection instrument I used in the second video session included self-reflections of participants and their academic mentors on the study to gain an understanding of whether their reflections and participation in the study had changed their classroom assessment practices.

5.2 REFLECTION AND ACTION: THE NARRATIVE DISCOURSES

The analysis of the narrative discourses provided the data to address the research question pertaining to the status of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context. The reflections were done case by case to gain deeper insight into the practices of the participants and their context. In the sections that follow, my reflections and those of the participants and their academic mentors are written in a combined way and brackets are used to identify the source or author of each reflection. The reflections are indicated as {JSR} for the researcher, {P} for the participant and {AM} for their academic mentor.

5.2.1 Participant 1: Sally

Sally was the first participant who agreed to be part of the study. Her attitude towards the study was very positive at all times and she returned the data very promptly each time. Her reflections were very thorough which turned out to be very valuable to me. Sally understood and supported the purpose of the study and expressed her hopes to gain and develop a better understanding of herself and her teaching practices. Sally had also recently completed her PhD and always motivated me to keep up the good work regarding the study and encouraged me to complete my studies. Sally's academic mentor also participated in the study although not as enthusiastically as Sally did (*cf.* 4.4.1).

5.2.1.1 Sally's video 1

In Sally's first video we (Sally, her academic mentor and I) reflected on whether and how she used formative and summative assessment. She stated that she used formative assessment in her module where the students had to write academic essays, wrote class tests and completed practical work for her module. Sally used summative assessment in her module where the students had to submit portfolios at the end of the semester. These portfolios contained their answers to all the questions and exercises posed in the study guide {P}. The students also wrote an examination paper of eight hours in which they were tested on their theoretical knowledge of the module as well as their practical skills that were developed in the module. She was more inclined towards both forms of assessment because the students had to show progress from the first assignment to the next during the semester, and then demonstrate that they understood the module as a whole at the end of the semester {P}.

Sally understood the balanced assessment as that there should be different forms of assessment used in the classroom, with different assessment criteria and aims. She stated that not all assessments should count towards marks; some assessments could be implemented to engage the students in the lesson and elicit responses from them. That is why the methods and aims should vary and be balanced in terms of needs and outcomes {P}.

Sally understood assessment of learning (AOL) as being "when you assess the students on their work and understanding of the content of the module by assessing assignments, practical work, i.e. if and to what extent the students understand the work" {P}.

Sally described assessment for learning (AFL) as follows: "[It is] when you assess if, how and to what extent knowledge has been transferred to and gained by the students. In other words, you identify aspects of the work that need more attention or explication, whether all the students are on the same level of understanding, and how you can assist should any problem areas be identified" {P}.

The rest of part one will be divided into sub-sections to ease the interpretation of the data and to align with the data collection instruments. The sub-sections are: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment. These aspects are discussed below.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

Sally clearly stated the learning outcomes at the start of the lecture so that the students knew what was expected of them. The learning targets could have been more clearly linked to the topics being discussed in order to direct the students' attention more effectively {P}. The outcomes were not conveyed to the students prior to the class, which might be why they did not see the need to prepare for the class by doing the necessary reading from the study guide {P}. The outcomes were set for this specific lesson and were not difficult to achieve. The outcomes were quite simple and few {P}. Sally could have referred to the outcomes more frequently during the lesson {P}.

(b) Verbal questioning

Sally used questioning well enough but she has a tendency to answer her own questions {JSR}. Clarification can be done after some waiting time has been given to allow students the opportunity to respond and think {JSR}. Much more probing and redirecting could have been used {JSR}. Verbal questioning should be seen as dialogue, rather than inquiry {P}. Students could have had difficulty knowing if their answers were correct; Sally only answered them with a 'yes'. After the 'yes' she moved on to her answer and did not build on the students' answers {JSR}. Good understandable examples were used {JSR}. Sally became concerned with keeping on track and because the unprepared students did not answer the questions {JSR}. Sally did not allow thinking time and immediately moved on to clarify the questions she had asked or asked another question directly after the first one {JSR}. She could have considered asking one question and given waiting time for learners to grasp what she had asked and then allowed them to think about it. Cognitive complexity of questions and variety used were good {JSR}. Sometimes the lecturer spoke too fast {AM}. More waiting time should have been allowed in the case of more complex questions. She should not have given them the answers if they did not respond; she should have given the students an example and got them to give more examples.

(c) Feedback

Sally was sensitive towards students {JSR}. She tried to give students detailed feedback according to the different outcomes {JSR}. She noted that "when students answer something incorrectly or incompletely, I try to make a point of not 'shooting down' their answer, but rather use it to direct them towards the right answer". Sally placed the theory into context and referred back and forth {JSR}. She gave immediate feedback that closed gaps on the spot, quickly enough to be useful to learners {JSR}. The lecturer had an informal way of teaching which took the form of a conversation at a level students understood. However, more student interactions and discussions would have been better {JSR}. Sally asked a few questions where diagnostic assessment was noted, possibly because she wanted to establish a starting 'hook' and determine student knowledge {JSR}. It was not clear whether the lecturer knew at the end of the class presentation if all students learned, due to their unpreparedness. It is uncertain whether the students used the feedback and acted upon it to improve their learning {JSR}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

Sally did not use or raise awareness about the benefits of self- and peer assessment during the class, but she stated, "I try to motivate the students to work together to solve problems and come up with creative solutions" {P}. Sally stated that she did not provide guidance on materials and learners understand the significance of conducting self- and peer assessments but she "[does] see the value of this" {P}. Sally also stated that interpersonal relationships can be improved if the assessment is administered correctly – students might perceive peer assessments as criticism, especially if there are personal issues at play between the student and the peer assessor {P}. The students' understanding of how they were learning was not noted {JSR}. It would have been good to see a recap after a chunk of work had been done for lecturer and students' purposes to determine progress at that stage {JSR}. Learners would have been able to note their learning gains and it could have prompted them to keep up or continue or understand the purpose of learning {JSR}. By realising there are various ways of tackling tasks, students could have developed skills that had helped them become critical thinkers {JSR}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

Sally used summative assessment at the end of the lesson {JSR}. Students were not engaged in the reflective review of summative results to revise more effectively {JSR}. Students were not encouraged to set own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process {JSR}.

Part two was concerned with the students' role in assessment. In this part, students were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Sally stated, "... that is why it is so annoying when students don't prepare for class – they are letting themselves down, and with each class they don't prepare for, they place themselves another step behind the rest of the class" {P}. Sally presented the class in an informal way in which she engaged with the students by means of a discussion {JSR}. Students were encouraged to participate, although they did not always use this opportunity {JSR}. A stronger focus towards student-centredness could be considered to gain better student participation and involvement {JSR}. The students were not involved with decisions regarding classroom assessment, for example record keeping {JSR}. No activities or intention were directed towards students to improve self-reflection on their learning which could have helped them control their learning, improve their higher-order thinking skills and become lifelong learners {JSR}. Sally stated, "I try to put a lot of emphasis on the fact that they were learning skills and that the development of these skills does not end in the classroom – they have to continue developing it by themselves" {P}. The lecturer did not use a lot of classroom assessment strategies that enhance student-participation {JSR}.

Part three pertained to the lecturers' role in assessment. Sally commented, "I think I am quite competent with regard to assessment, but I think my methods could be more diverse and creative" {P}. When diverse teaching and learning strategies, assessment methods and learning styles were considered, Sally stated that her assessment methods might not be very diverse, but she remarked, "I do incorporate different strategies in teaching that takes into account different learning styles. However, one can always improve ..." {P}.

Sally did not think NWU should enforce teaching and assessment licensing requirements for new lecturers; she thought that new lecturers would benefit more from workshops and guidelines than by being issued "licensing" requirements {P}. She stated that some new lecturers might be insecure at first, but they need time to develop their own teaching style and get the right guidance that will not break their spirit and demotivate them {P}.

Sally self-reflected by thinking about the responses (type, number) that she received from the students during the class, the extent to which they interacted with her and the content, and whether they showed and understood the concepts discussed in the lesson {P}. She thought about what she could have done differently to get different or more responses, more interaction, more engagement and a better indication of their understanding {P}.

She motivated herself by considering whether it was a successful class or not: "If the students seemed to enjoy the lesson and understand the content, and if this is reflected in their assignments, then I tell myself that I did a good job" {P}.

Sally stated that in order to make the content of her lessons applicable to the real world outside of the classroom, she tried to incorporate subject knowledge from other fields where relevant {P}. She noted, “If I know that there is some issue related to my work and the content of the lesson that a colleague deals with regularly or is an expert on, I would consult this colleague” {P}. Sally believed that all her students could pass and felt that she was realistic about the fact that some people will be more successful in terms of the specific skill-set that was taught and developed in the module {P}. Sally also stated that the actual marking of the students’ assignments takes up much more than a third of her time {P}.

5.2.1.2 Sally video 2

In Sally’s second video session, Sally, her academic mentor and I reflected on the following sub-sections: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment. The content of Sally’s second video was exactly the same class content which was captured in the first video; in other words, it was the same class with different students one year later. This facilitated the process of establishing the progress she had made.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

Sally stated the outcomes clearly at the beginning of the lecture. The students knew what to expect and what was expected of them after completing this part of the module {P}.

Although the learning targets were better than in the first video session, they could have been linked even more clearly to the topics being discussed in order to better direct the students’ attention {P}. Sally’s students understood their responsibility to prepare for the class because new content would have been discussed – if they prepared, they would have known what to ask to better understand the work/concepts discussed {P}.

Sally’s lesson did not contain any activities, but the fact that the students knew they were going to deal with “unknown territory” created a situation where the students actively participated in the class and asked and answered questions because they wanted to learn and understand the new concepts they were being introduced to {P}.

The students were asked questions throughout to see whether the outcomes were achieved, and they had to draw a mind map at the end of the class to demonstrate their understanding {JSR}. The outcomes were not that difficult to achieve, but the students understood and grasped the concepts because most of them had prepared and had done the necessary reading before coming to class {JSR}. Although better than in the first video session, Sally could have referred to the outcomes even more to ensure that students understood where she was heading with the presentation of the content {P}.

(b) Verbal questioning

Sally’s questioning techniques such as probing, prompting, seeking clarification and redirecting improved from the first video session {JSR}. She created a classroom discussion on the content with very good student interaction {JSR}. Sally’s response was that she “believed that students respond better when the questions are in the form of a discussion rather than an inquiry, and that’s why I try to follow a

conversational approach when talking to the students” {P}. Sally applied waiting time very effectively to allow students to grasp the questions and to think {JSR}. Sally noted, “I think I improved on this a lot from the first video – I allowed more time for students to respond and come up with the answers themselves” {P}. Sally’s questions opened up discussions among the students and she used various higher-order questions to do this {JSR}. Sally’s questions were clearly framed questions; she applied waiting time and only repeated the questions; she did not answer any of the questions herself. She got all the answers from the students {JSR}.

(c) On feedback

Sally used the students’ answers to scaffold onto and to create a better understanding {JSR}. She also praised or corrected answers immediately. Very good mediation occurred {JSR}. As before, when students answered something incorrectly or incompletely, she tried to make a point of not shooting down their answer, but rather used it to direct them towards the right answer {P}. Sally probed, redirected and sought understanding in her questioning and gave feedback in such a way that all gaps were closed {JSR}. The class was presented in an informal way where students interacted with each other and the lecturer in conversations {JSR}. All the students were engaged until the end {JSR}. Sally noted that she encouraged the students to talk to her if anything was unclear or if there was a difference of opinion as an entire group as well as individually with each student {P}. Sally indicated that she could clearly see from the second video that the students discussed their feedback with each other, tried to solve problems they encountered in the work and found ways of improving their work {P}.

It is evident that Sally encouraged positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem among students. If she saw that students did not grasp something she stopped, went back and immediately helped them with more examples and explanations {JSR}. Sally’s students used the feedback they received to improve their learning. The students felt free to answer and ask questions when they were unsure {JSR}. A safe environment was created {JSR}. Sally noted, “When sitting with a student, I point out a problematic area and ask them to think about how they can improve this. I do the same if they did something good – I ask them why they think this is good, and how they could have applied what they did in that instance to other instances” {P}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

Sally noted that she tried to motivate the students to work together to solve problems and come up with creative solutions: “[T]his year I could clearly see the students working together and discussing problem areas” {P}. Sally also indicated that she did not give enough attention to providing guidance on materials for conducting peer- and self-assessments, but she saw the value of this and felt she should do more to promote this aspect {P}. She indicated that she should have helped the learners understand the significance of peer- and self-assessment results {P}.

Sally tried to improve interpersonal relationships among the students by motivating them to deliver good quality work and to take ownership of their own work {P}. She also tried to have them realise that it was important to be able to point out areas of improvement in someone else’s work for the sake of quality and improvement {P}. She focused on encouraging the students to give feedback that was neutral and non-confrontational. She noticed that when students assess each other’s work, they think about the task at

hand more intently {P}. She tried to nurture self-directed learners by “getting the students to be more aware of their own work and where improvement was needed without me having to point it out all the time” {P}. Sally focused on learning and for students to discover and construct the context on their own; gradually they began to understand the purpose of learning {JSR}. The questions posed by Sally stimulated thinking. Sally asked many higher-order questions and scaffolded them from easy to more difficult questions {JSR}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessments

Sally used a mind map activity at the end of the class {JSR}. Students were encouraged to use higher-order thinking as well in the activity {JSR}. They used the activity again in the next period. They used this activity to note their learning gains and gaps {JSR}. The students assessed the quality and professionalism of the work they delivered –not only to understand the assessment process, but also to better understand how they should be doing the work {P}.

In part two, regarding the students’ role in assessment, Sally noted that her students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, especially at third-year level {P}. She encourages her students to improve their own work. In the second video session she instructed the students to mark their friends’ work, to add important information and to give their own and the friend’s answers in the discussion {JSR}. Sally indicated that her teaching style is student-centred to some extent, but she realised that even more attention could be paid to this {P}. Sally stated that she encourages students to participate in classroom assessment, “but the response I get differs from year to year. In 2012 the group was not very responsive and did not participate much in class discussions, whereas in 2013 the group was much more lively and interactive and prepared for class!” {P}. Sally also indicated that more attention should be given to get students involved with decisions regarding classroom assessment {P}.

Sally indicated that student self-reflect on own learning can be improved and that she tries “to put a lot of emphasis on the fact that the students are learning and developing skills, but that the development of these skills does not end in the classroom – they have to continue developing it by themselves and critically think about every possible issue they encounter, whether in terms of practical work skills or dealing with theoretical constructs” {P}.

Sally’s students were not involved with record keeping but this class was very good regarding classroom discussions, interactions and participation {JSR}. Sally saw an improvement in her students’ marks, self-esteem, confidence and how they were growing {P}. It was visible from video, on various occasions where one could hear the class having an ‘ah-hah’ moment {JSR}. The informal manner (and the frequent laughs) and positive classroom atmosphere were proof of this {JSR}. Sally’s students were actively involved by taking notes, giving their own opinions and by asking clarifying questions {JSR}.

Part three included the lecturer’s role in assessment. Sally’s assessment competencies improved a lot {JSR}. She expressed her view as follows: “[A]lthough I tried to use varying assessment strategies, I think my methods could be even more diverse and creative” {P}.

Sally had changed her view about the licensing requirements for lecturers to teach. She thought these requirements can “possibly” be implemented as long as they are “structured in such a way that it does not demotivate lecturers or cause negative feelings in terms of competency” {P}.

Sally self-reflected by evaluating how her students responded in class and what problems they displayed in their practical work {P}. She identified areas of her teaching that needed more attention and required more detailed explanations {P}. She kept in mind how different assessments could have helped the students understand the work she discussed with them and “to try and make the theoretical components more practically applicable and relevant for them {P}. In this way, if the students do good or bad [well or badly] in a given assignment, I can ‘map’ their progress and adapt my teaching strategies accordingly” {P}.

Sally collaborated with colleagues in terms of subject content she believed to be important {P}. She wanted her students to realise that their work will never be isolated or confined to one subject area or area of expertise, and so she tried to incorporate subject knowledge from other fields where possible and have the students identify possible areas of collaboration. In terms of teaching, Sally consulted colleagues on matters regarding teaching and assessment and she attended workshops where possible to improve her skills {P}.

Sally acknowledged that she did not communicate a standard of ‘success for all’ in the sense that she did not give the students the impression that they could simply pass the module without much effort {P}. They had to work hard and recognise the importance of offering good and professional work {P}. She indicated that she tries to manage her time, but the marking is overwhelming at times {P}. For practical work she spends more than one third of her time on assessment {P}.

The fourth part included self-reflections of participants and their academic mentors on the study to gain understanding regarding whether their reflections and participation in the study had changed their classroom assessment practices. Sally indicated that before the study she thought that her classroom assessment strategies were “relatively OK” and that she “knew there was room for improvement” {P}. During the study she realised that there was much more to assessment practices than what she thought and knew and that much more could be done in terms of using assessment to benefit the students and the learning experience in the classroom” {P}. After the study she saw an improvement in her teaching and the usage of assessment strategies. She added that “there is still room for improvement” {P}.

Sally indicated that her classroom assessment practices changed during the study: “... knowing and trying different assessment strategies and adapting my approach to the use of assessment helped me optimise my classroom and teaching practices” {P}. She described her classroom assessment practices as “balanced between assessment of and assessment for learning. The assessments I use give me an indication of the students’ progress and understanding of the content of the module, and also motivates them towards learning and better performance; not in terms of chasing good marks but rather improving skills and reaching or achieving goals/outcomes more optimally” {P}.

Sally's gains from her participation in the study were described as follows: "I now know much more than I did before, and I will approach teaching and assessment differently from now on (I already am ...)" {P}. She incorporated the changes of more varieties of assessments in all her modules {JSR}.

Sally's mentor did not gain anything from being a participant in the study nor did he change his own assessment practices {AM}. He merely stated that he would "probably" do things differently in the future regarding his own classroom assessment practices {AM}.

5.2.1.3 Sally: Summary

Sally is a subject expert in her field. In the first video, Sally was reflected as the source of knowledge in her classroom; she did all the talking; she answered her own questions and did not allow enough waiting time after questions for students to grasp what she said. Her students were unprepared for class and they were not involved in classroom discussions. She did not make use of self- and peer assessment strategies and the phases of her lesson, especially the summary at the end of the class, were not evident.

From the second video, definite professional growth became evident. Sally used her self-reflection, improved her questioning skills and applied waiting time after questioning. Her questions were prepared and the quality of the questions improved the thinking skills of her students. She did not answer any of her own questions and got her students to answer the questions. Classroom discourses happened very effectively. She used the students' answers to build upon and scaffold the content from easy to difficult. She used the context of the students very well. The majority of her students came to class prepared and participated in the classroom discussions until the end of the class. She used self- and peer assessment strategies very effectively. Sally broke the content of the work into manageable chunks. A great improvement and change were noted. Sally surprised me with the changes and growth I witnessed in her classroom practices. She moved away from being a lecturer as source of knowledge to a mediator of learning.

5.2.2 Participant 2: Concerned

Concerned was very open, honest and brave during the study. At first she was not certain whether she should participate. I emphasised that she could withdraw at any time if she felt uneasy. She understood the values and benefits of being a participant in the study and based on this understanding, she decided to continue her participation. Concerned had negative experiences in the past and questioned my intentions with the study instead of understanding that I was an independent researcher. Only after I had managed to gain her trust did she feel more comfortable about participating. Concerned's reflections were very valuable because they were honest and to the point. Her mentor also provided me with valuable information (*cf.* 4.4.2).

