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LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN AN EXAMINATION-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENT: PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN BOTSWANA

By

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LITERACY INSTRUCTION IN AN EXAMINATION-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENT: PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN BOTSWANA

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Botswana has set for itself goals towards having an educated and informed nation by the year 2016 (Republic of Botswana, 1997). To a large extent, the attainment of this goal entails concerns about literacy. Botswana's education system follows a national curriculum, with close prescriptions of content, modes of teaching and forms of assessment mandated by the Ministry of Education. The purpose of this study was therefore to uncover, interpret and illustrate the meanings teachers in secondary schools associate with literacy teaching and learning given the constraints of these planned school policies and curricula.

The study followed a qualitative approach, using ethnographic techniques to gather and analyze data. Data sources included a survey questionnaire, interview transcripts from audio-taped interviews, official documents, teacher documents and ethnographic field notes. An open-ended survey questionnaire was administered to 30 teachers of English and Setswana in selected senior secondary schools. Based on the teachers' willingness to volunteer and share information, 5 teachers who were a subset of those who completed the survey questionnaire were selected to be key informants.

The study was informed by both sociocultural and postcolonial theoretical frameworks. The sociocultural theory views literacy as a social practice. It assumes that people formulate ideas, beliefs and conceptualizations from experiences they have had

within a sociocultural context. The postcolonial theory was employed to illustrate how the teaching of Setswana is embedded within and shaped by colonial discourse.

The data revealed that although policies have been developed about the teaching and learning of literacy that are aimed at moving the country into the 21st century, they have not translated into practice. This is due to a number of factors: societal and institutional constraints, inadequate teacher preparation, lack of a culture of reading and lack of teachers' professional development. The findings have implications at both teacher education and policy formulation levels. Teacher education institutions have the major responsibility of equipping teachers with pedagogical content knowledge. It is mainly through skillful teachers that the school curricula can be planned accordingly and implemented effectively. Since assessment indicates what type of knowing is valued, the study sheds light on ways in which examinations constrain the teaching of literacy.

Dedication

To my late parents, Jonas and Menete Handenge Besson, who instilled in me the value of education and thus gave me a vision. Your memories are here to stay.

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Chapter One

Introduction

"Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read will be crucial. Continual instruction beyond the early grades is needed" (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p.99)

In recent years, there has been a great concern from the general public and teaching profession about falling standards of literacy among secondary school graduates in Botswana. Colleges are concerned that secondary school graduates come ill-prepared for college level writing and reading. Several studies and survey reports have also revealed that many secondary school students in Botswana schools have not yet developed the more sophisticated reading and writing skills expected by their teachers and mandated by the curriculum and national examinations (Secondary school Examination Reports, e.g. 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; Mooko, 1996; Besson, 1990). These studies and reports indicate that when students are asked to demonstrate the analytical reasoning skills such as interpreting, recognizing intent of the author, and drawing conclusions, they are unable to do so. There is evidence that secondary schools do not give consideration to supporting the literacy development of their students. This study

therefore focuses on how literacy teachers of secondary schools in Botswana perceive literacy teaching and learning.

The inadequate literacy skills are attributed mainly to lack of appropriate instruction in school due to insufficient language education offered prospective teachers at pre-service level. It has also been noted that the teaching of reading is a neglected area in Botswana secondary schools (Mpotokwane, 1986). This is exacerbated by the fact that literacy is acquired through an environment that is oriented towards preparing students to recall information for examinations. Literacy is not accorded the seriousness it deserves but just seen as accessing information needed to pass examinations. Teaching to the examinations tends to encourage rote-memorization without necessarily imparting literacy skills to students. Defining learning through test scores is seen as limiting for several reasons; learning is restricted by narrowing the curriculum and pedagogy and reducing teacher motivation (Darling-Hammond, 1994), it brings up questions of inequitable access and opportunity to learn, it denies the variability in prior learning experiences among students of different backgrounds, and, also fails to appraise the quality of thinking that produced a particular grade, or students own views concerned with whether or not they have learned (Nieto, 1999). Research has also indicated that students bring with them rich and varied language and literacy practices that often go unnoticed in classrooms (Dyson, 2005; Heath, 1983; Mahiri, 2004). This goes without saying that examination driven pedagogies exclude such wealth of experiences and teachers too fail to recognize alternative and expanded genres of language and patterns of learning especially for ethnic minority students.

Anecdotal data also indicates that language teachers continue to use the "traditional" approach (i.e. structural) in teaching literacy even though the curriculum has shifted to the communicative one. Whereas the structural approach views language as a system of structurally related elements for the transmission of meaning, the communicative approach views language as a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning. It emphasizes the semantic and communicative dimensions of language in different social contexts, more than the grammatical elements (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). In the traditional approach of teaching language, the emphasis is on students learning language through its structures as opposed to the subconscious absorbing of language through use of the language. The use of this approach inhibits teachers' efforts to develop in students the ability to solve problems, be critical thinkers or life-long learners as envisioned in policy documents (Republic of Botswana, 2002, 1997, 1994). In a country that uses education for its socio-economic development, it is vital to equip youth who are informed, engaged, and critical citizens in the new millennium (Bloom, in Suarez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004).

Until 1996, the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) administered Botswana's secondary school examinations externally. This board determined the overall standards of what is to be learned in school. It controlled the curricula, examinations and certification of students. The curriculum for each subject was a series of topics to be learned at a given level, followed by an outline of the structure of the examination papers; their breadth and depth and allocation of marks. There were no aims and objectives for content to be learned. The best that teachers made out of such a curriculum was to align their teaching with the expectations of the examining body and

drill students to pass the examinations. In that regard, students were not provided with a meaningful education.

The current teaching approaches are also attributed to the kind of education introduced by missionaries in Botswana. It is argued that the missionaries in general took little interest in education beyond preaching the gospel and the elements of literacy (Parsons in Crowder, 1985). Emphasis was on reading, writing and scriptures. Tabulawa (1997) contends that religious knowledge was viewed as objective, factual and unchanging. He argues that in such circumstances it was difficult for one to think of any other pedagogical style that would have best suited the teaching and learning of religious facts other than the transmission-reception pedagogical style. Tabulawa concludes that this authoritarian pedagogical style is what, perhaps, most saliently characterizes schooling in Botswana that has now almost acquired the status of an educational tradition. I concur with Tabulwa's view. I underwent the authoritarian style of education as a student during my secondary school days and later on carried it over as a teacher. Our classrooms were teacher-centered and the teachers were regarded as the "fountains of knowledge" pouring knowledge into students' heads. We were taught grammar in isolation without any relation to how it features in everyday communication. We were expected to memorize definitions of grammatical aspects such as Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, etc. Our teachers had the tendency to provide notes on the chalkboard, which we copied down into our notebooks (regardless of what the topic would be). In literature classrooms we were given the opportunity to say our views but the teacher always provided the final answer (the correct answer; the ultimate truth) that is acceptable in

examinations. As illustrated by the literature review in chapter three, most teachers in Botswana have adopted the authoritarian kind of teaching as the norm.

Luke (1997) asserts that teaching practices may be influenced by the kind of education teachers underwent during their pre-service. He cautions against the danger of teachers reproducing programs and approaches based on how they learnt literacy as best for all children, and the values and attitudes they had towards literacy and book culture as the 'norm' against which they can judge and assess students. The danger of using such benchmarks, Luke argues, is that, during the many years that might have elapsed, the life experiences and cultural backgrounds of the students might have changed. The teacher being the key in shaping literacy, literate culture and the child, it is imperative that s/he knows more about literacy in contemporary society.

Although reasons such as the UCLES curriculum or teachers' educational experiences might have influenced to a large extent the current teaching approaches, students' poor literacy skills cannot be attributed to only these. There is also need to look into the larger historical, political and sociocultural contexts of the education system. Historically, the curriculum has excluded ethnic minority students as far as language in education policy goes. Many students come to school with diverse linguistic backgrounds and experiences that are not part of the official school knowledge. They attain literacy in English and Setswana which are not their home languages. Like the rest of African countries colonized by Britain, Botswana chose English as the medium of instruction in school and the official language. The reality that the country needs English for international relations was wrongly translated into giving it absolute priority over the national language, Setswana, while other local languages were completely neglected.

The cultural linguistic diversity of the students is mentioned in the curriculum but teacher preparation does not seem to address issues of multiculturalism especially in Setswana courses. Setswana teachers are prepared as if the society is monocultural. This monocultural notion of teacher education is evident in many ways. I recall an informal discussion I once had with a curriculum development officer about the bias of some Setswana examination questions towards ethnic minority students. I had pointed out some weaknesses in a junior secondary school leaving examination that ethnic minority students might have had difficulty in responding to certain questions because of the unfamiliar vocabulary that was used. The officer disagreed with my view and insisted that;

> "This was a Setswana examination, not Setswana as a second language examination. All students have been studying this syllabus and are expected to know the vocabulary used. Until such time there is a Setswana as a second language syllabus, there is nothing we can do about students to whom Setswana is a second language".

The above words were ironically an admission on the part of the officer that the curriculum did not make provision for linguistic minority students. Other evidence one could cite is from incidents that occur in Setswana classrooms. In many classrooms and schools across the country, it is common to hear teachers or mainstream students uttering remarks such as these to ethnic minority students: "That's the *Sesarwa* way, or the *Sekgalagadi* way, say it in Setswana, "that's not Setswana but *Kalanga* pronunciation" *(Sesarwa, Sekgalagadi and, Kalanga are some of the minority languages of Botswana).*

This kind of derogatory language is so embedded in everyday discourse not only in Setswana classrooms but also in different social gatherings. Ethnic minorities in Botswana have for a long time been regarded as inferior and this surfaces more in school settings. Teaching practices are therefore historically grounded and influenced by policy.

In 1993, the entire education system was reviewed. The review was called for on the basis that there was need to develop a system that would see the country into the twenty first century (Republic of Botswana, 1993). Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) recommended that the curricula be revised and that examinations should also be localized. Through consultation and collaboration with UCLES, localization came into effect in 1996. In the teaching of language, the major changes that came with the localization of curricula and examinations were the layout of the syllabi and change in teaching approaches. The teaching methodology shifted from the structural approach to the communicative one. The Examinations, Research and Testing Division (ERTD) of the Ministry of Education now administer the examinations. However, it does not appear that the revisions yielded the desired result, hence this dissertation. More details about the locally controlled examinations system will be discussed in chapter six.

Literacy demands of secondary school students need to be an educational priority more than before. Progression rates from junior secondary to senior secondary school in Botswana have increased from 51.13% in 2005 to 61.27% in 2006 (Republic of Botswana, 2006). This has been due to strategies such as the expansion of some senior secondary schools and the double shift system that is being piloted in some schools. The increase in quantity has not been received well by some people on the grounds that less skilled students are being admitted into senior schools for political gain by the

government. The increase in quantity (of students proceeding to senior secondary school) without compromising quality suggests that teachers should be well equipped with pedagogical knowledge to meet the literacy needs of the students. On realization that middle and secondary school curriculums sometimes emphasize content learning so much that literacy development is ignored, the Commission on Adolescent Literacy of the International Reading Association (IRA) developed seven principles for supporting adolescents' literacy growth. These are as follows:

Table 1. Seven Principles of International Reading Association's Position Statement on Adolescent Literacy

1. Adolescents deserve access to a wide variety of reading material that they can and want to read
2. Adolescents deserve instruction that builds both the skill and desire to read increasingly complex materials.
3. Adolescents deserve assessment that shows them their strengths as well as their needs and that guides their teachers to design instruction that will best help them grow as readers.
4. Adolescents deserve expert teachers who model and provide explicit instruction in reading comprehension and study strategies across the curriculum.
5. Adolescents deserve reading specialists who assist individual students having difficulty learning how to read.
6. Adolescents deserve teachers who understand the complexities of individual adolescent readers, respect their differences, and respond to their characteristics.
7. Adolescents deserve homes, communities, and a nation that will support their efforts to achieve advanced levels of literacy and provide the support necessary for them to succeed.

Source: Position Statement on Adolescent Literacy, International Reading Association, 1999. *(http://reading.org/positions/adol_lit.html)*

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to uncover, interpret and illustrate the meanings teachers in Botswana secondary schools associate with literacy teaching and learning given the constraints of planned secondary school policies and curricula by the Ministry of Education. When there is conflict between teachers' espoused beliefs and perceived external requirements, their actual teaching practices are likely to be swayed by the latter (Wells, 2000). Furthermore, to make any reforms in literacy teaching and learning there is need to examine more closely what meaning teachers give to the acts of reading and writing. The study is grounded in the notion that the way in which literacy is taught, the professional judgment made and actions related to curriculum decisions are determined largely by how teachers conceptualize it, how they themselves experienced it as well as their beliefs and philosophies. I aim to explore the theoretical knowledge base teachers have about literacy and how their literacy experiences and beliefs shape their teaching practices.

The main research questions that guided my study are as follows:

1. In what ways does the postcolonial experience of Botswana play out in teachers' understanding of literacy teaching and learning?

2. What are particular meanings teachers associate with literacy teaching and learning given the structural constraints of the mandated curriculum and national examinations?

Significance of the Study

While research in literacy education has not been explored adequately in Botswana and in the region, there exists even less information regarding teachers' perceptions of literacy and how these shape their classroom practices. Teachers embody values, attitudes and ways of being and thinking that influence what goes on in their classrooms. An awareness of teacher perceptions is essential if there is an attempt to change and improve any education system. In this study I adopt the definition by Tabachnick & Zeichner (1984) for the term "teacher perspectives". According to them, *"perspectives"* are "a reflective, socially defined interpretation of experience that serves as a basis for subsequent action . . . a combination of beliefs, intentions, interpretations, and behavior that interact continually." (Clark & Peterson, 1986, p.287). Welcoming the voices of teachers beyond their classroom doors is an essential step toward creating positive enduring change in education. Historically, teachers' educational involvement has been limited to classrooms. Curriculum decisions, accountability measures, and disciplinary measures have all been removed from the hands of teachers (Apple, 1983). Change won't happen by telling teachers what to do in their classrooms. It is important that their voices and experiences are invited, and their professional knowledge be used to create and respond to particular contextualized learning situations in their classrooms. Discovering the underlying assumptions, theories, beliefs and understandings individual teachers have about literacy and literacy pedagogy will provide insights that would enable better decision-making for both curricula planning and presenting literacy lessons.

Even though Botswana has been using national examinations as a key device for establishing and maintaining educational standards, not much research has been carried

out to find out what influence such examinations might have on literacy instruction and learning. This study could contribute in that regard though it was conducted at a very small scale. Furthermore, the fact that all public schools operate under similar conditions by following standardized curricula that are centrally controlled, the findings of this study could be applicable to other secondary schools in the country.

This study is also a move to initiate debate and to enable teacher educators to rethink literacy education in Botswana's institutions. Teacher education institutions have the major responsibility of equipping teachers with pedagogical content knowledge. It is mainly through skillful teachers that the school curricula can be planned accordingly and implemented effectively. In a multicultural set up like that of Botswana, it is difficult, and not even desirable to come up with generic methods that teachers can be trained to follow religiously in all schools.

Many studies have examined teacher-student relationships in Botswana classrooms without specifically looking at why Setswana teachers adhere to certain practices. Among the many subjects taught in school, Setswana is the only subject taught through the local medium. With the belief that students would grasp English better by communicating through it, they are prohibited from communicating in Setswana around the school premises. This suggests that Setswana teachers could be working under certain constraints by teaching a subject that has little recognition as compared to other school subjects. This study therefore attempts to bring forth such constraints by exploring the perspectives held by Setswana teachers about literacy teaching and learning. Grossman and Stodolsky (1994) argue that secondary school teachers' instructional practices and perspectives on teaching and curriculum are framed by the particular school subjects they

teach; subject matter serves as a filter through which teachers plan their work, create associations, respond to policy initiatives, and interact with students.

Understanding teachers' thought processes or perceptions about their subject or curriculum, and their experiences with students may contribute towards better teacher education programs and teachers' professional development. Goodson (2003) sums it all when he states that understanding teacher agency is a vital part of educational research that should not be ignored.

Overview of Chapters

The next chapter, chapter two is the description of the context of the study. The geographical, historical, political and economic context in which the study is located is described. This chapter explores the language and literacy contexts of Botswana historically and today. It explains how the colonial experience continues to shape and define postcolonial problems and practices in Botswana. This is evident in the role assigned English as the medium of instruction in schools and as the official language over local languages. A general background of the education system and teacher education programs is given as well as post independence education reform policies. The chapter attempts to answer questions such as: What were the goals and objectives of these policies? What recommendations did the reforms pass regarding language in education policy and the teaching of local languages in particular? What reform efforts have been undertaken to improve standards, testing and accountability efforts?

Chapter three discusses the literacy literature relevant to the study. The theoretical frameworks within which the study is situated are first reviewed. These are the

sociocultural, the postcolonial and critical theories. The chapter also reviews definitions of literacy according to ideological perspectives of different scholars; specifically; functional literacy, cultural literacy, progressive literacy and critical literacy ideologies. These definitions have figured in different ways into literacy instruction in Botswana. The chapter then reviews literacy research in Botswana and other African countries. This is followed by literacy reports from both developed and developing countries in various parts of the world. The review of literature is aimed at providing the foundation for the study and to guide its methodology and formulation of theory.

Chapter four is a narrative description of the methodological procedures and research design of the study. It gives an explanation of how entry was gained into the research site, how the participants for the study were selected, how data were collected and analyzed.

Chapter five presents an analysis of other data sources such as the syllabi and textbooks to give the official perspective of what literacy teaching and learning should entail at secondary school level in Botswana. It seeks to answer the question; how does the national curriculum define literacy? Or, what is the official perspective of literacy teaching and learning in secondary school classrooms?

Chapter six is the presentation and analysis of the data provided by the five key informants of the study. Background of each informant is given with a focus on how they acquired literacy in their childhood. This background is linked to their perceptions and current practices of literacy teaching and learning. The chapter seeks to answer questions such as: What do teachers understand by the notion of literacy? What is their perception of the curriculum's responsiveness to the needs of linguistically diverse learners in

schools? Teacher documents such as their record books (scheme books) and examination reports are also analyzed to gain an insight into how teachers interpret and enact the official perspectives in their teaching.

Chapter seven is a synthesis of the findings of the study, literature review and theoretical frameworks that were used to guide the study. It reassesses the major research questions in relation to the theoretical frameworks. It also outlines the limitations of the study, implications for practice and further research. It examines prospects for improving teacher education programs and literacy teaching in Botswana secondary schools.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of terms that may not be clear to some readers because of the contexts in which they are used. The study is about education issues in Botswana written in a US institution hence the need to define some unfamiliar terms although they are also clarified in the dissertation when they appear for the first time.

Botswana – the name of the country

Setswana – the national language of Botswana

Batswana – the people of Botswana in plural terms

Motswana – singular form for a person of Botswana

Primary School – Elementary school, from 1st through 7th grade

Junior Secondary School – Middle school, 8th through 10th grade

Senior Secondary School – High school, 11th and 12th grades.

Vision 2016 – a document that outlines the long-term vision for the year 2016 when Botswana will have been an independent nation for 50 years. It identifies the major challenges that will need to be met and proposes a set of strategies that will meet them.

Literacy – in this study it means more than the basic ability to read and write, but the ability to be engaged in analysis, interpretation, problem-solving, critical thinking, self-reflection and cross-cultural understanding leading to a broader and better perception of the world.

Chapter Two

The Context

This chapter is the description of the context of the study. In it, I describe the geographical, historical, political and economic situation in which the study is located, both historically and today. I provide as well a general background of the education system and, also, the history of teacher education. In addition, I describe the official policy of language in education and then the post independence education reform policies.

Geography and Language

Botswana is a landlocked, semi-arid country of 582, 000 square kilometers, about the same size as Kenya and France. It is located in the interior of Southern Africa and is bordered by Zambia, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. Botswana attained self-governance in 1965, after 80 years as a British Protectorate and became independent on September 30, 1966. It is a non-racial country that maintains freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of association, and affords all citizens equal rights. All these are enshrined in the country's Constitution.

Botswana is a multilingual state with an estimated number of at least 25 languages. Research has not ascertained the exact number of languages in the country because of the blurred distinction between a language and a dialect (Batibo & Smieja, 2000). Setswana is demographically the most dominant language in the country. It is

spoken by at least 80% of a population of 1,680, 863 (Republic of Botswana, 2001) either as mother tongue or as a second language. Setswana is the medium of instruction during the first two years at primary school and is offered as a compulsory school subject at both primary and secondary school levels. English is the medium of instruction for all subjects at primary and secondary school levels except for Setswana.

Whereas these projections denote that indigenous languages are multifarious, the language in education policy has always favored English to the detriment of Setswana and extinction of other local languages. During the colonial era, English was the official language of administration (Janson & Tsonope, 1991). After independence, there were no significant changes in the country's language policy. This is attributed to the fact that the British and other Europeans occupied a large number of key positions in government. It follows therefore that the main language of administration was English.

There seems to be some inconsistencies in the way language policy is stated in official documents. These inconsistencies are statements such as: "The official language of the country is English; the national language is Setswana" (Republic of Botswana, 1985, p.2), and, "the official languages are Setswana and English, the latter being the main language in Government" (1997, p.10). Practically, English is the language of government and administration, science and technology, education, and international relations. In 1988, it was agreed in principle that Setswana be used in conducting official business, but this decision has not been fully implemented. Only a few instances can be cited where Setswana is used in official domains. Although English is a foreign language, it continues to enjoy a prestigious status over Setswana, which is a national language. Setswana is also spoken in some parts of neighboring Namibia and South Africa.

Economic Situation

Botswana's economy has undergone an almost total evolutionary structural transformation. At independence, Botswana was dependent mainly on agriculture for a livelihood. Since then, the country has recorded remarkable social and economic transformation, with the discovery and production of minerals, resulting in both growth and change in the structure of the economy. Most notably, the economy has grown rapidly due to the exploitation of minerals, particularly diamonds at Orapa and Jwaneng. Other minerals such as coal from Morupule copper and nickel from Selebi-Phikwe and soda ash from Sua Pans have greatly contributed to the transformation of Botswana's economic landscape. Coincidentally, the same period met with an increase in the demand for Botswana's beef in the European Economic Market resulting in the expansion of the cattle industry. The favorable market prices for Botswana beef and minerals translated into a rapid increase in both export earnings and government revenues. This was further supported by many years of political stability, a sound public policy making machinery, thrifty economic management policies and a strong measure of national unity free of destructive tribal and cultural divisions enabled the country to amass large foreign exchange reserves and to increase the Gross Domestic Product (Republic of Botswana, 2003). Botswana has thus graduated from the group of the poorest to the lower middle-income countries.

In the past two decades, Botswana has exhibited relatively sound public sector management. The government has used its foreign exchange and cash reserves to offset

the cyclical short–term economic fluctuations. The accumulation of foreign reserves has also enabled Botswana to liberalize her exchange controls. In addition, Botswana has evolved a system of national development plans based on the overall national objectives and an estimated budget authorized by parliament. This has been further developed into systems for economic planning and budget controls ensuring that development projects are selected on the strength of their economic and social returns and not solely on their face validity. The major challenge to the growing economy is the spread of HIV/AIDS. Botswana is one of the most affected countries in Africa by this disease. The government has therefore taken considerable efforts to fight the situation. This includes: provision of anti-retroviral drugs; the prevention of transfer of the virus from mother to child; care of HIV/AIDS orphans; introduction of home-based care for terminally ill patients; the inclusion of HIV/AIDS in primary and secondary school curricula and other public awareness campaigns. A large proportion of the national budget is therefore allocated to the Ministry of Health while the demand to increase quantity and quality of education is also at stake.

Before discussing the key issues such as education reform policies and language in education policy, which are essential for this study, I give the background of the pre-colonial and colonial education systems. The aim is to help the readers have a sense of the forms of literacy practices that existed before the prevailing practices in the post-colonial era.

Pre- colonial Education

During the pre-colonial era, Botswana had some traditional form of education, described as "part of a whole system of beliefs, or religion, as well as a means of

socializing children into the accepted norms of society" (Parsons in Crowder, 1984, p. 22). Parsons classifies traditional education into three categories: informal, formal and vocational education. There was informal education in the home, which was mainly parenting, and included relations among siblings, with special emphasis on the aged as repositories of wisdom.

Formal education was characterized by *bojale* and *bogwera;* adolescent initiation schools for females and males, respectively. In *bojale*, young female adults were formally taught matters concerning womanhood, sex, and behavior towards men, domestic and agricultural activities. *Bogwera* was formal instruction for young male adults where they were circumcised and taught skills such as kaross sewing for shields and clothing, and modeling cattle in clay to reinforce practical knowledge of livestock. They were trained to be responsible men, warriors and fathers. Whereas women qualified for motherhood and marriage after *bojale*, *bogwera* did not qualify men for marriage until after they had proved themselves as herders, hunters and fighters. Vocational education consisted of part-time individual apprenticeships in trades such as medicine, mining and smelting. Also, skills in agricultural and hunting techniques were imparted. The above kind of education was not unique to Botswana but similar in most pre-colonial African societies. Fafunwa (1982) asserts that:

> African education emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values. Children learnt by doing, that is to say, children and adolescents were engaged in participatory education through ceremonies, rituals, imitation, recitation and demonstration. They were involved in practical farming, fishing, weaving, cooking, carving, knitting ... intellectual training included the study of local history, legends, the environment, poetry, reasoning, riddles, proverbs, story-telling and

> story-relays. Education in Old Africa was an integrated experience. It combined physical training with character-building and manual activity with intellectual training. At the end of each stage, demarcated wither by age-level or years of exposure, the child was given a practical test relevant to his experience and level of development and in terms of the job to be done. This was a continuous assessment which eventually culminated in a 'passing out' ceremony or initiation into adulthood' (p.14).

With the advent of colonialism, African education system, which was modeled on the cultural traditions and history of its people was dismantled and replaced by western education which was different from the local one. In the African education system, the whole community participated in the learning process, children learnt by observing and imitating adults. The next section discusses western education.

Colonial Education

Western education in Botswana was introduced around 1847 by David Livingstone, a missionary of the London Missionary society. This education replaced "traditional" or "heathen" pre-colonial education (Parsons in Crowder, 1984, p. 22). The churches financed education and were therefore in full control of the curriculum and its content. The curriculum consisted of Christian scriptures. A translation of the New Testament into Setswana came into being in 1840. The translation for the rest of the Bible was completed by 1857. Robert Moffat, a leader of the missionaries, provided the first translation of Setswana into the Roman alphabet and translated the Bible into written Setswana.

In 1860, a school was established at Shoshong (then Bangwato capital) where children were taught reading, writing, arithmetic and scripture in Setswana. The main emphasis was to instill in the students obedience and discipline. Traditional pedagogy focused on lecture and memorization, using oral transmission as the main vehicle through which learning occurs. Education prior to the missionaries was oral. Print literacy began with the missionaries. Printed texts began with the translated Bible, and the reading of the Bible was the result of the Christian mission activity in Botswana. By the time schools were introduced, the majority of families had only the Bible and the church hymn-book (that for the London Missionary Society) in their homes. Consequently, many children who started school during the early years of independence came from homes in which very little reading and writing occurred except for the reading of the Bible.

Language in Education Policy

Language policy has been a contested terrain in Botswana since colonialism. It has always been central to educational policy. The country shares the experience of foreign rule with the rest of the African continent. Educational achievements were very modest during the colonial period (1885-1965). The British did not do much to improve the social and economic infrastructure of the country. Until the 1940's only primary education up to Standard 6 (equivalent of US 6^{th} grade) was provided (Tlou & Campbell, 1984). A small minority was able to advance their education beyond primary school level. These citizens had to further their schooling in neighboring South Africa, as there were no secondary schools in Botswana until the 1950's. The 1950's saw the expansion of secondary education within the protectorate after the apartheid government in South

Africa introduced Bantu education. In Bantu education, black people were offered inferior education designed to provide them with skills to serve their own people in the homelands or to work in laboring jobs under whites. They were also forced to learn through the medium of Afrikaanse (the language of their oppressors). As part of the reaction against apartheid, Botswana took the decision to increase the use of English in primary education and also make it the main language of instruction in the secondary school system (Janson & Tsonope, 1991).

At independence (1966), under the leadership of Sir Seretse Khama, unity of all ethnic groups in the country was emphasized. Local languages other than Setswana that were taught in schools before independence were banned from use in education, the media and the judiciary. The first President informed the nation that his party stood for a gradual but sure evolution of a nation state "to which tribal groups will, while in existence, take secondary place" (Carter and Morgan, 1980, quoted in Nyati-Ramahobo, 2000). This sentiment of a unified nation state where all the different ethnic groups are regarded as Batswana and therefore only Setswana [among the local languages] taught in schools has prevailed since Seretse's death.

At independence, Setswana was accepted as the medium of instruction for the first 2 to 3 years at primary school level. The transition to the medium of English varied according to the language competence of the teacher, and it was not uncommon to find some instruction through Setswana even in Standard 7 (Republic of Botswana, 1977). From Standard 4 onwards; however, English was the official medium of instruction while Setswana was offered only as a subject. Actual classroom practices indicated that teachers actually code-switched between Setswana and English throughout the primary

school (Republic of Botswana, 1977). Anecdotal data also indicated that in various parts of the country, code switching occurred not only into Setswana but also into other native languages of the students whenever the teacher happened to be a member of the community in which he or she was teaching. Some commonly cited examples of teachers who code switched between Setswana and the children's home languages were the Kalanga speaking teachers in North East district and Afrikaans speaking teachers in Southern Kgalagadi district.

To upgrade the quality of teachers, more efforts and resources were allocated towards the improvement of the teaching of English as the medium of instruction. English was also allocated more periods on the school time-table than Setswana (NCE, 1977). Thus English gained more prominence than the national language in the curriculum. Given the circumstances, it is difficult to imagine how Botswana could attain the cultural transmission goal of education. If children are not taught in their primary discourses, the local cultural values and forms of knowledge are being ignored. Since language and culture are interwoven, by learning through a second language, children acquire the culture of that language and lose their own. Based on this correlation between language and culture, Luke (1994) asserts that literacy and education are means for access to cultural knowledge and social power. To become literate, children must master conventionalized linguistic and symbolic codes for constructing and deconstructing meanings with and around written texts.

