

**A model for the effective integration of formative feedback into Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the Further Education and Training phase to improve learning**

**By**

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**Submitted in the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree**

**PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR**

**In**

**Curriculum Studies**

**In the Faculty of Education,**

**University of South Africa**

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**May 2018**

## DECLARATION

I declare that A MODEL FOR THE EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION OF FORMATIVE FEEDBACK INTO WRITING AND PRESENTING IN ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE IN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PHASE TO IMPROVE LEARNING is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated or acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis/dissertation to originality checking software.



16 May 2018

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**SIGNATURE**  
(M. Burger)

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**DATE**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful thanks to:

- Professor Marietha Nieman, who supervised my Master's dissertation and whose guidance was instrumental in my decision to embark on further study.
- Dr Lisa Zimmerman, your supervision and mentorship have made this journey a rewarding and enriching experience. I have especially valued your dedication and excitement towards my study.
- The teachers and learners at the four schools, your warm welcome was appreciated and your enthusiastic collaboration truly inspirational. Without you this research would not have been possible.
- My friends Charlu Fouché, Linda van den Heever, and Petrus du Toit, who cheerfully and gracefully motivated me along the way.
- My sister Susan Steyl and her family, your unfailing encouragement in all my endeavours galvanised me.
- My twin brother Dr Floris Burger, for your steadfast belief in my abilities and constant support in all manner of ways.

## ABSTRACT

Feedback is an element of formative assessment and is widely recognised as critical to the improvement of learning. Current research has found that teachers find it challenging to use feedback effectively in the classroom. Furthermore, research about feedback within the context of assessment for learning and how it is received is lacking, especially in the South African context. Writing lessons include feedback on writing, and the paucity of effective feedback on writing prompted the interest in English Home Language writing lessons. Therefore, the aim was to find, in collaboration with the teachers and the learners, a practical intervention to implement effective feedback as part of assessment for learning in the English Home Language lessons. Four Gauteng high schools with two subunits were purposively selected as part of a case study design and action research methodology.

The main research question was: *How can feedback be implemented to form an integral part of assessment for learning to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the Further Education and Training Phase?* To answer the question, the sub-research questions were explored in three research cycles. In the first research cycle, the current practice in the writing classrooms at each of the subunits was established. Emerging from the conceptual framework and the first cycle findings, an intervention tool in the form of a Writing Feedback Tool was designed and implemented in the second and third research cycles.

Multiple qualitative data sources led to the findings from the implementation cycles which were used to answer the sub-research question: *What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?* The findings revealed that the Writing Feedback Tool (WFT) succeeded in implementing feedback in the writing classroom to form part of assessment for learning. The study highlighted impediments teachers and learners face in the teaching and learning of writing, but, importantly, that assessment of learning in writing lessons is possible in the South African context. On the basis of the findings, recommendations for policy, teacher practice and teacher education, and further research are provided.

## KEY WORDS

English Home Language

Further Education and Training Phase

Grade 10 and grade 11

Teacher practice

Writing and Presenting

Assessment for learning

Feedback

Self-regulated learning

Intervention

Writing Feedback Tool

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## ACRONYMS

AFL	Assessment for learning
ANA	Annual National Assessments
ARG	Assessment Reform Group
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CAQDAS	Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CASS	Continuous Assessment
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EHL	English Home Language
FA	Formative assessment
FAST	Formative Assessment for Teachers and Learners
FET	Further Education and Training
GDE	Gauteng Education Department
HOD	Head of Department
IEAI	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
LiEP	Language in Education Policy (DoE, 1997)
LO	Learning Outcome
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PW	Process writing
SAG	Subject Assessment Guidelines
SBA	School Based Assessment
SCASS	State Collaborative on Assessment and Learner Standards
SRL	Self-regulated learning
WCF	Written Corrective Feedback
WFT	Writing Feedback Tool
WFT1	Writing Feedback Tool 1

WFT2 Writing Feedback Tool 2  
ZPD Zone of Proximal Development

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

### **1.1 ORIENTATION**

The aim of this research is to develop an intervention for the effective integration of formative feedback into English Home Language in the Further Education and Training phase in a purposively selected groups of Gauteng schools. This chapter offers an introduction to the premises of the study and the structure of the entire thesis. Firstly, the background (1.2), problem statement and rationale (1.3) are presented. Thereafter, aims, objectives and the research questions, which have been formulated on the basis of the literature review and conceptual framework presented later in the thesis, are outlined (1.4). This is followed by the researcher's position (1.5) and the operational definitions of key terminologies used in the study (1.6). Lastly, as a conclusion to the chapter, content outlines for the remaining chapters are explicated (1.7).

### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The purpose of this research is to explore the effective use of feedback as an integral part of the assessment for learning process to improve learning of English Home Language (EHL) Writing and Presenting in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase in four purposively selected Gauteng schools.

Over 30 years of research has suggested formative assessment, as an essential part of the curriculum, has proven to be highly effective in increasing student learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998a; National Council of Teachers of English, 2013; Wiliam, 2014a). The terms 'formative assessment' and 'assessment for learning' are used interchangeably and are part of an international education policy discourse reflecting a significant shift in the purpose of assessment, from a measurement to a learning focus (Willis, 2011:2).

In the seminal review by Black and Wiliam (1998a:62), formative assessment was presented as a way to change teaching practices to enhance learning. Black and

William (1998b) suggested a set of guiding principles that would have to be incorporated by each teacher into his or her practice in his or her own way to make formative assessment effective. By sharing learning goals and criteria with students, giving them experience in self-assessment and guiding them with feedback, it has been suggested that students are able to become more self-regulating and independent lifelong learners (Willis, 2011:1). In the Western context primary and secondary education, formative assessment is, without doubt, in vogue (Bennett, 2011:1). However, according to Black (2015:1) in a review of the impact of formative assessment on policy and practices in eight countries, the most optimistic claim is of partial success. Therefore, Black (2015) describes formative assessment as an optimistic but incomplete vision. Nonetheless, it is generally agreed that formative assessment or assessment for learning supports learning (Bennett, 2011; Klenowski, 2009).

The idea that assessment is intrinsic to effective instruction can be traced from early experiments in the individualisation of learning, through the work of Benjamin Bloom, to reviews of the impact of feedback on learners in classrooms (William, 2011:1). Feedback is seen as an important aspect of formative assessment that could facilitate the learning process by moving the learning forward (Black, 2015; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; William, 2011).

While many of these reviews detailed the adverse impact of assessment on learning, they also indicated that under certain conditions assessment had considerable potential to enhance learning. It has been shown that understanding the impact that assessment has on learning requires a broader focus than the feedback intervention itself, particularly the learners' responses to the feedback, and the learning milieu in which the feedback operates (William, 2011:1).

Assessment for learning (daily assessment activities) and feedback form part of the prescribed South African curriculum. The Department of Basic Education's (DBE) National Protocol for Assessment states that informal assessment as assessment for learning should be used to provide feedback to improve learning (DBE, 2012:3-4). Therefore, if assessment for learning with feedback as a component is expected to improve learning, the question arises how assessment for learning should be



implemented in the teaching process in the South African teaching and learning context? Furthermore, how does feedback form part of formative assessment and how does it succeed in improving learning? To focus the questions for this specific study the area of English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase was investigated. Writing and Presenting is one of the skills taught in the language curriculum and process writing is employed in the teaching of writing as planning, drafting and editing form part of the process (DBE, n.d.:4).

The study is situated in the context of South Africa with its eleven official languages which reflects a rich cultural diversity and multilingualism. The Department of Basic Education Language in Education Policy (DBE, 1997) promotes an additive approach to bilingualism which means the home language is developed together with the additional language which is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) (Matjila & Pretorius, 2004:1). However, thousands of learners in South Africa do their schooling in a language that is not their primary language, therefore, many find it difficult to perform well academically (Matjila & Pretorius, 2004:2). To focus the study, the area used for the exploration was English Writing and Presenting within the South African context of learners whose LoLT was English in the FET phase. The subject itself is referred to as 'English Home Language' but for many learners this is not their home language but the language of greatest educational exposure (if not proficiency).

It is recognised that the practical implementation of assessment for learning and effective feedback is complex and challenging for teachers. The way feedback is given has been investigated, but Hattie (2011) notes that the way it is received needs to be studied. This is, in my opinion as researcher, perhaps the most important gap in the literature. My intention in conceptualising this study was that an intervention would facilitate feedback and generate a new conversation that would include recognition of how feedback was received. A critical aspect in such planning was the learners' understanding of the learning goals and how feedback was used to achieve the goals. It was my assertion that when learners grasped this critical aspect they would seek feedback that was pertinent to their learning goals. Similarly teachers would provide feedback in such a way that the learners would move towards the achievement of their goals in a self-regulatory manner. Ideally learners would develop self-regulatory

strategies based on the feedback generated, internal and external feedback, on both the level of learning and self-regulation.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RATIONALE**

The South African education system has changed significantly since the first democratically elected government came into power in 1994 and the primary focus for transformation was equity and quality in education (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013:442). The Department of Basic Education's National Protocol on Assessment indicates that daily assessment is seen as assessment for learning and that feedback on the learners' performance should be provided to close knowledge and skills gaps to improve learning (DBE, 2012). Although alternative assessment policies are a key aspect of the transformation process in South Africa to address equity and quality, a measurement-focused approach in the classroom has hindered a shift towards assessment for learning (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013:442).

Current literature describes assessment for learning as a daily practice where learners work in partnership with their teacher and peers to reflect upon and respond to information from dialogue, demonstration and observation in ways that promote learner autonomy and enhance ongoing learning (Klenowski, 2009; Swaffield, 2011). However, research has demonstrated that teachers have struggled to embed assessment for learning successfully into classroom programmes (Black & Wiliam, 1998a:20; Carless, 2007:174; Dixon, Hawe & Parr, 2011). Feedback forms part of assessment for learning (Black, 2015; Bennett, 2011; Clark, 2010; Marshall & Drummond, 2006); however, Hattie (2011:12) points out that although it is becoming well understood that feedback is critical to raise achievement, the scarcity of feedback in the classroom is to be questioned. Hattie (2011:12) further states that more research may be needed to determine how feedback is received and understood by the learners. Hargreaves (2013:229) argues that, despite meta reviews about feedback, we still do not have enough details about how feedback helps children's classroom learning. This lack may be partly a consequence of the fact that the child's perspective on feedback is frequently missing from research into feedback (Hargreaves, 2013:230).

Kluger and DeNisi (1996:235) defined feedback as “actions taken by an external agent to provide information regarding some aspect(s) of one’s performance task.” Hattie and Timperley (2007) supported this and claimed that feedback is information that is provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self/experience) with the aim of reducing the discrepancy between what is understood and what is needed to be understood. However, various studies have indicated that the effects of feedback vary noting that, under some conditions, feedback information has no effect, or even a negative effect on performance (Hattie, 2011; Shute, 2008; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Feedback, as part of the assessment for learning process, is expected to facilitate learning (Black, 2015; Black & William, 1998b; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shute, 2008). However, the success would depend on the successful implementation of an assessment for learning process (Black, 2015; Willis, 2011; Hawe & Parr, 2014).

In the English Home Language subject in the FET phase, Writing and Presenting is Learning Outcome 3 (LO 3) of the curriculum. It aims to ensure that, “The learner is able to write and present for a wide range of purposes and audiences using conventions and formats appropriate to diverse contexts” (DBE, n.d.: 4). Process writing is emphasised in the teaching of Writing and Presenting: “Writing and designing texts is a process and learners need the opportunity to put this process into practice” (DBE, n.d.: 4). This further explored in sections 2.2 and 2.5.

A preliminary investigation of the DBE documents highlighted the following issues regarding assessment for learning and the use of feedback:

- Assessment for learning is not clearly described in the DBE documents, leaving it up to the individual schools and teachers to define.
- According to theory, the assessment for learning process has specific steps, feedback being one (Black, 2015; Black & William, 1998b; Wiggins, 2012). While the English Home Language Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document makes it clear that feedback is expected, its effective use as part of the assessment for learning process is not fully described.
- In the DBE documents there is no differentiation between written or verbal feedback or how the learners should respond to the feedback.

- Peer feedback is an expectation, however, how it would work is not defined.
- Process writing is expected in the English writing teaching, drafting and editing part of the process writing. How feedback fits into the process and how it enhances learning are not clear.

As mentioned previously, the measurement focus approach to assessment in the South African education context has meant that the implementation of assessment for learning has been lacking. Although assessment for learning in the form of informal daily assessments are expected and feedback is mentioned by the DBE as a strategy to improve learning, teachers are not offered tools or strategies for successful implementation. Kanjee and Sayed (2013:464) note the country's 2007 and 2011 assessment and curriculum policy documents offer limited information for how the informal assessments should be implemented, while substantial information is presented on the use of formal assessments. This study is motivated by the need to empower teachers to move away from the measurement approach and to embrace assessment for learning, using feedback to enhance learning.

A further motivation is the compelling issues raised by research, such as: If effective feedback is so difficult to achieve, why spend so much time practising it? (Scherer, 2012:7). Another is that, as Brookhart (2012:25) says, "Feedback says to a student [learner], "Someone cared enough about my work to think about it." Still another reason for sharpening feedback skills is that the overwhelming evidence shows that, when done right, feedback is likely the most effective tool educators have. As Wiggins (2012:10) urged, "Less teaching, more feedback." Or, to put it another way, "Giving good feedback is good teaching—and the key to achieving greater learning" (Scherer, 2012:7).

An issue which is pertinent to the South African context is the role feedback plays in the assessment for learning process. As indicated above, the implementation of assessment for learning by teachers is questioned. Hargreaves (2013:230) notes that, despite the prominent position given to feedback within the international discourse of Assessment for Learning, research into feedback within the context of assessment for learning is particularly wanting. The English Home Language Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DBE, 2011) makes it clear that informal assessment is

regarded as assessment for learning; however, it does not provide guidelines for its implementation. It remains unclear if assessment for learning is taking place. In the literature research conducted it was found that very little research has been conducted to determine the use of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase.

The importance of writing as a skill and the development of the higher cognitive functions, coupled with the argument that feedback improves learning, prompted me to focus on English Home Language Writing and Presenting. Writing and Presenting requires learners to produce pieces of writing of various lengths and for different purposes. Importantly, process writing lends itself to feedback opportunities as it includes drafting and editing as skills. Process writing, therefore, provides the opportunity for written feedback and the learner engaging with the feedback in the redrafting and editing process (DBE, 2011:30).

William (2014b:4) points out that educational research can only tell us what was, not what might be. Furthermore he argues that “What works?” is rarely the right question; in education the right question is: “Under what conditions does it work?” The problem for this research was, therefore, the following:

How can a practical strategy for effective feedback be implemented as part of an assessment for learning process in English Home Language writing in the FET phase?

#### **1.4 AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In this section the research aims are clarified in 1.5.1. The primary and secondary objectives are then given 1.5.2, followed by the research questions 1.5.3.

##### **1.4.1 Research aims**

Against the background and the problem statement provided above, and using a qualitative case study design and action research methodology, the aim of this research is to

- investigate the nature of assessment for learning in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase;
- explore how feedback is used in Writing and Presenting to promote learning;
- investigate how feedback is received and understood by the learners;
- develop a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting; and
- evaluate the practical intervention implemented for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting.

#### **1.4.2 Research objectives**

The primary objective of the study is to develop an intervention in the form of a strategy to implement the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in the English Writing and Presenting process in the FET phase. Therefore, the tangible outcome of the study is an intervention in the form of a practical writing feedback tool to enable teachers and learners to use feedback effectively.

Secondary objectives are that:

- through collaborative PAR joint meaning is sought to enable the teachers to implement assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase;
- the teachers recognise the impact of effective feedback on improving learning outcomes in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase; and
- the teachers and learners would use effective feedback strategies to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase.

#### **1.4.3 Research questions**

Given the above aforementioned aims and objectives, the main research question for the study is:

*How can feedback be implemented to form an integral part of assessment for learning to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase?*

The sub-questions that informed this main research question are:

**Sub-question 1**

*How is assessment for learning presently viewed and applied by English Home Language teachers in teaching Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

**Sub-question 2**

*What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

**Sub-question 3**

*How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase<sup>1</sup>?*

**Sub-question 4**

*What comprises an assessment for learning process in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

**Sub-question 5**

*What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?*

**Sub-question 6**

*How successful is the practical intervention implemented for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?*

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<sup>1</sup> For this study Grade 10 and 11 are studied and Grade 12 excluded due to the nature of the final school year and exit examinations.

## **1.5 RESEARCHER'S POSITION**

Initially I considered myself as an outsider with the awareness that I was bringing my own philosophy, experience and understanding to the research. Furthermore, my own ideology and biases meant that I was not neutral (Dickson & Green, 2001:245). Following Dickson and Green's (2001) research I was cognisant that my interest in the research question originated from my own teaching experience as a language teacher. The last 14 years of my experience was spent in management positions, however, I had a troubling awareness that the assessment of writing was generally underdeveloped, to the detriment of the learners' development of writing skills. This awareness was reinforced by my personal teaching philosophy that the teachers and learners were in a collaborative pursuit of learning and finding solutions. Thus, participatory action research (PAR) was an obvious choice to investigate an intervention in collaboration with the teachers and learners in the writing classes.

## **1.6 OPERATIONALISATION OF KEY TERMS FOR THE STUDY**

It is necessary to clarify the meaning of the key terms for this study and these are considered in subsections 1.6.1 to 1.6.7. While the descriptions are not exhaustive, these will help the readers to become familiar with how these terms have been operationalised for the purposes of this research.

### **1.6.1 Formative assessment and assessment for learning**

The terms 'formative assessment' and 'assessment for learning' are often used in literature as synonyms, both referring to learning evidence in the classroom used to make decisions about how to improve learning. Thus, the assessment practices should focus on improving learning and not the measurement of the learners' performance (Clark, 2012).

This study, with its focus on assessment for learning, seeks to clarify the different ways in which formative assessment and assessment for learning functioned effectively in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting classroom.



### **1.6.2 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)**

The National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (NCS) stipulates policy on curriculum and assessment in the schooling sector and consists of the following:

(a) Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) for all approved subjects listed in this document; (b) National policy pertaining to the programme and promotion requirements of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12; and (c) National Protocol for Assessment Grades R-12. (DBE, 2011:3).

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for English Home Language Further Education and Training Phase Grades 10-12 (DBE, 2011) is pertinent to this study as English Home Language is the subject chosen to investigate feedback in writing lessons. The CAPS provided the aims of language learning as well as an overview of the curriculum. Furthermore, the rationale for teaching language skills and learning and teaching approaches are explicated. Content and teaching plans for the school year for Grades 10 to 12 are provided as well as information about the assessment of English Home Language.

### **1.6.3 English Home Language**

Languages are labelled in the CAPS as Home Language and First Additional Language and refer to the proficiency levels at which the language is offered and not the native (Home) or acquired (as in the additional languages) language (DBE, 2011:8). “The Home Language level provides for language proficiency that reflects the mastery of basic interpersonal communication skills required in social situations and the cognitive academic skills essential for learning across the curriculum” (DBE, 2011:8).

### **1.6.4 Further Education and Training phase**

The South African school system consists of phases for the different levels of schooling. The high schools have two phases: the General Education and Training phase (the last phase of compulsory school) comprising Grade 8 and Grade 9; and

the Further Education and Training phase - Grades 10 to 12 - which are the last three years of schooling in South Africa. For this study only Grade 10 and 11 are examined for operational reasons linked to the school exit examinations in Grade 12.

### **1.6.5 Writing and Presenting**

Writing and Presenting is one of the skills required for language learning. It combines three elements: 1) using the writing process; 2) learning and applying knowledge of the structure and features of different text types; and 3) learning and applying knowledge of paragraphs and sentences (DBE, 2011:29). This skill requires the frequent teaching and learning of how to write texts for various purposes. “The learners should use their knowledge of language structures and conventions to communicate through writing their thoughts and ideas lucidly and creatively” (DBE, 2011:9). Throughout the study the skill and lessons are referred to as Writing and Presenting, however, the activity in the classroom is stated as writing. The particular tasks, such as writing an essay are referred to as writing tasks.

### **1.6.6 Process writing**

As indicated in 1.6.5, using the writing process is one of the elements required in the Writing and Presenting skill. Writing instruction will usually involve working through the writing process which have the following steps: planning/pre-writing; drafting; revising, editing, proofreading and presenting (DBE, 2011:30).

### **1.6.7 Feedback**

Learners receive many forms of feedback on their writing tasks. During the second step of process writing, which is drafting, learners are expected to, amongst other things, read their drafts critically and get feedback from others (classmates) (DBE, 2011:30). Feedback on the final task is from the teachers and is often in the form of a mark, codes and comments. Feedback is information about gaps in the learning and, importantly, how these gaps may be addressed (Sadler, 1998).

## 1.7 CHAPTER DIVISION

**Chapter 1** offered the introduction to the study; it aimed to provide an overview of the reasons for the study. The background to the study, the researcher's role, the research questions and aims were explained and the key terms were clarified.

In **Chapter 2** formative assessment and assessment for learning are defined and a review of the literature and its theoretical underpinnings presented. The chapter includes literature on formative assessment feedback and it formed the core of this research. A review of the literature on the meta-analysis of the effects of feedback is presented. Theories on feedback are explored with particular attention to the model of feedback developed by Hattie and Timperley (2007). Current models and strategies of formative feedback relating to language learning as well as the mediators of feedback and achievement are analysed.

Department of Basic Education policy documents and curriculum documents are studied to form an understanding of the use of assessment for learning and feedback in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase. The South African National Curriculum Statement (NCS), and the Curriculum and Assessment Statement (CAPS) for Grades 10 to 12 English Home Language are analysed to form a clear understanding of the expectations and desired outcomes. An overview of the specific aims of learning Home Languages, the language curriculum, the teaching of Home Languages and teaching approaches is presented as it is described in the CAPS document. The specific focus is on Writing and Presenting as the study dealt with the effective use of feedback in writing processes. Literature on feedback on English writing tasks is presented. The particular focus is on written feedback on the writing task where process writing is used.

In **Chapter 3** the theories underpinning the study are explicated. These are the socio-cultural theory and self-regulation and Hattie and Timperley's (2007) model of feedback. Assessment for learning as an approach to formative assessment is considered as well as Writing and Presenting in English Home Language. The conceptual framework is presented followed by a description of how the conceptual framework will manifest in the practical application of the WFT.

In **Chapter 4** the research design and methodology are explained. The chapter first includes discussion of the ontological, epistemological and methodological underpinnings of this research. Qualitative case study is described and all salient aspects related to qualitative case study research are addressed; these include the reasons why qualitative case study research is appropriate in an educational setting. Thereafter, the case study research design and action research methodology are furnished. Then the particular methods of sampling, data collection and analysis used to answer the research questions are considered. The important issues of validity, reliability and generalisability are also addressed. This is followed by the action research methods followed.

**Chapter 5** incorporates the presentation and discussion of the first phase of investigation findings where the current practice in EHL writing lessons in the four schools was established. The focus is on the use of process writing in Writing and Presenting, as well as how feedback is provided and received by the learners.

**Chapter 6** provides the presentation and discussion of the first implementation of the writing feedback tool. Background to the first implementation is provided followed by the discussion of the implementation. The structure of the Writing Feedback Tool 1 (WFT1) was used to present firstly the implementation and use of the WFT1 by the teachers and the learners to facilitate AFL practices. Thereafter an evaluation by the participants is presented and the implementation discussed. The findings were used to inform the changes made to WFT1 to arrive at Writing Feedback Tool 2 (WFT2) for subsequent implementation.

In **Chapter 7** the implementation of the WFT2 is presented and discussed. The chapter starts with background to the implementation followed by the discussion. Similar to Chapter 6, the WFT2 structure was used to present implementation and use of the WFT2. The participants' WFT2 evaluation is presented and the findings discussed and concluded.

**Chapter 8** deals with the discussions and recommendations that are made based on the interpretation of the findings for the overall research question for the study. The three data phases are summarised then sub-research question six is answered. The

research reflections are presented, the conceptual framework reflected on and the conclusions of the study drawn. Finally, recommendations are made for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 ORIENTATION**

Chapter 1 provided the background and rationale of the study leading to the research question and sub-questions. The purpose of Chapter 2 is to firstly present a brief background to the South African assessment context. This is followed by a literature review exploring the concepts for the study which provide the basis to the conceptual framework presented in Chapter 3.

Black and Wiliam (1998a) wrote a seminal review on the research carried out since 1988 on the effectiveness of what is termed formative assessment. This refers to assessment that is specifically intended to provide feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning (Sadler, 1998). There is a rich body of research conducted internationally on formative assessment led by Black and Wiliam and other researchers such as Klenowski (2009), Mansell and James and the Assessment Reform Group (2009), Bennett (2011) and Clark (2010). Similarly, the research history of feedback in education is substantial. Shute (2008) reviewed the body of literature on feedback and more recently the feedback discourse has been dominated by Hattie and Timperley (2007) and Hattie and Gan (2011), followed by Sadler (2013). Despite the extensive research, the lack of effective formative assessment and feedback practices in the classroom remain a concern. Language is regarded as a tool for thought and communication (DBE, 2011:8) and the writing skill important for the development of higher cognitive functions (Taylor, 2013), therefore, the teaching and assessment of writing tasks is explored in order to determine the effective integration of formative assessment in teaching writing.

The literature review first explains assessment in the South African context (2.2). Section 2.3 deals with formative assessment, its definition, followed by the clarification of the formative assessment process as enacted in the classroom. In section 2.4 the literature review on feedback is briefly presented and in section 2.5 writing in English Home Language is discussed.

## **2.2 ASSESSMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT**

The South African education landscape has changed significantly since 1994. Two areas of educational change are pertinent to this study. The first is the language policy discussed in section 2.2.1. The second area is the revision of assessment policies (2.2.2) to reflect a move away from assessment as measurement to assessment for the purposes of learning (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013).

### **2.2.1 Language in Education Policy**

The transformation of the South African education sector commenced after the apartheid system ended in 1994. Critical changes were implemented which included the consolidation of the 18 racially, ethnically and regionally separated education departments to form a single national department. The funding norms and standards changed and race-, ethnic- and language-based admission requirements were abolished (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013:442).

The new education policies needed to address the inequalities of the apartheid era and aimed to meet the needs of a democratic society (Heugh, 2013:217; Sayed, Kanjee & Nkomo, 2013:6). An inclusive human-rights based Constitution was adopted that promised a new equitable socioeconomic order and the promotion and development of multilingualism (Heugh, 2013:215). There was an urgent need on the side of the new government to outline language in education policy (Heugh, 2013:216; Manyike & Lemmer, 2014:253). All eleven South African languages were afforded equal status in the South African Constitution (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014:254) and a fundamental principle that informed the language in education policy document was that school learners should have equal access to the curriculum, and that this might be best achieved through a national system of additive bilingualism or multilingual education (Heugh, 2013:219). For the last 20 years the ideal has been to promote policies for the implementation of Mother-tongue-based bilingual education in South Africa (Plüddemann, 2015:186).

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DoE, 1997) recognises that the inherited language-in-education policy in South Africa has been fraught with tensions,

contradictions and sensitivities, and underpinned by racial and linguistic discrimination. The language policy is meant to be a necessary aspect of the government's strategy to build a non-racial nation in South Africa. The LiEP points out that being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African and multilingualism is in line with norms globally and on our African continent.

The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (DoE, 1997) promotes additive bilingualism through home language education (primarily in the early years) and gradual access to additional languages, including, of course, English. The Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE, 2002) clarified the LiEP by specifying that all learners should study their home language and at least one additional language as language subjects from Grade 1 and should complete the study of an African language for a minimum of three years by the end of Grade 12. This has been reaffirmed by the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) (DBE, 2011). The educational landscape has been transformed from bilingualism to linguistic pluralism and the acknowledgement of African languages as vehicles of educational delivery (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014:254). The LiEP states that the individual has the right to choose the language of learning and teaching. This right has, however, to be exercised within the overall framework of the obligation on the education system to promote multilingualism. Despite the policy changes, the state's inability to provide learners the right to be educated in the official language(s) of their choice remains a stumbling block. Furthermore, as Desai (2016:343) states, English is still the preferred language of learning. The overriding choice for black parents is for their children to be educated in English as early as possible due to the perceived socio-economic advantages associated with the learning of English (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014:254; Plüddemann, 2015:186). Historically English-medium schools in South Africa have had access to superior means and Ndhlovu (2015:404) argues that "if South African black parents chose English-medium schools for their children it was not necessarily the language of instruction that attracted them but rather the teaching and learning resources."

Black learners in South Africa face a linguistic mismatch between home and school and the switch from mother tongue education to English as language of learning is rather abrupt in Grade 4 (Desai, 2016:344). Language is critical in the development of ideas and concepts; learners learn through language to interpret oral information and



written texts and express their understanding of their learning (Desai, 2016:344). English as a medium of instruction in primary schools is hampered by the lack of teacher training or resources, therefore, the learners struggle to manage the demands of English as language of learning (Desai, 2016:345).

The learners' language difficulties continue as they progress to high school and tertiary institutions. Learners who are considered proficient in English, what Desai (2016:345) calls the "basic interpersonal communication skills" level, struggle with reading and writing tasks.

The CAPS for English Home Language clarifies that while Home Language is the first language acquired by learners, many South African schools do not offer the home languages of some or all of the enrolled learners, but rather have one or two languages offered at Home Language level (DBE, 2011:8). Therefore, Home Language in the CAPS English Home Language refers to the proficiency levels at which the language is offered and not the native (Home) language (DBE, 2011:8), any reference to Home Language should be understood to refer to the level and not the language itself (DBE, 2011:8). Against the background of the learners' language learning difficulties, the question is how it impacts on their ability to express themselves meaningfully in writing. Furthermore, how assessment for learning may be used to enhance learning in Writing and Presenting.

Learner performance in numeracy and literacy, specifically reading literacy, is typically used as an index of how well an education system is performing (Pretorius & Spaull, 2016:1450). "Yet South African learners perform abysmally poorly regardless of whether reading is assessed in African home languages, English or Afrikaans" (Pretorius & Spaull, 2016:1450; Howie, 2012). South Africa participates in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) which, under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation for Educational Achievement (IEA), assesses reading comprehension and monitors trends in reading literacy at five-year intervals. Reporting on the 2016 results, Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena and Nelladee (2017:11) explain that around 78% of South African Grade 4 learners do not reach the international benchmarks and, therefore, do not have basic reading skills by the end of the Grade 4 school year, in contrast to only 4% of learners internationally.

Learners writing in African languages attained the lowest mean scores, significantly lower than those writing in Afrikaans and English.

Between the 2011 and 2016 prePIRLS five African languages (isiNdebele, Sepedi, Sesotho, Tshivenda and Xitsonga languages) started from a low base and showed an improvement, however, there was no overall difference in the results. Furthermore, fewer learners in 2016 achieved the benchmarks and fewer learners reached the High Benchmark and the Advanced Benchmark (Howie *et al.*, 2017:11). The significance of these findings for this study is that the Grade 10 learners included here would have been in Grade 4 in 2011 and the Grade 11 learners in Grade 4 in 2010. The challenges with reading manifest in learning and writing, therefore, finding ways to remedy that is an imperative.

### **2.2.2 Assessment policies**

Three education periods dominate the post-apartheid South African landscape in which three ministers presided, Minister Bhengu (1994-1999), Minister Asmal (1999-2004) and Minister Pandor (2004-2009) (Sayed, Kanjee & Nkomo, 2013:8). The greatest undertaking that still impacts on the schooling system after 19 years was the implementation of a new curriculum. The aim of the curriculum was to address the ideals of a new non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa, and the development of teacher capacity and skills to provide high-quality education to all children for them to become active participants in the new society. Fundamental to this transformation process was the introduction and effective implementation of assessment policies. Given the discriminatory use of assessment during the apartheid era, this was a critical area to address to ensure that the specific learning needs of all children would be met in the post-apartheid schooling system (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013:443). However, Kanjee and Sayed (2013:444) argue that, although the policy intention since 1994 was the implementation of an effective classroom assessment system, it is in reality a classroom measurement system. Introduced in 1998, and despite the many curriculum and assessment policy revisions that have taken place since then, the “assessment-focused, measurement-driven” approach continues and is having a negative effect on learning and teaching practices (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013: 442). While an assessment approach will focus on practices to assess the achievement of learning goals and

successful learning processes, a measurement approach seeks to quantify learning, focusing on the attainment of marks or determining levels of achievement.

The National Protocol for Assessment (DBE, 2012) makes the differentiation between assessments used to make decisions about the progress of learners, and classroom assessment which should provide an indication of learner achievement by collecting evidence in the form of assessment. Classroom assessment is seen as informal and formal; in both cases the expectations are that the learners will know which knowledge and skills are being assessed and that feedback should be provided. Through informal assessment feedback is provided to improve learning by addressing the gaps in the learners' knowledge and skills. Furthermore, teachers use the informal assessment to evaluate and improve their teaching. The view is, thus, that daily, informal assessments are assessment for learning as opposed to formal assessment which is assessment of learning (DBE, 2011:3-4).

The assessment policy is closely aligned to the new curriculum and the 2011 policy applies to all grades in the schools (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013:459). The concepts of 'informal' and 'formal' assessment have replaced the terms formative and summative assessments and are further extended with clear connection being made to assessment for learning and assessment of learning. The policy notes that, "Informal (assessment for learning) or daily assessment is the monitoring and enhancing of learners' progress. This is done through teacher observation and teacher-learner interactions, which may be initiated by either teachers or learners" (DBE, 2011:3). The policy specifies further that informal assessment should be, "used to provide feedback to the learners and teachers, close the gaps in learners' knowledge and skills and improve teaching" (DBE, 2011:3) and goes on to explain that, "informal assessment builds towards formal assessment and teachers should not only focus on the formal assessment" (DBE, 2011:3). Continuous Assessment (CASS) is advocated as:

*... the best model to assess outcomes of learning throughout the system and enable improvements to be made on the learning and teaching process and is defined as, 'on-going process that measures a learner's achievement during the course of a grade or level, providing information that is used to support a learner's development and enable improvements to be made in the learning and teaching process'. (Kanjee & Sayed, 2013:449)*

Learning is a complex process which may be easily undermined in a system where the perceived focus is on assessing and reporting on the summative outcome. While the South African curriculum development since 1994 has moved to focus on learning and not on measurement, the emphasis on testing and in particular high stakes testing, such as the Annual National Assessments (ANA) and the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination, has led to a disproportionate focus on results. The results-driven education environment may distract from learning in such a way that the teaching and learning processes become distorted.

## **2.3 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT**

The concept of formative assessment has evolved over time (Black & Wiliam, 2009) but is regarded as the everyday teachers' practice to enhance learning in their classrooms. The definition of formative assessment and how it has developed is explicated in subsection 2.3.1. Subsection 2.3.2 is devoted to the process of interrelated steps that is the foundation of the implementation of formative assessment.

### **2.3.1 Definition of formative assessment**

Cronbach's seminal article in 1963 on the improvement in course content (Clark, 2010:344) was a precursor to Scriven's (1967) distinction between summative and formative assessment (Bennett, 2011:6; Clark, 2010:344). For Scriven, summative evaluation provided information to judge the overall value of an educational programme, whereas the results of formative evaluation were targeted at facilitating programme improvement (Bennett, 2011:16). Furthermore, Scriven used the term 'formative' to describe the evaluation processes that "have a role in the ongoing improvement of the curriculum" (Wiliam, 2014a:2). Bloom (1969 cited in Bennett, 2011:6) states that with learners and class tests, the purpose of formative evaluation was to provide feedback and correctives at each stage in the teaching-learning process. Summative evaluation was employed to judge what the learner had achieved at the end of a course or programme (Bennett, 2011:6). The term 'assessment' has

replaced Scriven's term 'formative evaluation' indicating a critical development in the traditions of formative assessment. Bloom's distinction is still used today, although formative assessment is used to focus on the learners and not the learning programmes (Bennett, 2011:6).

Formative assessment, with its emphasis on learning, is not used simply to measure performance providing reports of achievement at specific times in the school year (Clark, 2012:217). Educational researchers have emphasised various investigations on assessment practices and how they affect the quality of learner learning and motivation (Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 1998b; Mansell, James, & Assessment Reform Group, 2009). Definitions of formative assessment essentially revolve around the purpose of assessment being to improve learning (Clark, 2012; Torrance, 2012; Wiliam, 2011). Several attempts have been made to formulate a definition of formative assessment (Brookhart, 2007:43), Clark (2010:341) writes that formative classroom assessment gives teachers information for instructional decisions and gives learners information for improvement. Three elements are captured in the statement: it informs teaching practice, instructional decisions are made based on this information, and learners receive scaffolded assistance on how to improve their work (Clark, 2010: 41).

Black and Wiliam (1998a) explain that the idea of formative assessment is anchored in the world of classroom interaction, where formative assessment is not just linked to the teaching goals but is at the same time (Black & Wiliam, 2009) integrated into the process of instruction itself (Clark, 2011:167). Black and Wiliam (2009) explain how their definition of formative assessment evolved; their earliest work on formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 1998b) did not start from any pre-defined theoretical base but instead drew together a wide range of research findings relevant to the notion of formative assessment.

Black and Wiliam (1998b:2; Wiliam, 2014a:3) defined formative assessment as follows:

*We use the general term assessment to refer to all those activities undertaken by teachers – and by their learners in assessing themselves – that provide information to be used to provide feedback to modify teaching and learning activities. Such assessment becomes formative assessment when the evidence is*

*actually used to adapt the teaching to meet learner needs. (Black & Wiliam, 1998b:2)*

Clark (2010:341) considers the definition by Black and Wiliam (1998b:2) the most accessible explanation of formative assessment as it includes a 'what' element: all the activities, and a 'when' element: assessment is formative when evidence is used to adapt teaching to meet the learner needs. There is a tendency by some to restrict the definition of formative assessment as a tool used to facilitate relative immediate changes to instruction (Wiliam, 2014a:4). However, the underlying philosophy of formative assessment is that it is a process of teaching and learning where the results are used to modify the teaching and improve the learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

The term 'assessment for learning' is often used interchangeably with 'formative assessment'. The Assessment Reform Group (ARG) suggested that the term 'formative assessment' was no longer helpful as it often means that assessment is carried out frequently and is planned at the same time as teaching; such assessment does not necessarily help in the learning process. Instead they preferred the term 'assessment' for learning (William, 2011:15). In 1999, the Assessment Reform Group (ARG) defined assessment for learning as: "the purpose of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there." (Mansell, James, & Assessment Reform Group, 2009:10)

Black and Wiliam (2009:9) restated their definition of formative assessment in a way that was consistent with their original and with that of the ARG:

*Practice in a classroom is formative to the extent that evidence about student [learner] achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited. (Black & Wiliam, 2009:7)*

The Third International Conference on Assessment for Learning held in 2009 defined assessment for learning as: "...part of everyday practice by students [learners], teachers, and peers that seeks, reflects upon and responds to information from

dialogue, demonstration and observation in ways that enhance ongoing learning” (Klenowski, 2009:264).

The global Assessment for Learning movement (Assessment Reform Group, 2002; Black & William, 1998a, b) has encouraged teachers to foreground the role of assessment in improving teaching and learning, prioritising this above its traditional accountability functions. This shift in purpose has led to the growing recognition that any assessment can be used to improve learning; both formative and summative assessments can be used in this way (Bennett, 2011; Willis, 2011:2).

Bennett (2011) argues for a more nuanced view of the relationship between assessment purpose and assessment type. Assessment systems should be designed in such a way that summative assessments should advance learning and formative assessments add to the teacher’s overall informal judgements of learners’ achievements (Bennett, 2011:7; Black, 2015). ‘Formative’ and ‘summative’ are not labels for different types or forms of assessment, but describe how assessments are used. (Mansell, James, & Assessment Reform Group, 2009:9). Furthermore, as Bennett (2011:8) states, summative assessments may be used for assessment for learning purposes; any assessment may be used to assess learning.

Bennett (2011:6) quotes a definition promulgated by the Formative Assessment for Teachers and Students [Learners] (FAST) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student [Learner] Standards (SCASS) of the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, DC: “Formative assessment is a process used by teachers and students [learners] during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students’ [learners’] achievement of intended instructional outcomes.”

Klenowski (2009) regards assessment for learning as an approach to formative assessment that occurs as ongoing classroom assessment, to inform and improve learning and enhance learner autonomy (Willis, 2011:4). The term ‘assessment for learning’ challenges the view held by many that assessment is a peripheral component of pedagogy which threatens effective learning (Black, 2015:163). Shepard (2000:3) states that if assessment is to be used in classrooms to help learners learn, it must be

transformed in two fundamental ways. First, the content and character of assessments must be significantly improved. Second, the gathering and use of assessment information and insights must become a part of the ongoing learning process.

The role of the teacher is to provide opportunities for, and support, learners as they take control of their learning (Hawe & Parr, 2014:211). The overall claim of assessment for learning is for learners to become autonomous, self-regulating learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Willis, 2011) which Black (2015) regards as the main aim of education.

### **2.3.2 The formative assessment process**

While it has been established that any assessment can be used as assessment for learning, the CAPS document emphasises that informal daily classroom assessments should be used as assessments for learning (DBE, 2011). Black and Wiliam (1998a), in their review of assessment and classroom learning, describe ways to innovate teaching practices which would enhance learners' learning (Black, 2015:161). While the review states that there is enough evidence in place for giving helpful guidance to practical action, it also states that the changes to classroom practice are central rather than marginal, and have to be incorporated by each teacher into his or her practice in his or her own way (Black & Wiliam, 1998a:62). Clark (2011) argues that, for formative assessment to be successfully implemented, the term 'formative assessment' should not be understood as fixed or rigid in any sense. Formative assessment takes place in the context of each individual classroom, therefore, the process concerns itself exclusively with the activities undertaken by teachers and their learners during the process of classroom teaching and learning (Clark, 2011:165).

The alignment of the various stages are important for successful teaching and learning as the process is embedded in the classroom activities (Mansell *et al.*, 2009). The success of the formative assessment process is contingent on a variety of issues. Importantly, the inter-dependence of the steps (Hawe & Parr, 2014) in the process means that where the process is implemented with only a selection of steps, it is unlikely to succeed. The steps in the formative assessment process are as follows:



- *Learning intentions, goals and expectations clarified*

It is argued that the formative assessment process is a way of leading the pedagogy because once the assessment is firmly in place, the pedagogy needed to support the assessment becomes clear (Black, 2015). The process starts with making the purpose of the lesson, teaching programme and subsequent assessment clear (Natriello, 1987, cited in William, 2011). This first step of the process taken in the classroom is described in various ways, but the common thread is that the learning intentions or goals must be made clear (Black, 2015; Bennett, 2011; Clark, 2012). Clarifying the learning intentions is a process where learners and teachers set learning goals, share learning intentions and success criteria (Bennett, 2011; Mansell *et al.*, 2009; Rust, O'Donovan & Price 2005) this is the *sine qua non* (essential condition) of formative assessment (Clark, 2012:210).

In 2005, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Murtin, 2013) states that learning goals must be established and individual progress tracked (Clark, 2010), and what good performance is must be clarified (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). This step is important as the effectiveness of formative assessment is reduced if learners are not “appropriately informed of what they are expected to demonstrate a knowledge of” (Jenkins, 2010:567). In order for learners to become autonomous, self-regulating learners which is the aim of assessment for learning (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Willis, 2011) the learners must know what it is they have to do and learn, what the success criteria are and how to reach them. By sharing the learning goals and criteria specific to the task with learners, giving them experience in self-assessment and guiding them with feedback, it is suggested that learner are able to become more self-regulating and autonomous lifelong learners (Willis, 2011).

The success of assessment for learning means the learners are given the opportunity to achieve the learning goals as well as meta-cognitive goals. They can only achieve goals if they understand these goals, adopt the goals as their own, and can assess their progress towards the goals (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). However, there is the risk that sharing of the criteria may lead to ‘criteria compliance’, causing learners

to be more dependent on their teachers, thus, defeating the goal of being autonomous learners (Hattie & Gan, 2011; Torrance, 2012; Willis, 2011).

- *Appropriate activity to demonstrate achievement of the learning goal*

The next step is the activity or the performance expected from the learners. The activity should consist of a range of instructional methods to meet diverse learner needs (Clark, 2010:344; Murtin, 2013), and the activity should have the potential for the aims to be achieved, and elicit evidence of learner understanding (Black, 2015; Wiliam, 2011). The activity should, therefore, be appropriately aligned with the learning goals and the assessment tool or instrument. By clarifying the learning goals and success criteria and sharing this with the learners, the gaps in the alignment of the process can be addressed because, as Black (2015) explains, once the assessment is made clear, what the teaching and learning activities need to be to support the assessment become clear.

- *Feedback to move learning forward*

The third step in the formative assessment process is the element of feedback which and Rust *et al.*, (2005:234) explain is arguably the most important part of the process. Effective feedback has the potential to affect future learning and achievement. Feedback delivers high quality information which can be used in two ways; first by the teacher who will use the assessment results to improve teaching (Clark, 2010; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) and secondly to provide the learners with information to move their learning forward (Clark, 2010; Wiliam & Thompson, 2007 cited in Wiliam, 2011). Furthermore, feedback can activate learners as instructional resources for one another and as owners of their own learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009:4). Feedback in the form of a discussion between the learner and the teacher or written comments can provide information to learners about their progress and help them get an overview of the task to see how different aspects are interrelated.

- *Learners actively involved in learning process*

The development of learners' capacity to reflect on and own their own learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009:4) is regarded as an important aspect of formative assessment. During the fourth step the learners take responsibility for their learning and participate in the process of learning (Clark, 2010:344; 2012:222), by self-assessment activities (Bennett, 2011; Mansell *et al.*, 2009; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Learners become instructional resources for one another (Black & Wiliam, 2009:4) through self and peer assessment. Learners reflect on the assessment data with their teachers (Mansell *et al.*, 2009), consider the feedback information and recognise the next step in their learning and how to take them (Clark, 2010:222; Mansell *et al.*, 2009). The learners' ability to become meta-cognitive is enhanced as they learn to think and make decisions about their learning (Clark, 2010) and learn to link overarching criteria for learning to other tasks and situations (Torrance, 2012:338).

- *Assessment results inform future learning decisions*

The last step involves the monitoring of the outcomes. Teachers with the learners reflect on the assessment information which, with the feedback, is used to guide the decisions regarding the next steps and how to take them (Black, 2015; Clark, 2011; Mansell *et al.*, 2009). The formative assessment results and insights are used to adjust the teaching to meet the learners' needs (Black & Wiliam, 1998b). Such adjustments will usually occur over short cycles, within or between lessons (William & Thompson, 2008, cited in Bennett, 2011:6).

Clark (2012:163; 2010:344) argues that if an effective formative assessment process is to take place a classroom it is contingent on high quality interactions between learners and teachers and the use of assessment tools. The focus is on a social context where an environment is created that allows the learners to take responsibility for their learning, without threatening their self-esteem (Clark, 2012). Learners should be provided with opportunities to become meta-cognitive and build an understanding of their own learning progress and goals (Dann, 2014; Clark, 2012). The interactions the learners have with their teacher and peers are collaborative (Clark, 2012; Dann, 2014), learners reflect on their learning (Dann, 2014) and take responsibility for it (Clark, 2012). Importantly, the enactment of formative assessment depends on the

learners being offered appropriate opportunities in the form of a task to demonstrate their achievement of the goals, which may be a learning goal as well as self-regulation.

An assessment for learning approach to the implementation of formative assessment suggests that assessments, if used appropriately, will enhance learning. Assessment for learning differs from a 'teach to the test' approach as assessments are not a single point in the teaching and learning process; the assessments are used to facilitate the learning process. Several authors have suggested models or steps for the implementation of formative assessment. These steps support the notion that the essential purpose of formative assessment as a practice is to move learners' learning forward while their learning is still in the process of development (Heritage, 2011; Carless, 2011). However, the use of assessment information to improve learning cannot be separated from the instructional system within which it is provided (William, 2011:4). The instructional system is interpreted as the curriculum, in this case the CAPS, and the application of process writing in the EHL Writing and Presenting lessons.

Self-regulation (this is further elaborated on in Chapter 3) has particularly been seen as part of a socio-cultural gaze, as recognition is given to the teachers' role in mediating (through language) the curriculum and learners engaging in an interactive learning and assessment process. In its purest form, self-regulation involves learners in the creation of their own goals (Timperley & Parr, 2009). Self-regulating learners are able to judge performance relative to goals, generate internal feedback about amounts and rates of progress towards goals, and adjust further action based on that feedback (Butler & Winne 1995:258). Feedback is regarded as pivotal to the establishment of dialogue and conversations about learning and the achievement of learning outcomes.

## **2.4 OVERVIEW OF THE ROLE OF FEEDBACK IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The function of feedback in moving learning forward is integral to the success of formative assessment and briefly discussed in 2.4.1. Feedback as instructional purpose in addressing the learning gap is explicated in subsection 2.4.2 followed by a discussion on the effective use of feedback in subsection 2.4.3.

### **2.4.1 Feedback as part of formative assessment**

Feedback in educational contexts is generally regarded as crucial to improving knowledge and skill acquisition (Shute, 2008:153). Kluger and DeNisi (1996) find that if feedback succeeds in focusing the learner on the task, then learning and achievement are promoted.

Feedback as a concept has a long history (Hattie, 2011:1) and is consistently mentioned as an important part of formative assessment (see section 2.3). Formative assessment refers to assessment that is specifically intended to generate feedback on performance to improve and accelerate learning (Sadler, 1998) and, according to Shute, (2008:154) the starting point for the work on formative assessment was the idea of providing feedback. Research shows that assessment and feedback are important drivers of what, when and how learners learn (Orsmond, Maw, Park, Gomez, & Crook, 2013:240). In fact, feedback is claimed to be the action that moves the learning forward as it can significantly improve learning processes and outcomes. (Black, 2015; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Torrance, 2012).

The term 'feedback' is often used to describe all kinds of comments made after the fact, including advice, and praise; however, feedback is not always useful. Essentially, useful feedback is information about how learners are doing in their efforts to reach a goal (Wiggins, 2012:2). Hattie and Timperley (2007:81) conceptualised feedback as information provided by an agent (e.g. teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. Shute (2008:154) focused on the term 'formative feedback' which is defined as information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify his or her thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning. Furthermore, the objective of formative feedback is the deep involvement of learners in meta-cognitive strategies such as personal goal-planning, monitoring, and reflection, which support self-regulated learning by giving learners the power to oversee and steer their own learning so that one can become a more committed, responsible and effective learner (Clark, 2012:210). Influenced by socio-cultural perspectives on learning, and developments in the fields of learner self-regulation and assessment for learning, present-day notions of feedback emphasise the importance of learner autonomy and agency. Formative feedback is regarded as

a mechanism within formative assessment that will allow teachers and learners to work in partnership to construct achievement and effect improvement (James, 2006).

#### **2.4.2 Feedback as instructional purpose addressing the learning gap**

Learning researchers were particularly interested in the effects of various feedback characteristics (especially immediacy, suitability, data form and type of reward) on the retention of learned material. This focus, which developed out of behaviourist stimulus–response models of learning, is now viewed as unduly narrow (Sadler, 2010:535). A formative interaction is a broader view as it is an interactive situation; it influences cognition as the interaction is between an external stimulus and feedback, and internal production by the individual learner which involves looking at the three aspects: the external, the internal and their interactions (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Price, Handley, & Millar, 2011:879).

The view supported here is that feedback is rooted in the socio-cultural perspective that knowledge creation is shared rather than an individual experience (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014). More social constructivist approaches see knowledge and understanding as constructed through interaction rather than transferred through teaching, placing emphasis on the interaction of teacher and learner, learner and task, and also learners and their peers. Effective feedback depends upon a range of factors that lead to a relational dialogic process which impacts on the development of learners' understanding of their subject and their learning (Price, Handley, Millar, O'Donovan, 2010).

The three elements Sadler (1989:121) describes as required for the successful use of assessment to promote learning are: (1) A clear view of the learning goals (derived from the curriculum) - where the learner is going, (2) Information about the present state of the learner (derived from assessment) - where the learner is right now, (3) action to close the gap (taken through instruction) - how to get there. Vygotsky (1978, 1986 cited in Torrance, 2012:326) argues that it is important to focus on what learners may be able to achieve with the help of their teachers and in working together with their peers. Torrance (2012:326) further cited Bruner (1985), explaining that learning should be 'scaffolded' and the collaborative process of assessment is as effective in

enhancing learning as feedback on the task the learners produced (Torrance, 2012:326).

Following Sadler's (1989:121) notion of the 'gap' Hattie and Timperley's (2007) feedback model offers a view of feedback as an instructional purpose where feedback provides information specifically relating to the task or process of learning that fills the gap between what the goal is and where the learner's understanding of the goal is. Feedback gives learners information about their performance in relation to specific and clear goals and helps them to: (i) identify the causes of the gap between the desired and the actual level they are at and (ii) act to fill that gap (Black & Wiliam, 1998b; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Sadler, 1989). The argument is that the learners will be able to interpret the feedback, identify the gap between where they are in their learning and where they need to go and know which strategies to put in place to reach their learning goals. However, as soon as the term 'feedback' is used to denote simply any data about the gap between current and desired level of performance, or worse, simply for descriptions of the current level of performance, it loses all connection with its original, and powerful, meaning (Wiliam, 2011:4).