5.2.2.1 Concerned video 1

In part one, in Concerned's first video session, Concerned, her academic mentor and I reflected on whether she used both formative and summative assessment and how she used it. She stated that she used formative assessment in her module in most of her classes. She used summative assessment in her module by means of assignments, semester tests and examinations. She stated that she was more inclined towards formative assessment because it is more continuous {P}.

She described the balanced assessment as “moderation and a balanced approach yields results”. She understood AOL as testing knowledge. She understood AFL as being more supportive than prescriptive {P}.

The rest of part one will be divided into sub-sections to ease the interpretation of the data and to align with the data collection instruments. The sub-sections are: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

In the first video Concerned stated the learning outcomes clearly at the beginning of the session {AM}. Four outcomes were stated in a learner friendly way and reflected upon at the end of the lesson. The phases of the lesson were very evident {JSR}. She tested pre-knowledge and referred to previous modules and classes. The students were actively engaged; their attention was focused. The lecturer kept the students engaged by the fast tempo of her class. She also tested their pre-knowledge from the previous semester’s work {JSR}. The lecturer’s questioning skills kept them involved. The lecturer recapped continually during the lesson and at the end of the lesson. Considering the answers students gave at the end of the lesson during the wrap-up, the learning outcomes were achieved and learning took place {JSR}.

(b) Verbal questioning

This section is about one of Concerned’s strong points. The lecturer’s verbal questioning skills are very good. She makes very good use of prompting, redirecting and follow-up questions. The lecturer kept the students engaged in a classroom discussion and they participated very well. She also selected them randomly to answer her questions {JSR}. Most of the time, the waiting time that was applied was long enough and used effectively, but a few times the lecturer did not give enough time or even answered the questions herself {JSR}. Concerned consistently rephrased and redirected questions {JSR}. The questions that were posed encouraged the students to think {JSR}. She framed the questions in a straightforward manner, she gave scenarios and asked questions about them {AM}.

(c) Feedback

Concerned used the lecturing method where immediate feedback was given via verbal questioning {JSR}. The lecturer gave good descriptive and constructive feedback. She did not allow for students to form gaps in their learning {JSR}. The lecturer encouraged students to think and understand, not just to get a mark or to pass. The only concern was that because the tempo was so fast, some students might have been left behind regardless of the lecturer’s effort to keep the students and lesson together {JSR}. The way in which the class was conducted stimulated a very good classroom discussion. The way in which she used questioning to address them and the way she gave feedback appeared to encourage her students {JSR}. In one situation a student did not answer the question correctly and she followed up on this, providing an opportunity for the student to improve. A positive classroom climate could be sensed. The way she structured her questions gave her enough information about her teaching and how to continue onwards {JSR}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

Concerned did not make effective use of self- and peer assessment {JSR}. Since she used the direct teaching method (lecturer-centred) she did not utilise self- and peer assessments in the video session. The lecturer informed the students about a reflective activity at the end of the lesson in preparation for the next class as well as an online (eFundi) test. She did not make them aware of the significance of peer- and self-assessment results {JSR}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

Concerned did not make use of formative summative assessments, nor did she reflect upon this point to enable an understanding of her approach to this matter {JSR}.

Part two was concerned with the students' role in assessment. Concerned noted that she did not "spoon-feed" when asked if her students were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and own work {JSR}. Her teaching style was lecturer-centred. Concerned did not reflect on whether she encouraged her students to participate in classroom assessment which would have contributed to greater student involvement and student motivation {JSR}. She did not indicate whether her students were involved in decisions regarding classroom assessment, and whether the students were encouraged to self-reflect on their learning which would help them to control their learning and improve their higher-order thinking skills and become lifelong learners {JSR}. She did not reflect on whether her students were encouraged to participate in classroom assessment discourses, where they were involved with assessment and record-keeping and whether she saw an improvement in their marks, self-esteem and confidence. She also did not reflect on whether she saw how they were growing through her classroom assessment practices {JSR}.

Part three included the lecturer's role in assessment. Concerned described her assessment competency as "fairly satisfactory". When asked to comment on her usage of diverse teaching and learning strategies, assessment methods and considering of learning styles, she stated that she used "multimedia and traditional methods" {P}. When asked if NWU should enforce "teaching and assessment licensing" requirements for new lecturers she noted that "there is enough [of a] mess with the current strategies. Lecturers will leave if you add more" {P}.

Concerned justified her view by stating, "I love what I do. I remind myself why I am here, to help convey knowledge and help students but they must choose to excel" {P}. She integrated her assessment with teaching and learning practices by "planning in advance. [She had been] teaching the same modules for two years now. The assessment is the same. It ties in with the method" {P}.

Concerned collaborated and interacted with other subject experts, education experts, subject groups "for broader views" {P}.

When asked about whether she believed that all her students can pass and whether she communicated a standard of 'success for all' she stated that she does not spoon-feed. She believes that her "students have a choice. I will not drop the quality to improve throughput {P}. Not all students can or should pass otherwise we would all be professionals or just get our qualifications". When asked about whether she

spends 1/3 of her time on assessment, she indicated that “assessment is every day, maybe not formally but in dialogue” {P}.

Part two and part three were not completed fully by Concerned, which made it difficult to gain a deeper understanding of Concerned’s practices and perceptions {JSR}.

5.2.2.2 Concerned video 2

In Concerned’s second video session, Concerned, her academic mentor and I) reflected on the following sub-sections; (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

Clear learning outcomes were stated at the beginning of Concerned’s second video session {AM}. Most of the students were involved; the way in which the lecturer presented the class compelled the students to prepare for class, pay attention and answer her questions {JSR}. The lecturer tested them on previous modules and the content of the previous class. The answers and responses from the students showed that they had learned. The lecturer kept referring to the outcomes {JSR}. I think this helped the students track their progress {JSR}. Concerned noted that “I always strive to stimulate thinking rather than passive intake of info” {P}. The outcomes were not reflected upon at the end of the session {JSR}.

(b) Verbal questioning

Concerned has very good questioning skills {JSR}. This is a strong point of this lecturer’s teaching. At times she spoke too fast {JSR}. She always asked them if they understood or if they had any questions. In the beginning of this class it was more her telling them but it developed into a good interactive class {JSR}. Verbal questioning was used to good effect, but in a few instances she answered her own questions {JSR}. At times it was not clear whether she asked a question to answer it herself or to let the students answer the question. It was also not clear whether the students knew this. Good leading questions were used to encourage higher-order thinking {JSR}. Concerned constantly motivated them to try to answer {JSR}. She tended to ask a question, not pause for long, reframe the question and ask again {JSR}. The students who were not keeping up might have been feeling lost at times {JSR}.

(c) Feedback

Concerned made use of the lecturing method where the questions and answers were used {JSR}. She gave timeous feedback via the questions she asked and discussed general mistakes in class {AM}. Concerned gave detailed descriptive feedback with good examples from practice {JSR}. Students understood what was expected of them to be able to do the correct thing the next time {AM}. She used the answers students gave to build on and closed the gaps. Concerned did not use teacher and peer classroom discussions around learning as much in the second video session as in the first one. Her mentor stated that it was “not so much dialogue but encouragement from the lecturer” {AM}. She added, “I would have liked to see the students talk more with each other regarding the content. She focused more on the fact that the students should be professional and adhere to ethics but also that they should be able to adhere to positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem” {AM}. Concerned really motivated and encouraged the students to participate in class and study for the upcoming test. Even her Supplemental

Instruction (SI) facilitator had a slot to talk in class {JSR}. She used the questions to determine progress and also held their attention that way {JSR}. The responses from students suggested that they had understood the feedback. Students were not encouraged to generate their own feedback regarding their own work {JSR}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

Concerned used the direct teaching method with questioning and answering {JSR}. Interaction between lecturer and students was encouraged, but not between students. She referred the students to addendums in the study guide which have self-assessment exercises which they had to complete {AM}. Concerned's mentor noted, "In another module I know she encourages students to form discussion groups" {AM}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

Concerned did not use formative assessments in a summative way {JSR}. No evidence of summative assessment was visible from the session {JSR}. No summary was done at the end of the class {JSR}. Concerned noted that she is not keen to encourage her students to set their own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process {JSR}.

Part two was concerned with the students' role in assessment. In the way Concerned presented her class it is evident that the students should keep up, prepare and participate {JSR}. She encouraged them to study and to answer questions in class. The lecturer encouraged participation by her good questioning skills and she closed learning gaps immediately {JSR}. Her teaching style was inclined to be lecturer-centred and can still improve towards becoming student-centred {JSR}. It seemed as if she was in a hurry to finish the content in view of the upcoming test {JSR}. No specific motivation was noted to encourage participation in classroom assessment, but she did involve them in the discussion and motivated them to do their best in the upcoming test {JSR}. It was not clear whether all the students at the back of the class were actively involved in the class. When asked about her students' involvement in decisions regarding classroom assessment, she negotiated with them in the beginning of the class {JSR}. She considered their inputs and decisions. Concerned stated that "they choose dates etc., obviously not what to study" {P}. When asked if she encouraged her students to self-reflect on their learning which would help them control their learning, improve their higher-order thinking skills and become lifelong learners, she answered in the affirmative, saying that "they are encouraged to do this, but it is not always a success" {P}. Concerned did not encourage her students to participate in classroom assessment discourses, especially where they were involved with assessment and record keeping {JSR}. When asked to comment on whether she could see an improvement in her students' marks, self-esteem and confidence and how they were growing through her classroom assessment practices, Concerned commented, "Often I can. Sometimes I feel like I lecture the walls ..." {P}.

Part three included the lecturer's role in assessment. Concerned considered her assessment competency as "apt" {P}. She felt that she used diverse teaching and learning strategies, assessment methods and that she considered learning styles {P}. It was clear from the videos of her lecturing style, she used direct teaching with much questioning and answering {JSR}. The lecturer did not seem to change her style often {JSR}. On the subject of NWU enforcing "teaching and assessment licensing", Concerned indicated that

she felt requirements for new lecturers depend on “whether they allow creativity or turn us into robots like other processes they ‘apply’” {P}. Generally speaking, Concerned self-reflects after lessons by “going back and think of what I would do differently”. Concerned feels motivated because she loves teaching. She feels that assessment and teaching and learning “go hand in hand. Lock and key concepts” {P}. Concerned collaborates with colleagues, as she feels “this helps prevent mental blocks or teaching roadblocks” {P}. When asked whether she believed that all her students could pass and whether she communicated a standard of ‘success for all’ she replied, “Well, yes. But it’s a good theory ...” {P}.

The fourth part included self-reflections of participants and their academic mentors on the study to gain understanding regarding whether their reflections and participation in the study had changed their classroom assessment practices {P}. Concerned described her classroom assessment practices before, during and after the video reflections as follows: “I think I learned a few pointers through the process which I incorporated into my classes” {P}. Her mentor noted that she thought her practices stayed the same “although she seemed more relaxed in the second video” {AM}. When asked if her classroom assessment practices had changed during the duration of the study she noted that “change is a strong word, but I picked up new ideas” {P}.

Concerned’s gains from being a participant in the study were described as “new ideas” {P}. She felt that her assessment practices were balanced and when asked whether she would do anything differently in the future regarding her own classroom assessment practices, she stated, “... it depends on the topic at hand, but I will” {P}.

Concerned’s mentor noted that she did not change her own classroom assessment practices during the duration of the study as she was “currently only involved in the practicals of post-graduate students and there you do intense feedback and supervision constantly” {AM}. Her gains from being a participant in the study were “a confirmation that we should put more effort and planning in what and how we do things in assessments” {AM}. She felt that her assessment practices could be seen as balanced {AM}. Concerned’s mentor felt that she would do the following differently in the future regarding her own classroom assessment practices: “If I have pregraduates [undergraduates] again I will try and motivate them on trying different ways of studying and understanding how the info fits into the real world – although it is something that I were doing – know it is just more important” {AM}.

5.2.2.3 Concerned: Summary

Concerned is a subject expert in her field. In Concerned’s first video session she displayed exceptionally good questioning skills accompanied by a fast-paced classroom style. Her questioning encouraged higher-order thinking in the classroom. She gave immediate feedback and scaffolded the answers the students gave her from easy to more complex content. She demanded that students be prepared for class, interact in the classroom and take responsibility for their own learning. The phases in the lesson were evident. It was suggested that she considered using a ‘presenter’ device to change the slides, as it would eliminate the interruptions caused by moving to the lecturing technology bench. It was also suggested that she incorporate more visual elements to include visual learners. Not all learners favour the auditory Q&A approach. I also suggested that she include more student interaction and use a larger

variety of (non-traditional) teaching and learning strategies. I recommended that she could include self- and peer assessments to enable a student-centred approach.

In the second video, Concerned looked more relaxed. She started the class with a discussion on an upcoming test. Throughout the lesson it seemed as if she did not want to waste time and wanted to complete the lesson in order for the students to write a test on the content the next period. Concerned's classroom assessment practices did not change and not much growth was seen. She still used questioning very effectively, she gave good feedback on the spot to close learning gaps, and she used good examples from practice to clarify the content. In the later stages of the video the class participation improved, but some of the students were not involved. The introductory and summary phases of the lesson were lacking. She did not use a 'presenter' device and still had to move to the technology bench to change her slides. She still did not incorporate self- and peer assessments or interactions between students. She still used the lecturer-centred teaching method and did not use a greater variation of teaching methods and assessments. Concerned was still the source of knowledge in her classroom.

5.2.3 Participant 3: Albert Einstein

Albert Einstein was the second participant who agreed to participate in the study. From the onset of the research process she was very positive and agreed to be part of the study because she saw and understood the value of the study. She was a more experienced lecturer than some of the other participants and participated in the study to gain more support regarding certain difficulties she experienced like large-class teaching. After the first video reflection I became aware that Albert Einstein might have negative feelings about the study. Due to the holidays and unavailability of some of the lecturers I had to postpone the feedback and intervention sessions. After our feedback session I gave Albert Einstein constructive feedback, additional information and various strategies to confront her difficulties and I sensed that her attitude towards the study was positive again. Albert Einstein and her mentor were teaching very strict, quantitative inclined modules. They both experienced great difficulty in providing answers of a qualitative nature to the study and agreed that their "quantitative inclined brains could not get around" the qualitative format of my research (*cf.* 4.4.3).

5.2.3.1 Albert Einstein video 1

In Albert Einstein's (AE) first video session AE, her academic mentor and I reflected on whether she used formative and summative assessment and how she did it. She noted, "[I] use formative assessment in my module by asking questions as the lectures proceed. The presentations the students gave were peer-assessed and helped them to improve before giving final presentation at end of semester" {P}. She used summative assessment in giving homework at the end of each lecture and by giving regular tests. AE was inclined more towards summative assessment for mathematical skills because the exercises take long to complete in class, and towards formative assessment for presentation skills and practical research because it is easier to implement in class {P}.

She understood the balanced assessment as "[where] you use formative assessment more often, and use it productively to ensure a more efficient learning experience for the learners" {P}.

She understood AOL as “assessment that assesses to what extent learning took place after the event. Summative assessment, used to grade students” {P}.

She understood AFL as “assessment that assesses while learning takes place so that teaching methods can be changed and something can be explained again. Formative assessment is used to improve the learning experience” {P}.

The rest of part one will be divided into sub-sections to ease the interpretation of the data and to align with the data collection instruments. The sub-sections are the following: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

The lecturer presented the outcomes diagrammatically and referred to previous work to put the day's work into context and also showed what would still be done {JSR}. The lecturer tried to encourage her students to take the responsibility for their own learning; she constantly took them to the diagram and back where students could assess their learning or make a note to revise something later {JSR}. No activities were given during the class but various examples were given and used {JSR}. The outcomes stated were specific, measurable at the end of the session, and could have been achieved by students {JSR}. On time-relatedness AE noted that “if a course is very full, and there are many outcomes, the content is difficult and one wanted to break down each outcome in several shorter outcomes, they simply become too many and difficult to be realistic” {P}.

(b) Verbal questioning

AE asked good questions; however, more probing, prompting and redirecting could have been used {JSR}. The class was lecturer-centred. It seemed as if there could have been more discussions instead of only the lecturer transferring knowledge verbally (the content was noted) {JSR}. The lecturer applied good waiting time; she did not give the answers, and she waited for the students to come up with the answers {JSR}. AE used a variety of questions pitched on the correct cognitive levels. The lecturer did not need to rephrase questions often; they were well formulated and clear {JSR}.

(c) Feedback

In the content of the module AE presented, the nature of the feedback matters. Mathematics must have correct answers that can be seen as being judgemental {JSR}. AE commented that “for [the] mathematical part, a sum is right or wrong. No use trying to give feedback in words, unless you see [that the] person often tends to make a certain thinking mistake. Then I will tell them about it” {P}. AE stated that “feedback works well for practical part of class, where students give presentations” {P}. She continued by saying that “the marks also tell students whether they know how to do the maths and how to program. The presentations' feedback is more qualitative” {P}.

The lecturer gave an introductory activity and immediate feedback {JSR}. An opportunity to close the gap was presented. Also, she asked questions, the students answered and immediate feedback was given {JSR}. The lecturer could consider using strategies to improve student participation to encourage

discussions {JSR}. A student did ask a question to clarify his understanding of a concept which hopefully contributed to his beliefs about his own learning {JSR}. The pre-knowledge testing in the beginning of the session was used diagnostically and did help the lecturer understand where to head during her teaching {JSR}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

The lecturer used a group activity. The activity at the end looked like fun; it probably developed and improved relationships between the lecturer and her students {JSR}. The students had to focus on their learning in order to complete the activity. The students participated enthusiastically, It might be because they could have done the activity their own way and could have been creative {JSR}. When students feel empowered they tend to take responsibility for their own learning. The sessions were lecturer-centred. The lecturer referred to the group project and how the content she discussed could have been applied in the project {JSR}. This could have helped students to begin to understand the purpose of their learning. The lecturer provided a rubric for peer assessment {P}. The way the lecturer presented the class and the format of the slides indicate that the lecturer builds in application of critical thinking. One cannot do mathematics in your third year of studies if you have not acquired the skills. The nature of the tasks also encouraged the application of skills {P}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

AE only used baseline and summative assessments in class {JSR}. The aspect of the formative use of summative assessment could be improved. The students were not encouraged to set their own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process {JSR}.

Part two was concerned with the students' role in assessment. This class was lecturer-centred with the lecturer as the source of knowledge {JSR}. There was little interaction between the lecturer and students via questions and answers {JSR}. The students were involved with a recap activity in the beginning of the class and a drama activity at the end. The students had to mark their own work during the recap activity where (hopefully) they would complete the answers if they were not completed {JSR}. The activity at the end helped students understand their knowledge about the lesson and being able to do it in a creative and social context helped them a lot. The students were not involved in decisions regarding classroom assessment. AE noted, "I can see an improvement in their marks, self-esteem, and confidence and can see how they are growing {P}. Whether it is due to the assessment practices, or rather my method of teaching in general, I don't know" {P}.

Part three included the lecturer's role in assessment. AE described her assessment competency as follows: "I have the ability to determine whether my students are on track, or whether I have lost them. I also know who top achievers [and] medium achievers are and who really needs extra support and motivation to pass" {P}. Only one teaching strategy, namely the direct lecturing method, was used {JSR}. The lecturer made provision for visual learners. Due the theoretical nature of the content, the direct teaching method was relevant where other teaching strategies may not be quite effective {JSR}. AE commented, "I try as much as I can, but I think I can improve" {P}. AE did not think that NWU should enforce teaching, learning and assessment licensing requirements for new lecturers {P}. AE's commented as follows on her self-reflection: "I think about what has gone well, what I should do differently in future"

{P}. She usually motivates herself by remembering that “to lecture is my calling, it is not just a job” {P}. AE felt that she cannot teach properly without assessing regularly {P}. On being asked whether she believed that all her students could pass and whether she communicated a standard of success for all, she commented, “I do, but think there should be more of that in the stats group” {P}. AE noted that she had spent more than one third of her time on assessment during the semester {P}.