During the 1980's some Ikalanga speaking students at the University of Botswana started an organization to promote their language and culture. Many people felt uncomfortable about the formation of the Ikalanga organization, especially those who

belonged to the mainstream Setswana speaking groups. It was then that in 1989, the second President, Sir Ketumile Masire pleaded with the nation "not to spoil the prevailing peace and unity in the country by fighting for ethnic language groupings to take precedence over Setswana, and that tribes insisting that their languages become media of instruction within their respective areas would break up the nation" (Botswana Daily News, June 30, 1989, No. 123:1 quoted in Nyati-Ramahobo, 2000). This illustrates the powerful position Setswana has been accorded over other local languages since Seretse engineered it. Yet instead of taking advantage of this position of Setswana in the language planning process, language policy makers relegated Setswana use to a language that "unifies" the different ethnic groups in the country, without attaching any socio-economic value to it, thus making it subsidiary to English.

The reality that the country needs English for international relations was wrongly translated into giving it absolute priority over the national language. The distinction between studying English as a subject and studying through its medium was never made. It was assumed that by learning through the medium of English, Batswana children would acquire the language better. The policy instituted subtractive bilingualism instead of additive bilingualism. In additive bilingualism, a second language and culture do not displace the first language, and this has been associated with educational advantages and enhanced metalinguistic development (Cummings, 1981, 2000, Genesee, Paradis and Crago, 2004). Contrary to this, subtractive bilingualism occurs when the acquisition of a second language and culture take place at the expense of the first language. This has been associated with disabling educational settings for language minority speakers (Cummings, 1989, 2000). Research by the international Institute for Educational

Planning of UNESCO (2003) in Paris found that "using the language understood by learners as the medium of instruction not only builds trust, initiative, and participation in the learning process but also promotes participatory teaching methods." Furthermore, it found out that "encouraging the use of an [ethnic] language as the medium of instruction stimulates the production of school and cultural materials in that language broadens the body of knowledge, and facilitates learners' integration into social and cultural life". Decision concerning language of instruction and the level at which the changeover from Setswana to English should take place is critical especially for ethnic minority children who have to battle between their home languages and Setswana, and then between Setswana and English.

Education Reform Policies

Over the past decade, Botswana has made considerable efforts to review its socio economic development policies and re-align its planning accordingly. A task force known as the National Commission on Education (NCE) was appointed in 1977 to conduct a review of the education system, its goals and major problems, and submit recommendations for improvement. This commission objected to the introduction of English as the medium of instruction from Standard 3 on the grounds that it was too early and also that the amount of class time allocated to English discriminated against the national language. This was reinforced by the exclusion of the Setswana grade from the aggregate scores qualifying the candidates for secondary school selection; even if they scored a failing grade in Setswana, they could still be admitted to secondary school so long as they performed well in English. As a result, students were not motivated to take

Setswana seriously as a school subject and therefore performed poorly in it (Martin, 1990). Many students failed to attain competent levels of literacy in the national language. Also, the commission's survey showed that many students expressed preference for English over Setswana (Republic of Botswana, 1977).

The commission noted that there was great educational advantage in learning literacy and other skills through the national language first, and thoroughly mastering that language before moving on to another. It then recommended that Setswana should be the medium of instruction from 1st to the 4th grade. There was no mention of other languages children speak in their homes; thus neglecting other local languages. It then proposed that, instead of drilling students to pass examinations, the main objective of teaching Setswana should be the establishment of operational literacy, so that students could communicate effectively in the national language. The examination should be changed correspondingly. The commission called for more written materials to support the teaching of Setswana and recommended the use of Setswana as the medium of instruction for the first 4 years of the primary course, with the transition to English taking place in Standard 5, by which time children have become fully literate in Setswana. Other recommendations that passed were: a) giving Setswana more time on the school timetable, b) to give it the same status accorded to English as an examination subject in the Primary School Leaving Examination and in the selection process for secondary school (ibid, 1977, p.77).

In 1993, the government of Botswana set up another commission to review the entire educational system. The review was called for on the basis that time had lapsed since the last commission and that there was need to conduct another review to develop a

system that would see the country into the twenty first century (Republic of Botswana, 1993). The commission's 1994 report, the Revised National Commission on Education (RNPE), reversed the 1977 recommendation of using Setswana as the medium of instruction for the first 4 years of education. It recommended that; "English should be used as the medium of instruction from grade 2 as soon as practicable" (Republic of Botswana, 1994). The recommendation was adopted on the observation that children performed poorly in English because they do not get used to using English early enough in the process, yet they are required to write examinations in it. Regardless of the fact that Setswana is a second language to some children, and a compulsory school subject to all nationals, a proposal by some parents that children in primary schools should be taught in the language dominant in the area where the school is located, with the introduction of English and Setswana gradually, was rejected when the final recommendations were passed. The commission argued that the proposal might put pressure on schools to offer the various languages spoken in the country, "whereas the schools may lack the capacity to do so and the education system would not be able to support such a development. Further, it is contrary to national language policy." (ibid, p.85) Despite all the recommendations, language in education policy has accorded less value to the local languages in preference for English. Thus an education system that was meant to carry the country into the 21st century placed less emphasis on its local languages.

The recommendations pertaining to Setswana were directed towards teachers and teacher educators. It was recommended that teachers should be exposed to as many language teaching methods as possible so as to provide a variety for them and the

learners, "with emphasis on communicative approaches, and therefore make Setswana more interesting as a subject" (ibid, 1994). Some local languages are endangered because they are neglected by the language policy. Recognition of other local languages comes up in the country's long-term vision for the year 2016: "Education must be used to enrich Botswana's cultural diversity. All of the nation's languages must be taught to a high standard at primary, secondary and tertiary level." (Republic of Botswana, 1977, p.31). This statement does not specify the ways and means to train teachers of the other indigenous languages. This aim is far from being achieved. Practically no provision has been made to introduce other local languages in schools. This is a political strategy employed to comfort people. No official attempt at implementation has been made. The only third language that has always been offered in schools is French, another foreign language.

Given the fact that University of Botswana's Department of African Languages and Literature teaches Setswana courses (Setswana as a subject) through the medium of English, the RNPE recommended that it (the department of African Languages and Literature) should play a leading role in guiding academic presentations in Setswana and cooperate with the Faculty of Education in promoting the teaching of Setswana. The Department of Curriculum Development in the Ministry of Education did implement the recommendation by the 1994 RNPE that in order to improve the status of Setswana, emphasis should be on the communicative approach. The current Setswana curricula for both junior and senior secondary schools that were implemented in 1996 are based on the communicative approach. Issues about the curriculum currently in use are discussed more elaborately in chapter six.

Continuing Legacy of English

It is almost 10 years since the 1994 RNPE made some sound recommendations about Setswana in an effort to promote it, yet its status is still very low as compared to that of English. The government and the media communicate with Batswana more in English than in Setswana. This is prevalent in parliamentary debates, government documents and in the media. It is very common for a government official to address people in English when they tour villages to inform people about certain policies or get their views before implementing them. Although such officials do have some people translate for them into Setswana, such practice is uncalled for especially if the villagers are predominantly Setswana speakers. Government newspapers and magazines are written in English. An alarming example of a magazine written in English is the "Agrinews". This is a magazine produced by the Ministry of Agriculture that deals with issues about crops and farming, issues that directly affect farmers in Botswana. Most farmers are at the grassroots level with little or no formal education at all. Whether the aim is to educate the farmers, or seek their views about agriculture, they are denied the information and as such, it is therefore not easy for them to make any contribution. Another example is that of the "Botswana Daily News", a government's daily newspaper that is distributed at no charge. More than 90% of the news is written in English and the only news in Setswana appeared in English on the previous day (see the news clip attached at the end of this section). Vision 2016 states that the country's different

languages and cultural traditions will be recognized, supported and strengthened within the education system and that, "no Motswana will be disadvantaged in the education system as a result of a mother tongue that differs from the country's two official languages" (Republic of Botswana, 1994, p.5). This goal calls for the revision of the language in education policy so as to incorporate other indigenous languages.

Several studies have revealed that as a result of the status accorded English and Setswana as the only languages recognized officially, other local languages are going through a process of language shift and death (Molosiwa, 2000; Chebanne & Nthapelelng, 2000). These studies examined language shift tendencies and linguistic affinity of the Ovaherero and Khoe speakers (in Botswana) respectively. They found out that the attitude of the minority speakers to Setswana was positive. They viewed Setswana "as a means of accessing knowledge in books, a tool that can be used to negotiate deals, communicate ideas, etc. with the dominant Tswana groups" (Chebanne & Nthapelelng, 2000, p.89). They also expressed that the use of Setswana solves the linguistic and social barriers that exist between the different ethnic groups in the country. The interviewees for both groups reported that they would like their children to be fluent in Setswana and English. The shift towards Setswana language by the minority groups goes with shift towards its culture and loss of their own cultures and languages. The groups expressed that they have already lost their traditional practices in terms of religion, attire, food, marriage and some cultural rituals performed when children reach puberty. Their children are also now adopting Setswana as the medium of communication at both home and school, abandoning their mother tongue. The findings of these studies denote complex power relations in Botswana society (Apple, 2003; 1998; 1993).

Apple (1993) argues that literacy has a political function and "should be seen as a crucial means to gain power and control over our entire lives" (p.44).

The following news clip from the Botswana Daily News captures the continuing legacy of English in postcolonial Botswana:

No immediate plans to translate Constitution Skelemani
09 June, 2006

GABORONE - Presidential affairs and public administration minister Phandu Skelemani says there are no immediate plans to translate the Constitution and other statutes into Setswana.

Skelemani said at Ntlo ya Dikgosi that it was nonetheless desirable to do so as it would enhance access to the legislation if it was made available in Setswana for the benefit of those who did not understand the English language, let alone the legalese that was often used in the drafting of legislation.

There are however certain practical considerations that would have to be dealt with particularly regarding the selection of the statutes to be translated given that it would be a mammoth task and costly too to translate the entire statute book into Setswana. he said.

The issue of the authenticity would also need to be addressed particularly in the likely event of a discrepancy between the Setswana version and the official English version. Skelemani said these were however, mere modalities that should not stood in the way of making Setswana translations of certain legislation in the foreseeable future.

The translation of the Constitution into Setswana would obviously deserve to be accorded the highest priority, he said. Skelemani was answering a question from Kgosi Freda Mosojane of North East who had asked the minister whether there were plans to translate the Constitution and other statutes into Setswana.

The answer prompted Kgosi Lotlaamoreng II of Barolong to comment, saying what was happening in Botswana left much to be desired. He said he wondered why after 40 years of independence Botswana did not have a constitution written in Setswana when it took two years for South Africa after independence to translate its constitution to 11 official languages. Kgosi Oarabile Kalaben asked the minister to ensure that it was translated into all languages spoken in Botswana. BOPA

History of Teacher Education in Botswana

Teacher education has expanded qualitatively and quantitatively in Botswana since independence in 1966. Before independence, most teachers were unqualified. The highest qualification held was the Standard 6 Primary School Certificate. The few trained teachers obtained their teacher certification at Tiger Kloof in South Africa. Teacher training institutions in Botswana were established only during the 1940's. Initially, these institutions offered a two-year training course leading to the Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC). Admission to the program was dependent upon students having successfully obtained their Primary School Leaving Certificate. Around 1945, the structure of the PTC was extended to 3 years to bring it to a level of the 'Native Primary' course that was offered in neighboring South Africa. During the late 1950's, another two-year course, the Primary Higher (PH) was introduced alongside the three-year one. This course was pursued by those students who held a junior secondary school certificate and were to teach upper classes of the primary school; standards four, five, and six. Those who were admitted at the training colleges had to have taught for two years prior to admission. Prospective teachers had the exposure of real classrooms and background of remote areas. The education review commission realized that the approach to raise teacher morale was by raising the quality of new entrants to the profession; improving conditions of service for teachers; and thirdly, by providing proper professional support. In this regard, the certificate program was abolished and a three-year Diploma in Primary

Education program was introduced. Those who held the PTC qualification had to upgrade their qualification through distance education to obtain the three-year Diploma.

Currently, teachers are trained at three different levels. There are colleges of education that offer a Diploma (equivalent to US Associate degree) in Primary Education and those that offer a Diploma in secondary education. The duration of teacher preparation for both these programs is three years. The only institution that awards a degree in teacher education is the University of Botswana. Teacher preparation at the university lasts for 5 years. Students spend the first 4 years in the Faculty of Humanities studying content in different subject matter and are awarded a Bachelors degree; they then spend another year in the Faculty of Education to study education courses and are attached in schools for a period of 7 weeks as student teachers for field experience. At the end of this program students are awarded a Postgraduate degree in Education. Contrary to the university program, student teachers at colleges of education are attached in schools for two full semesters for field experience. They spend one semester in schools during their second year of study and another semester in their third year of study. This means that these students gain more field experience than their counterparts at the university. All teacher education programs are made up of three major components to be learned by the student teacher, namely: theories of teaching and learning, teaching subject content and teaching practice.

With regards to literacy education, a lot is taken for granted at the university and its affiliated colleges that offer a Diploma in secondary education. There are no lecturers who can claim to be literacy specialists (or specifically reading specialists). Emphasis is on teaching teachers how to teach literature and language (Grammar). Matters pertaining

to literacy education are treated seriously only at elementary teacher education level. Through my experience as a teacher and a teacher educator in Botswana, I have realized that topics that are covered in the Setswana education courses are:

- Communicative approaches to the teaching of grammar, basic language skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- The teaching of literature.
- Selection and evaluation of language and literature teaching materials.
- Remedial teaching and mixed ability teaching.
- Preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans.

These topics are based on content taught at the junior and senior secondary schools. Emphasis is on giving teachers skills to handle the school syllabi. Botswana is a multilingual and therefore multicultural nation like most African countries but issues of multiculturalism are neglected in teacher education programs.

In reviewing education research in Botswana during the period 1986 to 1991, Nyati-Ramahobo and Prophet found that large sections of the teacher education process had not been addressed. These were areas such as the pre-service teacher education curriculum, the effectiveness of the commitment to teaching practice, in-service teacher education, the teacher educators themselves, questions of coordination between the various teacher training institutions and the Department of Teacher Education. Chapman & Snyder (1989) did some classroom based observations to correlate effective teacher behaviors in the classroom with the level of teacher training. They concluded that levels of training appeared to have little impact on teaching behaviors and ultimately student achievement. This view is challenged in another study by Mannathoko (1998) who

laments that in Botswana, too much of the relevant knowledge and research is invisible to teachers. She blames research institutions and policy makers for not having strategies in place to make research accessible to teachers. It could be concluded that many education reform proposals do not move beyond political rhetoric to effect real changes in the education system.

The context described above clearly indicates that Setswana and English occupy unequal status as school subjects in postcolonial Botswana. The current language education programs at teacher education level do not adequately address issues of educating culturally and linguistically diverse learners. It is with this understanding that this study sought to explore how teachers perceive literacy instruction and learning. The implementation of education reform policies requires skilled teachers and availability of resources. Decisions concerning language of instruction and the level at which the changeover from Setswana to English should take place has to be looked into. Education reform that imparts life long survival skills is necessary for youth.

Summary

Pre-colonial education in Botswana was based on the society's cultural practices and beliefs. Children had to undergo some apprenticeship learning as a way of being socialized into the accepted norms of the society. Western education did not build on the traditional forms of learning but replaced it completely. The adoption of English as the official language and medium of instruction in schools is an illustration of how the colonial experience continues to shape and define postcolonial practices in former colonies. During the colonial times, English was given more prominence over local

languages, a practice which still continues today as illustrated by Setswana being limited to initial literacy at primary schools and as a subject at primary and secondary school levels only, with no economic value attached to it. Even though policy documents pay lip service to the fact that the country is multilingual and multicultural, practical steps to address this issue have still to be taken. These are: the implementation of recommendations such as; the introduction of local languages other than Setswana in schools, improvement of language teaching methods at teacher training institutions, and instruction of Setswana through its medium at the University of Botswana. With the current state of affairs, the education system will continue to serve certain students while excluding others.

The chapter that follows is a review of literature related to the study. I review literacy research in Botswana and other countries, the theoretical frameworks within which the study is situated, and the definitions of literacy according to ideological perspectives of different scholars.

Chapter Three

Literature Review

Botswana has set for itself goals towards having an educated and informed nation by the year 2016 (Republic of Botswana, 1997). The major way in which this goal would be attained is through the implementation of the secondary school curricula that were reformed in 1998. These curricula aim to equip students with attitudes, values and skills required for economic development in a rapidly changing society (Republic of Botswana, 2002). Discussions about competent work force or productivity entail concerns about literacy. This chapter therefore reviews research on literacy education that young people already possess or are in need of developing in order to be competent in the world of work as well as be responsible citizens. In the 21st century, students need to acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills to function within their cultural communities as well as participate effectively in the shared national culture (Banks, 2003).

The chapter begins by reviewing the theoretical frameworks within which the study is situated. The next section is a review of literacy reports from both developed and developing countries in various parts of the world. Finally, literature on the definitions of literacy according to the ideological perspectives of different scholars is reviewed. The review of literature is aimed at providing the foundation for the study and to guide its methodology and formulation of theory.

The main research questions and sub questions this study sought to answer are:

1. In what ways does the postcolonial experience of Botswana play out in teachers' understanding of literacy teaching and learning?

2. What are particular meanings teachers associate with literacy teaching and learning given the structural constraints of the mandated curriculum and national examinations?

a) How does the national (Setswana or English) curriculum define literacy?

b) What is it that teachers understand the curriculum to be telling them to do?

c) What are teachers' perspectives on the curriculum's responsiveness to the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse students in schools?

d) How does the teacher make sense of and come to understand students' familiar literacy experiences?

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on both sociocultural and postcolonial theoretical frameworks. While the sociocultural theory assumes that people formulate ideas, beliefs, and conceptualizations from the experiences they have had within a sociocultural context, post-colonialism deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2000).

Postcolonial Theory

Since this study is about teachers' perceptions of literacy teaching and learning, I employ the postcolonial theory to illustrate how the teaching of Setswana is embedded within and shaped by colonial discourse. Among other issues, postcolonial theory seeks to answer questions such as how the experience of colonization affected those who were colonized, what traces colonial education has left in former colonies, and how the colonial education and language influenced the culture and identity of the colonized

(Achebe, 1994; Mazrui & Mazrui, 1998; Thiongo, 1981; 1986; 1993; 2000). Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995) also posit that:

> the most formidable ally of economic and political control had long been the business of 'knowing' other peoples because this 'knowing' underpinned imperial dominance and became the mode by which they were increasingly persuaded to know themselves [...] A consequence of this process of knowing became the export to the colonies European language, literature and learning as part of a civilizing mission which involved the suppression of a vast wealth of indigenous cultures beneath the weight of imperial control (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1995, p.1).

The most important issue critiqued by postcolonial writers and theorists that is relevant to this study is the effect of the language of the colonizers on the language of instruction in Botswana schools. The ideological colonization of Botswana is prevalent in language education policy. Western form of education has persisted in the postcolonial era. In the postcolonial period, many governments have used education as a means of forging national unity through curricula interventions, language policies, ceremonial activities and suchlike. According to Pennycook (1995), the spread of English, partly through education, has had contradictory effects. On the one hand, it has contributed to western hegemony. On the other hand this phenomenon can act counter-hegemonically as counter-hegemonic discourses can be 'formed in English' and that access to English can mean access to global networks.

In Botswana, English is accorded more prominence over local languages in all aspects of life. The government and the media communicate with Batswana more in

English than in Setswana. The University of Botswana teaches Setswana courses through the medium of English. Setswana teachers too are prepared through the medium of English. It is only the Diploma (equivalent to USA Associate degree) awarding Colleges of Education that educate Setswana teachers through its medium. The official curricula documents that have to deal with the teaching of Setswana in schools are written in English. Teachers are expected to read them in English, translate their understanding into Setswana, and prepare their lessons in Setswana through which they teach. English is the medium of instruction for almost all school subjects offered at both primary and secondary schools except for Setswana as a subject. This dominance of English demonstrates the notion of knowledge and power relationships (Popkewitz, 2000) between the colonized and the colonizer.

Said (1978) demonstrates the ideology of colonial power over the colonized by analyzing the concept of Orientalism as it was produced and circulated in Europe. According to Said, representation of the Orient in European literary texts and other writings contributed to a dichotomy between Europe and its 'others', a dichotomy which was central to the creation of European culture as well as to the maintenance and extension of European hegemony over its colonies. It has been argued that Said's use of culture and knowledge to interrogate colonial power inaugurated colonial discourse studies (Loomba, 2005). Discourse analysis allows us to see how power works through language, literature, culture and the institutions which regulate our daily lives.

The contradiction between teacher education practices and actual school practices is a cause for concern. This contradiction illustrates that in education, Botswana is still bondage to colonial powers. It is with these kinds of practices in mind that Thiongo

(1986) describes the English language as a "cultural bomb" that continues a process of erasing memories of pre-colonial cultures and history and as a way of installing the dominance of new, more insidious forms of colonialism. Not only does colonial education eventually create a sense of wanting to disassociate with native heritage, but it also affects the individual and the sense of self-confidence. Ngugi wa Thiongo (2000) states that:

> Colonial alienation takes two interlinked forms: an active (or passive) distancing of oneself from the reality around; and an active (or passive) identification with that which is most external to one's environment. It starts with a deliberate disassociation of the language of conceptualization, of thinking, of formal education, of mental development, from the language of daily interaction in the home and in the community. It is like separating the mind from the body so that they are occupying two unrelated linguistic spheres in the same person. On a larger scale it is like producing a society of bodiless heads and headless bodies (p. 535-536).

Undoubtedly, the high status accorded English over Setswana and other local languages disadvantages the learners as illustrated by research studies conducted in some Botswana classrooms.

Sociocultural Theory

The sociocultural theory views literacy as a social practice (Street, 2001, 1996, 1995, 1993, 1984; Gee, 1996; Barton, 1994; Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Hymes, 1994; Heath, 1983, 1982). According to the proponents of this theory, language and literacy education are more than decoding and encoding of text; but rather they are the means of

participating in culturally valued activities. Through participating in these activities, students develop in interaction with others contextualized literate skills such as abstraction, reflection, analysis, interpretation, cross-cultural understanding, problem-solving and critical thinking. The privileging of one form of literacy (academic literacy) over multiple other forms (e.g., computer, visual, graphic, and scientific literacies) has been criticized for ignoring the fact that different texts and social contexts (reading for whom, with what purpose) require different reading skills (Barton, Hamilton, & Ivanic, 2000; Gee, 1996; Street, 1995). Acquiring these abilities would empower students to participate in public, community and economic life. Theorists of New Literacy Studies argue that literacy practices are constructed within a social context, that literacy acts vary depending on who engages in them and under what circumstances (Street, 1993). The concept of "multiple" literacies is useful in marking differences between school literacy and other literacy practices.

Scholars such as Lave (1988), Lave & Wenger (1991) and Rogoff (1990) have demonstrated that learning through interaction in activity is not unique to children but is also an integral part of formal and informal adult learning throughout the world. Learning, whether by children or adults, is not an isolated act of cognition, but rather a process of gaining entry to a discourse of practitioners through apprenticeship assistance from peers and teachers.

Rogoff (1990, 1995) relates sociocultural theory to three planes on which human development occurs; the personal, interpersonal and cultural planes. The personal plane includes cognition, emotion, behavior, values and beliefs. The interpersonal plane encompasses the mutual involvement of individual people with others in their social

spheres. The community or cultural plane refers to influences from the home and family. It also includes "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, 1995; Moll, et al, 1992) that children, particularly ethnic minority children have that are usually not part of the official school knowledge. By "funds of knowledge" is meant skills, abilities, ideas and practices essential to a household's functioning and well-being. It is assumed that all households are rich in sociocultural resources and thus have unique ways of shaping the minds of their members. In most cases children are made to depend on the teacher for all learning as if they have nothing or little to offer. Gee (2000) echoes this notion by stating that "school-based, specialist, academic, and public-sphere forms of language often require us to exit our life world ..." (p. 66). He argues that in the process of being exposed to specialist domains, minority and poor children are denied the value of their life worlds and their communities in reference to those of the advantaged children. In order for families to utilize their cultural and linguistic resources to contribute to their children's education, Rogoff is advocating for the inclusion of the cultural plane in the instructional practices. Her contribution to sociocultural theory could be illustrated as follows:

Table 2: Three Planes of Sociocultural Contexts of learning

Three planes	**Elements typical of each plane**
Personal plane	Cognition, emotion, behavior, values, beliefs.
Interpersonal plane	Mutual involvement of people with others in social spheres; social interactions; collective activity.
Community or cultural plane	Home, community, cultural and societal influences; economic; political, cultural, social context.

Adapted from Rogoff (1990, 1995)

The above three planes reflect the different dimensions of the processes of learning which need to inform the school curricula and instructional practices. The concept of literacy as a social practice has also been declared by the international agency, UNESCO. In the United Nations Literacy Day (UNLD) 2003-2012 goals, UNESCO states that "literacy is about more than reading and writing - it is about how we communicate in society. It is about social practices and relationships, about knowledge, language and culture".

Critical Pedagogy

The study also draws from the framework of critical pedagogy (Freire 1970; 1985; Giroux 1988; Cummins 1989). The critical pedagogy framework builds on the perspective of Freire (1970) who criticized the "banking concept" of education in which students are considered to be empty containers or vessels into which the teacher, as the agent of the culture, deposits knowledge and information into the learner. Freire believes that in a banking model of education, students do not function critically, but instead, have information imposed on them from the outside This model of education restricts students to receiving, filing, and storing the information deposited by the teacher, and in the end it is "the people themselves who are filed away through the lack of creativity" (p. 53). Freire contrasts this concept with a liberatory pedagogy based on dialogue and problem-solving in which, "teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and therefore by coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge." (p. 51).

Critical pedagogy affirms the mutual and coequal roles of teachers and learners. The experiences of learners' lives are placed at the center of the curriculum. Critical

pedagogy enables learners to reflect on their own experiences historically. Freire (1970) states that students must be taught to read the word and the world. Reading the word requires basic knowledge and skills of literacy but reading the world require students to question the assumptions of institutionalized knowledge and to use knowledge to take action that will make the world more just in which to live and work (Banks, 2003; 2004).

In summary, the theoretical frameworks discussed above are consistent with current views about literacy teaching and learning. Understanding literacy as a social practice means that reading and writing can only be understood in the context of the social, cultural, economic, historical practices of which they are a part. Effective instruction needs to build on elements of both formal and informal literacies. It has to take into account students' interests and needs while at the same time attending to the challenges of living in an information-based economy during a time when standards have been raised significantly for literacy achievement. This suggests the need to rethink how students' out of school experiences could be integrated with the habits of literacy learning and teaching that the schools value.

Literacy Studies and Reports: Local and International

Literacy in Botswana

Much of the past research in Botswana schools has focused on what teachers do in the classrooms (instructional practices) while a few studies have mainly examined the interactions between teachers and students in primary and junior secondary schools, the language of instruction and instructional resources. Although these studies do not make

reference to the perceptions behind particular teaching approaches, I reviewed them as the basis of my study since instructional practices and resources do reveal something about teachers' perceptions and their interpretation of the curriculum. The review attempts to establish the kinds of literacy teaching methods and resources that are employed in Botswana classrooms and also to find out how teachers deal with the contextual and institutional constraints.

In a study on "Classroom practices and the discourse of classroom interaction in Botswana primary schools", Arthur (1998) observed that teaching was authoritative and the curriculum was prescriptive in nature, failing to reflect the "nonstandard" home and community backgrounds of many students as well as that of many teachers. In Arthur's words, "individual and cultural difference is devalued, and conformity to an approved 'national' identity is encouraged" (p.10). He also argued that teacher identity in Botswana was shaped in teacher training institutions. According to him, teachers inherited prescriptive-teacher dominated classroom practices at teacher training institutions from their tutors. The tutors talked about learner-centered approaches but neither practiced them nor modeled them.

The authoritative nature of teaching was also revealed in Rowell's study (1991). Rowell studied the day-to-day patterns of events and interactions for students and teachers in two Botswana junior secondary schools located in selected villages. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with students, teachers and administrators, students' written and printed texts. The study revealed that most students were not given opportunities to articulate their thinking or interpret what they were learning; classrooms were dominated by teacher talk. Furthermore, Rowell found that the

content of lessons was invariably what had been laid out in textbook exercises, worksheets, workbooks or teacher guides. To be considered good students, when questions were asked, students provided teacher-designated answers that they had memorized. Rowell remarks;

> The students in this study appeared to be aiming for reproducing or replicating information and there was very little opportunity offered to them for re-presenting what they had learned, not as a product but as a process (p.22).

In that regard, Rowell concluded that, in Botswana schools, learning comes to be seen as the acquisition of someone else's knowledge, which is out there, detached from the learner. Her analysis of the teachers was that most of them saw their task as transmitting the information required to assist the students to pass the examinations. In this regard, learning was seen as the means of accessing information needed to pass the examinations. Rowell also observed that the English language presented a challenge for students and teachers alike. Teachers did admonish students for not conversing in English during or between lessons, yet they (teachers) did not communicate among themselves in English in the staffrooms. The incompetency of teachers in English was evident in the fact that many of them were unable to provide well constructed explanations in their lessons. Rowell found it disturbing that despite communication problems in classrooms, there was no discussion either about the difficulties facing teachers working in a second or third language, nor about the adequacy of teachers' written or spoken English. The contribution of this study to literacy education is that awareness of the ways in which

people come to learn is crucial. An approach such as the transmission of information to teaching does not afford students opportunities to think for themselves, but encourage them to depend on other people's knowledge.

Raising similar views as in Rowell's study, Sunal (1998) contends that instruction in sub-Saharan countries is often authoritarian and places students in passive roles where recall of information is the expected result of student learning. She attributes this kind of teaching strategy to lack of appropriate training on the part of the teachers. She also reports that students are given very few tests and no continuous assessment. Lack of continuous assessment is seen as an inheritance from the European colonial traditions where assessment is focused on end of year examinations.