Closing the gap between learners' current and desired understanding or performance can become mechanical if it is simply following a procedure to comply with formative assessment expectations. It could also result in a narrow focus on the intended learning outcomes only, rather than any others which may arise in the course of the teaching and learning experience (Torrance, 2012:330). Furthermore, when formative assessment is restricted to closing the gap between the actual and expected results in a learner's achievement, the focus remains on teaching, and the learner's role in developing autonomy can be marginalised (Willis, 2011:4). Scaffolded teaching in the form of formative feedback is effective in closing the gap between the current level of understanding and the desired goal (Clark, 2010:344). However, if feedback is seen as classroom conversations about learning and learners becoming actively involved in their learning, then closing the gap is as a result of improved learning. The gap is, therefore, not simply the difference between a correct and incorrect answer but rather the difference between current states in learning relative to the learning goal.

As stated by Clark (2010:344), feedback becomes formative when learners are provided with scaffolded instruction or thoughtful questioning encouraging learners to close the gap between their current level of understanding and the learning goal. Once feedback has made the learners aware of a gap, they can respond in various ways. The learners may develop and use effective error detection skills, which lead to their own self-feedback aimed at reaching a goal (Hattie & Timperley, 2007: 86). Feedback may also help learners to use or find better strategies to execute the task, or ask for more information in order to identify the problem or gap and use self-regulation strategies to address the learning gap (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:85).

In its most simplistic form feedback can focus on errors or the achievement of set criteria. However, feedback becomes formative and effective in closing the gap when learners are engaged in a process that focuses on meta-cognitive strategies. Learners use these strategies to understand the relationship between their previous performance, their current understanding and clearly defined success criteria, and are positioned as the agent improving and initiating their own learning (Clark, 2010:344; Hattie & Timperley, 2007:87).

### **2.4.3 The effective use of feedback**

The efficacy of feedback as a tool for learning depends on whether the feedback message is understood by the learners (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shute, 2008). Hattie and Timperley (2007:82) addressed the efficacy of feedback by referring to the usual effects of schooling in learner achievement and comparing the results to the evidence relating to feedback. Hattie (2011:2) used a synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses, 50,000 effect-sizes from 240 million learners to assess 138 influences on learner achievement (from schools, homes, learners, teachers and curricula). The average or typical effect of schooling was .40 (SE = .05) and this provided a benchmark figure or "standard" from which to judge the various influences on achievement, such as that of feedback (Hattie, 2011:2). There have been 12 meta-analyses that have included specific information on feedback in classrooms (196 studies and 6972 effect-sizes). The average effect-size was .79, which is twice the average effect of all other schooling effects (Hattie, 2011:2). This places feedback in the top 10 influences on achievement, although there was considerable variability leading to the conclusion that some types



of feedback are more powerful than others. Hattie and Timperley (2007) see feedback as one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement while recognising that the impact can be positive but also negative.

Feedback is effective if it becomes part of the process and the instructional purpose (Black, 2015) and the feedback information is used by the teachers and learners to influence future performance (William, 2011). Hattie and Timperley (2007:82) offer a view of feedback as an instructional purpose where feedback provides information specifically relating to the task or process of learning that fills the gap between what is the goal and where the learner's understanding of the goal is. A very important consideration is that feedback comes second, it follows instruction, and therefore, the usefulness of feedback is limited when provided in a vacuum (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). It is argued that effective feedback is provided within a learning context, therefore, both learners and teachers should not see it as separate from teaching and learning but as an integral part of the process.

The following are conditions for feedback to be effective:

- 1 The goals and the success criteria must be clear (Hattie & Gan, 2011; Wiggins, 2012). The feedback should challenge the learners to engage at their current level or at a level just above their current functioning (Hattie & Gan, 2011).
- 2 The feedback provided must be transparent and concrete (Wiggins, 2012) and clearly related to the task and its goal, and not the learner (Hattie & Gan, 2011; Shute, 2008).
- 3 Feedback should be actionable; the learners should be able to understand what, how and why they have gone wrong (Shute, 2008) and what they can do the next time (Wiggins, 2012). The learners must be able to use the feedback to close the gap between their current understanding and the goal (Sadler, 1989). Feedback information should be specific (Shute, 2008) and easy to use (Wiggins, 2012). In other words, the learners must be able to act on the feedback to improve their learning.
- 4 Feedback should be ongoing (Wiggins, 2012) and targeted at the achievement level of the learner (Shute, 2008).

5 Good feedback is all about exploiting “moments of contingencies” (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Wiliam, 2011:20), and aimed to be delivered at the right time and where it is appropriate (Brookhart, 2007).

Effective feedback follows after teaching and acts as a link between the learning and the assessment; it is, thus, most effective if it forms part of the teaching process. Learners are expected to act on the feedback. It follows that it is more productive to consider when and how it is received than when and how it is given; “it cannot simply be assumed that when student [learners] are ‘given feedback’ they will know what to do with it” (Sadler, 1998:78).

Wiggins (2012) argues that feedback should be given as soon as possible after the task and not during the task, as interrupting a learner may indeed have negative effects on learning. However, the function of feedback on writing during the drafting is to engage the learner in the process of writing. Therefore, synchronous feedback helps learners close the gaps in learning by interpreting the feedback, making connections between the feedback and the characteristics of the work they produce, and knowing how they can improve their work. Activities involving multiple drafts and feedback on the drafts by the teacher or peers, is one way of achieving these conditions (Handley, Price, & Millar, 2011; Rust *et al.*, 2005).

A major conclusion reached by researchers is that it is not enough to claim that feedback works; importantly under some circumstances feedback had no effect and in fact could have a negative effect on performance (Hattie & Gan, 2011; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Shute, 2008). The debilitating effect of feedback most pertinent to this study is feedback that focuses attention on meta-task processes, therefore, moving the attention away from learning and to self, such as the provision of marks, praise and public feedback (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Hattie (2011:8) reports that teachers often give feedback to a class or group of learners referred to in some cases as global feedback. However, global feedback is often ineffective as some learners do not see global feedback as relative to their performance (Hattie, 2011:6).

Shute (2008) makes it very clear that good feedback can significantly improve learning processes and outcomes, if delivered correctly. Hattie (2011) also concludes that the

way learners receive and understand feedback is unclear. Research into feedback has typically explored teacher and/or learner perceptions about feedback comments, and analysed written teacher comments to learners. However, research approaches that follow through such comments to examine their effects – how they are received and acted upon – are limited (Aijawi & Boud, 2015:2).

## **2.5 WRITING IN ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE**

The teaching of writing in the English Home Language curriculum is discussed (2.5.1) followed by an explanation of what process writing is and how it is used in writing lessons (subsection 2.5.2). The assessment of writing and how it is implemented is explained in subsection 2.5.3. Subsection 2.5.4 deals with the use of feedback on writing tasks.

### **2.5.1 Writing and Presenting**

Research studies have found that the degree to which information is reformulated through writing has an impact on how well the information is integrated, learned, and remembered (Bangert-Drowns, Hurley & Wilkinson, 2004; Graham, Gillespie & McKeown, 2013; Taylor, 2013). The importance of writing has been the subject of research for a long time. Graham *et al.* (2013) describe writing as a useful tool for the accomplishment of a variety of goals; it is used for communication, creating imagined worlds and to record experiences. Writing also provides a powerful tool for influencing others and, importantly, it is a crucial tool for learning. Emig (1977 cited by Bangert-Drowns *et al.*, 2004:29) makes a strong case for the connection of writing to learning. “In Emig’s formulation, learning entails active, personal, and self-regulated construction of organised conceptual associations, refined by feedback processes; similar features characterise writing requiring active organisation of personal understandings” (Bangert-Drowns *et al.*, 2004:29).

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for Grades 10-12, English Home Language introduces “languages as a tool for thought and communication” (DBE, 2011:8). Further, the “Home Language level is where language proficiency that reflects the mastery of basic interpersonal communication skills and cognitive

academic skills for learning across the curriculum is provided for” (DBE, 2011:8). There are four main skills in English Home Language: Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting and Language Structure and Use. The Writing and Presenting skill was chosen as the focus of this study as the importance of writing is central in shaping the way we think, reason and learn, according to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (Taylor, 2013:55).

The English Home Language CAPS document (DBE, 2011:11) describes Writing and Presenting as:

*... a skill that allows learners to construct and communicate thoughts and ideas coherently. Frequent writing ... enables learners to communicate functionally and creatively. The aim is to produce competent versatile writers who use their skills to develop and present appropriate written, visual and multi-media texts for a variety of purposes.*

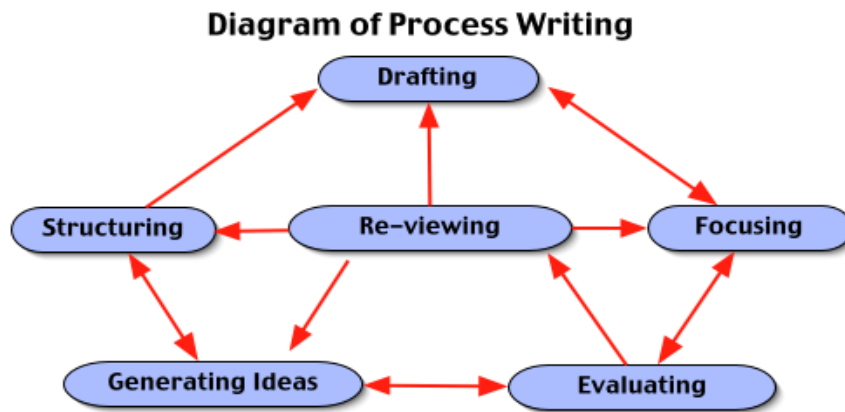
The CAPS document for EHL describes the Writing and Presenting skill as a combination of three elements: 1) using the writing process; 2) learning and applying knowledge of the structure and features of different text types; 3) learning and applying knowledge of paragraph and sentence structure and punctuation (DBE, 2011:30).

The critical importance of skilled writing is recognised and the curriculum expectation made clear in both the CAPS (DBE, 2011) and the supporting DBE documents. However, our understanding of writing development is incomplete (Graham *et al.*, 2013:9), “and there is no group of scholars who define what there is to be known about it” (Parr & Timperley, 2010:71). Writing is a complex activity (Graham *et al.*, 2013; Hawe & Dixon, 2014; Parr & Timperley, 2010) and it is described as a form of art, therefore, determining the quality of a piece of writing involves a range of criteria (Broad, 2003, cited in Hawe and Dixon, 2014:68). Furthermore, learning in writing is “multidimensional rather than sequential and as a consequence writing skills to be learnt cannot be conceptualised as neatly packaged units” (Sadler, 1989:123). Thus, Parr and Timperley (2010:71) explain that “in writing, a problematic issue concerns the body of subject matter or content knowledge that a teacher needs to know, to transform in order to teach it.” Furthermore, teachers need knowledge that can be used in their classroom thus, rooted in practice (Parr & Timperley, 2010:71).

Hargreaves (2013:231) reports that Torrance and Pryor (1998) have identified a range of assessment approaches with 'convergent assessment' and 'divergent assessment' at opposite ends of the spectrum. A learning environment that is focused on compliance and the memorisation of facts will result in corrective feedback as part of convergent assessment. However, the focus of feedback has moved to developing learners' "abilities to respond to complex, divergent assessment tasks" (Sadler, 2010:535). "Within a divergent framework, feedback is exploratory, provisional or provocative often encouraging children to reconstruct their thinking about the subject or learning process" (Pryor & Crossouard, 2008:4). Writing requires the active organisation of personal understandings, thus, writing is a divergent demanding self-regulatory activity in the learners (Bangert-Drowns *et al.*, 2004:29).

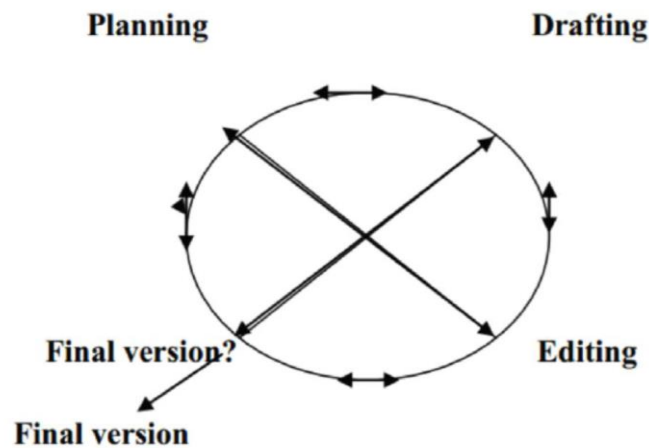
### **2.5.2 Process writing**

The last two decades have seen a change in the approach to the teaching of writing (Villamil & De Guerrero, 1996:51; Ruegg, 2016:199). Traditionally, the teaching of writing focused on the final writing task produced by the learners on their own. The assessment moved to alternative classroom assessment of writing. While the process approach to writing is now firmly entrenched in both first-language and second-/foreign-language writing contexts, and the direct assessment of writing is widely used around the world, the change in classroom assessment practices is still taking place (Ruegg, 2016:199). Process writing generally consists of different stages such as composing prewriting, writing, and revision and in stressing the learners' strategies, contributing to improved writing (Villamil & De Guerrero, 1996). The several models of process writing have similar steps. White and Arndt's diagram of process writing (Figure 2.1) includes planning and generating ideas, focusing on the outcome of the task, structuring the writing task, drafting, and editing the task by reviewing and revising it to produce the final task (White & Arndt, 1991). Harmer's (2004) process wheel (Figure 2.2) has four steps: planning, drafting editing and final version. The process allows the learners to plan and think about their writing and obtain feedback to direct their writing and improve on the draft or drafts before writing the final task.



**Figure 2.1: Process writing by Ron White and Valerie Arndt (1991)**

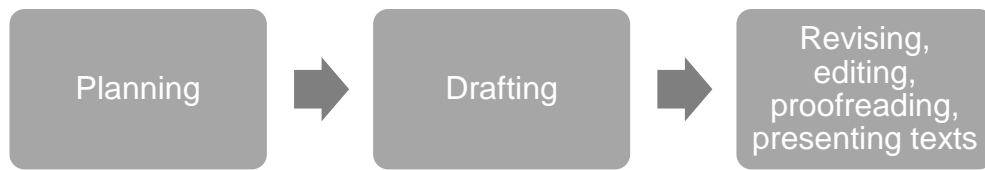
[http://member.tokohau.ac.jp/~dixonfdm/Core%20Activities/Process%20Writing/Process\\_model.htm](http://member.tokohau.ac.jp/~dixonfdm/Core%20Activities/Process%20Writing/Process_model.htm)



**Figure 2.2: Hamer's process wheel (Hamer, 2004)**

<https://myeltrambles.com/2015/05/10/delta-lsa-writing/>

While the process of assessment for learning is not clearly explicated in the CAPS, the writing process in English Home Language Writing and Presenting is made clear. The steps, as illustrated in Figure 2.3, are similar to those mentioned above, however, they are presented as three steps: firstly, planning; secondly, drafting; followed by the last step which is revising, editing, proofreading and presenting the text (DBE, 2011:30). Whereas the writing instruction will usually, but not always, involve working through the writing process, learners will not necessarily write drafts when teachers choose to focus on areas such as sentence construction or paragraph writing (DBE, n.d.:4).



**Figure 2.3: Process writing in Writing and Presenting EHL**

As described in the CAPS, writing and designing texts is a process and learners need the opportunity to put this process into practice. The writing process is explained as three steps and generally the teachers implement the process in three lessons. The first step, **Planning/Pre-writing**, means the learners decide on the purpose and audience of a text to be written; determine the requirements of format, style, point of view, and brainstorm ideas using, for example, mind maps, spider web, flow charts or lists; consult relevant sources, and select relevant information (DBE, 2011:30).

**Drafting** is the second step. The planning and drafting is typically dealt with in one lesson and the completion of the drafting process given as a homework activity. The learners use main and supporting ideas from the planning process to write a first draft. A first draft is written which takes into account purpose, audience, topic and genre. The learners read drafts critically and get feedback from others (classmates) (DBE, 2011:30-31).

The third and final step is the **Revising, editing, proofreading and presenting** of the task (DBE, 2011:31). Notably it is only here where the learners use set criteria, such as a rubric, for overall evaluation of their own work and others' writing for improvement. The learners are expected to use the rubric, paying close attention to the criteria and making use of editing and proofreading skills to refine word choice, sentence and paragraph structure; evaluate content, style and register, and use punctuation marks, spelling and grammar correctly and appropriately. A necessary skill for quality writing and academic success is the ability to critically evaluate both one's own and a peer's writing (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009), however, the teaching of the skill is not clarified in the CAPS document.

The skill of writing is best developed through frequent opportunities (Bangert-Drowns *et al.*, 2004; Graham *et al.*, 2013; DBE, 2011:11) to practise the skill. Process writing is an instructional act which allows for the implementation of formative assessment but also allows the teacher to choose appropriate tasks for the development of writing skills.

### 2.5.3 Assessment of writing tasks

In the assessment of written pieces in EHL Writing and Presenting classrooms, the rubric is the most commonly used tool. The Department of Basic Education is the assessment system in South Africa that all government schools adhere to. The assessment rubrics aimed at Grade 12 level assessment are provided to teachers and these rubrics are adapted and replaced in a four-year cycle. There is one rubric for the assessment of all transactional tasks, and similarly, one rubric is used for the different types of essay such as narrative, descriptive, argumentative and discursive essays. Learners are assessed according to a rating scale, these are on levels and percentages. For example, the assessment criteria on the essay assessment rubric (DBE, 2015:18-19) (Figure 2.4) are grouped in three sections: **Content and Planning; Language, Style and editing; Structure.** The sections are aligned with the elements of process writing, the application of knowledge of the structure and features of different text types and learning and applying knowledge of paragraph and sentence structure and punctuation (DBE, 2011:30). Each of these contain indicators of what the learners are expected to be able to do. The language structure and conventions are represented in the three sections of the rubric, they are not itemised but broadly indicated and described. Teachers typically mark the level of achievement with a tick and may indicate a mark. Few teachers may circle areas for improvement. The application of the rubric is commonly used as success criteria and the justification for the mark allocated. The listing of the criteria facilitates the convergent approach to essay writing prevalent in most EHL writing lessons.



**6.3 APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: ESSAY**

- Always use the rubric when marking the creative essay (Paper 3, Section A).
- Marks from 0–50 have been divided into FIVE major level descriptors.
- In the Content, Language and Style criteria, each of the five level descriptors is divided into an upper and a lower level subcategory with the applicable mark range and descriptors.
- Structure is not affected by the upper level and lower level division.

**SECTION A: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR ESSAY – HOME LANGUAGE [50 MARKS]**

Criteria		Exceptional 28–30	Skilful 22–24	Moderate 16–18	Elementary 10–12	Inadequate 4–6
<b>CONTENT AND PLANNING</b>  (Response and ideas) Organisation of ideas for planning; Awareness of purpose, audience and context  <b>30 MARKS</b>	Upper level	-Outstanding/Striking response beyond normal expectations -Intelligent, thought-provoking and mature ideas -Exceptionally well organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Very well-crafted response -Fully relevant and interesting ideas with evidence of maturity -Very well organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Satisfactory response -Ideas are reasonably coherent and convincing -Reasonably organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Inconsistently coherent response -Unclear ideas and unoriginal -Little evidence of organisation and coherence	-Totally irrelevant response -Confused and unfocused ideas -Vague and repetitive -Disorganised and incoherent
	Lower level	-Excellent response but lacks the exceptionally striking qualities of the outstanding essay -Mature and intelligent ideas -Skilfully organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Well-crafted response -Relevant and interesting ideas -Well organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Satisfactory response but some lapses in clarity -Ideas are fairly coherent and convincing -Some degree of organisation and coherence, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Largely irrelevant response -Ideas tend to be disconnected and confusing -Hardly any evidence of organisation and coherence	-No attempt to respond to the topic -Completely irrelevant and inappropriate -Unfocused and muddled

**SECTION A: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR ESSAY – HOME LANGUAGE [50 MARKS] (continued)**

Criteria		Exceptional 14–15	Skilful 11–12	Moderate 8–9	Elementary 5–6	Inadequate 0–3
<b>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</b>  Tone, register, style, vocabulary appropriate to purpose/effect and context; word choice; language use and conventions, punctuation, grammar, spelling  <b>15 MARKS</b>	Upper level	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Language confident, exceptionally impressive -Compelling and rhetorically effective in tone -Virtually error-free in grammar and spelling -Very skilfully crafted	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary largely appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Language is effective and a consistently appropriate tone is used -Largely error-free in grammar and spelling -Very well crafted	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Appropriate use of language to convey meaning -Rhetorical devices used to enhance content	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Very basic use of language -Tone and diction are inappropriate -Very limited vocabulary	-Language incomprehensible -Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make comprehension impossible
	Lower level	-Language excellent and rhetorically effective in tone -Virtually error-free in grammar and spelling -Skilfully crafted	-Language engaging and generally effective -Appropriate and effective tone -Few errors in grammar and spelling -Well crafted	-Adequate use of language with some inconsistencies -Tone generally appropriate -Limited use of rhetorical devices	-Use of language Inadequate -Little or no variety in sentence -Exceptionally limited vocabulary	
<b>STRUCTURE</b>  Features of text; Paragraph development and sentence construction  <b>5 MARKS</b>		-Excellent development of topic -Exceptional detail -Sentences, paragraphs exceptionally well-constructed	-Logical development of details -Coherent -Sentences, paragraphs logical, varied	-Relevant details developed -Sentences, paragraphs well-constructed -Essay makes sense	-Some valid points -Sentences and paragraphs faulty -Essay still makes some sense	-Necessary points lacking -Sentences and paragraphs faulty -Essay lacks sense
<b>MARK RANGE</b>		43–50	33–40	23–30	13–20	0–10

**Figure 2.4: English Home Language essay assessment rubric (DBE, 2015:18-19)**

The independent schools in South Africa, writing the NSC examination with the Independent Examinations Board (IEB,) use the Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG) in each subject for the purposes of planning, implementation and assessment. The guidelines for the assessment of writing are divergent as they stress the

importance of assessment, aiming to determine the success of the piece of writing as communication which includes using all the resources of language, structure and imagery to make communication effective (IEB, 2015:10). Creativity is regarded as problematic as it is difficult to measure; is not always present; and can be used as an excuse for obscurity, self-indulgence or inappropriate register (IEB, 2015:10). It is considered more practical to evaluate the level of linguistic competence, and effectiveness and clarity with which the writer's intention is communicated.

Rubrics are also the assessment tools used and a section in the EHL SAG deals with **Global Assessment and Marking to a Rubric** (IEB, 2015:10). Global Assessment is useful as a first indication of the overall worth of a piece; the teacher should arrive at an overall sense of the effectiveness and value of a piece of writing. It is advised that a particular category is established first by reading the first and last paragraphs only, then the whole essay, and thereafter the particular rubric comes into effect. The final assessment should take both the global assessment and rubric into consideration.

While the DBE rubric includes the assessment of categories which include editing and proofreading reflecting process writing, this is absent from the IEB rubric (IEB, 2015:46) (Figure 2.5). It can be presumed that the feedback generated from the GDE rubric will tend to be mechanical, focusing on correction, whereas the IEB rubric will encourage feedback that is not corrective or direct but rather open-ended, encouraging the learners to rethink and review their writing.



**NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION  
ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE  
ASSESSMENT GRID FOR PERSONAL WRITING**

Level	Category	%	Descriptors
7	Outstanding/ Excellent	90 – 100	Evidence of exceptional ability; consistent excellence. Distinctive evidence of own voice. Lively sentence construction. Precise language. Skilful use of imagery; real powers of literary expression. Able to control tone and subtle shifts in nuance exceptionally well. Striking impact. Content controlled throughout. Details revealing observation and knowledge. Flair of own voice is revealed. Well organised. Intelligent and mature. Skilful control of language usage and imagery, but there may be slight flaws.
		80 – 89	
6	Very Good	70 – 79	Well planned, but lacking the polish of an A. Mature thought and style with evidence of a strong own voice. High level of competence, skilful use of vocabulary. Perhaps minor inconsistencies and minor language errors, but shifts in tone still fairly well controlled.
5	Good	60 – 69	Interesting. Clear statements. Convincing. Sound, competent use of English with a reasonably well-sustained use of own voice. Direct, fairly well-controlled language. Efficient without much range in sentence structure. Some colour and vigour, but not always sustained. Style tends towards the ordinary and language errors do occur.
4	Satisfactory	50 – 59	Pedestrian style with distinct linguistic flaws. Ideas often not properly developed or tending to the dull and unimaginative. Some evidence of own voice. Lacking in maturity of thought, but fulfils the purpose adequately. Language, spelling and/ or punctuation errors are in evidence.
3	Mediocre	40 – 49	Candidate's control of language is worthy of passing. Structure is limited or content lacks originality. Little evidence of candidate's individual voice. Mediocre and unexciting. Expression is often quite clumsy and there are numerous language, spelling and/ or punctuation errors.
2	Weak	30 – 39	Candidate is often unable to sustain the topic for the required length. Candidate's content is often rambling and there is no evidence of the candidate's own voice or opinions. A lack of perception and a restricted vocabulary render the essay problematic. Language is often ungrammatical and unidiomatic as well as containing incorrect use of spelling and punctuation.
1	Very weak	0 – 29	Often very short. Flat, insipid. Essay may contain some areas of sense, but the content is poorly expressed. There is no evidence of voice at all. Lack of correct vocabulary makes it difficult to decode meaning. Language, spelling and punctuation is riddled with errors.

**Figure 2.5: IEB Assessment rubric/grid for personal writing (IEB, 2015:46)**

The difficulty of defining succinctly what good writing is, is explained in section 2.5.1 Process writing, as an expression of the writer's thoughts and creativity cannot be contained in the success criteria of a single assessment tool. What can be problematic with rubrics is that writing features referred to as 'manifest criteria' are presented in rubrics success criteria, creating a tendency to overemphasise structural more superficial criteria (Hawe, Dixon, & Watson, 2008).

How the transactional task rubrics were used in the four schools investigated are discussed in Chapter 6 and how the essay rubrics were used in Chapter 7.

#### **2.5.4 Feedback on writing tasks**

As was explained in subsection 2.3.2 learning outcomes or goals must be made explicit in order for learners to play a central role in their learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:81). In writing the absence of clear goals inhibits the learners' abilities to revise their work and thus, the successful development of their writing skills (Timperley & Parr, 2009; Hawe & Parr, 2014). In the learning of writing, clear, substantive learning goals are more likely to elicit feedback in relation to the goals that learners understand and use. Teachers who develop clear goals and provide effective feedback are more likely to have learners who are successful writers (Timperley & Parr, 2009).

Unclear goals result in the learners focusing on surface features of their writing. Hawe and Parr (2014:214) argue that learners will be motivated towards increased mastery if the learning goals are sufficiently challenging, this will enable learners to identify deeper features of writing as learning goals (Timperley & Parr, 2009: 43). While learning goals are superior to performance goals, studies have shown that performance goals are common in writing classrooms (Hawe & Parr, 2014; Timperley & Parr, 2009). Therefore, much of the observed feedback in the writing classroom is couched in affective terms, is not specific or in relation to a given task, it lacks constructive information and is difficult for learners to understand (Hawe & Parr, 2014:215).

Writing classrooms are no different from other teaching practices in schools in so far as the presence of assessment for learning strategies does not guarantee improved learning (Hawe & Parr, 2014). Traditionally, feedback to writing is written on drafts or given orally and is considered a significant part of instruction and falls within the theory of formative assessment (Parr & Timperley, 2010:68).

Ferris (2014:6) argues that teachers regard providing feedback to learners on their writing as a critical endeavour but filled with frustration and uncertainty. According to Lee, Mak, and Burns (2016), unfocused Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) is a

common practice among teachers; all errors are corrected. WCF is also provided in direct or indirect form; providing correct answers (direct) or simply highlighting (or underlying) errors (Lee *et al.*, 2016). The effect of WCF on language learning is debatable and Truscott concluded in 2007 that (a) the best estimate is that correction has a small harmful effect on learners' ability to write accurately, and (b) we can be 95% confident that if it actually has any benefits, they are very small (Truscott, 2007:270). WCF seems to be a controversial topic, particularly in second language writing classes (Ferris, 2010:182). Focused WCF, on the other hand, concentrates on a limited number of pre-selected linguistic features. The argument is that focused WCF is not as overwhelming for the learners and they develop a better understanding of errors importantly, learners are more prone to notice and understand focused WCF (Lee *et al.*, 2016:250). There are conflicting views on theory and research trends and the questions being asked about the effect of corrective feedback (Truscott, 2007; Ellis, Sheen, & Murakami, 2008; Ferris, 2010). Meanwhile, real-world teachers struggle to help their learners write more effectively, and, in some instances, learners fail to meet practical goals because of their lack of progress in producing more linguistically accurate texts (Ferris, 2010:182).

Written response in language teaching is an instructional act of feedback within the theory of formative assessment (Parr & Timperley, 2010:69). However, feedback in the assessment for learning paradigm demands a greater scope than corrective feedback. While the characteristics of feedback have received a lot of attention, there is a lack of research that considers response in relation to writing outcomes in language writing learning (Parr & Timperley, 2010:69). It is recognised that in assessment for learning and the teaching of writing, understanding of the goals of learning are critical to success (Hawe & Parr, 2014:213). Harris, Graham, MacArthur, Reid, & Mason (2011) explain that effective writing goals help writers understand the task, however, the goals are not limited to surface goals but include the writing conventions, effort and progress towards the goal, and the maintenance of motivation and performance (Harris, Graham, MacArthur, Reid, & Mason, 2011:189). Harris *et al.*, (2011:189) explain that writing goals should be clear but goes further to say that the goals should be well defined, achievable in the short term and at an appropriate level for the individual learner (Harris *et al.*, 2011:189).

Teaching writing means learners must be given opportunities to evaluate their own and their peers' writing, therefore, there must be agreement between the teachers and the learners not only about what the goals are, but importantly, what the success criteria are (Hawe & Dixon, 2014). Specific goals rather than general goals focus the learners' attention and result in feedback in relation to the goals (Kluger & DeNisi, 1998). However, as discussed in 2.3.2, sharing clear goals and the success criteria could mean that the learners' perception will be that they should comply with the criteria, thus, undermining the learning process. Further complicating the issue of clarifying learning goals Hargreaves (2012:11) contends that when a narrow conception of learning objectives is held by teachers and learners, then a limited practice of feedback will prevail. Rather than using precise goals and a standard set of pre-determined criteria to define progression and success, it is preferable to view progress as a movement towards a broad horizon or goal where outcomes and expectations are less precisely defined at the outset and multiple pathways to successful achievement are recognised (Hawe & Dixon, 2014:68).

In this study feedback on writing tasks was examined to determine how learners may use feedback to improve their learning in writing. As Han and Hyland (2015) note, the complexity of learner engagement is not only manifested in its multi-faceted nature, but is also evident in the individual differences demonstrated by learners using feedback. In recent years, researchers have called for a greater emphasis on context in feedback studies i.e., research that focuses on "feedback within the whole context of learning and on the learner's role in interpreting and using feedback" (Hyland, 2010:181). In a similar vein, Parr and Timperley (2010:69) suggest that research should explore the "interactive and contextual nature of response or work that considers response in relation to the writing outcomes". While feedback has a pivotal role to play in the writing classroom, much of the existing literature has highlighted its limited impact on learner learning (Lee, 2014:1). Lee (2014:1) explains further that there is yet no conclusive evidence about the efficacy of feedback across different contexts and therefore, it is not surprising that feedback has remained one of the most vibrant research topics in writing (Lee, 2014).

## **2.6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

Formative assessment has been advocated as effective in enhancing learning. Formative assessment has a particular process, consisting of interdependent steps which are most effective when incorporated into a well-structured instructional system such as process writing. Feedback as part of formative assessment is of critical importance in the success of learning and, in particular, the development of self-regulatory processes. The way learners receive feedback is important as the feedback information helps the learners address the gap in their learning and leads to self-regulated learning. The writing process is a process which can be aligned with the formative assessment process allowing for the effective use of the formative assessment steps and incorporating effective feedback practices. The implementation of formative assessment has been difficult for teachers and it is particularly challenging in the teaching and assessment of writing as writing is divergent. In Chapter 3 the theories underpinning the conceptual framework are presented. The theories considered led to the development of a feedback tool to facilitate the successful implementation of formative assessment in the teaching and learning of writing.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1 ORIENTATION**

The study seeks to explore the question of how feedback could be implemented to form an integral part of the assessment for learning process in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase in order to enhance learning. The importance of this question stems from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 on the role feedback plays in facilitating the assessment for learning process and how it can enable self-regulated learning (Black, 2015, Clark, 2010; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). To echo William (2011:2), after twenty years of assessment for learning research, the anticipated outcome of increased learner autonomy has been elusive rather than conclusive.

While the South African curriculum (DBE, 2011) expects informal assessment to be used as assessment for learning, the successful practical implementation of assessment for learning principles is questioned. In the teaching of writing, a process writing procedure is expected and this process is clearly set out in the CAPS (DBE, 2011) (section 2.6.2). It is further explained that feedback forms part of the writing process; however, the mechanisms of how the feedback is implemented or used by the teachers and learners to improve learning is not explained. Teachers routinely provide feedback but the efficacy of the feedback needed to be investigated.

Successful assessment for learning requires opportunities to be created in the form of feedback for a meaningful conversation between the teacher and learner, and the learner and peers about the progression towards learning goals. Effective feedback facilitates such a conversation consequently increasing cognitive development and self-regulated learning, and nurturing learner autonomy. The aim of this research is, therefore, to develop an intervention in the form of a writing feedback tool that would facilitate the implementation of feedback in the assessment for learning process in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting lessons in the FET phase.



Against this background, this chapter presents in section 3.2 four key elements from the literature review presented in Chapter 2 which emerged as the theoretical underpinnings for the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework which resulted in the implementation of a writing feedback that would facilitate effective feedback to improve learning in EHL writing is presented in section 3.3.

## **3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNINGS**

The theories and concepts that informed the conceptual framework are presented here. First socio-cultural theory and self-regulated learning are briefly discussed (3.2.1). Feedback and how it enhances learning is discussed (3.2.2). Assessment for learning as an approach to formative assessment is explicated in 3.2.3, followed by Writing and Presenting as part of the curriculum (3.2.4).

### **3.2.1 Socio-cultural theory of learning**

In this subsection the role socio-cultural theory plays in the teaching and development of self-regulated learning is briefly explicated. Firstly, as background, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (3.2.1.1), the zone of proximal development (3.2.1.2) and self-regulated learning (3.2.1.3) are explained. To further illustrate how self-regulation is relevant to learning, models of self-regulation are presented in 3.2.1.4.

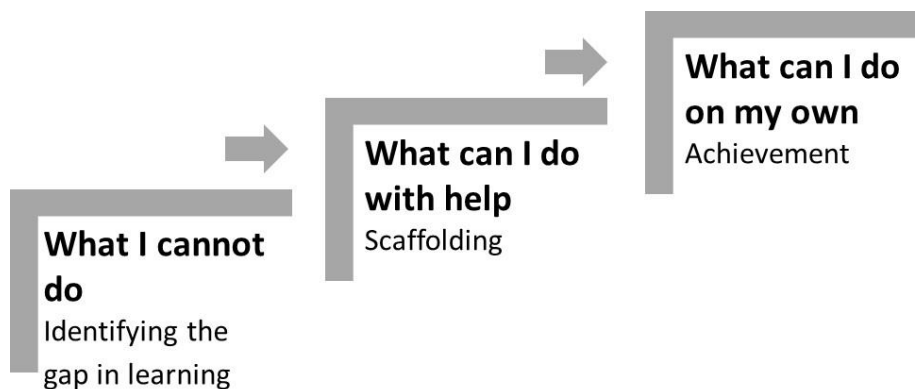
#### *3.2.1.1 Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory*

The central principle of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory of learning is that human consciousness arises through the dialectic unity of our biology endowed brain and "auxiliary stimuli" appropriated during participation in social practices. The stimuli enable us to intentionally control, or regulate, our mental functioning (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:8). Socio-cultural theory places the emphasis on children as active participants in social interactions that inform learning. The fundamental concept within socio-cultural theory is that higher forms of mental activity (e.g. intentional attention, voluntary memory, logical thought and problem-solving) are mediated by culturally constructed artefacts (van Compernelle & Kinginger, 2013:287). Vygotsky emphasised language as the most pervasive and powerful symbol (Duffy &

Cunningham, 1996) and it is situated at the heart of his psychological theory (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:7). Mediation is a term Vygotsky used to describe the human capacity to regulate not only themselves, but each other, resulting in self-regulation. Crucial to appreciating the relevance of Vygotsky's understanding of learning for assessment for learning is the notion of progression toward autonomy, and the teachers' role in facilitating this through the activities in which they encourage learners to engage.

### *3.2.1.2 The zone of proximal development*

Socio-cultural theory highlights human intentions and possibilities and how these can be developed (Thurlings, Vermeulen, Bastiaens, & Stijnen, 2013:4). According to Clark (2012), Vygotsky (1978) distinguished between learning and development arguing that development requires changes in the psychological functions available to the learner, while learning involves the gaining of new mental capabilities, without changes in the available psychological functions. Vygotsky believed that development is provoked by the tension between what a person is capable of and what that person is not yet capable of (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:157); learning is orientated toward development by creating cognitive conflict (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:158). The cognitive conflict is expressed in formative assessment as a learning gap which the learners and teachers identify and take steps to close. According to Vygotsky if and how this tension is resolved is the key to understanding the activity that unfolds in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:158). The ZPD, as illustrated in Figure 3.1, captures the process of how a learner negotiates the gap in learning with the initial support of an adult or a peer progressing towards independent learning. The move to independent learning lies in the zone of proximal development. What cannot be done is identified, addressed through scaffolded assistance (what I can do with help) to achievement (what I can do).



**Figure 3.1: Zone of proximal development (Source: adapted from (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:158)**

Lantolf and Poehner (2014:12) describe the ZPD as a social relationship conducted largely through language in which individuals undertake to help other individuals to appropriate and gain control over available forms of mediation in the service of mental and emotional growth. Mediation in the socio-cultural environment supports children’s development: “Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later on, on the individual level; first between people then inside the child. All the higher functions originate as actual relations between individuals” (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996:181), in support of this Wood (1998 cited in Black, 2015) reports that:

*Vygotsky, as we have already seen, argues that such external and social activities are gradually internalized by the child as he comes to regulate his own internal activity. Such encounters are the source of experiences which eventually create the ‘inner dialogues’ that form the process of mental self-regulation. Viewed in this way, learning is taking place on at least two levels: the child is learning about the task, developing ‘local expertise’; and he is also learning how to structure his own learning and reasoning. (Wood, 1998:98 cited in Black, 2015:167).*

### 3.2.1.3 Self-regulated learning

The ZPD is often seen in the context of dyadic interactions and reduced to a “two-person unit” usually an adult (presumed “expert”) and child (novice) working together to complete a task (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:155). Wertsch (1991 cited in Lantolf &

Poehner, 2014:155) suggests that the expertise brought to such interactions functions as a learning prosthesis, enabling learners to benefit from knowledge and experience beyond their own. However, the activity is not only from a more capable to less capable individual but involves mutual cooperation, or co-regulation. It is through co-regulation that individuals appropriate and ultimately internalise the forms of mediation available in a social environment and in this way eventually achieve self-regulation (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:157).

Co-regulation, that is the social interactions learners have with their teachers and peers, (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005:208) is based on the idea that learners themselves are active in regulating mediator behaviour through verbal and non-verbal means and in ways that may be quite explicit (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:158). Vygotsky's development of the concept of ZPD captured his recognition that particular types of conversations are especially effective at promoting the development of learners (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:12). As the mediation, such as the dialogue between learners and their teachers, is appropriated and internalised, the learner achieves autonomy or self-regulation and is then able to recontextualise the ability. This internalisation and recontextualisation of mediation is what leads to development (van Compernelle & Williams, 2012:42). It is our capability to use mediation that allows us to mediate others and in turn to be mediated, and therefore, we are able to become self-regulatory beings (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:8).

According to Boekaerts and Corno (2005:200), the capacity to self-regulate is central to our assumptions about learning, decision making, problem solving, and resource management in education. Self-regulating learners are actively engaged, are able to generate meaning, and can adapt their thoughts, feelings and actions to affect their learning and motivation (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005:201). Classroom learning is not linear, in fact, it is often described as messy (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005:199), Fosnot (2005:11) describes learning, real learning, as a messy business. The setting of learning goals, and sharing of intentions and success criteria are regarded as essential conditions for formative assessment to succeed (section 2.3.2). Whereas learners have the capability to use standards to direct their learning and to set their own goals and sub-goals, learning goals are not always adopted by learners, and if the goals have been adopted, some learners find it hard to focus on the achievement of the

goals (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005). Learners have two priorities; one is to achieve growth goals that increase resources such as knowledge and cognitive and social skills; the other is to maintain emotional well-being within reason. A self-regulatory concept of high relevance to formative assessment is volition (Clark, 2012:214). Volitional strategies are meta-cognitive knowledge to interpret strategy failure and knowledge of how to buckle down to work (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005:206). Positive volitional strategies prevent learners from deviating from their learning goals and concentrating on well-being goals (Black and Wiliam, 2009).

#### *3.2.1.4 Models of self-regulated learning*

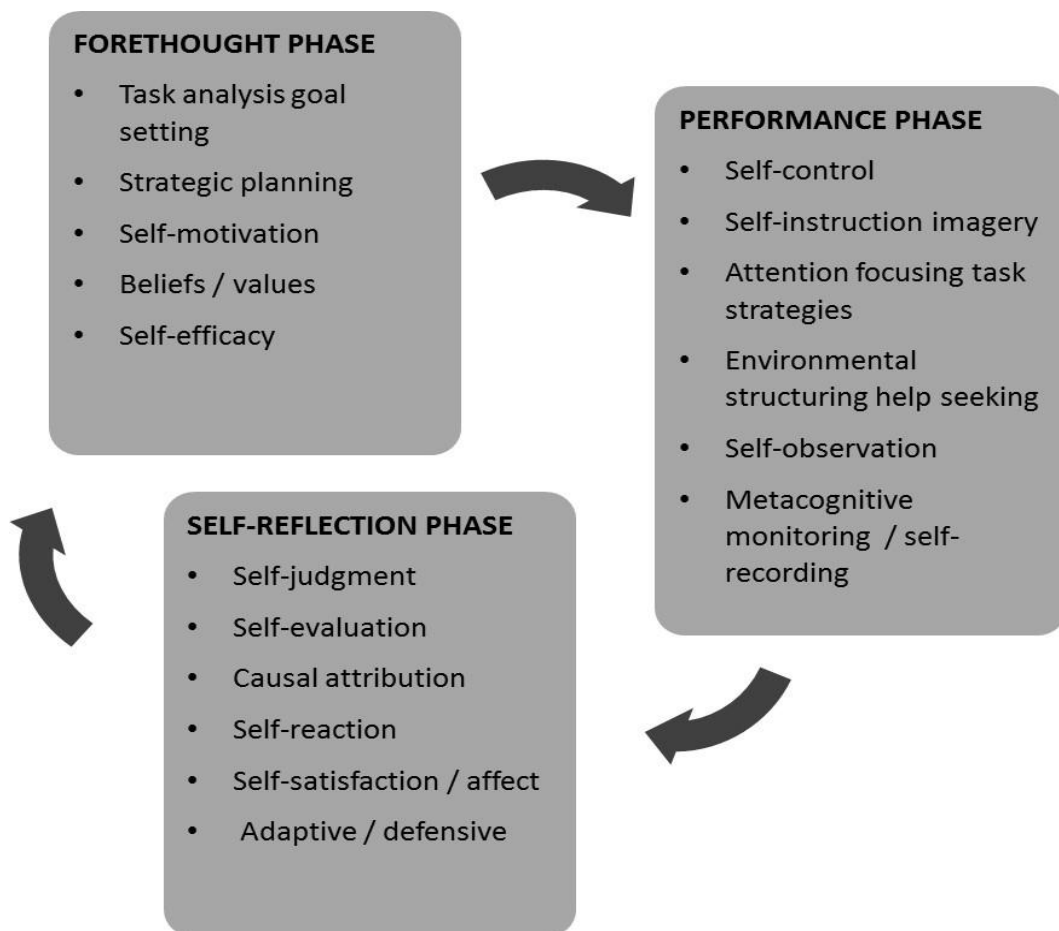
Not all learners are naturally self-regulated but it is possible to teach self-regulation. Pellegrino (2006) explains that learners can be taught to develop meta-cognitive strategies including the ability to predict outcomes, explain oneself in order to improve understanding, note failure to comprehend, activate background knowledge, plan ahead, and allocate time and memory. The teaching of meta-cognitive strategies is most effective when integrated into the subject matter and context (Pellegrino, 2006:5).

- *Winne's COPES model*

Winne's (2014) COPES five component model provides a heuristic for thinking about self-regulated learning. The letter **C** represents internal or external conditions a learner identifies as bearing on a task. The letter **O** marks operations; unobserved cognitive processes or observable behaviour (Winne, 2014:230). **P** refers to the products the operations generate, these may be internal, such as a judgement of learning; or external, such as a completed task. **E** identifies that an active learner evaluates qualities of work done in a task by monitoring how features of that work match against standards, the letter **S** (Winne, 2014:230). There are two ways in which a learner may respond to the evaluation of the success using the COPES strategy. If a goal is not reached, the task or an aspect of the task may be repeated implementing some change. If the learner is successful, the learner will use the same strategies or procedures again. Self-regulated learning involves monitoring experiences of learning and learning from those experiences—being meta-cognitive—about how to approach a task (Winne, 2014:230).

- *Zimmerman's phases and sub-processes of self-regulated learning*

Zimmerman (2013:135) thought it curious that a major gap exists in research dealing with social cognitive aspects of learners' learning since learners clearly learn many fundamental concepts in influential social milieus, such as the family, the classroom, and the peer group. In addition to this gap in research on learning, Zimmerman was also struck by an absence of research on learners' willingness to assume personal responsibility for their academic learning and performance (Zimmerman, 2013:135). Zimmerman (2013:142) proposes a cyclical model (Figure 3.2) of self-regulated learning (SRL) based on social cognitive theory to address the causal relations between SRL processes and key motivational beliefs, and learning outcomes. This model illustrates that a learner's learning processes and accompanying motivational beliefs fall into three self-regulatory phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection.



**Figure 3.2: Phases and sub-processes of self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2013:142)**

The forethought phase processes are used in preparation for efforts to learn and are intended to enhance that learning. Performance phase processes are employed during efforts to learn and are intended to facilitate self-control and self-monitoring of one's performance. The self-reflection phase processes occur after efforts to learn and are intended to optimise a person's reactions to his or her outcomes. These self-reflections, in turn, influence forethought processes and beliefs regarding subsequent efforts to learn, thus, completing a self-regulatory cycle (Zimmerman, 2013:142-143).

### **3.2.2 Feedback**

In this subsection the pivotal role of feedback in learning is explored and it is presented as a tool for self-regulation (3.2.2.1). Hattie and Timperley's (2007) model of feedback is explained (3.2.2.2) as it formed the backbone for the practical implementation of the writing feedback tool. This is followed by a brief discussion on the variables affecting feedback (3.2.2.3).

#### *3.2.2.1 Feedback as a tool for self-regulation*

Congruent with socio-cultural theory, feedback from teachers and peers facilitates the development of a rich internal dialogue that initiates the process of mental self-regulation (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014; Pellegrino, 2006) with the achievement of learners' various learning goals as the focus of their learning activities.

Effective feedback forms a scaffolding intervention (Clark, 2012; Thurlings *et al.*, 2013) which is identical to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and it is essential for the success in the zone of proximal development (Duffy & Cunningham, 1996:15). Teachers initiate and direct the teaching depending on the task and the learners' needs and the scaffolding in the form of feedback in the formative assessment classroom is contingent on what the evidence of learning shows (Heritage, 2013:81). Good feedback is all about using the opportunities that present themselves in the classroom (Black & Wiliam, 2009) (2.4.3) or, as Brookhart (2008:1 cited in Havnes, Smith, Dysthe & Ludvigsen, 2012:26) say: "It is just-in-time, just-for-me information delivered when and where it can do the most good".

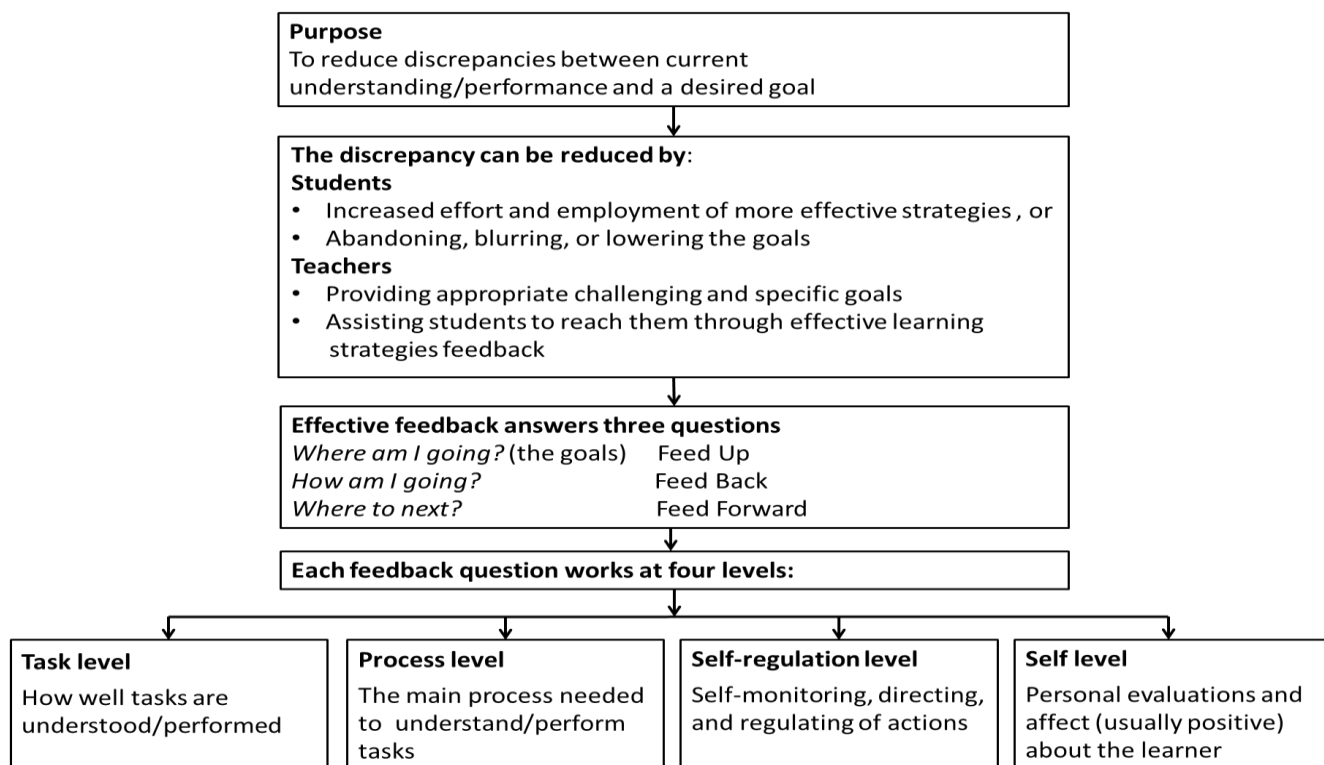
Providing scaffolded feedback to individual learners is a challenging task in the classroom which may be overcome by the learners using self-regulatory strategies. It is clear from the discussion above on self-regulation that learners are able to use cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies to regulate their learning, and in the achievement of their goals. Self-regulatory strategies also mediate the effectiveness of feedback when learners create internal feedback, self-assess, make an effort to seek and deal with feedback information and respond appropriately (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:94). However, as mentioned earlier (section 2.4.3), the provision of feedback does not guarantee its efficacy; the success of feedback depends on how the learners understand and are able to act on the feedback received.

### *3.2.2.2 Hattie and Timperley's model of feedback*

Hattie and Timperley (2007:81) conceptualised feedback as information by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. Feedback is seen as a consequence of performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:81), and is a critical part of formative assessment. The point made in section 2.3.2, that feedback is the pivot on which assessment for learning turns, is clarified by Hattie and Timperley (2007). Feedback cannot function in a vacuum, it is part of the teaching and learning process; providing instruction can be seen as one end of a continuum and providing feedback on the other end (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:82). The question is how the feedback information is used as effective feedback should be actionable. If the learners simply accept corrections and are not led through learning and self-regulatory strategies to address the gap in learning, then the feedback has not served its purpose.