5.2.3.2 Albert Einstein video 2

In part one, in AE’s second video session, AE, her academic mentor and I reflected on the following sub-sections: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment. The content of AE’s second video session was exactly the same class content which was captured in the first video, in other words, it was the same class with different students one year later. This facilitated the process of establishing her progress. AE gave the same responses for the second video session as in the first one. Most of the information was copied and pasted.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

The learning outcomes were presented diagrammatically {JSR}. AE used a diagram as a ‘roadmap’ to the session’s content. Five outcomes were stated. It seemed to be fair in number as well as specific, measurable and realistic {JSR}. The outcomes were achievable if the students kept up with the lecturer. Eighteen minutes into the session the lecturer showed the learning outcomes in words as well {JSR}. This came across as confusing. She referred to the previous year’s work as well as to previous lesson’s content. The lecturer focused on getting through the content, not on learning or completion of activities {JSR}.

(b) Verbal questioning

AE asked questions but in many cases she answered the questions herself. At times she also made statements which seemed like questions; this came over as confusing. Not many student interactions were noted {JSR}. The lecturer talked, explained, and read from the slides most of the time. She probed the students to answer questions but they did not respond; they were already in a passive mode. Waiting time was used effectively in only a few cases {JSR}. AE asked many questions that were pitched at the correct cognitive levels but the students did not participate willingly. AE framed the questions well and rephrased if the students did not answer. It was not the questions but the passivity of the students and their reluctance to participate that were barriers {JSR}.

(c) Feedback

Few questions were asked, which in turn resulted in little feedback being generated. AE gave the answers of the pre-knowledge activity immediately afterwards {JSR}. She tried to get the students to answer questions but they did not respond. At times she went back and retaught. If a student lost track in the beginning of the class, it would have been difficult for them to catch up and stay motivated {JSR}. The lecturer did not get an indication from the students about whether they had learned or whether her class had been successful. AE did not encourage her students to generate their own feedback regarding their own work. She commented, “After every assessment I give personal feedback, such as: ‘well done, try for 75% next time’” {P}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

AE used a peer assessment activity, which could easily have been better used as a self-assessment (of more value to the students) {JSR}. No awareness was raised about the benefits of peer- and self-assessments by the lecturer {JSR}. The students might have been more likely to focus on the task if they knew someone else were marking their activity, but they did not take the activity or the results seriously {JSR}. The focus was on the content to be covered. After the class, the majority of the students might have realised that they should go and figure out some of the content at home as active learning was not evident from the videos. AE commented, “When students give presentations on their projects, other students must fill in an online assessment in class, which I communicate to the students the next week” {P}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

AE ended the session with an eFundi test on the content that was covered during the session. The test could have been completed in class or afterwards {JSR}. Two submissions were allowed per student. If a student wrote the test in class and performed poorly, they should have gone back to their study materials and reviewed the content. After they had a better understanding of the content they should have attempted to write the test again {JSR}. AE commented that “students generating their own feedback will work for some subjects, not for all. No use [the] student goes through all the trouble, but cannot check his calculation’s answer” {P}.

Part two was concerned with the students’ role in assessment. AE taught in a lecturer-centred way. She aspired to teach more student-centred by “trying to meet the needs of every student – whether they are bright, or whether they are really battling” {P}. She talked and students must have listened, in other words the tabula rasa effect. She tried to get them to interact but she talked for such a long time that they became passive {JSR}. They did not react quickly enough when she asked a question. Some of her questions sounded like statements {JSR}. At times it was not clear whether she wanted them to answer or whether she wanted to answer the question herself {JSR}. AE encouraged them to do an activity in the beginning of the session, and gave them a test at the end as well as homework {JSR}. The two submissions allowed for the test could motivate the students to improve their performance from one submission to the other if they did not perform well. AE did not use any type of tracking strategy to determine whether learning had taken place {JSR}.

Part three included the lecturer’s role in assessment. AE used the traditional teaching method only. She read from the slides and talked too much {JSR}. More classroom discourses needed to take place and the content should have been broken into manageable chunks with breaks in between. A larger variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies should have been utilised {JSR}. Due to the fact that AE copied and pasted most of her responses from the first video into the second video’s reflection, I will not repeat the data received in this section {JSR}.

The fourth part included self-reflections of participants and their academic mentors on the study to gain understandings on whether their reflections and participation in the study had changed their classroom assessment practices. AE described her classroom assessment practices before, during and after the video reflections as follows: “I am more aware of assessment than before the study” {P}. AE’s mentor

commented that “based on the second video this was outstanding; unfortunately I cannot say whether it is due to the study” {AM}. When asked whether her classroom assessment practices had changed during the duration of the study, AE commented, “I have changed some of my classes to include online tests that students have to do in class” {P}. Her mentor commented that “in 2012 the participant was lecturing this module for the first time (first video). In 2013 this is the second time (second video). The first time around one has to set up presentations, the second time one has time to improve on them” {AM}. AE’s gains from being a participant in the study were articulated as follows: “I have also changed some of my classes to be more practical – students go through the work at their own pace in class, and have to perform certain tasks as they progress through the work. They ask their friends as well as me for assistance when needed. This, together with the online tests, works very well” {P}. AE’s mentor commented by saying “[I] cannot say whether the improvement is due to the study” {AM}. When AE was asked whether she considered her classroom assessment practices as balanced she answered, “For courses that are very full, time constraints make it extremely difficult to assess as often as I would like. For courses where there is more time, I would say my practices are balanced” {P}. Her mentor commented that it is “difficult to measure as I am unsure what exactly the study entails and what assistance was given to the participant” {AM}. Finally, when AE was asked whether she would do anything differently in the future regarding her own classroom assessment practices, she stated, “I will use as much as is practically possible” {P}.

AE’s mentor did not complete the section to self-reflect on her own development as an academic mentor in the study. She did, however, make comments about how she had experienced the study. This aspect will be elaborated on in AE’s hidden discourses.

5.2.3.3 Albert Einstein summary

AE is a subject expert in her field and it is evident that she is a very experienced lecturer. In AE’s first video the lesson outcomes were seen to be clear and concise. AE made use of a diagram as the ‘backbone’ of the session to link the outcomes and content. Students always kept track of what was happening. She used media very well, and she created her own videos and cartoon to give life to theory-rich module content. The phases of her lesson were evident. The lesson was well planned and she prepared well. It was suggested to AE that she should try to use more strategies which encourage interaction between lecturer and students, use a larger variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies, and include self- and peer assessment strategies. Due to time restrictions, large chunks of content had to be covered in a short time, which made critical student engagement difficult.

In the second video, it could be seen that AE stated the outcomes clearly. She made use of the outcomes diagram again. Her slides were not adjusted and included the same creative media footage as in the first video. In the second video session she used more activities in class – she also included a peer assessment activity. AE displayed good subject knowledge. There were still not enough student interactions between the lecturer and the students and among the students. The students were very passive. The lecturer tried to involve them and get them to interact but they were reluctant. AE did not use questioning, waiting time or feedback sufficiently. The content was presented in a lecturer-centred way where the lecturer spoke and the students had to listen. When she read from the slides, her voice was projected towards the screen and not towards the students, which made it difficult for them to hear her. It is suggested that the content should be broken into 15 minute chunks to allow students to refocus their

attention. A recap of the content should be done after these chunks. It is also suggested that the lecturer should include a greater variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies.

Very little growth was noted in the classroom practices of AE from video session 1 to video session 2. The reasons for the stagnancy will be elaborated on in AE's hidden discourses.

5.2.4 Participant 4: Pringle

Pringle was very enthusiastic and positive about the study from the start. She immediately saw it as an opportunity to help her improve her teaching and learning practices. At times she struggled to provide me with the data on time but she reflected very deeply and thoroughly, which was very valuable to me. Her mentor was deeply involved throughout the process and supplied me with very valuable data. Pringle is very supportive and understanding by nature and she always motivated and supported me throughout the study. I sensed that Pringle really struggled to balance her workload with her research load at times and that she sometimes felt overwhelmed. Being a new lecturer myself, I understood her situation and could relate to her at a personal level (*cf.* 4.4.4).

5.2.4.1 Pringle video 1

In part one of Pringle's first video, Pringle, her academic mentor and I reflected on whether and how she used formative and summative assessment. She stated that she tried to use a combination of both, not only to assess the students – for example with a class test to reflect back on the material that they studied – but also at a qualitative level to measure their understanding of what they had learned.

She understood the balanced assessment as being “that a lecturer has a variety of teaching learning styles to their advantage and that assessment doesn't always have to be carried out in the same manner” {P}.

She understood AOL as “[providing] feedback to students on their achievements; for example their results of their modules passed after the exam on their academic record will indicate their achievements and progress”. AFL was explained as “assessment incorporated within classroom learning whereby the student is encouraged to take part in the learning process with the intention to create a more balanced student” {P}.

The rest of part one will be divided into sub-sections to ease the interpretation of the data and to align with the data collection instruments. The sub-sections are: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

Pringle highlighted the outcomes and discussed them continuously throughout the lecture. She also emphasised the necessity of the outcomes within a South African context {P}. Pringle stated that “the learning targets had been established to be directly focused in order to link with the relevant content as well as to be clear towards a student perspective” {P}. The part between the recap and the learning outcomes was not always clear {JSR}. I suggested that she put all the outcomes on one slide and shorten

the description to only include the essentials {JSR}. Learning outcomes were referred to during the lesson. The students in this particular lecture were given the opportunity to discuss a relevant topic where no actual assessment took place but they had to give feedback to the lecturer {P}. As the discussions took place the lecturer measured student achievement of the outcomes {P}. All the outcomes were achievable, even at the level of a first-year student's capacity for thinking and learning {P}. The outcomes were realistic and not too extended, so they were attainable within class time. An adequate amount of outcomes were covered during the lecture {P}.

(b) Verbal questioning

Pringle used a variety of questioning techniques {P}. As far as the lecturing questions were concerned, there was much room for improvement {JSR}. She was made aware of waiting time and not answering her own questions {JSR}. The lecturer tried to establish a conversation, but the students did not respond and she answered the questions herself {JSR}. Pringle noted, "[M]y approach was to interact with the students and not merely seeking answers from them" {P}. Most of the time the lecturer did not apply waiting time and the few times she did, the students did not answer very well {JSR}. The cognitive level of the questions asked could have been better {JSR}. The questions were clearly framed but again this linked with waiting time. When the lecturer did not allow waiting time she began to rephrase the questions when the students did not answer {JSR}. Pringle stated that her approach "was not to overload the students with questions that they had to answer and to ask necessary and relevant questions to an extent that it related to the content of the lecture" {P}

(c) Feedback

Pringle commented, "The feedback I received from the students enabled me to reach the conclusion that the assessment standard was reached and that they have succeeded in reaching the outcomes" {P}. The lecturer was very empathetic, and no judgemental feedback was given {JSR}. Pringle did not build on some of the answers (which were wrong) to close learning gaps on the spot. She should have given immediate feedback {JSR}. Pringle noted that "from a lecturer's role my aim throughout the lecture was to engage with the students" {P}. I think the students felt comfortable with her. I also think they related to her because she is still young. I believe this encouraged and motivated them {JSR} The lecturer could have extracted the recap and summary activities (knowledge) from students to get a better picture of their performance {JSR}. Pringle stated that the group discussion amongst the students was directly aimed at learning rather than at assessment for marks {P}. She aimed to provide feedback that was understandable and clear to the students in order for them to master the outcomes and improve their learning {P}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

Pringle used group discussion but not self- and peer assessments {JSR}. She commented that "as a newly appointed lecturer this aspect needs improvement" {P}. She noted that from a lecturer's role her aim was engage with the students throughout the lesson, but she did not utilise this aspect sufficiently. At the end of the class the students felt free to discuss their experiences regarding an online (eFundu) test. The lecturer in turn explained one student's concern about the test and addressed the issue {JSR}. Pringle's mentor noted that "space was provided by the lecturer for students to take ownership and develop towards critical thinkers" {AM}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

Pringle used seven online (eFundi) tests throughout the semester as practice for students to determine their progress {JSR}. She commented, “In my opinion this is essentially important for student learning and also development of their higher-order thinking skills” {P}.

Part two was concerned with the students’ role in assessment. Pringle remarked, “My students are taught that I do facilitate the prescribed learning content but they themselves have to take the responsibility to apply it to the everyday world” {P}. She continued by stating, “My students are encouraged to improve their own work. At times I will credit them with additional assessments to improve their work” {P}. She acknowledged that her teaching style was not yet student-centred and as she gains experience this skill will be improved in time. Pringle’s approach involves lecturer-student involvement but also student-student involvement to enable the students to grasp the content and encourage them to want to learn more {P}. She stated that the majority of her students were not involved in assessment decision making due to the large classes she was teaching and that it would make it difficult to manage {P}. She indicated that she placed the responsibility back in the students’ corner in order for them to take responsibility for their learning and in the process the students will facilitate the content to improve their higher-order skills by applying it {P}. Pringle noted that her goal was to not feed students with content but for them to learn how to critique different theories or explain theories within the everyday world, for example {P}.

Part three included the lecturer’s role in assessment. Pringle described her assessment competencies as “competent but can be improved” {P}. She tried to facilitate different teaching, learning and assessment methods and incorporated formative assessment and summative assessments throughout a semester. She noted that she is “always open to use different teaching styles” {P}. When Pringle was asked if she thought NWU should enforce teaching and assessment licensing requirements for new lecturers she replied, “... to an extent yes, I agree, but the responsibilities of a new lecturer are sometimes overwhelming in my opinion, but I do agree that it is necessary” {P}. Pringle self-reflected and explained that by consulting with her academic mentor she discusses how she facilitated a class. This also helps her, but often there are certain aspects that she could possibly have done better and taken note of. She could possibly try to work it in with the next class {P}. Pringle motivated herself by reflecting on her passion for my field of work and by remembering that she is “in a position to help others learn about people and life itself” {P}. Pringle was asked whether she integrated her assessment with her teaching and learning practices. She mentioned that most of her classes were large in numbers and she tried to use a variety of assessments that were not directed to students only learning the content of the module but also to equip the students with knowledge to understand how they fit into society {P}. Pringle collaborated and interacted with colleagues, especially with her academic mentor and other subject experts, as she was a new lecturer. She believed that she had a lot to learn from them. Pringle believed that through dedication and hard work each of her students would be able to exceed well {P} She emphasised that she encourages her students to perform well. She noted that they are more than able to achieve success {P}. She believed that they are at university level because they had the ability to learn and to succeed. Pringle spent one third of her time and “sometimes even more” on assessment {P}.

5.2.4.2 Pringle video 2

In part one of Pringle's second video session, Pringle, her academic mentor and I reflected on the following sub-sections: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

Learning targets were explicit and directly related to the learning material {AM}. Pringle's learning targets were measurable and she could have determined the students' achievement of these targets. The learning targets were clearly formulated in order for the students to achieve them successfully {AM}. The learning outcomes were realistic and within the grasp of the students. They were also achievable within the duration of the class presentation {AM}.

The learning content was relevant to everyday life and therefore the students were able to understand the importance of the learning material {P}. The lecturer also discussed the module outcomes and how they linked to the study unit {P}. The lecturer's approach involved facilitating a certain amount of new knowledge to the students. The students had to engage with the knowledge through questioning and discussions in order to give responses, thus participating actively in the learning process {P}. There were a satisfactory number of learning targets for a class session {P}.

(b) Verbal questioning

Great improvements were noted in Pringle's questioning skills {JSR}. The lecturer used better questioning, redirection and probing. She applied good waiting time and did not answer any of her own questions {JSR}. She extracted the answers from the students. Classroom discourses occurred. A positive classroom climate was created where students felt comfortable to voice their opinions and ask questions {JSR}. Pringle stated, "I believe a lot of dialogue took place but a lot of inquiry as well. With experience I believe that I will start to master this skill" {P}. She used waiting time very effectively and the students gave well thought through answers {JSR}. Pringle commented, "During this class I tried to allow more time for students and not interrupting whilst they were busy answering a question that was asked" {P}. The lecturer used good higher-order questions, made effective use of waiting time and encouraged the students to think {JSR}. The responses received from the students indicated 'good questions' as they could answer the difficult questions after they had the opportunity to think about them. The questions were framed well {JSR}.

(c) Feedback

The lecturer improved this aspect of her teaching as well {JSR} by giving immediate and very detailed feedback where possible {JSR}. Pringle's feedback was in line with the outcomes of the session {JSR}. The feedback that she provided was descriptive and not judgemental in any way. The lecturer's attitude was very supportive in nature {JSR}. She created a positive classroom environment where students could feel comfortable to participate and make mistakes. The environment was successfully facilitated by the lecturer, and interactive discussion took place between the lecturer and the students {JSR}. The students responded well and later in the class they built on and completed each other's answers. Pringle used the questions and responses of the students to determine whether they understood the content {JSR}. She also gave them feedback regarding their progress and praised them. When a student asked a question or

gave an incomplete answer she answered in great detail. From their responses it seemed as if the students grasped the content as well as the feedback provided by the lecturer {JSR}. Pringle's mentor noted that she facilitated an environment which involved a co-constructed process and provided space for self-reflection. Pringle commented that she believed that she could have encouraged students to generate their own feedback regarding their own work {JSR}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

Pringle did not raise awareness about the benefits of self- and peer assessments, although she encouraged her students to work together {JSR}. Her facilitation on self- and peer assessment needed improvement. She was clearly inexperienced {JSR}. She gave the students a case study and discussed the answers. The questions were framed in such a way that self- and peer assessment could have been used. Pringle created a safe environment; the students seemed to feel safe to answer questions and they participated in the classroom discussions {JSR}. This contributed to improved relationships. The lecturer provided space for students to take ownership and develop into critical thinkers {JSR}. The lecturer needed to focus on nurturing self-directed learners and reducing the students' reliance on her. The focus of the class was more on what they were learning instead of how they were learning {JSR}. She used various strategies and activities. She asked every student to answer specific questions, which encouraged thinking and their own individual approach and view of concepts {JSR}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

Pringle did not utilise this section sufficiently {JSR}. In the summary she encouraged them to make notes, do additional reading and collect information in their own time, as they would be using it in the semester assignment {JSR}. The students made many notes during the activities where they discussed higher-order questions, so in a way they marked or benchmarked their own answers {JSR}.

Part two was concerned with the students' role in assessment. Pringle's students were explicitly encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, but her supportive nature contradicted this {JSR}. Pringle's teaching style was lecturer-centred but she was very sensitive towards the needs of her students {JSR}. If she gains more experience this will most likely change {JSR}. She encouraged her students to participate in classroom assessment, which contributed to greater student involvement and student motivation. Her students were not involved in decisions regarding classroom assessment and record keeping; neither were they encouraged to self-reflect on their learning which would help them control their learning, improve their higher-order thinking skills and become lifelong learners {JSR}.