Based on interview studies conducted among ethnic minority groups of the Basarwa, Hays (2002) and Polelo (2003) revealed that many ethnic minority students in primary schools in remote areas dropped out of school in Botswana because of the insensitivity of the school culture and curriculum to their (the minorities) culture and learning styles. Hays contended that children performed badly in examinations and dropped out of school because they were:

> Taught foreign systems of knowledge in a language or language variety other than their own, by teachers from cultures that are different from, and dominant to their own, and who use instruction and disciplinary styles that do not match that of the students' home life (Hays, 2002, p.1).

Both Hays and Polelo cited other factors as being those that included negative relations between teachers and students or between students and their peers, language difficulties and ethnic intolerance.

Chapman and Snyder (1989) conducted classroom-based observations to correlate effective teacher behaviors in the classroom with the level of teacher training. They concluded that levels of training appeared to have little impact on teaching behaviors and ultimately student achievement. Their studies revealed issues similar to those that came up in a government-funded consultancy on 'Primary Schooling for Remote Area Dwellers" conducted by Tabachnick in Botswana in 1980. This consultancy identified the need to devise instructional materials that are suitable for remote area dweller children. This was recommended on the basis that circumstances of living, of culture, of economic and social mobility were different for those children than for most Batswana. In his report, Tabachnick cited lack of appropriate teaching materials as obstructive to the learning of the remote area children. He argued that in remote areas, there was less access to and less variety of informal learning opportunities through mass media, interchange of news and ideas. He recommended that an important part of the curriculum for remote area schools should be an emphasis on activities in the classroom, which use out of school experiences of students.

In another study, Jankie (2000) investigated how far community practices and knowledge were incorporated in Setswana classrooms. This was a yearlong qualitative study in one secondary school. Jankie found out that teaching was geared towards examinations, with heavy reliance on textbooks, most of which were far removed from the experiences of the students. She argues that teachers can play a role by reshaping their

pedagogies to create classroom contexts that will nurture academic success for all students. This, according to her, can be achieved through recognition of community knowledge and worldviews as well as students' personal experiences as a form of valuable currency in Setswana classrooms.

The only study in the region that directly investigated teachers' conceptions of literacy was that which was conducted by Natsa (1994) in Zimbabwe. Among the findings, Natsa's study revealed that; the national examinations influenced what teachers taught and the breadth and depth of content coverage. He observed that "those aspects of literacy which did not often come in public examinations, such as debates and other oral communication skills were rarely emphasized in their literacy instruction" (p.123). Natsa further noted that the examination questions limited teachers' conceptualization of reading and writing. Reading appeared to be a process of getting meaning from print. Students were discouraged from using their prior knowledge to make sense of a written text for fear of misreading questions that were asked. Many of the findings in this study concur with observations made in the aforementioned studies conducted in Botswana. This is no surprise as Zimbabwe and Botswana are neighboring countries and were both former British colonies. Many of the teachers interviewed in Natsa's study were not able to define what reading was. Their responses suggested that there was no academic or professional discourse going on in schools about the meanings and processes of reading and writing. Based on his data, Natsa concluded that there was no evidence that reading was defined as a process of constructing meaning through interaction among the readers' existing knowledge. Having had similar experiences as Natsa's informants, his study has

partly provoked me to find out about teachers' perceptions of literacy teaching and learning in Botswana's education system.

It is interesting to note that during the time Natsa conducted his study, Zimbabwe's curricula and examinations were still controlled by the examinations board (UCLES) in United Kingdom, while Botswana localized its curricula and examinations in 1998. It is evident that the colonial influence is still prevalent in the education system of the former colonies. Parry (2003) laments that in most African countries; the curricula are dominated by externally administered examinations; and the head teachers locally dominate schools, while within the classroom, the teacher is the "undisputed authority". In this regard:

> Literacy is seen as a set of practices, imposed by authority, that have no intrinsic interest for learners; reading is just part of a series of hoops that learners must jump through before attaining a job and beginning real life (ibid, p.741).

Language of Instruction and Literacy

Some African scholars have argued that all the most developed nations use their native languages as mediums of instruction; while the least developed nations use languages other than their own native ones. Prah & King (1999) in particular, observed that classification of the world's nations along development scale correlates fairly with the use of native languages:

> ... successful societies of Asia and Europe are societies that use their own languages. The fact that English is a universal language

> does not mean that Danish people, who are more than five million use English; the Dutch who are no more than fifteen million do not use English or French ... the Malaysians who got their independence within six months of Ghana's independence, today use Bahasa on a wide scale (p.12).

The use of former colonizer's languages as mediums of instruction in most African countries has also been seen as hampering children's cognitive development (Silue, 1999), and a psychological disjunction between the school context and the social background of the children (Fereira, 1994). Silue's view is that tying up literacy to foreign languages implicitly leads Africans to view it as something external to their social praxis just as the foreign medium used to teach it. She argues that:

> In the general context of learning, on using a language other than their mother tongue, children's fragile and still emerging cognitive capacities are forced and routed through a completely different linguistic and conceptual framework (p.66).

The fear that learning in local languages may jeopardize students' competence in English is unfounded. Experimental studies in other countries have established that children who learn in local languages perform better than those who learn in languages foreign to them. One such example is the Iliolo experiment (Bamgbose, 1976) in Nigeria. Some children were instructed in the local vernacular of Hiligaynon in the first two grades of primary education while others were instructed in English. At the end of the

second year, the local vernacular was found to be a much more effective medium of instruction than English. At the end of the third year, the experimental group continued to perform better than the control group. The experiment demonstrated that instruction in mother tongue is superior to that in English. Unfortunately, details about how those children were tested are not given so these studies still leave us with some questions.

In another experiment, also carried out in Nigeria, children who studied in Yoruba for 6 years while learning English as a second language performed better than those who learned directly in English (Chumbow, 1998 and Bamgbose, 2005). This experiment was known as the Ife experiment. Children who studied in Yoruba to present themselves in an English Language examination outclassed those children who studied the same subjects – biology, mathematics –in the school system in English (Chumbow, 1998). Another experiment mentioned by Chumbow is that conducted in the Philippines in which some students were taught in English and others in Filipino in the mother tongue. The children who were taught in the indigenous language performed considerably better than those who were taught in English.

Instruction in mother tongue seems to be yielding positive results for children in various parts of the world. In Botkyrka, Sweden, Hagman and Lahdenpera (in Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988) provide evidence from a program in mother tongue instruction that was introduced in 1971 for Finnish immigrant children in 1st grade. By 1973, the program was extended to Finnish pupils in lower secondary education (6th to - 9th grades). A follow-up study was conducted in 1984 to find out the progress of Finnish students who had completed 9th grade. It was revealed that many Finnish students who had applied for lower secondary education had been admitted. The number of Finnish

students who had applied for programs leading to university was also higher than for the students from the other classes. Hagman and Lahdenpera argue, "minority children's languages and cultures can be given in every country the same status which Botkyrka has given to them" (1988, p.335).

The above literature demonstrates that the prevailing literacy practices in Botswana classrooms are due to some institutional constraints and teachers' lack of professional development. Knowledge is treated as neutral and given. In an era that demands advanced levels of literacy for secondary school graduates for further studies, to function efficiently in the work place or for good citizenship, students are trained to depend on the teacher. Their experiences outside of school are not considered and since language goes with culture, this makes matters worse for ethnic minorities whose languages are not taught in school. The colonial imbalance in power relations between cultures continues to exist in postcolonial Botswana. Although the researchers employed ethnographic research methods such as observations and interviews on teaching practices, there still remain questions about how teachers perceive literacy teaching and learning, what meanings they make of literacy teaching. These are the issues that I hope to address in this study. The section that follows discusses literature on culturally relevant pedagogy.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

In order to take advantage of students' diverse cultural language practices, literature on teaching practices in remote area schools of Botswana calls for culturally relevant teaching pedagogies. Culturally relevant pedagogy has been described by a

number of researchers as an effective means of meeting the academic and social needs of culturally diverse students (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Gay (2000) asserts that culturally relevant pedagogy uses:

> the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant to and effective [for students].... It teaches to and through strengths of these students. It is culturally validating and affirming (p. 29).

Culturally relevant teaching rejects the deficit-based thinking about culturally diverse students. Ladson-Billings (1994) has argued that one of the central principles of culturally relevant pedagogy is an authentic belief that students from culturally diverse and low-income backgrounds are capable learners. She maintains that if students are treated competently they will ultimately demonstrate high degrees of competence. To become culturally relevant, teachers need to engage in honest, critical reflection that challenges them to see how their positionality influences their students in either positive or negative ways. Gay (2000) maintains that one of the most fundamental features of culturally responsive teaching is the power of caring. She states that caring is frequently manifested through teacher attitudes, expectations and behaviors. Bruner (1996) states that "education is not simply a technical business of managed information processing, nor even simply a matter of applying learning theories to the classroom or using the results of subject-centered achievement testing. It is a complex pursuit of fitting a culture

to the needs of its members and of fitting its members and their ways of knowing to the needs of the culture" (p.43).

International Research on Literacy

Middle school Survey Reports

To find out how the teaching and learning of literacy in Botswana compares with that in other countries, I reviewed literacy survey reports submitted to the International Reading Association (IRA) in 2005 from various countries. Since my interest is in adolescent literacy, I selected surveys that reported about middle school literacy in the absence of reports on secondary school literacy. International Research Correspondents (IRCs) were requested to contact 20 to 25 qualified individuals in their respective regions and poll those individuals about 8 issues related to middle school literacy. The poll comprised the following items, with each item followed by a Likert scale (*not at all, little, much, very much*) and a request to explain the response.

1. To what extent are middle school students (grades 5–8) engaged with literacy in your region of the world?
2. Do language differences influence middle school students' involvement with literacy in your region?
3. Does assessment play a role in how much middle school students are engaged with reading?
4. Do schools in your region use out-of-school interests to engage middle school students with literacy in school?

5. Do electronic media influence middle school students' engagement with literacy?
6. Do teachers in your region of the world use new technologies to engage middle school students in literacy?
7. Does gender influence middle school students' engagement with literacy in your region?
8. In your region, does socioeconomic class influence middle school students' engagement with literacy?

From the responses received, the most often common identified issue was that there was disengagement with literacy among middle school children (grades 5-8). International research correspondents Marta Infante of Chile and Melina Porto of Argentina reported that literacy engagement by middle school students occurred mostly in school settings, in the form of required activities, rather than outside academic settings or for pleasure. Gearing instructional materials to students' interests was seen as motivational in involving students in academic activities. Although seldom utilized, it was done mainly through writing autobiographies and keeping student journals. The use of assessments, having a concrete audience for their writing, and students' desire for good grades were also commonly identified as motivating factors for student success. The respondents did not see language differences as being a substantial barrier to literacy practices, as both Chile and Argentina are largely monolingual, with most students speaking Spanish.

The South African report compiled by Mastin Prinsloo, the international correspondent, stated that middle school students were not very engaged with traditional

school literacies but preferred the more attractive alternatives offered by television programs, computer games, and the Internet. Assessments were described as motivation for some students' limited literacy engagement, although it was also noted that a high level of literacy was not required to pass those tests. A number of schools reported that they used students' out-of-school interests for instructional purposes. This was mainly through the use of newspapers, true-life stories about popular figures such as skateboarders, and, where available, the Internet. Many respondents described language differences as influential; they noted that Afrikaans and Xhosa-speaking students frequently struggled in the English-speaking schools they attended. Some respondents indicated that socioeconomic class was very influential on literacy practices in that there was lack of access to resources such as computers and texts in economically poor areas.

The international correspondents Robyn Gail Cox, Maya K. David, and Anita Y.K. Poon submitted reports that were compilations of 42 responses from questionnaires from four countries, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and Hong Kong. A common thread through many of their reports was the strong presence of government initiatives behind academic programs. Curricula were described as being geared toward preparing students to perform well on national examinations, and some respondents noted that the large role of assessment might have a negative effect on students' out-of-school literacy practices. Many commented on their difficulty gauging students' engagement in literacy practices because of an abundance of teaching responsibilities. Some respondents also observed that second language learners from the many different dialect and language communities within these countries often struggle in terms of academic achievement because of the reliance on official national languages in the curriculum. Out-of-school interests were not

seen as influential on instruction mainly due to the constraints of the curriculum, as respondents reported having little time for much variation.

Respondents from Hong Kong and Malaysia described after-school programs that attempt to build on students' interests to motivate reluctant learners. Many of them noted that students were very interested in new technologies, especially those that involved the internet, computer game playing, and supplemental academic activities available online. The respondents from Malaysia and Brunei reported that these resources were as yet not widely available in their countries, while those from Hong Kong noted the difficulty in adding anything to an already packed curriculum. Like the situation in South Africa, socioeconomic class was identified as a major influence on students' literacy engagement by most respondents, with the more affluent having more access to books and academic coaching and being described as more engaged with literacy.

The international research correspondent Meeli Pandis gathered 16 responses from Estonia and the United Kingdom from a range of groups. Middle school students were commonly reported as being engaged in literacy practices, with an identified pattern of moving away from traditional print-based literacy toward more interactions with electronic media, particularly in their out-of-school activities. Incorporating new technologies with in-school activities via electronic communication, searching the internet, and using electronic white boards or computer programs such as Microsoft's Power Point were identified as being effective alternatives to pen-and-paper activities. Responses from both Estonia and the United Kingdom generally indicated an advantage to using students' out-of-school interests in shaping instruction, but most respondents reported little evidence of this being done in classrooms, either due to a lack of attention

to students' interests, as reported by the UK correspondents, or larger workloads, as reported by Estonian teachers.

Comparing responses across the different regions, certain common themes about literacy engagement at the middle school level emerged. These were issues such as: influence of new technologies on students' engagement with literacy which, however, were depended on social class; economic differences led to a lack of access to a variety of scholastic resources. The use of out-of-school interests was also recognized as being part of effective instruction even though they were not often incorporated in instruction. Whereas the reports from South America and Europe indicated that second language learners were just as likely as native speakers to engage in literacy practices during middle school years, that was not the case with learners from Pacific Asia and South Africa. The countries where responses were gathered in the former were monolingual whereas the latter comprised of learners from different language groups. Pacific Asia and South Africa therefore reported a large number of learning difficulties since the official languages in the curriculum were different from learners' home languages.

Teacher Preparation Survey Reports

In order to get an insight into how other countries prepare their teachers I looked at survey reports submitted to the International Reading Association (IRA) in 2006 from selected countries that mentioned issues about literacy and teacher preparation. The international research correspondents were requested to send informed individuals in their regions a common questionnaire consisting of 10 items related to the issue of teacher preparation. The first 8 items were rated with a 4-point Likert scale (*not at all,*

little, much, very much), whereas the final two questions were open-ended. The 10 items were as follows:

1. Do teachers report feeling adequately prepared to teach reading and writing?
2. To what extent is teacher preparation in your region nationally regulated?
3. Are beginning teachers supported in their efforts to become successful teachers of reading and writing?
4. Are there professional development opportunities for working teachers?
5. Are teachers taught specific methods to teach reading and writing (as opposed to being taught general methods of instruction)?
6. Can teachers obtain special teaching certifications in the area of reading or writing?
7. What do you think should be the focus of literacy-teacher education in your region?
8. What do you think should be the focus of literacy-teacher education in your region?
9. Do you find the existing teacher-preparation system in your region adequate?
10. Briefly describe the process of becoming a teacher in your region. For example, are there requirements such as (a) choosing a specific grade level? (b) being bilingual? (c) taking specific tests? (d) completing a specific academic/training program?

The Australian correspondent reported that there were no reading or writing support teachers and so there was no formal specialist certification in reading or writing, but teachers can achieve a measure of specialization after teaching for several years and then completing postgraduate degrees. The school administrators believed that teachers were not generally well prepared to teach reading and writing skills, university academics believed that university programs provided a diverse and adequate foundation for teaching. The correspondent noted that the administrators who responded to this questionnaire reported that support systems and professional learning programs are provided for beginning teachers in their schools. However, the university-based

academics indicated that Australian graduates tend to receive little systematic support and professional learning experiences once they leave university, although the state Departments of Education occasionally offer mandatory professional development for public school teachers. The respondents also recounted that students in elementary programs believed they were better prepared than those in secondary programs. Special programs, such as French immersion and English as a second language, are provided, but with varying levels of preparation.

From Chile, Marta Infante reported that in general, Chilean teachers felt adequately prepared to teach literacy skills. Many (55%) stated that teachers were taught specific methods to teach reading and writing. However, a substantial group (30% of respondents) also noted that teachers were not equipped with all the theoretical and practical resources needed to address problems in learning to read acquisition. The respondents reported that the improvement of students' reading comprehension should be a major focus of contemporary teacher training, as evidenced by low national testing in this area. The majority of respondents (74%) emphasized that teachers have opportunities to obtain special teaching certifications in reading and writing at various universities, but they indicated a need for more financial support to be made available for in-service teachers to obtain these certifications.

In Hong Kong, more than 60% of the respondents felt that teachers are not adequately prepared to teach reading and writing, a view that was particularly strong among the experienced teachers. Furthermore, 60% of respondents indicated that little support was provided for beginning teachers in their efforts to become successful teachers of reading and writing. Respondents in Hong Kong suggested that literacy-

teacher education should focus on second-language acquisition, applied linguistics, reading psychology, critical thinking, and reading motivation. Respondents also advocated the use of practical examples of literacy teaching and learning in teacher-preparation and professional development programs.

In Estonia, no additional certification in the area of reading and writing is offered but reading and writing strategies are taught to classroom, mother tongue, and literature teachers in the course of their preservice training; however, this instruction is not required for teachers of other subject areas. In general, preparation for classroom, literacy, and literature teachers is reported to be adequate, but concerns are raised regarding literacy instruction for subject area teachers. This concern is especially notable as assessments point to deficiencies in literacy acquisition in school students, especially among adolescents.

The international reports on teacher preparation indicate that in many countries, teachers are not adequately prepared to teach reading and writing. It is also evident that novice teachers are not given the support they need in exception of Australia where some form of professional development and mentorship are in place. From the selected reports, it is also apparent that literacy education in teacher preparation, especially at secondary school level is still lacking in many countries.

The next section outlines the definitions of literacy according to ideological perspectives of different scholars. This is done in order to find out the ideology guiding the literacy curriculum and teaching practices currently in place in Botswana secondary schools.

Definitions of Literacy

Conceptions of literacy differ according to ideological perspectives of scholars. Cadiero-Kaplan (2004) distinguishes between four common ideologies of literacy that inform curriculum and pedagogy: functional literacy, cultural literacy, progressive literacy and critical literacy. She postulates that since the 1800's, each ideology of literacy has both influenced the English curricula and has been the fuel for educational and political debates regarding definitions of what it means to be a literate person in school and society.

Functional literacy ideology is reflected in a curriculum that teaches students the skills deemed necessary to participate in school and society successfully. A functionally literate person is the one who has the ability to read and write in order to perform tasks such as filling in job application forms, writing checks and reading signs. The premise of such instruction is that, through the use of basal readers and accompanying skills, books and drill worksheets, students acquire skills of decoding words and analyzing text by answering specific reading comprehension questions orally and in writing. The shortfall of this kind of literacy, Cadiero-Kaplan argues, is that, skills are decontexualized, require one specific answer or response, and do not consider the language and /or culture of the students. She contends that this kind of curricula is mostly tailored for ethnic minority students in the United States. The literature reviewed earlier in this chapter about schooling in a global view and particularly in Botswana confirms Cadiero-Kaplan's view that the curricula tailored around functional literacy do not accommodate the languages and/ or cultures of ethnic minority students. Teaching is driven by the curricula which are geared towards preparing students for specific skills so that they perform well in national

examinations. Such kind of practice, according to the literature, has led to limited literacy engagement for many students.

Cultural literacy ideology focuses on the teaching of core cultural beliefs, morality, and common values, with a curriculum that includes the classics or 'Great Books'. E.D. Hirsch introduced this curriculum in 1987. The ideology driving this curriculum is that all learners share common background knowledge in order to understand discourse and text. This implies that children from low-socio-economic classes and/or ethnically diverse groups have to be taught the cultural knowledge already possessed by their peers from mainstream speaking group (which is the one recognized by the school). The type of curriculum prescribed by Hirsch and his followers is criticized on the basis that it is not only geared toward those who already have power, but functions to reinforce existing lines of economic and social privilege (Provenzo, 2005). Hirsch's model of cultural literacy is based on accumulating a specific store of information. He believes that all communities are founded on specific shared information. He maintains; "the basic goal of education in a human community is acculturation, the transmission to children of the specific information shared by the adults of the group or polis" (1984). This transmission model of education can be equated with Freire's notion of a "banking concept" of education. Provenzo argues that an educated citizenry located in a rapidly changing culture like the American one needs not only to accumulate cultural facts, but cultural meaning as well if they are to understand critical aspects of contemporary issues. And for the purposes of this study, I would add that, an educated citizenry located in a multilingual society like that of Botswana needs to understand and appreciate the diverse nature of the society of which they are a part.

Education must develop moral and social values, cultural identity and self-esteem, citizenship and democracy (Republic of Botswana, 1993).

The critical literacy ideology emphasizes the ability to understand and act against social relations of oppression. It entails an understanding of the relationship between language and power together with a practical knowledge of how to use language for self-realization, social critique, and cultural transformation (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1993). Critical literacy is "linked to notions of self- and social empowerment as well as to the processes of democratization" (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985, p.132). It functions "to help students and others understand what this society has made of them ...and what it is they no longer want to be, as well as what it is they need to appropriate critically in order to become knowledgeable about the world in which they live" (ibid, p.132). It argues that those with power are able to define knowledge. Critical literacy suggest the need to teach youth to read with a critical eye toward how writers, illustrators, and the like represent people and their ideas, in short, how individuals who create texts make those texts work. At the same time, it suggests teaching adolescents that all texts, including their textbooks, routinely promote or silence particular views. In this ideology, the goals for literacy should be to empower people to criticize and change political and economic oppression. Critical literacy demands not only knowledge of alternative vocabularies, as well as the history of ideas and conflicts, but also a clear knowledge of theory that will allow the framing and interpretation of facts. This is rooted in Freire's notion of "reading the word and the world". Freire argues that:

> If the texts generally offered students once hid much more than they revealed of reality, now literacy as an act of

> knowledge, as a creative act and as a political act, is an effort to read the world and the word. Now it is no longer possible to have the text without context (Freire & Macedo, 1987, p.43).

Freire critiques the existing approaches to literacy as ignoring the learners' linguistic and communicative skills, and their creative capacities which they bring to school. Critical pedagogy therefore calls for a political reading or interpretation of the world so as to transform the oppressive relations which constitute the world. This contrasts the curriculum of cultural literacy, which is also linked to positions of power. It attempts to make certain core knowledge legitimate and is viewed by its critics as serving to maintain the status quo. Looking back at the reviewed literature on literacy globally, none of the reviewed schooling situation included this definition of literacy. This could probably be the case because the questionnaire asked specifically about the engagement of middle school students with literacy. It was only the report from Hong Kong that stated that literacy teacher education should focus on critical literacy among others.

In contrast to functional and cultural literacy ideologies, the progressive literacy is based on the democratic ideas postulated by John Dewey (1916) that include the free interchange of ideas between students and educators and the notion of a student-centered curriculum. This literacy ideology requires students and teachers to engage in the process of learning to read and write based on themes and topics that are of interest to students, and with the vocabulary related to their lives. The progressive ideology is seen in the whole-language curriculum that is derived from constructivist and cognitive views of learning and is reflected in the use of writer's workshops, literature response journals,

and literature circles. Under constructivism, social discourse is part of learning, and most important, it views students as agents over their learning. In Cadiero-Kaplan's analysis, the disadvantage of progressive ideology is that it is not transformative because it potentially ignores students' lived experiences, histories, languages, and discourse communities: their cultural capital. As already explained under 'functional literacy' ideology, this figures too into the reviewed schooling situation globally including Botswana.

Summary

The foregoing review of literature indicates that Botswana and other countries have adopted an oversimplified view of literacy. The concept of literacy has been confined to something that can be taught with skill-and-drill exercises and measured by standardized tests. Although efforts have been made to reform the curricula since independence, classroom research has indicated that actual teaching methods still follow the colonial model that was based on missionary education. That model emphasized rote learning, disregarding the learners' experiences and did not instill in them critical and creative thinking abilities. There is need to incorporate modern pedagogies in order to achieve the educational aims and aspirations of the country. The multiple perspectives of literacy provide a broader and richer view of what it means to be literate. Basic level literacy is insufficient in today's world where both reading and writing tasks required of adolescents are continuing to increase in complexity and difficulty. Effective instruction builds on elements of both formal and informal literacies. It does so by taking into account students' interests and needs while at the same time attending to the challenges

of living in an information-based economy. This echoes Brozo and Simpson's (1995) assertion that "the potential power of literacy as a tool for social, political, and economic transformation is largely ignored in secondary schools" (p.16). The colonial legacy still guides literacy teaching.

Based on the literature, it could be concluded that the conceptions guiding literacy teaching in Botswana schools are the functional and cultural literacy ideologies. All schools follow the mandated curriculum by the Ministry of Education; read the same prescribed books and write the same examinations. For each grade level, there is some core knowledge that all students should be taught. If teachers are to prepare students for the 21st century, they need to have a deeper knowledge base and expertise in the teaching of literacy. As I will establish in the next chapter, the curriculum was revised to move toward progressive and critical literacy pedagogies but this seems not to be the practice in schools currently.

The next chapter is the description of the methods that were used to collect data for the study, including an explanation of my professional affiliation to the field of literacy education and my role as a researcher.

Chapter Four

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to uncover, interpret and illustrate the meanings teachers in Botswana secondary schools associate with literacy teaching and learning given the postcolonial history of the country and the structural constraints of planned secondary school policies and mandated curricula by the Ministry of Education. My aim was to investigate how institutional and state policies that shape standards and assessments influence and constrain the teaching of literacy at senior secondary school level.

To understand teachers' perceptions of literacy teaching and learning, the study was conducted from both sociocultural and a postcolonial framework. The sociocultural framework assumes that reality must be described from the perspective of the participants in a culture (Berger & Luckman, 1967). People formulate ideas, beliefs, and conceptualizations from the experiences they have had within a sociocultural context. A postcolonial perspective helps us understand and examine the structural biases inherent in the education system that denigrate local culture and practices. It also offers us new ways of thinking about diversity and language. Postcolonial theorists identify knowledge and power as 'two individual foundations of imperial authority' (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 1995).

The main research questions and sub-questions that guided my study were as follows:

1. In what ways does the postcolonial experience of Botswana play out in teachers' understanding of literacy teaching and learning?
2. What are particular meanings teachers associate with literacy teaching and learning, given the structural constraints of the mandated curriculum and national examinations?

a) How does the national (Setswana or English) curriculum define literacy?

b) What is it that teachers understand the curriculum to be telling them to do?

c) What are teachers' perspectives on the curriculum's responsiveness to the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse students in schools?

d) How does the teacher make sense of and come to understand students' familiar literacy experiences?

This chapter is a description of the research methods and the design of the study. I describe the research site and participants of the study. I then explain how I gained access into the focal school, how I collected data and analyzed it. Finally, I discuss my role as a researcher for this study in relation to the participants.

Research Design

Site and Participants

The study was conducted among several English and Setswana teachers in some senior secondary schools in the South central region in Botswana. A total of 30 teachers agreed to participate in the study: 19 Setswana teachers and 11 teachers of English. An open-ended survey questionnaire aimed at getting their perceptions of literacy was given to these teachers (a copy is in the Appendix). Based on the criteria of internal sampling (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) and the teachers' willingness to volunteer to share information, I selected 5 teachers who were a subset of those who completed the survey questionnaire to be key informants. The 5 teachers were selected from a total of 13 Setswana teachers at the focal school. All the key informants were female since there were no male teachers of Setswana at that school during the time the study was conducted. One teacher had a Masters degree qualification while all the remaining 4 had Bachelors' degrees. The teaching experiences of these teachers ranged between 7 and 25 years. All the focal informants belonged to the mainstream Setswana speaking ethnic groups.

In selecting key informants, I gave priority to teachers who started teaching prior to the curriculum reform in 1996. The aim was to get views of these teachers about the old syllabus (that administered by the University of Cambridge) as compared to the new one administered locally.

The focal school, which I give the pseudonym "Duma", is a large public secondary school situated in a low-income area of a big city. The student population at

the time this study was conducted was approximately 1, 300, with 100 teachers. The location of Duma does not however imply that it is different from other schools in the country in terms of funding and resources. The government in Botswana equally funds all schools. The schools are strategically located in different areas of the city to cater for junior secondary schools in their neighborhoods.

Like all schools in the cities, students of Duma school are of mixed ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. The school is in a major city which many Batswana do not claim as their home. People came here for jobs and economic opportunities and still have great attachment to their towns and villages of origin to which they go for weddings, funerals, holidays and other communal activities. The main language of communication between the different ethnic groups is Setswana, the national language, while some people would speak a different language in their homes.

Duma senior secondary school is located between low-income government housing and the poorest township in the city. The township is inhabited by mostly the unemployed and low-income earners. Although unemployed, the majority of the residents of this township are engaged in a myriad of economic activities. They sell fruits and vegetables, prepare food and homemade beer for sale, and fix cars and appliances.

All senior schools enroll Form 4 and Form 5 students (US equivalent of 11^{th} and 12^{th} grades). The Department of Secondary Education is in charge of allocating students to senior schools after they pass the junior certificate examinations. Although schools do not choose which students to admit, there are special cases whereby parents can negotiate with principals to have their children admitted in a school (mostly for reasons like close

proximity of the school from the child's home in case the child was admitted in a far away school). Among the 6 senior schools in the south central region, I selected Duma because it has been ranked among the top schools that produce "good" Setswana results since the early 1990's while I was one of the senior examiners for Setswana national examinations. I also knew a few teachers there and had anticipated that it would not be difficult for me to negotiate collecting data there given the short notice I gave the school. It took me a while to inform the school of my intentions because the letter permitting me to conduct the study was delayed at the Ministry of Education.