The system Hattie and Timperley (2007) developed (Figure 3.3) is based on the major questions learners may ask about their performance, and the important aspects of performance that feedback may address to reduce the differences in current understanding or performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:86).





**Figure 3.3: Hattie and Timperley's feedback model (2007:87)**

The three questions in Figure 3.3 address the dimensions of feed up, feed back and feed forward and work in unison to help teachers and learners close the gap (Sadler, 1989, 2010; Hattie & Timperley, 2007:88).

The first question: *Where am I going?* relates to the learning goals to be achieved and success criteria of the task. The critical importance of goals in the process of learning has been established in Chapter 2. Goals direct feedback, therefore, without goals feedback is often confusing, disorienting, and interpreted as something about the learner not about their task or work (Hattie, 2011:4).

Feedback on the second question: *How am I going?* serves to help the learner compare the actual (or current) level of performance with the learning goal, success criteria or standard (Sadler, 1989; Hattie & Timperley, 2007:89). Sadler (1989:121) phrase it as *Where the learner is right now?* which is the learner's performance relative to the goal. The feedback can be relative to the starting point or the goal and is effective when it consists of information about progress and/or how to proceed. However, too often attention to this question leads to assessment or testing whereas

it is not the fundamental conception underlying this question (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:89). Feedback information about progress towards the goals, a learner's personal achievement, and performance relative to other learners can be most significant to this question (Hattie, 2011:5).

Sadler's third question *How to get there* deals with the appropriate action which leads to some closure of the gap (Sadler, 1989:121) (section 2.4.2). It is similar to Hattie and Timperley's second question as the feedback serves to move the learner to attainment of the goal. It is also comparable with Hattie and Timperley's third question *Where to next?* which is more consequential as teachers provide information, tasks, or learning intentions aimed at the next phase of learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:90).

- *The four levels of feedback*

It is recognised that the effectiveness of feedback is critical to its success. Hattie and Timperley's (2007) model includes four major levels and the level at which feedback is directed influences its effectiveness.

The first level is feedback about the task or product which is about how well the task is understood and performed. Task level feedback is mostly at surface level and it is often called corrective feedback, most learners see feedback in these terms (Hattie, 2011:5; Hattie & Timperley, 2007:91).

Feedback about the processing of the task, the second level, is more specific to the processes used to create the product or complete the task (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:93). Major types of processing feedback relate to learners' strategies to make adjustments in relation to the goal. These strategies would include feedback to self and seeking feedback using the requested feedback to reassess and continue to work towards the goal or to reduce the gap between knowledge and the goal (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:93). In writing process level feedback will address deeper features of writing such as language conventions, tone and style.

The third level of feedback is about self-regulation and self-monitoring directing regulating actions addresses the way learners monitor, direct, and regulate actions

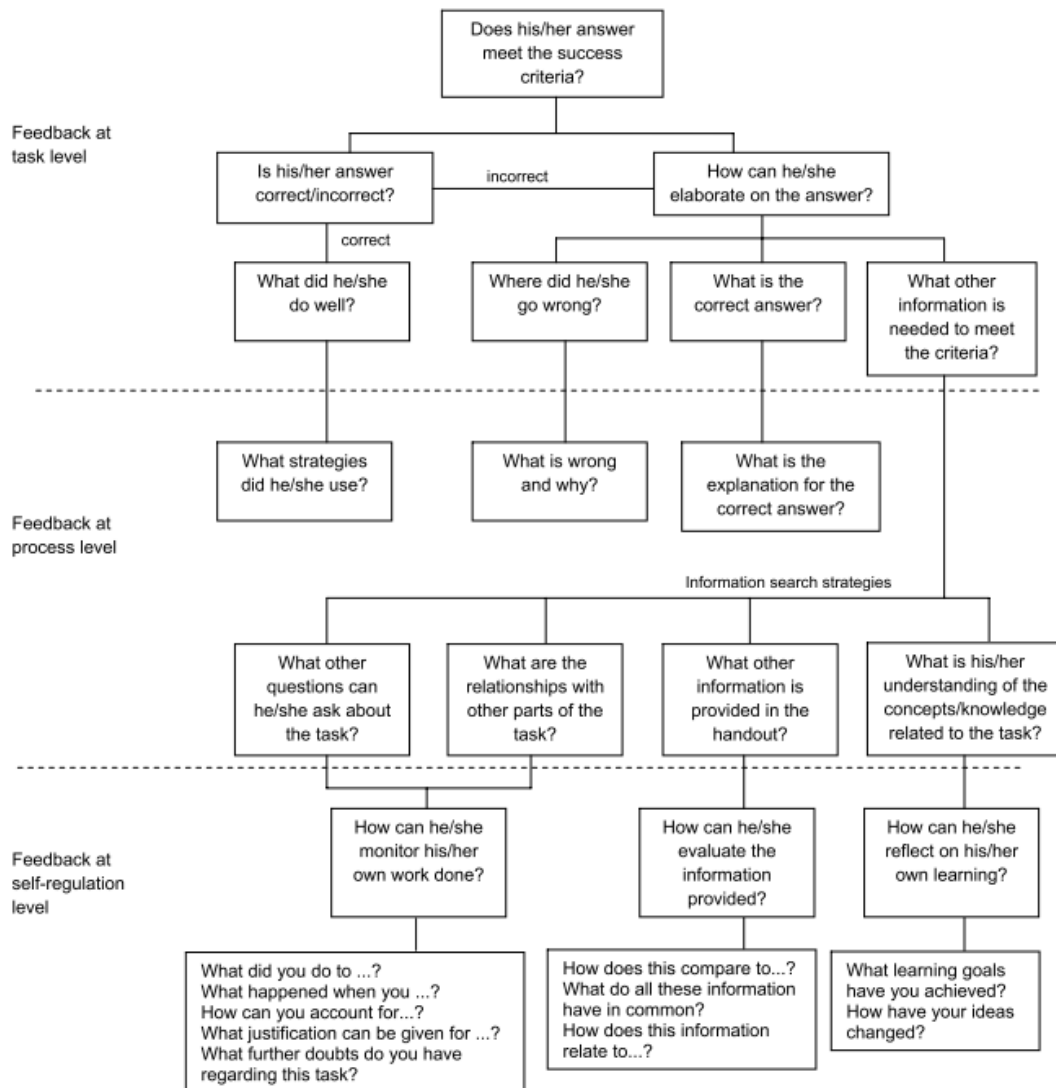
toward the learning goal. It implies autonomy, self-control, self-direction, and self-discipline (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:93). Learners successful at self-regulation would accept the feedback appropriate to their goal achievement and justify their learning strategies.

The fourth level feedback is directed to the 'self' distracts from the task, processes or self-regulation (Hattie, 2011:7) and focuses on well-being goals. However, self-directed feedback rarely enhances achievement or learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:7) and is, thus, not considered in this study.

- *Hattie and Gan's (2011) theory of visible learning*

Hattie and Gan (2011) argue that the explicit and conscious use of feedback leads to the development of cognitive and evaluative skills in developing understanding. Teaching and learning is, thus, made visible, leading to changes in teaching and learning strategies effecting the achievement of learning goals.

Hattie and Gan (2011) used Hattie and Timperley's (2007) feedback model to develop their theory of visible learning. The philosophical perspective is that knowledge creation is based on the development of learning strategies the learners use to regulate their understandings. With Hattie and Timperley's levels of feedback informing their view of learning, a graphic organiser (Figure 3.4) was developed to support the feedback process (Hattie & Gan, 2011:261). The graphic organiser incorporates the three feedback levels to provide visual scaffolding that facilitates explicit and meaningful feedback discourse (Hattie & Gan, 2011:261). The questions lead the process, the task level questions are perhaps most suitable to a convergent learning environment or subject. Writing, as explained in section 2.6.1, is often divergent and binary options such as *Is the answer correct or incorrect?* are not applicable. However, the questions on process and self-regulation levels are instructive in two ways: firstly it is a guide for the teachers to direct their feedback, and secondly, it makes the learning process explicit. The learning and self-regulatory strategies the learners are expected to use must be taught and modelled and the conversation that is developed by the use of effective feedback in the classroom makes the process visible.



**Figure 3.4: Graphic organiser on feedback levels and prompts (Hattie & Gan, 2011:262)**

### 3.2.2.3 Variables affecting feedback

Feedback may be provided but it does not mean the learners understand the feedback or that it influences their learning. Hattie (2011:8-11) maintains that there are seven variables that would impact the effects of feedback:

1. Teachers may provide feedback to learners, however, the nature of the feedback may not be understood by the learners.
2. Learners' cultural background influences the way feedback is received and the two dominant cultures discussed by Hattie are collectivist and

individualistic cultures. Learners from both cultures seek feedback to reduce uncertainty; however, learners from a collectivist culture prefer indirect, and implicit feedback, more group-focused feedback and no self-level feedback. Collectivist learners are more likely to welcome self-criticism 'for the good of the collective' and would ask for feedback to help them develop. Learners from individualist cultures prefer direct feedback particularly related to effort, are more likely to ask directly for feedback, and prefer more individual focused self-related feedback. Individualistic learners protect their ego and would engage in self-help strategies, as they aim to gain status and achieve outcomes. Learners from cultures where teachers are highly directive generally welcome feedback, expect teachers to notice and comment on their errors, and feel resentful when they do not.

3. Disconfirmation is more powerful than confirmation because being wrong is an opportunity to learn something. Confirmation is related to feedback that confirms a learner's preconception of propositions, independently of whether the feedback is appropriate or accurate. Feedback that corrects an incorrect idea or provides information that goes against expectations is related to disconfirmation.
4. Feedback is most effective when learners do not have proficiency or mastery and thus, addresses an incomplete understanding or gap in learning.
5. Peers provide feedback which could be incorrect. However, peer feedback is positive and teachers should acknowledge the role it plays in learning.
6. Teachers can use feedback from assessments to revise their teaching. Feedback that indicates aspects of successful teaching, areas in their teaching to address and the information on the three feedback questions considered.
7. Strategies can be used to enhance the power of feedback.

The most pertinent mediating factors related to this study are:

1. Feedback may be provided as marks, corrections or verbal and written comments; however, it is critical that the learners understand the feedback they receive, whether it is from the teacher, peer or self.

2. The power of feedback is undermined if it is not aligned with the learning goals or if learning goals are absent. Feedback from teachers and peers become meaningful if it is guided by the goals and structured as a conversation or discussion in the classroom.
3. The learning goals should include the use of effective strategies. The strategies will further guide the feedback and act as scaffolding for the learners in pursuit of their goals.
4. Scaffolded feedback aligned with the task goals may result in actions taken by the learners to close the gap in learning and focus on the next learning goal.
5. Feedback should result in actions by the teachers, such identifying gaps in the learners' learning and using the feedback information to plan subsequent teaching phases.
6. Strategies such as a feedback tool can be used to ensure feedback is actionable and thus, effective.

### **3.2.3 Assessment for learning as an approach to formative assessment**

Formative assessment and assessment for learning are often used synonymously to describe the process of using assessment effectively to enhance learning. A further complication of the terminology is the use of the term 'informal assessment' in the CAPS to refer to the assessments used for learning (DBE, 2011). However, the viewpoint in this study is that assessment for learning is, as Klenowski (2009) explains, an approach to formative assessment.

The purpose of formative assessment is to enable teaching and learning by stressing the meta-cognitive skills and learning contexts needed for self-regulated learning. Learners and teachers work together and use planning, monitoring and a critical yet non-judgmental reflection on learning, to make decisions about the achievement of future learning goals (Clark, 2012:217). The five stage model proposed by Black (2015:164) illustrates how formative assessment is a framework of a teaching sequence where assessment is integrated and the process culminates in a summative assessment.

1. Clear aims: The first stage of planning.

2. Planning activities: Setting up activities with the potential to achieve the aims.
3. Implementation in the classroom.
4. Review of the learning: Using informal assessments to check achievement.
5. Summing up: Using assessment to guide decisions about the next stage of students' work.

Informal assessment, i.e. assessment for learning at stage 4 is used to see if and how the learners are progressing towards their goals. Black (2015) argues that this stage is important as it is an opportunity to identify the gaps in learning and address them. Learners may also be able to see the relationships between different aspects of their learning. For Black (2015:164), feedback on written work is a link between stages 3 and 4, as learning of a number of lessons can be reviewed.

Hargreaves (2013:229) suggests that assessment for learning might be conceptualised as a classroom conversation in which learners as well as teachers assess how feedback relates to learning, which would itself constitute a major contribution to self-regulation and the learners' autonomous learning. Assessment for learning is linked to learning interactions and pedagogical relationships and is conceived not as "something that is being done to learners [but rather as] something that is being done with and for the learners" (Klenowski 2009:89).

An important function of an assessment for learning approach to the implementation of formative assessment is that it makes processes visible that accomplished learners may use to understand, evaluate and control their learning tasks (Willis, 2011:6). When learners develop strategies to support their learning they become active participants in their own learning and "move away from being the object of their teacher's behaviour" (James & Pedder, 2006:28). Therefore, the successful implementation of assessment for learning strategies results in learners becoming self-regulating, autonomous learners (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Willis, 2011). Assessment for learning is regarded by several authors as synonymous with self-regulated learning (Black, 2015; Bennett, 2011; Clark, 2012), supporting the importance of assessment for learning to enhance learning.

### 3.2.4 Curriculum levels

The National Curriculum discussed in section 2.6 informs the practice of teachers in their classrooms and is, thus, a crucial component of any investigation into classroom practices and assessment processes for Writing and Presenting. Thijs and van den Akker (2009:9) present five segments to aid the understanding of the different levels to which curriculum products may apply (Table 3.1). The English Home Language CAPS document, with its formative assessment elements, is at macro level and used by the language teachers to plan their teaching activities and the assessment of the learners; the schools' educational programme is at the meso level. The teaching of the Writing and Presenting skill in English Home language through process writing is enacted in the classroom, which is the micro level; and the learner's personal learning is at the nano level which links well to self-regulatory activities for this study and response to feedback. It is at the micro and nano level that assessment for learning is enacted.

**Table 3.1: Curriculum levels and curriculum products** (Thijs & van den Akker, 2009:9)

Level	Description	Examples
SUPRA	International	Common European Framework of References for Languages
MACRO	System, national	Core objectives, attainment levels Examination programmes
MESO	School, institute	School programme Educational programme
MICRO	Classroom, teacher	Teaching plan, instructional materials Module, course Textbooks
NANO	Learner, individual	Personal plan for learning Individual course of learning



Van den Akker (van den Akker, Gravemeijer, McKenney & Nieveen, 2006:69; Thijs & van den Akker 2009:10) adapted a range of three curriculum representations (Table 3.2) developed by Goodlad *et al.* (1979 cited in van den Akker *et al.*, (2006:69) which link to the curriculum levels outlined in (Table 3.1) above. The CAPS represents the curriculum vision and contains the intentions of the curriculum, these are in turn interpreted and implemented by the teachers. The implementation of assessment for learning in the teaching of process writing is at this level. How the learners respond to the curriculum implementation and their assessment results are the attained curriculum.

**Table: 3.2: Forms of curriculum** (Source: adapted from van den Akker *et al.*, 2006:69)

INTENDED	Ideal	Vision (rationale or basic philosophy underlying a curriculum)
	Formal/Written	Intentions as specified in curriculum documents and/or materials
IMPLEMENTED	Perceived	Curriculum as interpreted by its users (especially teachers)
	Operational	Actual process of teaching and learning (also: curriculum-in-action)
ATTAINED	Experiential	Learning experiences as perceived by learners
	Learned	Resulting learning outcomes of learners

At the level of the implemented curriculum Black (2015:161) writes that formative assessment is an incomplete vision and Howe and Parr (2014) describe assessment for learning in the writing classroom as an incomplete vision, too. In order to address the issue of successful implementation of assessment for learning, the intention of this study was to develop a feedback tool that would facilitate the implementation of the

intended curriculum and that would lead to attainment of learning and self-regulatory goals. The aim was also that the feedback tool would address the learning experience by facilitating a rich conversation about learning between peers and their teachers.

### **3.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY**

Hattie and Gan (2011) propose that it was time to see *how* feedback makes a difference in classrooms. Hattie and Gan (2011) argue that the concern with feedback should be less whether it is given, and more how it is received and used.

In this section the concepts and models discussed above are explained as part of the conceptual framework for this study. The approach is described in subsection 3.3.1 and in subsection 3.3.2 each part of the conceptual framework is discussed.

#### **3.3.1 Approach followed**

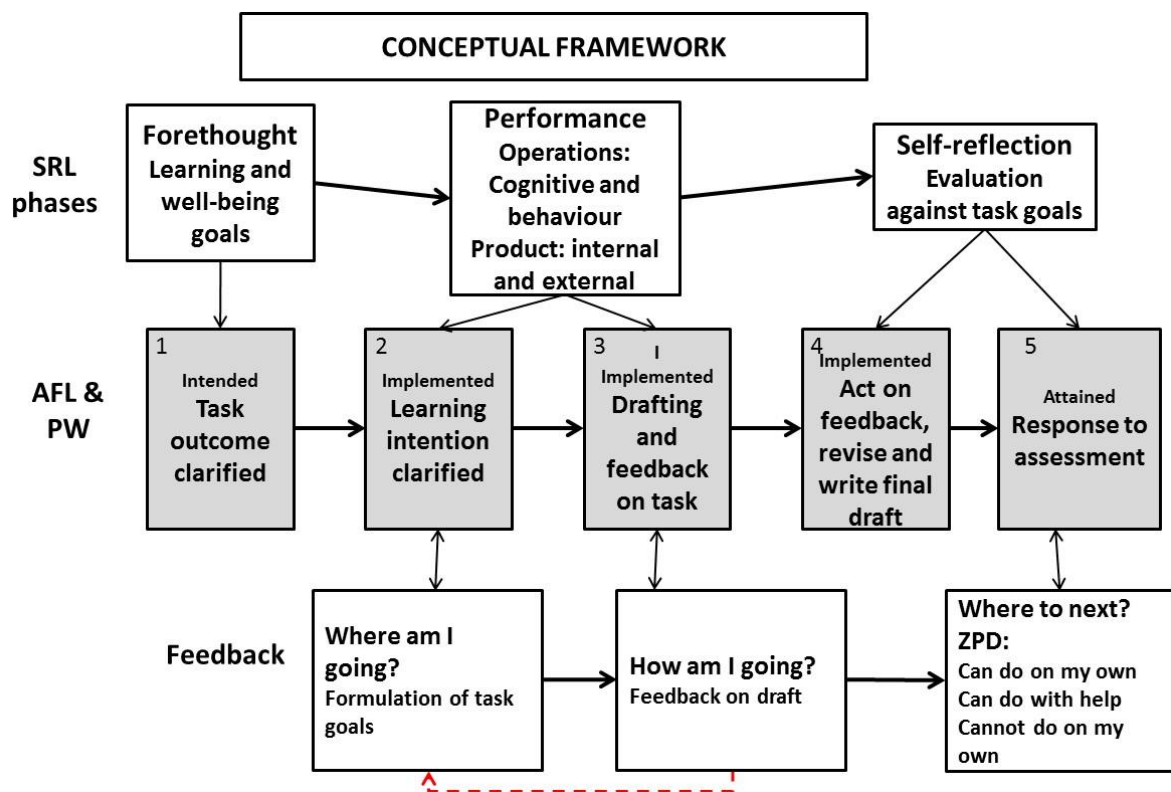
The conceptual framework presented here is the result of the converging concepts underlying formative assessment. Hattie and Timperley's feedback model (2007) and process writing (DBE, 2011), Zimmerman's Phases and sub-processes of self-regulation (Zimmerman, 2013), Winne's (2014) COPES model, curriculum levels (van den Akker *et al.*, 2006) and Vygotsky's ZPD (Davydov & Kerr, 1995:18) were integrated in the conceptual framework to indicate where it is placed and the role it plays in assessment for learning. The concepts were actualised in the classroom where the curriculum is implemented, the curriculum in action. Scaffolded feedback led learners to the achievement of their learning goals by using learning and self-regulatory strategies. At the attained learned and experiential level, the learners used the assessment to evaluate and adapt their learning (Zimmerman, 2013), identifying their success and where their learning could be improved.

#### **3.3.2 Assessment for learning processes in Writing and Presenting**

Three processes were merged to develop the conceptual framework: the assessment for learning (AFL) process was adapted to integrate process writing (PW) with feedback embedded (Figure 3.5). The aim was that the intervention in the form of a

writing feedback tool would manifest assessment for learning practices in the writing classroom.

The steps of the process were implemented in the form of a writing feedback tool. A description of the anticipated steps follow below.



**Figure 3.5: Feedback in writing conceptual framework**

- *Step 1 Task outcome clarified*

The intended curriculum is made clear by clarifying the intention of the writing task. The purpose of a writing task at implementation level would be either formal or informal assessment, the latter being assessment for learning. This first step falls under Zimmerman’s (2013) orientation phase, the learners set their learning intentions according to the purpose of the task.

- *Step 2 Learning goals and success criteria*

The teachers and learners set goals to achieve in the writing of the task. The feedback question, *Where am I going?* allows learners to engage with the task criteria, their goals and what success at these goals look like. Once the goals and success criteria are understood, learners can strategically plan (Zimmerman, 2013) the writing of the task as they identify the conditions bearing on the task (Winne, 2014). At this stage learners may analyse the task to break it into key components (Zimmerman, 2013:143) by producing a product such as a mind map or spider diagram. Proactive learners have superior task analytical skills and can set specific, proximal and challenging goals for themselves (Zimmerman, 2013:143).

- *Step 3 Drafting the writing task*

The task criteria, goals and success criteria identified in the first two steps focus the learning and activities to demonstrate the learning as at this stage of curriculum implementation further operations in the form of drafts are produced. Winne (2014:230) asserts that the operations are unobserved cognitive processes or observable behaviour. These operations produce products, these may be internal, such as judgment of learning; or external, such as a completed task.

The drafting falls under Zimmerman's (2013) performance phase. It is during this phase that learners exercise self-control and use specific techniques to direct learning such as self-instruction, imagery, attention focusing, task strategies, environmental structuring and help seeking (Zimmerman, 2013:143). The feedback question *How am I going?* directs the learners to compare their progress in relation to the goals and success criteria; it reduces the difference between what the learners understand and what is aimed to be understood and enhances learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:102). Feedback on the draft from a peer or the teacher may take the form of a discussion or a conversation which activates the learners' inner dialogue that in turn develops self-regulation (Lantolf & Poehner, 2014:12). Feedback at the task level is constantly given in classrooms via questions. Too much feedback at this level such as correction of spelling, grammar and structure move the focus to mechanical and

surface level (Graham *et al.*, 2013) and below the level necessary for high level performance such as processing (Hattie & Timperley, 2007:91).

On the process level, the feedback focuses on the writing strategies the learner used in the process of writing the essay. Scaffolded feedback would guide learners' strategies to make adjustments in relation to the goals. The learners would seek and use feedback to reassess and pursue the goal or to reduce the gap (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Feedback on the self-regulation level is in relation to how the learner is able to monitor his/her own work, how the learner is able to evaluate the information provided and reflect on learning, and how the learner's thinking has changed. Zimmerman (2013) argues that proactive learners use self-observation to guide efforts to self-control, such as meta-cognitive monitoring which is informal mental tracking of one's performance processes and outcomes. To integrate the feedback and close the gap between their present performance, the draft, and the final product, the learners record the feedback and strategies or actions they may take to address the gap. The self-recording makes the learning visible to the teachers and the learners. Zimmerman (2013) argues that self-recording can enhance self-control because it increases the reliability, specificity and self-observations. When learners can monitor and self-regulate their learning they can more effectively seek, accept and use the feedback they receive (Hattie, 2011:6). Steps two and three may need to be repeated (as indicated by the red dotted lines) if the feedback indicates that the learner has not shown adequate progress towards achieving the outcomes.

- *Step 4 Feedback analysed and final product*

The successful revision of the draft to produce a final product depends on how the learners are able to act on the feedback they have received. At this stage the learners analyse the feedback and take action. The actions could include accepting the feedback, rejecting the feedback and justifying their decisions or asking for further feedback or explanations.

- *Step 5 Reflection and evaluation*

The revised writing task is assessed by the teacher or the learners, depending on the task orientation, using the assessment criteria or assessment tool and, if appropriate, a mark is given. This last step demands self-regulatory strategies from the learners as it involves the teacher's and learners' reflection on the successful achievement of the task goals. The learners compare the task to the criteria used to assess the task (Winne, 2014); however, it is the reflection on the result that will enhance the learning. The two processes in Zimmerman's (2013) self-reflection phase are self-judgments and self-reactions. As the learners reflect on their task result, making self-judgments by evaluating the outcome, the self-reactions are self-satisfaction and adaptive inferences (Zimmerman, 2013). Winne (2014) explains that reflection on the task result will identify areas in which to improve, therefore, an aspect of the task may be repeated, implementing some change. Areas of success may prompt the learners to continue with the successful strategies. The learners are meta-cognitively engaged, monitoring their learning experiences and using their learning to approach a task. Zimmerman (2013) argues that the reactions of an unsuccessful learner may include modifying strategies or reactive learners may use defence strategies. These responses on the task result and the learners' understanding of their learning progress may influence how learners approach the next writing task.

Consideration of the third feedback question, *Where to next?* needs to focus on the next learning phase and the learners' reflections should include recognising areas of success and areas to develop. The reflections may also include evaluating the success of the strategies they used and, if necessary, how to adapt their strategies. The focus on the next learning goals and areas of development with the implementation of effective strategies may deflect the learners' attention from the assessment result and focus their efforts on learning strategies.

Within the process, a teacher may choose to repeat steps two and/or three, depending on the level of proficiency and progress. The process is repeated with the writing of the next writing task, building on the learning goals achieved and focusing on the next learning goals.

An outline based on the concepts discussed here is presented below (Table 3.3) as it was used to frame the development of the writing feedback tool to be used in the classroom. The first column contains the process writing steps, and the second column the feedback process informed by Hattie's three feedback questions (section 3.2.2.2). The third column represents the learners' possible responses to the feedback, and the last column the teachers' possible feedback strategies. These steps were incorporated in the design of the writing feedback tool.

**Table 3.3: Feedback tool development**

Instruction process writing	Feedback process	Learners' strategies	Teachers' feedback strategies
<p>Outcomes and success criteria clarified and agreement reached, examples provided, topic clarified = RUBRIC</p>	<p><b>QUESTION: Where am I going?</b>  <b>What are my goals?</b>            Task: Narrative essay 300-350 words            Topic</p> <p>Introduction/body/conclusion</p> <p>Process:            Plan/draft/revise/edit/final</p> <p>SRL: Self-appraisal            Self-management</p>	<p><b>TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>            What is your interpretation of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the task and topic?</li> <li>• the RUBRIC?</li> </ul> <p>Check understanding against rubric            Allocate time to task</p>	
<p>Plan essay</p> <p>Analyse topic            Draw spider diagram – use words or drawings to conceptualise essay</p> <p>Plan flow by putting ideas in order as paragraphs will flow.</p> <p>Show time allocated to complete essay.</p>	<p><b>QUESTION: How am I going? Where the learner is right now?</b>  <b>What steps am I taking to reach my goals?</b>            Task: Spider diagram.</p> <p>Process: Planning – understanding concepts of planning the essay and using the spider diagram.            SRL: Self-appraisal/Self-monitoring</p>	<p>Does planning reflect task and outcome, and time allocated?</p> <p>Check progress against rubric            Check time on task            Check concept: Is it complete?</p> <p>Instrumental feedback            dictionary/google/peers            Questions:            Read this, does this make sense?</p>	<p>Verbal feedback            Global – whole class            Conversation in groups or individual</p> <p>Direct feedback for weaker/novice learners            Scaffolding</p> <p>Indirect feedback for stronger/expert learners</p> <p>Self-regulatory strategies indicated</p>



	<p>Self-management/behaviour and correction or learning strategies.</p> <p>Seek feedback</p> <p>Response to feedback</p>	<p>Receive feedback, question, and check and accept feedback.</p> <p>Relate to task or errors.</p> <p>OR ignore feedback.</p>	
Draft essay	<p><b>QUESTION: How am I going? Where the learner is right now?</b></p> <p><b>What steps am I taking to reach my goals?</b></p> <p>Task: Writing draft/paragraphs, sentences vocab, and story line.</p> <p>Process: drafting, editing, using language conventions, variety of sentences, paragraphs to express ideas.</p> <p>SRL: Self-appraisal/Self-monitoring Self-management/behaviour and correction or learning strategies. Seek feedback</p>	<p>Check against RUBRIC</p> <p>Check essay underline/circle errors or areas to check and correct.</p> <p>Instrumental feedback dictionary/google/peers/teacher</p> <p>Receive feedback, question, and check and accept feedback.</p> <p>Relate to task or errors. OR ignore feedback. What am I thinking?</p>	<p>Weak/novice learners Direct written or coded feedback Scaffolding</p> <p>Stronger/expert learners Indirect written or coded feedback</p> <p>Use disconfirmation feedback</p> <p>Self-regulatory strategies indicated</p> <p>Response to disconfirmation? Strategies e.g., Relate to where it went wrong?</p>

	Response to feedback		Justify/explain decisions Address uncertainties Revise and edit
Respond to teacher feedback revise write final	<p><b>QUESTION: How am I going? Where the learner is right now?</b></p> <p><b>What steps am I taking to reach my goals?</b></p> <p>Task: Process: Revise, edit, final SRL: Self-appraisal/Self-monitoring Self-management/behaviour and correction or learning strategies.</p> <p>Seek feedback</p> <p>Response to feedback</p>	<p>Check progress against rubric Check time on task Check essay: underline/circle errors or areas to check and correct.</p> <p>Instrumental feedback dictionary/google/peers</p> <p>Receive feedback, question, and check and accept feedback. Relate to task or errors. OR ignore feedback. What am I thinking?</p>	
Analyse assessed essay	<p><b>QUESTION: Where to next? Which goals have I reached? What do I want to do better next?</b></p> <p>Task: Process:</p>	<p>Analyse assessment result and feedback relate to outcomes and success criteria – rubric Note successes – What did I get right?</p>	

	<p>SRL: Self-appraisal/Self-monitoring  Self-management/behaviour and correction or learning strategies.  Response to feedback</p>	<p>Note areas of development –  What do I need to work on?</p> <p>Reflective journal -  What was the progress towards the goal?  Which planning strategies were successful and why?  How did the feedback work for you?  What about the feedback did not work?</p>	
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### **3.4 CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

This chapter has explained the theories and concepts which have informed the conceptual framework for this research. The aspects of the conceptual framework were discussed. The conceptual framework was adapted to develop a writing feedback tool to facilitate the implementation of assessment for learning in writing classrooms. The steps informing the development of the writing feedback tool was presented.

In Chapter 4, the research design and methodological undertakings that addressed the research questions posed for this study are outlined.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 ORIENTATION**

In this chapter the underlying ontological and epistemological orientation of this qualitative study is explained (4.2), followed by a description of the research design and methodology and how each research question was addressed (4.3). In section 4.4 the data collection strategies are outlined, followed by the data collection procedures (4.5). The data analysis (4.6) is followed by the methodological norms (4.7) and ethical procedures in section 4.8.

#### **4.2 ONTOLOGICAL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION**

Vygotsky regarded educational practice as a form of scientific research and argued that the ultimate test of a theory is to be found in the real world where people engage in all the various social activities sanctioned by their respective cultures. For Vygotsky, the learners' interactions with other people, preferably a more competent member of the society, initiates the learners into the social, linguistic practices and artefacts of the society (Hattie & Gan, 2011:255). Education is enacted in the classroom as a social activity; a social accomplishment (Clark, 2011:164) driven by the school and community culture. Educational research has gradually affected most of our ideas about education and the practices we use to achieve our objectives in education (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:3).

Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam, 2009:5). The social world is not something independent of individual perceptions but is created through social interactions of individuals with the world around them. The qualitative approach is committed to multiple views of social reality whereby a researcher's respondent becomes 'the expert'—it is the respondent's view of reality that the researcher seeks to interpret. Social reality is assumed to be subjective and varied; there is not just one story, but multiple stories of lived experience (Hesse-Biber, 2010a:455).

Researchers always bring certain beliefs and philosophical assumptions to the research (Creswell, 2013). The researcher's views on social reality and the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired shape the choice of research design and methodology. The researcher must become aware of how these assumptions and beliefs shape their thinking and decide how it will be incorporated into the study (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research problems are usually formulated in order to address "real-life" problems (Mouton, 2004:137), and in this study the problem was the effective implementation of an assessment for learning process in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting process writing class in the FET phase. Mouton's (2004:137) Three Worlds framework provide a simple structure to differentiate between real-life problems (World 1) and research problems (World 2). Methodological choices in World 2 impact on the way real-life problems in World 1 are investigated. The philosophical and ethical considerations in World 3 in turn link with the methodological issues in World 2.

Our theories concerning reality are ways of making sense of the world, and shared meanings are a form of inter-subjectivity rather than objectivity (Walsham, 2006:320). A qualitative approach encompasses several research traditions that hold as their core assumption that reality is socially constructed and multiple (Hesse-Biber, 2010a:455). Constructive-interpretivism is one such tradition with the assumption that a subjective reality consists of stories or meanings grounded in 'natural' settings (Hesse-Biber, 2010a:455). Thus, the third world perspective is interpretivist with the position that our knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors.

Social constructivists believe that multiple realities are constructed through lived experiences and interactions with others (Creswell, 2013). This stance is congruent with the view in this study, which is that individuals use language to make sense of their world and formulate and express their ideas from a personal point of view. Through language and the exchange of ideas, individuals construct their own truth and learn to understand the view of the other, therefore, becoming aware of multiple realities and truths. The qualitative researcher conducts a study with the intent of reporting these multiple realities using multiple forms of evidence (Creswell, 2013:19). As is the case in this study, the interest is in the teachers' and the learners'

perspectives, interpretations and experiences of the way feedback in an assessment for learning process enhances learning. William, Lee, Harrison, & Black, (2004:63) report that Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, & William, (2002) state that teachers have generated a series of 'living examples of implementation' that have served to make it easier to introduce these ideas to other teachers. This has served as confirmation that the effectiveness of assessment for learning in the writing classroom is best discovered with and among the English Home Language teachers and learners.

Epistemology refers to a theory of knowledge, and contains two parts: a theory of knowledge and a theory of knowledge acquisition or creation (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010:34). It refers to what is known, and how it comes to be known, and is represented in the second world, the body of knowledge. A qualitative approach to research aims to understand how individuals make meaning of their social world. The social world is not something independent of individual perceptions, but is created through social interactions of individuals with the world around them. This approach is committed to multiple views of social reality whereby a researcher's respondent becomes 'the expert'—it is his or her view of reality that the researcher seeks to interpret. Social reality is assumed to be subjective and varied; there is not just one story but multiple stories of lived experience (Hesse-Biber, 2010a:455).

Epistemologically this study is situated in the social constructivist paradigm, constructivists in particular note that there is no 'objective' social reality 'out there' (Hesse-Biber, 2010a:455). Constructivists claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective. This paradigm recognises the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but does not reject outright some notion of objectivity (Baxter & Jack, 2008:545). Merriam (1998:6) explains that the view is that reality is constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have.

In the English Home Language Writing and Presenting classroom, teachers and learners are engaged in the process of producing written texts. Teachers and learners generate feedback to enable learners to take action in closing the gap between their current levels of understanding and the desired outcome. The teachers and the

learners engage in a conversation where the understanding of the task and how to achieve success in the task is constructed through a process of co-creation. The teachers and the learners bring their understandings and knowledge into the conversation, with their own realities constructing a new understanding. The learners' understanding of the quality performance aimed for, what success in a task looks like, and what they might do to achieve it, is directly related to the instruction and feedback received (Black & Wiliam, 1998b). Through a qualitative action research case study the aim is to form a better understanding of how feedback should be implemented to improve the achievement of learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase.

### **4.3 CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN AND ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was focused on the use of effective feedback as part of assessment for learning in the English Home Language writing classroom. Therefore, the study explored how feedback should be implemented to form an integral part of the assessment for learning process to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase. The premise of this study was that formative assessment or assessment for learning, of which feedback is an integral part, has not been widely adopted as part of instructional practice by the teachers, or as part of the learning by the learners. It follows, therefore, that a case study design with an action research methodology would be appropriate, to investigate the implementation of the writing feedback tool an intervention in four schools.

In this section the research design and reasons for the design choice are explicated (4.3.1). The sampling is clarified (4.3.2), followed by a discussion on the action research methodology and why it was used (4.3.3). An overview of the research questions and how these questions were addressed are briefly considered in 4.3.4.

#### **4.3.1 Case study design**

The empirical research of this study had a qualitative approach and the research design was guided by the overall purpose of the study. The qualitative case study



design provides an opportunity for the researcher to gain a deep holistic view of the research problem, and may facilitate describing, understanding and explaining a problem or situation (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The research design is the roadmap that guides the direction of the study from the research questions linking it to the case or unit of analysis and the conclusions. Yin (2014) relates that the research design functions as a guide to the investigator in the process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting observations.

The qualitative case study design with an action research methodology was regarded as appropriate to answer the research questions. The choice was supported by the view that case studies investigate a contemporary phenomenon within their real-life context and are used extensively in education (Atkins & Wallace, 2012:108; Creswell, 2013:97, Fletcher, MacPhee & Dickson, 2015). The everyday life, is where the problem is located and where the appropriate intervention or solution will be implemented. For researchers, the closeness of the case study to real-life situations and its multiple wealth of details are important in two respects: it is important for the development of a nuanced view of reality, including the view that human behaviour cannot be meaningfully understood as simply the rule-governed acts found at the lowest levels of the learning process, and in much theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006:223).

Case studies, as other forms of qualitative research, are a search for meaning and understanding (Merriam, 2009:39). The implementation of the writing feedback tool was exploratory in nature asking “why” and “how” questions (Yin, 2014) about the intervention. The intervention had no clear, predetermined outcome and the case study design supported the implementation of the intervention and the deconstruction and subsequent reconstruction of feedback in writing lessons (Baxter & Jack, 2008:543).

To understand how feedback as part of assessment for learning could be implemented in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting lessons in Grades 10 and 11, four schools were investigated. Each school was treated as a case each with its own context and therefore, unique experiences in the classrooms. The case study design applied was a multiple case study with embedded units. Four schools were each a case, and in each school one Grade 10 and one Grade 11 class were embedded units

within the school case. The Grades 10 and 11 English Home Language classes, as well as their teachers, were involved. The interest was not on one specific school or class, but rather how feedback as part of assessment for learning took place in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting classes in the FET phase. Therefore, each school and embedded classes were essential in developing an understanding of the use of feedback. The study resulted in a thick description of how the feedback tool as intervention was implemented as part of AFL in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase.

### **4.3.2 Case study sampling**

The motivation for the choice of schools is provided and background information about the schools given (4.3.2.1). Details about each school and its subunits are in 4.3.2.2.

#### *4.3.2.1 Sampling strategy and overview of sample*

The multiple case study with embedded units design enabled the researcher to explore each case, with subunits, which were situated within a larger study of cases. The analysis of the data within the subunits as well as between the subunits led to a rich analysis, allowing for the effective illustration of the case illustrate the case more effectively (Baxter & Jack, 2008:550; Fletcher, MacPhee & Dickson, 2015). According to Stake (1995), case study research is not sampling research as one case is not studied in order to understand other cases. Therefore, the choice of cases is driven by the questions we ask and what we want to learn about each school in its own context. In collective case studies balance and variety are important: the opportunity to learn is of primary importance (Stake, 1995:6). The units of analyses were four schools where the language of instruction was English and the English Language was offered at Home Language level. In each school there were two subunits - one Grade 10 and one Grade 11 English Home Language class. The class as subunit included the teacher and the learners.

At each school the Grade 10 and 11 classes, selected by the teacher, participated in the implementation of the WFT. However, for the focus group interviews and the learner protocols purposeful sampling was used because it would lead to information-

rich sites that could be studied in depth. The concept of purposeful sampling used in qualitative research means that the individuals and sites for the study were selected because they could purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2013:155). The specific case sites and participants had to be appropriate to the research problem and purpose where the research focus was on complex micro-processes; this is in line with McMillan and Schumacher's (2001:318) point of view. Creswell (2013:157) explains that a general guideline for sample size in qualitative research is not only to study a few sites or individuals but also to collect extensive detail about each site studied. The number of cases selected should provide the researcher the opportunity to identify themes of the cases as well as conduct cross-case analysis (Creswell, 2013:157).

South African schools are categorised as quintile 1 to 5. Quintile 1-3 schools are no-fee schools with contexts quite different from quintile 4 and 5 schools where school fees are charged. The four schools that were purposefully selected followed the South African curriculum. Three schools were Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) schools, writing the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examination of the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Of the GDE schools two were quintile 5 and one quintile 4. One school was an independent school, writing the NSC of the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). Both the DBE and IEB national assessments are governed by the Umalusi Council which sets and monitors standards for general and further education and training in South Africa in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework Act No. 67 of 2008 (RSA, 2010) and the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act No. 58 of 2001 (RSA, 2009).

As Hawkins (2015) observes, schools can be messy to an outsider and the conclusion was that sampling choices would have to include practical considerations to reduce logistical complications. The decision to include an independent school addressed two issues: the first was that the assessment rubrics differ from the GDE assessment rubrics. The writing assessment rubrics determine the learning intention, goal formulation and feedback on writing tasks, therefore, a comparison between the GDE and IEB schools added depth to the study of feedback in writing lessons. The second was a practical consideration. The GDE schools follow the CAPS teaching programme closely which means that process writing takes place at similar times in the school

term. The IEB schools follow a three-term school year, the longer terms give the teachers more flexibility in planning the implementation of the writing lessons. The IEB and GDE school holidays do not coincide which gave me some flexibility to conduct the research as the aim was to minimize the possible disruption the research may have caused. To further create flexibility in managing time, schools in close proximity to one another were chosen in terms of convenience.

Each school had its own contextual factors such as learner demographic, class size, number of lessons and duration of lessons allocated to the subject. The Grade 10 and Grade 11 classes were selected as the learners at that level were familiar with and had used some form of process writing multiple times. Furthermore, including two grades challenged the ease of use of the intervention at different ages and language learning stages. While the grades were purposively selected, the participation of the teachers was facilitated by the Head of Department (HOD) based on the teachers' availability and teaching and/or duty loads. All the teachers, except the Grade 11 teacher from school A, participated in the implementation cycle interviews. The Grade 11 teacher at school A continued participating in the implementation of the WFT and continued to engage in discussion, sharing thoughts on the WFT, thus her withdrawal had no significant impact on the study.

The teachers chose the particular class to participate in the study. In each class ten learners participated in a focus group interview and three learners in verbal protocols. The participants in the learner focus groups were selected with the assistance of the teachers as it was important that the learners were able to accommodate time for interviews. The teachers facilitated the choice of the participants; a mixture of boys and girls (in the co-educational schools) as well as a spread of academic ability.

With regard to the verbal protocols, the teachers initially chose learners who represented a range of ability. However, when the WFTs were completed, I purposefully chose approximately seven learners per class who were present in all the lessons and thus, used the WFT throughout the writing process. The teachers then assisted me in approaching three learners per class who would be able to make themselves available for the interviews. During the second implementation of the writing feedback tool the same learners, where possible, participated in the learner

verbal protocols. In some cases the learners had to withdraw from the study as they moved classes (Grades 10 and 11, school D) or were unable to make arrangements to be interviewed (Grades 10 and 11, school B). This did not impact the study as the learners were replaced by other participants. While the learners were purposefully selected, I had to accept that the choice was limited to participants who were willing and able to participate.

Table 4.1 below is an overview of the biographical information of the teachers who participated in the study, followed by Table 4.2 with the schools' information provided. What follows thereafter is a description of each school selected as a case and the grade subunit within each school to further outline the context.

**Table 4.1: Teacher biographical information**

<i>School</i>	<i>Teacher Grade</i>	<i>Qualifications</i>	<i>Years' experience</i>	<i>Home language</i>
A	10	B.Ed.	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	isiXhosa
A	11	N/A	15	Shona
B	10	B.A PGCE	1 <sup>st</sup> year	English
B	11	B.A PGCE	4	English
C	10	B.Ed.	1 <sup>st</sup> year	SeSotho
C	11	B.Comm Advanced Certificate in Education	19	Shona
D	10	B.Ed.	7	isiXhosa
D	11	B.A HDE	35	English

**Table 4.2: Biographical information of the purposefully selected schools**

<b>School</b>	<b>Assessment Body</b>	<b>Quintile</b>	<b>Type of school</b>	<b>Number of teachers in study</b>	<b>Grade 10 / class size</b>	<b>Grade 11 / class size</b>	<b>Duration of lessons in minutes</b>
A	GDE	4	Co-educational	2	1 class 43	1 class 37	35
B	GDE	5	Girls school	2	1 class 25	1 class 27	40
C	GDE	5	Co-educational	2	1 class 28	1 class 34	45
D	IEB	N/A	Co-educational	2	1 class 20	1 class 25	55

The nature of the study and the WFT implementation meant my close involvement with the teachers and learners over three terms. It was important that I understood the day-to-day programme of each school in order to organise the investigation, limiting the disruption as far as possible. While all the schools were well organised, unforeseen disruptions could not be avoided, these included teacher absenteeism and changes to the daily school routine such as fire drills, a visit from the police drug unit and sporting activities. The teachers went out of their way to accommodate the data collection scheduling allowing the study to continue despite the disruptions.

#### *4.3.2.2 Description of each school case selected and its subunits*

Each school and its subunits are described in detail here.

- **School A**

The school was co-educational government school in a suburban area, the area was regarded as a lower class, risk area. It was a quintile 4 school; it was fairly well run and had a full staff complement. The school's facilities were adequate but challenging.

The teachers had access to basic equipment but relied on the chalkboard and did not make use of other teaching aides. The learners were black English second language speakers and were from disadvantaged areas. The academic programme was an important focus for the school, additional activities were limited to cultural activities during school time. The school followed the five-day timetable rigidly.

### **Subunit: Grade 10**

The Grade 10 teacher was at that time enrolled in an honours degree in curriculum studies. The chalkboard was the only teaching aid, however, there was not always chalk available. There were 43 learners in the class, however, the teacher managed to maintain a controlled environment and an awareness of the learners' needs. In the classroom the desks were arranged in rows and space was at a premium. The Grade 10 learners were grouped together in classes according to their subject choices and this class was known as the Mathematics and Science group.

### **Subunit: Grade 11**

The Grade 11 teacher managed her classroom in a structured but empathetic manner. There was an atmosphere of urgency with a clear focus on the work to be done. There were 37 learners in the class, however, the classroom was spacious, accommodating the learners comfortably. The classroom desks were arranged in groups of five learners. Similar to the Grade 10 class, the Grade 11 class was the Mathematics and Science group.

- **School B**

The school was a girls' government school in a suburban area. It fell in the quintile 5 category. The school was racially mixed. It had a well-established culture of teaching and learning with formative assessment incorporate in the schools' curriculum, with the girls achieving excellent results. The school was well-organised, however, the five day timetable and lessons times were changed according to the needs of the daily programme such as tests and sporting or cultural activities.

### **Subunit: Grade 10**

The teacher seemed confident and had developed good rapport with the learners, creating a relaxed but workmanlike atmosphere in class. There were 25 learners in the class and the desks were arranged in two rows, forming a horseshoe shape. As a novice teacher, she was in the process of developing her teaching style and adapting to the teaching environment.

There was a whiteboard in the classroom but it was not an interactive whiteboard. No other teaching aids were used. There were many posters on the walls including a 'words poster' the learners contributed to, to develop their vocabulary.

### **Subunit: Grade 11**

The Grade 11 teacher was a past learner of the school, she had worked a number of years in a corporate environment and had subsequently decided to make teaching her career. She had a very clear understanding of the school's teaching programme and it was evident in her conduct that she was very confident in her subject knowledge and pedagogy. There were 25 learners in the class and the desks were arranged in rows of twos.

There was a whiteboard and a data projector in the classroom which were used as teaching aids. The classroom walls were populated with posters reflecting quotes, books and literature. It was clear that the learners also contributed to the posters. The classroom has what some would call 'talking walls'.

- **School C**

The school was co-educational government school in a suburban area, it fell in the category of quintile 5. The school was racially mixed with minority groups represented, these included the nearby Chinese community, the Muslim community and the foreign national community presenting a learner population quite different from the other three schools. Approximately one third of the learners were English Home Language speakers. This was regarded as a good school: the results were good and the learners competed at a high level in all areas of school life. While the school did not have an overt atmosphere of ill-discipline, maintaining discipline seemed to be challenging at



times. The school ran on a six-day timetable and on Tuesdays and Fridays the lessons were shortened to 35 minutes to accommodate a test period at the start of the day.

### **Subunit: Grade 10**

The Grade 10 teacher was enrolled in an honours degree in educational management. She was a confident teacher, her classroom management style was somewhat strict and inflexible. Learners who arrived late for the lesson sat on the floor in the front of the classroom and a roll call was conducted at the end of each lesson, this procedure was part of school policy. The chalkboard and posters were used as teaching aids. The Grade 10 class was grouped together according to their subject choices. There were 28 learners in the class and the classroom was spacious and the desks were arranged in rows of twos.

### **Subunit Grade 11**

The teacher was very strict; as per school policy learners who arrived late for class sat on the floor next to their desks and unruly learners sat at the teacher's desk. The learners seemed to be comfortable in the class despite the regimented teaching style focusing on completion of tasks. The chalkboard was used as the only teaching aid. There were 34 learners in the class. The desks were in single rows and the classroom was spacious although it was a prefabricated building.

- **School D**

The school was an independent co-educational school in an urban area. The school had a well-established culture of teaching and learning and achieved good results. The school wrote the Independent Examinations Board matriculation examination and had a three-term structure. The learners were black, English Second Language learners. The school was well organised and followed the 10-day timetable rigidly. The school ran a full day programme, closing at 3.50 pm Mondays to Thursdays and 3 pm on Fridays.

### **Subunit: Grade 10**

The Grade 10 teacher explained that her previous experience had been in an independent school where there was a close focus on effective classroom practices.

She managed her classroom well and it was noticeable that the lesson started in the corridor where she met the class. Once the learners were lined up she first informed them what they were going to need for the lesson before they entered the class. At the beginning of some lessons she informed the learners what the outcome of the lesson would be. There were 20 learners in the class with the desks arranged in rows of two. There was a chalkboard in the class as well as a data projector, both were used as teaching aids.

### **Subunit: Grade 11**

The Grade 11 teacher had 35 years' experience in teaching and was the head of the English department. She had a good rapport with the learners and had high expectations of them. There were 25 learners in the class with the desks arranged in rows of two. There was a chalkboard and a data projector, the teacher used both as teaching aids.

### **4.3.3 Action research methodology**

Explaining why researchers should choose participatory action research, Hawkins (2015:467) cited Bell (2010) as saying that it is particularly attractive to educators because of its practical, problem-solving emphasis. The study's main research question lent itself to an action research methodology as it was an enquiry, in collaboration with teachers and learners, into how the implementation of the writing feedback tool will influence their practice and improve learning. Most projects in action research turn out to be case studies, in the sense that they are studies of singularities (an individual, 'I'), in company with other singularities (other people, you and your research participants) (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010:165).

Action research might be defined as "the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of the action within it" (Elliott 1991:69, cited in Altrichter, Feldman, Posch, & Somekh, 2008:6). It aims to feed practical judgment in concrete situations, and the validity of the 'theories' or hypotheses it generates depends not so much on 'scientific' tests of truth, as on their usefulness in helping people to act more intelligently and skilfully. In action-research 'theories' are not validated independently and then applied in practice, they are validated through practice (Altrichter *et al.*,

2008:6). Action research is grounded in the belief that research with human beings should be participatory and democratic. (Ladkin, 2004:2). I was committed to involving participants in a democratic way (McNiff, 2010) and aware of the contextual factors such as relational practices, respecting the participants and being open to feedback and suggestions (McNiff, 2010).

Action research is about two things: action (what you do) and research (how you learn about and explain what you do). In action research, action is taken to improve action, or in this case improve practice, after a systematic, critical inquiry (Mills, 2014:9; Altrichter *et al.*, 2008:6). The research aspect is about creating knowledge about practice, the knowledge created is your knowledge of your practice (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010:7). Ladkin (2004:4) quoted McKernan's (1996) definition of action research:

*In a given problem area, where one wishes to improve practice or personal understanding, inquiry is carried out by practitioners, first to clearly define the problem, second, to specify a plan of action, including the testing of hypotheses by application of action to the problem. Evaluation is then undertaken to monitor and establish the effectiveness of the action taken. Finally, participants reflect upon, explain developments and communicate these results to the community of action researchers. Action research is the systematic self-reflective scientific inquiry by practitioners to improve practice (McKernan, 1996, cited in Ladkin, 2004:4).*

Action research in schools can be messy and complex (Hawkins, 2015) but as Black and Wiliam (2003) point out, “educational research can and does make a difference, but it will succeed only if we recognise its messy, contingent, fragile nature” (Black & Wiliam, 2003:628, cited in Black, 2015:163). It is, therefore, appropriate that action research requires the active involvement of all participants; its application should be a commitment to collaboration and partnership throughout the problem-posing, knowledge creation, and action-taking cycles of the project (Brydon-Miller & Maguire, 2009:88).