Part three included the lecturers' role in assessment. Pringle described her assessment competency as "... good but with experience it can be improved" {P}. The lecturer included more strategies in her second class and included a visual component in her slides to accommodate visual learners {JSR}. Good improvement was noted in the lecturer's practice. When Pringle was asked whether she thought NWU should enforce teaching and assessment licensing requirements for new lecturers, she replied, "Well yes, but not within six months of employment" {P}. Pringle reflected on her practices as follows: "... thinking about what I can add on in this session that has passed for the next year" {P}. She motivated herself in the following way: "[By] reading the new posters that I have placed on my walls that allows me to remember that I am only an instrument in making a difference in students' lives." Pringle integrated

assessment, teaching and learning by “focusing on the learning targets regardless, whether it is formative or summative but find ways that will incorporate it with the everyday life” {P}. She collaborated continuously with colleagues for a variety of reasons {P}. The reasons she gave for collaborating subject experts were: “... to find ways of promoting my subject group, educational experts to make sure that I remain objective within the class room and how I can better my teaching skills, and other subject groups to keep me informed on what others are doing within their subject group and their experiences with students” {P}. Pringle felt that “every student experiencing life is able to pass any module within my subject field. [She tried] to communicate a standard of ‘success for all’” {P}. Pringle commented, “A substantial amount of time has been allocated towards assessment but overall I would agree outside the class room environment a 1/3 of my time does go to assessment” {P}.

The fourth part included self-reflections of participants and their academic mentors on the study to gain understandings regarding whether their reflections and participation in the study had changed their classroom assessment practices. Pringle explained her classroom assessment practices before, during and after the study as follows: “... informal and it was a pleasant experience as I believed that everybody enjoyed it and also in the process understood the content and reached the outcomes which in the end was the most important feature and also that the students and myself have learned through this contact session” {P}. When Pringle was asked whether her classroom assessment practices had changed during the duration of the study, she commented, “No, it remained consistent throughout the duration of the study” {P}. Her mentor commented that “from the first video recording to the second there have been changes especially in the manner of questioning and providing feedback to the students. The lecturer has also grown within her skills in teaching and learning” {P}.

Pringle’s gains from being a participant in the study were: “[I have] improved my teaching and learning strategies and ... I have to adapt in order to reach a broad spectrum of students” {P}. Her mentor noted that the gains he saw in Pringle were “changing her mind-set that one teaches for a variety of students and different teaching and learning styles are required in a higher education institution” {AM}. Pringle felt that her classroom assessment practices were “balanced, to an extent as it is a challenge with classes that has a large amount of students” {P}. Her mentor commented that “the lack of experience plays a role and might hamper this process” {AM}. When Pringle was asked if she would do anything differently in the future regarding her own classroom assessment practices, she answered, “[I] will reflect back on this study and incorporate it to improve my assessment practices” {P}.

Pringle’s mentor commented that his own classroom assessment practices did not change during the participation in the study {AM}. His personal learning gains from being part of the study were “that being a lecturer or even being an academic mentor one is never too old to learn from others, even from the younger lecturers and also from students” {AM}. When I asked Pringle’s mentor if he would do anything differently in the future regarding his own personal classroom assessment practices he indicated that he would {AM}.

Pringle and her mentor contacted me at the end of the study to ask whether I could provide them with both the raw data and the final data of Pringle’s development throughout the study. They wanted to use it for motivation to appoint her permanently instead of on a contractual basis.

5.2.4.3 Pringle summary

Pringle has good subject knowledge in her field. In Pringle's first video session she was very anxious and nervous. Her inexperience was noted very early in the session. The video footage quality was not very good. It was suggested that Pringle acquire a presenter device. She looked very unsure and scared and her body language made it seem as if she was blocking the students. Her students did not participate in the classroom discussion she initiated and she ended up answering her own questions. She did not allow waiting time for the students to think about the questions she asked. It was recommended that she include strategies to improve classroom participation. The introduction and summary phases of the lesson were not evident. Her slides were confusing and visually unattractive. It was also recommended that she clarify terminology before she used it as she seemed to be speaking above the level of the students' understanding. She did not give feedback or make use of self- and peer assessments.

In Pringle's second video, which was taken a year later, she appeared very comfortable and confident. The lecturer incorporated and embraced the feedback she had received and growth in her classroom practices was evident. Pringle reflected critically on her first video and her mentor also provided valuable information. Her questioning skills as well as her application of waiting time had improved dramatically.

She initiated good classroom interactions and discussions between herself and the students and among the students. Pringle created a positive classroom environment where she used a variation of teaching and learning strategies. She included visuals to make provision for learners who were inclined towards visual learning and stepped out of her comfort zone. Pringle's lecturing method started to change from her as the source of knowledge to her as a mediator of learning.

5.2.5 Participant 5: Lira

Lira was unsure about her participation in the study when I recruited her. She only participated in the first part of the study and then withdrew from the study due to the demands of her post-graduate studies. Lira provided me with valuable insights in terms of the systemic oppression discourses. Lira withdrew from the study so early that I did not get her video footage. Lira's mentor was not contacted due to her early withdrawal from the study (*cf.* 4.4.5).

5.2.6 Participant 6: Luther

Luther only participated in the first part of the study where he provided valuable information in terms of the systemic oppression discourses. Luther did not respond to my requests to return the data for the first video. Due to the timeframes I had to adhere to I was obliged to withdraw Luther from the study due to his lack of participation. Luther's mentor and I completed the evaluation of the first video session (*cf.* 4.4.6).

5.2.6.1 Luther video 1

In part one, in Luther's first video session, only his academic mentor and I reflected on whether and how he used classroom assessment.

It is not clear how Luther understood balanced assessment, AOL and AFL as he did not return any of my documentation despite various communication efforts, visits to his office and phone calls from me. The

lecturer informed me that he did want to continue to be a participant but he just did not have time to complete the documentation.

The rest of part one will be divided into sub-sections to ease the interpretation of the data and to align with the data collection instruments. The sub-section includes: (a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students; (b) Verbal questioning; (c) Feedback; (d) Self- and peer assessment; (e) The formative use of summative assessment.

(a) Sharing learning targets or goals with students

The learning objectives for this specific lesson were well formulated and presented using PowerPoint at the beginning of the lesson {AM}. The outcomes were very clearly stated and definitely related to the work. During the course of the lesson the objectives unfolded when the theory was explained to the students. The objectives were measurable {AM}. During the lesson the lecturer asked questions that were related and based on the objectives {AM}. The objectives were achievable and if the students paid careful attention they should have had a clear idea of the outcomes of the lesson and what was expected from them at the end of the lesson {AM}. The objectives were realistic as they were directly related to the theory and content of the lesson. The objectives were achieved in the short term as they were explained and tested during the lesson {AM}. It is not clear whether learning took place effectively; the students did not seem to be involved in the lesson {JSR}. Although the objectives were clearly stated at the beginning of the lesson there was no reference to them during the lesson {AM}.

(b) Verbal questioning

Luther asked questions frequently during the lesson, but mostly in the form of a statement. He very seldom asked for clarification, redirected a question or probed {JSR}. The questions were asked but no attempt was made to involve all students to really think about possible answers. The lecturer did all the talking and very little discussions occurred between him and his students {JSR}. The lecturer did not use waiting time appropriately; only twice in the lesson {AM}. There was a small waiting time after that question was asked but this was not used as a conversation opportunity {AM}. On two occasions during the lesson the lecturer asked students to form small groups and to discuss a problem {AM}. After the allotted 5 or 10 minutes the group leader reported back by writing the group's answer on the whiteboard {JSR}. The lecturer checked the answers (some answers were wrong or not complete) but did not use the opportunity to engage all students in a conversation to make sure that everyone understand the concepts {AM}. The cognitive levels of questions were correct but the lecturer never allowed students to answer {JSR} – he always gave the answers. Clearly framed questions but no opportunities were given to students to answer the questions {JSR}.

(c) Feedback

Luther did not give enough feedback during this lesson {AM}. The lecturer did not involve students. He was the source of knowledge and the students the passive receivers of his knowledge {JSR}. When they answered he ignored them. He did not build on their knowledge but carried on to make his own voice heard. He rarely gave feedback on their knowledge or inputs, only on his own questions and answers {JSR}. I think the students who fell behind were discouraged and started talking or kept themselves busy with other things on the pc in front of them {JSR}. After an activity, he gave feedback on what was written

on the whiteboard. Hopefully groups checked their work when he did this. It was not clear whether the activity was of value as appropriate feedback was not given {JSR}.

(d) Self- and peer assessment

The only assessment that took place during the lesson was the verbal questioning of the lecturer and the two group discussions {AM}. Some groups worked effectively; others just disappeared {JSR}.

(e) The formative use of summative assessment

Luther explained assessments clearly at the beginning and during presentation on what to expect in the test and examination {JSR}. It appeared from the detailed explanation on assessment that the lecturer assesses throughout the module {JSR}.

Part two was concerned with the students' role in assessment. The lecturer seemed to be detached from his students {JSR}. The class was lecturer-centred, this was tabula rasa or the lecturer is all, the source of knowledge, the all-knowing ruler in class {JSR}. Some students were involved and participated (those who felt like it), and many of them were uninvolved. The students were encouraged to talk to each other but not to the lecturer {JSR}. No questions or students' contributions were noted, as the lecturer read from the PowerPoint during most of the class.

Part three included the lecturer's role in assessment. Luther's assessment practices seemed to be adequate. He incorporated visuals for visual learners {JSR}.

5.2.6.2 Luther summary

Luther is a subject expert in his field. The phases of his lesson were evident. He used good examples to explain the content. However, Luther did not give his students the opportunity to interact with him in the class. It is as if he saw himself as being separated from his students. He used a lecturer-centred teaching method, with himself as the source of knowledge. Very few opportunities were granted for interaction between the lecturer and the students. He answered his own questions all the time and he did not allow waiting time. He also read from the PowerPoint slides too much instead of engaging with his students in discussions.

5.3 TRENDS IN THE PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS

The trends provided the data for the second research question of how the balanced assessment system unfolds within selected classrooms in a higher education context.

5.3.1 Participant 1: Sally

The trends noted during Sally's reflections were that she deeply reflected upon her classroom assessment practices and considered and implemented her own feedback and the feedback she had received. Freire (2000:100) states that only human beings are praxis, the praxis which, as the reflection and the action which truly transforms reality, is the source of knowledge and creation.

A main problem in Sally's first video was that her students were unprepared and thus did not participate in the classroom discussions and could not construct and improve their own knowledge. Sally in turn became frustrated by her students and kept on answering her own questions.

In the second video various changes were noted. Sally ensured that her students understood the value of coming to class prepared (*cf.* 2.3.4) and that led to very successful classroom discourses (*cf.* 2.3.4) between Sally and her students. The classroom dialogue was improved by Sally's good questioning skills (*cf.* 2.3.3), the high-quality planned questions she asked and the correct waiting time (*cf.* 2.3.3) she applied to give students time to grasp what she said. Sally also included self- and peer assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3) which contributed to the successful classroom discussions. Sally improved the student involvement (*cf.* 2.3.4) and this led to a very successful class session where students were actively involved in learning. Freire (2000:75) states that when teachers exchange the role of depositor, prescriber and domesticator for the role of student among students, they undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation.

Sally reflected deeply and decided to change some of her classroom assessment practices (*cf.* 2.3.5). Freire (2000:66) states that reflection and action become imperative when one attempts to separate the content of humanity from its historical forms.

5.3.2 Participant 2: Concerned

The trends noted during Concerned's reflections were that she did not use the self-reflections to her advantage. She did not implement any of the suggestions and feedback she had received. Very little growth was noted in her classroom assessment practices. Freire (2000:39) states that the more radically the person reflects, the more fully they can enter into reality to better transform it. The individual must not be afraid to confront, to listen or see the world unveiled.

Concerned relied on the same teaching method (*cf.* 2.3.5) in the first and second video. She used her questioning skills (*cf.* 2.3.3) very effectively and it led to immediate feedback (*cf.* 2.3.3) and classroom interactions (*cf.* 2.3.4). Her questioning led to the development of higher-order thinking skills (*cf.* 2.3.4).

Concerned had a very high and mature expectancy of her students (*cf.* 2.3.5). She expected them to come to class prepared, to participate, to think and to take responsibility for their own learning (*cf.* 2.3.5).

However, she did not include interactions between students, use self- and peer assessments or include the formative use of summative assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3). She did not use a variety of teaching and learning strategies or consider various strategies to include all learner and learning types (*cf.* 2.3.5). Concerned's classroom approach was mainly lecturer-centred with her as the source of knowledge. It seems as if Concerned was reluctant to change (*cf.* 2.3.5) her classroom assessment strategies.

Freire (2000:66) notes that "true reflection – leads to action". Freire thus explains Concerned's situation. She did not critically reflect on her own practices and thus she did not change her practices as she did not understand the value and necessity of the changes that should have been made. Her conviction needs to be altered by her own understanding of the praxis.

5.3.3 Participant 3: Albert Einstein

The trends noted during AE's reflections were that she is a very experienced lecturer. In both videos she stated the learning outcomes (*cf.* 2.3.3) clearly and used a diagram as a roadmap to guide the class session which linked the outcomes and the content with each other and helped students (*cf.* 2.3.4) find their 'way' in the classroom. AE made use of creative media footage to give life to a theory-rich module (*cf.* 2.3.5).

It was suggested to AE after the first video session that she should use more strategies to encourage student interaction between the lecturer and her students. The student participation (*cf.* 2.3.4) did not improve in the second video session and the lecturer struggled to get the students to answer her questions willingly. In turn, the lack of participation resulted in the insufficient usage of waiting time, feedback and questioning (*cf.* 2.3.4). The lecturer asked higher-order thinking questions (*cf.* 2.3.4) but students did not respond to her. Due to time restrictions, large chunks of content were covered in a short time which made critical student engagement difficult. It is not visible from the videos that were evaluated whether the lecturer encouraged self-reflections (*cf.* 2.3.4), addressed barriers to learning (*cf.* 2.3.4), or instilled a 'success for all' approach (*cf.* 2.3.5).

Self- and peer assessment (*cf.* 2.3.3) were improved slightly. In the second video session AE included a peer assessment activity, although the activity did not really turn out to be effective.

The content in both videos was presented in a lecturer-centred (*cf.* 2.3.5) way where the lecturer spoke and the students had to listen. It was suggested that the lecturer use a larger variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies (*cf.* 2.3.5). It seems as if AE was reluctant to change (*cf.* 2.3.5) her classroom assessment strategies. Freire (2000:83) states that banking education resists dialogue, treats students as objects of assistance and inhibits creativity. From Freire's view, AE was using a banking education approach in her classroom.

5.3.4 Participant 4: Pringle

The trends noted during Pringle's reflections were that she was very inexperienced in the first video session. Pringle's students were not participating (*cf.* 2.3.4) in the planned discussions regardless of the efforts she made to get them involved. She did not allow waiting time (*cf.* 2.3.3) for the students to think about the questions she asked. She answered most of her own questions and the quality of her questions needed attention (*cf.* 2.3.3). She did not give feedback or make use of self- and peer assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3). Her teaching strategy was lecturer-centred where she was the source of knowledge (*cf.* 2.3.5).

In Pringle's second video session, the growth in her classroom practices was evident. Pringle reflected critically on her first video and utilised the feedback she had received. Freire (2000:83) states that "[i]n problem posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality but as a reality in process, in transformation".

Pringle cleaned up her slides and included clear, concise learning outcomes (*cf.* 2.3.3). She made provision for a larger variety of learning styles which were not in line with her own learning style (*cf.*

2.3.5). Pringle's questioning skills (*cf.* 2.3.3) as well as her application of waiting time improved. She also asked questions that facilitated higher-order thinking skills (*cf.* 2.3.4), this linking with her improved usage of waiting time (*cf.* 2.3.3). She made use of self- and peer assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3) although she did not utilise the formative use of summative assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3). Pringle also gave immediate feedback (*cf.* 2.3.3) to close learning gaps students experienced. She initiated good classroom interactions and discussions between her and the students and among the students (*cf.* 2.3.4). Pringle created a positive classroom environment where she used a variation of teaching and learning strategies (*cf.* 2.3.5). Freire (2000:80-81) states that the problem-posing educator constantly reforms his reflections in the reflection of the students. The students are no longer passive listeners but critical co-investigators in the dialogue with the teacher.

It seems as if Pringle's classroom practices were changing from being lecturer-centred to student-centred (*cf.* 2.3.4). Pringle stepped out of her comfort zone and embraced the recommendations she had received and changes subsequently occurred in her classroom.

5.3.5 Participant 5: Lira

Lira withdrew from the study before I could request her video footage and thus no trends were noted in the analysis of her reflections.

5.3.6 Participant 6: Luther

I did not receive any of Luther's documentation and the reflection was based on his academic mentor's views as well as mine. Luther shared the learning outcomes (*cf.* 2.3.3) during the lesson. He asked good-quality questions (*cf.* 2.3.3) and used good examples to explain the content.

However, Luther did not interact (*cf.* 2.3.4) with his students. He used a lecturer-centred (*cf.* 2.3.5) method where he spoke and the students listened. He asked enough higher-order thinking questions (*cf.* 2.3.4) but did not give his students the opportunity to answer his questions as he mostly answered the questions himself. He did not allow sufficient waiting time (*cf.* 2.3.3). He did not give feedback (*cf.* 2.3.3) as he did not note the gaps in their learning. Regarding his role as lecturer, he saw himself as the source of knowledge (*cf.* 2.3.5), which meant that the students were passive.

Luther had an oppressive teaching style described by Freire (2000:72) as the banking concept of education. He approached the students as containers that needed to be filled by his knowledge. He taught (talked) and the students listened. His approach suggested that he knew everything and the students knew nothing; he thought and the students were thought about, he chose and the students complied (Freire, 2000:73).

5.3.7 Summary of the trends discourses

The trends discourses provided the data regarding the research question of how the balanced assessment system unfolds within selected classrooms in a higher education context.

Table 5.1 indicates the summary of the trends discourses. Each participant has a tick block (√) or (X). For a participant to receive a (√) or an (X) they must have used or not used the indicated classroom

assessment practice. Not all the classroom assessment practices are included. Only the main themes which emerged from the data are included. If a lecturer used a classroom assessment skill in such a way where I could not pin it in the one or the other, I did not fill it in. The links to the literature are included in the blocks marked (2.3.3-2.3.5) where I crystallised the findings with the literature.

Table 5.1 Summary of the trends discourses		Sally	Concerned	AE	Pringle	Luther		
2.3.3 The balanced assessment system	Application of waiting time	√			X	√		X
	Questioning skills	√	√		X	√		
	Self- and peer assessments	√		X	X	√		
	Immediate feedback	√	√		X	√		X
	Formative use of summative assessments		X	X			X	
	Stating learning outcomes	√		√	√	√		√
2.3.4 The students' role in classroom assessment	Students are prepared for class	√	√					
	Discourses, involvement, dialogue, interaction and participation.	√	√		X			X
	Higher-order thinking skills	√	√	√		√		√
	Motivation stemming from the interest of lecturers in the students	√				√		
	Addressing barriers to learning		√		X	√		
2.3.5 The lecturers' role in classroom assessment	Changes in professional development	√		X	X	√		X
	Variety of teaching, learning and assessment methods and strategies					√		
	Expectancy or 'success for all' approach	√			X	√		
	All learner and learning types and preferences considered				X	√		
	Reluctance to change		X	√	√		X	
	Lecturer-centred, source of knowledge	√		√	√	√		√
	Positive classroom climate	√			X	√		X

It is evident that in terms of the classroom assessment strategy of questioning and questioning skills, the majority of the participants used questioning effectively in their classrooms. Questioning was the best used aspect of most of the participants' classroom assessment skills (*cf.* 2.3.3). Connected to questioning was the application of waiting time (*cf.* 2.3.3). In half of the participants the skill of giving students time to think and to grasp the question was not applied, especially in classes which were theory-rich modules or in cases where lecturers purposefully focused on teaching specific content. The third aspect which tied in with questioning and waiting time is the issue of giving immediate feedback to students verbally (*cf.* 2.3.3). Due to the link with questioning and waiting time, the practice of giving immediate feedback was not utilised sufficiently by half of the participants. It was noted that self- and peer assessment were not favoured by lecturers with theory-rich modules or in cases where lecturers purposefully focused on teaching specific content. It seemed as if self- and peer assessment were seen as time consuming in these classes (*cf.* 2.3.3). Very few of the lecturers utilised the formative use of summative assessment (*cf.* 2.3.3). This might have been due to the fact that not all authors acknowledge this practice as part of classroom assessment strategies.