Gaining Access

I telephoned Duma school a week before data collection and talked to the senior Setswana teacher (whom I knew before) to brief her about my intentions to conduct my study at their school. She alerted me to how uncooperative teachers at their school were to researchers in general. She however raised my hopes when she mentioned that the school principal discussed this issue in a staff meeting a few days ago since some researchers from the local university had complained to her. On a Monday morning I visited the school to make an appointment with the principal so as to introduce my study. Fortunately the principal was one of my colleagues at the university during our undergraduate days. She welcomed me and also informed me that she had had complaints from researchers who had wanted to collect data at her school that her staff was not cooperative, and that she had addressed this issue in a staff meeting recently and hoped the situation would change. She then telephoned the Head of the Setswana Department that she was referring me to.

On my arrival in the Setswana staff room I saw a number of familiar faces; teachers who were my former students at the university and a few I had worked with when I was a senior examiner for Setswana national examinations. All 13 of these teachers agreed to participate in my study by signing consent forms. I also did find few of my former students in the English staffroom although I did not know the majority of the teachers. Unlike with the Setswana staff, here the Head of the Department waited for recess time when all teachers were present and asked me to address them formally about my study. All teachers agreed to participate in my study by signing the consent forms and I gave them the questionnaires. Out of 15 teachers who took the questionnaire, only 3 teachers returned them. The rest kept on postponing returning them until my study period was over and I had to leave the school.

The Setswana staffroom was a small crowded room with desks squeezed next to each other and books all over, on desks and underneath them. There was one computer by the corner of the room that I never saw anybody touch throughout the period I spent at the school. To my amazement, I later learnt that this staffroom was shared by the 11 Setswana teachers (including the Head of the Department) and 5 teachers of Religious Education. The other 2 Setswana teachers had separate offices as they served in other positions in the school. One was the Head of the Humanities subjects and the other one was Head of Guidance and Counseling.

The English staffroom too was crowded and was the same size as that shared by the Setswana and Religious Education staff. The only difference was that it housed only English teachers who were approximately twenty in number. To my judgment, this staffroom had more books and materials like newspapers compared to the other one. It

had a lot of shelves built on the walls that I did not see in the other Setswana room. I also noticed one computer on one side of the room that seemed to have been functioning since once in a while I would see that the screen was on.

Data Collection Procedures

The study followed a qualitative approach, using ethnographic techniques to gather and analyze data (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Data sources included a survey questionnaire, interview transcripts from audio-taped interviews, official documents, teacher documents, samples of work given to students, and ethnographic field notes taken during both formal and informal conversations with teachers. The study lasted for a period of 10 weeks.

Interview data

I conducted in-depth interviews with five teachers individually about their personal literacy histories and professional experiences. The purpose of the interviews was to find out how teachers perceive literacy and how this influences their teaching practices. This enabled me to gain an insight into teachers' understandings of curriculum content, aims and objectives, as well as their views about prescribed textbooks and other instructional materials, find out their views about the quality of pre-service language education courses, and to get their views about how they address issues of diversity. I also tried to learn about their childhood literacy practices as a way to construct a learning history that could be constructed with their perceptions of their current teaching context.

The interviews were conversational with open-ended questions, allowing the teachers to speak at length so as to avoid a dialogue with them. I also conducted group interviews with teachers on general issues pertaining to the curriculum. The main reason for conducting group interviews was that some teachers preferred them to individual ones. Interview questions are included in the Appendix section. The questions covered these themes: teachers' conceptions of literacy, literacy as defined by the national curriculum, teacher agency in relation to the curriculum, curriculum responsiveness to the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse learners, recommendations for teacher education programs.

I conducted 2 focused group interviews and 2 individual interviews (total of 10 individual interviews). I used the combined approaches of the informal conversational interview and the general interview guide (Patton, 2002) to interview the informants. The informal conversational interview allowed for a natural flow of interaction and flexibility to pursue information on what emerged from talking with the participants. The advantage of this approach was that I could interview a number of participants at the same time. The general interview guide approach involves outlining a set of issues that are to be explored with each respondent before the interview begins. The guide serves as a checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics are covered. Each interview session lasted between sixty and ninety minutes.

Field notes

I took field notes during my visits to teachers' workrooms (staff rooms) as I observed official documents, prescribed text-books, teacher documents and samples of

work assigned to students. The kind of teacher documents I observed were their report books (known as scheme books). These are books supplied by the Ministry of Education in which teachers record the progress of their work. Details about this are outlined in chapter five. I wanted to photocopy a few of those reports but realized that the teachers who allowed me to look at their reports felt a bit uneasy. In addition, the report books had signatures of the senior teachers in the respective departments and that would have also revealed their identity. For these reasons, I resorted to copying down notes by hand as they appeared in the reports. The purpose of studying these documents was to gain an insight into how teachers talked about literacy, the resources or materials they used, the kinds of assignments they gave to their students, and the assumptions made about literacy and how it was learned.

Having served on the panel that prescribed textbooks in the past, I had personal copies of the main literacy textbooks that were used during the time of this study. My analysis of these textbooks was based on the syllabus objectives in relation to content covered, activities, test items (exercises given to test students' understanding of concepts) and the skills imparted. I wish to declare at this moment that I deliberately chose not to do much in this area because I am a co-author of one of the prescribed textbooks and avoided bias in commenting about the other book. There is already a lot of textbook "politics" (for lack of better terminology) among publishing companies in Botswana because they all compete for the same school market. I also elaborate more on this issue in chapter five.

I was allowed to sit in during teachers' meetings and workshops and was able to jot down some field notes in those sessions. Initially, I had planned to visit the school on

a daily basis to interview teachers and also do some classroom observations but was told that within two weeks into my study, students would be writing mid-year examinations. The teachers told me that they would therefore be busy supervising the examinations and grading papers; as such I might not be able to see them. Although it was not communicated directly, when I mentioned that I would like to visit some classrooms, the teachers told me that they were mostly revising previously taught material as a way of assisting students to revise for the examinations. For these reasons, I dropped the idea of classroom visits and gathered most of the data during the first week through interviews. Otherwise I visited the school thrice or twice per week depending on the availability of teachers.

Data Analysis Procedures

I transcribed interview transcripts in the evening each time I had conducted an interview while the conversations were still fresh in my mind. I started with general open-coding of my field notes, identifying recurrent themes in the data (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). I read and re-read interview transcripts to identify key issues that emerged from teachers' statements and other data sources in relation to the research questions. After open coding, I reviewed the field notes and transcripts to identify major themes that relate to my research questions. I linked data together that related to the same theme. I then did focused-coding, reading and coding field notes and transcripts line by line as grouped by themes (Emerson et al, 1995). The following issues surfaced in teachers' statements in interviews and in survey data across all sources of data: negative attitude towards Setswana as a school subject, hegemony of English, lack of professional

development, time constraint, inadequate teacher preparation, disconnect between school literacy and cultural literacy, lack of appropriate curricula resources, examination driven teaching and lack of a culture of reading amongst both teachers and students in general.

I analyzed the official documents such as the syllabi, past examination papers and prescribed textbooks to get the official perspective of what language and literacy teaching should entail at secondary school level in Botswana and to have a better understanding of the structural and institutional constraints under which teachers operated. I also assessed teacher documents (record of work done, scheme books, tests and assignments) to get their perspectives about literacy teaching and learning. I read critically the aims and objectives of the two syllabi (teaching and assessment syllabi) in relation to content assessed in tests and examinations. I also looked at common patterns among topics that teachers said they did not teach.

The themes that emerged from interviews and the questionnaire were hegemony of English, time constraints, the disconnect between school literacy and cultural literacy. Even then, in my interpretation of the data and reporting it, I had "to figure out how to say what needs to be said without jeopardizing individuals and feeding the perverse social representations" (Weis & Fine, 2000, p.48). The participants shared with me freely their experiences and personal views about how they felt teaching Setswana.

Researcher Role

I have been a Setswana teacher at a secondary school and in University for the past 22 years. I have worked closely with many secondary school teachers either as a teacher or as a teacher educator. Since many teachers knew me or at least my work, I had

the fear of how I was going to establish my role as a researcher. I served as a member of the Task Force that was appointed by the Ministry of Education to review the secondary school Setswana curriculum in 1995. I also served as a senior examiner for secondary school Setswana national examinations from 1992 until 1997. I have co-authored some of the Setswana textbooks that are currently read in schools. I served as a member of the Task Force that was appointed by the Ministry of Education to review the secondary school Setswana curriculum in 1995. I also served as a senior examiner for secondary school Setswana National examinations from 1992 until 1997. Although I am an insider in the field of Setswana education, I may be considered an outsider because of my current status of being a university lecturer and a PhD student. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) state that who the researcher is to the subjects and what that means to them is important to try to figure out when negotiating fieldwork relations as well as for interpreting data.

Having participated in the production of the curriculum I had come to research, I was aware that I could be perceived as someone who had come to evaluate teachers. To my surprise, many teachers felt at ease with me. Since they knew that I had participated in the production of the syllabus they were using, they trusted that I could help and even inform the Curriculum Development officers about their problems. This is illustrated by the following excerpt from the field notes I wrote in the evening of the first day I visited Duma school:

It is 9:30 am. I have now spent about 40 minutes in the principal's office. She then phones the heads of the departments (HOD) of English and Setswana to meet me. She is told that the English HOD is in class. The Setswana HOD agrees that I come to her

office. I am directed to the Setswana staff room from where the HOD also operates. Apparently they share the room with Religious Education teachers but I discover this some days later when I approach one teacher for an interview. A few teachers who are not teaching at this time are present in the staff room and I greet them as is the custom in our country. As soon as mention to the HOD that I have come for research, she ask me to wait a little and announces to the teachers what I have just told her. She asks me to explain my study to the few teachers who are present in this staffroom and I thereafter give them the consent forms. She does not want to deliver my message to other teachers who are not present in the staffroom at this time but rather ask me to come again the following day during recess time (10:00 –10:30 a.m.) to talk to them in person. One young teacher, a former student of mine from the university tells me that she is ready to start the interview any time. She tells me:

"I'm glad you're here mmaMolosiwa (Mrs Molosiwa). You have come at the right time. Nobody from the Ministry ever comes to see how we are doing. We are struggling alone with this new syllabus. I do not even have a desk for my books. Jus look at where I put my stuff" (she shows me a small space next to a cabinet by one corner of the room). I do not like my job because I do not have a space to work". I ask this teacher how many they are in the Setswana Department. She tells me that they are 13, but 2 teachers who have been given some administrative roles have their own offices. I'm wondering what meaning this teacher makes out of research. It appears she considers me something like an advocate that she brings out an administrative issue to me. How come she feels I could represent education officers at the Ministry of Education while she knows that I do not work there?

I have been in this staffroom for the past 4 hours. The HOD introduces me to each member of her department as they come and go.

AM: *Well, I'm here to learn about how you are progressing with the teaching of Setswana, as some of you know, I left the high school classroom long ago and I believe a lot has changed since then.*

Teacher 1: *Things are still the same MmaMolosiwa, there is no significant change to share with you.*

Teacher 2: *She is telling the truth. Nothing has changed. In our subject we still have that problem of attitude which I'm sure you are aware of. We also do not know how to teach some topics.*

It is 4:30 p.m. and is the official knock off time for school administrative staff as well as teachers. Students end the day at 4:00 p.m. The HOD tells me that she would appreciate it if I could guide them on how they could teach some topics that they still struggle with in the new syllabus. I agree that we can arrange for that someday after I'm done with my interviews. There goes my first day in the field.

Due to my status as a university lecturer and a PhD student, I contemplated that teachers could be reluctant to participate freely in my study or be honest in giving me their views. I was also worried that my own biases as a teacher might also affect what to look for or ask, or even the ability to take good descriptive field notes. But this was not the case. Those teachers who agreed to participate in the study did so freely and some of them even gave me their telephone numbers in case I wanted to ask them something outside of official school hours.

This chapter has provided a narrative description of the methodological procedures and research design used to collect data for this study. The main data sources included the questionnaire, interview transcripts, official documents and teacher documents. Survey data were collected from 30 Setswana and English teachers from whom 5 teachers were selected to be focal informants. The next chapter is a detailed presentation of data analysis.

Chapter Five

Official Perspectives of Literacy Teaching and Learning

"Setswana encourages students to investigate their cultural heritage for values and virtues that are necessary for survival within the modern world. The strengths and virtues inherited from culture are relevant in preparing students for the world of work as well as providing solutions to day to day problems with regard to preservation of self, environment and citizenry" (Republic of Botswana, 2000).

In several policy documents reviewing the country's education system, the Ministry of Education has made noteworthy pronouncements on how to improve the teaching and learning of Setswana. The above rationale of the senior secondary school Setswana syllabus is one example of such pronouncements. Other pronouncements appear in policy documents such as the Education Commission Reports, National Development Plans and Vision 2016.

This chapter is an analysis of official documents and policies geared towards the teaching and learning of Setswana in secondary schools in an attempt to understand the official perspective of what literacy teaching and learning should entail. The main documents I analyzed are the Setswana teaching syllabus, the assessment syllabus and key statements (about the teaching of language) that appear in policy documents. An analysis of these documents revealed that officially, literacy is perceived as the ability to read, write, speak, and listen as well as the acquisition of certain skills, attitudes and values. Another finding was the apparent contradiction between policy and practice when examining the teaching syllabus against the assessment one. The assessment procedures excluded certain parts of the teaching syllabus, an anomaly that could have adverse

effects in actual classroom practices. The fact that the Setswana syllabus is written only in English with no Setswana version or accompanying teachers' guide also seemed contradictory to pronouncements made in policy documents about the importance of Setswana as a national language and a second official language as claimed in other documents (see chapter 2 for details).

Whereas in countries such as the US and UK teachers have opportunities to make their own decisions about what to teach students and how to teach it, Botswana has a national curricula mandated by the Ministry of Education to be taught in all schools. Although teachers are free to choose modes of teaching, the curricula have prescribed content and forms of assessment. This limits any flexibility for decision-making either by the schools or individual classroom teachers. Research on the teaching of English as a second language demonstrates that teaching practices and approaches are influenced primarily by traditions in language teaching, by teachers' own experiences as language learners and by curricular documents and state frameworks as well as by available materials and assessment procedures used to measure student progress (Valdes, 2001).

Until 1998, the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) externally administered Botswana's secondary school curricula. The Setswana syllabus under UCLES was a series of topics to be learned, followed by an outline of the structure of the examination papers, their breadth and depth and allocation of marks. Content covered included grammar items and selected literature texts. There were no aims and objectives for the selected topics as is the case in the current syllabus. The best that teachers made out of such a syllabus was to align their teaching with the expectations of

the examining body and drill students to pass the examinations. In that regard, students were not provided with a meaningful education.

The main aim of teaching Setswana in schools was for communication purposes and national unity. Even when the education system was reviewed in 1977, ten years after the country's independence, these were the main aims put forth as justification for teaching Setswana at school. There were no intrinsic values attached to it like in other subjects. The 1977 national commission only stated that Setswana as a secondary school subject "should receive due emphasis as a source of both the ability to communicate in the national language and a sense of national unity" (Republic of Botswana, 1977, p.110). On the other hand, for English the commission:

> Emphasized the crucial importance of English competence (reading, writing and speaking) not only for further academic study but also as a preparation for work and adult life. The main aim of English should be to develop such competence, and the examination set at the end of the senior cycle should reflect this aim" (ibid, p.111).

It was only after the curriculum was localized that a more progressive syllabus was drawn for Setswana as will be discussed in the next section.

The Senior Secondary Setswana Teaching Syllabus

The current senior secondary school Setswana syllabus was introduced in schools in 1998. This was a postcolonial response to the examination-driven British curriculum that was in use until then. The implementation of this syllabus was a recommendation by

the Revised National Policy on Education in 1993 to localize the curricula which, until then was run by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES). It was felt that the country should have full control of the education standards by developing examinations and administering them locally at all levels. The dependence on UCLES had limitations on the education system such as the limited ability in influencing curriculum development in line with aspirations of the nation in terms of socio-economic development. It was argued that the localization of examinations would open up the potential for local curriculum development and a review of the modes of assessment at senior secondary level. The other reason was that localization would bring about continuity between junior secondary and senior secondary syllabuses that was lacking as the two were administered by different bodies.

The revised Setswana syllabus was a complete departure from the colonial one in terms of content and lay out. In localizing the syllabi, the Ministry of Education appointed Task Forces for all subject areas to produce the syllabi. The Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) provided the Curriculum Blue Print to guide the task forces in their job. The task forces were charged with the responsibility to:

- ensure that the subject syllabus at a particular level covers all essential components within the subject area and relates to other levels.
- assist the Examinations, Research and Testing Division in the development of assessment procedures for that particular level.
- advise the Curriculum Development Division on:
    a) students and teacher needs in the subject at a particular level
    b) problems, concerns and gaps within the subject area at that level
    c) the appropriateness and relevance of curriculum materials being designed, developed and implemented for the particular level.

- assist, review, evaluate and recommend new and revised materials for learning and or teaching which have been or are being submitted to the Ministry of Education for possible use (whether optional or mandatory) in the school system at a particular level. *(Guidelines for Curriculum Subject Panels, Ministry of Education, February 1996).*

The Setswana task force comprised of members representing several institutions which are indirectly or directly involved in education: the Ministry of Education (represented by the department of Secondary Education, Curriculum Development Unit, Examinations Research and Testing Division and the Department of Non-Formal education), the University of Botswana (represented by the departments of African Languages and Literature, Faculty of Education) and representatives of teachers from both public and private secondary schools. The panel came up with two syllabi: the teaching syllabus and the assessment syllabus.

The Setswana teaching syllabus is a detailed document that lays out the rationale, aims, assessment procedures and content to be taught with general and specific objectives for each topic. The content is divided into modules and each module is further subdivided into seven domains: listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, literature and culture. Out of these domains, only three are assessed: reading, writing and literature. The official perspectives of literacy teaching can be deduced from the aims of teaching Setswana at secondary school level. These are to:

1. equip students with writing, reading, listening, speaking skills which will develop confidence and ability to assess their personal strengths and weaknesses.
2. develop in learners, self esteem, confidence, pride and appreciation of the national cultural heritage.

3. provide learners with a range of experiences through the study of literature, including the moral justification for appropriate choices in life.
4. provide knowledge of communication and study skills including skills to generate technical terminology appropriate for different technological situations.
5. equip learners with knowledge of cultural practices including those that promote conservation of the environment and implications for the future.
6. instill in learners, positive attitudes towards their cultural heritage in order that they may adopt the virtues and strengths inherent in their culture in an endeavor to emerge as good citizens of Botswana and the world.
7. equip learners with the following foundation skills: problem solving, critical thinking, communication.
8. encourage learners to acquire knowledge, attitudes, values and practices that will ensure good family and health practices that are conducive to a productive life.
9. encourage learners to embrace a culture of learning.

(Adapted from the Senior Secondary Setswana Syllabus. Department of Curriculum development and Evaluation, Ministry of Education, 2000, p.ii)

From the above aims it could be inferred that, officially, it is acknowledged that literacy means more than the ability to read and write but the acquisition of other skills, attitudes and values. The aims mention the skills of problem solving, critical thinking, development of moral, ethical and social values, knowledge or awareness of technology, development of national and cultural identity towards good citizenship, awareness of environmental conservation, and a culture of reading for life-long learning. They also reflect the values, symbols, and ways of knowing of the communities from which students come, while introducing them to new cultures and cultural ways of thinking. The way the specific objectives of topics are laid out also shows that officially, it is acknowledged that there are multiple ways of being literate. The syllabus is aimed at

providing the learners with those skills, attitudes, values and knowledge that would enable them to function better in their society and the world outside. To guide teachers in how they could approach the syllabus in order to address these aims, the syllabus prescribes pedagogy for its content:

> The bias of the syllabus is on communicative competence such that language structure is taught in conjunction with communication skills that enforce appropriate use of language to meet communicative purposes. The communication skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing should be taught through "linguistic competence, socio-linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence (p.ii).

Unfortunately, the foregoing statement that seems to be loaded with a lot of meaning is not elaborated further for teachers. The discourse "linguistic competence, socio-linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence" needed to be explained or clarified for teachers particularly since the syllabus is written only in English but taught through the medium of Setswana. The foreword by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education does make reference to teaching methods but this could not be taken as a substitute for the explanation of these terms. The foreword mentions ideas such as that; the teacher must be a proficient manager and facilitator; a director of learning activities. S/he should be conscious of students' needs and take on board a measure of accountability and responsibility for their own learning.... It is important that we value the students' own experiences, build upon what they know and reward them for positive achievement.

The Senior Secondary Setswana Assessment Syllabus

Assessment in schools is meant to monitor students' progress at various stages and levels. Besides school and classroom assessments, Botswana has a national examination system with a dual function: to promote students from one education level to the next and for final school credentialing. With the localization of the curricula, assessment syllabuses were developed for each subject. The Permanent secretary in the Ministry of Education states in the foreword of the Setswana assessment syllabus that:

> The purpose of this syllabus is to guide schools, teachers and other educational institutions on what will be assessed in the subject area and how the assessment will be carried out for certification of students completing the course. The syllabus, therefore, should be used as a source of information on the examination. Critical to the success of our education program, is the recognition of individual talents, needs and learning styles of students. (Republic of Botswana, 2000, p.i)

The Setswana assessment syllabus includes three written papers that measure different skills. The first paper (Paper 1) assesses the students' ability to write a continuous prose in a variety of contexts. This includes an argumentative, descriptive or narrative composition and a dialogue, report or speech. The second paper (Paper 2) is comprised of Comprehension, Summary and Translation. It assesses student's ability to comprehend, summarize and translate information from English into Setswana and vice versa. The third paper (Paper 3) is Literature. It assesses student's knowledge and understanding of

prescribed texts and the ability to apply skills acquired in those texts and wider reading. The questions test students' knowledge and understanding of literary aspects such as development of a story's plot, author's style, characterization, theme, setting and their ability to relate the literary aspects to real life situations where appropriate. The assessment syllabus excludes all the topics under the domain of "Culture". The explanation given is that:

> Some objectives that are emphasized do not lend themselves to pen and paper testing; in particular listening skills and cultural heritage content. These objectives have to be assessed during the course. Guidance on appropriate procedures and moderation will be provided by the National Examining body. The teachers' guide will also provide guidance on how to assess projects and term papers for course work. The students' profiles for projects, term papers and other course work will be prepared in conjunction with the relevant examining body. (p.iii)

It is a commonly held belief that if the assessment syllabus tallies with the teaching syllabus, teaching towards the test or examinations is not a problem. It has been argued that teaching towards the test has more disadvantages than advantages. One disadvantage is that some items on which students would have done well are likely not to be tested because of their failure to discriminate among students (Tierney, 1990 quoted in Soler, Wearmouth & Reid, 2002). It has also been argued that standardized reading tests tend to treat students as well as teachers as responders while literacy involves both responding and initiating (Tierney, 1990 quoted in Soler, Wearmouth & Reid, 2002).

Standardized tests have also been criticized on the grounds of systematic bias (e.g. Fowles & Kimple, 1992). Examinations place teachers in the position of giving up 'real teaching time' on improving test scores. This results in a narrowing of the curriculum. The teachers become identified as working with or around the testing tools that control rewards rather than as engaging children's minds. They teach to the test, using actual items from the test, coaching students. This is consistent with the findings reported in this study. In Botswana, the effectiveness of the teacher is measured by the performance of his or her students in examinations.

Even though the Setswana syllabus was changed from the structural one, and the aims of teaching Setswana spelt out the kind of literate society aspired to, the literacy assessments currently in place do not adequately address the aims. As a result, colonial forms of assessment continue to infiltrate in the postcolonial system and thereby hold back reforms that would better serve the literacy needs of the learners. Learners are expected to acquire selected bits of knowledge on which they are tested after a given period. A bulk of vital knowledge which could be tested in other ways is left untaught because it is not covered in the examinations. This suggests that the syllabus was implemented before examining the kinds of literacy assessments that would match it. Literacy assessment must be grounded in current understandings of literacy and society (Johnson & Kress, 2003; Johnston, 1999).

Other Official Pronouncements on Literacy

The government of Botswana recognizes the importance of educating children through their ethnic languages. This is pronounced in a document known as Vision 2016.

This document presents a long-term vision for Botswana when it will have been an independent nation for 50 years. When the country celebrated the 30th anniversary of independence in 1996, the government set upon a task to take stock of the country's past aspirations, and the extent to which they have been realized and thus formulated this vision. The vision addresses all aspects affecting the life of the society nationally and globally. Regarding language education, the vision states:

> By the year 2016, Botswana's wealth of different languages and cultural traditions will be recognized, supported and strengthened within the education system. No Motswana will be disadvantaged in the education system as a result of a mother tongue that differs from the country's two official languages". (Republic of Botswana, 1997, p.5)

An examination of the current state of affairs indicates that these ideals of the vision will not be achieved by the year 2016. Practically, no provision has been made to introduce other local languages in schools in terms of resources or teacher training. This is just a political rhetoric used to appease the people.

The National Development Plan 8 (NDP 8, 1997/98 – 2002/03), a source that outlines government policies, echoes the aspirations of Vision 2016 by stating that teacher education will "sensitize teachers to cultural differences to facilitate interaction with children and communities with different cultural backgrounds" (NDP 8, p.364). This document does not elaborate on how policy could address issues of teacher education. This shows lack of commitment by the government to take seriously the issue of cultural

diversity. It is evident that the education reform proposals do not move beyond political rhetoric into real changes in the education system.

The next section describes the policy towards textbooks as teaching resources and textbook selection procedures instituted by the government in Botswana schools.

Textbooks and their Selection Procedures

Textbooks are a central part of the curriculum in Botswana schools. Most teachers use textbooks as the primary source of their teaching. Textbooks provide the basis for the content of lessons and the balance of skills taught. The 1993 national commission recommended that as a support to the development of education and the promotion of literacy, a National Book Policy be developed by the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs to: a) promote local book production and ensure a high standard of professionalism in the book industry; and, b) promote a culture of reading amongst Batswana (Republic of Botswana, 1993). Textbooks in Botswana are mainly published by multinational publishing companies such as Longman, Macmillan, Heinemann and Collegium. There are a few local publishers like *Botsalano* and *Pula* Press but they do face stiff competition with the multinational companies that have an established history in educational publishing and are better off financially to publish high quality materials.

The Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education centrally prescribes all textbooks used in schools through various subject panels. A Book Selection Committee of the Department of Curriculum Development evaluates the appropriateness and suitability of the material to the syllabuses and prescribes which books should go into the school market. For Setswana, there are core texts and supplementary texts. The

category of core texts covers textbooks that have to be used by all students. In some cases more than one core textbook is prescribed. This gives schools the opportunity to select their own choices of textbooks they would like to use with their students. The supplementary texts category provides for materials to be used to supplement the core texts. Students may use these for class research or individual work. In addition to core and supplementary texts, teachers are allowed to purchase reference texts they need. Schools are also encouraged to develop library resources for students.

Textbook selection guidelines seem to be more about literary elements in literature texts disregarding everything else in the syllabus. Although the syllabus was changed from the structural approach to the communicative one, the same old selection guidelines are still being used. The guidelines do not mention anything about the features of the texts that should be selected for topics that fall under the domains of: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Study skills and Culture, usually referred to as language books. This therefore means that the selection committee uses its discretion to select texts under this category. The only domain that has guidelines is Literature. The guidelines stipulate that features to be considered in literature texts should include: readability of the text, clarity of vocabulary and print, development of plot; whether actions of characters are realistic to real life situations, whether the plot is simple or complex; types of conflict and whether they are easily detectable; how the theme is portrayed, the kind of language and style used by the author.

On examining some of the prescribed literature texts for senior secondary school, I realized that they addressed a lot of relevant issues in contemporary society. For instance; the novel "*Fa a lelela legodu*" by P.T. Marope focuses on gender and cultural

issues. Through the major character, the story illustrates the need for youth to be obedient to their parents. The drama *"Motswasele"* by L.D. Raditladi is about issues of oppression, injustice and abuse of power by leaders; based on traditional chieftainship. Other books address crime and other contemporary issues. The noticeable thing among the books that were on the prescription list during the time of this study was that all of them made references to mainstream ethnic groups. From my recollection of textbook prescription guidelines during the early 1990's while I served as a member of the panel that prescribed Setswana books, the few books that mentioned ethnic minorities degraded their culture so their use in schools was discontinued. One of the requirements of the panel that prescribes books is to review, evaluate and recommend new and revised materials for learning and or teaching. The fact that most books are biased towards certain ethnic groups means that those groups and their cultures are privileged over others in the school curriculum. This brings in notions about knowledge and power (Popkewitz, 2000). An example is Grant's (1994) view about the plight of African Americans in the US. Grant contends that respect for the of culture African Americans has never existed, citing the way textbooks promoted the cultural denigration and inferiority of their culture in the past. His perception is that textbooks should provide the opportunity for all cultures to be seen as equal and to be celebrated in the classroom. Apple (2001), one of the critiques of a national curriculum in the US, has argued that a national curriculum and a national test will lead to privatization and increasing centralization of control over official knowledge. It will put price tags on schools so that the market can function:

> ... a national curriculum and a national test will exacerbate even more the process of turning schools into commodities.... As has happened in

> England, where their national curriculum is sutured into the national test (the results of which are published as "league tables" in the press and elsewhere through which schools are compared), this provides a direct mechanism that enables the Right to put price tags on schools and say "This is a good school, this is a bad school" (p.xxi).

In view of the fact that Botswana was a British colony, it inherited a national curriculum and national examinations' system from the British.

Code Switching

Code switching is an issue that needs to be discussed in the analysis of the official perspective to literacy teaching and learning. While code switching is a common practice that occurs in multilingual and multicultural communities, it is not allowed [officially] in Botswana classrooms. This applies to both English and Setswana classrooms. While in English classrooms code switching is not allowed between English and Setswana, in Setswana classrooms, the non-Setswana speaking students are discouraged from code switching between their home languages and Setswana. However, teachers do code switch consciously or unintentionally. Professional conversations have it that code switching is viewed as language interference in Botswana classrooms. While the Setswana syllabus is silent on code switching, The English syllabus pronounces that:

> While the subject aims at a high level of proficiency in the use of standard English, the teaching methodology acknowledges that English is not the first language of the majority of the learners. The teaching methodology is based

on a communicative approach. Features of this approach include: integration of the basic language skills, using the language without code switching, using language in real life situations ..." (p.i).