The collaborative nature of action research allows the researcher and participants to focus on the co-creation of knowledge about practice and improving practice through collaborative learning (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010). Role-players in schools are not

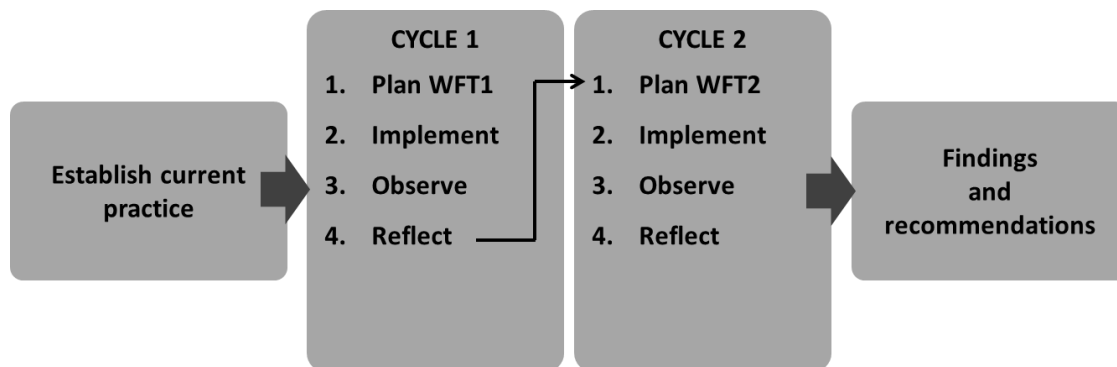
seen as mere participants, but rather as research collaborators and as experts on their own context who could take an active role in the research process. Following a movement in the 1980s by action researchers to develop more overtly critical and emancipatory action research, a new generation of action researchers emerged through social movements in the developing world (Hawkins, 2015). Hawkins (2015:467) cited Mac Naughton (2001) who explains that activists such as Paulo Freire (1993) and Orlando Fals Borda (1988) believed that research must represent, “educational transformation and emancipation by working with others to change existing social practices and by using critical reflection and social criticism as key research processes”. The collaborative nature of action research speaks to the manner in which groups of people work together to improve practice (Atkins & Wallace, 2012:130). The iterative and methodological nature of action research is suitable for the development, implementation and reflection on an intervention. The process of action research tends to take a cyclical form of plan (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010:95). The actions plan, act, observe and reflect are repeated, the observation and reflection on the action taken informing the planning and subsequent action of the following cycle.

To reach the aim of the research which was to find a way to make effective feedback part of the assessment for learning process, action research methods were employed in each of the cases. The aims and purposes of action research were to improve learning and practice and were in synergy with the objective of this study which was to improve the practice of assessment for learning in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting class by using effective feedback strategies. In this case the purpose of the action research component was to collaborate with the teachers to develop a strategy, in the form of a feedback tool, for the successful implementation of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase.

As stated by Lee (2014), researchers’ call for a greater emphasis on context in feedback studies has resulted in an increasing interest in teachers’ feedback practices in the real classroom, as well as learners’ perceptions of and reactions to teachers’ feedback practices in specific classroom contexts. Participatory action research with a strong emphasis on collaboration was chosen as the best strategy to conduct

research on the implementation of the writing feedback tool. The teachers' interpretation and implementation of the tool were critical to the insights gained and the development of the writing feedback tool.

The current practice in teaching and learning of writing in the four schools was established in the first phase of data collection, this is explained in section 4.5. The two action research cycles were then implemented with the following steps: plan, implement, observe and reflect. The observation and reflection on the implementation informed the planning and subsequent action of the following cycle as illustrated in Figure 4.1. The findings from the two implementation cycles informed the eventual findings and recommendations.



**Figure: 4.1 Action research process implemented**

#### **4.3.4 Research questions overview**

To further explain the data collection, the main and sub-research questions follow in this subsection again but with details about how the three data collection phases focused on answering the sub-research questions.

The main research question was:

*How can feedback be implemented to form an integral part of the assessment for learning process to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase?*

In order to answer the main research question, six sub-questions were formulated. The first and second research questions were:

**Sub-question 1**

*How is assessment for learning presently viewed and applied by English Home Language teachers in teaching Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

**Sub-question 2**

*What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

To answer these two questions selected interview and document data from the first data collection cycle regarding the current practice in teaching and learning writing were used to inform the development of the WFT and first implementation cycle.

The effective use of feedback moves learning forward, therefore, the question how the learners received feedback was central to the development and implementation of the WFT. Therefore, the lesson observation, interview and document data from the three phases of investigation were used to answer question three:

**Sub-question 3**

*How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

Questions 4 and 5 focused on the effective implementation of the WFT in the classroom, integrating AFL and process writing and the effective use of feedback. The data from the two WFT implementation cycles were used to answer these questions:

**Sub-question 4**

*What comprises an effective assessment for learning process in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

### **Sub-question 5**

*What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?*

Question 6, evaluating the efficacy of the WFT is answered in Chapter 8, the conclusions and recommendations chapter.

### **Sub-question 6**

*How successful is the practical intervention implemented for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?*

## **4.4 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES**

In this section the choice of data collection strategies is explained. The participants' views, perceptions and interpretations were collected (Algozzine & Hancock, 2006:31) and used to inform the description of each case.

In a qualitative study, data collection is primarily in the form of words rather than numbers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:41). Data conveyed through words have been labelled qualitative and can include direct quotations from people's experiences obtained through interviews, descriptions of recorded observations and excerpts from various types of documents (Merriam, 2009:85). The study included many dimensions of the rich writing classroom environment, these included the interactions between participants as well as the products, in this case the writing tasks. The feedback conversations between learners and their teachers as well as the learners and their peers were important in establishing how feedback was received. Hence the interviews and the classroom observation during the implementation of the WFT were investigated. Furthermore, how the feedback information was used on the WFT and the writing tasks were also of interest, thus, the documents were included as part of the data collection. The interviews conducted in English with the participants are explicated in the following subsections: 4.4.1 the teacher interviews, learner focus groups in 4.4.2, and learner verbal protocols in 4.4.3. The lesson observations are in 4.4.4, the document analysis 4.4.5, and critical conversations 4.4.6.

#### **4.4.1 Semi-structured interviews with teachers**

Merriam (2009:86) explains that in education interviewing is probably the most common form of qualitative data collection. Interviewing in qualitative investigations is more open-ended and less structured as the assumption is that individual respondents define their world in unique ways (Merriam, 2009:90), and qualitative researchers take pride in discovering and portraying multiple views of the case (Stake, 1995:64). The qualitative interview is about the participants' stories, and the researcher is interested in these stories, the interviewer becomes part of a conversation (De Vos, 2002; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The interview is not one-sided as the researcher is constantly trying to understand the participant's world and this involves reflection on the description of the world (De Vos, 2002:292). The qualitative interview is a meaning-making partnership (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) between the researcher and, in this case, the teacher.

Semi-structured interviews were appropriate here as it allowed for a level of flexibility; I was able to ask for clarity or ask further probing questions (Creswell, 2013:163; Merriam, 2009: 90). I used an interview schedule with open-ended questions that did not predetermine the answers but allowed room for the participants to respond on their own terms (De Vos, 2002:293). Three semi-structured interviews with the teachers were used to gather contextual information about the school, the background of the learners and their socio-economic status. The semi-structured interviews were instrumental in gathering information about assessment for learning and feedback. The teaching of essay writing in EHL Writing and Presenting takes the form of process writing, as explained in subsection 2.5.2. I was interested in finding out how the teachers viewed assessment for learning and the effectiveness of the writing feedback tool in the writing process. The questions at pre-implementation (Appendix B) explored the current practice and were adapted to be applicable to implementation cycle 1 (Appendix C) and cycle 2 (Appendix D). The teachers' interviews after the two implementation cycles included the writing feedback tool as the teachers referred to the tool to explain how they interpreted and implemented the tool.



#### **4.4.2 Learner focus group interviews**

Focus group interviews were conducted with Grade 10 and 11 learners at each participating school. The pre-implementation focus group interview explored the learners' understanding of writing learning in the EHL classroom (Appendix G). During the implementation cycles the purpose of the focus groups were to explore the learners' understanding and use of the writing feedback tool. Therefore, the learners brought their completed WFT1 and WFT2 with them to the interviews to speak to their use of the tool. The interview questions (Appendix H) focused on WFT1 and I was interested in how it was used in their learning of writing. Furthermore, the efficacy of feedback received was explored. The questions were adapted to suitably explore the implementation of WFT2 (Appendix I) as it was adapted in response to the WFT1 findings.

Focus groups are group interviews and a means of better understanding how people feel or think about an issue (De Vos, 2002:305). A focus group was chosen as a strategy because it is a dynamic process based on the interaction between the participants as they do not only respond to the questions but also to each other (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:166). The focus group generates unique data as the participants disagree, explain themselves and query each other (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:176) reflecting some kind of collective activity (De Vos, 2002:306) which aligns with how the learners engage in the classroom and the philosophy of socio-cultural theory.

#### **4.4.3 Learner verbal protocols**

Learner protocols were conducted with three learners from each Grade 10 and 11 class after each of the two WFT implementation cycles. The assessment for learning process has self-regulation and meta-cognition (thinking about thinking) as an integral part of the process (Pellegrino, 2006:5). Meta-cognition often takes the form of an internal conversation (Pellegrino, 2006:5), therefore, the purpose of the protocols was to explore with the learners how they used the writing feedback and how it enhanced their learning. The interview questions were pertinent to the implementation of the WFT, therefore, the interview schedule for WFT1 implementation (Appendix E) was

adapted for the second implementation cycle (Appendix F) to effectively explore the tool's development.

Swain (2006:1) argues for an alternative approach to verbal protocols based on the socio-cultural theory of thinking. There are two types of verbal protocols, namely, concurrent and retrospective (Swain, 2006; Trickett & Trafton, 2009). Concurrent and retrospective verbal protocols differentiate between thinking aloud while solving a problem and describing, explaining or rationalising what a person is doing (Trickett & Trafton, 2009:333). The retrospective verbal protocols with the learners in this study during the post-implementation of the feedback tool aimed to explore how the WFT facilitated learning in the writing of their tasks. The purpose was to understand the learners' use and comprehension of the WFT, I had a keen awareness of some learners' fear that their use of the tool WFT was possibly incorrect. The learners had their completed writing feedback tool with them during the interview and referred to it to explain how they used it. I took care to explain that there was no "right way" and that their interpretation of the WFT was useful to me. Furthermore, I did not question their use of language or the type of learning gaps that emerged, I wanted the use of the WFT to remain the focus of the investigation.

#### **4.4.4 Lesson observations**

Lesson observations were conducted during the two writing feedback tool implementation cycles. The lesson observations focused on the writing process in the English Home Language writing class and how effective the writing feedback tool was in integrating assessment for learning principles into the teaching of writing. Using a lesson observation guide (Appendix A), the lesson observations served to track the use of assessment for learning strategies to inform the further development of the intervention.

Stake (1995) explains that observations pertinent to the issues are needed to increase understanding of the case. One of the reasons to conduct observations as part of the data collection is to provide some knowledge of the context or to provide specific incidents or behaviours that can be used as reference points for subsequent interviews (Merriam, 2009:119).

#### **4.4.5 Document analysis**

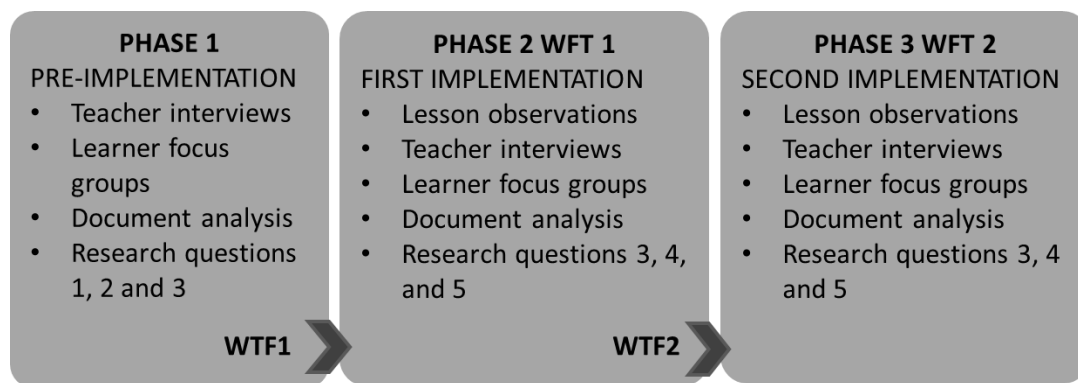
Both Merriam (2009: 150) and Stake (1995) state that the use of documentary material as data is not much different from using interviews or observations, as the data collection is guided by the questions, yet remains open for unexpected clues (Stake, 1995:68). A qualitative study of classroom instruction would lead to documents in the form of teachers' lesson plans, learners' writing tasks and official documents (Merriam, 2009). Initially the following documents were planned for analyses: lesson plans, assessment plans, assessment rubrics and completed written tasks. The documents were to be analysed to find how assessment for learning in the classroom was applied and feedback used. The written tasks were analysed using a schedule (Appendix J), however, during implementation cycles WFT1 and WFT2 emerged as a crucial documents for analysis. The learners completed the WFT at each stage; formulating the task goals, recording the feedback and their responses. Therefore, WFT1 and WFT2 became a primary documents in the analysis and findings of the data collected. The questions guiding the analysis of the WFT are reflected in Appendix K.

#### **4.4.6 Critical conversations**

Critical conversations in action research involve the researcher and the participants, in this case the teachers, talking about plans and intentions; and sharing learning (McNiff & Whitehead, 2010:150). As participants in action research, the teachers were not co-researchers, but co-creators and implementers of the feedback tool. The conversations with the teachers often took place before or after a lesson where observations and next steps were shared. In some cases the teachers engaged with me during lessons, asking for clarification or sharing insights. Recognising the value of the information shared I kept notes of the conversations both as possible data and to follow up with the teachers in further conversations or interviews. For a study to be meaningfully coherent, a social constructionist framework would employ member reflections—a practice that does not aim toward accuracy of a single truth, but rather provides space for additional data, reflection, and complexity. In short, the assumptions of social constructionism cohere with the practice of member reflections (Tracy, 2010:849).

## 4.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

In this study, action research was conducted in four schools stretching over one academic year. The nature of the intervention in the form of a writing feedback tool meant that the data was collected in three phases as demonstrated in Figure 4.2. The purpose of each phase is outlined, with the data collection strategies as well as the research sub-questions addressed in each phase. The first phase is explained in section 4.5.1 and the second and third phases in section 4.5.2.



**Figure: 4.2 Data collection phases**

### 4.5.1 Phase 1: pre-implementation

The first data collection phase of the study commenced with the purpose of gaining an understanding of how writing was implemented in the Grade 10 and 11 classes in each school.

The eight teachers were interviewed to ascertain how writing was approached through formal and informal assessments, how process writing was implemented and the role of feedback from their perspective. In each grade a learner focus group interview was conducted. I was interested in the learners' understanding of the writing process and the role of feedback in their writing. The first term writing tasks were collected for analysis. As indicated in Table 4.3 sub-research questions 1, 2, and 3 were addressed in the first phase and discussed in chapter 5. In answering sub-research questions 1 and 2, the focus was on the micro level of the implemented curriculum in action,

that is, the enactment of formative assessment in the classroom and in particular with process writing. Sub-research question 3 focused on how feedback is currently received, the focus here is on the nano level of curriculum implementation, how it is perceived as well as the attained curriculum - experienced by the learners.

#### **4.5.2 Phases 2 and 3 implementation of WFT1 and WFT2**

The WFT was implemented in two consecutive cycles, the first cycle in the second term and the second cycle in the third term. The WFT was adapted by responding to the observations and reflections shared between the researcher, teachers and learners. Participatory action research involves a collaborative model of research that seeks to include research participants, however, participants are not always involved in all the phases of the project. It is important that the researcher and participants have a shared goal (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:51). While the initial WFT was designed by the researcher, the implementation and subsequent development involved the participants. I relied on the teachers' input on the implementation in the classroom as the WFT needed to be practical, but above all it had to allow the implementation of process writing and assessment for learning. Additionally, the WFT had to facilitate the effective use of feedback, involving the cooperation of the learners as they engaged with the WFT.

The two implementation phases addressed sub-research questions 3 to 6 and are discussed in chapter 6 and 7. It was important to establish how the WFT enabled the learners to succeed in writing. Furthermore, how the WFT was used in the implementation of assessment for learning in process writing. The implementation of the WFT focused on the role feedback played and how it was received but also how it influenced the curriculum at the various levels as indicated in Table 4.3.

Ten learners from each class participated in the focus group interviews. The purpose was to explore how they used the WFT in their writing. The WFT included peer feedback and I wanted to find out how the peer feedback had changed with the use of the WFT. The learners participated willingly, however, particularly at school A, the learners initially struggled to answer the questions and I had to reformulate the

questions to “yes, no” questions. The learners acknowledged that they were worried about giving the correct answer, which I interpreted as a class culture of compliance.

I collected the WFTs and purposely identified three to seven learners to participate in the verbal protocols and, with the teachers’ facilitation, three learners were approached to be participate. The learners’ participation in the learner verbal protocols was determined by their availability which varied from term 2 to term 3 (4.3.2.1). The final three were learners who were willing and able to arrange time to meet with me. The questions were structured according to the sections of the WFT and the purpose was to question the learners with their completed WFT. I was made aware by the teachers that some of the learners were worried that they had not completed the tool correctly, therefore, I took pains to be careful about how I formulated the questions.

Table 4.3 (below) provides an overview of the data collection phase of the study aims to demonstrate how the elements are interrelated. The main research question and operational sub-research questions are presented and in which chapters each of the research sub-questions and associated data are discussed. The sampling, data sources and main focus for each sub-question are presented and in the last column how the research sub-questions and data link with the curriculum levels and the theories underpinning the study.

**Table 4.3: Data collection matrix**

Research question	Chapter in thesis	Sample	Data source for research sub questions	Research focus	Link with theory
<p><b>Main Research question</b> How can feedback be implemented to form an integral part of the assessment for learning process to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase?</p>		<p>Main units: 4 schools. Sub-units in each school: 1 Grade 10 class 1 Grade 11 class</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews Learner Focus Groups Learner Verbal Protocols</p> <p>Documents Lesson Observations</p>	<p>Teaching and learning strategies for the successful implementation of assessment for learning in the English Home Language Writing and Presenting class.</p>	<p>Micro level Nano level Implemented curriculum: Curriculum in action Attained curriculum: Experiential and learned Formative assessment Process writing Feedback SRL</p>
<p><b>Sub-question 1</b> How is assessment for learning presently viewed and applied by English Home Language teachers in teaching Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?</p>	<p>Establishing current practice Chapter 5</p>	<p>8 Teachers</p> <p>80 learners 4 x Grade 10 classes 4 x Grade 11 classes</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews</p> <p>Learners Focus Groups</p> <p>Documents WFT 1 &amp; 2</p> <p>Documents</p>	<p>Interpretation and understanding of AFL and Writing and Presenting, process writing in the CAPS. Implementation of AFL. Implementation of process writing. Lesson plans, assessment plans and assessment rubrics analysed to determine evidence of assessment for learning strategies: planning outcomes in essay writing, focused teaching to outcomes linked with the assessment rubric. Alignment of expected outcomes, teaching, feedback and assessment tool and teacher's assessment. Completed and marked essays will be studied to see how process writing is usually implemented and how feedback is provided and responded to.</p>	<p>Micro level Implemented curriculum: perceived and curriculum in action Formative assessment Process writing Feedback SRL</p>

<p><b>Sub-question 2</b> What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?</p>	<p>Establishing current practice Chapter 5.</p>	<p>8 Teachers 40 Grade 10 learners 40 Grade 11 learners</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews Learner Focus Groups Learner verbal protocols Lesson observation Documents</p>	<p>Development of intervention tool Process writing teaching strategies</p> <p>Teachers and learners to reflect on how the tool facilitated the assessment for learning process in process writing. Their experience using feedback strategies considered: Learners' response to feedback. Feedback learners requested. Learners' response to feedback questions wWhere am I going? How am I going? Where to next? Learners' response to task strategies. Learners' response to process strategies. Self-regulation developed during process.</p>	<p>Micro level Implemented curriculum: perceived and curriculum in action Formative assessment Process writing Feedback SRL</p>
<p><b>Sub-question 3</b> How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?</p>	<p>Establishing current practice Chapter 5 and implementation on cycles of WFT Chapters 6 and 7</p>	<p>8 Teachers Grade 10 learners Grade 11 learners</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews Learner Focus Groups Learner Verbal Protocols</p> <p>Documents WFT 1 &amp; 2</p> <p>Lesson observation</p>	<p>Effective use of feedback strategies to facilitate learning, SRL strategies Feedback received The learners will be asked to reflect on how they receive the feedback and whether the feedback tool was helpful in advancing learning.</p>	<p>Nano level Implemented curriculum: perceived Attained curriculum: experiential Formative assessment Process writing Feedback SRL</p>
<p><b>Sub-question 4</b> What comprises an assessment for learning process in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?</p>	<p>Implementation on cycles of the WFT Chapters 6 and 7</p>	<p>8 Teachers Grade 10 Writing and Presenting lessons. Grade 11 Writing and Presenting lessons</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews Learner Focus Groups Learner Verbal protocols Lesson Observation Documents WFT 1 &amp; 2</p>	<p>AFL strategies in process writing lessons. Teachers describe planning strategies: clarification of outcome, success criteria, (sharing rubric?) instructing planning and drafting process, guidelines on PAS feedback. How is process writing implemented? AFL strategies in process writing lessons</p>	<p>Micro level Implemented curriculum: Curriculum in action Attained curriculum: Experiential and learned Formative assessment Process writing</p>



<p><b>Sub-question 5</b> What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?</p>	<p>Implementation cycles of the WFT Chapters 6 and 7</p>	<p>8 Teachers Grade 10 learners Grade 11 learners</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews Learner Focus Groups Learner Verbal protocols Lesson Observation Documents WFT 1 &amp; 2</p>	<p>Development of intervention AFL strategies integrated in process writing with teacher input. Tool adapted for effective use in writing lessons</p>	<p>Micro level Nano level Implemented curriculum: Curriculum in action Attained curriculum: Experiential and learned Formative assessment Process writing Feedback SRL</p>
<p><b>Sub-question 6</b> How effective is the practical intervention implemented for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?</p>	<p>Conclusions and recommendations Chapter 8</p>	<p>8 Teachers Grade 10 learners Grade 11 learners</p>	<p>Teacher Interviews Learner Focus Groups Learner Verbal Protocols Lesson observation Documents WFT 1 &amp; 2</p>	<p>Effective integration of AFL strategies Evaluate how effective the tool is post-implementation</p>	<p>Micro level Nano level Implemented curriculum: Curriculum in action Attained curriculum: Experiential and learned Formative assessment Process writing Feedback SRL</p>

## **4.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

Qualitative grounded theory analysis techniques were used to derive meaning from the data collected. Firstly the organisation of the data is briefly explained (4.6.1). Then the analysis techniques are explained in 4.6.2 followed by the coding and theming of the data in 4.6.3.

### **4.6.1 Organisation of the data**

As mentioned in section 4.4, the multiple data collection strategies were instrumental in the effort to capture the multi-faceted writing classroom. The result of the data collection phase was that this study, as in any other qualitative study, produced a large volume of data in non-standard format and one way of interpreting the data was to become immersed in the data and to make an intuitive attempt to identify key categories and connections (Baxter & Jack, 2008: 554; Denscombe, 2005:2710).

Qualitative data analysis is a relatively systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising, and interpreting to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:462). The goal is to analytically reduce data to combine pieces of information into categories (Hesse-Biber, 2010b; Kolb, 2012:84). McMillan and Schumacher (2001:461) maintain that qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories. The interview questions were organised in categories to address the steps in the WFT, however, most categories and patterns emerged from the data, rather than being imposed on the data prior to data collection.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:464) analysis begins as soon as the first set of data is gathered and runs parallel to data collection because each activity (data collections and interim analysis) informs and drives the other activities. The action research methodology, in particular the implementation cycles (Figure 4.1) supported the methodical observation of data and reflection on the information gathered. Merriam (2009:85) states that data is nothing more than ordinary bits and pieces of information found in the environment and it depends solely on the

researcher's interest and perspective whether information becomes data. During the three data collection phases the immersion of the data included a process of discernment, carefully reading the information and deciding what would be included as data. The WFT and the concept of AFL were new to some of the teachers and most of the learners. It was noticeable that in some interviews, particularly the first WFT implementation cycle, the participants' tentative responses reflected their uncertainty about the questions. While this observation created depth to my understanding of the context, it also meant that some of the information was not included as data.

#### 4.6.2 Grounded theory data analysis

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006:358) illustrate the steps in data analysis and interpretation in a visual model (Figure 4.3). The data preparation involved the verbatim transcription of the teacher interviews, the learner focus group interviews and the learner verbal protocols. The transcripts were added to the Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) ATLAS.ti which was used to assist with the data preparation, data exploration and specification of data processes. The study produced substantial data sets and, in order to manage, a separate project for each of the three phases was created. During the data preparation and exploration phases I had the opportunity to engage with the data by listening to the interview recordings and checking the transcripts. The audio of the interviews revealed the tone and intonation of the interviewees and provided further insights regarding the context in which teaching and learning took place.

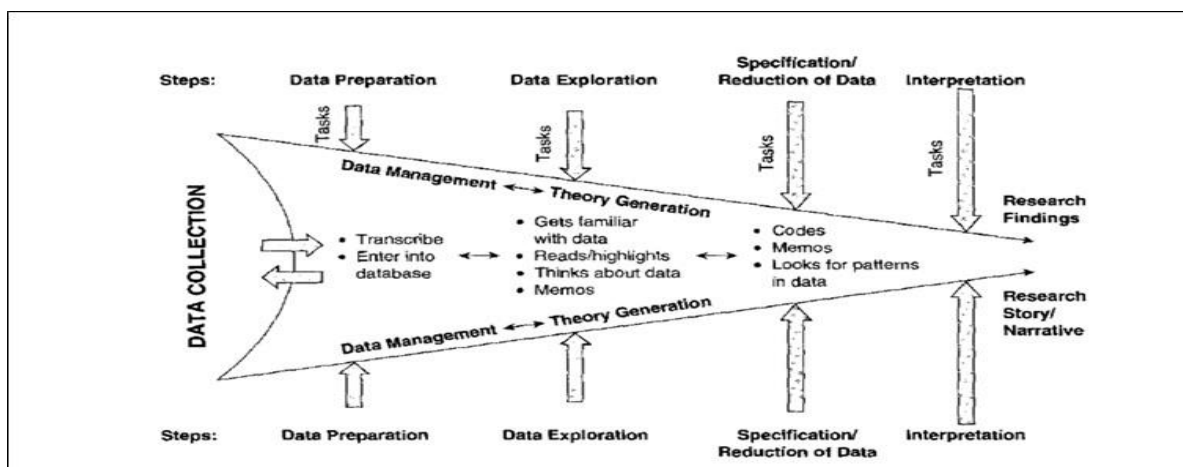


Figure 4.3: Steps in data analysis and interpretation: a visual model Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2006: 358)

Grounded theory data analysis is a method of explication and emergence; it begins with the empirical world and builds an inductive understanding of it as events unfold and knowledge accrues (Charmaz, 2008:155). The method takes a systematic inductive, comparative, and interactive approach to inquiry and offers several open-ended strategies for conducting emergent inquiry (Charmaz, 2008:155). Data collection and analysis procedures in grounded theory are explicit and the pacing of these procedures is, at once, simultaneous, sequential, subsequent, scheduled and serendipitous, forming an integrated methodological 'whole' that enables the emergence of conceptual theory which is different from the thematic analysis characteristic of qualitative data analysis research (Glaser & Holton, 2007:48).

Many qualitative researchers have adopted grounded theory strategies when engaging in simultaneous data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2012:3). Grounded theory was chosen as the application of specific types of codes to data through cumulative coding cycles ultimately lead to the development of a theory rooted in the original data (Saldaña, 2009: 42). Data collection and analysis are streamlined as data and emerging ideas are analysed throughout the investigation and appropriate to the case study where through action research the WFT emerged. The emerging analyses is studied focusing on data collection and analytical questions. Through grounded theory strategies the researcher controls and advances the research process (Charmaz, 2012:4).

#### **4.6.3 Coding and theming the data**

A code is a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing attribute for a portion of language-based data (Saldaña, 2009:3). The analysis of the data collected was conducted in multiple phases where the recoding further managed, filtered, highlighted, and focused the significant features of the qualitative data record for generating categories, themes, and concepts (Saldaña, 2009:8). The coding methods were chosen to capture the complexity of the data. Therefore, coding methods were used that were appropriate for the analysis of interviews, observations and documents. The process followed was informed by Saldaña, (2009) and is presented in a data analysis matrix in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Data analysis matrix**

Collection instruments	Phase 1 – coding	Phase 2 - coding
<p><b>Interviews</b> Eight individual teachers Verbal protocols Three Individual learners per class Focus groups One group of 10 learners per class</p> <p><b>Lesson Observations</b> Writing lessons 1 Grade 10 class 1 Grade 11 class</p> <p><b>Documents</b> Completed WFT1 &amp; WFT2 Assessed tasks.</p>	<p><b>Attribute coding</b> Participant information and contexts for analysis and interpretation.</p> <p><b>Descriptive coding</b> The interviews were coded using phrases to summarise the data in the interview transcripts</p> <p><b>Analysis</b> thematic and within-case and cross-case</p> <p><b>Initial</b> (Open coding) Breaking down the data, comparing the data while open to emergent themes.</p> <p><b>Analysis</b> Line by line coding Theming data</p>	<p><b>Focused coding</b> Data categorised based on thematic or conceptual similarity. Categories are constructed emergently from the reorganization and categorization of participant data.</p> <p><b>Theoretical Coding</b> covers the other codes and categories in the analysis.</p> <p><b>Analysis</b> Describing themes and subthemes</p>

Attribute coding is particularly appropriate for studies with multiple participants and sites such as a multiple case study as well as a variety of data forms (Saldaña, 2009:56). Each school has its own unique context, the details of which were established before the data collection commenced. The following details were included:

- A description of the school's details.
- The lessons observed.
- Individual teacher interviews.
- Focus group Interviews.

- Learner verbal protocols.
- The teachers' qualifications and teaching experience.
- The learners' grade.

The analysis of the data in this case involved two phases, the first consisted of descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2009:70) and open coding (Saldaña, 2009:81). In the second phase focused coding (Saldaña, 2009:155) was used. During this phase of the coding process data was compared and questions asked about what was and what was not understood (Kolb, 2012:82). The AFL and process writing steps which were critical components created natural categories of investigation. The pre-implementation interview questions focused on formal and informal assessments, process writing, feedback and assessment of writing. The interviews conducted during implementation of the WFT were constructed to interrogate the WFT and its steps. The questions organised the data and resulted in initial deductive coding of the data. The interviews were semi-structured and the interviewees sometimes answered more than one question at a time. Using the questions as categories, the initial theming was facilitated. The interview transcripts and lesson observations were read and analysed line by line, further categorising the data by allocating descriptive coding in the form of a short phrase. Descriptive coding was essential groundwork for the second cycle of coding as it led to a categorised inventory of the data's contents. Descriptive coding summarised in a word (usually a noun) or a phrase the basic topic and not the content of a passage of qualitative data (Saldaña, 2009:70). The data collected from the lesson observations and the learners' essays was analysed using descriptive coding.

The analysis (codes) came directly from reading and thinking about the data in an iterative process. After the initial coding the codes are revisited and broken down (Hesse-Biber, 2010b). The first cycle of data analysis was followed up with a second cycle of analysis involving focused coding resulting in conceptual similarities further describing themes and exploring how subthemes related to one another. Finally, theoretical coding led the analysis to the central categories identifying the primary theme of the research (Saldaña, 2009). A core category was selected after careful integration and refining of the major categories of data (Kolb, 2012:84).

Analytical memos were used throughout the data analysis process and were critical to the documenting of the researcher's impressions, observations, questions and suggestions regarding the data which emerged during the data collection phase. As Hesse-Biber (2010b) explains, critical memo writing forms a critical link between the data and creation of codes and categories. Memos were used to summarise initial potential interpretations about the data during the analysis such as how the WFT provided a structure, a system to think about writing and how effective the recording of feedback is in identifying gaps in learning.

#### **4.7 METHODOLOGICAL NORMS**

In the qualitative case study, the rigour of the trustworthiness of the study is as important as in any other research effort (Creswell, 2013) and is the art, practice, and politics of interpretation and evaluation. To the qualitative investigator, credibility is the equivalent of internal validity and deals with the question, "How congruent are the findings with reality?" (Shenton, 2004:64).

Case study design principles lend themselves to including numerous strategies that promote data credibility or "truth value" (Baxter & Jack, 2008:556). Graneheim and Lundman (2004:109) maintain that research findings should be as trustworthy as possible and every research study must be evaluated in relation to the procedures used to generate the findings. In qualitative research, the concepts credibility, dependability and transferability have been used to describe various aspects of trustworthiness (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:109; Shenton, 2004:64).

The following aspects of trustworthiness should be viewed as intertwined and interrelated.

*Credibility* deals with the focus of the research and refers to confidence in how well data and processes of analysis address the intended focus, selection of context, participants and approach to gathering data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:109). The adoption of well-established research methods will allow for the accurate recording of the phenomena under scrutiny (Shenton, 2004:64).

I endeavoured to develop an early familiarity with the culture of the schools by doing preliminary visits to the schools (Shenton, 2004:65). The schools and grades were purposefully selected (4.3.2) and the teachers purposefully selected by the schools' Head of English Department. Purposeful sampling was used to select the learners to participate in the learner focus groups (4.4.2) and the learner verbal protocols (4.4.3). The data collection strategies were lesson observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers, focus group interviews with the learners and verbal protocols with a smaller sample of the learners. The writing tasks, and learner completed and assessed writing tasks were analysed to determine the implementation of formative assessment strategies and effective feedback. While analysing the data, an effort was made to extract categories and themes that covered the data in order to add to the credibility of the study. The diverse data collection strategies allowed for detailed descriptions which make provision for promoting credibility and help to convey the actual situations, adding to the credibility of the findings (Shenton, 2004:69).

As pointed out previously, the way we make sense of our world is through shared meanings as a form of inter-subjectivity (Walsham, 2006:320). The researcher's proximity to reality, which the case study entails, and the learning process that it generates for the researcher, will often constitute a prerequisite for advanced understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2006:237). The nature of the case study puts the researcher in close proximity to reality; the researcher is involved in the learning and sense making. Researchers admit that the participants are the co-constructors of the account between the researcher and the participants and are the true owners of the information collected (Creswell, 2013). To manage the influence of subjectivity, I made use of a research journal to carefully reflect on observations and interpretations of the case and mitigate the influence of subjectivity.

*Dependability* seeks means for taking into account both factors of instability and factors of phenomenal or design-induced changes (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:110). Inconsistency in the data collection will undermine the dependability of the research. Interviewing and observing are evolving processes during which new insights into the study are acquired and judgements must be kept consistent (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:110). The processes in the study were recorded and reported in detail, thereby enabling future research to repeat the work, but not



necessarily to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004:71).

*Transferability* refers to the extent to which the findings are transferable to other settings or groups (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:110; Shenton, 2004:69). Clear and distinct description of culture and context, selection and characteristics of participants, data collection and process of analysis will enhance transferability (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004:110). However, ultimately, the results of a qualitative study must be understood within the context of the particular characteristic of the particular education system, school and school community (Shenton, 2004).

Shenton (2004:72) adds *confirmability* as an additional strategy to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research. Confirmability, in this case, was achieved by crystallisation, and detailed methodological descriptions.

Like notions of reliability and validity, triangulation does not lie neatly over research from interpretive, critical, or post-modern paradigms that view reality as multiple, fractured, contested, or socially constructed (Tracy, 2010:843). A term that relates to the practice of using multiple data sources, researchers, and lenses—but is motivated by post-structural and performative assumptions—is crystallisation (Tracy, 2010:843). Crystallisation depends on one's viewing angle and "provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic" (Paulus, Woodside & Ziegler, 2008:234). Crystallisation encourages researchers to gather multiple types of data and employ various methods, multiple researchers, and numerous theoretical frameworks. This 'crystallisation' aims to change the researcher's relationships with the researched, and is an attempt at 'changing one's relationship to one's work' (Cho & Trent, 2006:235). However, it assumes that the goal of doing so is not to provide researchers with a more valid singular truth, but to open up a more complex, in-depth, but still thoroughly partial, understanding of the issue (Tracy, 2010:844). Recognising that our world is far more than three sides enables a shift from seeing something as a fixed rigid two-dimensional object towards a concept of the crystal, which allows for infinite variety of shape, substance, transmutations, multi-dimensionality and angles of approach (Tobin & Begley, 2004:393). Recognising the complexities of the classroom and the importance of the learners' view in addition to the teachers', the multiple data

sources employed in the study allowed for a nuanced view of the WFT implementation process.

Another major threat to validity can be the researcher herself. Two threats to validity that commonly occur in qualitative studies are the bias of the researcher and reactivity, which is the effect the researcher has on the setting or the study (Kolb, 2012:85). I was aware that as the study progressed my relationship with the teachers and the learners evolved to resemble a partnership. The teachers and I engaged in constant discussions about the process and the learners became comfortable with my presence. Kolb (2012:85) explains that the researcher must incorporate continuous awareness of reflecting, examining and exploring his/her relationship through all stages of the research process. Using memo writing during the data analysis as Saldaña (2009) suggests, I reflected on my own reactions and expectations about the participants because while I designed the WFT I had to trust the teachers and learners to use the WFT according to their needs. Black and Wiliam (1998a) included in their seminal article on formative assessment a caveat that, while there is enough evidence for giving helpful guidance to practical action, changes in classroom practice must be adopted by each teacher in her own way. In being reflexive, I endeavoured to remain the researcher; maintaining the focus on the study while being flexible enough to appreciate the evolving nature of the study.

#### **4.8 ETHICAL PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY**

The researcher is obliged to respect the rights, needs, desires and values of the participants. Permission to conduct research was requested from the University of South Africa College of Education ethics committee and the Gauteng Department of Education. To ensure ethical research, the following principles were followed: informed consent, indication to participants of the voluntary nature of their participation, assurances of safety in participation, as well as assurance of privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and the principle of trust (De Vos, 2002).

The school principals received letters requesting to conduct research at their schools. When the principals granted permission, the four teachers each received a letter outlining the scope of the research, the teachers gave written informed consent to

participate in the study. The focus group learners received letters for their parents communicating the outline of the research at the school. The letters explained that the learners will be interviewed three times, their writing lessons observed and their writing tasks analysed. The focus group learners signed written assent and confidentiality agreements. The confidentiality was explained to each of the focus groups to make sure the learners understood that the information shared in the context of the group was to remain confidential. Similarly the parents of the learners who participated in the verbal protocols received letters explaining the study and that they will be interviewed three times, their lessons observed and written work analysed. The parents signed permission forms and the verbal protocol learners signed written assent forms. As learners withdrew and new learners joined (section 4.3.2.1) letters of permission were signed by the parents and assent by the learners. All communication was conducted in English. No concerns were raised by the principals, teachers or parents. The final outcome of the research will be shared with the participants in the form of a short presentation at the schools.

#### **4.9 CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

The case study design and methodological undertakings have been presented in this chapter. In the next chapter, Chapter 5, the findings for establishing the current practice are presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **ESTABLISHING CURRENT PRACTICE IN GRADE 10 AND 11 ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE WRITING CLASSES**

#### **5.1 ORIENTATION**

Firstly a brief explanation regarding the quotations presented in the three findings chapters (Chapters 5, 6 & 7). Direct quotations taken from transcripts of the interviews conducted have been edited by the removing obsolete words and phrases which hindered readability. Ellipses in the quotations signify where editing has occurred. No changes have been made to the quotations that would alter the original meaning as described by the interview participants. 'R:' indicates the respondents and 'Q:' the question asked. Each quote is followed by a reference to the transcript as captured by ATLAS.ti, 'D2' indicates the primary document's number followed by the quote's location in the transcript. The three phases of data collection were captured as separate units in ATLAS.ti, thus, the document numbers differ. The primary documents and their denotations are attached as Appendix M.

The focus in this chapter is the analysis of the data collected to establish the current practice in the Grade 10 and 11 EHL writing classrooms at four purposively selected schools (section 5.2). Section 5.3 reflects on the current practice of the implementation of writing and presenting teaching and learning leading to the development of the writing feedback tool in section 5.4.

#### **5.2 FIRST PHASE OF DATA COLLECTION: ESTABLISHING CURRENT PRACTICE IN GRADE 10 AND 11 ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE WRITING CLASSES**

In this section, the analysis of the first phase of data collection for the study is explicated. The purpose of the first phase was to provide an overview of the current assessment practices in the Grade 10 and 11 EHL writing classes in the four purposively selected schools. Subsection 5.2.1 gives a synopsis of the process followed in collecting the data. In 5.2.2, the assessment practices in the grades in the

four schools are outlined in the form of informal and formal assessments and, for the GDE schools, an examination. Subsection 5.2.3 deals with process writing and the way it is presently implemented. Subsection 5.2.4 offers insights into peer feedback and feedback from teachers as well as how the learners receive feedback.

### **5.2.1 Recap of data collection process for phase 1**

In this chapter the following research questions are addressed: Research Question 1: *How is AFL presently viewed and applied by EHL teachers in teaching writing?* Research Question 2: *What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in EHL writing?* and Research Question 3: *How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and 11 learners in EHL writing?*

The teachers and learners were interviewed to establish the current practice in the teaching and learning of writing tasks. The questions focused on how formal and informal tasks were used to assess writing. Furthermore, process writing was explored to ascertain how the implementation of its steps facilitated the assessment of writing tasks.

The first data collection phase commenced in the second week of March 2017 after ethical clearance was obtained on 24 February 2017 and permission granted by the GDE. I visited the schools to deliver the permission, assent and consent letters and met with the principals. Upon receiving permission from the principals and the teachers, I made appointments with the teachers to organise the interviews and to request the learners' writing tasks.

As explained in Section 4.3.3, the collaborative approach of action research requires people, in this case the teachers and I, to work in partnership to improve practice (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). In the light of this I had taken a decision to exclude lesson observations from the first phase of data collection as the schools had concluded their first term writing assessment or were in the process of finalising it. More importantly however, I felt I had not had the opportunity to build a trust relationship with the teachers yet and I was hesitant to observe their lessons. My concern was that the teachers might experience my presence as a critique of their teaching. While my letter to them indicated that the lessons would be observed, I reasoned that I needed them

to develop a better understanding of the aim of the study first before I observed their lessons.

I made a second judgement call when I decided not to ask the teachers about what their understanding of AFL was in the interviews. During initial discussions with the schools' principals, heads of department, and teachers, it became clear that AFL was not part of their narrative about teaching. The terms "*formal tasks, task for marks*" and "*practise tasks*" were used. I felt that the teachers might not understand exactly what was meant by AFL even though some of their practices might reflect knowledge or aspects thereof. The focus was on establishing the purposes of formal and informal assessment and the implementation of process writing. The first phase interview questions were used to ascertain if AFL practices were present in the teaching and learning of writing.

At the time of the first data collection phase all the learners, except for those in Grade 10 at school D, had completed at least one writing task. I was aware that in answering the interview questions the teachers and learners referred to writing tasks in general - not necessarily the tasks they had written in the first weeks of the term but also writing tasks from the previous year.

### **5.2.2 The assessment of writing tasks**

The learning in the curriculum learning outcome Writing and Presenting was assessed according to the assessment plan outlined in the CAPS (2011). The IEB school (D) conducted writing tasks that were classroom based but regarded as formal writing. The tasks were for the purposes of the portfolio and constituted the year mark. Informal and summative assessments of writing were not included in the IEB assessment requirements. At the GDE schools (A, B, and C) the assessment of writing took place on three levels. The first two, informal and formal assessments, were classroom activities. Informal tasks led up to the formal tasks which were part of the school based assessments (SBA) constituting the learners' year mark. The third level was the summative assessment in the form of an examination (paper 3) written at the end of the first and third terms. In this section the difference between the informal tasks (5.2.2.1) and the informal tasks (5.2.2.2) are discussed as well as how the assessment rubric is used (5.2.2.3).

### 5.2.2.1 Informal assessment

Informal assessments are described in the CAPS (DBE, 2011) document as assessment for learning; however, the teachers did not use the term 'informal tasks' or 'assessment for learning' but used the term 'practise tasks'. At schools A and C the use of the practise tasks were similar, it was recognised that they were for learning: As the Grade 11 teacher at school C stated: "... and then informal assessment is when we just assess them, informally just for practise, they practise, it is more learning" (D6, 6:2 5:5). Furthermore, the practise tasks were used to teach new learning or consolidate learning: "So we will include something that they haven't even done yet, or has been done previously, right" (D2, 2:11, 36:39). Informal tasks were also used as 'baseline activities' to establish where the learning gaps were: "So that I prepare them for their formal tasks" (D5, 5:4, 12:12).

The preparation for the formal tasks was a particular focus and part of a regulated system at school A as the informal tasks and classwork in the workbook had to reflect the preparation of the learners: "So in class, in the workbook, you can't have given a learner a task, or mark, if it doesn't show in your workbook" (D2, 2:11, 36:39).

At school A there were typically two to three practise tasks per term. The practise tasks familiarise the learners with process writing, as well as the assessment systems and the rubric:

*R: So then in the workbook as well, they should be familiar with the marking systems, so somehow you are showing them, this is you are weak at, so your next task try and perfect, maybe your introduction, based on the rubric, then you explain. (D2, 2:11, 36:39).*

School A and C had a further practical way to distinguish between formal and informal tasks. The informal tasks, classwork, homework and notes were included in the workbook, as the Grade 10 teacher at school A explained: "That was an informal task because we were doing it within our workbooks" (D2, 2:7, 22:29). This arrangement had some unintended consequences; it was not always possible for the teachers to collect the books on a regular basis to check or mark the work in the books as most of the time the learners needed the workbooks for classwork. The teachers' assessment

of the informal tasks was therefore limited and not as comprehensive as the formal tasks.

The Grade 11 teacher at school A had a broader view of informal assessment, recognising that it was ongoing and that it did not necessarily involve a written task. Her understanding was in line with the explanation of informal assessment in the assessment policy document (CAPS, 2011). As the teacher indicated:

*R: If it is informal assessment then sometimes the assessment is done verbally, right when you talk to the child, in your conversation with the child, you are still assessing, even if it is an informal set up (D3, 3:4, 7:7).*

The decisions informing the choice of informal tasks did not seem to relate to the formal assessment. While the CAPS lists the writing tasks teachers may consider, there is no further indication how the tasks facilitate learning of specific skills. In the first term, the Grade 10 learners at one school wrote a letter as an informal task and a narrative essay as a formal task without a clear indication of how the informal task prepared the learners for the formal task.

The informal tasks at school B were integrated into the teaching and learning, which the Grade 10 teacher explained, is “*your kind of day-to-day skill building*” (D10, 10:1, 8:8). The understanding was that formative assessment was the teaching of a unit where skills were developed and practised. The teaching leading up to the writing task was quite methodical, with the learners receiving substantial support such as notes and examples followed by the informal task to monitor the progress. As the Grade 11 teacher explained:

*R: So for your informal tasks, that will be usually practise. The model we tend to use, is we tend to teach the formal, formative assessment as a unit, so try to develop the skills for a particular kind of writing and then formally assess and then thereafter, we schedule in practise of the formative assessment sort of thing (D10, 10:4, 21:22).*

At school B, the learning was assessed with the practise tasks in class serving as “*a kind of a time in class where we start to see what they produce and we start to look at it and see if they on the right track sort of*” (D10, 10:28, 26:26). Therefore, the practise



tasks were not part of a prescribed assessment plan, but in support of the learning towards the formal assessments.

The Grade 11 learners at school B explained that they were told what to do when the tasks were handed out and the learners understand from the teachers' explanations what to focus on:

*R: Sometimes we use the handbook, and then it has topics, it tells you what to do and what not to do.*

*R: Usually when you do that, and the teacher before you have a task, the teacher will tell you focus more on that (D25: 25:10, 59:62).*

At the GDE schools, the informal tasks were intended for the practising of writing in preparation of the formal tasks. The practising included writing skills as well as process writing and the use of the assessment rubric, with the teachers checking on how learning was progressing.

#### *5.2.2.2 Formal assessment*

At the three GDE schools, as part of the SBA, the focus of the formal tasks was the collection of marks and reporting on the learners' performance. The Grade 11 teacher at school C explained how the formal tasks are viewed:

*R: Okay, I think, well, with formal assessment it is the assessment for their marks, isn't it, what they are going to get at the end of the year. Their marks, that is, formal assessment tasks and the formal tasks, they make up their year mark at the end of the year (D6, 6:1, 5:5).*

Schools A and C used the CAPS document as a guide regarding the types of writing tasks and how many formal tasks should be written per term. The alignment of the curriculum and SBA in terms of the number and type of tasks expected was adhered to and there were up to 10 formal assessment tasks per year.

The formal tasks were strictly managed and filed to protect the integrity of the process. The emphasis on marks had a noticeable influence on teaching and learning, and as the Grade 11 teacher at school A said, the formal tasks were subjected to "thorough marking" (D3, 3:2, 7:7). The teachers from all four schools indicated how marks

influenced learning, explaining that the learners take the work more seriously if it was for marks: “*Ja, if it is not for marks, it is not going to work*” (D2, 2:6, 20:21). The narrow focus on the mark was to the detriment of the learning gained by writing the task.

Apart from the collection of marks, the formal tasks were used to establish the standard across the classes in a grade. The tasks were assessed according to the rubric and moderated by the head of department or another English teacher.

However, while school B was a GDE school, the implementation of the CAPS in terms of Writing and Presenting was not as dominant a factor. The teachers decided on which assessments to conduct which were planned well in advance. In line with the school’s formative assessment focus, the formal assessments were for the purposes of the SBA but were also used to determine “*whether the learners have successfully absorbed the learning and can apply it*” (D10, 10:2, 10:10).

School D implemented the portfolio requirements with Grade 10 and 11 to prepare the teachers and the learners for the Grade 12 portfolio. The Grade 12 learners’ SBA was in the form of a portfolio, which would be submitted for external moderation at the end of the year. There was a list of portfolio writing tasks, which became the assessment the teachers and the learners focused on. There might have been as many as six to eight tasks in a twelve week term which created such emphasis on formal assessments that the informal assessments were neglected. The Grade 10 teacher described the focus on assessments as a challenge:

*R: My biggest struggle for me as a teacher is that I feel that we assess too much. So we do too much formal assessment. So I am often, like chasing my tail, for the formal assessment that I often don’t do informal assessment (D7, 7:1, 5:5).*

There was the recognition that teaching to the assessments detracted from learning:

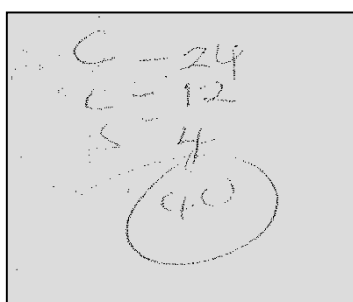
*R: So I often feel like I am doing, I am teaching for assessments more than I am teaching for learning. So that, so it is difficult to assess sometimes how a child is doing (D7, 7:3, 9:9).*

The keen focus on formal tasks was evident in all four schools as the assessment plan, and not a teaching or learning plan, directed the teaching and learning activities.

### 5.2.2.3 The assessment rubric

All the teachers indicated that the tasks and, in particular, the formal tasks were assessed using the prescribed rubrics. The GDE rubrics were generic; one rubric would be used to assess all types of transactional writing tasks and one rubric used for the assessment of essays. The IEB essay rubrics were specific to the type of essay, the transactional rubric was universal. The rubrics are discussed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

All the teachers indicated that the rubric was used to make the expectations clear and was provided to the learners before the tasks were attempted. Generally the learners had access to the rubric either in their workbooks or it was handed out with the writing tasks. After the tasks were marked, the mark was indicated on the rubric or the mark written on the writing task (Figure 5.1) was according to the rubric criteria. Figure 5.1 illustrates how the marks are allocated according to the rubric criteria. **C** indicates Content and Planning, **L** is Language, Style and Editing, **S** is for Structure.