With regard to the students' role in classroom assessment, there seems to be a strong link between students who prepared for their classes and the interaction in classes in which classroom discussions occurred (*cf.* 2.3.4). Most of the participants in the study made use of higher-order cognitive questions. There also seems to be a correlation between higher-order thinking skills and classroom discussions (*cf.*

2.3.4). It also shows that students are more likely to participate in classroom discourses if the lecturer displays interest in them and addresses barriers to learning (*cf.* 2.3.4).

In the cases where lecturers embraced the self-reflections and implemented the feedback they received, change occurred (*cf.* 2.3.5). Lecturers who used a variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies (*cf.* 2.3.5), implemented a 'success for all' approach, considered all learner and learning types and created a positive classroom atmosphere were more likely to engage the students in classroom discourses and included self- and peer assessments (*cf.* 2.3.3).

In the study, lecturers who taught mainly with traditional methods where they regarded themselves as the source of knowledge and did not reflect deeply in their self-reflections were found reluctant to change (*cf.* 2.3.5). These participants did not see the value of giving opportunities for classroom discourses or of giving immediate feedback (*cf.* 2.3.3). These participants did not make use of self- and peer assessments either (*cf.* 2.3.3).

5.4 HIDDEN DISCOURSES: UNVEILING THE NARRATIVE REFLECTIONS

The hidden discourses provided the data for the third research question of how classroom assessment develops as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context.

5.4.1 Participant 1: Sally

Freire (2000:51) states that liberation takes the form of a praxis, reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it. The hidden discourses noted during Sally's reflections were the success Sally experienced in the second video session. Sally completed a deep-rooted self-reflection after the first video session which enabled her to construct and change her perception of herself and her classroom assessment practices. There seems to be a connection between Sally's level of reflection and the successes she experienced in her class.

Another hidden discourse seems to be the participation of Sally's academic mentor. Sally's mentor experienced difficulties to complete the reflection on Sally's classroom assessment practices. Additional support was given to the academic mentor, but the level and quality of the feedback received were not very useful. Sally's mentor indicated that he did not understand how to complete the reflection sheet. The mentor also ticked the quantitative scales which were included to direct one's reflection.

I speculate that the academic mentor did not have sufficient time in his schedule to complete the reflection or did not see the value of the study for the participant and the researcher. Other speculations include that the academic mentor did not read the prescribed materials and thus did not understand the core focus of the study or simply did not have the skills to interpret or to do self-reflection.

5.4.2 Participant 2: Concerned

The hidden discourses noted in Concerned's data were that she did not reflect deeply on her own practices. This is evident from the short answers and sections that were left out in the self-reflections. She did not embrace the feedback she had received and continued as she had done before. My speculation is that Concerned was reluctant to change her classroom assessment practices as she perceived them to be good and effective. She would probably state that something that is not broken and is indeed working

should not be fixed. The fact that Concerned is a more experienced lecturer and might also be a reason for the reluctance to change (*cf.* 2.3.5). Freire (2000:62) refers to the duality of the oppressed. On the one hand the lecturers might want to free their students' minds from old beliefs by including higher-order thinking and classroom discourses and on the other hand they themselves might be internalising the oppressor where they become the source of knowledge and are reluctant to change. All lecturers are faced with this duality as they can be seen as both the oppressed and the oppressors.

Concerned noted that some of the questions in the self-reflection were "ambiguous". I am not sure whether Concerned read the literature I gave the participants from Leahy *et al.* (2005), Stiggens (2002) and Brown (2004). The questions in the self-reflection were based on the literature. The participants who read the literature and engaged in deep reflections did not experience the questions as being ambiguous as this matter was clearly discussed in the literature. My speculation is that Concerned did not have sufficient time in her schedule to complete the self-reflection or did not see the value of the study for herself.

5.4.3 Participant 3: Albert Einstein

The hidden discourses noted during AE's reflections were that she did not reflect critically on her own classroom assessment practices. This is evident from the short answers, left out sections and copy and pasted sections in the self-reflections. She did not embrace the feedback she had received and continued to teach as she had before. AE's classroom practices stagnated in certain areas. AE's field of expertise is quantitatively inclined and I am speculating that she did not fully understand, with the support I had given her, what exactly I had expected of her. AE's first video evaluation information had a negative undertone due to the fact that she thought I was not going to give her feedback after the first session. The lecturer did not remember the phases of the PAR cycle when I initially recruited her for the study. A feedback session was arranged where the participant received a copy of my feedback, the comments on her feedback and the mentor's feedback along with notes discussing the phases of the lesson, teaching strategies and a class planning template developed specifically to include assessment for learning strategies.

The final hidden discourse I noted during AE's reflections was the participation of her mentor. AE's mentor experienced difficulties in completing the reflection on AE's classroom assessment practices. Additional support was given to the academic mentor, but the level and the quality of the feedback received were not very useful. AE's mentor indicated that she did not understand how to complete the reflection sheet. The mentor also ticked the quantitative scales which were included to direct one's reflection.

The second hidden discourse I noted during AE's reflections was that the content of AE's second video was exactly the same class content which was captured in the first video, in other words, it was the same class with different students one year later. To a certain extent, it should have been beneficial to her as she had already presented the content, prepared and planned well for the first video session to complete her ICNL Phase II. She received feedback from ADS on the lesson as well as from her mentor and from me. She received recommendations from her mentor and me; she self-reflects on the lesson and had the opportunity to incorporate changes into her second video session. AE presented more or less the

same lesson with minor changes – something that was not possible for all the participants in the study. On the other hand, it can also be seen as a disadvantage for her seeing that we had seen the unfolding of the lesson and might have had memories of the first video session and therefore could have missed some elements of growth.

The third hidden discourse I noted during AE's reflections was that the students were very reluctant to participate in classroom discourses specifically in AE's second video session. Although she made a valiant attempt to get them to participate in discussions and engage them by means of various questions they were still passive. My first question is whether the students were prepared for the class and if they were unprepared, whether this was the main reason for their 'absence'. My second question is whether AE's approach in the classroom – as the source of knowledge, power and the one to whom they should listen, the one who 'knows things' (Freire, 2000:63) – suggested to the students that this is the 'way things are supposed to be'. I am speculating that the students are the empty containers that are filled and in their absolute ignorance are not aware that they are oppressed. There is a 'culture of silence' (Freire, 2000:32) among the students; it is therefore imperative that students are led to the praxis, to truly reflect in order to bring about changing action. Freire (2000:73) indicates that

...the more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them.

AE's mentor indicated that she had experienced problems with the self-reflections after the first video session. After the first video session, I forwarded instructions to AE's mentor with a copy of how I had evaluated her first video and an extract of how another mentor in the study had completed the reflection sheet (assistance given). No growth was noted in the mentor, neither were there any improvements in the quality of the feedback from video 1 to video 2. It also seems as if she did not read the literature or the instructions as most of the quantitative scales in the questions were filled in. These scales were provided to encourage reflections and were not to be used quantitatively in any way. The mentor's comments did not help the participant at all seeing that they were limited and incomplete.

I am speculating that the academic mentor did not have sufficient time in her schedule to complete the reflection or did not see the value of the study for the participant and the researcher. Other speculations include that the academic mentor did not read the prescribed materials and thus did not understand the core focus of the study or simply did not have the skills to interpret or do a self-reflection. Also, the mentor teaches statistics, with a very strong inclination towards quantitative research. I am not sure whether she understood how to use a qualitative questionnaire. I was very grateful for the effort, time and willingness of the academic mentor who agreed to participate in my study, but I had to seek an understanding of all the aspects of my data to gain a better understanding of the research problem.

5.4.4 Participant 4: Pringle

The hidden discourses noted during Pringle's reflections were the growth and transformation that occurred in Pringle's teaching, learning and assessment practices in her second video session. Freire (2000:100) indicates that the praxis occurs when human beings reflect and act to truly transform reality.

Pringle reflected critically on her first video and subsequently brought about change through her action, as shown in her second video. There seems to be a connection between Pringle's level of reflection and the successes she experienced in her class as can be seen in the second video.

Another hidden discourse seems to be the participation of Pringle's academic mentor. He took the time to provide constructive and valuable feedback which guided her personal development. Pringle's mentor valued his role as a mentor and supported and motivated Pringle. He played a very large role in her personal development journey. Pringle was very fortunate to have such a committed senior lecturer to guide her.

5.4.5 Participant 5: Lira

Lira withdrew from the study before I could request her video footage and thus no reflections analysis was done. The hidden discourses noted were whether Lira's own studies were the real reason for withdrawing from this study. My speculation is that she withdrew from the study because she thought that, in view of her full schedule and the pressure to complete her own post-graduate studies, this study would take up too much of her valuable time.

5.4.6 Participant 6: Luther

The hidden discourses noted during Luther's reflections were that he did not return the documentation to me to continue with the research process. After he ignored various attempts to contact him, visits to his office and email messages, I was forced to withdraw him as a participant from the study.

My speculations regarding the lack of involvement from Luther are that he did not see the value of the study for himself or for me, the researcher. I suspect that Luther did not have sufficient time in his schedule to complete the reflection. I also think that the incentive of personal development my study offered was perhaps not attractive enough to gain his full attention.

5.4.7 Summary of the hidden discourses

The hidden discourses provided the data for the research question of how classroom assessment develops as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context. Certain patterns emerged from the hidden discourses of the participants. First of all, there seems to be a significant linkage between the level of self-reflection and professional growth in the participants. In the case of Sally and Pringle, who undertook critical and deep-rooted self-reflections, growth and change were evident and led to improved classroom practices. In contrast, Concerned's and AE's self-reflections were not very intensive and change and growth were not very evident. The deeper, more honest and more authentic the participants' self-reflections were, the more evident the growth and changes that manifested. The degree to which the participants understood and valued the PAR process also had an influence on the quality of their reflections.

The second pattern that emerged from the hidden discourses of the participants was that the more experienced the lecturers were, the less inclined they were to engage in critical reflections. I am not sure whether the reason for this can be that experienced lecturers have a better understanding of themselves

as assessors and are not very open to changes and critique because they feel they have ample experience.

The third pattern that emerged from the hidden discourses of the participants was the role their academic mentors played during their self-reflections and feedback. The academic mentors played an important supporting function in the professional development of new lecturers and if they were effective and considered their roles as being valuable and not just as 'another thing they must do', positive changes manifested. Their support was valuable but was not an essential criterion for growth to occur in the classroom assessment practices of the participants. For instance, one can consider the role Pringle's and Sally's mentors played in the study: Pringle's mentor was deeply involved in the study and Sally's mentor was mostly absent, but growth occurred in both of these cases. The praxis occurs once the participant commits to reflection and action.

The fourth pattern emerging from the hidden discourses of the participants was related to the time constraints and pressure all lecturers operate under, the lack of interest and gains in the study, the inability of participants and academic mentors to follow simple instructions and to critically reflect, and the systemic oppression to which they are subjected.

The final discourses noted were the students' passivity to participate in classroom discussions (due to lecturer-centred approaches), the under-preparedness of students, the same class and same content scenarios that were used and the real reasons why some of the participants withdrew from the study.

5.5 CONCLUSION

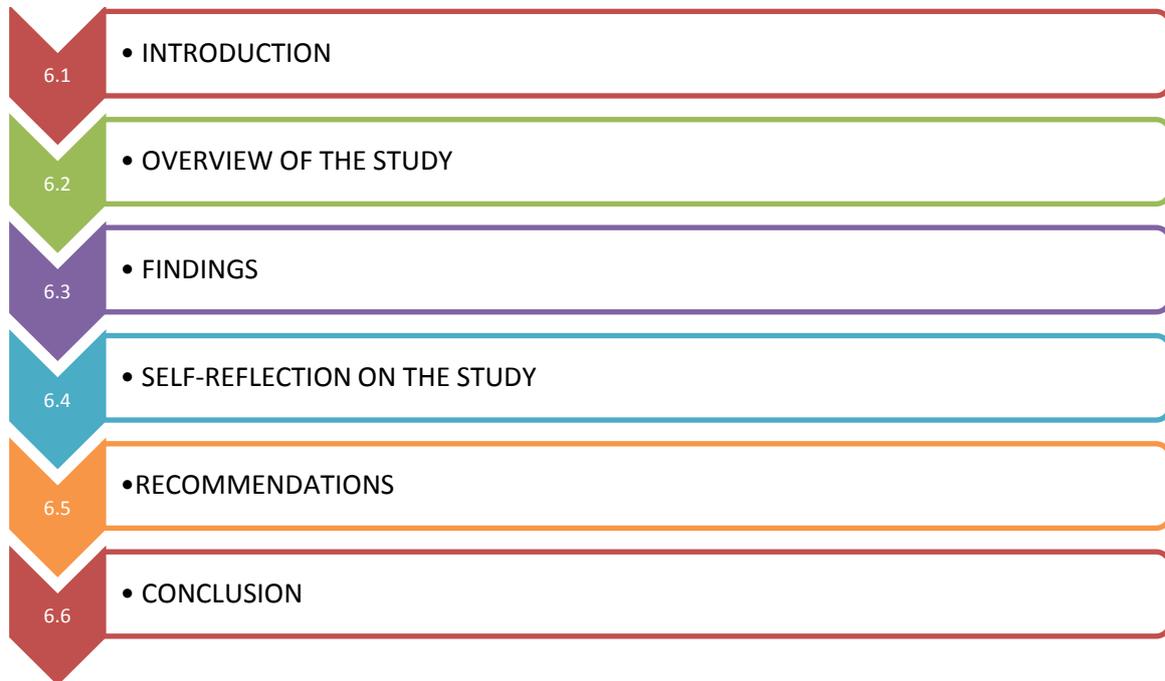
In this chapter the data analysis process and interpretation of the data gathered were presented and analysed in three phases or three discourses, namely the narrative discourses, the trends discourses and the hidden discourses. The narrative and trends discourses provided the data for the research question of how classroom assessment developed as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context. The trends discourses provided the data for the research question of how the balanced assessment system unfolded within selected classrooms in a higher education context. The hidden discourses provided the data for the research question of how classroom assessment developed as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context.

The following and final chapter will conclude with the findings and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER LAYOUT



*“The time has come to accept in our hearts and minds
that with freedom comes responsibility.”
~ Nelson Mandela (2011:108)*

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The international status of classroom assessment is described as practices “in mayhem”, “dismal” and “in disarray” (Knight, 2002:275; Stiggins 2001:5). Stiggins (2001:5) contends that this has been the state of affairs of classroom assessment for decades. Most of the previous research conducted to determine the status of classroom assessment was conducted at school level and not in the higher education context (*cf.* 2.3.2).

In this study I set out to critically reflect on the nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context. Through the study I also sought to answer the following questions:

- How does the balanced assessment system unfold within selected classrooms in a higher education context?
- How does classroom assessment develop as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context?
- What is the nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context?

New movements in the field of assessment call for a balanced approach to classroom assessment (*cf.* 2.3.3) where summative assessments are balanced with formative assessments and teachers/lecturers move away from traditional forms of assessment towards continuous and authentic forms of assessment (*cf.* 2.3.3). By means of participatory action research I encouraged lecturers to reflect critically on their own classroom assessment practices (*cf.* 2.2.3). The lecturers engaged in critical discourses regarding their teaching, learning and assessment strategies and subsequently engaged in transformative actions prompted by their critical reflections (*cf.* 2.2.3). Freire's (2000:95) statement that "the revolutionary leaders do not bring the message of salvation, but through dialogue come to know [and] understand their objective situation and awareness of the situation" is very apt in this context.

In this final chapter an overview of the study, the findings and recommendations are presented.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The overview of this research provides a summary of what each of the chapters of this study entailed.

Chapter 1 introduced the layout of this study. The background to the study and the review of the scholarly literature were briefly discussed, and the research questions, purpose, research design and methodology and research paradigm of the study were provided, together with the qualitative research design. The conceptual framework and the methodology, methods and processes were also briefly introduced.

In Chapter 2, a review of relevant literature was conducted regarding the theoretical perspectives in the field of the nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context. Two main areas were discussed, curriculum praxis and classroom assessment. In the curriculum praxis the technical, practical and emancipatory interest were explored. In classroom assessment, the status of classroom assessment, the balanced assessment system, and the students' and the lecturers' role in classroom assessment were also discussed.

Chapter 3 focused on research design and methodology. The research design, participatory action research (PAR), the paradigmatic position, processes of data generation and data analysis were elaborated on.

Chapter 4 presented the systemic oppression discourses, which was a deviation from the original PAR cycle, and included a brief discussion on the deviation discourses which occurred in course of the research. This provided a rationale for the chapter and gave the reader insight into the background and context of the research participants' environment. It also introduced the research participants and their perceptions on key issues connected with this study. The chapter gave voice to the participants – as they were co-researchers and after various interactions with them, I decided to give voice to an issue that concerned them.

Chapter 5 described the data analysis and interpretation. The data analysis was presented in three phases: the narrative discourses, the trends discourses and the hidden discourses.

The hidden discourses provided the data for the research question of how classroom assessment developed as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context. The trends discourses

provided the data for the research question of how the balanced assessment system unfolded within selected classrooms in a higher education context. The hidden discourses provided the data for the research question of how classroom assessment developed as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context.

6.3 FINDINGS

The findings of the study will be discussed in three parts addressing the three research questions.

6.3.1 The status of classroom assessment

The first research question of what the status is of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context can be answered theoretically by referring to the review of the scholarly literature (*cf.* 2.3.2).

According to the literature, assessment is one the most frequently criticised parts of the education system and also the most politicised of all processes since issues of power are at stake (Reynolds & Trehan, 2000:267; Pryor *et al.*, 2002:673). Authors such as Knight (2002:275) and Stiggins (2001:5) refer to practices “in mayhem”, “dismal” and “in disarray”. Vandeyar and Killen (2007:101) state that South African teachers are reluctant to change their classroom assessment practices: they are unwilling and unable to adapt their assessment practices, because they are “unaware of the need for change [and] the perceptions they hold regarding teaching, learning and assessment are no longer relevant”.

Too often, teaching, learning and assessment in higher education are reduced to examinations-driven teaching, rote learning and memorisation of textbooks. Cross (1996:403) calls for a shift in classroom assessment from assessment for accountability towards assessment for improvement by using assessment to improve learning.

In the narrative discourses (*cf.* 5.2) detailed events of classroom assessment practices were narrated. The status of higher education classrooms in my study is in line with the descriptions given by authors such as Knight (2002:275) and Stiggins (2001:5). The teaching, learning and assessment practices of the participants in my study, who work in the field of higher education, are mostly reduced to examination-driven teaching, rote learning and lecturer-centred approaches. Only after I had introduced the strategies for balanced classroom assessment practices to my participants did growth and improvement manifest.

In my study the lecturers’ unwillingness and inability to adapt their assessment practices (*cf.* Vandeyar & Killen, 2001:101) was also noticed, especially in the more experienced and/or older lecturers who displayed a reluctance to change. An advantage of using new lecturers in the study was that they were very open to trying new things and openly embraced suggestions to improve their classroom practices. It was also in the practices of the inexperienced new lecturers where the most growth occurred. The inexperienced new lecturers also engaged in deeper critical reflections, resulting in actions and change.