The above statement acknowledges that English is not the first language of the majority of the learners but denies the existence of code switching. There are multiple views regarding code switching. Some authorities view it as an extension to language for bilingual speakers while others perceive it as interference, depending on the situation and context in which it occurs. Perhaps, the purposes of code switching or the circumstances in which it occurs can guide us in this matter. It has been found out that switching occurs when a speaker needs to compensate for some difficulty, express solidarity, convey an attitude or show social respect (Crystal, 1987; Berthold, Mangubhai & Bartorowicz, 1997). Skiba (1997) shares the same view that in the circumstances where code switching is used due to an inability of expression, it serves for continuity in speech instead of presenting interference in language.

According to Cook (2002), the use of code switching in multilingual classrooms may be problematic in that in classes where students do not share the same native language, some of the students will somehow be neglected. The notion here is that if students share the same native language, code switching could be applied in instruction. In Botswana, all students speak the national language (Setswana) and many teachers have always code-switched in their classes. In this respect, it is difficult to buy into the official policy that does not allow code switching.

The fact that the Setswana syllabus is written in English encourages code switching for Setswana teachers (besides the fact that the university trains them through the medium of English – see chapter 2). The syllabus has many concepts that are not easy to translate into Setswana. This has led to inconsistencies and variations of vocabulary in textbooks that were written for this syllabus. I illustrate this by the following examples from the core texts schools use:

English version	***Sedibeng* translation**	***Marang* translation**
Discourse	*Totlego*	*Theetso-puo*
Debate	*Kganetsano/Phikisano ka puo*	*Ngangisano*
Public-speaking techniques	*Matsekana a bobui*	*Bokgoni jwa Puo*
Coherence indicators	*Matshwao a tomagano*	*Matshwaa-tomagano*
Research	*Tlhotlhomiso-kitso*	*Patlisiso-kitso*

Teachers use the vocabulary they feel comfortable with depending on the textbook they choose to use among those that are prescribed. Issues such as these could have been addressed in the Setswana version of the syllabus if there was one. The focal teachers in this study did express that they were constrained by the non-availability of a Setswana version of the syllabus or at least a syllabus guide in Setswana. The extent to which English dominates in the education system of post colonial Botswana leaves a lot to be desired. Without giving much support to the national language, there is no indication that pronouncements about introducing other local languages in schools will ever take place.

Summary

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that official perspectives of literacy teaching and learning are well thought out and laid out in the curriculum and policy documents. However, there seem to be contradictory views between policy pronouncements and practice. Evidently, there are institutional and assessment constraints that need to be addressed in order for official literacy perspectives to be fully effected in schools. An examination of the curricula documents has shown that officially, in addition to the basic communication skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, literacy is the acquisition of other skills, values and attitudes that would enable learners to function responsibly and productively in the society.

Although the Setswana syllabus includes a wide range of topics aimed at imparting essential skills to students, the assessment is still geared towards producing an elite society with an overemphasis on academic knowledge measured through a rigorous national examination system. The syllabus emphasizes the need for students to understand past cultural practices, the influence of history in the development of attitudes or bias in today's society, their own cultures and the different cultural constructs that exist in the society. In the next chapter I focus on how teachers interpret and enact these official perspectives in their teaching.

Chapter Six

Teachers' Interpretation and Enactment of Policy

"One year we taught even the unexamined topics. At the end of the year our students performed badly in the exams. Teaching according to the syllabus did not work for us positively. From then on we realized that it would be more meaningful to concentrate first on those topics that are examined, and teach everything else only if there is time to do so. In this regard, we ignore topics such as 'Cultural values' because they are not tested" (Mrs. Pako; one of the key informants).

This is an illustration of the dilemmas faced by teachers in Botswana schools where teaching is driven by examinations. Examinations are part of the political and cultural environment of the school system and thus put a lot of pressure on teachers' decision-making regarding instructional choices they make. In order to be labeled "good teachers" or have their schools considered "good schools", teachers modify instruction and concentrate on activities that they believe would better prepare their students for examinations. Literacy teaching becomes transfer of knowledge rather than the promotion of reasoning, creativity, problem-solving ability, information finding and life-long readiness to learn which are clearly spelt out in the curriculum.

To gain an insight into how teachers interpret and enact the official perspectives in their teaching, I not only interviewed teachers but also did a content analysis of their documents. These were their record books (scheme books) which provided information about work they did in their classes; topics taught, class work, tests and assignments given. I also analyzed examination reports written by teachers who were involved in the

grading of final year (12th grade) national examinations during the years 2002, 2003 and 2005. I reviewed these reports because they were the only ones that were made available to me.

The teachers who participated in this study were found to have similar perceptions about what literacy is and the constraints that affected their own instructional practices. These perceptions will be described below according to the major themes that emerged from the analysis; school literacy versus cultural literacy, examination driven teaching, hegemony of English, curriculum responsiveness to the needs of diverse learners, and lack of professional development for teachers. Overall, teachers articulated the importance of instilling in students the skills laid out in the curriculum aims and objectives but felt that they were constrained by institutional structures to teach as they desired.

The section that follows is the introduction of the key informants of the study. Following the introduction is the discussion of the findings. All informants' names are pseudonyms. It should also be noted that all of these informants belong to mainstream Setswana groups.

Key informants

Mrs. Pako

Mrs. Pako is the senior teacher in terms of age and the number of teaching experience. She has been teaching for 26 years. She started school in 1963 (3 years before Botswana attained its independence from Britain). She considers herself to be coming from a background with educated parents. Both her parents had attained the

Standard Six Primary School Certificate, which was the highest level of education offered locally in Botswana during the colonial era. Her father worked in a shop while her mother was a house wife. Later they ventured into farming like many Batswana of their time. She had older siblings who attended school when she grew up. During those days there were no pre-schools in her village but Mrs. Pako recalls that there was a prestigious English medium school known as "Danger". She is not certain whether this was a nickname or the real name of the school since it no longer exists. Most children who attended that school were from rich families. She speculates that the school was built to cater for the children of the expatriates who worked in government departments in their village such as the teacher training college, the hospital and offices.

Although Mrs. Pako did not attend Danger school because her parents could not afford it, she believes that she did acquire similarly good education at a government primary school. Her school had a diverse teaching staff. Some of her teachers were foreigners from neighboring South Africa and Zimbabwe. Since these teachers could not speak Setswana, they (students) had to communicate with them mostly in English. She believes that having foreign teachers made them learn English better. She remembers two of her foreign teachers, a Zimbabwean and a Xhosa, who used to take them to the library and asked them to check out books, read them and summarize them. One time she checked out a book titled "Brazil" which was about coffee production. What attracted her to the book were the colorful pictures overlooking the vocabulary that was beyond her comprehension. Since she could not follow the book very well due to the difficult vocabulary, she failed to summarize it. She was punished for having checked out a book above her level.

Reading books was not part of the tradition in Mrs. Pako's family when she grew up. Her older siblings had books but Mrs. Pako does not remember having them read to her. Her friends in the neighborhood also had their older siblings in school but nobody ever read books to them; they did look at books together but they talked about pictures most of the time. The older siblings acted as teachers for them in the play schools but they mostly taught them scriptures which they also learnt at Sunday school. By the time she started school, Mrs. Pako could write her name and also knew stories about the birth of Jesus. Although older people did not have much education, Mrs. Pako believes she acquired education about traditional and cultural practices from them. This included taboos, myths, legends, folktales, riddles and proverbs. During the weekends and holidays children went to the cattle posts to be with their parents. It was at that time that they learnt from their parents. They shared the folktales and riddles with their friends back in the village or at school.

Although Mrs. Pako pointed out that in the olden days the range for careers was not wide, she believed that lack of support and guidance from her parents led her to end up as a teacher. Her father also wanted her to become a teacher. She stated that career choices were limited between teaching, being a police officer or a clerk in government offices. This is the colonial legacy. Missionary schools prepared teachers to teach the Bible; police officers to keep law and order; and agriculture officers as Batswana are traditional farmers.

Mrs. Wesi

Mrs. Wesi started school at the age of 6. She has been teaching for 18 years. Her parents could read the Bible and sing church songs from the hymn book but did not have much schooling. Her father spent most of his time at the cattle post while the children stayed with their mother in the village. Her mother too would move to the lands during the rainy seasons when it was time to plough the lands. Before she started school, Mrs. Wesi learnt how to read and write from her older siblings who attended school. Sometimes she played school with her friends where an older sibling would act as the teacher.

Mrs. Wesi recalled how during her primary school days their teacher would ask them to be quiet in class and talk only when they were called upon to do so; "during those days we obeyed our teachers and followed the rules strictly because corporal punishment was in full use. Teachers kept sticks in their classrooms to beat children. Our parents were aware of that and supported it on the basis that it was the Setswana way of disciplining children. These days we cannot dream of doing that unless the principal allows it". Mrs. Wesi also reflected back at the time she was at junior secondary school when they would memorize chunks of notes given in History class if they were to write a test. She and her friends would take turns reciting the notes while the other colleague looked at the notes to check if one was on the right track; "memorizing was not a pleasant experience. When one forgot a word, everything else was gone. But we had to memorize because those who had the art of doing so scored good grades. As I moved up the educational ladder later on, like when I was in Form 4 and 5, I got to realize that understanding something was much more meaningful than memorizing it. I remember

our English teacher who penalized us for using the same words that appeared in the passage for a reading comprehension when answering questions. She always encouraged us to use our own words to demonstrate that we understood."

Mrs. Wesi did not recall ever reading for pleasure as a student. All her reading was done for school purposes although as a teacher she occasionally reads newspapers. She was adamant that she grew up in a system where students had to write tests and examinations all the time; "at primary school, junior secondary, senior school and at UB, it was exams throughout. During the holidays we went to the cattle post to help our parents with chores. We never really had time for books". Mrs. Wesi stressed that despite the absence of a reading culture amongst Batswana, children did acquire a high degree of education from their families in the olden days: "Setswana like other African languages is rich with proverbs and idioms. Our grandparents used proverbs to emphasize a point whenever they talked to us and I was really impressed by their knowledge of the language. You know the moral lessons in our folktales. We learnt moral lessons like 'all that glitters is not gold', 'cheating is a bad thing' and many more. This is the reason I liked reading Setswana literature books at secondary school. The well written ones like those of *rre Monyaise* have rich language. I also enjoyed reading African literature by authors such as Ngugi wa Thiongo and Chinua Achebe, but now I no longer read English literature because I don't teach English and I really do not have time to do that. The prescribed readings for Setswana literature are too many."

Mrs. Wesi asserted that oral literature taught mental development and critical thinking skills. She described how, in their home, some evenings were devoted to competition of riddles between them and other children in their neighborhood. The

competition was some form of a game to find out who could think fast and use imagination to associate a variety of things. Some Setswana riddles are questions which are in the form of a statement, for example; my mother's white house which has got no door (*Ntlo ya ga mme e e senang lebati*), the answer is 'an egg'. One group says the riddle and the other one supplies the answer. The aim is to test one's imagination of associating things within a short time. The answers have to be given quickly or else the group loses its chance.

Ms. Bame

Ms. Bame has taught for 14 years. She declared that there was nothing much she could say about her early childhood literacy experiences as she learnt to read and write only after she started school at the age of 6. By then she could count up to 10 and write her name which she learnt at home from her older siblings. Like most children of her age, she did not go to pre-school as there were no kindergartens at that time in her village. She comes from a background whereby books were exclusively regarded as school work. Bame said; "I grew up in a typical village and went to a public primary school at age 6 like most of my peers. Our parents did not understand much about school. To them, we had to read books at school and learn from teachers, then come home to perform our duties as children. Reading and writing were school activities, once home after school I was expected to pound maize, cook and wash the dishes, fetch water or gather firewood. These were girls' duties which every mother ensured that her daughters perform to the fullest."

Ms. Bame grew up going to Sunday school. At Sunday school, teachers assigned them to memorize prayers from the book of Psalms or verses from the Bible every week. That was the major reading she did outside of school until she finished primary school. Otherwise Ms. Bame enjoyed reading stories from *Motlhatlhami and Molatedi,* 4th to 7th grade Setswana readers.

Although Ms. Bame grew up in an environment where reading books was not valued much, she developed a lot of interest in books when she went to secondary school. She believes that the negative attitude many people have towards reading could have developed at junior secondary school because there, unlike at primary school, many teachers did not encourage reading. They would either read books to them or allowed only good readers to read for the class.

During that time, there was a general belief that mathematics and sciences were male subjects while languages were for females. She believes many girls internalized that conception and gave up on math and science without putting in much effort. Ms Bame said they concentrated more on languages and literature and outperformed their male counterparts in them. "I remember how we memorized interesting passages from books such as 'Things fall apart', 'Cry the beloved country' and Shakespear's 'Macbeth', she said.

Ms. Bame felt they were denied the opportunity of having guidance counselors during their time when these days schools have counselors to advise students on careers. This meant that even when she applied to the university, she just filled in the forms with a very vague idea of what courses were available or what really suited her. When she got the admission letter that said she was admitted into the BA Humanities program, she got

very excited even though she was not sure what it involved. She had heard from other students that people who get into that program become teachers. Bame never thought she would become a teacher but since she wanted a university degree, she accepted it. She majored in Geography and Setswana but ended up teaching the latter because in her school, there was shortage of Setswana teachers. She does not regret teaching Setswana since she had always excelled in it at secondary school. She was also inspired by one particular lecturer at the university whom she respected as "excellent" in Setswana Literature; "although Setswana was taught through the medium of English, we enjoyed the way he interpreted literature texts, both poetry and novels lessons."

Ms. Bame reads empowerment books, Health magazines and motivational books. Occasionally she does some creative writing. She has written some poems and short stories but has never submitted them for publication. She sometimes shares her work with her classes before she teaches the prescribed texts. She finds it meaningful to give examples to students with things she has personally experienced since these are about issues that happen in the country on a daily basis which students too could relate to. Ms. Bame also writes letters to the editor for the *Kutlwano* Magazine (a government owned magazine) at times. This is the only magazine that has more than 50% articles published in Setswana (and the rest in English). This magazine and the *Daily News* are produced by the Department of Information and Broadcasting. The newspaper is distributed widely throughout the country at no charge, while the magazine is sold at a very low price; equivalent of less than US $1.00 and the fact that many of its articles are in Setswana and therefore accessible to a wide readership, it is popular among the low-income people and those in rural areas.

Ms. Lorato

Ms. Lorato has been teaching for the last 15 years. She grew up in a rural village with parents who had some primary school education as they could read and write but did not have much education. Ms. Lorato does not recall doing any reading with her parents except looking at pictures in the school books with her mother. Her father, like other males in Botswana did not spend much time in the home but was engaged in out door activities like looking after cattle and hunting. The only forms of literacy activities in her home were writing letters to their brother and uncle who worked far away in a mining town. Her older sister was a teacher and her older brother was a police officer. Even though her sister was a teacher, she does not recall ever discussing books with her at home. However, her sister allowed her to read her books at home.

When she was in 5th grade, Ms. Lorato's sister was transferred to a school in a small town. She and her younger brother then moved with their sister to her new school so that they could get a better education compared to that in rural schools. That is where Ms. Lorato obtained her secondary education as well. They used to visit the village only during long weekends and holidays. Ms. Lorato found the new school was a little different from public schools in villages in terms of facilities and resources. It had more books, a lot of teaching aids, and even radio lessons. In the junior secondary school she met a lot of children who came from English medium primary schools. Those children spoke English fluently and Ms. Lorato envied them a lot. She believed that those children

motivated her to read more and also try to abide by the "English only" regulation in school although that was not easy. "We used to go to the library with my friends after school to read books. The only problem was that our teacher would encourage us to visit the library but never checked if we did read or not. In that way, most of us did not take reading seriously except for homework or in preparation for a test or an examination. I liked writing letters to my friends at home when I was in junior secondary school. We also had a tendency of listening to music on radio and writing down songs in exercise books which we called 'Music books'. My English in town also improved because we had access to TV where we would watch cartoons.

Regarding her current literacy practices, Ms. Lorato, remarked: "Me writing? Writing what? I never write anything besides my preparation for school work. I'm lazy to read. I really don't read. I prefer listening to the radio or TV than reading a book. I do a lot of reading for school work which occupies my time. Working in an education set up forces me to read and write all the time. I write scheme books, notes and prepare assignments for students." When I mentioned to Lorato that Masters Degree and PhD programs require a lot of reading, she was adamant that she does not have the desire to further her education.

Ms. Kabelo

Ms. Kabelo is junior to her colleagues' age wise and teaching years experience. She has taught for only 7 years. She grew up in the city where she stayed with her mother who worked as a secretary in one of the government departments. Her mother trained for a secretarial course at the then Botswana Training College after obtaining the junior

secondary school certificate. Her mother was an active member at the church and also a member of the Botswana Red Cross Association. Ms. Kabelo therefore attended Sunday school at an early age and was a member of the Girl Scouts Association. She went to kindergarten at the age of 4. By then she could already write her name and recite the alphabets.

Ms. Kabelo started school at the age of 6. She grew up in a home where there were literacy materials and this motivated her to read. She had two older siblings who attended secondary school. She recalls that the first English book she read was titled 'Benny and Betty come to town'. For Setswana, there were many interesting books like *Mpepu,* the basic reader and spelling book in 1st grade and other books like Bofatlhogi and *Motlhatlhami* that were her older sibling's. All her teachers at primary school were elderly women who were very caring. Reflecting back at the kinds of books they read at primary school, Ms. Kabelo said; "You know I remember that in English books we read about life in towns and cities, shopping, trains, cars and traffic lights, western food and the like. Do you remember that book about Mr. Nkomo's store and groceries? I forget it's name but those were the things we read about. All these things had colorful pictures to illustrate them. I think English books were about English things and Setswana books about Setswana life style which was also illustrated in pictures. We read about plowing fields, harvest, drought, building traditional houses, traditional doctors and the like. You remember the popular tales about the tortoise and hare being small but canny animals while the most feared giant was the lion but sometimes not wise? Those were the same stories we heard from our elders. Now I see what people mean when they say culture and language go together."

On completion of her primary education, Ms. Kabelo was admitted at a junior secondary school (equivalent of middle school in the US) in the same city they lived in. For senior secondary education she went to a boarding school as her mother preferred so. Ms. Kabelo believes her love for books developed there because boarding students had a lot of curfews to abide by so most of the time they had to study. They had meals prepared for them. The only chores they did were to clean their hostels on weekends. Even though there was a public library close by the school, there were no official arrangements for them to go there. So she visited the library only during the holidays.

The school had several clubs for extra curricula activities such as Debate, Traditional dance and Drama, Athletics and Wildlife clubs. Ms. Kabelo was not a registered member for any particular club but occasionally attended meetings of the Debate Society and Wildlife club. She enjoyed it when senior boys debated as they liked using big English words. She remarked; "I don't know how I ended up being a Setswana teacher when this subject has always been looked down upon during our time. The rules were very clear at our school that if you were caught speaking Setswana, you were punished to either pick litter around the school or dig a whole for litter disposal. Since many students would be punished everyday, this form of punishment lost meaning and turned into fun especially for those who didn't like school. It was an opportunity for them time to miss lessons".

With regards to her current literacy practices, Ms. Kabelo said she mostly read newspapers, magazines and novels for pleasure. Like Ms. Lorato, Ms. Kabelo did not write anything serious besides the writing she did for her classes. She felt that a Setswana teacher does not have time to read outside of school work since they have too many

novels to read with students. They are also burdened by teaching many students, at least 35 in a class. When I asked what kind of extended writing they gave to their students, her response was that literature requires students to write essays and besides that, they also gave them composition assignments. She said they have to give them work and grade it.

Summary

The literacy histories of the above informants provide keys to understanding their contexts. They all bring out important salient issues in their education such as: lack of support from parents in school work since they did not have much education; learning being seen as the responsibility of teachers; absence of the culture of reading among Batswana; the disconnect between school literacy and cultural literacy; and English's association with prestige and power in Botswana. The women's literacy interactions with books in their homes were limited except for Ms. Lorato and Ms. Kabelo. To most informants, the reading and writing done for school was synonymous with personal literacy. Most of them cited elder siblings' books as the only possibilities for reading.

Given the circumstances of these informants, school reading and writing have a particularly strong influence in the way they define literacy. The informants positioned reading as a school task and gave examples by their teachers at the regular school and Sunday school. Although the informants said they did not read or did not like reading, they engaged in a lot of literacy practices in their early childhood. They learnt stories and gender based tasks and chores from adults, read the Bible for Sunday school classes and played school with their siblings or friends. The point of contention is that school literacy did not validate their home literacy practices.

The next section is the discussion of the main issues regarding the informants' perception of literacy teaching and learning which they brought up during the interviews.

Key Issues

Negative Attitude toward Setswana as a School Subject

English has always been associated with power and prestige in Botswana, thus putting down Setswana as a school subject. The informants raised the concern that the society at large had negative attitude towards Setswana as a school subject. They felt that they were fighting a losing battle by teaching a subject that was shunned by the society including students, parents as well as other teachers. They felt that parents as well as teachers of other subjects have negative attitude towards Setswana, and that education policy also uplifts English at the expense of Setswana.

Teachers identified the context of their teaching as affecting their instructional decisions. They saw themselves as being caught up between policy, other teachers and parents' views. All (policy, parents and non-Setswana teachers) emphasized the importance of learning English. Mrs. Pako related that in their school, when a student performs well in Setswana, the peers put him/her down by uttering remarks such as: "Do you want to become a traditional doctor? What are going to do with Setswana grades? (*A o batla go nna ngaka ya Setswana? O ya go dira eng ka matshwao a Setswana?*) Since the introduction of western education and medical practices during colonial times, everything traditional is despised and associated with backwardness while western practices (together with English language) are associated with modernity. Traditional doctors are associated with witchcraft. Mrs. Pako lamented that this was the case despite

the fact that traditionally, people had a lot of knowledge about important aspects in their lives such as the environment, health issue and how to cure illnesses. In relation to this, my conversation with Mrs. Pako went like this:

***Mrs. Pako**: In our subject we have the problem of attitude which I'm sure you are aware of. We are still battling with this problem of attitude. Students do not like Setswana. When you meet students outside of school and they introduce you to other people they say "my Setswana teacher" (emotionally carried away, facial expression goes sour and raises her voice as she speaks). We know that this is not expressed in good faith but it's a way of making fun of us, sort of putting us down. When they introduce teachers of other subjects they say "my teacher" without specifying the subject offered by that teacher. They don't say "my math teacher" for instance. Some parents also display the same negative attitude. When a student gets an "A" grade in Setswana, the parent says, "if only you could have gotten this "A" in Math or English or any other subject. Parents do not help us. Anyway these days a few of them show some interest in our subject. I do see such parents during parent-teacher conferences or on parents' day. They appreciate it when the child gets a good grade in Setswana. Anyway it doesn't mean that they do assist their children with assignments at home.*

***AM:** But I thought the policy was changed a few years ago. Isn't it that a pass in English Language is no longer a requirement for admission to university?*

***Mrs. Pako:** No, It's still the same. The policy could be on papers only. In addition to how the student has performed in other subjects, the university still requires a good grade in English."*

While I acknowledge that the way in which a school subject is constituted and subsequently construed by educators, parents and students contributes to the specific context in which teachers of that subject work (Grossman& Stodolsky, 1994), I do believe teachers are individuals and have their own views. In this regard I asked the teachers what their attitude was towards Setswana, Ms Bame responded:

> "Although we sit here as Setswana teachers, in the school we do not exist alone. We teach with other teachers. Even if we have the wish to promote our subject, it is hard for us to do so. People will take it as if we do not want the students to learn English. All the other subjects are taught in English and students are the school policy is that students should speak only English around the school premises except in the Setswana class."

Hegemony of English

The focal teachers pointed to the imbalances between the Setswana and English departments. Their concern was that English has always been given more priority over Setswana in many respects. One example was the "English only" policy around the school premises except during Setswana lessons. The policy in all Botswana secondary schools is that students should not speak their home languages or even the national language around the school premises. They should communicate only through medium of English amongst themselves as well as with teachers except during Setswana classes. When caught speaking Setswana or any other language, students are punished. In many

schools I visited, I also observed that as one enters the school gate, there would be a sign that reads "You are now entering the English speaking zone."

English was also allocated some library periods on the school time-table, and the library had more English books than Setswana ones. English teachers specialized in what to teach; some taught only literature and others taught language. In comparison, Setswana teachers taught both literature and language. They found it unfair that they were expected to be knowledgeable in both language and literature. Since English language and literature were treated as separate school subjects in the curriculum, they were scheduled separately on the school time-table whereas Setswana was treated as one subject. Individual teachers had to decide when to teach literature and when to focus on grammar. This disparity does not seem to recognize the importance of the national language and in turn the multilingual and multicultural nature of the learners.

When the teachers reported that students see the imbalances between the two subjects and were really not interested in reading Setswana books, I did point out to them that perhaps students did not like to read because they were not encouraged to do so, and that by being exposed to more reading, and having time assigned to read in the library, their horizons could be widened. I asked the teachers if they ever considered asking for a library period or whether they thought only English was justified to have one, the teachers declared that they never asked for a library period because they did not have extra time. They felt that their syllabus was too loaded for a 2-year period, leaving no room for activities such as library periods.

Another example of the powerful position English is accorded in Botswana is evident in the syllabus. The Setswana syllabus is written in English. This poses a problem

for teachers to understand it because a number of them are not proficient enough in English since it is a second or even third language to most of them. As a result, teachers interpret the syllabus differently from one school to the other or even amongst themselves.

The government and the media also communicate with Batswana more in English than in Setswana. This is prevalent in parliamentary debates, government documents and in the media. It is very common for a government official to address people in English when they tour villages to inform people about certain policies or get their views before implementing them. Although such officials do have some people translate for them into Setswana, such practice is uncalled for especially if the villagers are predominantly Setswana speakers. Government newspapers and magazines are written in English. An alarming example of a magazine written in English is the "Agrinews". This is a magazine produced by the Ministry of Agriculture that deals with issues about crops and farming, issues that directly affect farmers in Botswana. Most farmers are at the grassroots level with little or no formal education at all. Whether the aim is to educate these farmers or seek their views about agriculture, they are denied the information and it is therefore not easy for them to make any contribution. Another example is that of the "Botswana Daily News", a government's daily newspaper that is distributed at no charge. More than 90% of the news is written in English and the only news in Setswana appeared in English on the previous day.

School Literacy versus Cultural Literacy

Most of the informants in this study reported that they seldom read books outside the work they did for school purposes. To most of them, the reading and writing they did for school work was synonymous with personal literacy. Many of them agreed that in their upbringing there was distinction between school and home regarding education; that there was school knowledge and home knowledge. The school was a place to read books and learn from teachers, while home was a place to perform domestic chores. In the home, there were different roles for boys and girls. While boys worked closely with male adults performing tasks outside the home such as taking care of domestic animals, girls worked in the home with female adults cooking, cleaning and taking care of their young siblings. Given this context, culturally, there has never been a culture of reading amongst Batswana according to the informants. Mrs. Pako pointed out that:

> We Batswana do not have a culture of reading like people in other countries, especially those in the west. Whereas people in the west would prefer to read a book than to talk to the person sitting next to them in a bus seat, or talking to the person when they meet at a bus stop, we wouldn't do that. I realized this in England when I visited my husband who was studying there. We are not like that. We talk to each other even if it's the first time you meet a person. When we are on a journey together, we converse all the way and learn a lot from each other, and not only that, we might end up being friends. We are more sociable than people in the western countries. We believe in talking to each other not so much in reading books.

The absence of a culture of reading among Batswana was also a concern to the commission that revised the education policy in 1994 that it recommended that "to improve the level of literacy amongst Batswana, a logical extension would be the

enunciation of policies and strategies that would enhance the reading habits of the population at all levels of literacy and standards of educational achievement." (Republic of Botswana, 1993, p.187)

The above notion of a lack of reading culture among Batswana reflects that our ways of knowing are based on oral culture whereas western ways of knowing are based on print culture. This, however, does not suggest that oral culture is synonymous with illiteracy and is inferior to print culture. Whereas literacy could mean reading books and acquiring knowledge in formal education institutions to western societies, acquisition of knowledge in non-formal set ups could as well be literacy to Africans and even other societies. Vuolab (2000), reflecting on her childhood literacy experiences as a Sami child asserts that:

> "Nature and life are illustrated in oral literature ... Through stories we became familiar with animals, birds, fishes, flowers, trees, insects, sunshine, rain, wind, snow, rivers, lakes, the ocean. Listening to the oral stories we learned how we belong to nature as part of it. Oral literature taught us human beings to respect nature, and then nature gives us security"(p. 16).

The above assertion indicates that by the time children come to school they bring with them a lot of knowledge such as about their environment. Skilled teachers would incorporate this knowledge in their lessons. Cultural knowledge is taken for granted in Botswana whereas some educationists in developed countries have termed it "funds of knowledge". This according to Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) are historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for

household or individual functioning and well-being. Moll, et al view the household as containing ample cultural and cognitive resources with great potential utility for classroom instruction. Although the Setswana syllabus is culture sensitive as illustrated by the rationale and some aims and objectives, teachers did not teach topics on Culture because they were not examined as will be discussed below.

Apple (1993) contends that school curriculum is not neutral knowledge; "what counts as legitimate knowledge is the result of complex power relations and struggles among identifiable class, race, gender, and religious groups" (p.46). Given the circumstances, it is difficult to imagine how Botswana could attain the cultural transmission goal of education.