**Figure 5.1: Example of writing task mark allocation**

The Grade 11 teacher at school A purposefully included the rubric in the teaching of writing and the learners were taught how to interpret the criteria to understand what was expected and what the mark indicated:

*R: Yes, before attempting a task, like in, before you are even talking of writing process, let's say we are talking of essay writing, you avail the rubric to the learners and then you explain each criteria. You say you are okay, as far as language is concerned, if you are going to get 15 out of 15, this is what is expected for this, if you do not give this much input, this is what you will get. So the learner must know what the rubric stipulates (D3, 3:17, 38:39).*

The rubric seemed unattainable to the learners as one of the indicators is: “*virtually error free*” (D3, 3:20, 41:41). However, learning is a process and the learners were encouraged to use the rubric as an aim. “*Learning is a process and during learning you will make mistakes, but know that this is the work, this is your target, but it is easier when they know the rubric*” (D3, 3:21, 41:43).

The rubric was used as a feedback tool and the learners were encouraged to engage the teacher regarding the assessment; the mark was an indication of their performance and where they could improve: “*So before you move on, let them look at their marks, look at your comments, let them marry that with the rubric and also give them a chance to query your mark*” (D3, 3:25, 44:45).

The mark, based on the rubric, was used to indicate attainment, but also where the learning gaps were. While the areas were made clear, e.g. a low mark for Language, Style and Editing, the mark alone did not provide specific details about the learning gap:

*R: Yes, I break down the three elements, content and planning, ja, structure and style, language and that sort of thing and then they can see. I will tell them what each was out of and then they will see where they fell down: okay, my content and planning was good, but the structure was all over the place and the style was over the place (D9, 9:17, 30:31).*

The rubric was not perceived as a useful assessment tool by all the teachers. The Grade 11 teacher at school C saw the rubric as too complicated for the learners to understand: “*Because even if you give it to them, they don’t read through it and it so difficult and complex for them to understand*” (D6, 6:10, 31:31). The rubric was also described as “*rigid and contradictory*” (D6, 6:26, 68:71).

The Grade 10 teacher at school A saw the rubric as problematic as she experienced it as limiting the learners to a certain standard and prohibiting some of the more advanced learners to achieve at their own level:

*R: Sometimes they feel the rubric gives them, I don’t know, like with the smarter children, let’s say, they feel the marks have been provided. Everyone immediately just goes to what is expected, right, and they don’t think out of that (D2, 2:15, 40:47).*

The Grade 11 learners at school B explained that they were told what to do when the tasks were handed out and the learners understand from the teachers' explanations what to focus on:

*R: Sometimes we use the handbook, and then it has topics, it tells you what to do and what not to do.*

*R: Usually when you do that, and the teacher before you have a task, the teacher will tell you focus more on that (D25: 25:10, 59:62).*

The rubric did not feature as a reference or focus point in the assessment of writing in any of the schools. It was at best regarded an assessment tool and necessary to comply with. The tasks' success criteria were not explicitly linked to the assessment criteria on the rubrics. The rubrics were used to allocate marks, indicating the attainment level and being used to direct the learning of writing.

### **5.2.3 Process writing**

In order to ascertain how process writing was used in the teaching of Writing and Presenting, the teachers were asked to explain how it was implemented. Process writing as prescribed in the English Home Language CAPS document consists of the following steps: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and presenting texts (DBE, 2011:30). Process writing is embedded in the GDE rubric criteria where planning and editing are stipulated and thus assessed.

Schools A and C implemented process writing in both formal and informal writing tasks. The Grade 11 teacher at school A explained how the learners were taught step by step how to do process writing in preparation for the formal tasks and examinations: *"For process writing I go through the steps with them, like step by step. I have to check, we do planning, we check, we do the first draft, we check, that is what takes so much time"* (D3, 3:9, 13:13).

School C used process writing as part of the writing tasks and followed four steps: planning or brainstorming, the draft, editing and the final draft. As suggested by the Grade 10 teacher at the school: *"I have the brain storming, I have the rough draft, then I have the proof reading and then then the final draft"* (D5, 5:28, 36:37).

The Grade 11 teacher at School C used similar terms; her learners brainstormed their ideas which resulted in a mind map which in turn was used to plan and write the first draft. The teacher monitored the mind map and the introduction where after the learners peer assessed the first draft (D6, 6:29, 10:21).

The planning in the form of a brainstorm or spider diagram was expected at schools A and C as per the rubric criteria. The learners generally used the planning to plot their ideas and paragraphs. The implementation of the planning was rather rigid as the learners were not allowed to deviate from their plan. The teachers expected the written task to closely follow the plan.

The editing or proofreading step, which was expressed as peer assessment, could be misunderstood. It was evident from the Grade 11 teacher at school C's interpretation and what the learners were expected to do that the editing, proofreading or peer assessment had the function of detecting and correcting errors. The focus was on an error free product:

*R: Well some of them enjoy it, some of them they don't want to people to read their work and then so in terms of peer assessment I also said they could go home and ask another teacher or their sisters and I needed to see evidence of somebody correcting, checking and then they must then do the corrections because what I noticed is most of them, after the correction has been made, they still rewrite it in the final draft, so there is not much corrections. I said I need to see if there is a spelling you must rewrite the correct spelling, if it is the tense, or if it is concord, or whatever, I must see the correction (D6, 6:7, 25:25).*

At school D process writing was not an enforced practice in the English department. The Grade 11 teacher followed process writing in the teaching of writing, however, her focus was on teaching writing skills to enable learners to express their thoughts and ideas. The Grade 11 teacher wanted to develop the learners' thinking: "... so *the process writing which involves the thinking and then revisiting their thoughts*". The concern is that a strict adherence to process writing may turn the focus to grammatical and punctuation errors: "*So the one weakness I think of focusing only on process writing is that you can then let correct use of grammar, proper punctuation, things like that*" (D8, 8:35, 141:141). The process she implemented was similar to process writing

in schools A and C where the learners planned together in class, and produced a draft at home which was edited by their peers in class with the teacher's assistance. However, with the Grade 11 teacher at school D there was an additional step as the second draft was collected by the teacher who provided feedback where the focus was on one area: *"We have looked at ideas, now let's look at how you are going to express those ideas"* (D8, 8:35, 141:141). The learners used the feedback to edit and produce the final draft for assessment.

At school B process writing was not an expectation, nevertheless the learners were encouraged to plan, create a mind map and write a draft in preparation of the final writing task. The learners were given a period of time to write the draft, usually a few days. In that time they could approach their teacher for assistance and ask others to edit the draft. When the learners were due to write the formal task, the draft would be left at home and they would be allowed to have a one page plan from which to produce the final essay or writing task for assessment. The object was to allow preparation for the formal task but to avoid instances of plagiarism. Furthermore, there was the expectation that, especially at Grade 11 level, the drafts would not be checked by the teacher and that the learners would do their own editing:

*R: ... then go into that process of brainstorming whether it is through a mind map or bullet points or whatever, and then a draft, at this level, you know we are not checking drafts, like you have to hand this draft in to me, but is an option for them and then those that do, we look at it and we go through it together, that sort of thing (D 9, 9:7, 17:17).*

Process writing was implemented by schools A and C the way it was described in the CAPS. The steps were implemented in a systematic way where the learners planned, drafted, edited and wrote a final draft. The function of process writing was to teach planning and editing of drafts to arrive at a virtually error free product. The implementation seemed to be focused on compliance and not on developing the process of writing which should involve planning, drafting and redrafting to support the learning of writing skills.

## 5.2.4 Feedback on writing tasks

Process writing has two feedback components: the feedback or peer editing on the draft (5.2.4.1) and the teachers' feedback on the assessed task (5.2.4.2). The interview questions focused on how the feedback processes were used in the writing process. In addition it was important to ascertain how the learners received the feedback to understand how feedback was used in their learning (5.2.4.3).

### 5.2.4.1 Peer editing

The learners planned their writing tasks followed by the writing of a rough draft, which was read and checked to improve the draft. At school B process writing was not a focus point in the teaching of writing, therefore the way the draft was edited was a personal choice. The Grade 10 learners could choose to self-edit or could ask a friend or other person to edit "... *and then sometimes we give it to our friends to read and then we ask for feedback. And we criticise our own work and then we will fix all our mistakes*" (D24, 24:5 - 24:6, 8:8).

At schools A and C the learners understood that they were expected to produce an error free task and seek feedback from sources who could assist them in eliminating their mistakes. Editing was part of process writing and it was a criterion on the rubric, thus the learners were well aware of what was expected. The Grade 10 learners at school A seemed to make active use of peer editing. As mentioned, it was a clear expectation but, more importantly, marks were deducted if lack of editing was evident:

*R: [The teacher] checks if your final draft is still the same.*

*Q: And if it is the same?*

*R: You lose marks (D18, 18:24, 149:164).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school A confirmed the emphasis she placed on the learners editing their own work:

*R: Yes, even I see it when I mark because I tell them, you cannot have the same mistakes first draft and second draft because then it just tells me all you did is copy and paste and that motivates you to be practising plagiarism (D2, 2:51, 138:140).*



As the purpose of editing is to eliminate mistakes, the learners and the teachers accepted that editing may be performed by any other peer, or other person who would be able to correct the errors. The Grade 11 teacher at school A explained her expectations of the editing step as follows:

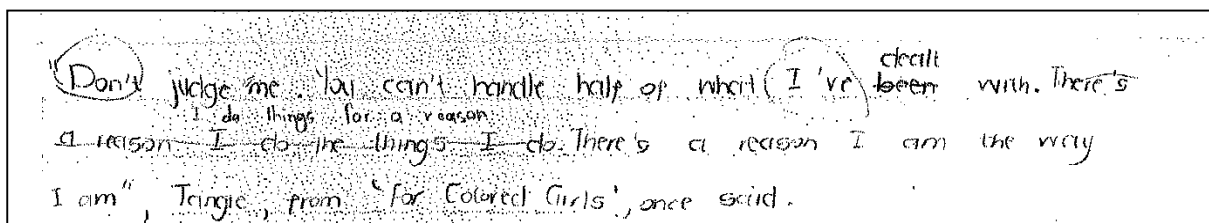
*R: I ask them first to edit on their own... and then to swop books... I make them swop books, sometimes I can say if there is someone who can help you at home, maybe also ask them to edit for you (D3, 3:35, 64:66).*

The consequence of the emphasis on error correction was that some Grade 10 learners at school A purposefully look for a more accomplished family member or peer to edit their work with the goal of achieving a good mark: “Someone who will get me marked up. Someone who passed” (D18, 18:14, 96:99). The prominence of error detection and correction focused the peer editing on surface level errors such as spelling and punctuation which were easier for learners to detect than complex language processes.

The Grade 10 learners at school C focused on the completion of the task, which meant they did not notice all their mistakes. Therefore the help they needed was mostly error correction at task level as the learners felt that it was easier for someone else to see the mistakes:

*R: Normally with the first draft you are just writing, you want to get done, you don't look at punctuation or other relevant things, you just write. That is why it is good to have someone edit it for you (D20, 20:8, 36:42).*

The editing at the Grade 11 class at school C reflects that errors detected are circled and phrases corrected, as seen in the example below (Figure 5.2).



**Figure 5.2: School C Grade 11 peer editing example**

The Grade 10 learners at school C understood why their teacher would not correct their work if they asked her for feedback because they explained it was to help them improve:

*R: She does it to help us improve.*

*R: We can think for ourselves and to do research” (D20, 20:15, 66:73).*

However, they would prefer corrective feedback as it was not as much work. The learners expressed their feelings about editing their own work. One learner said: “...it feels like an extra job, it is more work and wasting our time.” Thus, the correction of their own work was not understood as learning from their mistakes, but to produce an error free task.

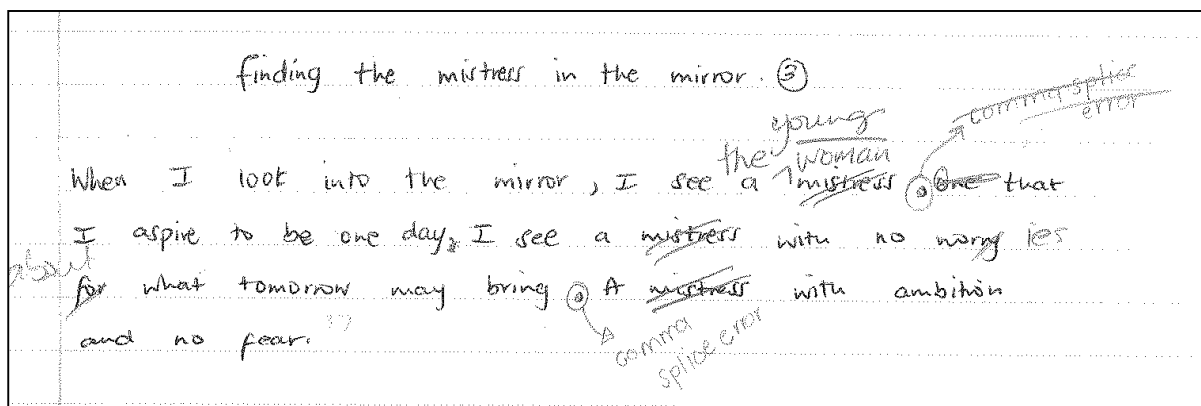
The teachers might fall into the habit of correcting learners’ draft but realised that if the feedback was corrective the learners would not learn from the correction and simply rewrite the work. The Grade 11 teacher at school C explained that the mistakes would then be repeated in subsequent work:

*R: The ones that do, correct their work, but, like I said, there are some just simply will recopy, I don’t know whether it is an element of not understanding the correction, because sometimes I do help them. I will say, instead of writing, you write does, because maybe it is the subject verb, instead of saying were, you said was, so correct was to were, and then you find they are going to write was again. So I don’t know whether they are not reading the work? (D6, 6:22, 58:59).*

At the school D, the Grade 11 teacher handled the peer feedback as a structured activity in the class. The feedback was in the form of a discussion about the editing, facilitated by the teacher:

*R: They sit in two’s, I found that works the best and swop and discuss each other’s. Every now and again they will go into threes, because this one cannot stay out of the discussion and then they will be asking me, because there is always a slight argument and then I come and adjudicate. If I am not doing that, then I am just walking around interfering myself, what is this, and that sort of thing (D8, 8:5, 26:27).*

During the feedback lesson the way the learners edited the tasks by indicating and correcting errors are illustrated in Figure 5.3.



**Figure 5.3: School D Grade 11 peer editing example**

The Grade 11 feedback at school D was not limited to task level mistakes and some learners were able to give feedback on process level. The feedback discussion gave the Grade 11 teacher insight into the learners' differentiated abilities to identify language errors:

*R: Those who aren't too mature in Grade 11 will look first of all for punctuation. They are comfortable with that. But then I find that others, especially the girls, like to look at the figurative language in an essay especially, and they will underline and say, too many adjectives or need some more description (D8, 8:10, 29:29).*

Most learners expected their task to be read from start to finish and corrected. However, the feedback they expected or requested from their peers was an indication of what they understood the success criteria to be. In some cases, such as the Grade 11 learners at school A, the feedback they requested was vague:

*R: To check if there is any mistakes which I made in the essay and to check that grammar.*

*R: I ask my friend to check my sentence, the sense of the sentences and the paragraph and the punctuation (D19, 19:10, 126:137).*

Some learners, for example the Grade 11 learners at school D, requested feedback that was not focused on error correction alone but also at process level such as the appropriate tone used in writing:

*R: I also think who you go to the topic you are on and the mood you want to set because maybe you want to talk about love or something maybe you must go to a teenager because they will be more intrigued to read it there is a specific type of person you want to engage in (D23, 23:15, 52:52).*

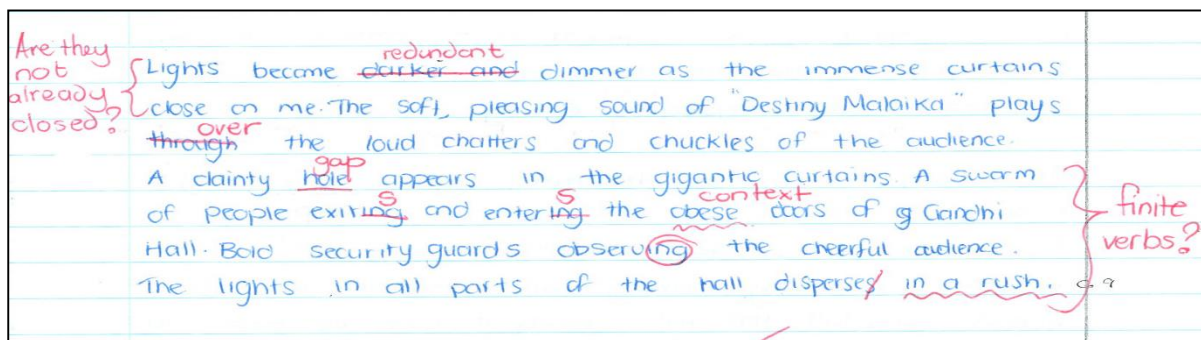
The Grade 11 learners at school D were aware of their well-being goals, thus peers were chosen who would provide honest feedback without being hurtful: “ *Usually friends because you trust your friends to be honest but not brutal*” (D23, 23:9, 34:35). Efficiency was a goal therefore a reliable peer was preferred:

*R: You want them to be truthful not to just let go because they are afraid. If you did something wrong maybe they can rewrite for you comma splice or something; they can cross it out and put a full stop (D23, 23:11, 40:40).*

The purpose of editing or peer feedback was explicitly to arrive at an error free writing task as it would result in a better mark. The learners therefore sought feedback from a more accomplished peer or adult. The feedback from the teachers might sometimes take the form of a comment, suggesting a strategy, or indirect feedback which was not always received as helpful feedback. The feedback on the drafts was not to facilitate learning, particularly at schools A and C, the aim was to correct all the mistakes and not to learn from them.

#### *5.2.4.2 Feedback from teachers*

All the teachers assessed and provided feedback on the formal writing tasks. The feedback information included coded editing marks, comments, and a mark followed by global feedback in class when the assessed tasks were returned to the learners. The most commonly used form of feedback was underlining and codes. The teachers developed their own system of codes that they explained to the learners. Typically the teachers would also include short comments and in some cases correct the work, as illustrated by the example in Figure 5.4. However, according to the Grade 10 teacher at school A, GDE facilitators encourage the use of codes to avoid direct correction of work: “*When the facilitators come, they refuse that I mustn’t write out the spelling word, I should just do SP*” (D2, 2:29, 82:83).



**Figure 5.4: Example of a teacher’s written feedback on writing text**

The Grade 10 teacher at school A regarded feedback as a very important responsibility, using a strong statement to describe the need for feedback: “*They really like feedback, I think it is injustice to not provide feedback*” (D2, 2:46, 115:115). The purpose of feedback is to correct the work and indicate to the learners where they are going wrong in order to improve their writing. This the Grade 10 teacher at school A regarded as the teachers’ responsibility:

*R: Because you have to provide feedback before and your feedback and you want the learner to practise it again and at least show you, look, I worked on that. If not then you are at fault (D2, 2:20, 65:67).*

The teachers’ assessment of the tasks were driven by the detection of errors, with the Grade 11 teacher at school C explaining why it was important to the learners too:

*R: It depends, the children want the written actually, because, the errors, because I mark errors actually, so the errors that we find mainly, is the spelling, the grammar, and tenses and punctuation, but it is mainly just tenses and the concord error, the verb, subject verb, they have lots of mistakes there (D6, 6:13, 43:43).*

The assessment of the formal task turned the teachers’ focus to all the mistakes, even though they might have wanted to focus on assessing a certain aspect. The Grade 11 teacher at school D explained that, while the assessment focus on a particular task was “*sentences and language*”, it was difficult to ignore the other aspects of writing:

*R: This time we looked at use of sentences and language, punctuation etc. and how their sentences worked. So that was the feedback I focused on. But you can never stay with that, because there is always something else that you just have to correct. So I always, I don’t know why, but somehow something always directs me to the introduction and conclusion (D8, 8:21, 90:91).*

When teachers assessed the tasks and focused on correction they easily fell into rewriting sections, which was not an efficient marking and feedback strategy. The Grade 11 teacher at school D explained how she reflected on her feedback strategy:

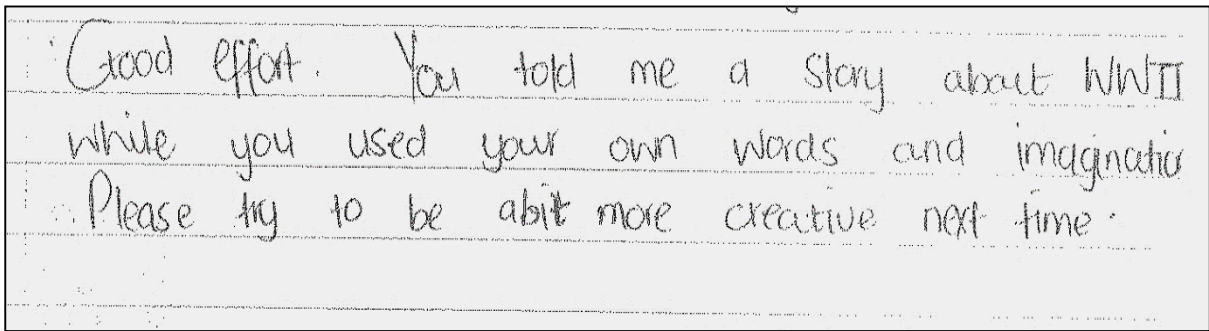
*R: Ja, sometimes, spelling, they know SP, they NP, new paragraph, they know my wiggly lines are, if there is just a wiggly line and I haven't written anything, it means you must seriously reconsider what you have said. If it is really, really bad, I will circle a large area and draw a little arrow and try and help him rewrite it. I used to do that a lot and then I realise I was actually writing my own essay and that is what I stopped (D8, 8:25, 101:101).*

The feedback comment at the end of the essay was a further form of communicating information to the learners. Teachers provided details about the gaps in different ways. Some teachers, such as the Grade 11 teacher at school A, summarised the points they identified:

*R: The individual feedback happens on the task itself. Let's say the child has got a problem with concord or with spelling, so as you mark you are indicating and then at the end of the essay you can even write like a short summary, just in point form ... to say maybe watch your spellings, right, your grammar, concord (D3, 3:30, 56:60).*

The feedback might not be limited to a written comment and might be followed up with a conversation with the learner: *"If you think it is too much, then you put a 'see me' so that the child will come and see you individually"* (D3, 3:30, 56:60).

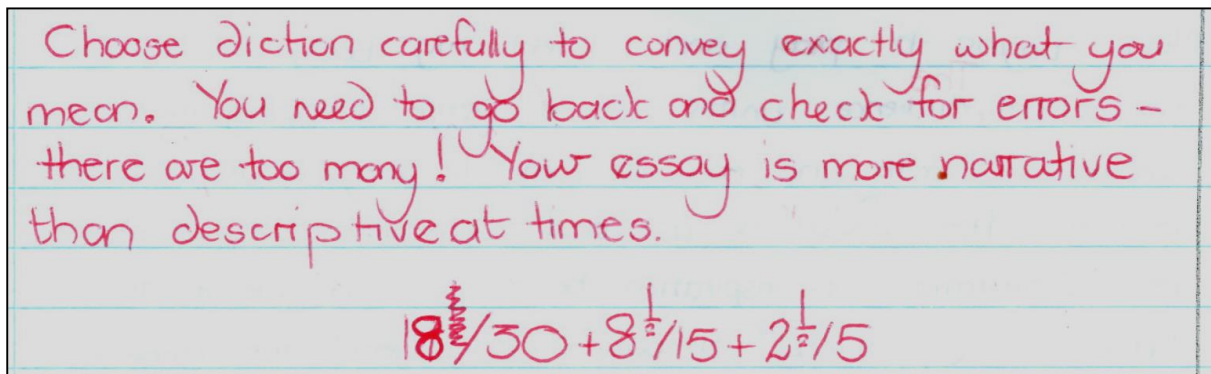
The written comment was an opportunity for the teachers to point out specifically what was done well, what could be improved on, and how. The comment below from the Grade 10 teacher at school C (Figure 5.5) indicated what was done correctly: *"The narrative succeeded, in an original way"*. The comment did not include information about how *creativity* could be improved.



Good effort. You told me a story about WWII while you used your own words and imagination. Please try to be a bit more creative next time.

**Figure 5.5: School C Grade 10 teacher written comment**

The example illustrated in Figure 5.6 does not merely point out three areas to pay attention to, it also included information on how to improve. The diction should be used to clearly express meaning, editing is lacking and the style should be descriptive throughout.



Choose diction carefully to convey exactly what you mean. You need to go back and check for errors - there are too many! Your essay is more narrative than descriptive at times.

$$18\frac{1}{30} + 8\frac{1}{15} + 2\frac{1}{15}$$

**Figure 5.6: School B Grade 11 teacher written comment**

The Grade 11 teacher at school C explained that global feedback given when the assessed tasks were returned to the learners was used to bring awareness to “major errors” (D6, 6:19, 53:53). According to the Grade 11 teacher at school A the aim is “to make them aware, maybe of the common errors or something that you are picking up, that most of them, since you will relating their essays, then you give that global feedback” (D3, 3:32, 60:60), as well as making the other learners aware of the mistake, “So that others don’t make the same mistake”. It was unclear whether the learners took note of the global feedback as their focus seemed to be on the mark and the teachers’ written comment.

The global feedback was not only used to point out mistakes, but also to share examples of good writing with the learners in class to reinforce the success criteria.

The feedback then became specific, as seen below. Coherence was the issue and the Grade 10 teacher at school A teacher used the example to illustrate the use of conjunctions to achieve coherence:

*R: So you are saying that I did it wrong there, who got it right?" You point at someone, or someone will volunteer that they got it right, which I normally prefer them to show each other. Then I will ask whoever did well in that section to explain, or I will read it out. And then, because they have a problem with coherence, so they don't use their conjunctions very well, they have good ideas, but they don't link, so we always stress, we will read someone's essay who did well (D2, 2:24, 72:73).*

The teachers, as reflected by the Grade 10 teachers at schools A and C, had a keen awareness of the learners' well-being goals and often kept the global feedback and focus on errors general: "... *but then it is always going to be general because I don't want anyone being discriminated because they are very, they work on the negative, they keep that for longer*" (D 2: 2:42 (104:105)). The Grade 10 teacher at school C was also cognisant of the importance of a safe learning environment when global feedback was given: "... *I don't like individual attention and picking them out individually because then it damages their self-confidence and their self-esteem. Then they don't feel confident and safe in the classroom in the working environment*" (D5, 5:23, 64:66).

The global feedback was predominantly verbal and it was not clear if it was proceeded by corrections or further reflections on the gaps in learning. The learners received feedback from their teachers in multiple forms on their formal tasks. The feedback communicated information to the learners about the gaps in their learning, but did not always indicate how the gaps could be addressed. The teachers' feedback indicated the success criteria they used in their assessment.

#### *5.2.4.3 Learners' interpretation of feedback*

The learners used the feedback from their teachers to determine what they had done well and where their learning gaps were. The Grade 11 learners at school A were clear that they needed specific information about where they went wrong such as codes: "*Because the codes, you can see, with the codes you see where your mistakes*



are” (D19, 19:20, 216:219). However, the most important indicator of success for the Grade 10 learners at school A was the mark as it showed the level of their achievement:

*Q: How do you know whether your essay was a good essay?*

*R: The marks (all) (D18, 18:33, 214:215).*

Furthermore, the Grade 11 learners at school C preferred a specific mark that indicated the areas on the rubric because: “*It tells you where you lagged. Tells you where you went wrong where you paid attention*” (D21, 21:14, 78:87).

The Grade 11 learners at school A referred to the rubric to understand where they had made mistakes:

*R: Ma'am, you check with the marks she has given you and refer to the rubric and see like your mistakes, like sometimes she breaks them down. CP [content and planning], if she gave you maybe 3, because you go to the rubric and check the mistakes, why she gave you 3 (D19, 19:18, 207:208).*

At school D the Grade 11 learners found the teacher’s comments most helpful as they contained specific information about their writing:

*R: It is more specific she will say like, “You are not making sense. When we are writing you want to reach the amount of words you have to and you don’t want to end up repeating things” (D23, 23:18, 68:69).*

The learners also reflected that the feedback enabled them to identify gaps in learning and that it was helpful to receive feedback on the draft so that the gap could be addressed before the final draft was written:

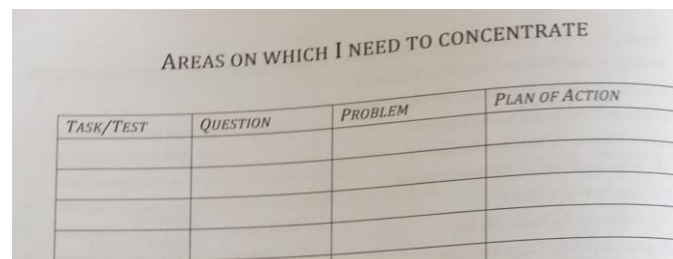
*R: I don’t really see the point of the teacher telling you on the final draft writing, “Please try and look at this this sentence” to you, you could have done something different writing why if they could have done it on the first draft? (D23, 23:31, 98:98).*

The need for feedback on the draft was driven by the focus on marks and not on learning:

*R: M'am I also feel like once you get your first draft you should like have a one on one with your teacher so you can check each and every paragraph to be more specific on what she wants, and what would get you good marks (D23, 23:37, 107:107).*

At school B the grade 10 teacher commented “*the [Grade 11] learners are given the opportunity to process*” (D10, 10:19, 51:52) the assessment and the feedback. During this time the teacher would walk around, assisting the learners as they went over the task, correcting the mistakes and making further adjustments based on the feedback they had received. The Grade 11 teacher at school B explained that the learners were expected to record in their workbooks what the gaps were and how they would respond to them (Figure 5.7). The identification of the “*PROBLEM*” and the creation of a “*PLAN OF ACTION*” were facets of self-regulated learning:

*R: Yes, that is correct. So I usually hand the task back and leave them to process the writing and the feedback. And we actually have a dedicated area in their workbooks where they records areas on which they need to improve. And so they can keep track of that throughout the year. We do it for all tasks, usually (D10, 10:19, 51:52).*



AREAS ON WHICH I NEED TO CONCENTRATE			
TASK/TEST	QUESTION	PROBLEM	PLAN OF ACTION

**Figure 5.7: School B Grade 11 learner’s workbook**

The teachers’ feedback on the final draft was in reference to the gaps in learning, but did not always include how the gaps could be addressed. The feedback included a mark based on the assessment rubric; however, the rubric was not always used to explain the success criteria linked to the task. When the expectations are not always made clear the consequence is that the feedback is not effective. This was evident as the Grade 11 learners at school D explained that they did not understand what the gaps were or how to address them:

*R: Essays... we get types of essays that are introduced to us over the years. It is unfair. We go into it blindly, we never know how to write it, get examples of how to write the essay you do a reflection about this this and that. And we listen to a song that was somewhat reflective essay and that so we could not see an example of a reflective essay so you don't know what to refer to. So you go into it blindly and you are confused. And when your teacher is giving you feedback you are a bit confused on how to fix it (D23, 23:46, 126:126).*

The teacher feedback reinforced the expectations, however it was not clear how strong the alignment was between the expectations and the assessment criteria the teachers used. Tension would develop if the success criteria were vague or inconsistent and the learners' attempts were focused on what they perceived the teacher expected. Expressions such as "*The teacher liked the writing style, be more specific on what she wants*" from the Grade 11 learners at school D seemed to indicate that the success criteria rested with the teacher and were not explicitly stated or agreed upon:

*R: With the marks I got I understood the teacher liked the writing style and the approach I am coming from. If my marks are not favourable I can know what to push because I am outside of what is wanted (D23, 23:33, 101:101).*

All the learners interviewed indicated that they used the feedback information to identify their successes and mistakes. However, only school B had an established system in the form of the reflection page in their workbook for the learners to use to track the progress of their learning.

### **5.3 REFLECTION ON CURRENT PRACTICE**

Based on the analysis presented above, it was evident from the interviews and the assessed essays that there was a greater focus on the completion of formal tasks than the informal tasks because the formal tasks were for marks. Where the practise tasks were part of the assessment they were used to expose learners to process writing and the assessment of tasks. School B, on the other hand, had an established formative assessment approach where learning was focused and assessed in the writing of the informal and formal tasks.

Where process writing was implemented, the process writing elements provided steps to follow in the writing of the task. The perception was that the steps were rather perfunctory and not used to hone the planning, drafting and revising skills. Feedback on the draft, in particular, was not effectively used to enhance learning. The feedback indicated mistakes or areas to work on but it was not clear how the gaps could be addressed. The learners attached importance to the feedback they received from their teachers, preferring feedback with specific information about the gaps. In seven of the eight classes investigated, structured, facilitated feedback in class from a peer or teacher was a new activity for the learners. In the case of the GDE schools, the current practice was an exercise in compliance with the rubric's expectation that editing had been done. The writing tasks were edited by a peer or other as prescribed in the CAPS (2011), mostly between lessons and not closely monitored. The Grade 11 class at school D was used to giving each other feedback on their work as a class activity facilitated by the teacher. However, the strong indication was that the feedback focused on error detection and correction and not on improving learning in writing.

The assessment rubrics covered all the pertinent aspects of the specific writing task and the teachers' use of the rubric indicated that the entire task was assessed against all the criteria. It became problematic if all the assessment criteria were applied but were not made clear as expectations at the outset. Furthermore, the assessment of all the aspects was vast and complicated and not easily accommodated in one writing task; this might explain why the feedback focused on accessible aspects such as spelling and punctuation. The writing tasks might be described as stand-alone activities and not explicitly linked to specific learning goals; the impression was that the tasks were to be done for marks and not for learning.

With the formal tasks in particular, the pressure to complete the tasks for marking was evident. The overwhelming impression from the participants was that the tasks were for the purposes of marks and that the tasks should be error free. The consequence of error detection focus was that there seemed to be a lack of attention on particular writing skills to achieve specific learning goals. The processes of thinking how to develop and express ideas, learning writing skills and careful drafting of writing tasks were absent.

The following findings from the analysis were used to inform the design of the writing feedback tool:

- Teaching and learning of writing focused on the assessment of formal tasks.
- Process writing with AFL elements, such as feedback, were present in all cases; schools A and C implemented process writing in all writing tasks.
- A rubric was used to assess formal writing tasks.
- Feedback on drafts focused on error detection and correction.
- Teachers provided feedback in multiple formats on formal tasks.

#### **5.4 WFT1 1 DESIGN**

The conceptualisation of WFT1 emerged from the conceptual framework (Chapter 3) where the theoretical underpinnings of the conceptual framework were explained. Using the findings based on the investigation of current practice presented above, the WFT is a system for the implementation of process writing while incorporating AFL principles. As part of the successful practical implementation, the WFT had to fit onto one page as the concise nature of a tool would facilitate its use in practice.

Hattie's three feedback questions, *Where am I going?*, *How am I going?* and *Where to next?* (Hattie, 2011) were used as a framework for the tool, as feedback is the pivot on which AFL turns (Clark, 2011). The three questions were also in close synergy with the process writing and the AFL processes. The decision to use Hattie's feedback questions as they were was deliberate as the three questions indicated meta thinking about learning. The questions moved the thinking to broader themes of language learning and away from the task orientated thinking that dominates when tasks are for the sole purpose of marks (Section 2.5.4). Hattie's phrasing of the questions do not represent the way the teachers and learners currently think about learning. *What I have to do, how I have to do it, and Have I done it?* Would have been closer; however, these questions implied a right or wrong approach and were therefore discarded.

Assessment for learning is self-regulated learning (Clark, 2011) and while some learners have a self-regulatory capacity it is possible to teach self-regulation to those learners who lack self-regulatory skills. Self-regulatory learners plan their goals and

use the feedback to track their progress towards their goals (Zimmermann, 2013). While considering the design of the WFT, I decided to build self-regulation into the tool, embedding self-regulatory practices in the processes. The self-regulatory practices were reflected in the questions and statements in the WFT columns (Figure 5.8), prompting learners to think about their learning and the processes they were engaged in.

While the learners preferred corrective feedback, it was clear that the teachers avoided it, instead pointing out errors and making suggestions about how to correct the writing. The issue regarding scaffolded feedback needed to be addressed. Scaffolding is regarded as effective feedback, but I was not sure how it was practiced in the writing lessons, be it verbal or written feedback. I decided to include the facilitation of scaffolded feedback in the design of the WFT.

One aim that emerged during the development phase was that the WFT had to be a learner's tool. One of the findings of the initial investigation of writing in schools indicated that the execution of the writing tasks were largely task orientated, the focus being on compliance as it was for marks. The WFT would only succeed in its aim to facilitate AFL if it engaged the learner in her/his learning. The WFT, therefore, needed to lead learners through the AFL steps, making their own learning visible, thereby enabling the learners to take action in regulating their learning.

WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL		
NAME: .....		
GRADE: .....		
Type of task:		
Topic:		
Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
What are the task goals:	Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:	<b>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</b> Which goals have I achieved?
My own goal:	Things I have to do to achieve goals:	What do I have to work on in the next task?  How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?

**Figure 5.8: Writing Feedback Tool 1**

The first question (first column): **Where am I going?** represented the planning phase of process writing which also included the clarification of task criteria and success criteria, the first step in AFL. It was a deliberate decision to use *task goals* and *own goals* instead of success criteria. The interviews with teachers and learners indicated that there was a disproportionate focus on the idea of the right answer, shown by the focus on editing and error detection. I wanted to create the opportunity to recognise that learning was ongoing and goals could be achieved, or be partially achieved, in the writing task. Therefore the achievement of the goals would become an ongoing endeavour, moving away from the narrow task focused approach to learning.

In order to clarify the task criteria, two sections were created in the first step. *Task goals* focused on the goals appropriate to the specific writing task such as a narrative essay or a formal letter. The task goals were informed by the task criteria and the assessment criteria. The *own goals* focused on the language learning goals the individual learner wanted to achieve. The own goals could be the same as the task goals or specific to the learner's needs. Self-regulatory learners are able to formulate the goals (Zimmerman, 2013) and, with the teacher's guidance and examples, learners can be taught to formulate goals.

The second question (second column): **How am I going?** addressed the phase in the writing process where the draft was completed or in process of completion. The statement: *Feedback to check my progress towards my goals* expected the learners to understand that the feedback should be on the goals they wanted to achieve. Furthermore, the feedback was on the progress made and not necessarily judgement on the correctness of the writing. The goals could be the ones they had written in the first column or goals that emerged from the feedback. The feedback question also addressed self-regulation. When learners considered their work on their own or with feedback from others, the observable behaviour of self-regulation was evident; the focus being on the task, self-instruction and help seeking (Winne, 2014).

The second column also included the statement: *Things I have to do to achieve goals*. Good feedback is actionable (Hattie, 2011) and the assumption was that the feedback would lead to actions or strategies to move closer to the goals. The actions and strategies would furthermore facilitate scaffolded feedback. A function of self-regulation is how learners respond to the help they receive and if they are able to use strategies to improve their writing. Some learners may be able to develop strategies in response to the feedback they received, or apply strategies they have been taught.

The third question (last column): **Where to next?** prompted the learners to reflect on their learning. The question: *Which goals have I achieved?* required the learners to interpret the assessment result, the mark, and feedback such as a comment and teacher's marking on the tasks. The learners would check their achievement against the goals stated in column one and the goals which may have emerged during the writing process. The next question: *What do I have to work on in the next task?* expected the learners to exercise self-regulatory functions to consider the feedback they had received, the goals they had achieved and, in the process, identify gaps in their learning. The evaluation of one's achievement of goals and the identification of areas in which to improve, are self-regulatory functions (Zimmerman, 2013).

The last question: *How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?* was included for two reasons: firstly I wanted the learners to consider the function of feedback and its influence on their thinking and write it down. Secondly I



wanted the learners to understand that the WFT was their tool and their evaluation, and input on the tool was of value.

## **5.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter focused on describing the current practice in the teaching and learning of writing in tasks in Grade 10 and 11 EHL. The current practice at school B showed that AFL was part of the English department's teaching philosophy; formative assessment is a recognised practice incorporating practise tasks targeting learning, formal tasks and the learners reflecting on their learning gaps. The other schools used informal tasks to practise writing, however, the focus on formal tasks distracted from using practise tasks for learning. The use of the process writing steps meant that AFL aspects such as drafting and feedback were present, however, it was primarily used to detect and correct errors.

The learners indicated that they preferred specific feedback which would clearly indicate where they had gone wrong. The feedback from their peers was for the purposes of editing and thus corrective and the learners expected peer feedback to enable them to achieve a better mark.

Taking the findings into consideration, the WFT design was finalised in preparation of the first implementation phase planned for the beginning of the second term. The first implementation phase is presented and discussed in Chapter 6.

## CHAPTER 6

### FIRST IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL

#### 6.1 ORIENTATION

In this chapter, the first implementation cycle of the WFT (referred to as WFT1) is presented. In section 6.2, the research questions aligned to this cycle are recapped and the tasks the teachers chose for the implementation of WFT1 are explained as well as the assessment rubrics which contain the success criteria. In section 6.3 the Grade 10 and section 6.4 the Grade 11 data collected during the implementation are presented and discussed. There were distinct similarities between the Grade 10 and Grade 11 classes; nevertheless, I decided to present the findings separately to better illustrate each subunit's context and its implications for the WFT1 implementation. A summary of the key implementation findings are provided in section 6.5. The teachers' reflections on the implementation of WFT1 are contained in section 6.6, followed by the discussion on the WFT1 implementation (6.7). How the findings of the first implementation were used to modify WFT1 are explicated in section 6.8.

#### 6.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT1

In Chapter 5 the current practice in the writing classes was established as well as the findings used to develop WFT1. The implementation of WFT1 occurred in the first action research cycle and the following research questions were addressed:

- Research Question 2: *What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in EHL writing in the FET phase?*
- Research Question 3: *How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and 11 learners in EHL writing?*
- Research Question 4: *What comprises an AFL process in EHL writing in the FET phase?*
- Research Question 5: *What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of AFL in writing lessons?*

The teachers agreed to implement WFT1, with the writing tasks planned for the second term. The discussions with the teachers regarding WFT1 included an explanation of

the WFT1 steps and how they could be incorporated into the process writing lessons. During the implementation, the teachers and I were in constant conversation about WFT1; therefore the implementation included everyone's efforts - my design of WFT1, the teachers' implementation and the learners' use of the WFT1 - implying a shared responsibility. Thus, the participatory action research methodology resulted in a high level of collaboration between all the participants. It also meant that the teachers could make suggestions about the WFT1 and adapt the way it was used in the lessons. The learners felt comfortable asking questions about WFT1, clarifying their understanding and contributing to the development of WFT1. My intention was that we would interrogate WFT1 and that it would evolve during the two implementation cycles of the study.

The first data collection phase, which established current practice in writing classes, concluded at the end of the first term (see Chapter 5) and the second phase commenced two weeks later, at the beginning of the second term. Within the context of an emergent design, the analysis of the first data collection phase was, therefore, not exhaustive and only preliminary findings were made. The implementation of WFT1 further clarified the current teaching and learning practices in EHL writing lessons while bringing greater context and understanding to the pertinent issues.

At the time WFT1 was implemented, learners in the Grade 10 and Grade 11 classes were writing transactional pieces in the second term. At school C the Grade 10 English department had decided not to include a writing task in the second term, but the Grade 10 teacher agreed to do a diary entry for the sake of the research. The transactional writing tasks address detailed writing skills requiring the learners to apply specific language conventions to achieve effective writing. These are explained in the Guideline for Teaching and Writing Essays and Transactional Texts (DBE, n.d.) and include examples.

The established practice was that the rubrics were not used as teaching tools to explain and demonstrate how success criteria could be met, but were used to allocate marks. The rubrics were experienced as inaccessible and the Grade 11 teacher at school A explained that it had to be explained to the learners. While practise tasks were not for the purposes of the year mark, it was important to determine how the rubrics could be used to inform the formulation of the goals and the use of feedback.

The GDE transactional text rubric (Figure 6.1) has two categories representing the success criteria. The expectation in *Content, planning and format* of an “*outstanding response beyond normal expectations, Intelligent and mature ideas*” (DBE, 2015:20), may be difficult for teachers and learners to agree on, particularly if such an example is not available. *Language, style and editing* are perhaps easier to assess in a binary correct or incorrect nature.

6.4 APPENDIX D: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: TRANSACTIONAL TEXT

SECTION B: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR TRANSACTIONAL TEXT – HOME LANGUAGE [25 MARKS]					
Criteria	Exceptional 13–15	Skilful 10–12	Moderate 7–9	Elementary 4–6	Inadequate 0–3
<b>CONTENT, PLANNING AND FORMAT</b> Response and ideas; Organisation of ideas for planning; Purpose, audience, features/conventions and context <b>15 MARKS</b>	-Outstanding response beyond normal expectations -Intelligent and mature ideas -Extensive knowledge of features of the type of text -Writing maintains focus -Coherence in content and ideas -Highly elaborated and all details support the topic -Appropriate and accurate format	-Very good response demonstrating good knowledge of features of the type of text -Maintains focus – no digressions -Coherent in content and ideas, very well elaborated and details support topic -Appropriate format with minor inaccuracies	-Adequate response demonstrating knowledge of features of the type of text -Not completely focused – some digressions -Reasonably coherent in content and ideas -Some details support the topic -Generally appropriate format but with some inaccuracies	-Basic response demonstrating some knowledge of features of the type of text -Some focus but writing digresses -Not always coherent in content and ideas -Few details support the topic -Has vaguely applied necessary rules of format -Some critical oversights	-Response reveals no knowledge of features of the type of text -Meaning is obscure with major digressions -Not coherent in content and ideas -Very few details support the topic -Has not applied necessary rules of format
<b>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</b> Tone, register, style, purpose/effect, audience and context; Language use and conventions; Word choice; Punctuation and spelling <b>10 MARKS</b>	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Grammatically accurate and well-constructed -Virtually error-free	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary very appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Generally grammatically accurate and well-constructed -Very good vocabulary -Mostly free of errors	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Some grammatical errors -Adequate vocabulary -Errors do not impede meaning	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Inaccurate grammar with numerous errors -Limited vocabulary -Meaning obscured	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary do not correspond to purpose, audience and context -Error-ridden and confused -Vocabulary not suitable for purpose -Meaning seriously impaired
<b>MARK RANGE</b>	22–25	17–20	12–15	7–10	0–5

Figure 6.1: GDE assessment rubric for transactional text (DBE, 2015:20)

The IEB transactional task rubric (Figure 6.2) has two sections of 10 marks each. The one section focuses on the *Purpose and content*, the second section on *Language and register*, and the aim is the highly competent use of language conventions and an excellent understanding of register. The writing should be practically free of grammar and/or spelling errors and the format correct. The marking instruction (Figure 6.3) demonstrates a nuanced approach to marking, steering away from the close attention to the correctness of writing and adherence to the word count. The purpose is to produce “*a text that is fully developed to meet the requirements of the assessment rubric*” (IEB, 2015:52).

Level	Mark	PURPOSE AND CONTENT	LANGUAGE AND REGISTER
7+	10 9	<b>AN IMPRESSIVE SCINTILLATING RESPONSE.</b> Writing suggests that this is a piece of work that is significant, has <b>depth and breadth, impressive detail.</b> Organization of thoughts is <b>impressive and superior</b> resulting in writing that is <b>compelling and striking.</b> Highly original. <b>Supplied text is used as only as stimulus.</b>	<b>IMPRESSIVE COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER</b> <b>Impressive</b> use of language conventions; <b>Elegance</b> of style; tone and mood appropriate to the task; <b>plays confidently</b> with language usage; <b>thoroughly engaging.</b> Virtually error free.
7	8 ½ 8	<b>A LIVELY, ORIGINAL RESPONSE.</b> Writing provides <b>comprehensive insight, understanding and reflective thought</b> by building a focused response. A <b>cohesive viewpoint has been developed throughout, resulting in a strong, consistent voice.</b> Original, sincere and creative. Shows clear development and <b>commendable depth of argument.</b> A clear, <b>mature personal style.</b> Skillfully adapts to different audiences, purposes and contexts. <b>The supplied text is used only as stimulus, with no cutting and pasting into the transactional piece.</b>	<b>EXCELLENT COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER.</b> <b>Highly sophisticated use of language conventions</b> and excellent understanding of register required for the task. Language is <b>precise and engaging,</b> with notable sense of voice and awareness of audience and purpose. Effectively incorporates a range of varied sentence patterns to reveal syntactic fluency. Writing reflects author's unique personality through carefully selected diction and register, rendering a piece that comes to life.
6	7 ½ 7	<b>A GOOD TO VERY GOOD (ABOVE AVERAGE) RESPONSE.</b> Writing, on the whole, provides consistent focus, understanding and thought. Glimmers of a focused response but lacks consistency, which could have resulted in the writing being awarded a level 7. Evidence of personal style and voice, although depth and development compromised in places/ development and depth in evidence but personal style lacking or compromised. <b>The supplied text is used generally as stimulus- limited cutting and pasting integrated/ moulded with own ideas.</b>	<b>A GOOD TO VERY GOOD COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER.</b> Competent and at times, impressive use of language. Very good understanding of register. Language is fluent and original with evident awareness of audience and purpose. Incorporates varied sentence patterns that reveal an awareness of different syntactic structures. May employ liveliness, sincerity or humour when appropriate; the writing at times may be too casual/ personal/ formal. Errors do not impede readability. Some editing is needed.
5	6 ½ 6	<b>AN ADEQUATE (AVERAGE) RESPONSE.</b> An ordinary, predictable response that broadly meets the requirements of the task. Makes an attempt to respond sincerely albeit unconvincing in places. Evidence of personal style in places, although some areas jar with the question requirements. <b>The supplied text is used as stimulus- cutting and pasting integrated/ moulded with own ideas.</b>	<b>AN ADEQUATE COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER.</b> Use of appropriate language with <b>some</b> awareness of audience and purpose. Makes some attempt to include different sentence patterns but with awkward or uneven success. Occasional errors that detract from the writing fluency in places. In places errors may impede readability. The purpose, audience and register have been understood. Writing is ordinary.
4	5 ½ 5	<b>A LIMITED (BELOW AVERAGE) RESPONSE</b> Ideas in the paragraphs may be inconsistently organised. Glimmers of originality, despite limited success in taking into account different audiences and purposes. Superficial response. Limited personal style. Development of ideas is limited/ partial and requires further elaboration. Personal voice is not always in evidence/ limited personal voice. <b>Over-reliance on supplied text, which hinders personal response in places.</b>	<b>A LIMITED COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER</b> Limited awareness of audience and purpose. Limited range of syntactic structures. Uses words that are colourless and flat. Language may be repetitious. Errors begin to impede readability. Editing required for clarity of ideas. Register not consistent with question's demands.
3	4 ½ 4	<b>AN INADEQUATE, COMPROMISED RESPONSE</b> Ideas have in instances been compromised by insufficient depth, development and organisation. The purpose of the task has been tackled marginally. Vague in places. An inconsistent or incomplete attempt. Glimmer of personal voice, albeit unconvincing. <b>The writing is compromised and lacks focus and direction. Over-reliance on supplied text, which hinders personal response.</b>	<b>AN INADEQUATE COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER</b> Language is flawed and unsuitable for audience or purpose. Language patterns flawed, images stereotyped. Errors severely impede readability; extensive editing required. Vague, confused sentences. Register inappropriate for the task.
2	3 ½ 3	<b>A POOR, MUDDLED RESPONSE</b> Little or no originality. Individual ideas lacking. No development and focus. Cohesion required. No personal style. Reveals no awareness of the purpose of the task. Voice is flat and unconvincing/ no voice. <b>Relies solely on supplied text.</b>	<b>A POOR COMMAND OF LANGUAGE AND REGISTER</b> Very flawed product. Erroneous. Demonstrates lack of control of language conventions, exhibiting frequent errors which impedes understanding.
1	2 ½ 2 1	<b>AN INCOHERENT RESPONSE</b> No evidence of originality or cohesion; no attention to purpose, context. Development lacking. A completely flawed response/ does not address the question.	<b>INCOHERENT/ INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE AND REGISTER</b> Incoherent language/ inappropriate language. Preponderance of errors of style. Illogical.

Figure 6.2: IEB transactional task rubric (IEB, 2015:53)

- (20 MARKS = 10 + 10)
- This rubric serves to guide the marking process.
  - Markers should be aware that the mark for the PURPOSE AND CONTENT element need not correspond with the mark for LANGUAGE AND REGISTER. A candidate may, for example, achieve a level 7 for PURPOSE AND CONTENT, and a level 5 for LANGUAGE AND REGISTER (7 + 5 = 12).
  - An approximate length of 250 words is a recommended guide but this is not prescriptive. Candidates should be encouraged to write a text that is fully developed to meet the requirements of the assessment rubric.
  - Candidates need NOT write a word count at the end of their writing.
  - Half marks may be awarded.
  - Candidates must NOT write word length at the end of their writing.
  - Half marks may be awarded.

**Figure 6.3: IEB transactional task marking instruction (IEB, 2015:52)**

### **6.3 THE GRADE 10 IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT1**

In this subsection, the WFT1 implementation in the four Grade 10 classes is presented. Firstly an overview of the context is provided (6.3.1) followed by discussions on the three WFT1 columns, the *Where am I going?* column (6.3.2), *How am I going?* column (6.3.3), and the *Where to next?* column (6.3.4).