6.3.2 The balanced assessment system unfolded

The second research question of how the balanced assessment system unfolds within selected classrooms in a higher education context can be addressed theoretically by referring to the review of the scholarly literature (*cf.* 2.3.3).

The term 'balanced assessment system' was introduced by Stiggins (2001:13) to explain the paradigm shifts in assessment. The paradigm shifts are various movements in the measurement community, for example the shift from AOL to AFL and assessment as learning (AAL) or the shift from summative assessments to more formative approaches which occur on a daily basis. The most relevant paradigm shift, which is directly in line with the underpinning of this study, is the shift from behaviourist orientations to liberating assessments (Beets & Le Grange, 2005b:115). Classroom assessment should thus be student-centred in nature which includes strategies like sharing the learning targets with students, the use of verbal questioning and feedback, the inclusion of self- and peer assessments and the formative use of summative assessments (Meyer *et al.*, 2010:56-57).

In the trends discourses (*cf.* 5.3) the trends emerging from the narrative analysis of the classroom assessment practices were analysed. The term 'balanced assessment system' was introduced by Stiggins (2001:13) to explain the paradigm shifts in assessment. The majority of the lecturers who participated in the study were inclined to use traditional assessment methods and their practices could not be considered to be balanced (*cf.* 5.3).

Classroom assessment should thus be student-centred in nature, which includes strategies like sharing the learning targets with students, the use of verbal questioning and feedback, the inclusion of self- and peer assessments and the formative use of summative assessments (Meyer *et al.*, 2010:56-57).

With regard to the classroom assessment strategy of questioning and questioning skills, it was evident that the majority of the participants used questioning effectively in their classrooms. Questioning was the strongest aspect of most of the participants' classroom assessment skills. Connected to questioning was the application of waiting time. Half of the participants did not apply the skill of giving students time to think and to grasp the question. This was especially the case in classes which were based on theory-rich modules or in cases where lecturers purposefully focused on teaching specific content. The third aspect which ties in with questioning and waiting time is the issue of giving immediate verbal feedback to students. Due to the link between questioning and waiting time, the practice of giving immediate feedback was not utilised sufficiently by the half of the participants. It was noted that lecturers with theory-rich modules did not favour self- and peer assessment; the same applied to cases where lecturers purposefully focused on teaching specific content. In these classes self- and peer assessment were apparently regarded as being too time-consuming. Very few of the lecturers utilised the formative use of summative assessment. Most of the lecturers in the study displayed a preference for lecturer-centred classroom assessment practices (*cf.* 5.3). The implications of this finding is that if most of the participants favoured lecturer-centred classroom assessment practices, the status of classroom assessment in my study can be viewed as out of balance and inclined towards traditional assessment practices not in line with new trends.

6.3.3 Classroom assessment as emancipatory praxis

The third research question of how classroom assessment develops as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context can be addressed theoretically by referring to the review of the scholarly literature (*cf.* 2.3.4-2.3.5).

The students are central to the process of teaching and learning and thus the role they play during classroom assessment. When classroom assessments are student-centred, the assessments inform students of their own learning (Stiggins, 2005:328, 2006:15; Carless, 2007b:44). Classrooms that are student-centred encourage student involvement (Taras, 2002:506-7) as they are seen as equal partners in the learning process, who take the responsibility for their own learning. In these classrooms students are part of the communication process and are encouraged to participate in record keeping. In order for classrooms to become student-centred, lecturers have to understand their students. In the trends discourses it became evident that most of the participants in the study made use of higher-order cognitive questions. There also seems to be a correlation between higher-order thinking skills and classroom discourses. It also shows that students are more likely to participate in classroom discourses if the lecturer displays interest in the students and addresses barriers to learning (*cf.* 5.4).

Student-centred classrooms deliver students who are self-regulatory, who use self-efficacy and are goal-oriented, all contributing to growth and development in the student. This links with Freire's critical theory which holds that human activity consists of action and reflection, praxis to transform their world (Freire, 2000:125). Reflection in turn leads to higher-order thinking skills, problem solving and life-long learning (Taras, 2002:508; Klenowski, 2009:267, Carless, 2005:40, 2007a:2). The literature shows that students display a preference for classroom discourses (Stiggins, 2006:15; Black & Wiliam, 1998a:144, 2004:19; Carless, 2005:42, 2007a:42), and this is in line with social constructivism, which is the underpinning theory of assessment for learning (Taras 2009:3016; Carless 2005:44). In the study of Botha *et al.* (2005:73), the students expressed an interest in more interaction such as class discussion which stimulated them and forced them to think.

The trends discourses indicated that when the students' role in classroom assessment is considered, there seems to be a strong link between students who prepared for their classes and the interaction in classes in which classroom discourses occurred (*cf.* 5.4). In the cases where lecturers embraced the self-reflections and implemented the feedback they received, change occurred. Lecturers who used a variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies, implemented a 'success for all' approach, considered all learner and learning types and created a positive classroom atmosphere were more likely to engage the students in classroom discourses and included self-and peer assessments (*cf.* 5.3-5.4). In the current study, lecturers who taught mainly with traditional methods with the lecturer being the source of knowledge and who did not reflect deeply in their self-reflections displayed reluctance to change. These participants did not see the value of giving opportunities for classroom discourses or of giving immediate feedback. These participants did not make use of self-and peer assessments either (*cf.* 5.3-5.4).

With regard to the lecturer's role in classroom assessment, the literature points to the need for both teachers' and students' assessment competencies or literacy and states that the need is growing daily (Stiggins, 2006:19; 2008:290, Popham, 2006). There is a lack of professional development (Black &

William, 1998a; Carless, 2007a:40; William, 2011:5; Klenowski, 2009:265; Stiggins, 1999a:192, 1999b, 2002:765, 2008:290). The educator's perception of him-/herself as an assessor is problematic as changes in such educator's perceptions are needed. Any efforts to eliminate and change educators' perceptions and pedagogical practices by means of professional development are destined to fail unless these perceptions of lecturers are voiced, acknowledged, contested and eventually changed (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007:101). Pryor *et al.* (2002:675) argue that even when there is a willingness from teachers to embrace new ideas about assessment, their enthusiasm is hindered by the lack of training and the deep-rooted perceptions of teachers which are in conflict with the underpinning values of the new assessment order. Vandeyar and Killen (2007:107-108) report another barrier relating to teacher perceptions: experienced teachers' resistance to and reluctance to accept change. They report that some teachers are still embracing old educational paradigms because they are struggling to grasp changes and new implementations in the curriculum. These teachers are all following a product approach to the curriculum and they do not approve of the view that classroom assessment should support learning. These authors reported that such teachers "reinforced differences between learners"; "their assessment practices were driven by ignorance and prejudice" and they "did not have a deep understanding of assessment practices" (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007:107-108). Pryor *et al.* (2002:677) refer to teachers' lack of a sense of themselves as agents in the educational process. Due to the demanding nature of assessment most lecturers will spend one third of their time on assessment. Emerging from the hidden discourses of the participants in my study, it became apparent that the more experienced the lecturers were, the less likely they were to engage in critical reflections. I am not sure whether the reason for this can be that experienced lecturers have a better understanding of themselves as assessors and are not very open to changes and critique because of their experience (*cf.* 5.4.7).

There is also a call for the utilisation of various teaching, learning and assessment methods and strategies. Issues such as the needs of individuals, self-reflection (Beets & Le Grange, 2005a:1202), staff motivation, self-reflection and integrating assessment with teaching and learning practices (Carless, 2005:47, 2007a:9) must be addressed. From the hidden discourses, it became evident that there seems to be a significant linkage between the level of self-reflection and professional growth in the participants in my study. In cases where participants engaged in critical and deep-rooted self-reflections, growth and change were evident and led to improved classroom practices. The more honest and authentic the participants were in the self-reflections, and the more deeply they engaged in these reflections, the more evident the growth and changes became (*cf.* 5.4.7).

Freire explains that praxis has two dimensions, namely reflection and action. He contends that liberation is a praxis, and that the actions and reflections of men and women upon their world are needed to transform it (2000:79). To have a curriculum informed by praxis would mean that elements of action, reflection and praxis must be visible. This means that our curriculum will promote praxis instead of a product or process approach. It suggests that the curriculum itself will develop through continuous action and reflections. Our curriculum would not only be a set of plans that must be implemented, but must rather be an active process in the real world in which emancipation and change enable social construction and discourses are visible (Grundy, 1987:114-118).

Curriculum praxis was discussed based on the works of Grundy (1987) who used Habermas's technical interest, practical interest and the emancipatory interest to convey a clear understanding of various perceptions regarding the curriculum (see Table 2.2). The technical interest is also called the curriculum-as-plan or curriculum-as-product. The technical interest is underpinned by theories of positivism and behaviourism. The focus of the technical interest is on effective teaching. The basic characteristics of the technical interest are control, prediction, rules, linearity, plans, management, power, memorisation, repetition, depositing knowledge, and the teacher as the source of knowledge.

The practical interest is also called the curriculum-as-practice or the curriculum-as-process. The practical interest is underpinned by theories of constructivism, interpretivism and cognitivism. The focus of the practical interest is on effective learning. The basic characteristics of the practical interest are understanding, enlightenment, communication, flexibility, experimenting, analysis, interaction, shared responsibilities, discourses, student-centredness and the teacher as mediator.

The emancipatory interest is also called the curriculum-as-praxis. The emancipatory interest is underpinned by critical pedagogy. The focus of the emancipatory interest is on emancipation from oppressive powers or conditions. The basic characteristics of the emancipatory interest are autonomy, liberation, freedom, change, justice, reform, democracy, praxis, action, reflection, critical dialogues, student-teachers and teacher-students.

Grundy (1987:99) states that the technical interest is not compatible with the emancipatory interest but it is compatible with the practical interest. If one considers the characteristics of both the practical and emancipatory interest and looks at AFL and AAL, one sees that there are many similarities between the two curriculum approaches and classroom assessment strategies. The emancipatory interest and AAL highlight the best qualities concerning the practical interest and AFL but include issues of social responsibility and emancipation. I would like to keep to the two main categories of classification of product/AOL on the one side of the scale and the process/AFL and praxis/AAL on the other end of the scale (see Table 2.2).

6.4 SELF-REFLECTION ON THE STUDY

In agreement with the underpinning and the nature of this study, it seemed appropriate to include a self-reflection on my experiences in the study.

The main issues that I encountered were that most lecturers, new or experienced, me included, are functioning under time constraints and enormous pressures. We all struggle to keep to impossible deadlines, balancing our teaching and research loads while trying to maintain a healthy family life as well (see Addendums H-I). For these reasons, I found that lecturers were very difficult participants to have in a study. Full time schedules, multi-tasking and insufficient planning were issues which caused untold frustration and worry. We are all oppressed by a system from which we are trying to emancipate our students (*cf.* 4.4.7-4.4.10). We will never get away from our duality of being both the oppressed and the oppressor but we can try our utmost to teach with critical pedagogy in mind (*cf.* 2.2.3).

Another challenge I experienced had to do with the video camera equipment and software I had to use for my study. I had to borrow equipment and was dependent on video assistants for the video footage. At times the quality of the videos I received was not adequate or errors occurred that made the reviewing of footage problematic. If I make use of video footage in my further studies I would invest in my own equipment and ensure that I have backed up copies of footage. I would also consider the use of field notes along with the footage.

The gains I am taking from this study will be the deepened understanding of how reflective practices are crucial if one wants to change one's own classroom assessment practices. I have undergone tremendous academic and personal growth during the last year and my faith has grown much stronger. I had to learn to prioritise and manage my own time and my time with my family efficiently. I will also take the reflective skills I have gained during the study to critically reflect on my own classroom practices to bring about change, discourses and empowerment in my classroom context.

Some of my participants are now my friends. My relationships grew most with the participants who critically reflected on my study. The reason for this is probably that they validated my study. I am now part of a community of practice and understanding where we can voice our concerns and let our opinions be heard. One of my participants was appointed permanently as a result of her participation and the growth she experienced in this study.

My experiences of using PAR as a methodology are that due to the flexible nature of PAR, you never know what can happen and what you will have to include in your study. In my case the additional chapter I included (Chapter 4) gave a voice to the frustrations of my participants.

My experiences of using critical theory as the underpinning of my study were mind-altering. The *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2000) disrupted my being in a sense that I feel I can never again be that same naïve person who started this study. At times, I felt conflicted with Freire's pedagogy or unsure if I wanted to be a 'revolutionary leader' due to the fact that I had to point out issues which might offend my participants and colleagues.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations will be discussed according to the research questions, recommendations for further studies and the future of classroom assessment.

6.5.1 Recommendations in terms of the research questions

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- New lecturers are more likely to be open to feedback and suggestions and to engage in critical reflections. It is suggested that reflective practices be included in the content of the ICNL programme.

- In the study, most of the lecturers used questioning skills effectively up to a point, but did not effectively use waiting time or give effective verbal feedback in class. Very few participants saw the value of self- or peer assessments (or used them) and almost none of the participants used formative assessments in a summative way. The purpose and value of these classroom assessment strategies ought to be addressed in the ICNL courses.
- Lecturers need to understand the importance of classroom discourse and involve students as partners in the teaching, assessment and learning process. Lecturers need to focus on developing higher-order thinking skills in their students. Lecturers also need to understand that their beliefs about their students' learning can be the determining factor in learning successes. Lecturers also need to understand what it entails to truly teach in a student-centred way. All of these aspects should be addressed in the content of the ICNL programme.

6.5.2 The gaps in and suggestions for NWU's ICNL process

Most of the gaps identified in the recommendations articulated in the research questions can be addressed in the ICNL courses. It is therefore suggested that the current structure of the ICNL process be revised as it does not meet the needs of lecturers. Some lecturers felt oppressed by the structures that were established to help them. The impact of these findings might well be extended beyond the limited participants used in the study.

It is suggested that dedicated research relating to new lecturers and the improvement of academic staff induction programmes along with CPD be undertaken within the ADS structures. It must be borne in mind that "[n]ew lecturers are under researched and poorly understood occupation groups" (Murray, 2005:68). From this study it is evident that if new lecturers are guided and made aware of certain facets of teaching, learning and assessments through reflective practices, growth will definitely occur. If the quality of the NWU induction and CPD programmes can be improved, the status of our classroom practices will also improve.

Further gaps noted in the systemic oppression discourses were that the majority of the lecturers who participated in the study did not see the link between the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning. This is problematic as it is uncertain whether they perceived these as separate entities. I am concerned about the fact that only one lecturer knew that one's perception regarding curriculum will influence how one perceives assessment. This indicated major gaps in the knowledge of the frontline lecturing staff of NWU and need to be addressed by the ICNL process.

Most of the views of the participants were in line with a product approach. Some of the participants understood the value of the strategies of AFL. The problem regarding this approach is that one cannot see the curriculum as a product but use AFL, as these are not conceptually or methodologically compatible. A paradigm shift towards a balanced approach is thus needed. The participants did not understand what the curriculum entails, its underpinnings and the fact that they should have a view, perception or understanding of it.

Based on the participants' experiences it seemed as if the university, via the ICNL processes, does not give clear guidelines and directions to new lecturers regarding their stance on curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning. It is evident that this can contribute to new lecturers being confused and unsure as to how to approach these issues. New lecturers will not be able to formulate their own opinions and perceptions regarding curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning if they do not understand how NWU perceives the curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning. These lecturers are uninformed about the essence of their daily teaching, learning and assessment practices and are remaining in the 'culture of silence'. These are serious discrepancies that urgently need to be addressed.

In the following discussion I offer suggestions on how the current ICNL programme can be improved to better meet the needs of new academic staff entering into employment at NWU.

It is suggested that when new lecturers arrive at NWU they should undergo a compulsory competency evaluation. This can consist of an informal discussion between ADS, a senior academic staff member in the subject field of the new lecturer and the new lecturer. A video recording of the first class sessions can be captured and evaluated by all parties by means of a carefully developed instrument (format of a checklist).

The lecturers, ADS and the senior academic staff member can then categorise the new lecturer as 'not yet competent', 'competent' or 'experienced' according to three main criteria (see Table 6.1). The level of 'not yet competent' indicates to NWU that the lecturer needs development and that certain interventions need to be implemented. If a lecturer is certified as 'competent', they would still need to adhere to continuous professional development regarding the gaps in their experience or educational knowledge. When a lecturer is certified as being 'experienced', they would still have to participate in continuous professional development in order for them to grow and not stagnate in their teaching and learning practices. Academic mentors should also undergo a mentoring training course to realise and understand their role in the development of new lecturers.

All lecturers should be individually evaluated according to their own experiences to understand their further developmental potential.

Table 6.1: Competency placement of new lecturers

Criteria	Not yet competent	Competent	Experienced	Progression options
Experienced in teaching and learning	No/little/limited teaching and learning experience	Relevant teaching and learning experience	Years of teaching and learning experience	Complete workshops (ADS CDP) and phases of ICNL.
Educational qualification(s)	No educational qualifications	PGCE or similar	BEd Hons or higher	Complete post-graduate qualification in HE
Educational background	No HE background or school level teaching background (teacher) OR Relevant school level background (teacher)	Relevant HE background (other HE institutions, or NWU part-time lecturer)	Knowledge of HE + NWU background (experienced lecturer transferred from other campus or other HE institution)	Complete relevant ICNL phases

It is suggested that ICNL Phase I should be divided into two separate work sessions where Part 1 is kept in its original format, dealing with an introduction to NWU, relevant policies and a basic orientation towards teaching, learning and assessment. It is suggested that Part 1 is still organised and presented by

the institutional ADS. It is suggested that the advisors from the various ADS campus units be utilised to present topics in the workshops in their areas of expertise. The practical sessions are found to be valuable and must be continued. Support groups or websites can be included to support lecturers and form part of a community of engagement for new lecturers regarding issues of concern to new lecturers and to encourage a sense of collaboration and a community of practice.

ICNL Phase I Part 2 can be dedicated to deep-rooted discourses on the curriculum, programme development, teaching, learning, assessment and reflective practices. The discourses mentioned in this part should be presented by educational specialists in the specific fields to encourage a deeper understanding of the topics.

ICNL Phase II should be aligned across campuses regarding specific outcomes. It must still be presented at campus level (to keep the campuses' specific niches) but standardised outcomes need to be set to improve consistency. A flexible component regarding competency development should also be implemented linking the workshops presented and CPD. The classroom capturing and evaluation can be replaced by a transparent self-, peer and mentor reflection of the session with constructive feedback aimed at positive professional development. A strong emphasis must be placed on the supporting function of ADS and professional academic development must be highlighted.

ICNL Phase III can be divided into elective options, the first option being a course on general philosophy and the other on educational philosophy. The second option should be for experienced lecturers to get exemption from or recognition for the course if they can provide evidence of their competency via articles published or assignments (presentations or portfolios) to be completed.

It is recommended that only after a lecturer has completed all the ICNL phases or where they are declared 'experienced' in all fields that only then they be allowed to compete in the ITEA (institutional teaching excellence awards). The ITEA are prestige awards lecturers can apply for voluntarily (every four years) to gain a rating as an excellent lecturer. The ITEA candidates have to supply evidence of their competence and three levels of excellence are defined to merit an ITEA award. It is also recommended that the professional developments completed by lecturers be captured in the same format as our students' academic records to ensure proof of their competencies.