The Neglect of Culture

Despite the fact that the teachers were optimistic about the values of cultural literacy as portrayed in their personal histories, it became apparent that they did not teach topics on culture. The teachers claimed that they tended to ignore those topics because of time constraints. The topics were excluded in the assessment syllabus so they did not teach them even though they were aware that they were denying the students vital knowledge. At senior secondary school level, topics on culture call for discussing the effects of social, political and economic factors. Unfortunately, these are the very topics that are not included in the examinations and are therefore neglected by teachers. The teachers confessed that they were not able to give enough written work, grade it and give appropriate feedback to students because they had too many students in a class, about 35 to 38 in a class. They felt that when the curriculum was reviewed, nothing was done to

the bulk of the curriculum. The material that used to be covered in 3 years was retained for the 2-year program, overlooking quantity of content to be covered. The teachers did not realize that they could use passages on culture to teach grammar or reading comprehension. In fact, what I observed from my conversations with them and the records of their work, topics were treated discretely and taught in isolation from each other. The major problem they seemed to display was that they lacked the skills of integrating knowledge across various sections in the syllabus. Instead, they taught topics in isolation especially those listed under the domains of "Reading" and "Writing" as illustrated in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Examples of topics under the domains of "Reading" and "Writing"

Reading	**Writing**
Syntax and Semantics	Orthography, Register, Punctuation
Forms and Functions of Parts of Speech	Speech writing
Reading between the lines	Essay writing
Coherence indicators	Translation

(Adapted from the Senior Secondary Setswana Syllabus, Curriculum Development Division,Ministry of Education, 2000).

One reason why teachers taught topics in isolation was because of the books they relied on. The books treated topics discretely from each other and were generally shallow in their explanation of concepts. The above topics need not be taught in isolation, for instance; 'coherence indicators' and 'essay writing' should ideally be taught at the same time.

It has been over 10 years since the promise to guide teachers on how to conduct continuous assessment has been made, but as of the time of this study, nothing had yet been done. During our discussions and my observation of the teaching documents, it came out that while some topics that were not tested were taught, those under cultural heritage were the ones that were neglected. Topics such as "Speech, talk, dialogue, political/*kgotla* address" under listening skills were taught though not listed in the assessment syllabus, while those under cultural heritage were not taught (see Table 2 in the appendix).

Excluding topics on cultural heritage from the assessment could be interpreted as implying that cultural knowledge is less valuable than other topics in the syllabus. However, teachers in this study were optimistic about the teaching of topics under "cultural heritage."

Curriculum Responsiveness to the Needs of Diverse Learners

The education system in Botswana is built on the national principles of democracy, self-reliance, unity and *kagisano* (peaceful co-existence). Issues of linguistic and cultural diversity have been neglected for a long time and assimilating minorities into the mainstream language and culture has been the norm in schools. Multicultural education issues are not emphasized in pre-service programs. As a result, teachers are poorly equipped with skills for working in multilingual classrooms. Some teachers do not even think it is an issue to be discussed. Teachers are seen as implementers of the standardized curriculum, not necessarily advocates for social justice. The focus is on teaching how to teach a given set of topics at a given level. All teachers in the focal group

came from backgrounds that could be categorized as mainstream. They were mainstream in their social and cultural orientation. There was a tendency for these teachers to assume that all students were alike. When I asked the teachers if they think the syllabus addresses the needs of the linguistically diverse students in schools, Mrs Pako said;

> "Our students are the same when it comes to writing regardless of where they are – whether they are in Maun, Chobe or in the city. They do not differ. Sometimes they perform poorly in exams because they might have understood the question differently from what the examiner intended to ask. Sometimes examiners ask questions basing on the syllabus with no idea of what actually goes on in the classroom".
> *("Bana ba rona ba kwala ka go tshwana fela mo Setswaneng go sa kgathalesege gore a ba kwa Maun, Chobe kana mo toropong. Fa gongwe bana ga ba arabe potso sentle mo tlhatlhobong e le ka fa e neng e boditswe ka teng. O tlaa fitlhela e le gore* ***examiner*** *o ne a botsa potso a akantse se sele. O fitlhela e le gore ene* ***examiner*** *o tsere* ***syllabus*** *a botsa potso, gongwe e se* ***standard*** *sa bana ka gore ga se motho yo o mo* ***classing****, yo o rutang bana.")*

It was interesting to note that Mrs Pako believed that students did write the same way regardless of where they came from in the country. She equated students in the city with those in very remote parts of the country where Setswana is a second or third language. Although Mrs Pako felt that students did not differ in the way they write, others strongly believed that they lacked the knowledge and skills to teach linguistic minority students. They expressed the concern that Setswana and English are either a second or third language to most students; thus it was essential that second language teaching methodologies should be offered in teacher education courses.

Surprisingly, many teachers in this study were concerned that linguistic diversity is being neglected by the education system. One English teacher said; "Some students may have an advantage as the languages used are also used at home. However, some of the students, e.g. Bakalanga, Basarwa, Bakgalagadi find it difficult to adjust to the sudden use of Setswana and then English languages in school". The teacher acknowledged the difficulties encountered by language minority students in adjusting to school languages. The teacher also raised the issue of students' different abilities in learning. He said; "We are also burdened with the huge task of identifying students' literacy abilities but most of us are not equipped with the necessary training to do that. We tend to focus on those average students who can read and write. The high achievers and low achievers are often left out as teachers find it difficult to deal with their cases". The latter remark by the teacher seemed to suggest that teachers did not have the skills to operate in mixed ability classes. Another teacher pointed out that; "The system does not prepare us to teach diverse learners. We are also not taught the skills to teach students from diverse cultures to whom English and Setswana are second or third languages."

Examination Driven Teaching

Interviews with focal teachers as well as survey data revealed that they did struggle with the demands of school policies and mandated assessments. Teachers said they were aware of the importance of curricula objectives but were more or less paying attention to examination demands. They strongly believed that they needed to guide and practice their students on how to answer examination questions. Mrs. Pako expressed the dilemma they face as teachers:

> "One year we taught even the unexamined topics. At the end of the year our students performed badly in the exams. Teaching according to the syllabus did not work for us positively. From then on we realized that it would be more meaningful to concentrate first on those topics that are examined, and teach everything else only if there is time to do so. In this regard, we ignore topics such as Cultural values because they are not tested."

Data provided by the focal teachers about examinations indicated that there was too much emphasis on testing in Botswana secondary schools. Students wrote internal school examinations, regional examinations and national examinations. At the time this study was conducted, the Form 5 students (equivalent to 12^{th} grade) were writing regional "mock" examinations. These are common examinations written by all schools in a given region. Teachers from various schools in the same region meet and set the examinations. They then decide on a common marking guide (rubric) to be used in the grading of those examinations. Students' performance in these examinations is used to predict the outcome of the final year examinations, as such these examinations are held in high esteem. Consequently, many teachers ignore the overall aims of the curriculum and concentrate on what they know is being examined by relying on past examination questions. The entire education system was also seen as putting pressure on teachers by the way examination results are ranked and publicized. Mrs Wesi said:

> "Generally, our students are on average. We manage to get around 60% pass rate. Last year we were number 3 in the whole of Botswana." (*Generally, bana ba rona ba average. Re kgona go dira bo 60%. Maloba re ne re le number 3 mo Botswana*).

The ranking and publicity of examination results by the Ministry of Education is illustrated in the following news clip from the government news reporting agency, the Botswana Press Agency (BOPA) reporting the 2005 Junior Certificate Examinations results on the Botswana Daily News as follows:

Orapa JSS leads the pack
05 January, 2006

GABORONE - Orapa Junior Secondary School is the nation's academic champion among all junior secondary schools, with a pass rate of 97.5 per cent; one merit, eight first class passes, 80-second class passes, 65 third class students and four grade Ds.

With last year's junior certificate results, which were released on December 29, Meepong and Makhubu junior secondary schools in Selebi-Phikwe, became second and third with 96.7 per cent and 96.1 per cent a bonus of happiness for students, teachers and parents for the New Years Day. The three schools reportedly augmented the regular teaching with some strategies to prepare students for junior certificate qualification. Hard work and collective responsibility added value to instruction.

Maitshwarelo Boile, the acting school head for Orapa Junior Secondary School, applauded the teachers for their dedication and discipline, which was instrumental in helping the students to excel. Boile said her school excelled because the teachers completed the syllabuses ahead of time, thus leaving some periods for revision.

We have an extended study for the form threes and a policy of one-on-one between a student and a teacher which provides students with a platform to express their problems thus enabling teachers to devise measures of dealing with them, Boile said. The practice at Orapa Junior Secondary School is that all teachers are expected to have completed their subject syllabuses by the end of second term every year to give the students adequate time to revise ahead examinations.

Motshegofatsi Kgomela, the school head for Meepong Junior Secondary School is not only happy that her school obtained the runners-up position but she is more than happy that Meepong prevailed over Makhubu Junior Secondary School.

Kgomela attributed all top-notch performance to cooperation among Selebi-Phikwe secondary schools, especially the regular meetings between the heads, deputies, guidance and counselling teachers as well as senior teachers where they share ideas on how to improve their performance. She was delighted that the strategies the educators have

employed to deal with the misconduct of the students were effective. This, she said, was evidenced by the presence of five of Selebi-Phikwes six schools among the top 20 schools nationwide. She added that helping the students with motivational presentations was also a key factor in her schools' performance. Under this arrangement, the students present on a variety of issues at mini assemblies to develop their confidence and conscientise fellow students about social ills that could ruin their lives.

Meepong Junior Secondary School has established an academic board, modeled after the university senate, which reviews the students monthly tests, end of term examinations and the final examinations. The academic board assists educators to subject their work to critical examination thus identifying problems that could lead to poor performance, and solving them. Kgomela said the Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation should review the compact syllabuses because they were often not completed before examinations started.

The third best school, Makhubu has five merits, followed by Gold Mine Junior Secondary School in Francistown with three. Makhubu also has 25 first-class students, followed by Moselewapula in Gaborone with 23. Kgolagano Junior Secondary School at Middlepits in the Kgalagadi District trails others with a 44 per cent pass and it is the only school that failed to cross the average mark. BOPA

(Botswana Daily news Online, 05 January, 2006)

Every year when the results for national examinations are announced, the overall performance of schools across the country are compared and ranked by the Ministry of Education. Performance of students in various subjects is also indicated for each school. The rankings are published on newspapers for the public. Of the issues in the above news clip, three echo some of the major findings in this study. These are: teaching toward the test, time constraints, and lack of professional development. The schools that performed well are reported to have managed to finish the syllabi on time and therefore had adequate time to work on revision with students. The syllabus is described as "compact" meaning that it is loaded with too much material to be covered in a given period. It is reported that the school head complains that the material to be covered is too much and that the Curriculum Development and Testing Division should look into this matter. The

heavy emphasis on examination results communicates to the teachers that literacy is accessing information to pass examinations. To this end, it came up during our discussions that some teachers spend a lot of time reviewing past examination papers instead of teaching according to the syllabus. Teachers concentrate more on the parts of the syllabus that are tested. They pay attention to how questions are asked on these topics and drill students to respond to such questions. Teaching is not based on the teaching objectives as laid out in the syllabus but on assessment. Without doubt, examination driven teaching affects both content and skills that are covered. It encourages rote memorization and students have little opportunity to develop critical thinking and creativity skills.

Lack of Teachers' Professional Development

All the participants in this study felt that they were ill-prepared by their pre-service programs to handle the syllabus they were teaching. The focal teachers also complained that they were not provided with in-service programs to help them develop as professionals in their subject area. The responses to the question "what do you understand by the notion of literacy" were varied. Some (36%) teachers' understanding of literacy was limited to the functional notion of the ability to read and write only. They described literacy only in terms of the encoding and decoding of print. Others (40%) defined literacy as having the ability to interpret and analyze information read. Furthermore, a few (13.3%) defined it as the ability to read and write, interpret, analyze information read, and apply knowledge learned to any given situation, even to the world of work.

Only 6.6% described a literate student as "the one who understands the world around him or her; one who has acquired different skills; one who has acquired knowledge".

Although some teachers confined themselves to the narrow definition of literacy, it was evident that many of them had a broader perception of literacy as meaning making; interpretation and analysis, application and acquisition of knowledge. All teachers had the common understanding that the curricula defined literacy as the acquisition of the basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. One English teacher's response was that "the curriculum's definition of literacy is to have students read and write coherently and skillfully in English, to manipulate information, to relate whatever is taught to real life situations and equip students with life-long skills". It is worth noting that this was the only teacher who mentioned the words "life-long skills" in the survey data. In addition to the acquisition of the basic skills, a few teachers mentioned that the curriculum laid emphasis on the students' ability to develop critical thinking skills.

Interviews with teachers as well as survey data revealed that their understanding of the communicative syllabus was limited but that the Ministry of Education did not support them. The teachers stated that they were not sure what teaching communicatively means or the terms "linguistic competence", "strategic competence", "sociolinguistic competence" and "discourse competence" which the syllabus advocate. They felt that they could have been more efficient in teaching this "new" syllabus if the Curriculum Development Unit had conducted workshops for all teachers to explain the syllabus prior to its implementation in schools. To their recollection, only one workshop was held for selected teachers who were regarded as representatives of their schools, a practice they

felt was not helpful as most teachers who were sent as representatives to workshops never reported back to their colleagues.

Although neither the Ministry of Education nor the schools gave teachers any support in terms of professional development, the focal teachers said they did organize workshops with other teachers in their region to assist each other with issues pertaining to the syllabus. Ms. Bame viewed that kind of practice as having "a blind leading another blind" ("*sefofu se goga se sengwe*"). She felt it was good for teachers to share their insights on the syllabus but that having resource persons who were more skilled than themselves in certain areas would be more meaningful. One teacher who had just come back from the local university with a Masters Degree in African Languages expressed disappointment that she did not feel that her latest educational qualification had helped her improve as a professional. She was confident with the content knowledge she had but felt inadequately prepared in the area of teaching methods. She lamented that:

> "I am just continuing from where I left off. At UB we take classes only in the Humanities and not from the Faculty of Education. We therefore learn only content and nothing about teaching approaches. I still teach the same old way I used to do before going for the Masters Degree, so I am just like my colleagues when it comes to understanding some topics in this new syllabus."

The above view points to a gap in teacher preparation especially at the University of Botswana. Whereas teacher trainees at the Diploma offering colleges study both content and methods courses throughout the duration of their program, those trained at the university take content courses in the faculty of Humanities first and then methods

courses in Education (see chapter 3 for details). The teachers declared that some of them might have studied only novels but no poetry since genres of literature (novel, drama, poetry) are offered as separate courses and are also not compulsory. Contrary to this, in the faculty of Education they are expected to know all aspects of their teaching subject.

According to Shulman, pedagogical content knowledge "represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (1987, p.8). This calls for the teacher's understanding of how students think and learn and also consider their socio-cultural contexts as particular areas of influence to learning.

The interview data did reveal that many teachers took students' socio-cultural contexts for granted as such issues were never discussed in the teacher education programs they underwent. From the survey data, one English teacher said; "Some students may have an advantage as the languages used are also used at home. However, some of the students, e.g. Bakalanga, Basarwa, Bakgalagadi find it difficult to adjust to the sudden use of Setswana and then English languages in school". The teacher acknowledged the difficulties encountered by language minority students in adjusting to school languages. The teacher also raised the issue of students' different abilities in learning. He said; "We are also burdened with the huge task of identifying students' literacy abilities but most of us are not equipped with the necessary training to do that. We tend to focus on those average students who can read and write. The high achievers and low achievers are often left out as teachers find it difficult to deal with their cases". The latter remark by the teacher seemed to suggest that teachers did not have the skills to

operate in mixed ability classes. Another teacher pointed out that; "The system does not prepare us to teach diverse learners. We are also not taught the skills to teach students from diverse cultures to whom English and Setswana are second or third languages". Students' growth hardly in terms of problem-solving or critical thinking was rarely mentioned in the interviews. Most of the time teachers were concerned about students' performance in examinations. They were concerned about how to teach certain topics or how to prepare students to respond to certain questions from past examination papers.

One disturbing thing I noticed among these teachers was that they did not aspire to further their education. Many of them said they were done with schooling. Ms Kabelo said; "staying for five years in teaching is enough. After five years one has to move on to a different career or job, otherwise she becomes redundant or lazy and hence no productivity."

Textbooks and other Teaching Resources

The findings showed that teachers relied heavily on textbooks in teaching Setswana. Most teachers confirmed that they used the prescribed texts for the instructional purposes. This was also evident in that the teachers' work room/staff room did not have any other resources besides prescribed textbooks. Only in a few instances did some teachers mention using newspapers as resources even though there was not much evidence to this. The only newspaper I saw on some teachers' tables was the "Daily Newspaper" which could have been there because it is distributed freely to all government departments every day. Those who claimed to use it reported that they got articles from it to teach topics like "Giving a speech" or "identifying main point and

supporting arguments". The prescribed texts have class exercises for students and teachers give those exercises for in-class work or home work. I realized that there was very little initiative from teachers in the kind of work they gave their students. They just followed work in the texts and the teaching guides.

Most instructional resources used by teachers were relevant to what students experience in their lives as they did address social issues. The literature texts addressed issues about abuse of power by people in authority, youth relationships, while some poems were on HIV/AIDS, drought, seasonal changes. To have an idea on how these were taught, I relied on teachers' record books and what they told me since I did not do classroom observations. Test papers as well as past examination papers indicated that students were expected to give certain agreed upon responses (giving back to the teachers what they were taught previously). Even for literature texts, students had to give certain responses that they were taught in class. Before teachers graded papers, they had to discuss marking guides, which they all had to adhere to.

As concerns texts, all Setswana teachers who participated in the study complained that the quantity of literature texts to be studied within the specified period before students sat for the national examination was overwhelming. They also expressed their unhappiness about the quality of some of them. They felt that some of the texts did not address the syllabus' objectives while others were difficult to understand. Conditions permitting, teachers would select their own teaching resources/textbooks and teach what they believed was valuable for the students. The teachers had their own notions of what literary aspects a typical literature text should have. For instance, one teacher lamented about a certain drama text: "One of the prescribed drama text has 15 actors. Can you

imagine such a book! What's your view about that? We really wonder how book selection is done and who the people on the panel are." This teacher expressed the feeling that some books are being marketed for the benefit of the authors, disregarding the needs of the students.

Scheme Books /Record of Work done

Scheme books, also known as record books are books that are supplied by the Ministry of Education to teachers for record keeping. Teachers' record plans of their work; content to be taught in a given term (semester), and remarks about how lessons progressed as well as students' grades for class work, home work and tests. Each department meets at the beginning of the term to agree on what content to teach and plan their schemes. In this way, the plans are uniform and the teaching progresses more or less at the same pace, more so that students write similar tests at the end of every month. Although content taught is the same, teachers are free to use varying teaching methods. Each teacher has to record work he or she has covered every fortnight and submit the scheme to the senior teacher in the department for checking.

In order to gain an insight into how teachers record their work, I asked for a few scheme books from selected focal teachers who were more comfortable with me in the study. To compare between English and Setswana, I also asked two teachers from the English department to share their scheme books with me. Reading through four teachers' scheme books, I got the impression that these reports were just written as a procedure to fulfill the school policy. All the reports had similar patterns; minimal information was provided about specific issues covered in a topic, not much information was given about

students' performance or problems encountered; even when it was stated that students did not understand something, there was no information regarding the remedial strategies that were taken. To protect the identities of the teachers and their supervisors, I did not make copies of the reports (since they were handwritten and had supervisors' signatures) but instead I did copy down notes as they appeared in the schemes. I translated the Setswana ones into English. The following are some of the examples of how teachers reported their work:

Setswana Schemes of Work

Table 4: Example 1

Grammar: We did form and function of the Noun and Pronoun. Reference: *"Marang 5" – Tshukudu et al.* **Literature:** We read "*Motswasele 11*" and discussed setting and characterization. We discussed how time setting has an impact on the behavior of actors like *Motswasele, Diratsagae and Molotlhanyi.* Students were assigned to discuss characterization in groups and write a report that they presented before the whole class. **Remarks:** Students did well in literature than in Grammar.

Mrs. Pako's Record of Work for week ending March 11, 2005.

Table 5: Example 2

Speaking: Political/*Kgotla* address. Selected articles from newspapers were read (from the "Botswana Daily News" and "*Mokgosi*") and students were asked to tell the main ideas and supporting points. They were also asked to tell what emotions were shown in the speeches read. **Literature:** We discussed conflict in "*Motswasele 11*". We talked about how the three major events led to conflict in the play; the killing of *Maleke,* confiscation of *mogatsa-Moilwe's* cattle and the incident of *Ramodi's* children. **Remarks:** The students performed well in both literature and the activities under the domain of Speaking.

Mrs. Wesi's Record of Work for week ending March 11, 2005.

Table 6: Example 3

Grammar: We did the Adjective: Form and function of the three types. **Reading between the lines:** We read a passage from *Sedibeng 4* and students were asked to search for main ideas/central themes, topic sentences and introductory paragraphs in the passage. **Literature:** We discussed theme in "*Motswasele* 11". We talked about the theme of social injustice as illustrated by *kgosi Motswasele* among his people. **Remarks:** Students did well. They seem to enjoy reading "Motswasele 11".

Mrs. Wesi's scheme of work for week ending March 25, 2005.

English Schemes of Work

Table 7: Example 1

Reading: Local history pp.33 – "Active English".
Speaking: Discussion of local legends and stories as told by parents/grandparents.
Writing: Comprehension and Summary
Grammar: Sentence types – e.g. simple, compound and complex.
Composition: Argumentative composition.

Ms. Lenong's Record of Work for week ending January 28, 2005.

Table 8: Example 2

Reading: - Reunion with father
- Wasted waters (Handout)
Writing: Cars – a composition or newspaper report based on the theme.
Grammar: Preposition of time and place used in context.
Speaking: Based on either one of the reading passages above.
The best way to conserve water
Debate: Presentation on Setswana or food in general.

Ms. Lenong's Record of Work for week ending February 25, 2005.

From the above records of work, it is clear that the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking as well as grammatical aspects are taught separately. The Setswana schemes were more elaborate than the English ones. The English ones seem to

be a list of topics covered with no clarification of whether these were lessons or discussions held with students, or work assigned for writing. For instance, Mrs Lenong did not give the title of the argumentative composition so it is not clear whether students were asked to write compositions based on titles of their choice or whether this was a class discussion of how they should write such an essay. The topic for debate "Presentation of Setswana or food in general" does not also communicate anything to the reader. There is no indication of the exact tasks students were engaged in. All the schemes do not state the kind of problems students displayed or raised, and the kind of guidance they were given in case some had difficulties like in Mrs. Wesi's scheme where she states that students performed better in literature than in grammar. The strengths and weaknesses of the students are not explained in detail. The schemes do not specify anything about the attainment of literacy skills mentioned in the aims of the syllabus. Given this, it would be difficult for a substitute teacher or any concerned person to make sense of exactly what was done and how to move on with a lesson or topic. Other documents that gave teachers' perceptions of literacy learning and teaching were the examination reports. After reading through teachers' schemes of work, I did a further analysis of examination reports of final year examinations.

Examination Reports

The grading of Form 5 (12^{th} grade) national examinations takes place in a central location for all schools throughout the country. At the end of the grading period, teachers are asked to give an overall view about students' responses in the papers they grade. The information supplied by teachers is compiled into booklets and distributed to all schools

by the Examinations, Research and Testing Division. This information is used as the means of providing feedback to teachers about the performance of students so that they see what needs to be improved or reviewed. Comparing the remarks teachers wrote between 2002 and 2005, it is apparent that teachers have been identifying similar mistakes across these years; there have been no substantial changes in their remarks. In general, the remarks indicate lack of skills in reading, writing, critical analysis, and interpretation, inability to think independently, and shallow vocabulary. All these confirm the reports by focal teachers that students are not exposed to adequate reading and writing activities in secondary schools. Selected comments from these reports are presented below.

Comments from Setswana examination reports:

"Generally, candidates' performance was below the required syllabus standard, e.g. overbalance on retelling the story without showing cause and effect as required, candidates supported their views with very minor events. Most of them seemed not to have understood the text itself."

The above remark shows lack of reading and analytical skills on the part of the students. It is further illustrated in the following excerpt:

"Over the years candidates have always found difficulties in responding to comprehension questions and this year's candidates are no exception. The responses clearly indicate lack of reading skills. For instance, candidates still need a lot of practice on responding to questions that deal with drawing of inferences and giving reasons or

providing support for the statements that they make. They also have problems with identifying the functions served by some parts of speech in a sentence, significance of the parts of speech as well as identify coherent markers from a given text."

The next excerpt demonstrates students' inability to be independent when they are given unfamiliar information because they are used to having the teacher do the task for them. In this instance the examiner reports that students failed to summarize passages they had not seen before:

"The summary writing is also another area where candidates seem not to be making headway. Candidates invariably fail to use their own words in summarizing the passage. Most of the time candidates repeat the words in the text or write out some disjointed points that are presented in the form of a paragraph. They need to learn to extract important points and link these points so that they end up with paragraphs that flow."

Furthermore, students' lack of independent thinking and interpretation is illustrated in the poetry section:

"Many candidates failed to come up with the theme of the whole poem ...and used the same words as in the poem to answer questions. There was no indication that they understood what the words used by the poet meant. "

"Candidates who failed in this part of the question rewrote the last stanza without commenting on the impression made ... candidates failed to show how the poet had used words to describe the subject of the poem and to create interest but just concentrated on

explaining the subject of the poem in a general way with no reference to the language used. Candidates should not just give a narration of the story or characterization of the doctor but give their own feelings ... candidates did not answer questions fully."

The above comments could be interpreted as limitations on teaching methods. In both survey reports and focal interviews teachers reported that they were constrained by having to cover a lot of material within certain time limits. Given the circumstances, they did not expose their students to a variety of poems but only on the selected few which they believed were likely to appear in examinations. This kind of practice suggests that engaging students in activities such as having them write their own poems, read them aloud or share them with peers is far fetched. Unfortunately, it is through such activities that students could grasp the language of poetry and even begin to enjoy it.

Selected comments from English Examination reports are in no way different from the Setswana reports. The examiners are concerned about students' shallow vocabulary which is an indication of lack of exposure to reading materials:

"Generally, this year candidates did not do very well. The caliber was lower. Therefore the majority of candidates fell in the "D" category. The main concern was inadequate content and very shallow vocabulary. Some barely wrote more than a page and a half – less than 200 words. Teachers need to encourage students to practice writing at least 350 words. Candidates were further not eloquent enough especially those who chose questions 1 and 5 which required mastery of the language and a knowledge of current affairs or issues pertaining to government. Teachers should interest students in using the library appropriately."

Another area of concern is students' lack of creativity which is demonstrated by the fact that students from certain schools used the same expressions in their essays. It is apparent that those students memorized what they were taught and reproduced it in the examinations:

"Some candidates showed signs of being drilled because they used the same expressions. Teachers should desist from this as Paper 1 is about creativity. Another concern was the use of obscene language – some candidates are just too graphic and explicit. Teachers should caution their students against this. L1 interference still very rife, slang, so is and the over use of certain conjunctions like "so" and "very" interchangeably and the use of "as" instead of "when."

In the following qoute, the examiner is pleading with teachers to spend time training students how to answer questions and in vocabulary development:

"In general, centres should devote sometime for 'exam wisdom' to improve the quality of candidates' answers. Candidates have to be trained to analyse questions, to note keywords and therefore the demands of the question. It is apparent that some candidates, though endowed with the tools of the language, cannot meet the demands of the questions, giving vague if not irrelevant responses. It is also apparent that there is a need for training in vocabulary development. Candidates use or give descriptions where a single effective pregnant word could be the answer. This results in long descriptive wordy answers without focus on the demands of the question."

It is necessary that teachers guide students in responding to questions. However, the notion that students could be trained in vocabulary development does not seem to be feasible without exposure to a wide range of reading materials and engagement in a range of writing activities.

The next comment confirms that teaching is driven by examinations not by the syllabus objectives. The examiner recommends that teachers need to train students for examinations:

"The paper emphasized character, opinion, feelings yet candidates' answers reflected limited understanding of the differences between the three ... There is a need to consult the assessment syllabus in training candidates for the BGCSE."

It is conclusive from the above reports that even though the aims of teaching Setswana at senior secondary school level seem to be more progressive and aligned towards meeting the literacy demands of the 21st century, students' performance gives a regressive picture. Much of the reading and writing that students are engaged in are aimed towards helping them cope with examination requirements. The weaknesses mentioned in the reports such as lack of comprehension, lack of creativity and analytic skills, and limited vocabulary cannot be adequately addressed in an environment that is driven by purposes of examinations.

Summary

The teachers in this study had similar perceptions about literacy teaching and learning. An analysis of their documents has shown that they understood literacy through the lens of the national examinations. Botswana schools follow a national curriculum,

with close prescriptions of content, modes of teaching and forms of assessment mandated by the Ministry of Education. With this kind of curricula, teachers tended to disregard the curricula objectives and taught towards examinations, thereby failing to implement the intended aims. Even though the syllabus has clearly laid out the aims, it was evident that the teaching goals were derived from examination questions. This practice is rooted in the colonial context whereby students were taught disintegrated body of knowledge that did not require them to apply knowledge to real life situations or be independent thinkers, but instead, to acquire only a selected body of knowledge to pass examinations and serve successfully in the colonial administration.

The data also revealed that there was lack of institutional support for teachers. Lack of knowledge in how to conduct continuous assessment for certain parts of the syllabus compelled them to concentrate more on those topics that were tested. The importance of examinations in diagnosing the difficulties students may have cannot be contested. Examinations are also used to measure achievement at different stages of learning, and as a method of helping teachers to prepare the ground for the next level. However, if the goals of teaching are derived from examinations, effective literacy instruction cannot be take place. The acquisition of literacy skills is fundamental to overall learning in school, and emphasis on examinations is bound to affect the teaching and learning of these skills.

The sociocultural approach to literacy insists that language and literacy must always be understood in their social, cultural and political contexts. In terms of teaching, it is necessary that students be shown the connection between school knowledge and their local realities. By neglecting topics on cultural heritage, teachers are denying students the

opportunity to draw upon the cultural resources they bring with them to school, to understand the richness and strengths of their cultural traditions (Giroux, 1992). In this way the school curriculum becomes a tool of cultural alienation and the students gradually acquire the cultural identity of other people.

The next chapter is the conclusion of the study. I reassess the major research questions in relation to the theoretical frameworks and findings of the study. I discuss the implications of the study for teacher education programs and literacy teaching in Botswana secondary schools. Finally, I discuss the limitations of the study.