#### **6.3.1 Overview of the Grade 10 context at the time of implementation**

Table 6.1 reflects the task purpose and type that were used for the WFT1 implementation in the Grade 10 classes. The transactional tasks at the GDE schools (schools A, B, and C) were practise tasks or informal tasks. The practise tasks were not meant to be for marks; however, at schools A and D the practise tasks were assessed to ensure compliance, the teachers arguing that the learners would not complete a task if it was not for marks (5.2.2.2). At the IEB school (school D) the task was a formal task as all writing tasks were portfolio tasks forming a collection of the learners' writing.

**Table 6.1: Grade 10 writing tasks**

School	Informal	Formal	Type
A	√		Obituary
B	√		Friendly letter
C	√		Diary entry
D		√	Obituary

### 6.3.2 Grade 10 *Where am I going?*

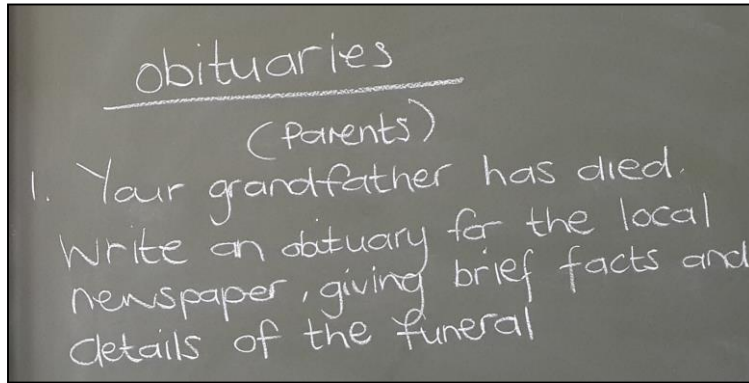
The first column of the WFT1 focused on the formulation of the goals. The overview of the column is provided in section 6.3.2.1. There are two sections in the *Where am I going?* column which are discussed as follows: *Task goals* (6.3.2.2) and *My own goals* (6.3.2.3) and the discussion of the *Where am I going?* column findings (6.3.2.4).

#### 6.3.2.1 Overview of the *Where am I going?* column

With reference to the WFT1 development (see Chapter 5.5), the purpose of the question in the first column: *What are the task goals?* was to clarify the learning intention. This included the clarification of task criteria and success criteria and stated the goals to be achieved in the writing task. The way the task was introduced was critical as it determined how the learners understood the learning intention and thus what was expected of them. The teachers shared task goals both verbally and in written format as well as continuously during the writing lessons. Furthermore, regardless of whether the teachers or learners formulated the goals, the question was, how did the goals make the learning intentions, task and success criteria clear?

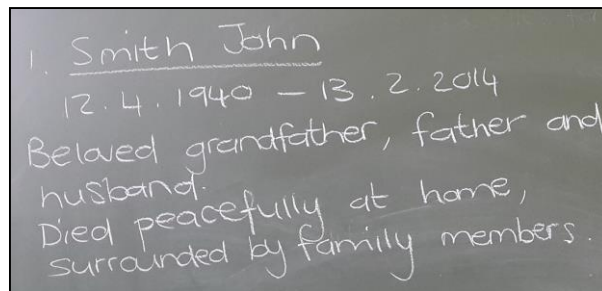
#### 6.3.2.2 *What are the task goals?*

At school A the task topic (Figure 6.4), an obituary of a grandparent, was agreed on with the learners. The instruction on the board emphasised the facts and details of the funeral:



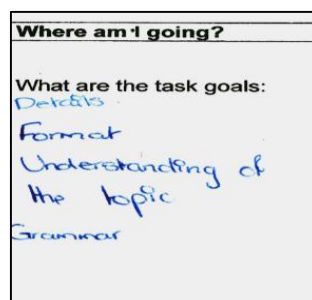
**Figure 6.4: School A Grade 10 task topic**

The teacher shared the task goals of the obituary with the learners as a verbal instruction detailing the format, grammar, tenses and punctuation, details about the deceased and coherence in writing. The following day the teacher provided a short example on the board (Figure 6.5) about the details expected in an obituary adding that it should be “*factual*” (D2, 2:16, 43:43). The additional information was not added to the task goals and many of the learners did not succeed in this goal.



**Figure 6.5: School A Grade 10 obituary example**

The learners wrote the goals on the WFT1 according to the teacher’s instruction; the “*format, grammar*” and “*coherence*”. The goals were at a surface level, taking the form of a checklist and directing the level at which the learning was taking place, as seen in the example in Figure 6.6:



**Figure 6.6: School A Grade 10 example of learner task goals**



The learners demonstrated their own somewhat limited understanding of the goals in the way the *What are the task goals?* section was completed. The school A focus group was asked what some of their goals were. While they could list the goals, they could not always explain what they wanted to achieve with the goal. For example:

*R: Grammar.*

*Q: Grammar, what about the grammar?*

*R: Like the way you say it, like write it, if you like proper.*

*Q: Proper and what does that mean? That it should be proper?*

*R: Like somehow it should like make sense to someone who is reading and like being interested (D3, 3:4, 17:23).*

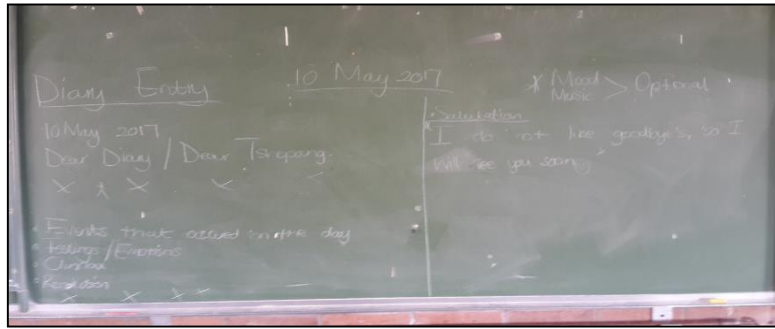
The obituary was a new task for the learners and the criteria and the goals did not provide sufficient clarity; however, some learners found examples on the internet to guide their writing. The result was that the “*format*”, which was understood as the detailed content, became the focus point. The processes underlying the writing of the task as indicated on the rubric such as “*the purpose, audience, appropriate tone*” and “*use of language conventions*” became irrelevant as learner N explained:

*R: I had to understand what an obituary is, and how you put it, because this was, I think it is our first time to use it, so I focus mostly on my format, grammar and spelling. Okay, spelling I am good at but I tend to make a few mistakes; format I always mix it up, so I make that like a key point, like to get the obituary right (D4, 4:1, 272:604).*

The task goal “*format*” was vague, with no indication of how it was to be executed. Some learners were not certain about the format, an indication that the mere stating of format was not sufficient:

*R: My task goals, the task goals helped me, because she gave out the specific things that we were supposed to add. So now the setbacks were that, the format I did not understand at first, but when I got the feedback, I regularly understood it (D6, 6:2 1706:2108).*

At school C the Grade 10 teacher led the discussion about the task goals the focused being on the format written on the board (Figure 6.7):



**Figure 6.7: School C Grade 10 format example**

The teacher emphasised the format which in this case was the sequence of narrative writing:

*R:...there is an event, an emotional response, what happened, a climax of the event and an emotion, the resolution, written in three paragraphs and concluding the diary entry with a salutation (D24, 25:14, 30:36).*

At school C the learners were included in a discussion about important goals to achieve in writing a diary. The goals that the teacher and the learners agreed on indicated the learners' understanding of what was required in a writing task:

*R:...content should relate to the topic, spelling and punctuation, vocabulary must be appropriate to content, focus on language use, tense – must be present tense, register determined by topic and content, it will be semi-formal (D24, 24:14, 1796:2558).*

Similar to school A, the criteria the school C learners listed on the WFT1 did not have any indication of what should be done to achieve these goals, as illustrated in Figure 6.8. While “register” is one of the goals, the learners did not understand that the language should be semi-formal (Figure 6.8).

Learner M	Learner N
<p>Where am I going?</p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Format</li> <li>Content must relate to the topic</li> <li>Punctuation, spelling</li> <li>Register</li> <li>Present tense</li> </ul>	<p>Where am I going?</p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Format</li> <li>* Content should relate to the topic</li> <li>* Spelling and Punctuations</li> <li>* Vocabulary</li> <li>* Present tense</li> <li>* Register</li> </ul>

**Figure 6.8: School C Grade 10 learner task goals**

Without an opportunity to discuss or plan the writing, the learners struggled to understand the topic and expressed their frustration. However, after an example was provided (one of the learners read a draft to the class) the learner focus group explained they were able to attempt the writing of the diary:

*R: Ma'am, the topic, the topic wasn't so clear to me either, the first time when we were told the topic wasn't clear and we didn't understand for a while. We couldn't put that into our diary entry, but after we were told the second time, and were given an example, we could do it better (D25, 25:6, 26:26).*

At both schools A and C, the task goals did not clarify the learning intention and the absence of an example to illustrate the task and success criteria confused the learners about what they were to do. The focus turned to the task level goals with the result that the learners produced written work lacking in substance.

At school B, the lesson introduction included the learners by giving them the option to choose the type of letter they wanted to write. The learners chose a friendly letter as opposed to a formal letter and decided, with the teacher, to write to a friend about an exciting event she had missed out on. As explained in section 5.2.4.3, the learners each had a comprehensive workbook with criteria, examples and success criteria of the various tasks they were expected to learn. It was clear that the learners had written friendly letters previously and it was anticipated that that the learners knew what was expected of them.

After the agreement on the task type and topic, the school B teacher emphasised some of the expectations of the task such as the “*content, language and the appropriate tone*”. The learners formulated the goals on their own, therefore the goals were fairly unique to each learner’s understanding of the criteria. Listing the task goals, the learners demonstrated an awareness of the topic “*describing the event*” and the “*correct structure*” which was the format of the friendly letter as illustrated by the examples in Figure 6.9:

Learner C	Learner T	Learner J
<p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:            Write an informal letter to a friend. Write it in an informal letter in the correct format. The letter has to be about telling a friend about an exciting event that she missed.</p>	<p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To describe what has happened in the event ✓</li> <li>- To finish the task within the given time. ✓</li> <li>- To use the correct format taught to us. ✓</li> </ul>	<p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To write a exciting event that happened ✓</li> <li>- use good vocabulary and spelling ✓</li> <li>- don't use colloquial language or slang ✓</li> <li>- use structure correctly ✓</li> </ul>

**Figure 6.9: School B Grade 10 learner task goals**

Similar to schools A and C, the goals were vague and at surface level such as “*use good vocabulary and spelling*” (learner J). Goals such as “*don’t use colloquial language or slang*” (learner J) or “*To use correct format taught to us*” (learner T) were specific even if they were on a surface level. Specific goals, as opposed to vague goals, could be checked. However, the learners’ familiarity with the friendly letter and the expectations enabled them to complete the task successfully.

At school D, the planned formal writing task for the term was an obituary. The learners received a task sheet (Figure 6.10) which included criteria for writing an obituary, the task topic and a checklist. The learners analysed the task by highlighting the criteria for the content of the obituary.

**Grade 10 Transactional Writing – Obituary**

- An obituary gives the basic facts of the deceased person’s life such as the person’s birth date, the date of death and where he or she lived. Details of the person’s family may also be included.
- Stories and memories about the person are included.
- The deceased’s favourite sayings are included.
- The **tone** is **sad** because the person has died, but also **uplifting because it is a celebration of the person’s life**
- Personal feelings about the deceased person can be included.

Task: Okonkwo has taken his own life. Okonkwo was a titled man in his village, with many wives and a great deal of wealth. While he was respected, he was also feared. Write a suitable obituary paying tribute to the person. **Word count: 200 – 250 words.**

20 marks

**Obituary Checklist**

1. Basic Facts about the deceased	Date of birth, date of death, where the deceased lived, 1 detail about his family	
2. memories or stories about the deceased.	A minimum of 2 stories of memories about the deceased.	
3. Favourite sayings	A minimum of 2 favourite sayings or beliefs the deceased had	
4. Tone	The tone is sad in some parts and happy in other parts.	
5. Person Feelings <i>Personal Feelings</i>	It may help you to pretend you are one of the characters in the novel that you think would give the obituary at his funeral.	

**Figure 6.10: School D Grade 10 task sheet with instruction and criteria**

The task goals the learners formulated emerged from the discussion in class, the information on the task sheet and their own understanding of the purpose of an obituary. The topic was based on a character in the *Animal Farm* set work, therefore the task was made accessible. The learners were able to discuss the character and the content of the obituary in a meaningful way. The checklist made the criteria clear and the learners’ goals such as “write facts about his life” were in alignment with the obituary checklist as the examples in Figure 6.11 illustrate.

Learner K	Learner N
<p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:  <i>Highlight the positive aspects of Okonkwo during his life.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good father</li> <li>- Titles</li> <li>- heartfelt</li> <li>- co-adherent</li> </ul> <p><i>- Seem like a human being</i></p> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- facts about the deceased</li> <li>- Writing with emotions</li> <li>- Sentimental</li> <li>- heartfelt</li> <li>- Achievements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <p><i>Write a meaningful obituary about Okonkwo</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To write facts about the deceased</li> <li>- write about his amazing achievements</li> </ul> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want to write an obituary that will touch hearts</li> <li>- I also want to be uplifting and positive in the obituary</li> </ul>

**Figure 6.11: School D Grade 10 learners' task goals**

### 6.3.2.3 My own goal

Figure 6.12, below, shows examples of the learners' own goals at schools A, C, and D. Some learners repeated the task goals while some added their own goals such as "*improve punctuation, planning*" (school A learner N, Figure 6.12), indicating an awareness of weaknesses but lacking a detailed understanding of what the learning gaps were. The learners at school D did not effectively differentiate between the task goals and their own goals and were confused about it, swapping them around, as seen with learner P from school D in Figure 6.12.

School A learner N	School C learner M	School D learner P
<p><b>My own goal:</b></p> <p>improve punctuation planning</p>	<p><b>My own goal:</b></p> <p>my diary entry should impress the reader/listener</p>	<p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals: Heartbeat and Cheerful answer. Highlight the fire he had when he was alive.</p> <p><i>Use the idea</i></p> <p><b>My own goal:</b></p> <p>to create 200-250 words. * said bene, up cave.</p>

**Figure 6.12: Schools A, C, and D Grade 10 learner task goals**

At school B the learners had a greater awareness of their learning gaps and added these as their own goals. Learner C explained that she listed general language goals pertinent to gaps in learning she had identified in her previous writing tasks:

*R: Because I chose that because the previous letters that I wrote in tasks, I didn't really apply the rules correctly because it was like kind of my first time writing it. So and this I just wanted to achieve that (learner C, school B) (D16, 16:3, 11:11).*

Learner C at school B (Figure 6.13) was specific about the gaps; while "... *apply the rules correctly*" might be a vague goal, it was an indication of how structure such as the "*correct format*" was a goal. Learner C (quoted below) explained her awareness that sentence structure was a gap but it was not clear if she knew what correct sentence structure was.

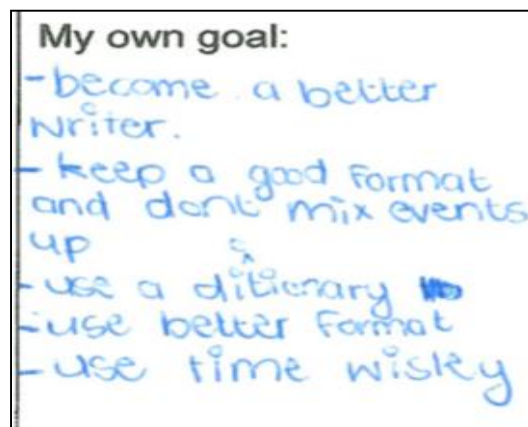
**My own goal:**

Being able to apply  
the rules correctly.  
Being able to structure  
my sentences correctly  
and not making the it  
vague.

**Figure 6.13: School B Grade 10 learner C: own goals**

*R: I also wanted to achieve that because, it like not, because I didn't really have much practice, so I just want to see if I can structure my sentences correctly (D16, 16:4, 13:13).*

Learner J (Figure 6.14) also indicated an awareness of a learning gap which in her case was coherence of the events: "... don't mix events up". "Use time wisely" as a personal goal indicated a self-regulatory awareness as well as the long-term goal "become a better writer". While these goals were vague, it might have opened up a conversation about her goals with her teacher.



**Figure 6.14: School B Grade 10 learner J: own goal**

#### 6.3.2.4 Discussion of the *Where am I going?* column findings

The function of formulating the goals was to make the learning intentions, task and success criteria clear to the learners. If the learners formulated the goals it demonstrated their understanding of the task. The task goals (6.3.2.2) recorded demonstrated that the task type and the topic were the learning intention, e.g. to write an obituary about a grandparent. The absence of an example or clear success criteria; what a successful task would look like, resulted in a list of goals indicating what to do. The difficulty the learners had with understanding the obituary (at school A) and the diary entry (school C) became an obstacle to their abilities to demonstrate their learning in relation to the task goals. The task goals were mostly at surface level, therefore the conclusion may be reached that the learning intentions were at surface level. The absence of clear success criteria in the form of the rubric or examples contributed further to the vague and surface level task goals.



The writing tasks at schools B and D were accessible; therefore the learners demonstrated a better understanding of the task. The learners at school B had previous experience as well as resources in the form of the workbook to draw on. The learners at school D used the checklist to structure the goals, furthermore, their knowledge of the set work and characteristics of the deceased informed their goals. The task goals indicated the learning intention, albeit retrospectively.

The learners' own goals (6.3.2.3) indicated a random awareness of their learning gaps based on the feedback they had received on previous tasks, as demonstrated by one learner in the school B focus group who observed: "*My goals weren't really what I was doing wrong, I think I was doing that wrong, but I wasn't doing that wrong*" (D13, 13:36, 25:25). The learners' own goals were mostly at surface level and served to indicate the level of their engagement with the writing task.

### **6.3.3 Grade 10 *How am I going?***

The second column reflected the learners' use of the feedback to track their progress. In this subsection firstly an overview of the *How am I going?* column is provided (6.3.3.1). *Feedback to check my progress towards my goals* is presented (6.3.3.2) followed by *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* (6.3.3.3). Thereafter, the findings linked to these sections are discussed (6.3.3.4).

#### **6.3.3.1 Overview of the *How am I going?* column**

The feedback stage was, as indicated on the WFT1, primarily to check progress towards the goals. The data was analysed to determine if the feedback in relation to the goals allowed the learners to track their progress. Furthermore, analysis focused on how the learners responded to the feedback, if the feedback was actionable, and whether it gave the learners strategies to improve their writing.

The feedback could be peer feedback, or feedback from the self or the teacher. The feedback formed part of a structured lesson where the learners paired up with a peer, in most cases two learners sitting next to one another. It was left up to the learners to decide who would record the feedback; in some cases the peer wrote down the feedback, however, some learners recorded the feedback they received. The

classroom culture determined the way the feedback was conducted. At schools A and D it was a vibrant discussion with the teachers circulating, providing synchronous feedback to individuals and the class and facilitating the process. At schools B and C the learners worked quietly; here the teachers circulated too and provided feedback to individuals.

### 6.3.3.2 *Feedback to check my progress towards my goals*

The learners were instructed to provide feedback in relation to the goals stated in the *Where am I going?* column. The intention was that the learner and the peer would identify which goals were achieved or achieved to some extent. Furthermore, if the goals were not achieved, there would be feedback information about what to do to achieve the goal.

At school C, for example, where the goals were at task level and vague such as *“format, punctuation, factual details”*, the feedback was also on task level and vague. In fact, the feedback illustrated the level of the task goals. As shown in Figure 6.15, below, there was recognition from some that feedback should be actionable, such as *“Spelling should improve (use a dictionary Please)”*. The surface level corrective feedback did not allow for meaningful strategies which focused on improvement, *“Improve punctuation”* and corrective steps *“correct my spelling mistakes”*.

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <p>Format, Grammar Coherence/Coher Details</p> <p>Format Grammar Coherence Details</p> <p>My own goal:</p> <p>Spelling Improve Punctuation</p>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>* Spelling should improve (use a dictionary please) * Improve your format and add more detail * Punctuation should improve too "either way well tried"</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <p>Correct my spelling mistakes Improve punctuation</p>

**Figure 6.15: School C Grade 10: peer feedback how to improve spelling**

The surface level goals created a list to check if the goals were present in the task. However, the feedback "followed" (Figure 6.16) did not give enough information to act on. The spelling which was not followed resulted in "I have to work on my vocabulary (spelling)" (Figure 6.16), lacking a corrective strategy. The awareness that spelling needed to be improved could be enhanced by specific feedback indicating what the spelling problem was and how to correct it.

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <p>Formation (relate to topic) Context Spelling (Vocabulary) Present tense Register (Semi-Formal)</p> <p>My own goal:</p>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>Formation - Followed Context - Followed Spelling - Not followed Present - Followed Register - Followed</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <p>I have to work on my vocabulary (spelling)</p>

**Figure 6.16: School C Grade 10: peer feedback**

Learner B at school A also used the listed goals as a “tick box” with the emphasis on compliance and not understanding:

*Q: And how did you then know when you looked at your work, that you were getting closer to the success criteria?*

*R: I looked, since she explained it, I looked at it and I was like okay, this I mentioned, this I mentioned, I like did like a box. Before we even got the criteria, the rubric, I like ticked, whatever she was saying, let's see if I have it, tick (D6, 6:10, 56:59).*

At school B, the learners were encouraged to read through their work, check and edit against their goals. Learner T from school B used the goals as a way to check her progress by going back to the goals and editing her work. She realised that feedback and goals were aligned or as she explained:

*R: So ma'am, always your goal, or I feel like it always goes hand in hand with the feedback, so what we do always have an outcome. If my goal is avoid using slang, then I don't use slang in my writing, then I will probably get a positive feedback about that (D 14, 14:20, 62:62).*

The goals were used to guide and check the writing while drafting the letter:

*R: Ma'am, well the thing is, I am not quite sure, the thing is I tend to think a lot about or while I have to write a letter, then only then I am like, I've got a problem with this and this and I pick it up. So I will like write a draft and then I see, no but the goal said, don't use slang, and I would go back and I would fix my mistake (D 14, 14:18, 42:42).*

At school D the teacher's teaching style was collaborative and she regarded her classroom as a “*knowledge hub*” where knowledge was shared. The feedback took the form of a discussion and conversation with the teacher circulating throughout, assisting the learners and providing feedback on the writing, and answering questions. The feedback lesson demonstrated how it was possible for learners to learn from each other while engaging in a discussion. In this case the goals, and therefore the feedback discussion, focused on the content. Learner K explained how the restructuring of the conclusion developed while she received feedback from a peer:

*R: I think her feedback, because as she was explaining I also like I try taking her words and then which open to more broad aspects (D36, 36:11, 36:40).*

R: I just wrote it down, then she said she liked my idea (D36, 36:12, 42:44).

The WFT1 did not succeed in aligning the goals and the feedback in all cases. In the example below, the task goals were vague and the own goals more specific. However, the peer feedback included a task goal which was not included by learner N namely the “word count” (Figure 6.17). This was mentioned by the teacher; while she circulated she alerted the learners to common issues, e.g. “If word count was exceeded edit work” (D35, 35:3, 2572:2963). While the word count was stipulated on the task, it was not initially highlighted as an important criterion. This was a common occurrence where the teacher would add goals and new information would emerge during the process as the tasks were read and feedback provided. Some learners included the criteria in their feedback, thus informing the peer of the gap. It became problematic when not all the learners were made aware of the emerging goals yet it was part of the success criteria. The learners then became confused and unsure of what the task expectations were, or as they said: “what the teacher wants”.

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals: To write an obituary about Okwonkwo</p> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* positive</li> <li>* inspiring</li> <li>* motivational</li> <li>* factual</li> <li>* touching</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals: you have not met your word count requirements but other than that it is so far inspirational and motivating us to reach our dreams one day.</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals: I have to complete my work so that I'm able to have a good, touching obituary</p>

Figure 6.17: School D Grade 10 learner N: “word count”

An aspect of the WFT1 implementation that was underestimated was the learners’ acceptance of peer feedback. Learners were allowed to choose the peer; or those who

felt uncomfortable receiving peer feedback, could give themselves feedback. Learner B at school A preferred not receive peer feedback, as she explained:

*R: So, that is when I said, you know I must do this by myself, because it is not like I don't trust another person's advice, I really do love other people's criticism but I was like, you know, you are going to do this by yourself and then I learned from it yourself (D6, 6:9, 55:55).*

The inclusion of peer feedback was to create an opportunity for discussion between learners, facilitated by the teachers with the task goals as focus. However, if the function of feedback was regarded as corrective, then a more proficient or expert peer was preferable and the feedback functioned as editing. Learner J from school B recognised that her peer's language proficiency was similar to her own and perhaps not in the best position to provide feedback:

*R: Ja. T, I think she, I don't wanted to query T, she is not the best with English, she is kind of like me. Except not Afrikaans. So when she marked it, she said you know, it was okay, there is a bit colloquial language and whatever, but it was okay (D15, 15:12, 39:39).*

While learner J acknowledged coherence as a learning gap, she did not respond to her peer pointing it out. It could have been a result of her doubting her peer's ability to provide feedback or alternatively it may be that she did not know how to achieve coherence:

*Q: What did you do then when she said it is a little jumbled?*  
*R: I checked it again, and I just, I looked at it and was like, ja, it is a little jumbled but I think the teacher will get to the, you know type of point place (D15, 15:16, 42:43).*

#### 6.3.3.3 Things to do to achieve my goals

Effective feedback is actionable, in other words, the learner will take action to correct the mistake or address the issue, and this was the motivation to include the statement: *Things I can do to achieve my goals*. The intention was not that the feedback would always be corrective, however, most of the goals were at surface level and resulted in

corrective feedback. Whereas process level goals may result in scaffolded feedback that include a strategy.

The learners' responses to the feedback showed an awareness of things that could be done, for example, "Edit my work", "Always start with the planning before the first draft" to ensure a detailed obituary, (Figure 6.18). The vague strategy to improve format indicated the gap developing in the understanding of the task.

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <p>Details</p> <p>Format</p> <p>Understanding of the topic</p> <p>Grammar</p> <p>My own goal:</p> <p>Grammar</p> <p>Format</p> <p>Improve understanding</p> <p>Improve creativity</p>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>Improve your <del>my</del> format</p> <p>Lacks details on venue and specific info.</p> <p>Grammar is good, but needs improving.</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Edit my work.</li> <li>② Always start with the planning before first draft</li> <li>③ Format needs to be improved.</li> </ol>

**Figure 6.18: School A Grade 10 learner B: strategy in response to feedback**

Restating the feedback as a goal without a remedy showed that the learner might not have known how to correct the mistake. The feedback "Will have to mention his name less" was restated as "I have to mention his name a lot less" whereas an appropriate strategy would have been "use pronouns appropriately" (Figure 6.19).

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Write a meaningful obituary about <del>obituary</del></li> <li>- To write facts about the deceased</li> <li>- Write about his amazing achievements</li> </ul> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want to write an obituary that will touch hearts</li> <li>- I also want to be uplifting and positive in the obituary</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals: Obituary was incomplete but first part was very good Has meet the goals and is emotional. Will have to mention his name less.</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <p>I have to mention his name a lot less in the obituary and have to complete it alot quicker</p>

**Figure 6.19: School D Grade 10 learner strategy used**

At school B, learner C (Figure 6.20) identified the following gaps: “full sentences” and “one idea ... in each paragraph”. Her response was to restate the gaps as goals, adding things to do to achieve the goals such as “I should try to stick to one idea in a paragraph and not write many different ideas”. An additional goal was added: “I should learn my vocabulary and use interesting words. I should replace vague words with interesting words”. The response here to the feedback was encouraging as it showed how the WFT1 could be used to engage with the learning that was not linear; flowing from task goals to achievement, but that the feedback would result in the adding of goals.



Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p><b>What are the task goals:</b> Write an informal letter to a friend. Write an informal letter in the correct format. The letter has to be about telling a friend about an exciting event that she missed.</p> <p><b>My own goal:</b> Being able to apply the rules correctly. Being able to structure my sentences correctly and not making it vague.</p>	<p><b>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</b> I should write full sentences. I should stick to one idea or topic in <del>the</del> each paragraph.</p> <p><b>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</b> I <del>should</del> should focus on writing full sentences and try not to make them vague. I should try to stick to one idea in a paragraph and not write many different ideas. I should learn my vocabulary and use interesting words. I should replace vague words with interesting words.</p>

**Figure 6.20: School B Grade 10 learner C: gaps identified and response**

The focus group at school B accepted error detection feedback but acknowledged that it would have been more useful if the feedback had included information about *how* to correct the errors:

*R: I feel like if someone tells me what I am doing wrong, and then gives me suggestions of how to do it right next time.*

*R: Because if they're just telling you what to do, rather than I just have all my errors but I don't have any way of correcting them (D13, 13:19, 67:69).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school A circulated during the lesson and gave synchronous feedback as the learners were giving each other feedback, resulting in “*immediate feedback*”. The teacher felt that she was able to give feedback and gain insight into their thinking:

*R: You know, and when I also marked I was able to say, “yes I think you are improving here. Let's just work there” you know. Even if I was saying it verbally, when I went back to them, it was like, “Oh don't stress, you are working on this, but we need to work on this.*

*How you are planning on doing that?" you know (D1, 1:41, 124:124).*

*R: "I get what you wanted to do, but at this point you didn't do it that way", you know. So I got to see that some have their own ideas, and even though in other tasks that we do, do feedback but it is too late so they don't work on it immediately (D1, 1:70, 40:40).*

The feedback lessons created an opportunity for the learners to engage with the feedback and address the gap in learning, taking responsibility for their learning. The teacher at school A felt that the feedback required the learners to take responsibility for the editing of their work. However, the vague and surface level task goals would make it difficult to respond to the feedback other than correcting the mistakes.

*R: They did the planning, however I feel they ran away from the second column.*

*Q: Why do you think they ran away from the second column?*

*R: Because it involved them taking the responsibility to edit their work (D1, 1:48, 138:140).*

#### **6.3.3.4 Discussion of *How am I going?* column findings**

The feedback lessons succeeded in the sense that the learners engaged in giving and receiving feedback even though most of the learners were not used to receiving peer feedback on their drafts. The learners used the goals as a list to check their work. As many of the goals were vague and at surface level, the feedback focused on error detection, and correction rarely resulted in actionable strategies which would move learning forward. Consequently, the feedback detected the error and in some cases corrected the error, which was what the learners expected.

Where the feedback was corrective it was often corrected on the draft and not recorded. To respond to feedback employing meaningful strategies is self-regulated learning, this was limited by the nature of the goals. Furthermore, as the errors were corrected, therefore fixed, the feedback was not always recorded on the WFT1. It was also not clear if the synchronous feedback was recorded.

The role of feedback on the draft of the writing task was to align the goals with the success criteria. The corrective nature of the feedback illustrated the vague, surface level goals and the absence of clear success criteria. The emergence of new goals,

or the restating of goals, was important as it showed that initial formulation of goals did not have to be restrictive, the WFT1 allowed for new goals or the development of goals during the feedback. This illustrated the importance of learners developing an awareness of their own learning and that it is not always linear.

#### **6.3.4 Grade 10 *Where to next?***

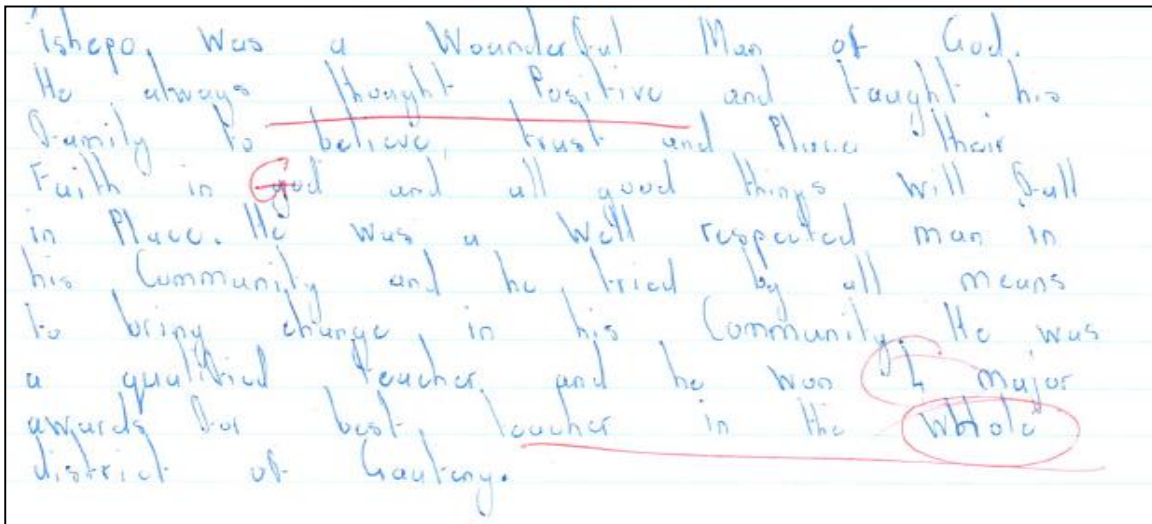
The overview of this section is presented in section 6.3.4.1. The *Where to next?* column is a reflection on the progress and feedback on the task. The learners considered the goals they had achieved and the gaps in learning that had emerged. These observations and the use of the WFT1 to track learning for each school are commented upon in section 6.3.4.2. The findings based on this section are deliberated in 6.3.4.3.

##### *6.3.4.1 Overview of the **Where to next?** column*

The last column of the WFT1 served as an opportunity for the learners to reflect on the task assessment feedback. The feedback was in the form of a mark (schools B and D) and at all four schools the feedback was tick marks and codes as well as a comment. The learners were expected to interpret the feedback to determine which goals they had achieved and record these under *Which goals have I achieved?* The areas where they went wrong, in other words, identifying the learning gap were recorded under *Areas to develop to improve my writing.*

##### *6.3.4.2 Goals achieved and gaps identified*

The question on the WFT1: *Which goals have I achieved?* proved to be difficult to answer for some; the focus was on corrective feedback with the teacher's marking often pointing out the errors as the school A teacher example illustrates (Figure 6.21):

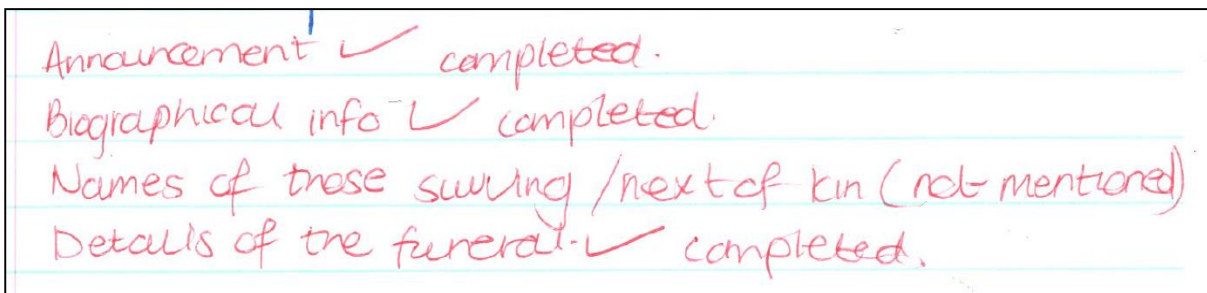


**Figure 6.21: Example of school A Grade 10 teacher’s error detection feedback**

The learners deduced from the absence of markings which goals they had achieved. This created the perception that “I achieved my spelling goals and the grammar is good” while this might not have been a valid conclusion:

- Q: Okay. Then you got it back from Miss, how were you able to identify areas of success in your writing? Things that you were able to achieve?
- R: I achieved my spelling goal and the grammar is good.
- Q: How did you understand that? How could you see that you got that right?
- R: Miss didn’t like point out, or circle any errors like she always does, if you make a mistake (D4, 4:14, 5150:5574).

The Grade 10 teacher at school A assessed the task according to the details she expected and included these in her feedback on the writing tasks (Figure 6.22), however, as these details not made clear at the beginning they were not represented in the task goals.



**Figure 6.22: School A Grade 10 teacher expectations of writing tasks**

The Grade 10 teacher at school A gave global feedback to the learners, explaining the details she had expected from them. The teacher’s feedback identified the format of the obituary as a gap in learning. In this case WFT1 made the learning visible and clearly demonstrated the lack of alignment between the task goals stated and the success criteria. The fact that her goals and the learners’ goals may not be the same was a new realisation for the teacher:

*R: The tool revealed their goals, right, instead of what I would perceive a Grade 10 learner should know (D1, 1:56, 17268:17977).*

The use of the WFT1 (Figure 6.23) demonstrated that an alignment between the goals, the feedback and the goals achieved was possible. The WFT1 illustrated “*format*” (squared in yellow) as the gap in learning and that it was not addressed during the feedback process. The “*grammar*” as a goal (squared in red) was “*improved on*” as result of the editing, with the vague goal eliciting similarly unspecified feedback.

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
What are the task goals: <i>Details</i> Format Understanding of the topic Grammar	Feedback to check my progress towards my goals: Improve my format lacks details on venue and specific info. Grammar is good, but needs improving.	Feedback on final. Check against goals. Which goals have I achieved? ① I edited my work. ② Used a dictionary for word search. ③ Grammar was improved. ④ Specific details were given / written.
My own goal: Grammar Format Improve understanding Improve creativity	Things I have to do to achieve goals: ① Edit my work. ② Always start with the planning before first draft ③ Format needs to be improved. ④ Use a dictionary for word search.	What do I have to work on in the next task? Above ① Planning my work in a form of a mind. ② Understand proper format of obituaries. How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals? It has changed how I should look at tasks and I should improve my understanding of what topic I'm given before I can begin with my writing process.

**Figure 6.23: School A Grade 10 learner B: completed WFT1**

The WFT1 below, completed by learner M at school A (Figure 6.24), reflects a similar alignment with regard to the “*format*” as a goal; the learner received feedback to add more details as a way to improve the format. The task goal “*grammar*” (squared in yellow) was made specific by adding “*Spelling*” and “*Improve Punctuation*” as own

goals, however it remained a gap in learning. “Word order” and “more detail” were new gaps in learning.

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <p>Format, Grammar Coherence/unity Detail</p> <p>Format Grammar Coherence</p> <p>My own goal:</p> <p>Spelling Improve Punctuation</p>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>* Spelling should improve (use a dictionary please)</p> <p>Improve your format and add more detail</p> <p>* Punctuation should improve for "either way well tried"</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <p>Correct my spelling mistakes Improve punctuation</p>	<p>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</p> <p>Which goals have I achieved?</p> <p>Details of the memorial/ Funeral Service</p> <p>What do I have to work on in the next task?</p> <p>Grammar, word order what: Sickness caused his death</p> <p>How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?</p> <p>I should be more specific on details. My Grammar and Word order skills improve.</p>

**Figure 6.24: School A Grade 10 learner M: completed WFT1**

As illustrated in Figure 25 and Figure 26 below, the learners at school B received comprehensive written feedback on the written task from their teacher:

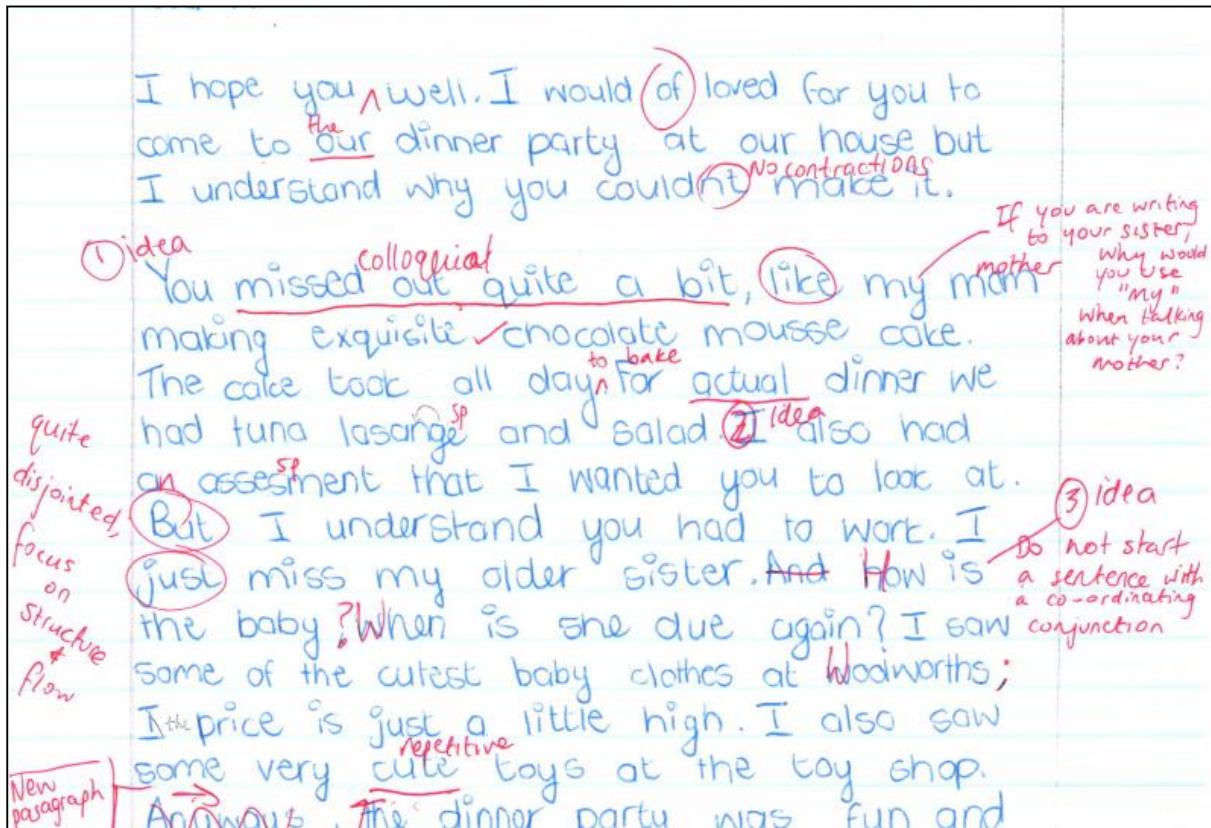


Figure 6.25: School B Grade 10 teacher's written feedback on writing task

The teacher also allocated a mark according to the rubric; a mark for content, planning and format, language, style and editing. The rubric was not included as the learners had access to rubrics in their workbooks. The teacher looked at the learners' WFT1 and in her written feedback indicated the gaps in learning she had identified, showing the learners what to focus on:

Words: <del>190</del> 195	content, planning & format: 10 language, style & editing: 5
	15 25
Focus on:	
- vocabulary	
- sentence structure	
- repetition	
- one idea per paragraph	

Figure 6.26: School B Grade 10 teacher's feedback on writing task and mark allocation

The teacher engaged in detailed global feedback, asking the learners to record her feedback on the WFT1. The teacher included time after the completion of the last column on the WFT1 for the learners to share the strategies they had used or thought they could use to improve their writing:

*R: ... but those who spoke, gave very valuable, and this was the general feeling of that lesson, that you sat in on with, you know, that they were made fully aware of what they could change (D11, 11:25, 27:27).*

Learner J engaged in detail with the feedback and used the WFT1 (Figure 6.27) to identify the goals she had achieved (squared in red). The sections in Figure 6.27 which are squared in yellow show the feedback from the teacher which the learner recorded on the WFT1. Learner J used the WFT1 to note things she could do to close the learning gaps, the writing in green. This is another example of how the WFT1 facilitates the AFL process, the processes are made visible and open to analysis by the teacher and the learner.

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?										
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To write a exciting event that happened</li> <li>- use good vocabulary and spelling</li> <li>- don't use colloquial language or slang</li> <li>- use structure correctly</li> </ul> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- become a better writer.</li> <li>- keep a good format and don't mix events up</li> <li>- use a dictionary</li> <li>- use better format</li> <li>- use time wisely</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>Structure and language is correct. Write a exciting event, language needs some work</p> <p>*Not to drift away from topic</p> <p>- write letters and ask Ms King to mark them and give me feedback</p> <p>- try and learn a new word one a week</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- use a dictionary and use time wisely</li> <li>- read over and over the rough draft</li> </ul> <p>Acronym for format of Address</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>S - Street</td> <td>21 Berry St</td> </tr> <tr> <td>S - suburb</td> <td>Linkfield</td> </tr> <tr> <td>T - Town</td> <td>Johannesburg</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P - P.O Box</td> <td>1237</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D - Date</td> <td>27 October 2018</td> </tr> </table>	S - Street	21 Berry St	S - suburb	Linkfield	T - Town	Johannesburg	P - P.O Box	1237	D - Date	27 October 2018	<p>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</p> <p>Which goals have I achieved? (friend-check)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Structure</li> <li>- event</li> <li>- non-colloquial language</li> </ul> <p>What do I have to work on in the next task?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time</li> <li>- dictionary</li> <li>- structure</li> <li>- Vocabulary</li> <li>- sticking to a idea in a specific paragraph</li> </ul> <p>How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?</p> <p>It helped me find my weaknesses and strengths and to remember when I write my next piece. Keep this feedback. Focus on Format and address format. I could make a acronym for the format to remember it, when I am writing. My writing hasn't changed but has given me ideas on how to achieve a well formatted letter with no colloquial language and good vocabulary. I feel like this has helped me realise how many ways I can improve</p>
S - Street	21 Berry St											
S - suburb	Linkfield											
T - Town	Johannesburg											
P - P.O Box	1237											
D - Date	27 October 2018											
<p>Focus: language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read and ask questions and practise work</li> <li>- vocabulary</li> <li>- structure</li> <li>- grammar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- not mixing events together</li> <li>- don't need to use "so" or "very"</li> <li>- language</li> <li>- precise writing</li> <li>- reading books</li> </ul>											

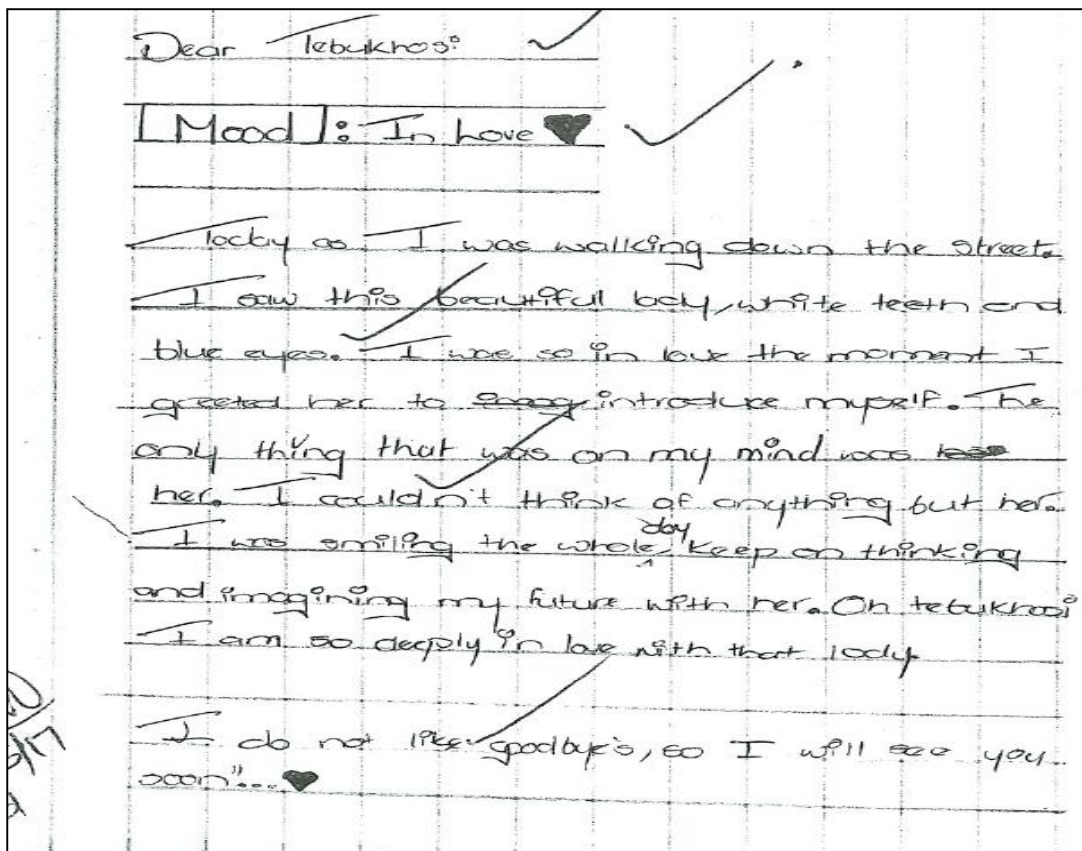
Figure 6.27: School B Grade 10 learner J: completed WFT1



The focus group at school B could explain how the gaps in learning became the goals for the next task:

*R: The goals I wrote wasn't merely what I was doing, and then after ma'am marked it then I saw what I was doing wrong, then I could come up with new goals for myself (D13, 13:7, 19:19).*

At school C, the task was not assessed according to a rubric and no mark was allocated. The teacher did not provide global feedback, preferring that the learners reflected on the task on their own. The teacher made cursory markings on the tasks, as seen in Figure 6.28, focusing on tick marks to indicate that the work had been checked, which the learners interpreted as the work being correct.



**Figure 6.28: School C Grade 10 teacher markings on writing task**

*R: Well she told me to, she said the format was correct, because she ticked on it, and since she notices that I am really bad, I am not that bad at spelling (D27, 27:10, 2676:2832).*

The reflection on goals achieved was in response to the peer feedback indicating, “*You have reached your goals in your diary entry*” (Figure 6.29) and the absence of feedback from the teacher.

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
What are the task goals: Format Content must relate to the topic Punctuation, spelling Register tense	Feedback to check my progress towards my goals: <i>You have reached your goals on your diary entry</i>	Feedback on final. Check against goals. Which goals have I achieved? <i>My format was correct and my content related to the topic my punctuation and spelling is all correct and I've used the proper register.</i>

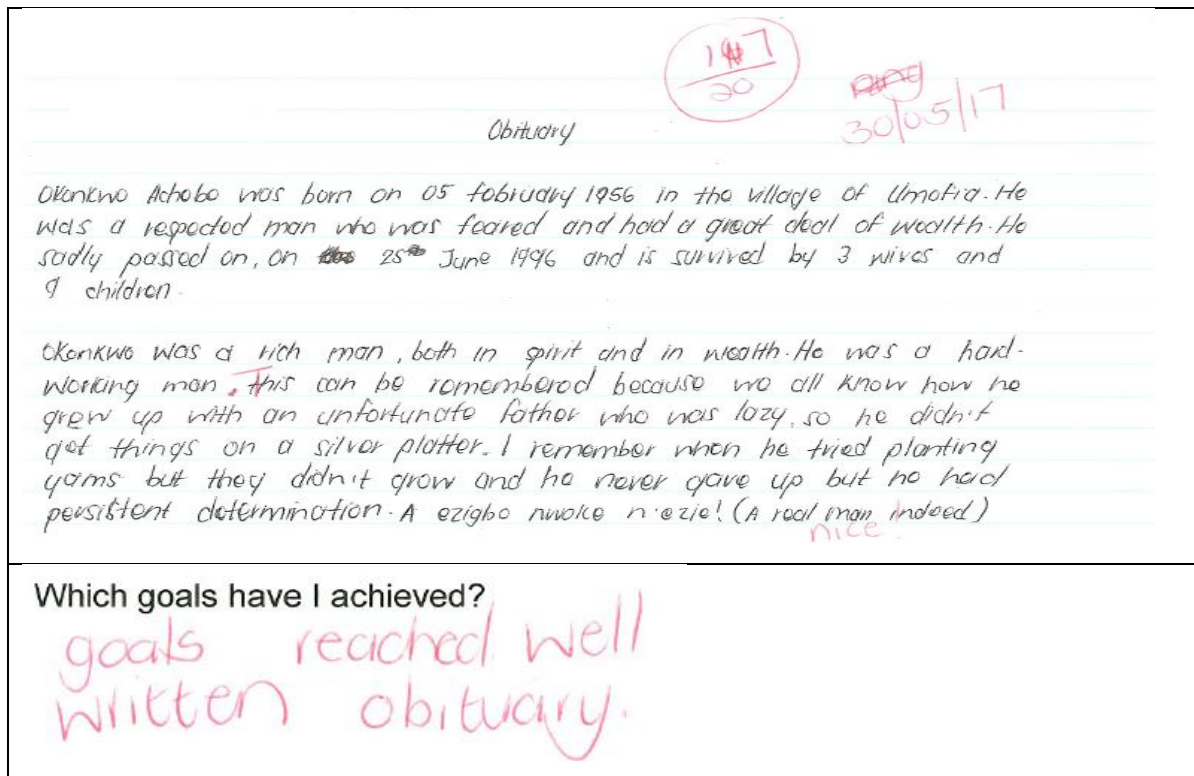
**Figure 6.29: School C Grade 10 learner M: peer feedback**

The school C focus group thought the WFT1 helpful in identifying the mistakes but also it guided their thinking as to what to pay attention to in the next task:

*R: Well it shows us how to identify my mistakes and what we should look out for next time we write, things to fix (D25, 25:28, 225:225).*

At school D the task was a portfolio task, thus assessed as a formal task and a mark given. The teacher decided to complete the section on the WFT1: *Which goals have I achieved?* as a comment on the task would have been a duplication.