Another recommendation is that an additional phase should be introduced to include all aspects (core modules) that are needed for lecturers to attain a post-graduate qualification in higher education.

If the competencies are recorded in a CPD recording system and the lecturers have completed all the relevant phases, they can acquire a teaching degree in higher education.

It is important to note that all lecturers are (supposed to be) life-long learners and researchers. In order to keep up with the demands of the students, new teaching and learning pedagogies and new technologies, it is important for lecturers to be agents of change management and ensure that they continuously

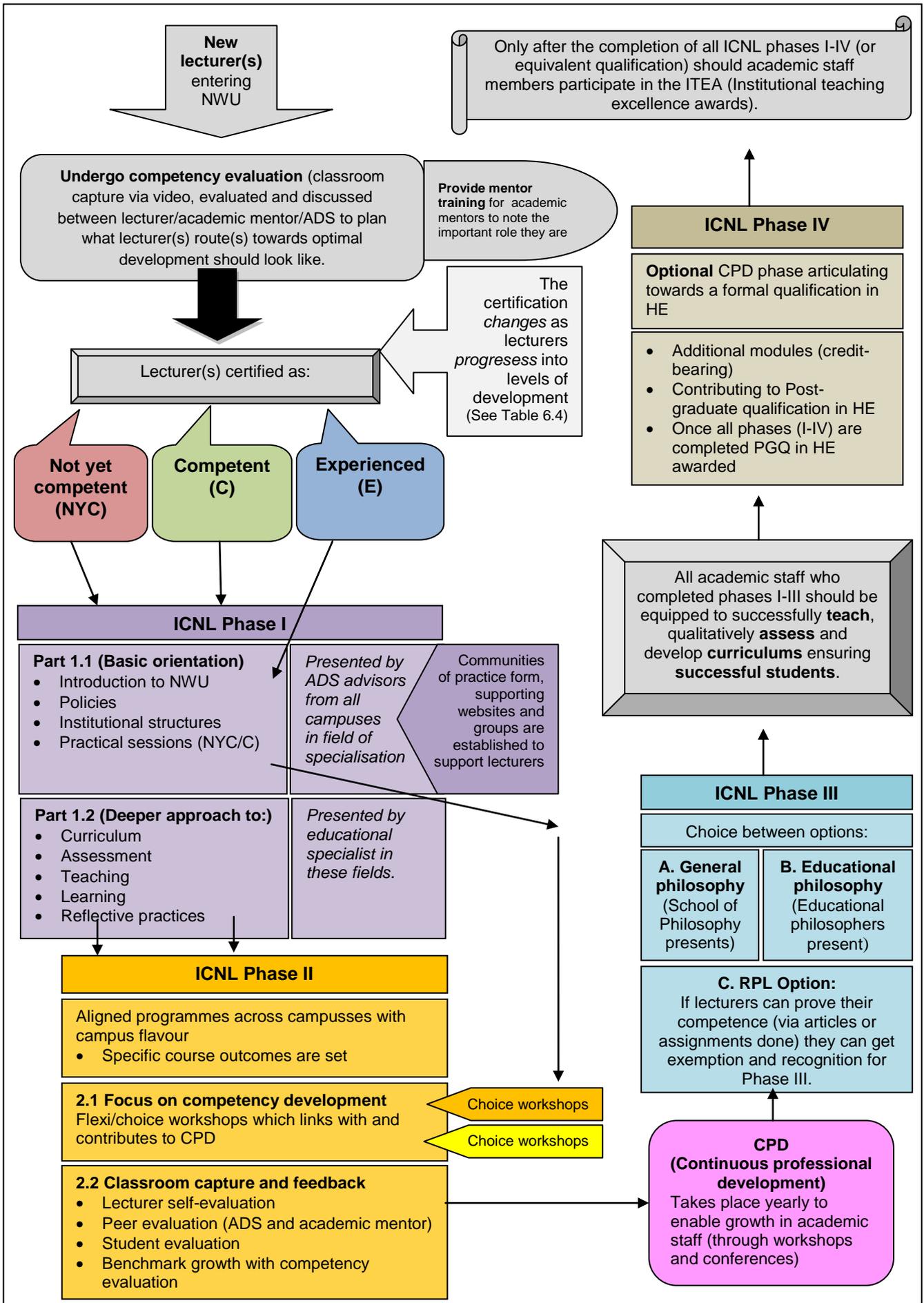


Figure 6.1: Visual proposal for improved model for the ICNL courses

develop professionally. No lecturer should have the perception that once they have completed the ICNL phases they need do no more. Continuous professional development is, as the term suggests, continuous in nature.

It is advised that ADS VTC, with regard to ICNL Phase II, understand the nature of their oppressive authoritarian behaviour and authentically reflect upon their practice to transform and bring about positive change. If ADS decide that they will continue to ignore this need, deny the lecturers the right to speak and refrain from critical reflective discourses, they should consider deeply looking into what they stand for.

It is not my purpose to tarnish the name of ADS but in line with the nature of this study I must fight alongside the people for the recovery of the people's stolen humanity (Freire, 2000:95).

6.5.3 Recommendations for further research

It is suggested that further research, based on this study, be done on the following topics:

- The unwillingness of experienced lecturers to change their classroom assessment practices
- The extent to which new or experienced lecturers' classroom assessment practices can be improved if they make use of reflective teaching and the emancipatory interest
- The development of a model for the implementation of assessment as learning in specific curriculums

6.5.4 Recommendations regarding the future of classroom assessment

According to my knowledge gained through this study, and considering the views, perceptions and approaches of the participants, it does not seem as if classroom assessment practices will change dramatically over the next few years unless the lecturers themselves can gain an understanding of the values improved practices will offer through their own experiences as well as a change in their perceptions. Support structures such as the ADS units should continue to present workshops to eradicate 'poverty of practice' (Black *et al.*, 1998) and 'assessment illiteracy' (Popham, 2006; 2009) and make the lecturers aware of the benefits derived from making use of such support. It all comes down to the old saying, "You can talk the talk, but can you walk the walk?" If lecturers do not grasp the value of classroom assessment, it is unlikely that they will purposefully use it.

It is strongly suggested that development programmes with a strong focus on reflective teaching practices, where lecturers can experience the benefits of classroom assessment practice first hand, be introduced. In this way lecturers will hopefully manage to keep the revolutionary spirit alive and bring to life the scholarship of assessment (through the scholarship of teaching and learning).

6.6 CONCLUSION

It was evident from this study that the research question regarding the nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context was answered by addressing three secondary questions.

The first (secondary) research question on the status of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context was answered by indicating that the status of classroom assessment was in line with

the what the literature states, namely that classroom assessment practices were “in mayhem” and “in disarray”. The dominant lecturing method remains the lecturer-centred method of ‘chalk and talk’ and summative assessments, with the lecturer as the source of knowledge in classrooms. Very little utilisation of classroom dialogues, self- and peer assessments and verbal feedback was noted on the part of the participants.

The second (secondary) research question of how the balanced assessment system unfolded in selected classrooms in a higher education context could be answered by stating that very few changes were noted in the classroom assessment practices of the participants to suggest evidence of a paradigm shift. Most of the participants still employed traditional assessment methods instead of authentic, fit for purpose assessment methods. The situations in the HE classrooms in the study were in line with the findings presented in the literature.

The third (secondary) question of how classroom assessment developed as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context could be answered as most of the participants appeared to adhere to the curriculum-as-a-product approach. This links with traditional approaches and the unwillingness of the experienced participants to change their classroom assessment methods. It was noted that the inexperienced lecturers engaged in deeper critical reflection and growth and various improvements were evident. It was obvious that the change only occurred if the participants reflected effectively to bring about transformative actions.

It is suggested that to improve classroom assessment practices NWU needs to understand the value of classroom assessment and include its use in policies concerning assessment practices. Changes ought to be made to current induction programme structures to include deeper knowledge inquiry into teaching, learning, assessment and reflective practices, to equip frontline staff to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.

To improve classroom assessment practices lecturers ought to be change agents. Change begins with the lecturers – they should be open to renewing their thinking, teaching, learning and assessment. Lecturers ought to embrace self-reflective practices and team up with their students. Furthermore, lecturers need to understand their 21st century students and engage with them in dialogue, thus stimulating critical thinking skills and fostering life-long learning in these students.

To improve classroom assessment practices students ought to understand that assessment can be a learning opportunity instead of oppressive actions designed to make them suffer. Students need to take responsibility for their own learning, self-reflect on their learning and become life-long learners who are free and can make a difference in their communities.

I would like to conclude this study with a statement from Paulo Freire (2000:51): “[L]iberation can only be done by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.”

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ADDENDUMS



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Fakulteit Opvoedingswetenskappe
Faculty of Education Sciences

Verwysingsnr: / Reference nr.

FAKULTEIT OPVOEDINGSWETENSKAPPE / FACULTY EDUCATION SCIENCES

Notule / Minutes

Vergadering / Meeting

MEd&PhD Programkomitee B/ MEd&PhD Programme Committee B

Datum / Date: Donderdag 13 September 2012, 9:15 / Thursday, 13 September 2012, 9:15

Plek / Venue: Konferensielokaal 252, C6 / Conference Room 252, C6

ITEM	Persoon / Person															
5. MEd-sake / MEd matters																
5.1 Goedkeuring van navorsingsvoorstelle, titels en studieleiers / Approval of research proposals, titles and supervisors																
<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">5.1.1 Student/Student</td> <td>Me/Ms J Slabbert-Redpath (20876033)</td> <td rowspan="6" style="vertical-align: top; text-align: center;">Komitee B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Graad/Degree</td> <td>Kurrikulumstudies / <i>Curriculum studies</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Titel/ Title</td> <td>A critical reflection on the praxis of classroom assessment in a higher education curriculum</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Studieleier/Supervisor</td> <td>Prof P du Preez Mnr S Lundie</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mede-studieleier/ Co-supervisor</td> <td>Prof HD Nieuwoudt Dr R van den Berg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Werksverdeling/ Work distribution</td> <td>Goedgekeur, maar gee aandag aan die volgende punte:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Besluit/Decision</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Nieuwoudt en dr van den Berg sal hul kommentaar elektronies aan die studieleier stuur. </td> </tr> </table>	5.1.1 Student/Student	Me/Ms J Slabbert-Redpath (20876033)	Komitee B	Graad/Degree	Kurrikulumstudies / <i>Curriculum studies</i>	Titel/ Title	A critical reflection on the praxis of classroom assessment in a higher education curriculum	Studieleier/Supervisor	Prof P du Preez Mnr S Lundie	Mede-studieleier/ Co-supervisor	Prof HD Nieuwoudt Dr R van den Berg	Werksverdeling/ Work distribution	Goedgekeur, maar gee aandag aan die volgende punte:	Besluit/Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Nieuwoudt en dr van den Berg sal hul kommentaar elektronies aan die studieleier stuur. 	
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Graad/Degree	Kurrikulumstudies / <i>Curriculum studies</i>															
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Studieleier/Supervisor	Prof P du Preez Mnr S Lundie															
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Werksverdeling/ Work distribution	Goedgekeur, maar gee aandag aan die volgende punte:															
Besluit/Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof Nieuwoudt en dr van den Berg sal hul kommentaar elektronies aan die studieleier stuur. 															

Notulehouer/Minute keeper: Me/Ms M Verster



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
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POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Fakulteit Opvoedingswetenskappe
Faculty of Education Sciences

Verwysingsnr: / Reference nr.

FAKULTEIT OPVOEDINGSWETENSKAPPE / FACULTY EDUCATION SCIENCES

Notule

Vergadering

Fakulteit Opvoedingswetenskappe

Navorsingsetiekkomitee

Datum: Donderdag, 22 November 2012, 9:15

Plek: Seminaarkamer 299E, C6

ITEM		Bladsy/ Page
Goedkeuring van nuwe etiekaansoeke		
Projekhoof	Prof P du Preez	
Studente/Span	J Slabbert-Redpath	
Etieknommer	NWU-00125-12-S2	
Titel	A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within the a higher education context	
Werksverdeling	Dr R van den Berg Dr T Kirsten	
Besluit	Magtiging, maar gee aandag aan die volgende punte: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Dosente van een universiteit is nie verteenwoordigend van die hele hoër onderwyskonteks soos wat die titel impliseer nie. Voorstel dat “the higher education context” verander na “a higher education context” • Punt 9 – “rights of the research subjects” - maak dit eerder “participants” • Vraag 3 in bylaag B – verander vraag sodat dit nie leidend is nie • Vraag: “What would you do different in future” verander na “Would you do anything differently in the future 	

Notulehouer: Me E Conradie

ANNEXURES:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

SUMMARY OF ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE:	DOCUMENT:	ROLE PLAYER INVOLVED:	PAGE
ANNEXURE A	CONSENT OF LECTURERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT	141
ANNEXURE B	SELF-REFLECTION SHEET: PARTICIPANT VIDEO 1	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT	143
ANNEXURE C	REFLECTION SHEET: RESEARCHER & ACADEMIC MENTOR VIDEO 1	RESEARCHER ACADEMIC MENTOR	148
ANNEXURE D	SELF-REFLECTION SHEET: PARTICIPANT VIDEO 2	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT	152
ANNEXURE E	REFLECTION SHEET: RESEARCHER & ACADEMIC MENTOR VIDEO 2	RESEARCHER ACADEMIC MENTOR	157
ANNEXURE F	ROLE CLARIFICATION	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT ADS VTC	161
ANNEXURE G	PERMISSION TO ADS TO RELEASE VIDEO FOOTAGE	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT	162
ANNEXURE H	PROFILE INFORMATION	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT	163
ANNEXURE I	SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION DISCOURSES	RESEARCHER PARTICIPANT	165

ANNEXURE A:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

CONSENT OF LECTURERS TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Dear lecturer

You are requested to participate in a research study conducted by Jackie Slabbert-Redpath, from the School of Education, Faculty of Education Sciences, North West University, Potchefstroom. The research results of this study will be made public in the form of a Master Degree dissertation, scientific articles and book chapters. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your ICNL Phase II participation video met the research enquiry, and because ADS VTC suggested you as a possible candidate.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study will aim to address the following question: *What is the nature of curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a higher education context?*

The main objectives of the research to be undertaken, among others, are:

- *What is the status of classroom assessment within a selected higher education context?*
- *How does the balanced assessment system reflect within selected classrooms within a higher education context?*
- *How does classroom assessment develop as an emancipatory praxis within a selected higher education context?*

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I would ask you to make your ICNL Phase II video available to me for reflection, allow me to video record a second video of one of your classes and participate in an interview.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The study to be undertaken will not provide any potential risks to the participant.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The participant will receive an electronic copy of the MEd dissertation which might be used to improve the understanding the realisation of classroom assessment in the within the higher education context. Intervention strategies and professional development opportunities can be introduced to help lecturers overcome barriers and introduce them to balanced assessment strategies.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Not applicable.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Information will not be released to any other party for any reason.

The audio recorded data and field notes can at any stage during the research process be reviewed by the participant. Video recorded data will be destroyed as soon as it has been transcribed by the researcher. Transcripts might be archived for future reference.

In the dissertation the participants' names will for example be referred to as: Lecturer A-F.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCHERS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Prof Petro du Preez (supervisor) at 018-299-4737.

9. RIGHTS OF PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please ask the researchers or promoter of the study.

SIGNATURES OF PARTICIPANT AND RESEARCHER

The information above was described to me by Jackie Slabbert-Redpath in English / Afrikaans and I am in command of this language. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study.

Name of Participant	
Signature of Participant	
Name of Researcher	Jackie Slabbert-Redpath
Signature of Researcher	
Date	20 / /

Researcher: Me J Slabbert-Redpath MEd Candidate and lecturer North West University: Potchefstroom Campus Jackie.SlabbertRedpath@nwu.ac.za 0182994741 0845870207	Supervisor: Prof Petro du Preez Supervisor North West University: Potchefstroom Campus Petro.dupreez@nwu.ac.za 0182994737
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ANNEXURE B:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

SELF-REFLECTION SHEET: PARTICIPANT VIDEO 1

Dear participant

Please fill out the following self-reflection sheet while you review your video of your classroom assessment practices.

Please note that the scale underneath is NOT important, it is just provided to help you reflect on your practices.

In order to get a better understanding of yourself, assessment and the study, please refer to the booklet included, specifically focussing on the article on page 17-23 and the table on page 51.

Very important: Seeing that this is a QUALITATIVE study, please comment on your classroom assessment practices, I will ONLY be using the comments, and not the quantitative scale answer.

Some of the questions may not be applicable to the classroom situation, please feel free to comment on your assessment practices during the module.

Scale

- 1 = Not achieved
- 2 = Partial achievement but have to improve
- 3 = Satisfactory achievement
- 4 = Outstanding/Excellent achievement

I will investigate three areas regarding classroom assessment practices. The balanced classroom assessment system, students' role in assessment and the lecturers' role in assessment.

1. THE BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Please look at the booklet included page 51, the table on formative and summative assessment. Please consider whether and how you are using BOTH this types of assessment and elaborate on this.	I use formative assessment in my module.....
	I use summative assessment in my module.....
	I am inclined more towards..... assessment because.....
After reading the article(s), what do you understand of the balance of classroom assessment?	Please elaborate...
What do you understand as assessment OF learning?	Please elaborate...
What do you understand as assessment FOR learning?	Please elaborate...

In order to reflect on your classroom assessment practices, I need you to reflect on the assessment for learning strategies that occur in your classroom, even if you were not aware of these strategies or you were doing them without knowing ☺						
ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES						
Criteria (Adapted from: Meyer <i>et al.</i> 2010: 56-57)	1	2	3	4	Fre- quency ###	Comments, suggestions, improvements:
1.1 LEARNING TARGETS/GOALS WITH STUDENTS (LEARNING INTENTIONS, OUTCOMES)						
Achievable learning targets should be articulated in advance to produce students with a clear idea of what will be learned and why.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets direct attention, mobilise effort, increase persistence.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets transfer some responsibility to students, enabling them to be active participants in the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
They focus on the purpose of learning rather than on the completion of an activity.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be SMART						
• <i>Specific</i> (clear, concise, related to work)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Measurable</i> (one should be able to see when they have been achieved)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Achievable</i> (they must be within the grasp of the student)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Realistic</i> (they must be a short step within the learning process)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Time-related</i> (short-term)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be appropriate in number – not too many.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
They are referred to regularly.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.2 VERBAL QUESTIONING						
Apply questioning techniques such as probing, prompting, seeking clarification, redirecting.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Verbal questioning should be seen as dialogue, rather than inquiry.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Waiting time: to grasp the questions, to think.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Cognitive complexity of questions should be noted.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Note the framing of questions.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.3 FEEDBACK						
Relates to the outcomes and	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

assessment standards and helps clarify good performance.						
Should be descriptive rather than judgemental.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem among learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides valuable information for teachers that can be used to help shape their teaching.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Feedback conditions (Brown & Glover, 2006)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient feedback is provided often enough, and in enough detail. 	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback is provided quickly enough to be useful to learners. 	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback focuses on learning, rather than on marks or learners. 	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback is linked to the purpose of the assessment task and to criteria. 	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback is understandable to learners. 	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback should be acted upon by learners to improve their learning. 	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
I try to teach/encourage students how to generate their own feedback regarding their own work.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.4 PEER AND SELF-ASSESSMENT						
The lecturer's knowledge, expertise and skills contribute to successful peer- and self-assessment by:						
Raising awareness about the benefits of peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Providing guidance on materials for conducting peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Helping learners understand the significance of peer-and self-assessment results.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Benefits of peer- and self-assessments:						
Interpersonal relationships are improved.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students are more likely to focus on task.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
A sense of ownership inspires students to assume more responsibility for own learning	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

behaviour.						
Nurturing self-directed learners – reliance on lecturer reduced.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students gain understanding of how they are learning, as opposed to what they are learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students begin to understand the purpose of learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
By realising there are various ways of tackling tasks, students develop skills that help them become critical thinkers.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.5 THE FORMATIVE USE OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT						
Summative assessment should become a positive part of the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learners can be engaged in the reflective review of summative results, and can plan revisions more effectively.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learners could be encouraged to set own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
2. THE STUDENT'S ROLE IN ASSESSMENT						
My students are taught/encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My students are taught/encouraged to improve their own work.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My teaching style is student-centred which informs students of their own learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
I encourage my students to participate in classroom assessment which contributes to greater student involvement and student motivation.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My students are involved with decisions regarding classroom assessment.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My students are taught/encouraged to self-reflect on their learning which helps them control their <u>learning</u> , improve their <u>higher order thinking</u> skills and become <u>lifelong learners</u> .	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate on the underlined concepts...
My students are encouraged to participate in classroom assessment discourses, where they are involved with assessment and record keeping.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

ANNEXURE C:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

REFLECTION SHEET: RESEARCHER & ACADEMIC MENTOR VIDEO 1

Dear mentor

Please fill out the following self-reflection sheet while you review the video of the participant's classroom assessment practices.