Chapter Seven

Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications

This study explored the meanings teachers in Botswana secondary schools associate with the teaching and learning of literacy given the structural constraints of planned school policies and curricula by the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, the study examined how teachers' literacy experiences and beliefs shaped their instructional practices. Data sources included audio-taped interviews, policy documents, curriculum materials, teacher documents, past examination papers, examination reports, and ethnographic field notes. The findings reveal that although policies have been developed about the teaching and learning of literacy that are aimed at moving the country into the 21st century, they have not translated into practice. This is due to a number of factors: societal and institutional constraints, inadequate teacher preparation and lack of teachers' professional development, and lack of a culture of reading.

The main research questions and sub-questions that guided the study were:

1. In what ways does the postcolonial experience of Botswana play out in teachers' understanding of literacy teaching and learning?

2. What are particular meanings teachers associate with literacy teaching and learning, given the structural constraints of the mandated curriculum and national examinations?

a) How does the national (Setswana or English) curriculum define literacy?

b) What is it that teachers understand the curriculum to be telling them to do?

c) What are teachers' perspectives on the curriculum's responsiveness to the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse students in schools?

d) How do teachers make sense of and come to understand students' familiar literacy experiences?

This chapter is a synthesis of the findings of the study and concludes by outlining the limitations of the study, implications for practice and future research. The section that follows is a discussion of the findings of the study under the main themes.

Findings of the Study

The overall finding of the study is that teachers' perceptions of literacy teaching and learning are rooted in their childhood literacy experiences and the teacher education programs they underwent. The official perspectives regarding literacy teaching and learning are consistent with the postcolonial and sociocultural theoretical frameworks in which this study is grounded. However, these theories do not seem to be in place to guide teachers' instructional practices. The study also revealed that there has been a revolutionary change in content and pedagogy of the current syllabus. The problem lies in that the new syllabus has been implemented in a system that has long been run by examinations and is therefore still tied to the old one. Even though the syllabus is postcolonial, the teaching is embedded within and shaped by colonial discourse. Literacy teaching methods still follow the traditional approaches that do not take on board the sociocultural contexts of the learners. The forms of assessment that were in place in the pre-colonial era were also never taken into consideration by colonial and subsequently post-colonial education system.

The theoretical frameworks on which the study was grounded proved useful in different ways: the postcolonial theory provided a lens to uncover and examine the structural biases inherent in the language education policy and how it affects the teaching and learning of Setswana in schools. I used the sociocultural approach to examine the official as well as teachers' perceptions of literacy in view of the current move in literacy education that literacy is a social practice. An analysis of the official documents showed that the syllabus is aimed at producing students who have the ability to read, write, speak and listen, and have acquired skills, attitudes and values that would enable them to function better in the society. In other words, the syllabus is aimed at moving students beyond the traditional notion of encoding and decoding print into being literate in multiple ways.

Critical theory was useful in examining the research question "What are particular meanings teachers associate with literacy teaching and learning, given the structural constraints of the mandated curriculum and national examinations." The findings revealed that teachers understood literacy through the confines of national examinations such that they focused more on preparing students for those examinations and paid less attention to the aims of the syllabus. Such a kind of practice seems to deny students vital knowledge that would open their doors to read the word and the world (Freire, 1983).

Institutional and Social Discourses as Constraints to Literacy Teaching and Learning

The data has revealed that institutional and social discourses constrain the teaching and learning of literacy in Botswana schools. Teachers' perceptions of literacy teaching and learning are determined by the realities of their institutional contexts. Despite the pronounced efforts in language and education policy to recognize Botswana's cultural diversity, an unequal picture is uncovered when one examines how local languages are given low status by government and its respective media while English is accorded more prominence not only in school but in all aspects of life. Consequently the society at large, parents, teachers and students themselves do not see any value in Setswana as a school subject, which impacts negatively on its teaching and learning as illustrated in the previous chapter.

The high value placed on examinations also affects the teaching and learning of Setswana. The teaching syllabus covers a wide range of topics but teachers were constrained by time and selected what to teach, depending on what the examinations tested. Teaching goals are derived from examination questions not from syllabus objectives. One particular area of knowledge that remained untaught, "Cultural Practices", is an area that almost all focal teachers acknowledged as having shaped their lives as they grew up. Since the assessment procedures did not create room for that area, teachers ignored it contrary to their personal beliefs. On a personal basis, the informants of this study acknowledged the importance of teaching students about their cultural practices as outlined in the teaching syllabus. Traditional models of teaching and assessment are still in place although the syllabus has changed. Forms of assessment for

literacy are still comprised of only paper and pencil tests as was the case in the UCLES curriculum. As explained in chapter 2, the new syllabus was introduced with pending plans to guide teachers on continuous assessment for some topics. Since teachers were never shown how to carry on the continuous assessment, they neglected the topics that were to be tested in this way and focused on those which had clearly pronounced guidelines.

In sociocultural approaches to learning, assessment must pay attention to the social and cultural context of both learning and assessment (Gipps, 2002). Even during pre-colonial education, assessment did take into consideration the social and cultural context. Children learnt by looking, imitating and practicing what their elders did. At the end of specific stages, they were given a practical test relevant to their experience and level of development and in terms of the job to be done. The test was a continuous assessment, which eventually ended up in a ceremony marking that the child has graduated into adulthood (Fafunwa, 1982). Language and literacy education should be viewed (the same way) that is, as part of a process of helping students to participate fully in public, community, and economic life.

The findings revealed that teaching in Botswana schools is driven by examination demands. However, teachers believed that even though they tended to teach towards the test, they did focus on syllabus objectives that included skills such as critical thinking, analysis and application. In that regard, they believed students did acquire the necessary skills. They cited the section on "Unseen texts" as an example. This is a section of the assessment syllabus whereby students are given passages from texts that were not

prescribed and asked questions on them. The aim is to test if students can apply knowledge learnt in prescribed texts to those they had never read in class. Teachers' claims contradicted the data in the examination reports (see chapter 6) that students performed poorly in "unseen texts". The remarks in the examination reports indicate that there has been no change in students' performance in the last 6 years. This suggests that instructional practices have remained the same even though the syllabus changed from the structural to the communicative one.

Whenever the word culture is mentioned, what comes to many people's minds is "backwardness" or "not civilized". Educational anthropologists and sociologists have conceptualized the term culture differently over time. Over a long time culture has been defined as a (stagnant) way of life characteristic of a bounded social group and passed down from one generation to the next (Eisenhart, 2001). Geertz (1973) defines culture as the dynamic and recursive construction of beliefs, values, and ways of acting among a group of people. The contemporary views also define culture as a concept that refers broadly to all forms through which people make sense of their lives (Rosaldo, 1993). From an African perspective, Falola (2003) defines culture as including "values, beliefs, daily practices, aesthetic forms, systems of communications (e.g. language), institutions of society, a variety of experiences that capture Africans' way of life, a metaphor to express political ideas, and the basis of an ideology to bring about both political and economic changes" (p.1). These contemporary conceptions of culture point to the need for the inclusion of cultural knowledge in the school curricula.

A study conducted by Heath in 1983 provides an example of the need for teachers to know how cultural differences relate to school subject matter learning. Heath describes

a study in which students in a rural agricultural area conducted enquiries into the people in their town that were particularly good at farming vegetables. Their teacher found it meaningful for students to conduct ethnographies of their own communities. This enabled them to connect school knowledge and culture with their own culture. This was also a way for the teacher to find out more about the background, beliefs, values and culture of the students. Heath argues that students come to school with different ways of speaking and communicating than those valued in schools. . In this regard, if prospective teachers were given the skills to conduct ethnographies of literacy practices of students, they would better understand ways in which their students think about language and literacy. Research by Moll and Gonzalez (1994) similarly points to the importance of making available to teachers the rich funds of knowledge and cultural practices that youth from non-mainstream backgrounds might bring with them to their classes. Such knowledge could enable teachers to bridge bridges between mainstream academic knowledge and discourse, and the knowledge and discourse that students bring to their classrooms. The traditional conception that confines literacy to the ability to read and write is powerless to get at these kinds of analyses and explanations.

Inadequate Teacher Preparation and Lack of Professional Development

Teachers' perceptions towards literacy have implications for the pre-service language education curricula. As already pointed out, interviews with teachers gave an indication that they lacked the knowledge and skills regarding the teaching of literacy. They understood literacy in the narrow sense of decoding and encoding print. The teachers also disclosed that their understanding of the communicative syllabus was

limited but that the Ministry of Education did not support them in terms of professional development. According to Shulman (1987), pedagogical content knowledge "represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction" (p.8). This calls for the teacher's understanding of how students think and learn and also consider their socio-cultural contexts as particular areas of influence to learning.

Whereas the need to learn about students, their cultures and communities, and to build on such knowledge in teaching and learning has been found to be crucial in other parts of the world (Ladson-Billings, 1998; hooks, 1994; Delpit, Zeichner and Hoeft, 1996), this is not the case in Botswana. As shown already, teachers lack the skills to accommodate students' funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, 1995; Moll, et al, 1992) to enrich their literacy skills. Since they did not have adequate knowledge about what teaching second language learners involves, some teachers who participated in this study felt that students' linguistic differences did not matter since all of them could speak and write Setswana. This is the view held by the society at large as described in chapter 2 and hence the negligence of ethnic minority languages even at the initial levels of education at primary schools.

A closer look at the syllabus objectives shows that teachers are not required to be sources of information for topics on cultural knowledge. They are to teach these topics through research projects that could be done by students in their communities. For example, one objective states that students should "Trace the developments of cultural practices in their community". By allowing students to carry out research in their

communities, students are being connected to their communities, besides the fact that they acquire the skills of speaking, listening, writing, interpreting and analyzing.

Using literature and texts based on cultural knowledge, the topics that are currently neglected could be taught without jeopardizing the material covered in the examinations. A core of the traditional way of life remains integral to contemporary community life. This, for instance, is portrayed in marriages and ceremonies, and other rituals which continue to bring the community together in socially significant and meaning laden activities. These activities offer cultural and linguistic resources that teachers could tap into and incorporate in their teaching. They could use reading and writing assignments to teach students about the community and cultural traditions they are familiar with. This could afford them the opportunity to be engaged in self-reflection, analysis, interpretation, cross-cultural understanding, problem solving and critical thinking which the sociocultural theory to literacy advocates.

We need to rethink our teacher education programs so as to produce teachers who are knowledgeable and accountable. Understanding the curriculum and enacting it could be two different things. The implementation of curricula objectives depends on several factors: teachers' readiness (i.e. understanding), institutional support in terms of resources and the actual classroom contexts.

Lack of Reading Culture in Botswana Society

The previous chapter has revealed that generally, there is no reading culture in Botswana secondary schools. In both the interviews and survey data, teachers reported that they did not engage students in reading except for school purposes. The teachers

themselves confirmed that they hardly read outside of schoolwork due to workload constraints. Teachers who do not encourage extensive reading or read for their own professional development are not good role models for students. The focal teachers related how they acquired literacy through interaction with their peers, adults and older siblings. Lack of not valuing reading by both students and teachers is a product of sociocultural context. Before the advent of western education, learning was more oral than based in books like in the western way. Although reading books was not a cultural way of learning in pre-colonial times as pointed out by the informants, times have changed and there is need to acknowledge that in postcolonial Botswana, literacy demands place reading at the forefront. Culture evolves with the times; it is not static.

The few teachers who engaged in reading said they mostly read English articles and books. However, they did mention that they read Setswana articles when they had to research for materials to use in their classes but reported doing most of their leisurely reading and writing in English. Literacy practices of these teachers and the materials they read revealed the degree to which English dominated in their lives.

The benefits of extensive reading and writing need not be underscored. Interview data showed that students in Botswana schools are engaged in reading and writing to complete teacher directed classroom assignments, they are not exposed to a wide range of reading materials. Regrettably, research has found that students who do little independent reading in various and diverse texts will have difficulty with school learning (RAND Reading Study group, 2002).

In some studies, middle school students have reported an interest in reading a wide range of texts (e.g., informational texts, picture books, series books, magazines,

poetry), but that in school their reading is limited to textbooks and fictional novels assigned to the whole class (Ivey and Broaddus 2001; Worthy et al. 1999). It has also been observed that young adolescents find it difficult to reconcile school literacy with the reading and writing they engage in outside of school (Alvermann, 2001). For instance, they may read and write to fulfill school required tasks such as assignments, whereas outside of school they read and write to communicate, create, and participate. Teaching secondary school students to be strategic in their approach to reading is essential to their academic growth. The above issues point to a number of factors to be reconsidered at both teacher education and policy formulation levels.

Recommendations for Teacher Education

Ever since the introduction of the localized Setswana syllabus in 1998, no evaluation has been carried out to find out how teachers cope with it. This study has therefore provided data that gives us insights into teachers' perspectives about this syllabus. It has contributed to our knowledge about how secondary school teachers make instructional decisions that may affect students' literacy. The findings have indicated that there are some gaps in language teacher education programs that need to be looked into. Teachers in this study expressed that they were ill prepared by their programs to handle the "new" syllabus (besides other internal and external constraints). According to socio-constructivist views, teachers and learners are creators of socially constructed knowledge. Teachers need to have an understanding and appreciation of the socio-cultural contexts of the learners as particular areas of influence to learning. The school and the local community should be important resources in the teacher preparation process. It is

important to determine if those aspects of the learner that are crucial to his/her learning, notably his/her language and life experiences as derived from his/her culture are taken into consideration as part of curriculum reform and teacher preparation.

Literacy teachers need to have knowledge about language and learning, literacy, and instructional debates surrounding the teaching of language, literacy, and culture. It is vital that courses on second language teaching methods are introduced at teacher education level. Setswana and English are either second or third languages to many students, yet teachers are not equipped with second language teaching methods. Bell hooks (1994) calls on the need for teachers at all levels to transform their pedagogical processes in the current age of multiculturalism. She points out that most people were taught in classrooms where styles of teaching reflected the notion of a single norm of thought and experience, which were claimed to be universal. She argues; "Multiculturalism compels educators to recognize the narrow boundaries that have shaped the way knowledge is shared in the classroom. It forces us all to recognize our complicity in accepting and perpetuating biases of any kind" (ibid, p.44). hooks calls upon teachers to recognize and value all learners in the classroom. This suggests the introduction of multicultural education courses in at teacher education level.

Teacher education faculty should embark on research with teachers serving in remote area schools to document the cultural life styles of the communities as well as learning and teaching difficulties encountered in those areas. Such research could be compiled into booklets to be used as resource materials in the courses offered.

The University of Botswana and affiliated colleges of education should introduce language courses for the local languages that are not currently taught in schools (in view

of the recommendation that by the year 2016, all local languages will be taught in school). Some of these languages are already taught in neighboring Namibia at university level. Arrangements can be made to send interested candidates to study there.

Recommendations for Policy

There is need to conduct workshops for teachers to engage them in discussions about the communicative syllabus and its assessment. Teachers need an understanding of what communicative teaching entails as opposed to the traditional structural approach. Clear and accurate assessment and reporting procedures must be put in place so that teachers know how to assess the various sections of the syllabus. Since assessment indicates what type of knowing and learning are valued, clearly specified assessment criteria are required which measure the attainment of cognitive objectives such as levels of abstraction and critical engagement.

The long pending continuous assessment must be implemented. Teachers should be guided as to how they could conduct continuous assessment so that they can teach the unexamined topics through project work. Literacy as a social practice includes the construction of knowledge, values, attitudes, beliefs and feelings associated with the reading and writing of particular texts within particular contexts (e.g. Street 1984, Barton & Hamilton 1998, Barton et al. 2000). It is through reading and writing varied texts, and getting feedback from teachers that students' literacy skills could be enhanced. There is need to devise multiple ways of evaluating students so that we do not solely rely on paper and pencil tests.

In-service training should be provided for serving teachers and education officers about issues of linguistic and cultural diversity to address the problem of negative attitude towards Setswana as a school subject, as well as negative attitudes, prejudices and misconceptions about ethnic minorities.

Some studies (e.g. Reitzug, 2002) have shown that among the many types of professional development, recently emerging forms such as networks and Professional Development Schools (PDS) have positive effects on both students and teachers. Networks are when educators from across different schools interact regularly to discuss and share practices around a particular focus (such as a new teaching method). The interaction could be through meetings, cross-school or cross-classroom visitations or through electronic forms of communication. Networks have been found to be effective in helping teachers get students more actively involved in learning and professional development of teachers. The focal teachers in this study did confirm that they were involved in some form of networks with teachers from schools in their district.

PDS are schools in which university faculty, PDS teachers, and student teachers work collaboratively to enhance the student teaching experience and to improve the professional development of teachers. This is done through activities such as teacher study groups, curriculum writing, peer observation, case conferences and workshops. Several outcomes of staff development that are affected by professional development have been identified: teacher knowledge, teacher attitudes and beliefs, teaching practice, school-level practice, and student achievement. Teacher professional development should be seen as a process, not an event (Harwell, 2003). Sustained, systematic professional development programs that unfold as processes over time rather than individual

workshops and seminars, which are one-time events, have proved to be productive in other settings. Harwell argues that practices such as simply telling teachers that scores on standardized assessments must improve is not enough to bring change. Before change can take place, there must be a shared sense of need for change. If teachers agree about problems and solutions, institutional change is possible. For Harwell, effective teacher professional development and factors that contribute to its success should have the following characteristics:

Context (or setting)

- Supports professional development and the changes it is intended to bring about.
- Is characterized by a shared sense of need for change.
- Is characterized by teaching professionals who agree on answers to basic questions regarding the nature of learning and the teacher's role in the classroom.
- Is characterized by teaching professionals consider learning a communal activity.

Content

- Deepens teachers' subject matter knowledge.
- Sharpens classroom skills.
- Is up to date with respect to both subject matter and education in general.
- Contributes knowledge to the profession.
- Increases the ability to monitor student work.
- Addresses identified gaps in student achievement.
- Centers on subject matter, pedagogical weaknesses within the organization, measurement of student performance, and enquiry regarding locally relevant professional questions.

- Focuses on (and is delivered using) proven instructional strategies.

Process

- Is research based
- Is based on sound educational practice such as contextual teaching.
- Supports interaction among teachers
- Takes place over extended periods of time.
- Provides opportunities for teachers to try new behaviors in safe environments and receive feedback from peers.

(Adapted from Harwell, 2003, p.8)

This study has established that the current Setswana teaching syllabus is translated and interpreted differently by teachers as well as textbook authors. In a system that measures standards through national examinations, there is need for the Curriculum Development Unit to devise a Setswana version of the current syllabus so that teachers have a common understanding of the concepts they teach.

Limitations of the Study

This study focused only on five teachers based in one urban school who were all female. The findings of the study can therefore not be generalized to other teachers and schools throughout the country. Literacy perceptions of teachers and their instructional practices may differ from one teacher to the other and from one school to the other. The multicultural situation of the Botswana context also suggests that literacy teaching and learning require different approaches in different schools. This suggests that the study

could have been more informative if more schools in different parts of the country were studied, and also if the gender of the informants was balanced. The perception of males and females may be different in matters relating to teaching.

The other limitation is that I did not observe any classrooms to complement the data provided by teachers. I also did not interview students to get their perception of literacy learning. What teachers reported might not be a true reflection of their instructional practices; in this regard their information may not be reliable. Based on these limitations, the section that follows offers suggestions that future research may focus on.

Implications for Further Research

The importance of studying teachers' perceptions in Botswana schools cannot be underestimated since such research is rare. Research that focuses on teachers' voices would provide a valuable insight into restructuring and reform processes in education and into new policy concerns and directives (Goodson, in Day, Fernandez, Hauge & Moller, 2000). Lortie (1975) in his study "The School Teacher" has long argued that:

> It is widely conceded that the core transactions of formal education take place where teachers and students meet ... But although books and articles instructing teachers on how they should behave are legion, empirical studies of teaching work – and the outlook of those who staff the schools – remain rare (p. vii).

Future research could target more schools in different parts of the country, and also balance the gender of the informants as well their ethnic backgrounds. Such research could be extended to primary school teachers and teacher educators in colleges of education. Students and parents could also be included in the research.

It could be more meaningful if teacher educators could embark on research with teachers serving among ethnic minority communities in different regions of the country to document their cultural life styles as well as learning and teaching difficulties encountered in those areas. As earlier noted, such research could be compiled into booklets and used as resource materials in the courses taught. Future studies could include schools in more diverse communities/ ethnic minorities.

Conclusion

This study has revealed that official documents acknowledge that there are multiple ways of being literate, thereby advocating for a broader perception in the teaching and learning of literacy. The main problem is that teachers have limited understanding of what literacy entails and continue to use traditional approaches that are examination driven and teacher-centered, treating students as people who have no experiences, and not even recognizing that they come from diverse cultural backgrounds. This is an indication that there is contradiction between policy and practice. Although the syllabus is aimed towards being progressive and incorporates critical theoretical views, teachers operate within the confines of the national examinations and thus do not enable students to realize that literacy is part of their everyday social practices.

The multiple perspectives of literacy described in chapter 3 provide a broader and richer view of what it means to be literate. They do point to a need for multiple-process approaches to literacy education in pre-service teacher education programs. This would eventually translate into effective literacy instruction in secondary schools. Equipping students with the basic communication skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, problem solving, critical thinking, values and attitudes for responsible citizenship are the main aims of the current secondary school Setswana syllabus (Republic of Botswana, 2000), which needs to be addressed starting from the teacher education level. A meaningful education system should take into consideration people's sociocultural and linguistic background in addition to their educational needs. From the sociocultural point of view, becoming literate involves being apprenticed into ways of living with people as much as being able to decode and encode print or symbols. Lastly, to have an educated and informed nation by the year 2016 (Republic of Botswana, 1997) and beyond, there is need to reconsider the aims of the literacy curriculum in terms of questions such as what kind of literate individuals or society we aspire to have, so that we realign literacy assessment with the major goals of teaching it.

APPENDIX A

Table 9: Unexamined Topics

Topic	**General Objectives**	**Specific Objectives**
Cultural Heritage	Trace the developments of cultural practices in their community.	- investigate cultural practices in their communities associated with societal values. - discuss elements in their culture that make them proud of their personal origins as individuals, ethnic groups and citizens of Botswana.
Cultural Values	Analyse and critically evaluate their cultural values.	-discuss relevance of certain old cultural practices in the modern society. - assess the influence of socio-economic, historical and political contexts on cultural practices found in the modern community. - express and justify their opinion about the merits and demerits of cultural practices in the community. - suggest ways of conserving useful cultural practices in the community. - discuss ways of adapting useful cultural practices to contemporary life situations.
Cultural Diversity	Trace the development of cultural practices in their communities.	-discuss how some cultural practices in their communities (such as those associated with cutting of trees, hunting, veld burning, grass cutting etc.) relate to current environmental issues. - discuss cultural elements that are common to all societies of Botswana and distinguish them as a people. - volunteer to share information about what they have read.

		- read and extract information from a range of materials relevant to their needs during and after schooling.
Culture of Reading	Make a habit of reading for pleasure as well as interest and knowledge.	- articulate and discuss their own assumptions, feelings about, and attitudes towards what has been read. - communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to what is read. - choose reading against any form of house entertainment.

(Adapted from the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education Teaching Syllabus: Setswana, Ministry of Education, 2000).

APPENDIX B

Survey Questionnaire

Qualification:_____ Gender: _____

Subject taught: _____ Level taught:_____

Number of years taught:_____

This is an open ended questionnaire; please feel free to answer as much as you can. You may write at the back of the page or use an extra page. Thank you.

1. What do you understand by the notion of literacy/ what does being literate mean to you?
2. When and how did you learn to read and write (what age, who taught you, family literacy practices, etc)?

a) What purposes do reading and writing serve in your life? How often do you read and write?

b) What kinds of materials do you read? What kinds of writing do you do?

3. What does it mean to teach reading and writing at secondary school level?
4. What is your opinion regarding the changes that have occurred in the Setswana/English syllabus since localization of the curriculum in 1998?

5. How does the current curriculum (Setswana or English) define literacy?

a) What do you understand the curriculum to be telling you do to?

b) What kinds of reading do you do with your students?

c) What kinds of writing do you do/engage your students in?

d) What purposes do the above reading and writing tasks serve?

6. What is your view regarding the teaching syllabus and the examination syllabus? How does this affect your teaching?

7. Tell me what you think about the textbooks and other resources that are used in your teaching subject?

8. What is your perspective on the curriculum's responsiveness to the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse learners in school?

9. How do you make sense of and come to understand students' familiar literacy experiences?

10. What recommendations do you have for preparing future teachers of Setswana and English?

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

1. What do you understand by the notion of literacy/ what does being literate mean to you?

2. The teaching of reading has always been associated with primary school teachers. What does it mean to teach reading at secondary school level?

3. How much reading do you do with your students?

4. Do you have a library period scheduled for your classes as is the case in the English department? How do you feel about this?

5. One objective in the current syllabus is that a culture of reading must be instilled in students. How do you address this objective?

6. What kinds of writing do you engage your students in? What kinds of extended writing tasks do you assign your students? What is your opinion regarding their performance and level of writing?

7. What is your view regarding the changes that have occurred in the Setswana syllabus since localization of the curriculum in 1998? Do you have any problems with the current syllabus? If so, what problems? How do you address those problems? How does your department address those problems?

8. What is your view regarding the teaching syllabus and the examination syllabus? What do these mean to you? How do they affect your teaching?

9. Tell me what you think about the textbooks and other resources that are used in Setswana?

10. What is your perspective on the curriculum's responsiveness to the needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse learners in school?

11. How do you make sense of and come to understand students' familiar literacy experiences?

12. What recommendations do you have for preparing future teachers of Setswana?

APPENDIX D

An investigation of teachers' conceptions of literacy in Botswana

Consent Form

I am a PhD student at Michigan State University and conducting a study on the perceptions of literacy in Botswana's education system. The purpose of this study is to uncover, interpret and illustrate the meanings teachers in Botswana associate with literacy teaching and learning given the structural constraints of planned secondary school policies and curricula.

I would like to interview you and learn about your perceptions of literacy and your literacy practices, both while you were at school and that you do as part of yoru life outside of school. This would mean that I would arrange to spend sometime with you at your convenience to talk to you about these issues. You allow me to interview regarding (1) the different kinds of texts you read and write in your life both out of school and in school, and (2) the purposes for which you read and write these texts. You also give consent for these interviews to be recorded on audiotape and transcribed to inform the study of "An investigation of language educators' conceptions of literacy in Botswana". These audiotapes will be stored in a locked cabinet and only I will be able to listen to them. When I am through with this study, I will erase the audiotapes and throw them away.

You also give consent for samples of the texts you read and write to be copied to further inform the study. You give consent for these samples to be published or shared with an audience as part of the process of sharing the results of this study.

Your name will always be held confidential to the maximum extent allowable by law and will never be revealed in any oral or written presentation of the results of the study. If any samples of your writing are shared with others, either in live presentations or in print, your identity will be masked. Finally, you may withdraw this permission at any time during the course of the study without negative consequence either to you or your child.

Participation in this study is voluntary, you may choose not to participate at all, or you may refuse to participate in certain procedures or answer certain questions or discontinue your

participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. My contact information between June 15th and August 30th 2005 while in Botswana is:

Annah Molosiwa, Telephone: 3901-394, P.O.BOX 70301, Gaborone, Botswana. email: molosiwa@msu.edu

Your signature below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this study.

Signature of Research Participant:_____ Date:_____

Your signature below indicates your voluntary consent to participate in this study WITHOUT audiotaping.

Signature of Research Participant:_____

Date:_____

APPENDIX E

SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL
REGIONAL MID YEAR EXAM
SETSWANA PAPER 2
FORM 5

NAKO:lhr50mins

MATSHWAO:69

DITAELO

1 . Pampiri e e na le dikarolo di le tharo .

2 . Araba dipotso tsotlhe ka Setswana se se lolameng.

3 . Araba potso kgotsa dipotso go tswa mo karolong nngwe le nngwe .

4 . Kwala palo ya potso nngwe le nngwe fa gare ga tsela e seng kwa tshimologong ya yone.

5. Tlola tsela fa gare ga dikarabo tsa gago gore karabo nngwe le nngwe e senoge sentle .

6. Kgwarela mola mo letlhakoreng lengwe le lengwe la pampiri ya gago ka fa mojeng.

KAROLO YA NTLHA

Bala palo e e latelang o bo o araba dipotso tse di fa tlase:

Go phuaganngwa ga thuto ya Setswana ya tlhago, boemong jwa go tokafadiwa le go tlhabolwa gore e tshwanele e be e amogelesege mo botshelong j'wa segompieno, go latlhetse Batswana moko wa boleng jwa bone, le isago ya bana ba bone le segabone. Ka go latlha thuto e gotlhelele, re latlhile motlhala o re neng re o neetswe ke batlapele, go kaela bana ba rona tsela ya botshelo, go ba ruta go tlotla segabone le go itlotla. Maswabi a magolo ke gore ga re a e emisetsa ka sepe; jalo re tlogetse bana ba rona **ba paputla mo setlaatlaeng.** Re nnetse go ngomoga pelo fela, re ntse re re bana ba gompieno ba a re.....ga ba re.....; jaaka ba moloba.

Re tlhoka go itse gore ka thuto va maloba, bana ba ne ba segelwa melelwane; go fatlhoga le go aloga ga bone go tshwaetswe ka dipaakane tse di bonalang tse di tlhaloganyegang, tse di popota. Go ne go na le nako e ngwana wa mosimane a neng a tewa go twe: 'Go tloga gompieno o monna, jaanong o ka re .....; le gone o ka se ka wa re.....!' Fela jalo le ka wa mosetsana. Ngwana o ne a itse gore mogolo mongwe le mongwe ke motsadi wa gagwe. 0 ka mo otlhaya ka phuthulogo ga a dira phoso.

Ka go rialo bana ba ne ba itshwara ka maitseo a a amogelesegeng mo morafeng otlhe, le mo setshabeng ka kakaretso. **Ba ne ba aga ba ikgabeditse mo** boitshwarong jwa bone. Ba ne ba itse gore 'nxa' ya mogolo ofe kapa ofe ke phutso - dineelelo. Jalo ba ne ba tila phutso e ka go itshwara sentle. Gape boitshwaro jo bo ne bo bopaganya batho. Ke ka moo go tweng 'moroto wa yosi ga o ele, go be go twe motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe. Bana ba ne ba itse gore ngwana o sa utlweng molao wa batsadi, o utlwa wa maanong. Ba rutwa go emelelana le botshelo ka bobelotelele le bobelokgale, ba ikgapha mo dikotsing.