The importance of the alignment between task goals, task criteria and success criteria was clearly illustrated by the discrepancy between the mark allocated and the comment that all goals had been achieved, as illustrated in Figure 6.30:



**Figure 6.30: School D Grade 10 teacher mark and comment**

The learners analysed the feedback to determine what they had achieved and where they had gone wrong, however, the discrepancy between the goals they had achieved and the mark received was confusing. The success criteria were absent therefore the learners did not know what to do to achieve the marks they were aiming at:

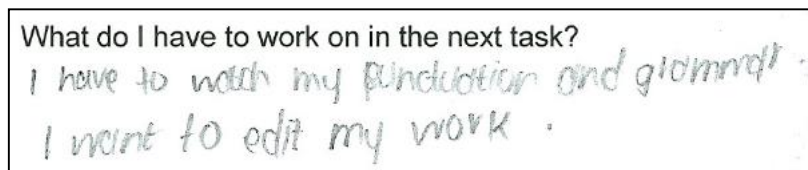
*R: When I asked the teacher, she said it is just the language, so that is where I was confused, because I didn't understand where and what is wrong with my obituary and what were written to get full marks (D36, 36:24, 70:70).*

The misalignment between the goals and the assessment was confirmed by the learner focus group; a learner explained that while the process was followed, the expected mark was not achieved.

*R: Ma'am I feel like agree with what T said, because for me, my obituary was, I followed, okay I asked Miss why I didn't get like the mark that I thought I deserve because this essay, I followed the goals that I set for myself, and the goals that the task wanted, and I also asked her like, where can I improve because she saw my rough draft before the final one. So I just feel like I did it the way I was supposed to. I didn't get the mark (D37, 37:36, 153:153).*

If the task goals are not aligned with the success criteria, the feedback is not as helpful and may be limited to surface level feedback. Learners will also find it difficult to identify gaps in learning.

Learner K at school D, who achieved all her goals but did not receive full marks, identified a perceived gap in her learning (Figure 6.31) but could not explain what it was:



What do I have to work on in the next task?  
I have to watch my punctuation and grammar.  
I want to edit my work.

**Figure 6.31: School D Grade 10 learner K: perceived gap in learning**

*Q: And the Where to next?, what would you like to do next time, when you write something, what did you say, "I have to work on my punctuation and grammar"? Do you know what to work on though?*

*R: No, because usually my punctuation, I make sure of commas, full stops, and everything is like to the point, even here, she has never corrected me on spelling and grammar (D36, 36:27, 83:84).*

Where the teacher's comment agreed with the peer's feedback (Figure 6.32, squared in red) the learner identified paragraphing as a gap to work on in the next task (Figure 6.32, squared in yellow).

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
<p>What are the task goals: Heartfelt and Cheerful as well. Highlight the title he had when he was alive.</p> <p>My own goal: Use ver. 100</p> <p>to create 200-250 words. *sach bene, upit cave.</p>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>She had indeed a heartfelt obituary. She also highlighted the title he had when he was alive. You just need to write in paragraph form and make it a little more so.</p> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- write in paragraph form.</li> <li>- finish and make sure I meet my word count.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</p> <p>Which goals have I achieved?</p> <p>goals reached. work on structure and putting appropriate information in appropriate paragraphs</p> <p>What do I have to work on in the next task?</p> <p>I have to work on structure and using the right info in the right places.</p> <p>How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?</p> <p>- I shouldn't only follow instructions and expect to get a high mark but I should make sure that my language structure is on point.</p>

Figure 6.32: School D Grade 10 learner P: completed WFT1

#### 6.3.4.3 Discussion of the *Where to next?* column findings

The last column of the WFT1 allowed the learners to determine, by analysing the assessment result and feedback, which goals they had achieved and where the learning gaps were. For this to be possible the teacher's assessment criteria must be aligned with the task goals. Where the tasks were dominated by tick marks and lacked informative feedback, it was difficult for the learners to determine with confidence which goals were achieved or partially achieved.

In order to answer the question: *What I have to work on in the next task?*, the learners determined what the gaps were. Some learners identified gaps in their learning by analysing the peer feedback as well as the feedback from the teacher. However, the gaps were described but not always what specifically should be worked on the next time. The learners felt that the WFT1 and the feedback on the task in relation to the goals allowed them to find where they went wrong and to identify the learning gap. In some cases the feedback indicated how to correct work but it was the minority. Learners also recognised that the gaps they identified would become future learning goals.

The learners' reflections on the WFT1 were perhaps somewhat superficial, however, the transactional tasks were not cognitively demanding and the surface level goals did

not expect more than a superficial engagement. The learners' tasks did not reflect “*elaborate details in support of the topic*”, or “*significant depth and breadth with impressive detail*”, as the rubric criteria expected.

The WFT1 illustrated the process and how the learning took place. However, the efficacy and what it made visible is discussed further in the teachers' reflections (6.6).

## 6.4 THE GRADE 11 IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT1

The Grade 11 WFT1 implementation is presented in this section. The overview of the Grade 11 context at the time of implementation is in subsection 6.4.1. This is followed by the WFT1 implementation discussion, The *Where am I going?* column (6.4.2), the *How am I going?* column (6.4.3) and the *Where to next?* column (6.4.4).

### 6.4.1 Overview of the Grade 11 context at the time of implementation

During the second term the Grade 11 classes, like the Grade 10 classes, focused on types of transactional writing as practise tasks at the GDE schools and a formal task at school D (Table 6.2). Similar to the Grade 10 classes at the GDE schools, the tasks were practise tasks, therefore not for the purposes of marks for the SBA and year mark. However, the teacher at school A included a mark according to the rubric as part of the feedback.

**Table 6.2: Grade 11 writing tasks**

School	Informal	Formal	Task type
A	√		Friendly letter
B	√		Speech
C	√		Formal letter
D		√	Open letter

### 6.4.2 Grade 11 *Where am I going?*

Similar to the Grade 10 classes (6.3.2) the discussion on the *Where am I going?* column is about the goal formulation. The overview of the column is presented in subsection 6.4.2.1. The two sections in the *Where am I going?* column are considered

in the subsections of this section as follows: *Task goals* (6.4.2.2) and *My own goals* (6.4.2.3). A discussion of the *Where am I going?* column findings is in 6.4.2.4.

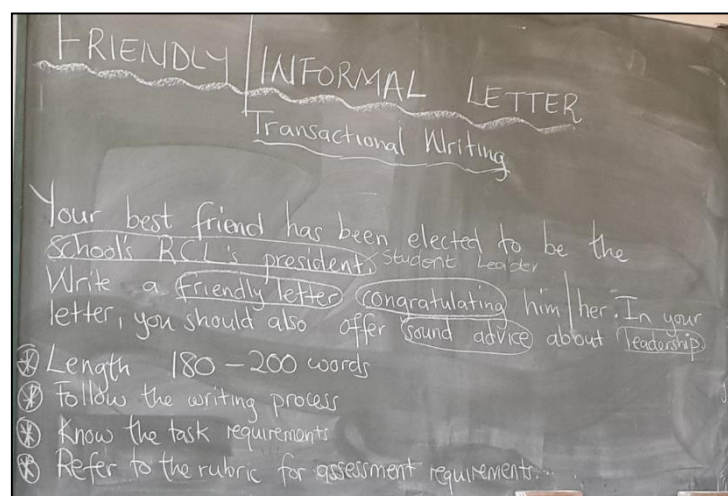
#### 6.4.2.1 Overview of the **Where am I going?** column

The first step of making the learning intentions clear, sharing the criteria and assessment criteria was critical, as indicated earlier. The Grade 11 learners received substantial information from their teachers about the tasks which they could use to formulate their goals. In addition, they had written transactional tasks in Grade 10 and thus had prior knowledge. As with the Grade 10 learners, the question was how the formulation of task goals reflected the learners' clear understanding of what was expected of the learning intention, task and success criteria.

#### 6.4.2.2 What are the task goals?

At schools A and C the way the tasks were approached by the teachers was similar to that of a formal task. While reference was made to the rubric, the assessment criteria were not discussed or explained. Therefore detailed expectations regarding what constituted a successful letter will be were not shared with the learners.

The teacher at school A led the class discussion, focusing on analysing the instruction on the board (Figure 6.33) with the learners reaching an understanding about the content requirements:



**Figure 6.33: School A Grade 11 task instruction**

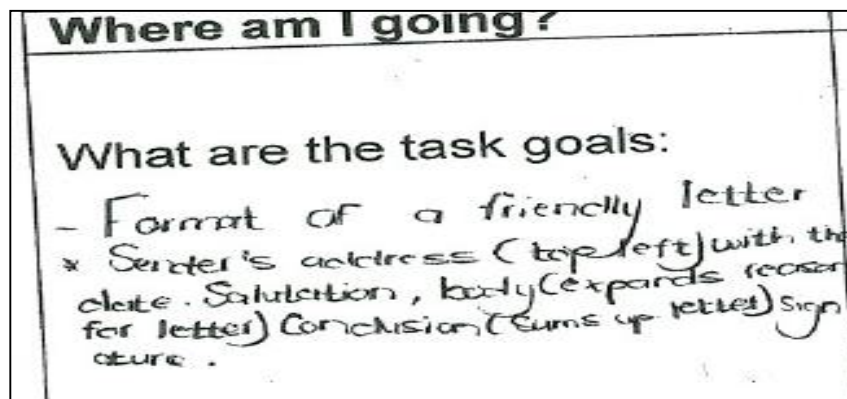
In the lesson observed the teacher gave the learners the following instructions about the criteria:

*The teacher discussed format with the learners; discouraged the use of colloquial language and told the learners to find new ways of expression. The body could be more than one paragraph. The conclusion must round off the letter (D7, 7:5 - 7:6, 25:28).*

The somewhat random stating of criteria formed part of the discussion, followed by the teacher instructing the learners what the task goals should be:

*The learners are reminded what the task goals were, they have to check: Spelling, grammar, sentence structure, tense, format, the address must be aligned (D7, 7:10, 57:62).*

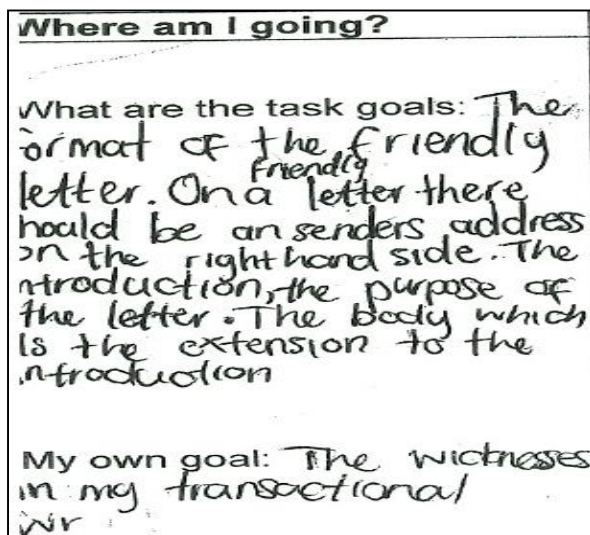
The teacher outlined the important criteria and the learners used these to formulate goals, as the example of learner T in Figure 6.34 indicates:



**Figure 6.34: School A Grade 11 learner T: recording of task goals**

Learner C formulated the goals by paying attention to the criteria as set out on the board including the “purpose” of a transactional task which is one of the criteria on the rubric (Figure 6.35).





**Figure 6.35: School A Grade 11 learner C: task goals**

The purpose of the letter, a requirement for transactional writing, was not explicitly stated as a goal. However, learner C explained how she used the information on the rubric about the “*purpose*” to structure her writing of the friendly letter:

*R: Okay, my goal is to first I will look at the paper that they always give us, which is a the rubric, then I will look at the top marks (D9, 9:2, (12:14).*

*R: Well I, it helped me to, you know, how to get straight to the point. In other words when writing a friendly letter I should look at the main points about the friendly letter, when they are saying you should write how many words or it should be a friendly letter and whether it is about a friend or a relative (D9, 9:1, 4:4).*

The surface level goals focusing on the format distracted from the possibility of including goals on the process level such as the “*appropriate tone*” and “*diction*” (apart from avoiding slang) to use in a congratulatory letter. How “*grammar*” and “*sentence structure*” must be used in the writing of the letter was not explained. The “*word count*”, although stated, was not used as a way to focus on succinct writing and how to achieve it.

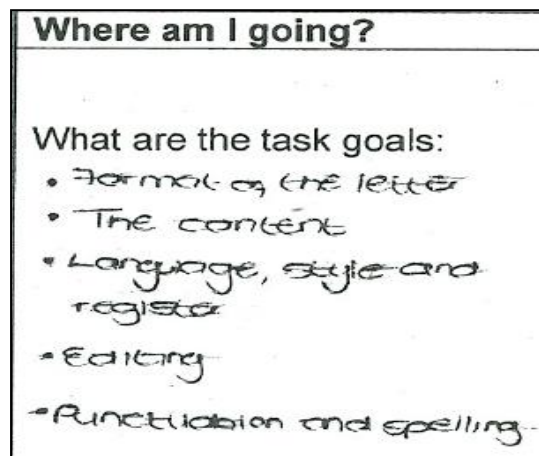
At school C, the Grade 11 class started the term focusing on transactional writing. The learners wrote a number of transactional tasks in the first two weeks of the term; these included two dialogues, an obituary and a formal letter. The focus of the writing tasks was to expose the learners to the different types of transactional writing.

During the lesson, the teacher explained the application letter methodically by giving an example of the format on the board. While the learners received notes and an example in reference to the letter of application, the teacher explained to the learners that the task goals were those contained in the rubric, that is: “*the correct format, language style, register and editing*”. Even though the rubric was not made available, the teacher expected the rubric to be the primary guide to goal formulation:

*R: Yes, so that is how we formulated that, because they have to know the format, content, it is a format which the structure, the content, language, register and stuff like that. So they used the rubric more and the goals were devised from the rubric (D28, 28:6, 12:17).*

The learners formulated the task goals on their own based on the information they received in class and their notes. While the task goals resembled the categories on the rubric, they were at surface level and resulted in a checklist to follow (Figure 6.36), therefore, the learners found the task goals helpful in understanding what to do:

*R: Well, it helped me a lot. So since everything was clear for me, I understood what I was supposed to do, what the task was about. So everything for me was easy (D31, 31:2, 14:14).*



**Figure 6.36: School C Grade 11 learner B: task goals as a checklist**

While the Grade 11 learners would have written formal letters previously, the application letter was a new topic and the learners understood that the teacher’s emphasis on the “*format*” implied its importance as success criteria:

R: It is actually the format that she is mostly concerned with because it shows that we actually like following up and putting the right information in the right place (D33, 33:4, 10:10).

The practise task at school B was a speech; the learners referred to their workbook (Figure 6.37) for the criteria and guidelines:

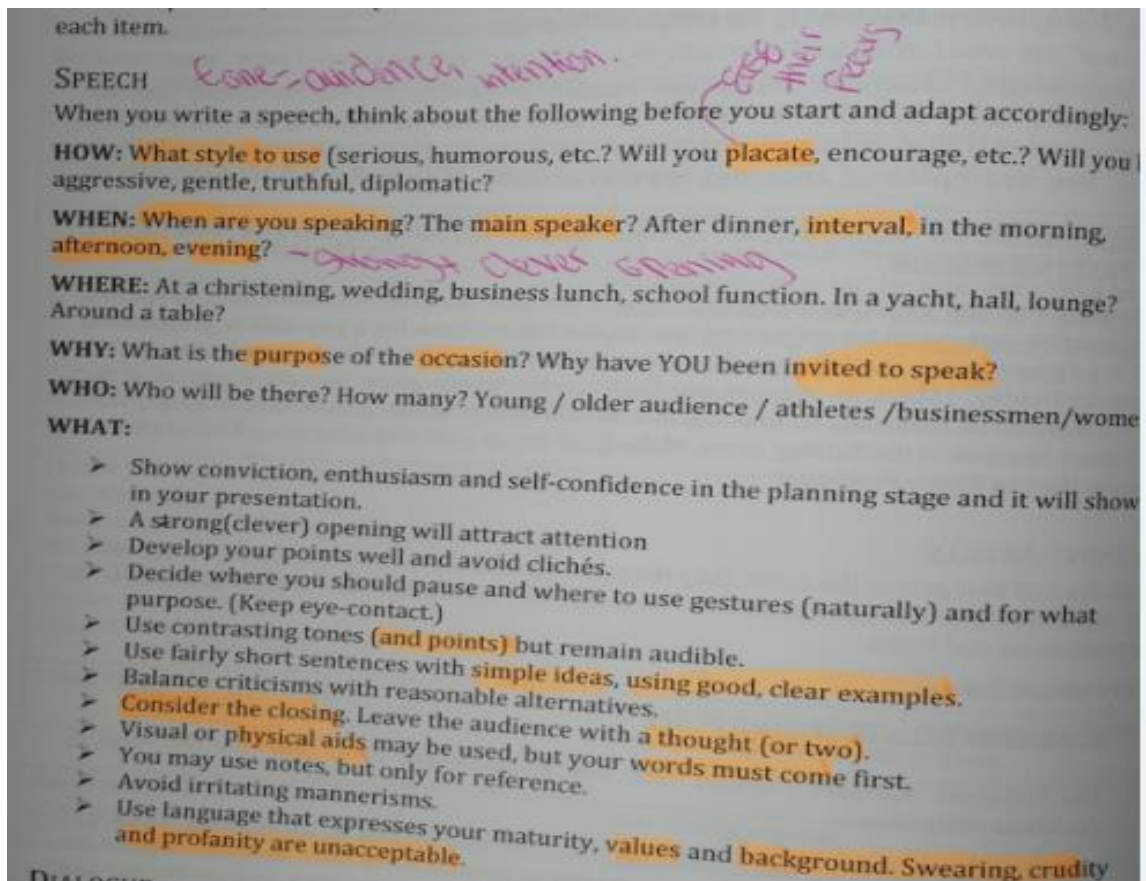


Figure 6.37: School B Grade 11 workbook criteria and guidelines for speech

The learning intention of the practise task was not the writing of the entire task but to practise effective writing skills and the speech was used as a vehicle to do so. The teacher stressed “*tone and diction*” explaining that better ways of expression should be found. The learners were provided with examples; they were to avoid expressing themselves in “*mad, sad, bad, glad*” and use better words expressing themselves with “*originality but clarity*” (D19, 19:5, 778:1061). The teacher, therefore, not only pointed out what the goals were but also indicated how the goals could be achieved. The task goals the teacher communicated were task specific such as “*format*” but also focused on the skills required for good writing such as use of “*style*” and “*diction*”.

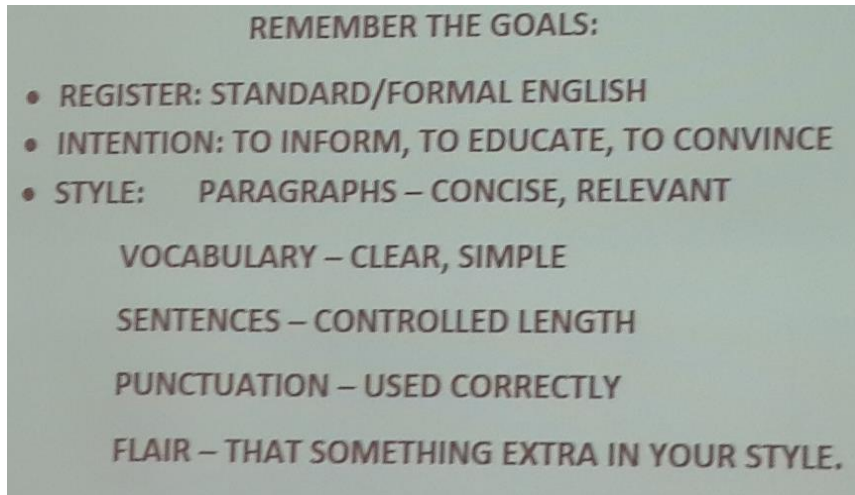
At school B the teacher’s understanding of the WFT1 was made clear by her explanation to the learners: “...it is a tool used to look at goals and feedback and processes to achieve the goals”. The teacher facilitated the formulation of goals by giving examples of goals such as “correct format”. An own goal could be “too informal sentence structure” (D19, 19:9, 2204:2414). She encouraged the learners to consider what they wanted to achieve or work on. She told them to ask for feedback on a strategy to be more “formal” such as “no contractions”.

The learners worked in pairs or small groups discussing the task goals, which encouraged the learners to engage with each other’s task goals. Despite all the information the teacher shared, the task goals the learners wrote down did not reflect the processes underlying the writing but were vague and similar to a checklist of things to do (Figure 6.38):

Learner A	Learner N
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Correct format</li> <li>o Correct grammer</li> <li>o Convincing and interesting</li> <li>o Analyse with understand.</li> <li>o Correct style and focus too.</li> </ul> <p>My own goal: (development)</p> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o correct format</li> <li>o use the correct diction</li> <li>o do not use contractions.</li> <li>o have 4 paragraphs</li> </ul> </div>

**Figure 6.38: School B Grade 11 learner task goals**

The school D learners received considerable information about the writing task in the form of a handout which included an example of an open letter and the task instruction. Also included were an editing checklist focusing on the register, intention and style and there was a further instruction sheet serving as a guideline to writing. As a reminder, the goals were displayed on the board (Figure 6.39):



**Figure 6.39: School D Grade 11 task goals**

The example, which was read and discussed in the lesson, served as a guide and the learners understood what was required regarding the tone and the purpose based on the example:

*R: Well first I didn't, I've never done an open letter before, so having the example there for me, it showed me what it should look like and how the register should be and how your purpose depends on the task and it also affects, like the audience you are talking to (D45, 45:1, 3:3).*

As illustrated in the examples in Figure 6.40, the learners' task goals did not resemble a checklist, the task goals were aimed at the processes of writing such as “teach us different ways to use different styles of writing”, “teach us how our register changes depending on your audience”.

Learner T	Learner S
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-teach us different ways to use different styles of writing</li> <li>-teach us how our register changes depending on your audience.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Where am I going?</b></p> <p>What are the task goals:</p> <p>to encourage us to look beyond just writing a normal letter but also knowing how to write it such as Register, Style, length of sentences, use of punctuation, grammar, proper sentences etc.</p>

**Figure 6.40: School D Grade 11 learner task goals**

The school D focus group learners showed an understanding of how the language was used to write an open letter; *“how to manipulate my writing”*:

*R: Well I wanted to practise, like a mental shift in my writing to manipulate my writing so that it becomes appropriate and like having not just like the structure in mind but to prioritise content because, like, reception is more important than the delivery (D42, 42:10, 35:35).*

#### 6.4.2.3 *My own goal*

The purpose of the *My own goal* section was to encourage the learners to consider and focus on their own language learning. The Grade 11 level learners showed some recognition of their learning gaps; however, the focus remained at surface levels.

At school A, the teacher directed the *My own goal* section, giving examples of what to write, which included language goals: *“Avoid contrived word forms, improve language usage from the previous task, note and stick to the number of words”* but also personal goals such as *“Improve handwriting, I want to finish my task”* (D7, 7:9, 2382:2453).

When asked how the own goals were formulated, the learners in all four schools explained that in choosing their goals they focused on *“improving language from previous tasks”*. At school A there was an indication that the learners could understand from the explicit feedback they had received from their teacher what their learning gaps were. The focus group (D 8) and a verbal protocol learner (D 10) explained:

*R: I looked at my last transactional writing, and I saw the mistakes there, so I saw that this is what I have to do (D8, 8:5, 45:46).*

*R: Our teacher, she usually write comments and I usually write very long sentences. So she tells me to work on that. And my spelling mistakes and paragraphs, sometimes, I have a problem linking the paragraphs to each other (D10, 10:3, 9:10).*

Similarly at school B the learners were directed to *“think of other things that have always been problems for you”* (D18, 18:16, 56:57).

As demonstrated in the examples from the four schools below (schools A and B, Figure 6.41 and schools C and D, Figure 6.42), the variety in the learners’ own goals reflected

the areas the learners wanted to focus on such as “use strong adjectives and more figures of speech”.

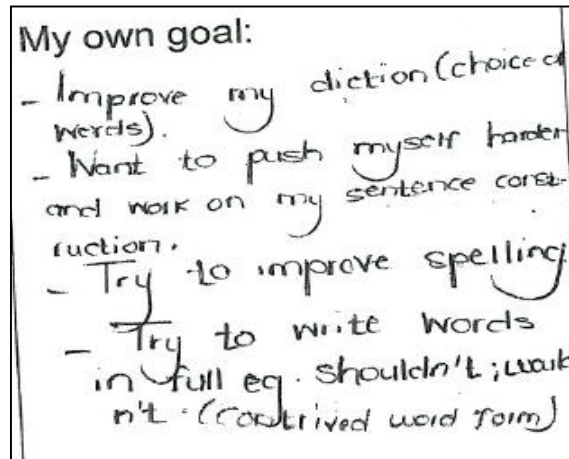
School A learner M	School B learner A
<p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve my writing skills (paragraphing)</li> <li>- Improve my style skills</li> <li>- Push myself harder in the transactions, get more higher marks</li> <li>- My Spellings have to improve</li> </ul>	<p>My own goal: (development)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Avoid clichés in my speeches</li> <li>o Use strong adjectives and more figures of speech.</li> <li>o Be able to apply tone, diction &amp; style.</li> </ul>

Figure 6.41: Schools A and B Grade 11 learner own goals

School C learner B	School D learner TT
<p>My own goal:</p> <p>My goal is to punctuate, spell and use the correct grammar</p>	<p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reach out to women who are abused</li> <li>- Do not make anyone look bad.</li> <li>- Not to make too many grammar mistakes</li> </ul>

Figure 6.42: Schools C and D Grade 11 learner own goals

Learner T at school A, who participated in the learner verbal protocol, had detailed own goals and included some detail to assist in achieving these goals. Demonstrating self-regulated learning, the goals included detail; instead of writing “*diction*” only, “*choice of words*” was added, and examples of words to write out in full (Figure 6.43):



**Figure 6.43: School A Grade 11 learner T: own goals**

However, learner TB at school C recognised that at Grade 11 task level goals such as “*spelling*” should not be the focus, indicating an understanding of his own learning needs:

*R: Oh ja, I had spelling, but then I wouldn't actually consider like spelling a goal, because at this stage of experience in Grade 11, spelling shouldn't actually be an issue because you should be able to worry about more important issues, like format and also structure of the piece itself that you are given (D33, 33:2, 10:10).*

#### 6.4.2.4 Discussion of the **Where am I going?** column findings

The formulation of the task goals was to make the learning intentions clear, bringing into alignment the task criteria and the success criteria. While the learners were able to formulate goals, the purpose of the exercise was lost because the goals did not unlock the task in the sense that the learners did not know clearly what the learning intentions were and how to achieve them.

The amount of information the learners received about the task made it clear that the teachers' intentions were not focused on a specific area that they had identified as a gap in learning. At schools A and C the learning intention was to write a letter adhering to a certain format and content. The goals resembled a list of things to do; the processes of how to achieve the writing were absent. At school D, the open letter was a new addition to the IEB prescribed tasks and its use as a formal task was somewhat problematic. The learners did not have time to practise the task before writing it for marks. The goals were not aimed at specific learning as the completion of the task for



formal assessment was the goal. The task at school B was a practise task, and the learners were asked to focus on certain areas in their writing. The goals appeared as a checklist of things to do.

It seemed that the teachers expected the learners to have a certain level of understanding about writing, therefore they should have been able to formulate goals. In addition, at Grade 11 level it was evident that the writing of the entire task became the aim, resulting in a multitude of task criteria. However, a practise task could be used to hone writing skills, deepening the learning such as the school B teacher aimed to do.

The learners' own goals reflected some awareness of previous gaps in learning, however, mostly at surface level. Most of the learners may not have had time or opportunity to look at their previous work but formulated own goals based on what they thought were important.

### **6.4.3 Grade 11 *How am I going?***

The purpose of the second column was to reflect how the learners used the feedback to improve their writing, showing the feedback they received and their responses. In this section, firstly an overview of the column is provided (6.4.3.1). *Feedback to check my progress towards my goals* is presented (6.4.3.2), followed by *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* (6.4.3.3) and a discussion on the *How am I going?* column (6.3.3.4).

#### **6.4.3.1 Overview of the *How am I going?* column**

At all four schools the teachers devoted a lesson to peer feedback with the learners checking their progress towards the goals on their WFT1. The learners paired up, mostly with the person sitting next to them, and in all cases the learners were reminded to give feedback on the goals. The expectation was that the feedback would result in an appropriate response to correct the draft. At schools A, B and D the lesson turned into a discussion, with the learners questioning and explaining the feedback to one another. At school C the learners worked quietly, focusing on the editing of the tasks;

therefore, the discussions were rather limited and not as engaging as at the other schools.

The intention was that the learners would use the feedback to check their progress towards their goals and to identify where there were gaps in learning. By identifying the gaps the learners were then able to respond to the feedback by correcting their work or asking for help.

#### *6.4.3.2 Feedback to check my progress towards my goals*

At schools A and C, the Grade 11 teachers did not facilitate the feedback, choosing to allow the learners to provide peer feedback on their own. At schools A and C the feedback that dominated was corrective and error detection in response to the task level goals. However, it also seemed that the editing that the learners were accustomed to prevailed and the feedback was conducted in a similar way; reading the work and identifying errors and not necessarily focusing on the goals.

At school A, the learners sat in groups of three and took turns in reading the letter and giving feedback, creating a discussion between them, as learner T explained:

*R: Ma'am, they had like a discussion about my letter, they told me that it is a good letter, but then the spelling mistakes and things, the spelling mistakes usually I make mistakes (D10, 10:11, 30:30).*

The focus group explained that the feedback is “*like you are having a conversation*”. While the point of their feedback was corrective, they also engaged in explanations: “... *it is like, mm, can you help me, explain something about the paragraphing?*” (D8, 8:17, 100:100).

The school C learners’ need to eliminate mistakes meant that they used their own editing and feedback from multiple peers as a way to achieve that:

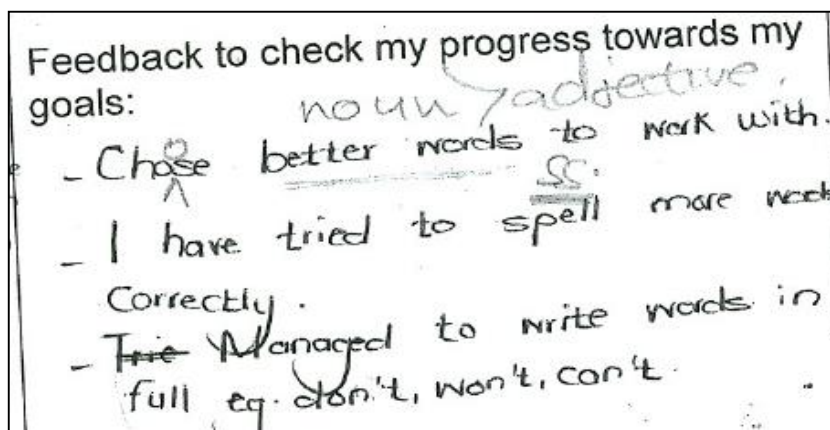
*R: But I feel that sometimes, when you write a letter, you should correct it yourself, because there are certain things that you will pick up that other people won't pick up and things that they pick and you won't, so it is crucial that several people edit your work, not just one (D30, 30:37, 77:77).*

The feedback was in relation to the goals, pointing out surface level mistakes:

*R: Oh, he actually like looked at the goals that I stated as my format, I was actually had this main focus on that, so he clearly underlined that, where it wasn't actually lining up with my goals that I have set. He clearly corrected me like I put the dates in the wrong place, I didn't correctly indent the topic or the heading (D33, 33:7, 28:29).*

The learners received the corrective feedback as informative because mistakes were pointed out and that was their expectation. Surface level mistakes such as “*format, spelling*” and “*punctuation*” were corrected by the peer or the learners themselves where it was possible.

The Grade 11 learners, such as learner T at school A, were able to check their progress; however, the responses to the feedback were mostly vague without indicating specifically how the gaps could be addressed, e.g. “*Choose better words to work with*”, “*I have tried to spell more words correctly*”. Where the learner was successful in avoiding contraction, it was noted (Figure 6.44):



**Figure 6.44: School A Grade 11 learner T: recording of feedback on WFT1**

The learners at school B wrote the speech purely as a practise task, which was different from schools A, C, and D where the focus was on the completion of an entire task and not on practising specific writing skills. As such, the teacher’s approach to the feedback on the draft speech was for the improvement of writing and not to revise the draft for the final version and assessment.

The feedback lesson turned into an active teaching lesson focusing on the goals and revisiting the criteria. Encouraging self-regulated learning, the learners were instructed to first engage in an exercise of self-assessment, identifying the areas where they may not have been “mindful” D 19: 19:11 (3209:3449) of their goals. The learners then gave each other feedback while the teacher circulated, commenting and giving synchronous feedback. The focus group learners noticed that the feedback indicated recurring mistakes or issues:

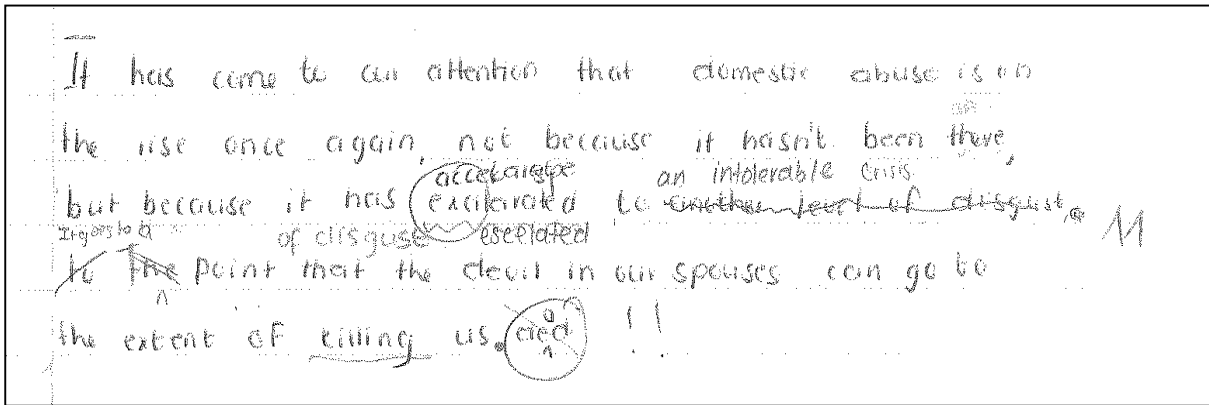
*R: I still got the same feedback, I got feedback that still do put the commas where, I place it wherever I feel like it needs to be placed and I also, like go on with ideas that aren't mentioned, so I always get that (D18, 18:41, 61:61).*

The aim to “practise writing skills” was reflected in the feedback learner N (Figure 6.45) gave herself. While the peer feedback was not related to all the goals on the FWT1, it was instructive and in relation to the task criteria: “good used (sic) of diction and how you interpret (sic) your writting (sic)”, “check spelling and use words that are not so harsh”.

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o correct format</li> <li>o use the correct diction</li> <li>o do not use contractions.</li> <li>o have 4 paragraphs</li> </ul> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o do not use clichés</li> <li>o be clear &amp; simple</li> <li>o know when to use commas &amp; full stops.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <p>I have tried to better my writing skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- good used of diction and how you interpret your writing</li> <li>- check spelling and try to use words that are not so harsh</li> </ul> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o practise my writing skills</li> <li>o increase my vocabulary</li> </ul>

**Figure 6.45: School B Grade 11 learner N: peer feedback**

The school D learners were familiar with the practice of giving each other feedback on their drafts, as illustrated in Figure 6.46. The open letter was a formal task therefore the learners read the entire task with the aim of correcting the mistakes.



**Figure 6.46: School D Grade 11 peer feedback on the draft writing task**

Two learners interviewed as learner verbal protocols (learner S, D 44 and learner TT, D 45) did not receive feedback related to the task goals. The feedback resembled editing; pointing out areas to work on such as punctuation and sentence construction and redundancy:

*R: They told me that some of my, some of my sentences were quite long and that I have to shorten them. (D44, 44:12, 32:32).*

*R: Some, okay I was adding too much extra information and some was, some irrelevant things that they didn't think to be there and also I was repeating myself without noticing it. So they picked that up (D45, 45:8, 29:29).*

The classroom conversation that the feedback created between the learners included the teacher and synchronous feedback. Learner T noticed that she was going off topic and asked for specific feedback from her teachers and peers, showing how feedback works in the classroom:

*R: Oh, I asked Miss, okay, she told me, the other students told me that this was my problem and so I asked Miss how I could re-arrange it in way that it wouldn't be extra information but then I could still mention the point (D45, 45:12, 3889:4123).*

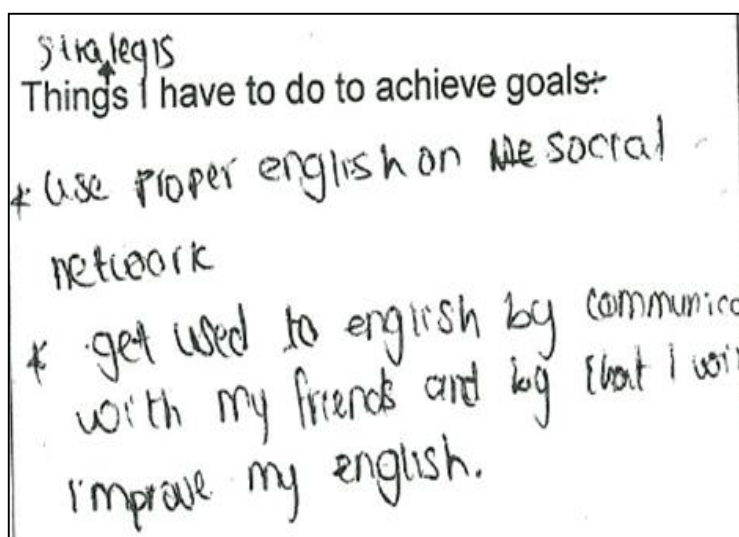
The feedback the learners recorded did not reflect the vibrant discussions during the feedback lesson or the written feedback they received on their drafts. Some of the learners did not record all the feedback they received, as seen in the examples in Figure 6.47 below. It was an indication of perhaps what the learners thought was important to write down, or what they could remember about the feedback.

Learner T	Learner F
Feedback to check my progress toward goals: - stop repeating phrases	Feedback to check my progress toward goals: My sentences are too I leave out words.

**Figure 6.47: School D Grade 11 learner recorded feedback**

#### 6.4.3.3 Things I have to do to achieve my goals

At school A, the statement *Things I have to do to achieve goals* was facilitated by the teacher who helped the learners think of strategies such as “reading more” or “using correct language on social media”. However, the broad strategies did not relate to specific goals or gaps in learning, as seen in the example below (Figure 6.48):



**Figure 6.48: School A Grade 11 learner strategies**

The school C learners responded to the corrective feedback by restating their goals, e.g. “Punctuate properly and use simple standard grammar” (Figure 6.49). The restating of the goal acted as a reminder but would be more effective if it were specific about the punctuation error.

Things I have to do to achieve goals:

- I have to re-read my work
- check any spelling errors
- Punctuate properly and use simple standard grammar.

**Figure 6.49: School C Grade 11 restating of goal**

The learners at school D focused on the content and purpose of the open letter. The two strategies “*Try not to generalize, include both genders in the discussion*”, “*To be more specific about the forms of abuse*” in Figure 6.50, below, relate to the feedback; however, there was no strategy to address the feedback of “*Express better*”:

**How am I going?**

Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:

- \* To make people engage with it as a whole
- \* People should appeal to it.
- \* Express better
- \* Informative.

Things I have to do to achieve goals:

- \* Try not to generalize, include both genders, in the discussion.
- \* To be more specific about the forms of abuse.

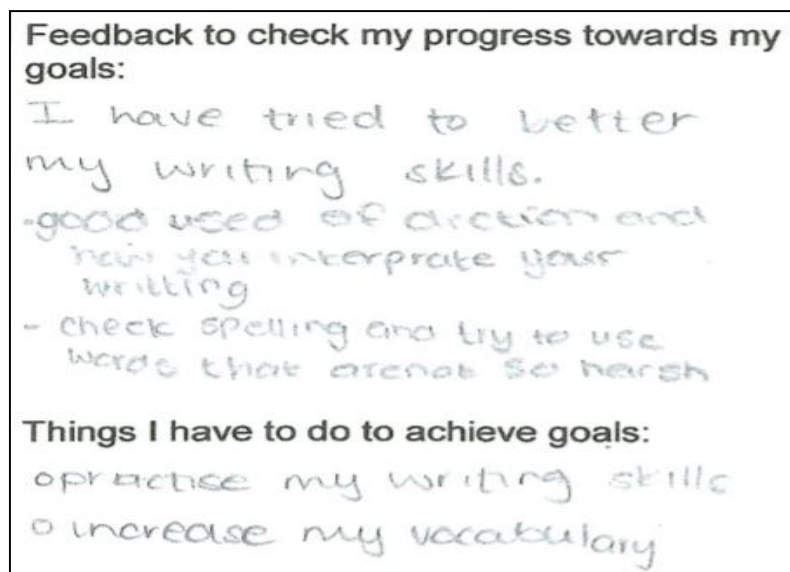
**Figure 6.50: School D Grade 11 strategies recorded**

At school B, the learners worked on the speeches in class, while receiving feedback from their peers and the teacher. The synchronous feedback included discussions among the peers and the teacher aimed at the task goals and also a response to what the learners had produced. As part of the synchronous feedback, the teacher included strategies the learners could include. For example, the learners were encouraged to

be mindful of their word choice to achieve a certain style. They were taught to reread their work and choose stronger words to use instead of “good” and “tricky”. The learners should use “you” and “we” to make the speech inclusive. The tone must be persuasive and conversational. The teacher reminded the learners of two established strategies: RID – replace, insert, delete; to achieve concise writing, and PEE – point, example, explain to develop ideas. Learners were reminded to give concrete examples and practical suggestions.

Despite the comprehensive classroom instruction, the peer feedback was not always in relation to the goals, but closer to editing and error correction. However, the learners were able to identify both success and mistakes. Learner N was able to recognise expanding her vocabulary as a way to avoid “*try to use of words that are not so harsh*” (Figure 6.51), as well as correcting her mistakes:

*R: Ja, I did that, because usually when I write, I write like really fast, but then when I look back I fix my contractions (D21, 21:6, 1377:1499).*



**Figure 6.51: School B Learner N: feedback and strategies recorded**

Learner A at school B preferred self-feedback, her WFT1 (Figure 6.52) indicated an awareness of the issue and the strategies included to “ask ma’am to check my answers and format”, “understand how to apply these skills”. How this will turn into actionable strategies was unclear:



R: Wow, because like I also, like kept it for myself, but then like most of the time I just find out that I should fix my adjectives, use strong adjectives and things like, figures of speeches, I don't really use them a lot (D20, 20:13, 2843:3064).

Where am I going?	How am I going?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Correct format</li> <li>o Correct grammar</li> <li>o Convincing and interesting</li> <li>o Analyse with understand.</li> <li>o Correct style and focus too.</li> </ul> <p>My own goal: (development)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Avoid clichés in my speeches.</li> <li>o Use strong adjectives and more figures of speech.</li> <li>o Be able to apply tone, diction &amp; style.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o managed to correct my grammar.</li> <li>o used 1 figure of speech in every paragraph.</li> <li>o used strong adjectives.</li> </ul> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Practice these skills, and ask ma'am to check my answers and format.</li> <li>o learn and understand how to apply these skills and use them probably in order to also understand the topic and what to write for the essay / speech.</li> </ul>

**Figure 6.52: School B Grade 11 learner A: feedback and strategies recorded**

The peers gave feedback related to the goals but it focused on error detection and correction. Some learners, such as learner A (Figure 6.52), succeeded in using task goals such as “*use strong adjectives and more figures of speech*” which could be checked as indicated in the second column: “*used 1 figure of speech in every paragraph*”.

#### 6.4.3.4 Discussion of the **How am I going?** column findings

The task goals directed the feedback, similar to that of the Grade 10 learners; the task goals could be the goals written on the WFT1 or the goals emerging from the feedback. The learners’ task goals reflected their understanding of the task criteria and success criteria, thus the goals were not uniform. The feedback from some learners was on the criteria they thought were important and not only on the task goals listed.

The feedback resembled editing, as the tasks were read with the purpose of detecting and correcting all the errors. The corrective feedback at surface level meant that the learners responded by correcting their spelling or punctuation errors, or mistakes corrected by the peer. The learners who received corrective feedback did not always complete the *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* section on the WFT1 as mistakes had already been corrected or what they had to do was obvious. Some learners did reflect on this statement and listed broad strategies such as “*work on skills, or read more*”.

Some of the feedback comments on the drafts and verbal feedback were not transferred to the WFT1. It could be that the correction was made on the draft, therefore dealt with, and writing it on the WFT1 was seen as a repetition. It was further indicative of the amount of feedback learners received. Furthermore, because the feedback ranged from “*spelling mistakes*” to “*sentence structure*”, it was thus possible that the learners prioritised the feedback according to its importance to their own learning.

The intention of the statement: *Things I have to do to achieve my goals*, was for the learners to reflect on the feedback and think of strategies to employ such as RID used at school B. However, it could mean that the learners restated their goals, e.g. if the feedback was incorrect punctuation the goals could be stated or restated as avoid comma splice.

#### **6.4.4 Grade 11 *Where to next?***

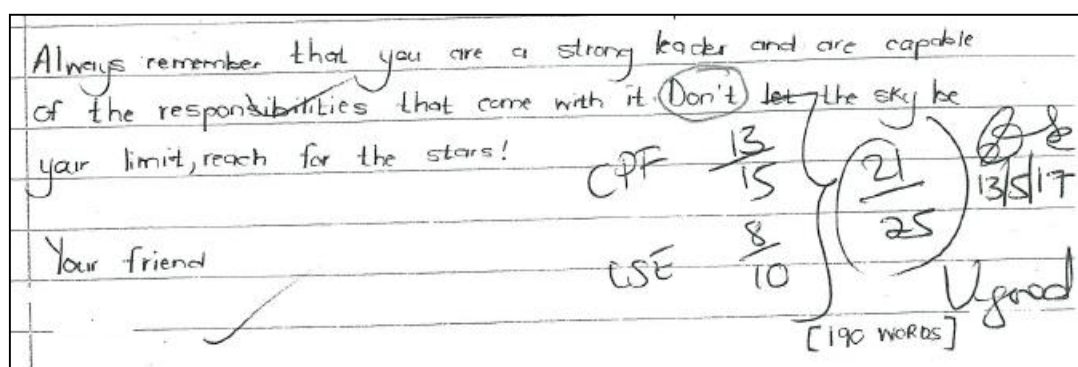
This subsection starts with an overview of the *Where to next?* column (6.4.4.1). The discussion how the learners identified the goals achieved and gaps and completed the WFT1 follows in 6.4.4.2. The findings of this column are considered in 6.4.4.3.

##### **6.4.4.1 Overview of the *Where to next?* column**

The WFT1 was used to facilitate feedback so that the learners could track their progress towards their goals. The intention of the *Where to next?* column was that the learners would use all the feedback information they received during the process and on the assessed task to determine goals achieved and the gaps in their learning.

#### 6.4.4.2 Goals achieved and gaps identified

The Grade 11 learners at school A did not get the opportunity to receive global feedback and completed the last WFT1 column on their own without further input from their teachers or peers. The learners at school A received a mark on the task based on the rubric but the rubric was not included. The mark indicated the area of weaknesses but lacked specific information. For example, in Figure 6.53, below. *CPF* represents content, purpose and format and *LSE* language, structure and editing on the GDE transactional writing rubric (refer to rubric Figure 6.1).



**Figure 6.53: School A Grade 11 teacher mark allocation**

The question was how the learners were able to use the feedback to determine their successes and gaps in learning; therefore the learners were asked how they knew where they had succeeded. The mark, as indicated above, was a clear indication of their attainment level. Furthermore, as indicated in chapter 5, the teacher's marking, codes and comments were used as information.

The completed WFT1 (Figure 6.54) below shows how learner T at school A was able to track the goal progression (squared in red). The vague reflection in the last column, "I have improved my format as well as grammar", "I have improved on my spelling" was as a result of the vague task goals. The gaps identified (squared in yellow) are "paragraphing" and, somewhat more specific, "learn to shorten my my sentences".

**WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL**

Type of task: Transactional Writing - Friendly letter  
 Your best friend has been elected to be the school RC's president.  
 Topic: Write a friendly letter to congratulate him/her. In your letter you should also offer sound advice about leadership.

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next? Feedback on final. Check against goals.
What are the task goals: - Format of a friendly letter - Sender's address (top left) with the date. Salutation, body (expands (reasons for letter) Conclusion (sums up letter) sign off.	Feedback to check my progress towards my goals: noun / adjective - Chose better words to work with. - I have tried to spell more words correctly. - <del>Have</del> Managed to write words in full eg. shouldn't, wouldn't, couldn't.	Which goals have I achieved? - I have improved my format as well as grammar. - I have improved on my spelling.
My own goal: - Improve my diction (choice of words). - Want to push myself harder and work on my sentence construction. - Try to improve spelling. - Try to write words in full eg. shouldn't, wouldn't. (avoided word form)	Things I have to do to achieve goals: STRATEGY - Use appropriate words even on social media to avoid writing words in abbreviated form <del>as</del> in short. - Try by all means to consult/ work with a dictionary when writing.	What do I have to work on in the next task? - I have to work on paragraphing and learn to shorten my sentences!
		How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals? - The feedback has taught me to write using the correct format as well as grammar. It has also helped with my spelling.