Please note that the scale underneath is NOT important, it is just provided to help you reflect on their practices.

In order to get a better understanding of assessment and the study, please refer to the booklet included, specifically focussing on the article on page 17-23 and the table on page 51.

Very important: Seeing that this is a QUALITATIVE study, please comment on the classroom assessment practices of the participant, I will ONLY be using the comments, and not the quantitative scale answer.

Some of the questions may not be applicable to the classroom situation, please feel free to comment on the assessment practices of the participants during the module (if you are aware of them).

The reflection sheet of the participants has also been included for your convenience.

Scale

- 1 = Not achieved
- 2 = Partial achievement but have to improve
- 3 = Satisfactory achievement
- 4 = Outstanding/Excellent achievement

In order to reflect on the classroom assessment practices of the participants, I need you to reflect on the assessment for learning strategies that occur in their classroom, even if they were not aware of these strategies or they were doing them without knowing 😊

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Criteria (Adapted from: Meyer <i>et al.</i> 2010: 56-57)	1	2	3	4	Fre- quency ###	Comments, suggestions, improvements:
1.1 LEARNING TARGETS/GOALS WITH STUDENTS (LEARNING INTENTIONS, OUTCOMES)						
Achievable learning targets should be articulated in advance to produce students with a clear idea of what will be learned and why.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets direct attention, mobilise effort, increase	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

persistence.						
Learning targets transfer some responsibility to students, enabling them to be active participants in the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
They focus on the purpose of learning rather than on the completion of an activity.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be SMART						
• <i>Specific</i> (clear, concise, related to work)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Measurable</i> (one should be able to see when they have been achieved)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Achievable</i> (they must be within the grasp of the student)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Realistic</i> (they must be a short step within the learning process)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Time-related</i> (short-term)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be appropriate in number – not too many.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
They are referred to regularly.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.2 VERBAL QUESTIONING						
Apply questioning techniques such as probing, prompting, seeking clarification, redirecting.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Verbal questioning should be seen as dialogue, rather than inquiry.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Waiting time: to grasp the questions, to think.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Cognitive complexity of questions should be noted.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Note the framing of questions.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.3 FEEDBACK						
Relates to the outcomes and assessment standards and helps clarify good performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Should be descriptive rather than judgemental.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem among learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides valuable information for teachers that can be used to help shape their teaching.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Feedback conditions (Brown & Glover, 2006)						
• Sufficient feedback is provided often enough, and	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

in enough detail.						
• Feedback is provided quickly enough to be useful to learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback focuses on learning, rather than on marks or learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is linked to the purpose of the assessment task and to criteria.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is understandable to learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback should be acted upon by learners to improve their learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
I try to teach/encourage students how to generate their own feedback regarding their own work.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.4 PEER AND SELF-ASSESSMENT						
The lecturer's knowledge, expertise and skills contribute to successful peer- and self-assessment by:						
Raising awareness about the benefits of peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Providing guidance on materials for conducting peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Helping learners understand the significance of peer-and self-assessment results.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Benefits of peer- and self-assessments:						
Interpersonal relationships are improved.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students are more likely to focus on task.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
A sense of ownership inspires students to assume more responsibility for own learning behaviour.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Nurturing self-directed learners – reliance on lecturer reduced.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students gain understanding of how they are learning, as opposed to what they are learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students begin to understand the purpose of learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
By realising there are various ways of tackling tasks, students develop skills that help them become critical thinkers.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.5 THE FORMATIVE USE OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT						
Summative assessment should become a positive part of the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learners can be engaged in the reflective review of summative	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

ANNEXURE D:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

SELF-REFLECTION SHEET: PARTICIPANT VIDEO 2

Dear participant

Please fill out the following self-reflection sheet while you review your video of your classroom assessment practices.

Please note that the scale underneath is NOT important, it is just provided to help you reflect on your practices.

In order to get a better understanding of yourself, assessment and the study, please refer to the booklet included, specifically focussing on the article on page 17-23 and the table on page 51.

Very important: Seeing that this is a QUALITATIVE study, please comment on your classroom assessment practices, I will ONLY be using the comments, and not the quantitative scale answer.

Some of the questions may not be applicable to the classroom situation, please feel free to comment on your assessment practices during the module.

Scale
1 = Not achieved
2 = Partial achievement but have to improve
3 = Satisfactory achievement
4 = Outstanding/Excellent achievement

I will investigate three areas regarding classroom assessment practices. The balanced classroom assessment system, students' role in assessment and the lecturers' role in assessment.

In order to reflect on your classroom assessment practices, I need you to reflect on the assessment for learning strategies that occur in your classroom, even if you were not aware of these strategies or you were doing them without knowing 😊						
ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES						
Criteria (Adapted from: Meyer <i>et al.</i> 2010: 56-57)	1	2	3	4	Fre- quency ###	Comments, suggestions, improvements:
1.1 LEARNING TARGETS/GOALS WITH STUDENTS (LEARNING INTENTIONS, OUTCOMES)						
Achievable learning targets should be articulated in advance to produce students with a clear idea of what will be learned and why.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

Learning targets direct attention, mobilise effort, increase persistence.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets transfer some responsibility to students, enabling them to be active participants in the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets focus on the purpose of learning rather than on the completion of an activity.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be SMART						
• <i>Specific</i> (clear, concise, related to work)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Measurable</i> (one should be able to see when they have been achieved)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Achievable</i> (they must be within the grasp of the student)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Realistic</i> (they must be a short step within the learning process)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Time-related</i> (short-term)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be appropriate in number – not too many.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
They are referred to regularly.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.2 VERBAL QUESTIONING						
Apply questioning techniques such as probing, prompting, seeking clarification, redirecting.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Verbal questioning should be seen as dialogue, rather than inquiry.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Waiting time: to grasp the questions, to think.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Cognitive complexity of questions should be noted.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Note the framing of questions.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.3 FEEDBACK						
Relates to the outcomes and assessment standards and helps clarify good performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Should be descriptive rather than judgemental.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem among learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides valuable information for teachers that can be used to	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

help shape their teaching.						
Feedback conditions (Brown & Glover, 2006)						
• Sufficient feedback is provided often enough, and in enough detail.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is provided quickly enough to be useful to learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback focuses on learning, rather than on marks or learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is linked to the purpose of the assessment task and to criteria.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is understandable to learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback should be acted upon by learners to improve their learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
I try to teach/encourage students how to generate their own feedback regarding their own work.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.4 PEER AND SELF-ASSESSMENT						
The lecturer's knowledge, expertise and skills contribute to successful peer- and self-assessment by:						
Raising awareness about the benefits of peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Providing guidance on materials for conducting peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Helping students understand the significance of peer-and self-assessment results.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Benefits of peer- and self-assessments:						
Interpersonal relationships are improved.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students are more likely to focus on task.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
A sense of ownership inspires students to assume more responsibility for own learning behaviour.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Nurturing self-directed learners – reliance on lecturer reduced.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students gain understanding of how they are learning, as opposed to what they are learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students begin to understand the purpose of learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
By realising there are various ways of tackling tasks, students develop skills that help them become critical thinkers.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.5 THE FORMATIVE USE OF SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT						

Summative assessment should become a positive part of the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learners can be engaged in the reflective review of summative results, and can plan revisions more effectively.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learners could be encouraged to set own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
2. THE STUDENT'S ROLE IN ASSESSMENT						
My students are taught/encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My students are taught/encouraged to improve their own work.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My teaching style is student-centred which informs students of their own learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
I encourage my students to participate in classroom assessment which contributes to greater student involvement and student motivation.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My students are involved with decisions regarding classroom assessment.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
My students are taught/encouraged to self-reflect on their learning which helps them control their <u>learning</u> , improve their <u>higher order thinking</u> skills and become <u>lifelong learners</u> .	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate on the underlined concepts...
My students are encouraged to participate in classroom assessment discourses, where they are involved with assessment and record keeping.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Through my classroom assessment practices, I can see an improvement in their marks, self-esteem, and confidence and can see how they are growing.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
3. THE LECTURER'S ROLE IN ASSESSMENT						
How would you explain your assessment competencies?	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Do you use diverse teaching and <u>learning strategies</u> , <u>assessment methods</u> and <u>consider learning styles</u> ?	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate on the underlined concepts...
Do you think NWU should enforce "teaching and assessment licencing"	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

ANNEXURE E:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

REFLECTION SHEET: RESEARCHER & ACADEMIC MENTOR VIDEO 2

Dear mentor

Please fill out the following self-reflection sheet while you review the video of the participant's classroom assessment practices.

Please note that the scale underneath is NOT important, it is just provided to help you reflect on their practices.

In order to get a better understanding of assessment and the study, please refer to the booklet included, specifically focussing on the article on page 17-23 and the table on page 51.

Very important: Seeing that this is a QUALITATIVE study, please comment on the classroom assessment practices of the participant, I will ONLY be using the comments, and not the quantitative scale answer.

Some of the questions may not be applicable to the classroom situation, please feel free to comment on the assessment practices of the participants during the module (if you are aware of them).

The reflection sheet of the participants has also been included for your convenience.

Scale

- 1 = Not achieved
- 2 = Partial achievement but have to improve
- 3 = Satisfactory achievement
- 4 = Outstanding/Excellent achievement

In order to reflect on the classroom assessment practices of the participants, I need you to reflect on the assessment for learning strategies that occur in their classroom, even if they were not aware of these strategies or they were doing them without knowing 😊

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Criteria (Adapted from: Meyer <i>et al.</i> 2010: 56-57)	1	2	3	4	Fre- quency ###	Comments, suggestions, improvements:
1.1 LEARNING TARGETS/GOALS WITH STUDENTS (LEARNING INTENTIONS, OUTCOMES)						
Achievable learning targets should be articulated in advance to produce students with a clear idea of what will be learned and why.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets direct attention,	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

mobilise effort, increase persistence.						
Learning targets transfer some responsibility to students, enabling them to be active participants in the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets focus on the purpose of learning rather than on the completion of an activity.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learning targets should be SMART						
• <i>Specific</i> (clear, concise, related to work)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Measurable</i> (one should be able to see when they have been achieved)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• <i>Achievable</i> (they must be within the grasp of the student)	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
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Learning targets should be appropriate in number – not too many.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
They are referred to regularly.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
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Apply questioning techniques such as probing, prompting, seeking clarification, redirecting.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Verbal questioning should be seen as dialogue, rather than inquiry.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Waiting time: to grasp the questions, to think.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Cognitive complexity of questions should be noted.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Note the framing of questions.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.3 FEEDBACK						
Relates to the outcomes and assessment standards and helps clarify good performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Should be descriptive rather than judgemental.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem among learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Provides valuable information for teachers that can be used to help shape their teaching.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Feedback conditions (Brown & Glover, 2006)						
• Sufficient feedback is	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

provided often enough, and in enough detail.						
• Feedback is provided quickly enough to be useful to learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback focuses on learning, rather than on marks or learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is linked to the purpose of the assessment task and to criteria.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback is understandable to learners.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
• Feedback should be acted upon by learners to improve their learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
The participant tries to teach/encourage students how to generate their own feedback regarding their own work.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
1.4 PEER AND SELF-ASSESSMENT						
The lecturer's knowledge, expertise and skills contribute to successful peer- and self-assessment by:						
Raising awareness about the benefits of peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Providing guidance on materials for conducting peer-and self-assessments.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Helping students understand the significance of peer-and self-assessment results.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Benefits of peer- and self-assessments:						
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Students are more likely to focus on task.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
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Nurturing self-directed learners – reliance on lecturer reduced.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students gain understanding of how they are learning, as opposed to what they are learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Students begin to understand the purpose of learning.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
By realising there are various ways of tackling tasks, students develop skills that help them become critical thinkers.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
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Summative assessment should become a positive part of the learning process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...
Learners can be engaged in the	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

reflective review of summative results, and can plan revisions more effectively.						
Learners could be encouraged to set own questions and mark their answers to gain an understanding of the assessment process.	1	2	3	4		Please elaborate...

2. MENTOR REFLECTION ON THE PARTICIPANT'S DEVELOPMENT

How would you describe the participant's classroom assessment practices before, during and after the video reflections (before, during and after the study)?	Please elaborate...					
Did the participants' classroom assessment practices change during the duration of the study? If so, how? Why?	Please elaborate...					
Did the participant gain anything from being a participant in this study?	Please elaborate...					
Would you describe the participant's' classroom assessment practices as balanced? (Stiggins' balanced classroom assessment practices - Assessment booklet p.24-32)	Please elaborate...					
Do you think the participants will you do anything differently in the future regarding their classroom assessment practices?	Please elaborate...					

3. MENTOR REFLECTION ON THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT

Did your classroom assessment practices change during the duration of the study? If so, how? Why?	Please elaborate...					
Did you gain anything from being a participant in this study?	Please elaborate...					
Would you describe your classroom assessment practices as balanced? (Stiggins' balanced classroom assessment practices – Assessment booklet p.24-32)	Please elaborate...					
Will you do anything differently in the future regarding your own classroom assessment practices?	Please elaborate...					

ADDITIONAL NOTES:						

ANNEXURE F:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

ROLE CLARIFICATION

	Researcher (<i>Jackie Slabbert-Redpath</i>)	Researchers' supervisor (<i>Prof P Du Preez</i>)	Participant(s)	Academic mentor	ADS & Academic Advisors	Video assistants
Permissions			x	x	x	
Video 1 capture (collection)	x		x		x	x
Video 1 storage	x				x	x
Video 1 self-reflection	x		x	x		
Video 1 feedback	x		x	x		
Video 2 capture (collection)	x		x			x
Video 2 storage	x					x
Video 2 self-reflection	x		x	x		
Video 2 feedback	x		x	x		
Data analysis of video data (coded, categorised, sorted into meaningful units)	x	x	x			
Data validation	x	x		x		
Conclusion and findings	x	x	x			

ANNEXURE G:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

PERMISSION TO ADS TO RELEASE VIDEO FOOTAGE

I, _____ (name and title of lecturer participant), staff number _____ gave written consent to the researcher Jackie Slabbert-Redpath student number 20876033, ethics number NWU-00125-12-S2 to participate in the above stated study.

I hereby, request that ADS VTC release my video footage to the researcher for educational and research purposes.

I am aware of the conditions under which ADS VTC will release the video footage to the researcher regarding further copies being made, ownership and distribution.

SIGNATURES OF PARTICIPANT AND RESEARCHER

I hereby consent that my video footage for the ICNL Phase II contact session may be released to the researcher.

Name of Participant	
Signature of Participant	
Name of Researcher	Jackie Slabbert-Redpath
Signature of Researcher	
Date	20 / /

Researcher:
Me J Slabbert-Redpath
MEd Candidate and lecturer
North West University: Potchefstroom Campus
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0845870207

Supervisor:
Prof Petro du Preez
Supervisor
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ANNEXURE H:



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Study title:

A critical reflection on the curriculum praxis of classroom assessment within a Higher Education context.

Researcher: Jacqueline Slabbert-Redpath

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

Dear participant

In order to voice your opinion, I have to compile an anonymous profile on you in order to understand your view of the world and make meaning of it.

1. Please complete the following information:

Participant alias / nickname *	
Participant qualification (highest qualification and discipline):	
Modules taught during 2012:# (Please supply module codes plus descriptive names of the modules)	
Modules taught during 2013:# (Please supply module codes plus descriptive names of the modules)	
Teaching experience: (Time and place)	

2. Please **reflect critically** on the following and answer the questions as truthfully as possible:

What is your (personal current understanding / perception / worldview about:

2.1 The curriculum:

ADDENDUM D – TURNITIN REPORT

Turnitin - Windows: Internet Explorer
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 ID: 369805013
 Word Count: 63411
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20876033:Jackie_Slabb
 -
 Redpath_MEd_2013_T
 By JACKIE SLABBERT-REDPATH

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 20876033 CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE PROBLEM CHAPTER LAYOUT

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 Assignment Petro du Preez_ Mercy Kutu MED hele
 dok
 Paper ID: 267454151

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133
 1.1 • BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM STATEMENT 1.2 • REVIEW OF THE SCHOLARLY LITERATURE 1.3

• RESEARCH QUESTION 1.4 • PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH 1.5 • CONCEPT CLARIFICATION 1.6 • RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

111
 1.7 • RESEARCH PARADIGM AND METHODOLOGY • 1.7.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM • 1.7.2 METHODOLOGY • 1.7.3

THE RESEARCHER'S ROLE • 1.7.4 PARTICIPANT SELECTION • 1.7.5 METHODS OF DATA GENERATION • 1.7.6 METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS • 1.7.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS • 1.7.8 ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE RESEARCH 1.8 • CONCLUSION "Assessment is the most political of all educational processes, it is where issues of power are most at stake." – Heron (In Reynolds and Trehan, 2000:268) 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

66
 International development and research in the field of assessment indicates a shift in focus from traditional testing practices to a more constructive assessment approach that

Error on page.

TURNITIN PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

(This form should be completed by the supervisor/promoter.)



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Fakulteit Opvoedingswetenskappe
Faculty of Education Sciences

STUDENT NAME:	Jackie Slabbert-Redpath		
STUDENT NUMBER:	20876033		
FAKULTY:	Faculty of Education Sciences		
SCHOOL:	School for Human and Social Sciences in Education		
QUALIFICATION:	MEd in Curriculum Development		
Please tick:	MASTERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	PhD
SUPERVISOR OR PROMOTER:	Prof Petro du Preez		
SUBMISSION DATE:	2013/11/05		

Chapter: / Whole document:	eFundi site document submitted through:	Date on which document was submitted through TII:	Percentage similarity on TII report:	Comment / motivation supervisor or promoter:
Whole study	Jackie Res 2013	2013/11/05	8 %	The report only indicates similarities where the student quoted. All referencing are done correctly.

THE SUPERVISOR OR PROMOTER: (Please tick correct option)					
It is	RECOMMENDED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	that the above mentioned student submits his/her documentation for the examination of his/her mini-dissertation/dissertation/thesis.	Date:	2013/11/05
	NOT RECOMMENDED	<input type="checkbox"/>		Signature:	

*But I have discovered
the secret that
after climbing a great hill,
one only finds that
there are many more
hills to climb.*

~ Nelson Mandela (2011:107)