Mo thutong ya segompieno e go tweng ke ya tlhabologo, re na le eng se se re thusang go raya ngwana re re 'go tloga gompieno, o monna kgotsa mosadi ....?' Re na le motlhala ofe o re kaelang bana ka one gore ba dire eng, ba seka ba dira eng? A thuto ya rona ya gompieno e kgona go betla botho jwa ngwana, go mo dira motho yo o botho; yo o ipelang ka se a leng sone? Kampo e mo dira gore a inyatse, a itshwabele; a iphutse go bo a le montsho, a bua puo e a e buang?

Re tshwanetse go ipotsa gore fa bana ba rona ba ikgatlha ba bua puo ya sekgoa, le ba le bosi tota; gore fa ba tsaya gore go itse sekgoa go go dira 'motho **yo o botoka'**; gore fa ba itshasa ditlolo tse di feletsang di ba kgobotse matlalo, ba ntse diphisetso; gore fa ba a tie ba reke meriri ya maitirelo ba e rwale mo ditlhogong; fa ba a nwa majalwa, ba goga metsoko ba sa ntse **ba buduletse;** bana ba tshola ba bangwe; bana ba sa thole ba tlotla bagolo, re le kwa ga mmapereko - tota matsapa di a tsaya kae? Re tshwanetse ra ipotsa gore ke eng bana ba babotlana ba itshwaetsa ka dikgole. A jaana re se ne re di tlhaolela di bekerwe, fa ga jaanong re tlogetse lesomo le itsamaisa mo pakeng e e diphatsa ya tlhakatlhakano ya dingwao le ditso? Tlhang ba ba nang le matlho ga ba di tshwara teu ba nna ba re 'tsela ga se eo, ke e!' Kgangkgolo ke gore, re tlaa tsoga re botsa mang gore di fapogile fa kae, fa re sa ipotse gone gompieno?

Ga twe ngwao ya Setswana e buselediwe jaaka e ne e ntse; ka bogwera le bojale. Ga go twe bana ba tswale ditshega le makgabe. Nnyaa! Dipaka di fetogile, mme ga go yo o ka emang dipaka pele. Potso ya botlhokwa ke gore, a re tlhomamise gore, mo thutong ya maloba ya Setswana go ne go se na sepe se se ka beng se re tswa thuso gompieno mo kgodisong ya bana ba rona? A go ne go se na jaaka e ka tlhabololowa go dira gore e tsamaelana le matshelo le **tswelelopele?** A go ne go se na sepe se re ka neng re setse ka sone go nonotsha thuto ya gompieno? A go re humisitse dipelo go e tsaya re e furunyetsa kwa mananeng? A ka go e latlha re bo re e nyonya, re amogetse sengwe se se botoka tebang le kago le kgodiso e e lolameng ya bana ba rona? A thuto ya gompieno e oketsa botho jwa bana ba rona kgotsa e a bo nyaletsa? A mo dingwageng tse di masome matlhano tse di tlang bana ba rona ba tlaa bo ba ipela ka Botswana wa bone?

Kgangkgolo fa ke gore a thuto e nne e e bopang botho jwa ngwana le boene jotlhe, e seng e e mmetlelang go nna motlhanka; jaaka o kare thuto ga e kgone go betla motho gore a ikemele ka nosi - a ipela a bo a ikgantsha ka boene. Motho yo o rutegileng, e nne yo o sobegileng, yo o rekegelang ba bangwe le ditsabone, a ba tlotla go bo e le batho, e seng ka go bo e le bo Semangmang. 0 tshwanetse go tlhaloganya gore kwa ntle ga maitseo a a laolweng ke ngwao ya Setswana, matsapa a; thuto ya gagwe ke lefela la lefela.

DIPOTSO:

1. Tlhalosa dielana tse di latelang ka fa di dirisitsweng ka teng:

a) ba paputla mo setlaatlaeng (temana ya 1)
b) ba aga ba ikgabeditse (temana ya 3)
c) ba buduletse (temana ya 5)

2. Bolela gore dikarolo tsa puo tse di segetsweng mo temaneng ya bobedi di dirisitswe jang?

a) ka thuto ya maloba (tselana ya 10) (2)

b) ba ne ba segelwa (tselana ya 10) (2)

c) jaanong (tselana ya 13) (2)

d) Ngwana (tselana ya 14) (2)

3. Fa leganetsi la lefoko: tswelelopele (temana ya 7) (2)

4. Ke eng mokwadi a dirisa dipotso tse di sa tlhokaneng le dikarabo mo temaneng ya bone? (2)

5. Ntsha ntlhakgolo ya temana ya 6.

6. Inola rmafoko ale mararo a a tlisang tomagano mo temaneng ya 3. (3)

7. Bolela bokao jwa mafoko a a ntshofaditsweng. (temana ya *b)* (2)

8. Tsenya makopanyi a a tshwanetseng mo seeleng se se fa tlase:

A thuto ya rona ya segompieno e kgona go betla botho jwa ngwana go mo dira motho yo o botho a bo a ipela ka se a leng sone? (2)

9. Kgangkgolo ya palo e ke eng? (2)

10. a) 0 akanya gore batsadi ba ba ka baiang paio e ba ka tsaya kgato efe? (1)

b) Ke eng o rialo?

11. Inola seele sa tlhogo sa temana ya 3. (1)

12. Inola tiri le tlhalosi mo seeleng se se fa tlase:

A mo dingwagena tse di masome a matlhano tse di tlang, bana ba rona ba tlaa bo ba ipela ka Botswana jwa bone? (2)

TOTAL MARKS **[30]**

KAROLO YA BOBEDI

Bala pego e e latelang mme morago o arabe dipotso tse di bodiwang ka ga yone:

Ba Botswana Craft ba ne ba tshwere moletio wa bone wa ngwaga le ngwaga o o bidiwang Letlhafula. Ka moletio o, ba ne ba supa boswa jwa ngwao ya bone ya Setswana ka go farologana ga yone. Fa o ne o batla go bona matshelo a metseselegae o le mo Gaborone, o ne o ka kgabolela ka kwa Botswana Craft fela wa ya go intsha pelo.

Go ne go le monate. 0 ne o ka o ja ka tse di jewang di ne di le dintsi thata. Go simolola ka motsotsojane, moretlwa, mokuru le tse ditona tsa setso di ne di setilwe sentle. Ke sa bue ka kgora ya mpa fela. Le ka matlho diala a a sa jeleng ope sepe, o ne o ka ja wa kgotsofala. Mongwe le mongwe yo o neng a eletsa go bona ngwao ya Setswana o ne a le koo. Ngwao ya Setswana e ne e go kgatlhantsha fela jaaka o tsena ka kgoro.

0 ne o kgatlhantshwa fela ke sehikantswe sa'monna wa motsomi a sikere ditlhabani, a na le ntsa ya gagwe. Sehikantswe se go ne go bonala se kgatlhile ba le bantsi jaaka baeng ka go farologana ba ba ba sa se fete fela.

Go ne go bopilwe gape le segotlo, sa ba sa dilwa sa kgaphiwa ka botswerere ka boloko. Mo teng ga segotlo se, ga bo go le mefuta ya ditilo tsa Setswana ka go farologana. Dipora le ditilo tsa dikgole tsa makanangwane di ne di beilwe sentle. Go ne go le gape sebeso mo segotlong seo. Barulaganyi ba tiro e ba tlhoma gape bojalwa jwa Setswana, mokuru o nowa o tswa mo dipitseng tsa letsopa.

Mme mongwe o ne a le foo a itirile mmaseapei jaaka a ne a ntse a tshepholela ba ba batlang go utlwa bojalwa joo ka sego. Banwi ba be ba nwa ka dingwana jaaka bone Batswana ba maloba tota. Kgakalanyana fale, ga bo go tlhomilwe ntlo ya mogwaafatshe: ke kago e e tumileng mo morafeng ya Sesarwa. E ne e kgatlhisa thata. Bojang jwa yone bo ne bo lebega ekete ga e bolo go tlhongwa foo. Mo teng mogwaafatshe o o ne o feetswe ka botswerere.

Fa o okamela, o ne o bona magapu a le mebedi fale, a mangwe a le mebedi ka fale. Go ne go na le sekupunyana gape mo teng le dithobanyane. Ka fa ntle ga mogwaafatshe o, ga bo go le kutla, e leng bonno jwa koko. Fa o tlosa matlho o leba fale, e ne e le matshelo a a farologaneng. Dipitsa tse 18 ka palo di le mo isong. Go kgamathetswee jaaka go phetsolwa ka fa le ka fa. Ke tsone tsa morafe o o neng o apeetswe batho ba ba neng ba phuthegile.

Go ne go tlhabiwa mainane, go le mmino wa borankana. George Swabi, Masilonyane Radinoga le setlhopha sa mmino wa Setswana sa Mogwana, ba ne ba le teng mo lenaneong go natefisa maitiso a ka mmino le moopelo.
(Pego e e tswa mo pampiring ya *Naledi*- e fetotswe fale le fate.)

13 Soboka pego e o sa tswang go e bala ka mafoko a le 100 go ya go 150. (10)

14 Maikeelelo a moletlo wa letsatsi la Letlhafula ke eng? Inola seele go tlatsa karabo ya gago. (3)

15. Dirisa lekaelagongwe la lefoko 'sebeso' (temana ya 4) mo seeleng (1)

16. Sefikantswe sa monna wa motsomi yo o sikereng ditlhabani a na le ntsa ya gagwe, se kaya eng mo botshelong jwa Motswana? (2)

17. A o bona pego e e ka solegele banana molemo? Itlatse ka lebaka. (2)

18. Ntlhakgolo ya temana ya bobedi ke eng? (2)

TOTAL MARKS **[20]**

KAROLO YA BORARO

RANOLELA PALO E E LATELANG KWA SETSWANENG:

I remember the day as if it was yesterday. It was one chilly evening when people were called to the kgotia in Mochudi and informed that independence was on the cards and that the country will no longer be called Bechuanaland Protectorate, but Botswana, as of September 30, 1966. I was a 12 year old boy and I remember I was clad in my khaki uniform during that historic meeting.

Every one was told to go and prepare for the big day. I did not understand the importance of what was being said. But I was just as excited as everyone else. Residents of all wards in Mochudi converged at their respective dikgotla to discuss the best way of celebrating the important day. Independence Day was a day like no other. It arrived with a bang and was celebrated with pomp and ceremony across the country by jubilant Batswana. **(10)**

(Source: *Daily news, Thursday June2, 2005)*

APPENDIX F

NALEDI SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

MID YEAR EXAM FORM 4

SETSWANA PAPER 11

DURATION : 1hr 50 mins

DITAELO

Araba dipotso tsotlhe ka Setswana se se lolameng

Tlola tsela fa gare ga potso nngwe le nngwe gore karabo nngwe le nngwe e tswe sentle.

Dirisa tsebe e ntsha go simolola karolo nngwe le nngwe.

Araba dikarolo tsotlhe.

KAROLOYA NTLHA

O gakololwa go tsaya oura fela mo karolong e (Ihr)

Bala polelo e o bo o araba dipotso tsotlhe tse di e latclang.

Leso le tshajwa lebaibai. Go begwa ga lone go garola pelo, le fa ntswa ba itse fa leso le motho e le di ya thoteng di bapile. Bontsi jwa batho bo tsenwa ke tsebetsebe fa ba Iwala mme ba lemoga fa ba ka swa. Baswelwa bone ba sala ba le mo mahutsaneng le mathata a ditshenyegelo, tsa phitlho . Boammaaruri ke gore, fa motho a tlhokafala, ke tshimologo ya ditshenyegelo . Sa ntlha ke madi a mmoshara, dijo kwa merapelong bogolo jang tee le borotho , seshabo , tante le lekesi kana diphutho. Ka jalo ditshenyegelo tsa leso mo lefatsheng leno di lopa madi a a boitshegang .Mo malatsing ano ,go lebega go na le kgaisano e e masetla mo diphitlhong. Mo go tse dingwe go jewa dijo tsa mefutafiita fa baswi ba fitlhwa ka makese a a turang, a manobonobo.

Mo Botswana re tlwaetse go boloka baswi ka mafelo a beke mme se se gakatsa ditshenyegelo.Batswana ba dumela gore moswi o tshwanetse go hutsafalelwa le go gakologelwa pele a ka bolokwa .Ba dumela fa nako e o, e e fa bahutsafadi kgomotso , ba itlhoboga ba bo ba laela moswi wa bone . Ka jalo ditshenyegelo tsone di ntse di a oketsega. Gantsi gape ga go nke go akanngwa ditshenyegelo le matsapa a a tshwanang le go ya kgonnye, matlhakung, go feela kana go tlhagola jarata le yone fela nako e batho ba e senyang ba letile phitlho.

Bontsi jwa batho ba dumela gore diphitlho mono Botswana di tsere phekelo e sele. Go dirisiwa madi a mantsi mme e bile bangwe ba dumela fa jaanong bangwe ba supa khumo tsa bone kwa dintshong .Baswi ba isiwa mabitleng ka dikoloi tsa manobonobo jaaka di-limoausin le dikolotsana tsa maphatsiphatsi tse di gogwang di gokeletswe mo dikoloing tsa baswi. Legale, bangwe ba re go tswa mo mothong gore wena o batla go fitlha wa ga eno ka tsela e e ntseng jang. Boammaaruri ke gore Batswana ba ba berekang ba ikwadisitse mo dikomponeng tse di ntsi tsa diphitlho. Bangwe ba ikwadisitse mo dikhamphaning tsa insurance di le tharo , go ya go tse nne. Gore batle ba ipoloke le go boloka ba ga bone ka fa ba batlang ka teng .Gongwe se ke sone se se dirang gore diphitlho dingwe mono e bo e le tse di rileng . Kwa go tse dingwe go hirwa dikompone tse di apayang go fepa batho ba ba tsileng phitlhong ka dijo.

Legale bangwe ba re go dira jaana ga se go ikgantsha mme e le go fa moswi tlotla le go mo laela ,mmogo le go mo robatsa sentle .Kgang ya dintsho le phitlho ke e e mashetla, bangwe ba re go boelwe kwa bogologolong kwa dijo kwa dintshong di neng di jewa di sa lokwa,di le bosula mme e bile dine di pala go tsena ka magano a ba bangwe .

Bangwe bone ba re nnyaya, ke segologolo, segompieno ba bona se le botoka fela thata ka jaana motho o kgona go thapa khamphani ya dijo ,go na le go tlhola batho ba fisiwa ke melelo le dipitsa kwa dintshong. Kgang e e tsweletse ka go sekasekwa mme go lebega e opisa tlhogo, mme e bile e sa ka ke ya rarabololwa motlhofo. Ditshenyegelo tsone di tsweletse.

DIPOTSO

1. Fa temana e setlhogo . (2)

2 . Ntlhakgolo ya temana ya bobedi ke efe? (2)

3 . Tlhalosa dipolelwana tse di latelang jaaka di dirisitswe mo palong .
   a) go mo robatsa sentle (1)
   b) e opisa ditlhogo (1)
   c) go garola pelo (1)
   d) ba tsenwa ke tsebetsebe (1)

4. Lebelela temana ya bofelo o bo o ntsha seele sa kabelelo (1)

5. Maikaelelo a mokwadi wa polelo e ke eng? Ntsha lebaka le le go gogelang go rialo. (3)
6. Lebelela seele se se latelang o bo o ntsha:
   a) leamanyi (1)
   b) letlhalosi (1)
   c) tiri (1)

Boammaaruri ke gore Batswana ba ba berekang ba ikwadisiise mo dikomponeng tse dintsi tsa phitlho.

7 .Mokwadi o supa fa go begwa ga loso go garola dipelo ntswa leso le motho e le di ya thoteng di bapile.Ntsha mabaka a le mabedi a a dirang gore batho ba garoge dipelo. (2)

8. Bolela bokao jo bo fiwang ke karolo ya puo e e ntshofaditsweng . (2)

9. Ntsha lobaka le le ka go gogelang gore o dumelane le bangwe ba ba boneng fa diphitlho tsa bogogolo di le botoka. (2)

10. Fa o lebeletse temana e, o bona batho ba ba sa itsholeiang ba ka felela ba tsere tshwetso efe ka diphitlho tsa gompieno (2)

11 .Supa tiriso ya dikarolo tse di latelang tsa puo mo dieleng tse di segetsweng.

a) Batswana (1)
b)Pele (1)
c)Bone (1)

12.Go ya ka fa o tlhalogantseng palo ka teng, o kare molaetsa wa one ke ofe? (2)

13. Fa o lebeletse palo e o kare mokwadi o sekametse ka kae ? Ke eng o rialo ? (2)

KAROLO YA BOBEDI

Bala temana e o bo o araba dipotso tse di latelang.

Mo dingwageng tse 10 tse di fetileng batho ba le 4083 ba bolailwe ke dikotsi tsa tsela mo Botswana. Tota dikotsi tse di kanakana tse di bakwa ke eng? Go tabogisa koloi mo go feteletseng, go kgweetsa motho a iphetisitse dinotagi ke mangwe a mabaka a matona a abakang dikotsi. Koloi e e thulang e le mo lebelong le legolo e dira tshenyo e e maswe thata le dikgobalo tse masisi. Ke sone se moono wa ipabalelo tseleng o reng "Bakgweetsi ngotlang lebelo, lebelo le a bolaya."Lekalana la Ipabalelo Tseleng le na le tsholofelo ya gore moono o go tlaa bong go itebagantswe nao go fitlhelela kgwedi ya Sedimonthole monongwaga, o tla kgothatsa bakgweetsi go ikitsa go tabogisa dikoloi phetelela le go bakela boitshwaro jo bo diphatsa mo ditseleng. Se se solofelwa se tla tokafatsa seemo sa pabalesego mo ditseleng.

Palo ya bakgweetsi le bapalami ba ba swang kgotsa ba golafala ka ntata ya gore ban_e ba iphetisitse dinotagi e ntse e le kwa godimo fela thata mo dingwageng tse di sa tswang go fetatse 10. Se se diragala thata mo malatsing a boitapoloso. Ke fela fa Batswana ba ka itebaganya le dikgwetlho tse pedi tse tsa gore go tabogisa mo go feteletseng le go kweetsa motho a aiphitisitse dinotagi go diphatsa. E seng jalo maiteko a lekalana la Ipabalelo Tseleng go fokotsa dikotsi e tla a bo le lefela. Batsamaya ka dinao segolo bogolo bana, ba mo diphatseng fa ba kgabaganya tsela. Badinao ba ba iphetisitseng dinotagi le bone ba mo diphatseng. Ba dinao ban a le boikarebelogo tlhomamisa gore **ba kgabaganya** tsela sentle . Ba tshwanetse gape go gadimantlheng tsothle go netefatsa gore go babalesegile go kgabaganya tsela.

Dikoloi tse di sa itekanelang le boganana jwa bakgweetsi mo go obameleng matshwao a tsela le tsone di na le seabe mo dipalong tse di kwa godimo tsa dikotsi tsa tsela mo Botswana.Leruo le le tlogelwang le sasanka mo ditseleng le lone le na le seabe mo dikotsing tsa tsela.

Setshaba se ka tsenya letsogo ka go dirisanya le mapodisi go tlhomamisa gore melao ya tsela e a obamelwa. Se se ka tokafatsa fela thata pabalesego mo ditseleng. Gakologelwa ka ngwaga wa 1981 go sule batho ba le 93, ka 1990 go sule ba le 314, ka 1991 go sule ba le 349, mme ngogola ka 2000 ga tlhokafala ba le 529 mo dikotsing tsa tsela. Dintsho di oketsega ka lebelo le le tsitsibanyang mmele jaaka dipalo tse dif a godimo di supa. Tsaya kgato go fokotsa dipalo tsa monongwaga. Tsaya kgato go boloka matshelo.

DIPOTSO

1. Soboka temana e ka mafoko a a sa feteng lekgolo le masome a matlhano.[150] [10]
2. Fa temana e setlhogo se se e lebanyeng. [1]
3. Mo seeleng se se segetsweng mo temaneng ya bobedi, inola;

a.Tlhalosi [1]

b.Lekopanyi [1]

4.Ntsha seele sa tlhogo mo temaneng ya ntlha [2]

5 Tlhalosa gore mafoko a a kwadilweng ka mokwalo o o tseneletseng a dirisitswe jang. [3]

6.Ka bokhutshwane bolela se o se ithutileng mo temaneng e. [2]

KAROLO YA BORARO

O solofelwa go tsaya metsotso e le masome a mabedi fela (20 minutes) mo karolong e.

Ranolela kwa Setswaneng.

The annual Ngamiland Basket Exhibition was officially opened at Nhabe Museum in Maun last week. Speaking at the opening, the Museum Director John Fella said the exhibition has been running for a decade and this year, over 400 baskets were exhibited. Fella said the judges had a difficult if not near impossible task to name the winners the exhibition competition .

A basket weaver, Nduhe Sanjera said the only problem they face on the industry is the market, adding that this was his first time to attend the exhibition. He said when one enters the basket industry; one should not expect to make quick money, as most people who buy these are tourists who buy occasionally.

Source (The Mirror 29th June 2005)

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, BOTSWANA

in collaboration with

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE

Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education

SETSWANA 0562/02

October/November 2003 1 hour 50 minutes

Paper 2 Comprehension, Summary and Translation

Additional Materials: Answer paper

Read the following carefully before you start.

Follow the instructions overleaf.
You are advised to spend 1 hour on Section 1, 30 minutes on Section 2 and 20 minutes on Section 3.
Write your answers on the separate answer paper provided.
Write your candidate number, name and centre number on each sheet of answer paper you use.
At the end of the examination, fasten all of your work securely together using the string provided.

(i) Pampiri e, e na le dikarolo di le THARO.

(ii) Araba dipotso TSOTLHE go tswa mo karolong nngwe le nngwe.

(iii) *Araba dipotso tsotlhe ka Setswana se se lolameng.*

(iv) *Simolola karolo nngwe le nngwe mo tsebeng e ntsha.*

(v) Kwala palo ya potso e o e arabang kwa tshimologong ya tsela.

(vii) Tlola tsela fa gare ga dikarabo tsa gago gore karabo nngwe le nngwe e senoge sentle.

KAROLO YA NTLHA

O solofelwa go tsaya oura (1 hr) fela mo karolong e.
Bala palo e, o bo o araba dipotso tse di latelang.

Ka kgwedi ya Hirikgong ngwaga ono, metsi a a letswai a ne a **penologela** ka phoso mo molapong wa Mathathane go ya go fitlha kwa melapong ya Letlhakane le Motloutse. Tiragalo e, e ne ya se ka ya itumedisa batho ka bontsi, bogolo jang ka e bile ditlhapi tsa mefuta e e farologanyeng, di ne tsa bonwa fa godimo ga metsi a noka ya Motloutse **di ile ga maoto hunyela.**

Molemi mongwe o ne a bua fa a latlhegetswe ke dijwalo tse di akaretsang merogo ya sepiniche, khabeche le digwete ngogola ka ntlha ya tikologo e e leswafaditsweng. O boletse fa kwa tshimologong ba ne ba sa lemoge gore mathata a dijwalo a bakiwa ke eng, fela ba ne ba lemoga fa naga e ne e le tshweu gongwe le gongwe. A re e ne ya re kwa morago ba lemoga fa mathata a ne a bakwa ke metswako e e mo metsing a a tswang kwa moepong wa BCL.

Mogolwane wa meepo rre Mike Marsden, o ne a kopa gore **ba inelwe diatla metsing** ka jaana kelelo e ya metsi, e ne e le lantlha e diragala gape ka ebile e ne ya tlisiwa mo taolong **ka bofefo** morago ga go tsaya kgato ga bagolwane ba moepo. Go ya ka **mogolwane yo,** metsi a a letswai a ne a tswa mo matamong a moepo. O boletse fa go elela ga metsi mo, go ka bo go sa diragala ka jaana metsi a teng a ne a tshwanetse go gogelwa gape kwa moepong go ya go dirisiwa **gape.**

O ne a re go elela ga metsi a, go bakilwe ke dipula tse dintsi. A re dipula di dirile gore diphaephe di *20*se ka tsa kgona go goga metsi a a elang. O tlhalositse gore diphaephe di dikologile matamo a a tsenyang metsi gore di tie di goge metsi a a dutlang fa go gogelwa metsi a a phepa kwa letamong la metsi a a nowang.

Rre Mike Marsden o boletse fa go elelela ga metsi a mo nokeng ya Mathathane, e ne e le phoso, mme a tlatsa ka gore metsi a eleletse mo nokeng ka ba ne ba sa kgona go a goga nako e sa le *25* teng. O boletse fa a tshepha gore metsi ao a ne a ka se ka a leswefatsa metsi a a nowang ke batho le diruiwa ka noka ya Letlhakane e ne e ela nako eo. Go itshireletsa mo nakong e e tlang, ba moepo wa BCL ba rekile diphaephe le dipompo tsa madi a a kana ka P2 million, tse go neng go boletswe fa di tla gokelwa mo nakong e khutshwane.

Ntlha e nngwe ya tikologo e e **opisang tlhogo** ka Selibe-Phikwe, ke ya gase ya Sulphur Dioxide. *30* Go ya ka moitseanape wa tikologo wa BCL, Mike Hagger, gase ya sulphur dioxide e ka oketsa mathata a khupelo. **Le fa go ntse jalo,** o tlhalositse fa motho yo o itekanetseng a ka se amege motlhofo bogolo jang mo lobakeng le le khutshwane. Hagger o kaile gape fa mosi o o tswang mo moepong o se borai mo dijwalong ka jaana ditlhare tsa mosu di kgona go gola mo kgaolong e. Ngaka ya moepo, Dr John Penhall, o boletse fa gase ya sulphur dioxide e baka bolwetse jwa *35* khupelo mme e sa bake malwetse a kankere ya makgwafo le kgotlholo e tona jaaka bangwe batho ba akanya. A re dipalo tsa balwetse ba khupelo mo Selibe-Phikwe di tshwana fela le tsa mafelo a mangwe. Dr Penhall a re tota le fa go twe gase e ga e diphatsa, e kgona go nna diphatsa mo babereking ba meepo e e fitlhelwang mo go yone, ka jalo, go botlhokwa gore babereki ba itshireletse ka go thiba melomo le dinko fa ba tsena mo moepo.

Go tsewa ga motlhaba kwa nokeng ya Motloutse go dirisiwa mo moepong wa BCL, ke nngwe ya dilo tse di tlisang mathata a tikologo mo Selibe-Phikwe. Hagger o boletse fa jaanong moepo o dirile dithulaganyo le ba kompone ya Nata Haulage go ba tlisetsa motlhaba. Kompone e, ga e letle go kgaolwa ga ditlhare ka e rotloetsa pabalelo ya tikologo. Hagger o kaile fa a lebogela maiteko a mogolwane wa moepo a go laola seemo sa tikologo mo *45* Selibe-Phikwe, a bo a bua gape gore Marsden ke mogolwane wa ntlha wa moepo go etela mafelo a a amegileng le go thusa go rulaganyetsa phuthego go tla go buisanya ka mathata a.

DIPOTSO

1 Tlhalosa mafoko kgotsa dielana tse di latelang go ya ka fa di dirisitsweng ka teng mo palong.

(i) penologela [temana2]
(ii) e e opisang tlhogo [temana?]
(iii) di ile ga maoto hunyela [temana2]
(iv) ba inelwe diatla metsing [temana 4] [4]

2 Mo seeleng se se latelang tlhopha tiri, sediri le lesupi.

Kompone e, e rotloetsa pabalelo ya tikologo. [3]

3 Bolela gore mafoko kgotsa dielana tse di latelang di dirisitswe jang mo palong e.

(i) tsa motlhaba [temana 1]
(ii) ka bofefo [temana 4]
(iii) mogolwane yo [temana 4]

4 (a) Bolela kgang-kgolo e mokwadi a buang ka yone mo palong e. [1]
(b) Ntsha dintlhana di le pedi tse mokwadi a di dirisitseng go netefatsa kgang ya gagwe.

5 Mo temaneng ya boferabobedi (8), Dr Penhall go lebega a ikganetsa. Tlhalosa go ikganetsa mo, ka botlalo. [2]

6 (a) Fa o bona maikaelelo a mokwadi wa palo e, ke go kgala, go tlhalosa kana go rotloetsa? [1]
(b) Ntsha lebaka go netefatsa karabo e o e fileng fa godimo. [2]

7 (a) Fa e le gore banni ba Selibe-Phikwe ba ba sa berekeng mo moepong, ba dumela fa gase etsenya matshelo a bone mo diphatseng, o tsaya gore morago ga go bala palo e ba ka felelaba akanya jang?

(b) Netefatsa karabo ya gago ka lebaka le le lengwe. [2]

8 Tlhalosa bokao jwa dikarolo tsa puo tse di latelang go ya ka fa di dirisitsweng ka teng.

(i) Le fa go ntse jalo [2]

(ii) gape [2]

9 Inola seele sa tlhogo mo temaneng ya ntlha.

10. Seele se se fa tlase se tlhoka makopanyi a le mabedi. Se kwalolole mme o tsenye makopanyi a a lebanyeng.

Go tsewa ga motlhaba mo nokeng ya Motloutse ----- go kgaolwa ga ditlhare --- le go leswefatsa phefo ga moepo, ke dingwe tse di ngongoregisang batho ba toropo e. [2]

11 Thuto e mokwadi wa palo e, a e abelang babadi ke efe? [2]

KAROLO YA BORARO

O gakololwa go tsaya metsotso e le masome a mabedi (20 min) mo karolong e.

Ranolela temana e e latelang kwa Setswaneng.

Trees are a source of life. For instance animals eat their leaves, fruits, branches and roots. People gather fruits and sell them to get money. They also provide us with a source for medicine. For example, Mosukujane and Morolwane roots are used as blood purifiers. Trees also serve as wind-breaks and as such they help prevent soil erosion. Trees should be planted with crops. They have long roots, so they do not compete with plants for nutrients.

Trees need to be conserved because they add nutrients to the soil and make the environment beautiful. After cutting down trees, people are advised to replant more trees and they are also encouraged to take part in tree planting campaigns. They should also be aware of the dangers of wild fires as these destroy the environment. [10]

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