Figure 6.54: School A Grade 11 learner T: completed WFT1

The school B learners were instructed to consider the teacher's feedback when completing the WFT1. The teacher's feedback on the tasks was substantial; it included coded markings and written comments. How the learners interpreted and recorded their teacher's feedback demonstrated their understanding of the feedback information. Learner S at school B integrated the teacher feedback received on the WFT1 regarding "Phrasing" and "slightly vague" (Figure 6.55) and the comment about the "style" (Figure 6.56). Learner S used her own words to record the teacher's feedback (Figure 6.56) on her WFT1, reflecting her understanding of her learning gaps (Figure 6.57):

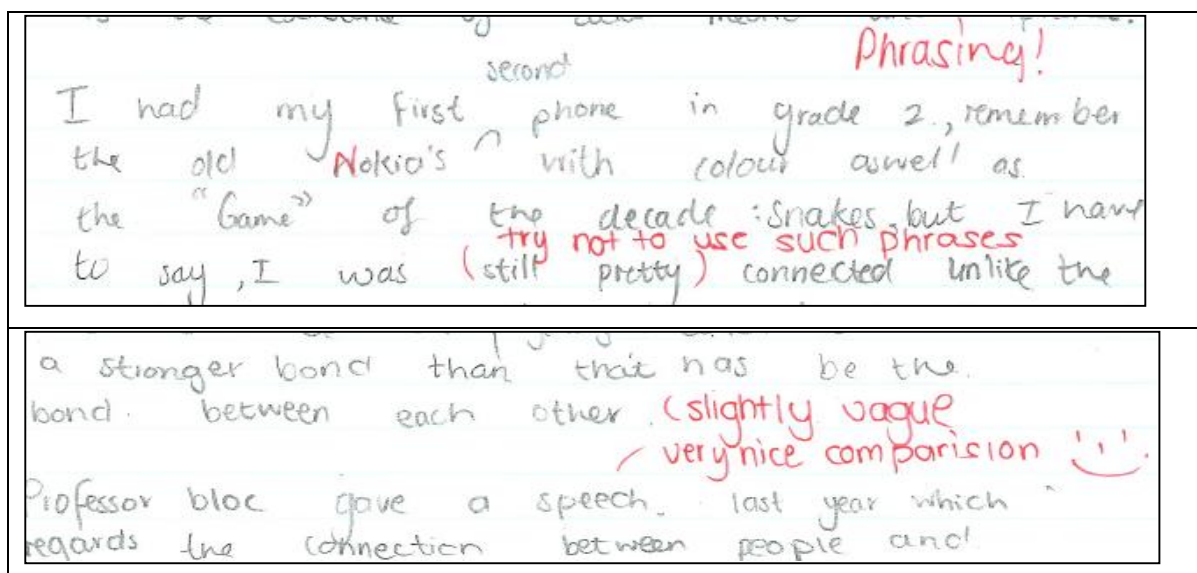


Figure 6.55: School B Grade 11 learner S: teacher feedback on task

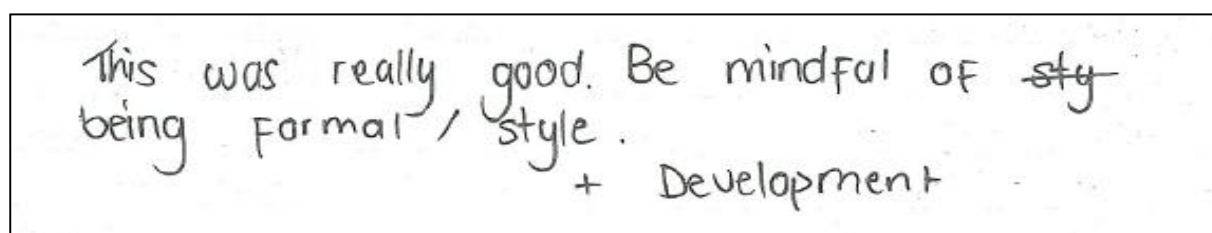


Figure 6.56: School B Grade 11 learner S: teacher comment on task

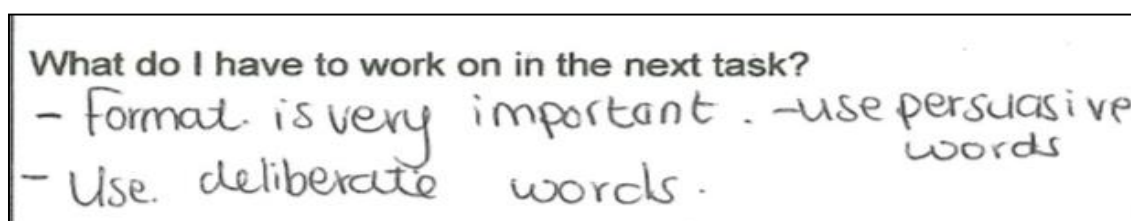


Figure 6.57: School B Grade 11 learner S: interpretation of feedback on the task

Learner A from school B received feedback from her peer, but did not submit her draft for comment from the teacher. The peer feedback was added to the last section in the *Where to next?* column (Figure 6.58, squared in yellow). Considering the gaps in learning, the learner also remembered to write down the RID strategy (Figure 6.58, squared in yellow) indicating that the information the learners received was not neatly

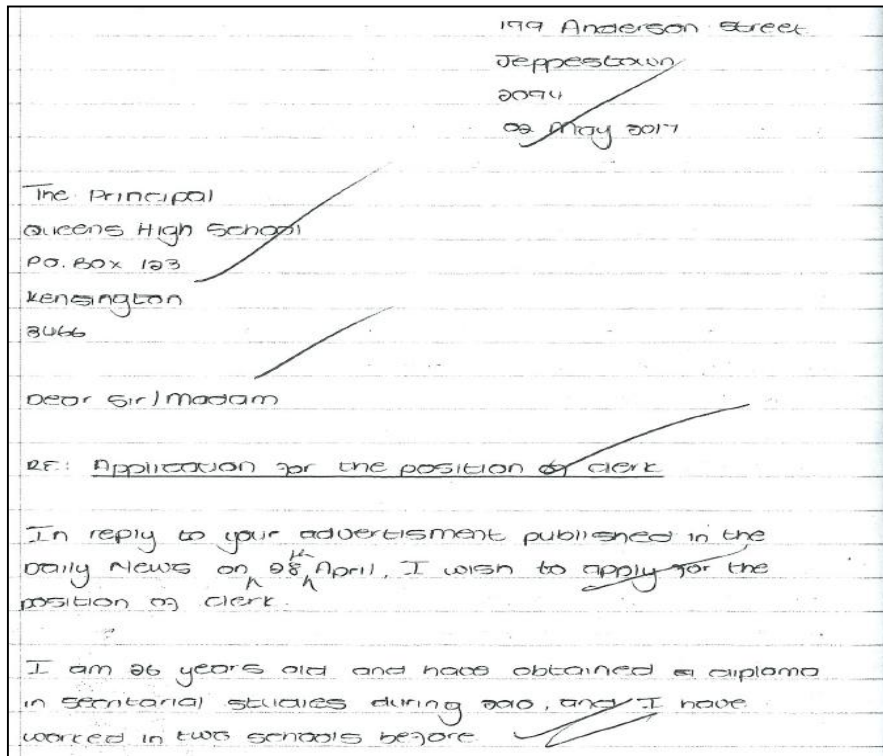
packaged. In the course of teaching and learning in writing learners receive information in various formats such as task sheets, notes and feedback. Learners are expected to use all the information from verbal and written feedback to improve their writing, as learner A explained:

*R: When ma'am told us to apply the RID, replace, insert and delete, and also to always like refer back to the topic and to when you like write there the introduction and conclusion, to always like link them together (D20, 20:16, 3909:4124).*

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct format</li> <li>Correct grammar</li> <li>Convincing and interesting</li> <li>Analyse with understand.</li> <li>Correct style and focus too.</li> </ul> <p>My own goal: (development)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid clichés in my speeches</li> <li>Use strong adjectives and more figures of speech.</li> <li>Be able to apply tone, diction &amp; style.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>managed to correct my grammar.</li> <li>used 1 figure of speech in every paragraph.</li> <li>used strong adjectives.</li> </ul> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice these skills, and ask ma'am to check my answers and format.</li> <li>Learn and understand how to apply these skills and use them probably in order to also understand the topic and what to write for the essay / speech.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</p> <p>Which goals have I achieved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correct format</li> </ul> <p>- Convincing but not focused enough.</p> <p>What do I have to work on in the next task?</p> <p>Refer back to the topic, and always focus on one idea in paragraphs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link the points in my essay</li> <li>Work on apply style, diction and tone</li> </ul> <p>How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop my ideas, more.</li> <li>- Correct grammar by using commas and not semi-colons.</li> <li>- Not repeat what I say more than once</li> <li>- Have a single focus (topic), be focused on one point and develop it more. (Think more about the topic)</li> <li>- Diction</li> </ul> <p>Apply R - replace, insert, delete</p> <p>(Register of writing)</p>

**Figure 6.58: School B Grade 11 learner A: completed WFT1**

The learners at school C completed the WFT1 on their own and did not have the opportunity to ask questions about the feedback. The feedback on the writing task was in the form of tick marks and on a surface level such as spelling errors, but no comment was included (Figure 6.59).



**Figure 6.59: School C Grade 11 marked transactional task**

Where the tasks were marked with tick marks, the learners interpreted it as success. When asked how they knew what they had got right, learner TB at school C remarked: *“Oh it’s, she clearly underlined that with the tick”* (D33, 33:17, 57:57).

The learners completed the WFT1, however, the limited feedback was reflected on the learners’ WFT1. The *“My goal is to punctuate spell and use the correct grammar”* own goal (Figure 6.60 squared in red ) were checked and achieved according to the learner. *“Spelling”* (Figure 6.60 squared in yellow) remained a gap to work on in future tasks.

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
What are the task goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format of the letter</li> <li>• The content</li> <li>• Language, style and register</li> <li>• Editing</li> </ul>	Feedback to check my progress towards my goals: I have to spell and punctuate properly so I can achieve great marks	Feedback on final. Check against goals. Which goals have I achieved? I have learnt to use simple standard grammar.
→ Punctuation and spelling	Things I have to do to achieve goals: → I have to re-read my work → check any spelling errors → Punctuate properly and use simple standard grammar.	What do I have to work on in the next task? → I have to work on my spelling How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals? Yes now I am more aware on not to spell incorrect words.
My own goal: My goal is to punctuate, spell and use the correct grammar		

**Figure 6.60: School C Grade 11 learner B: completed WFT1**

The global feedback the school D learners received covered broad aspects of the task such as the purpose of the open letter in which the teacher felt the learners were successful. The learners were asked to consider the feedback and complete the last column of the WFT1. The teacher used the lesson to engage with individual learners about the feedback as well as monitoring the completion of the WFT1.

The learners used the feedback on their task to identify the goals achieved and the gaps in their learning. Similar to the comments from learners at school C, the learners interpreted the absence of marking or comments as indications of success: *“Because if didn’t have a lot red markings”* D 43: 43:22 (108:109). Where there was feedback information, the learners used it to determine their success:

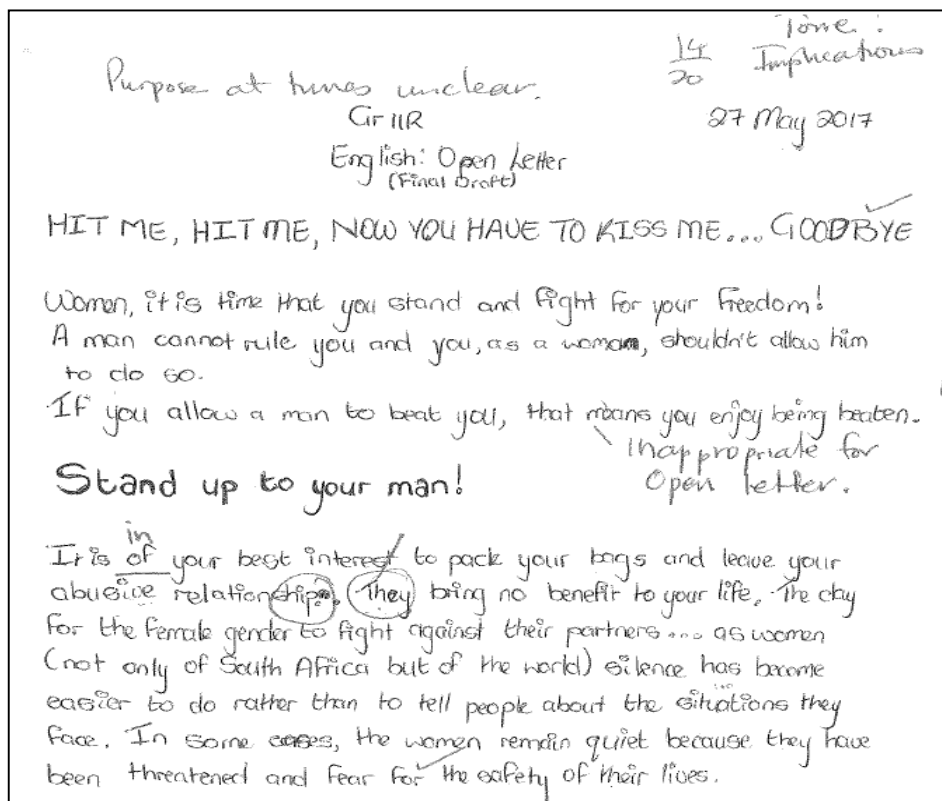
*Q: How were you able to identify what you got right, your areas of success?*

*R: Well she ticked it. Then I also looked at the back sheet and a couple of notes there, and saying what was good and what was bad (D44, 44:25, 89:92).*

Whereas the task goals learner S listed were broad statements (Figure 6.61), his own goals were more specific to the task requirements: *“To learn how to make proper paragraphs. Not to repeat statements in different ways. Try to appeal to men and*



women to help fight against abuse” (Figure 6.62). The peer feedback learner S received did not relate to his goals. However, the teacher feedback on the task (Figure 6.61) pointed out where the task criteria were not met which was noted such as “Purpose at times unclear”, “Tone implications”:



**Figure 6.61: School D Grade 11 learner S: marked task and teacher’s comment**

In response to the feedback, learner S from school D indicated as goal achieved: “Introduction that is attractive,” (Figure 6.62, squared in red). The gaps were recorded from feedback received from the peer and the teacher (Figure 6.62, squared in yellow). The learner further listed areas to work on in response to the peer feedback under the last question: “Now I have to be specific with characters”, “Work on my register”, “Keep the message clear”, “Have a direct audience to help with my...” (Figure 6.62, squared in yellow).

Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next?
<p>What are the task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be able to write an open letter that can be read by the masses</li> <li>• Talk to the people and providing information and solutions to abuse</li> </ul> <p>My own goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To learn how to make proper paragraphs</li> <li>• Not repeating statements in different ways</li> <li>• Try to appeal to men and women to help fight against abuse.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of tautology alot.</li> <li>• Not being specific enough.</li> <li>• Word choice is incorrect</li> <li>• Good introduction and title</li> </ul> <p>Things I have to do to achieve goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to specify as to what I am talking about and avoid being vague</li> <li>• Not use similar words to add emphasis.</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</p> <p>Which goals have I achieved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction that is attractive</li> <li>• <del>...</del></li> </ul> <p>What do I have to work on in the next task?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># Work on misrelated participles</li> <li>* Less of harshness</li> <li>* Inappropriate use of language and implications.</li> </ul> <p>How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Now I have to be specific with characters</li> <li>* Work on my register</li> <li>* Keep the message clear</li> <li>* Have a direct audience to help with my</li> </ul>

Figure 6.62: School D Grade 11 learner S: completed WFT1

#### 6.4.4.3 Discussion of the *Where to next?* column findings

The question, *Where to next?*, not only focused on what was right and what was wrong, but required a reflection on the goals achieved and not achieved. How learners determine which goals they have achieved should be supported by clear task goals, feedback on the progress towards the goals and finally a clear indication in the feedback that the goals were achieved.

Using the WFT1 to record goals, feedback and response to the feedback, the learners were able to track some of their goals to identify success and gaps in learning. The WFT1 reflected the somewhat messy nature of writing learning, particularly where there were multiple and varied learning goals. The vague and disparate nature of the goals was also reflected in the lack of alignment between goals stated and feedback on the assessed task. The feedback information from the teachers was not always in relation to the learners' goals, but rather the task criteria and the teachers' expectations. Where the learners received feedback information from the teachers, the learners were able to analyse the feedback to determine success and gaps in learning. As was the case with the Grade 10 learners, the absence of markings such as underlining or circling or a comment was interpreted that the writing was correct. The WFT1 showed the alignment between the goals (task and own) with the feedback,

response to feedback and the goals achieved, making the writing learning open to analysis.

The findings discussed after each subsection were based on the specific implementation in the Grade 10 and Grade 11 classes. The discussions reflected how the WFT1 was used in the teaching and, in particular, the learning of writing. However, overall themes emerged and these are summarised in the next section.

## **6.5 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM GRADE 10 AND 11 IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT1**

The focus of the preceding sections (6.3, 6.4) was to demonstrate how the WFT1 operationalised the curriculum at implementation level (section 3.2.4) in Grade 10 and Grade 11 at the four schools. The WFT1 implementation illustrated how the WFT1 facilitated the use of the AFL and process writing steps integrated in the teaching and learning. While the contexts differed between the subunits, teachers used the WFT1 in their own way, indicating their perceptions of the curriculum. The complexities of the writing classrooms were represented in the learners' experience of the attained curriculum which manifested on the WFT1 as their response to the assessment feedback and their goals achieved.

There were similarities in key findings and these are summarised according to the WFT1 columns, *Where am I going?* (6.5.1), *How am I going?* (6.5.2) and *Where to next?* (6.5.3).

### **6.5.1 Where am I going?**

The formulation of the task goals were informed by the information the learners received regarding the task criteria and the teachers' expectations; thus, the task goals indicated the learners' understanding of the learning intention. The success criteria remained vague and not clarified beyond the implicit understanding that the rubric was used as assessment tool.

The learners' task goals were dissimilar and not clearly aligned with the learning intention, task criteria, and success criteria and consequently the teachers'

expectations. Where the task type or topic was inaccessible, e.g., Grade 10 at schools A and C, the learners struggled to demonstrate their abilities to achieve the task goals. The task goals, mostly at surface level, often resembled a list of *what* to do but *how* to achieve the goals were largely absent.

Learners' own goals were a vague representation of their own learning needs, mostly aimed at surface level goals such as spelling, punctuation, grammar.

### **6.5.2 How am I going?**

The learners used the task goals to check how they were going, thereby monitoring their progress towards their goals. The peer feedback was mostly in relation to the goals; however, some learners gave feedback according to their understanding of the task criteria. It was also found that peer feedback resulted in adding a learner's goals or restating the goals (section 6.3.3.3). This indicated how learners might learn from one another through the feedback process.

The feedback resembling editing and focusing on error detection and correction illustrated the proliferation of surface level goals. The surface level feedback resulted in error detection and correction of mistakes, however, error detection feedback did not always help learners understand how to correct their work (subsection 6.3.3.3). It was not clear how much of the feedback received, that is from self, peers or synchronous feedback from the teacher, was recorded and responded to.

### **6.5.3 Where to next?**

The feedback from their teachers included tick marks, codes, and written comments and in some cases a mark. The learners used all the feedback information they received on their tasks, including peer and self-feedback, to identify the goals they had achieved and the gaps in their learning.

The learners' completed WFT1 indicated where there was alignment between their task and own goals, feedback and the gaps in learning.

In the next section, the teachers' evaluation of the WFT1 implementation is presented and discussed.

## 6.6 TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS ON WFT1 IMPLEMENTATION

The teachers' evaluation of the tool represents their perception of the curriculum at implementation level. Therefore, teachers' reflections were valuable in order to determine how effectively the WFT1 integrated the AFL and process writing steps. Furthermore, how the WFT1 succeeded as a practical tool was evaluated. The discussion below includes how the WFT1 structure facilitated the process (6.6.1), the role the clarification of the task goals played (6.6.2) and the role of feedback (6.6.3).

### 6.6.1 WFT1 structure

In both the Grade 10 and 11 classes, WFT1 succeeded in one of the aims which was to integrate the process writing and AFL steps for implementation in the classroom. The WFT1 structured the planning which was self-regulation, the forethought and goal setting (Zimmerman, 2013), followed by the feedback on the drafts to check progress and then, finally, the reflection on success and identification of learning gaps.

According to the Grade 11 teacher at school B, the WFT1 had a "logical structure" D17: 17:21 (5919:6142) which not only structured the writing of the task, but also the learners' thinking about the writing process from the goals to the peer feedback:

*R: And by then structuring their thinking, that then fed into the next section and it almost then became like kind of cross reflective, because not only were they doing it on their own, but by doing peer assessment (D17: 17:32, 8286:8497).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school A explained that the WFT1 made the process of writing "concrete" to the learners. The fact that it became "authentic" and "real" to the learners helped them understand why the writing process was needed:

*R: I think it gave them a concrete perspective for the reason why they actually have to do the, because I think before they didn't understand why it should be a process. So I think it made it more*

*authentic or real, because it seems it created reality (D1: 1:1- 1:4, 1088:1123).*

Similarly, the Grade 11 teacher at school D regarded the task goals as successful in clarifying for the learners what they were aiming to achieve, making the expectations clear and concrete: *“It was no longer just talk, the tool was concrete, it was there”* (D40: 40:4, 393:459).

The Grade 10 teacher at school A recognised that her previous practice was not always effective and that the WFT1 changed how she checked for understanding:

*R: Because in reality that is not what always happens, it is chalk and board. Do you understand? You don't understand, okay I am going to repeat (D1: 1:84,10197:10339).*

The teachers' observations about the structure and *“concrete”* process made the teaching and learning visible. The teachers were able to check on the learners' understanding in relation to the goals.

## **6.6.2 The task goals**

The AFL process starts with the stating of the task goals which answers the *Where am I going?* question. The clarification of the task goals and how the task goals directed the learning are briefly discussed in 6.6.2.1 and 6.6.2.2.

### *6.6.2.1 Clarifying task goals*

The first step of the WFT1 brought into sharp focus the importance of identifying task goals and own goals; the formulation of goals and clarifying the expectations is an essential condition of formative assessment (Clark, 2012:210). The WFT1 focused the teachers' approach to the task on making the criteria clear by structuring the learning intentions. The Grade 10 teacher at school D explained that the WFT1 focused her planning and setting up the task sheet which helped her structure the goals: *“This tool actually helped me actually set my task, the task sheet, it helped me. So I feel like from the word go, I structured their goal”* (D34: 34:2, 365:444). The Grade 10 teacher

at school A also experienced the WFT1 as allowing for clear criteria: *“Now that allowed you to have clear criteria. That is what I noticed”* (D1: 1:8, 2771:2838).

#### 6.6.2.2 Task goals directed the learning

The Grade 11 teacher at school C explained that the WFT1 helped the learners to focus on their goals. *“It will give them goals and it will give them what they are supposed to do and so for them it does help, this tool, it does”* (D28: 28:39, 10255:10535). While the focus at school C was on what to do, the teacher at school D explained that the WFT1 allowed her to focus the learners’ thinking as well: *“... at the very beginning of the lesson when I could use it to show them what I actually wanted them to do in terms of their thinking about the topic and the process”* (D40: 40:1, 200:392).

### 6.6.3 Feedback

Feedback in the AFL process drives the learning on several levels. The discussion below is structured to address the feedback in relation to the task goals, 6.6.3.1, and the use of strategies in feedback, 6.6.3.2. The way feedback influenced the classroom conversation is dealt with in section 6.6.3.3 and the multiple opportunities for feedback in the classroom in section 6.6.3.4. Lastly learning gaps are discussed in 6.6.3.5.

#### 6.6.3.1 Feedback in relation to the goals

The feedback activity in class was a new activity for most of the Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners; however, the feedback process with the WFT1 created an opportunity to engage and to check on the learning while the writing was in progress:

*R: And somehow, the draft, the first draft, must be like started within class, and then we must facilitate it. As they move on to paragraph or to whatever, a few questions. Let’s stop and think, is there, are you getting lost, are you, what are your frustrations or something? I think that would have helped* (D1: 1:62, 21004:21337).

The peer feedback was mostly in relation to the task goals and own goals which was what the WFT1 was intended to do. The feedback the learners received mirrored the

level of the goals; surface level goals elicited feedback focused on error detection and error correction, such as spelling errors or punctuation.

The feedback created the opportunity for the teachers and the learners to analyse the goals, recognising that the goal to “*improve grammar*” may not be helpful as it was not specific about what needed to be achieved, as the Grade 11 teacher at school B observed:

*R: Yes, so I mean for things I have to do to achieve goals, to just write I need to improve my grammar, grammar is such a wide area, it could be anything from are you writing fragments or are you making comments, or are you misspelling things? So they needed to rather, from the peer assessment, kind of go “Okay, what is it in my grammar? Is it the word order, that I put my words in a sentence? Is it that I run ideas together with no logical break between them?” (D17: 17:48, 12254:12847).*

#### 6.6.3.2 Feedback and the use of strategies

The feedback showed how the conversation can move the focus from correction to *how* learning can take place. The Grade 10 teacher at school B had the realisation that the WFT1 could move the focus away from corrective feedback by engaging the learners in the strategies on how to move their learning forward:

*R: Well I think, rather than now it is sort of like make sure that you improve your vocabulary, make sure you don't repeat yourself. We then transition from what not to do, to how you are going to and how you are not going to (D11: 11:26, 10592:10815).*

Where the word count was exceeded, it was specified without indicating how it could be rectified. If the goal was: “*To use RID (replace, insert, delete) to achieve succinct writing*”, the feedback would have been more specific, indicating how the strategy succeeded or could be used. When focusing on strategies, it was recognised that it may be challenging for some learners but that the WFT1 introduced a system of feedback and reflection to develop strategies. The Grade 11 teacher at school B recognised that the use and development of strategies in response to feedback was an indication of self-regulated learning:



*R: ... then again weaker learners will find that those strategies are more straight forward, so things like, you know, it can be simple and they can improve writing, being more aware of full stops, you know, more sort of practical grammatical strategies (D17: 17:39, 9922:10168).*

*R: So I think that for a lot of learners who struggled to almost develop their own strategy, and kind of take abstract, almost abstract advice about how to get better and implement it themselves, this becomes a nice way of organising that system (D17: 17:47, 11563:11808).*

The Grade 11 teacher at school B further identified that the WFT1 brought into focus the use of strategies to address the gaps in learning:

*R: That then also fit into them having awareness while they were writing, working on the task of the phase, of how am I implementing this, what is my plan of action? (D17: 17:4, 871:1035).*

*R: How am I doing this, what are my strategies? (D17: 17:5, 1037:1080).*

Effective feedback should lead to addressing the gap in learning by the learner taking action. When the feedback is at task level and mostly corrective it does not translate to substantial strategies in addressing the gap. The intention of *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* was to prompt the learners to use the feedback information to address the gaps in their learning as identified by the feedback. At this stage the learners may consider using strategies such as Replace, Insert, Delete (RID) to achieve succinct writing or make your Point, give an Example, Elaborate (PEE) to expand on their ideas. As part of the synchronous feedback the teachers reminded the learners of things they could do to achieve their goals. Some learners could think of quick fix strategies such as using a dictionary to check and correct the spelling of words. This was particularly evident with the Grade 10 learners where the elementary nature of some of the tasks brought the focus to surface level errors.

#### *6.6.3.3 The WFT1 facilitated interaction in the classroom*

The Grade 11 teacher at school D experienced the WFT1 as a positive way to facilitate her interaction with the learners. *“To answer your specific question now, it made it easier for me, for them to interact with me” (D40: 40:5, 554:646).* The WFT1

neutralised the conversation, moving the attention away from a possible focus on well-being goals where feedback may be regarded as criticism:

*R: Yes, it took away the teacher criticising and I am at fault. It was totally moved. There was a relation, different relationship now (D40: 40:34, 5681:5888).*

The feedback between the peers was facilitated by the Grade 11 teacher at school B and it became a conversation as the feedback on the learning became common ground. The peer feedback could be questioned, justified and consequently accepted or rejected. The classroom feedback, which took the form of editing, moved to a conversation about the feedback and the learners engaging about their thinking about writing:

*R: Ja, it structured the conversation and it also opened a doorway into discussing whether or not that editing had been correct, had it been accurate, had it actually helped? (D40: 40:22, 3120:3293).*

The Grade 11 teacher at school B remarked that the editing, or feedback process came under scrutiny. The discussion about feedback became part of the writing process whereas previously the editing may have been questioned without understanding the process:

*R: So now, something else has entered into this whole writing process. The editor could now to talk to me and the person, about the learner, about, oh, okay, that does make sense. So I think it was a different, the editing process itself has now been examined (D40: 40:26, 3977:4785).*

#### *6.6.3.4 Multiple feedback opportunities*

During the feedback session teachers provided synchronous feedback to individuals and globally to the whole class. The learners did not record the teachers' feedback and it was unclear whether they used the teachers' feedback to address the gaps in learning. Synchronous feedback in the classroom may not always be understood or applied and the Grade 10 teacher at school B used the WFT1 to check the efficacy of the feedback in class:

*R: So ja, it was just a great way of getting them to hone in on their own work, and I liked having, whilst I was marking the work, reading what they, you know, where am I going and how am I going to see, okay, what did they think? Because some of my feedback comments, they didn't necessarily pick up (D11: 11:4, 774:1072).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school D observed that the feedback was “*layered*”, with multiple opportunities of receiving feedback on the writing:

*R: Well I think it goes with my philosophy of this being a knowledge hub, so the child was able to set a goal for themselves, another child who was an outsider was able to go and I could give him input in it. So that means three people have contributed to this obituary actually (D34: 34:21, 32:32).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school B explained that feedback at different stages of the process created multiple opportunities to respond to the feedback and make adjustments to the gaps identified:

*R: So they wouldn't have known, oh that format wasn't quite correct. So they hadn't put it down, so those are a nice way of going through that process of getting the peer to look at it, then me looking at it and then it is sort of general, debrief afterwards, it is a layered process and I think it has been very beneficial for them and me (D11: 11:6, 5:5).*

The task goals directed the learning, as discussed above (6.5.2). This critical aspect was made visible by the feedback process because the corrective nature of the feedback did not encourage the learners to engage with the gap in learning.

#### 6.6.3.5 Learning gaps

Learners were able to demonstrate self-regulation by identifying the goals they had achieved using the feedback information, the teachers' comments, the mark and the absence of teachers' marking codes. In some cases learners added new goals which emerged during the process, either by their own analysis or input from a peer or teacher. The vague nature of the goals such as “*grammar*” made it difficult for the learners to determine with confidence that they had achieved the goal. More specific goals, where the feedback was to “*avoid using contractions*”, made it easier to recognise when it was achieved.

In answering the question: *What I have to work on in the next task?*, the learners identified gaps in their learning based on the feedback from their peers and teacher. As the task goals were mostly on task level it followed that the gaps were also mostly at task level. The Grade 10 teacher at school D explained that learning gaps identified in the writing could be used to inform the task goals in the next writing task, therefore, language learning became ongoing: *“So the next writing piece I am going, so what did they pick up about your, so maybe we can start there, what did they pick up about your writing last time?”* D 34: 34:32 (8887:9042).

There was also the recognition that new areas had arisen and needed to be focused on in the next task. *“But also, maybe what, new areas, or different areas also arose, that they can also focus on next time”* (D17: 17:7, 1226:1328).

The identification of the gaps raised the question about ZPD, in other words, how the gaps would be addressed. The partial achievement of goals required scaffolding as a possible remedy, whereas goals not achieved needed to be addressed as new learning. Furthermore, the Grade 10 teacher at school B recognised that the WFT1 allowed for the analysis of the learning gaps making it easier to address *“where their strengths and weaknesses lie and is also kind of, it categorises it in such a way that it doesn’t seem so daunting”* (D11: 11:18, 7762:7888).

## **6.7 DISCUSSION OF THE WFT1 IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of the WFT1 successfully integrated the assessment for learning and process writing steps, creating a structured process to the teaching and learning. The WFT1 allowed for the critical engagement of the learning intentions as expressed in the task goals. The clarification of criteria and the transparent process around assessment, which the teachers felt were present, were open to question. The accessibility of the task criteria and the topic was a perception held by the learners and the teachers. However, the recording of the task goals and learners’ achievement of them contradicted this perception.

The general understanding by the teachers and the learners was that the task goals were specific to the writing task and the own goals were the learners’ learning goals.

The task goals formulated focused mainly on surface level goals such as the format of the task, grammar and language, spelling and punctuation, and word count. While these were reflected in the transactional rubric, simply stating the broad criteria as goals resulted in the formulation of goals that were superficial and vague.

What became clear was that the task goals and own goals governed the level of learning, feedback and subsequent success. If the intention was that the learning would be at task level then the goals, feedback and success of learning would be at task level. If the task goals were at surface level, the assessment would have to be at the same level, as nonalignment caused confusion. This was demonstrated when the learners at school D Grade 10 received feedback that their goals were achieved, yet the mark allocated did not reflect that. The formulation of goals that are in line with the learners' learning progress, the task criteria and success criteria make learning accessible to the learners.

While there were many opportunities for feedback and a feedback conversation was created, the WFT1 demonstrated the vague nature of the task goals and the scarcity of scaffolded feedback. Learners could respond to surface level feedback by correcting errors; however, it became clear that the learners lacked strategies to use or develop in order to address the gap in learning beyond surface level errors. The feedback did not effectively address the ZPD; how to move learners from what they could not do to what they could do with help, and eventually to achievement without help.

Not all the learners responded to the question *How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieved my goals?* However, the responses received were varied; some learners indicated that they had learned that a peer might see mistakes they did not. Learners also reflected on what the gaps in their learning were, and some learners were motivated by the process. The interpretation of their answers was that the learners saw the WFT1 as a process of feedback information about their writing.

The use of WFT1 in the writing lessons made the teaching and learning visible as the learners recorded their understanding of the goals, feedback and achievement of goals. The presence of SRL was in the learners' ability to track the steps of process

writing and monitor their progress towards their goals. Finally, the learners were able to reflect on the achievement of learning goals and recognise the gaps in their learning.

## 6.8 WFT2 DEVELOPMENT

The preliminary analysis of the WFT1 implementation, the lesson observations and interviews conducted, resulted in conclusions about the implementation of the WFT1. The first critical aspect was the formulation of task goals. Self-regulating learners were capable of formulating the task goals, however, the goals would be informed by gaps in learning identified in previous tasks, the task criteria and the success criteria. The task goals should encapsulate the learning intention and the purpose of the task.

The writing tasks activity allowed the demonstration of complex language writing skills as reflected in the assessment rubrics. The purpose of the transactional task was emphasised by the GDE rubric as it would inform the learning intentions such as “*focused, coherent writing demonstrating elaborated and detailed handling of the topic*” (DBE, 2015:20). The clear format of the transactional task made the content accessible to the reader, hence, the emphasis on the correct format. The efficacy of the chosen activity was undermined if the learning was not scaffolded, particularly if it was a new task. Furthermore, the writing task was made accessible by choosing a context appropriate topic.

Learning was facilitated when the task goals included strategies the learners could use to achieve these goals. The surface level task goals which dominated WFT1 did not in all cases indicate how the goals could be achieved. The teachers at schools B and D explained that the WFT1 brought into focus the question of *how* the learning would be achieved. These aspects of AFL were absent in WFT1 and needed to be addressed in WFT2 (Figure 6.63).

The second critical aspect was how feedback was received. Most of the feedback recorded by the learners on WFT1 was corrective, indicating that the task goals such as spelling, punctuation and grammar were surface goals at task level. This was a result of the vague goals and the lack of information about *how* the goals should be achieved. The learners interpreted the feedback by recognising mistakes and in some cases how to correct the mistakes, using “quick fixes” to address the surface level

mistakes. There was a lack of strategies to employ, or things to do to enhance learning in response to the feedback. Therefore many learners found the corrective feedback helpful, but how to address the gaps in learning remained elusive.

WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL	LEARNER	NAME: .....	GRADE: .....
Type of task:			
1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?	
Task goals:	Feedback from peer/teacher/self:	Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1 <sup>st</sup> column)	
Planning		What did I do to achieve the goals?	
Drafting		Areas to develop to improve my writing: Learner:	
Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:	Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):	Teacher:	
		I need more feedback about/help with:	

**Figure 6.63: Writing Feedback Tool 2**

Planning the writing task was expected as it was a category on the assessment rubric. The planning was not part of the lesson or discussed; as a result it was not clear how the planning assisted the learners in the development of ideas or a well-structured writing task. The teachers felt that planning was important, thus the first column *Where am I going?* was adapted to include planning and drafting to draw attention to the two areas. School D preferred not to stipulate planning and drafting as it was argued that formulating task goals covered the planning of the task.

With WFT1, the learners completed the *My own goal* section focusing on surface level goals. The *Goals I want to focus on/my own goals* section on WFT2 was to encourage learners to consider goals other than the surface level goals to focus on. It was also an effort to bring in differentiation, allowing learners to focus on their individual learning goals. One learner might want to focus on the complex ways of using diction to

achieve effective writing, whereas another learner's focus would be on using commas correctly.

Analysis of WFT1, the second column: *How am I going?*, indicated that the feedback was not always in relation to the goals. It was also found that new goals may emerge during the feedback process. The learners read each other's tasks and identified mistakes that did not relate to the task goals or own goals. Furthermore, it emerged that with WFT1 the other sources of feedback may not have been recorded, such as feedback from self and synchronous feedback from the teacher. In order to make the process flexible and ensure that the feedback was recorded, the sentence *Feedback to check my progress towards my goals* was changed to *Feedback from peer/teacher/self*.

The next sentence in column two: *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* was changed to *Things I can do to achieve my goals (strategies)*. It transpired with the WFT1 implementation that the corrective or vague feedback did not engage the learners in thinking about how they could learn from their mistakes. The wording of the WFT1 sentence also implied compliance. The option of strategies was added to prompt the teachers to consider teaching strategies to the learners and encouraging learners to develop their own strategies.

The learners' response to the reflection question in the *Where to next?* column confirmed the surface level of most of the goals. Some learners' feedback indicated that they had achieved their goals, which made it difficult for them to identify areas to work on in the next task.

The last column was improved to elicit reflection on the goals achieved but also how the goals were achieved. The learners were expected to mark the goals they had written in the first column with a tick to indicate achievement. At this point goals that emerged during the process could be added. Then they would be expected to identify what they did to achieve their goals, in other words what they could do on their own. This was also an attempt to move the learners away from surface level focus on goals to the processes underlying their writing.



The WFT1 question *What do I have to work on in the next task?*, as mentioned before, exposed the learners' task-focused thinking as they felt they could not answer the question because they did not know what the next task would be. Recognising that there were other gaps in addition to learning gaps, the question was changed to *Areas to develop to improve my writing*, aiming to broaden the focus. Firstly the word *areas* could include writing goals, or practical, personal goals such as "*finish the task on time*" or "*improved handwriting*". The teachers suggested a section on the WFT2 for their comments which was included with a space for the learners to comment.

The three questions in the last column addressed the issue of how to apply the ZPD levels. *What did I do to achieve my goals?* answered the ZPD level what I can do on my own. *Areas to develop to improve my writing* is what I can do with help, and *I need more feedback/help with* dealt with what I cannot do.

## **6.9 CONCLUSION**

The practical implementation of the WFT1 succeeded in combining the process writing and AFL steps in the teaching and learning of the writing thereby answering *Research Questions 4 and 5*.

*Research Questions 2 and 3* focused on feedback; which feedback strategies were successful and how they were received. The multiple forms of feedback the teachers provided pointed out learning gaps and sometimes included ways to address the gap. How the feedback aligned the task goals with the success criteria and how it improved learning remained unanswered. The learners' corrective response to feedback was important as it demonstrated the learning intention and the level of learning. The feedback did not always stimulate thinking about how goals would be achieved.

How WFT2 addressed the clarification of the task goals, feedback strategies and how feedback was received is discussed in Chapter 7.

## CHAPTER 7

### SECOND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL

#### 7.1 ORIENTATION

In this chapter the second implementation cycle of the WFT (referred to as WFT2) is presented. Section 7.2 deals with the preparations made before implementation of the WFT2; how the tool was introduced to the teachers and how the writing tasks were chosen for the implementation of WFT2 as well as the assessment rubrics used. In sections 7.3 and 7.4, the Grade 10 and the Grade 11 data for the WFT2 implementation is presented. The Grade 10 and Grade 11 findings are then summarised (7.5), followed by the participants' reflections of the second implementation cycle (7.6). Section 7.7 is a discussion of the of the WFT2 implementation.

#### 7.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT2

The first implementation cycle of the WFT addressed the following research sub-questions:

- Research Question 2: *What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in EHL writing in the FET phase?*
- Research Question 3: *How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and 11 learners in EHL writing?*
- Research Question 4: *What comprises an AFL process in EHL writing in the FET phase?*
- Research Question 5: *What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of AFL in writing lessons?*

The first implementation cycle of the WFT established the following:

- The teachers used multiple forms of feedback on the writing tasks; however, the feedback was not always aligned with the task goals. Learning gaps were identified but the feedback did not always indicate how to address the gaps.

- The learners received the feedback as information on their writing; however, the focus was still on error detection and correction.
- WFT1 integrated AFL and process writing steps for the implementation of feedback in the writing lessons.

While research sub-questions 4 and 5 were addressed during the WFT1 implementation, the second implementation cycle of WFT2 sought to confirm the findings. Furthermore, with reference to the first implementation cycle findings, the second implementation cycle focused on how feedback was provided and received, thus addressing sub-research questions 2 and 3.

The first implementation was concluded in the second term before the mid-year examinations were held. The teachers did not all have the opportunity to engage in detail with how the learners used the WFT1 and I wanted to use the initial meetings in the third term to further discuss the WFT2 implementation with the teachers. The meetings were held with all the teachers individually to make arrangements for the scheduled writing tasks and to introduce WFT2. I used examples of the completed WFT1 to discuss the findings and suggested changes to the WFT1. The teachers were asked to consider the changes made to WFT1; the GDE teachers felt *Planning* should be included to draw attention to the activity and because it was a criteria on the GDE rubric. The heading *Planning* was included with *Drafting*, with the understanding that the teachers could choose to ignore the differentiation. Similarly, the teachers could choose to use the space for teachers to comment on the tool or, if they preferred, to write a comment on the writing task. All the teachers accepted the changes made to the WFT1. The high level of collaboration of the first implementation cycle continued in the implementation of WFT2.

The WFT1 illustrated how the formulation of task goals depended on the clarification of the learning intention and success criteria. Clear task goals in turn influence the way feedback is provided and used. While the structure of WFT1 provided guidance for the writing task, scaffolded learning in the form of effective feedback was absent. The WFT2 was adapted to facilitate the effective use of feedback to enhance learning (section 6.6).

The critical aspect of the clarity of task goals, highlighted during the WFT1 implementation, needed to be addressed. With the WFT1 implementation, the task criteria and success criteria were shared with the learners, either verbally or on a task sheet, therefore the learners were informed what to do. However, the learning intention should be clear and also aligned with the success criteria. To clarify the purpose of the task goals, the teachers were asked to think about the learning intention for the writing task. *What* should be learnt (the task criteria) and *how* it should be learnt (strategies) were formulated as goals. The *success criteria*, how the teachers and the learners would know that the learning was successful, would be the rubric and examples illustrating what success looked like.

In discussion with the teachers, examples of task criteria were shared and example WFTs created. The teachers were asked to consider formulating the task goals for the learners to form a clear focus for the writing task. Teachers were also asked to include the assessment rubric or assessment tool they would be using by printing it on the back of the WFT2 to make the success criteria accessible to the learners.

It was evident with WFT1 that the task goals determined the level and, to a large extent, the efficacy of the feedback. The expectation was that the clarification of the task goals with the focus on how to achieve those using strategies would result in actionable feedback.

The third term writing tasks included transactional writing and essay writing. The task chosen by each teacher is indicated in the Grade 10 (Table 7.1) and Grade 11 (Table 7.5) sections. Seven of the eight classes wrote essays, varying in length and purpose. Grade 10 learners at school B wrote a longer transactional piece.

The GDE assessment rubric for essays (Figure 7.1) reveals three comprehensive categories, the levels of achievement were differentiated, indicating an upper level and a lower level. The first section was *Content and Planning*, it was not clear how the teachers and the learners would determine, or agree on what “*intelligent, thought-provoking, mature ideas*” would look like. The two categories of *Language, style and editing*, and *Structure* were concrete expectations and the success criteria perhaps easier to agree on. It possibly explains why the teachers focused their assessment on error-free writing as detection of errors was uncomplicated and indisputable.

6.3 APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: ESSAY

- Always use the rubric when marking the creative essay (Paper 3, Section A).
- Marks from 0–50 have been divided into FIVE major level descriptors.
- In the Content, Language and Style criteria, each of the five level descriptors is divided into an upper and a lower level subcategory with the applicable mark range and descriptors.
- Structure is not affected by the upper level and lower level division.

SECTION A: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR ESSAY – HOME LANGUAGE [50 MARKS]

Criteria	Exceptional 28–30	Skilful 22–24	Moderate 16–18	Elementary 10–12	Inadequate 4–6
<b>CONTENT AND PLANNING</b> (Response and ideas) Organisation of ideas for planning; Awareness of purpose, audience and context	-Outstanding/Striking response beyond normal expectations -Intelligent, thought-provoking and mature ideas -Exceptionally well organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Very well-crafted response -Fully relevant and interesting ideas with evidence of maturity -Very well organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Satisfactory response -Ideas are reasonably coherent and convincing -Reasonably organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Inconsistently coherent response -Unclear ideas and unoriginal -Little evidence of organisation and coherence	-Totally irrelevant response -Confused and unfocused ideas -Vague and repetitive organisation and incoherent
<b>30 MARKS</b>	<b>25–27</b>	<b>19–21</b>	<b>13–15</b>	<b>7–9</b>	<b>0–3</b>
	-Excellent response but lacks the exceptionally striking qualities of the outstanding essay -Mature and intelligent ideas -Skilfully organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Well-crafted response -Relevant and interesting ideas -Well organised and coherent, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Satisfactory response but some lapses in clarity -Ideas are fairly coherent and convincing -Some degree of organisation and coherence, including introduction, body and conclusion	-Largely irrelevant response -Ideas tend to be disconnected and confusing -Hardly any evidence of organisation and coherence	-No attempt to respond to the topic -Completely irrelevant and inappropriate -Unfocused and muddled

SECTION A: ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR ESSAY – HOME LANGUAGE [50 MARKS] (continued)

Criteria	Exceptional 14–15	Skilful 11–12	Moderate 8–9	Elementary 5–6	Inadequate 0–3
<b>LANGUAGE, STYLE AND EDITING</b> Tone, register, style, vocabulary appropriate to purpose/effect and context; word choice; language use and conventions, punctuation, grammar, spelling	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary highly appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Language confident, exceptionally impressive -Compelling and rhetorically effective in tone -Virtually error-free in grammar and spelling -Very skilfully crafted	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary largely appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Language is effective and a consistently appropriate tone is used -Largely error-free in grammar and spelling -Very well crafted	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Appropriate use of language to convey meaning -Rhetorical devices used to enhance content	-Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Very basic use of language -Tone and diction are inappropriate -Very limited vocabulary	-Language incomprehensible -Tone, register, style and vocabulary less appropriate to purpose, audience and context -Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make comprehension impossible
<b>15 MARKS</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	
	-Language excellent and rhetorically effective in tone -Virtually error-free in grammar and spelling -Skilfully crafted	-Language engaging and generally effective -Appropriate and effective tone -Few errors in grammar and spelling -Well crafted	-Adequate use of language with some inconsistencies -Tone generally appropriate -Limited use of rhetorical devices	-Use of language inadequate -Little or no variety in sentence -Exceptionally limited vocabulary	
<b>STRUCTURE</b> Features of text; Paragraph development and sentence construction	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0–1</b>
	-Excellent development of topic -Exceptional detail -Sentences, paragraphs exceptionally well-constructed	-Logical development of details -Coherent -Sentences, paragraphs logical, varied	-Relevant details developed -Sentences, paragraphs well-constructed -Essay makes sense	-Some valid points -Sentences and paragraphs faulty -Essay still makes some sense	-Necessary points lacking -Sentences and paragraphs faulty -Essay lacks sense
<b>5 MARKS</b>					
<b>MARK RANGE</b>	<b>43–50</b>	<b>33–40</b>	<b>23–30</b>	<b>13–20</b>	<b>0–10</b>

Figure 7.1: GDE assessment rubric for essay Home Language (GDE, 2015:18-19)

The IEB assessment rubric for essay writing was specific to the type of essay, facilitating targeted feedback in relation to the discursive essay criteria (IEB, 2015) (Figure 7.2). The rubric for personal writing was used for narrative or descriptive essays (Figure 7.3). The categories of *Introduction and Conclusion*, *Structure*, *Quality*

of discussion, and Appropriateness of register indicated descriptors of achievement whereas the rubric for personal writing had a broad description based on the writing task as whole. The IEB rubrics were divergent, as discussed in Chapter 2 (2.5.3), as opposed to the convergent focus of the GDE rubrics.

#### D.17 DISCURSIVE ESSAY RUBRIC

Criteria	Level 7 (80 – 100%) (4 – 5)	Level 5 – 6 (60 – 79%) (3 – 3,5)	Level 3 – 4 (40 – 59%) (2 – 2,5)	Level 1 – 2 (0 – 39%) (0 – 1,5)
<b>Introduction and Conclusion</b>	An excellent introduction which is original and expresses the standpoint which the candidate intends to take succinctly and convincingly. The conclusion is insightful and successfully draws together the different aspects of the discussion with which the reader is presented in the essay.	The candidate has provided a clear introduction which signposts his/ her viewpoint effectively. The conclusion highlights the main focus of the essay although some aspects may be omitted.	The candidate alludes to the topic but his/ her position is unclear. The candidate has not provided an explicit statement to explain his/ her viewpoint. There is a conclusion, but this does not leave the reader with a summation of the ideas presented and may be a repetition of the introduction in places.	Candidate makes little or no effort to inform the audience of his/ her viewpoint. The introduction is vague and rambling and the focus of the essay is unclear. There is EITHER no conclusion OR the conclusion has very limited/ no relevance to the topic.
<b>Structure</b>	(8 – 10) Crisp, clear structure which enhances the overall discussion. The structure allows for an effortless reading, and understanding, of the essay. The cohesion of the essay is excellent.	(6 – 7,5) The structure is logically developed and the links between paragraphs enhance the overall coherence of the essay.	(4 – 5,5) The transitions between paragraphs are often awkward. However, there is a sense of overall progression in the structure and there is evidence of cohesion.	(0 – 3,5) The structure is haphazard and the reader has difficulty in following the writer's train of thought. The essay is written in a very loose and random manner.
<b>Quality of discussion</b>	<b>Level 7: (21 – 25)</b> The candidate presents the different sides of the discussion in a carefully balanced way. The discussion is sophisticated, lucid and thought-provoking. The research is highly relevant and completely fulfills the demands of the question with regard to content. It is skillfully incorporated to wholly convince the reader of the credibility of the candidate's viewpoint and is fully sustained.	<b>Level 6: (18 – 19)</b> The candidate's discussion is clear and does take different sides into account although the discussion may be less balanced than a Level 7 response. The discussion is logical and has substance. There is very little deviation from the line of discussion and the research is largely relevant, with regard to content and substantiates the candidate's viewpoint convincingly. <b>Level 5: (15 – 17)</b> The candidate's handling of the topic tends to be adequate, but lacks sufficient	<b>Level 4: (13 – 14)</b> The candidate's line of discussion is mediocre and deals heavily with one side of the discussion to the exclusion of other aspects. The discussion does have focus but is not always sustained. The candidate has tried to incorporate appropriate research into his/ her discussion but this lacks relevance in places and is not well-synthesised. <b>Level 3: (10 – 12)</b> The candidate's discussion is superficial and unbalanced. The essay	<b>Level 2 (8 – 9)</b> The candidate's line of discussion is vague and deals almost wholly with one side of the topic. The candidate's discussion is poorly sustained and the minimal research generally lacks relevance and is incorporated inadequately. The candidate's viewpoint conveys insufficient understanding of the topic. <b>Level 1 (0 – 7)</b> Some ideas relating to the topic are evident, but they are almost completely undeveloped.

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		balance in presenting his/ her discussion. The candidate has responded to the question but the line of discussion is not sustained in places and the research needed to be more carefully selected to ensure its relevance, in substantiating the candidate's viewpoint.	tends to lapse into narrative and the line of discussion presented is often unclear. There is little evidence of relevant research to substantiate the candidate's viewpoint in order to convince the reader.	No evidence of research is discernible. The candidate's line of discussion is fragmented and only makes an effort to deal with one side of the discussion.
Appropriateness of register, awareness of target audience and correct use of language conventions	<b>Level 7: (8 – 10)</b> Highly competent use of language conventions and excellent understanding of register displayed. Wholly aware of specific target audience.	<b>Level 6: (7½ )</b> Competent, at times impressive, use of language conventions and appropriate register but this is not always sustained. Clear awareness of target audience  <b>Level 5: (6 – 7)</b> Average response. Pedestrian, but not seriously flawed. Mostly accurate use of language conventions. Evidence of an awareness of the target audience	<b>Level 4: (5 – 5½)</b> The candidate displays knowledge of the appropriate conventions, but there are lapses in the correct register as well as errors in the accurate use of language conventions. Awareness of target audience lapses in places.  <b>Level 3: (4 – 4,5)</b> The candidate tried to apply conventions, but the product is flawed. The register is either incorrect OR inadequately sustained and there is frequent misuse of correct language conventions. There is minimal awareness of the target audience.	<b>Level 2: (3 – 3½)</b> The register is inappropriate and there is very little evidence of language conventions being applied correctly. The incorrect use of language conventions is distracting with numerous flaws in grammar and punctuation. A fleeting awareness of the target audience. <b>Level 1: (0 – 2,5)</b> No evidence of language conventions being applied. Inability to use correct register. Communication marred due to serious flaws in grammar and punctuation. No discernible awareness of the target audience.

Total: 50 Comment:

Figure 7.2: IEB discursive essay rubric (IEB, 2015:48-49)



**NATIONAL SEN+IOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION  
ENGLISH HOME LANGUAGE  
ASSESSMENT GRID FOR PERSONAL WRITING**

Level	Category	%	Descriptors
7	Outstanding/ Excellent	90 – 100	Evidence of exceptional ability; consistent excellence. Distinctive evidence of own voice. Lively sentence construction. Precise language. Skilful use of imagery; real powers of literary expression. Able to control tone and subtle shifts in nuance exceptionally well. Striking impact. Content controlled throughout. Details revealing observation and knowledge. Flair of own voice is revealed. Well organised. Intelligent and mature. Skilful control of language usage and imagery, but there may be slight flaws.
		80 – 89	
6	Very Good	70 – 79	Well planned, but lacking the polish of an A. Mature thought and style with evidence of a strong own voice. High level of competence, skilful use of vocabulary. Perhaps minor inconsistencies and minor language errors, but shifts in tone still fairly well controlled.
5	Good	60 – 69	Interesting. Clear statements. Convincing. Sound, competent use of English with a reasonably well-sustained use of own voice. Direct, fairly well-controlled language. Efficient without much range in sentence structure. Some colour and vigour, but not always sustained. Style tends towards the ordinary and language errors do occur.
4	Satisfactory	50 – 59	Pedestrian style with distinct linguistic flaws. Ideas often not properly developed or tending to the dull and unimaginative. Some evidence of own voice. Lacking in maturity of thought, but fulfils the purpose adequately. Language, spelling and/ or punctuation errors are in evidence.
3	Mediocre	40 – 49	Candidate's control of language is worthy of passing. Structure is limited or content lacks originality. Little evidence of candidate's individual voice. Mediocre and unexciting. Expression is often quite clumsy and there are numerous language, spelling and/ or punctuation errors.
2	Weak	30 – 39	Candidate is often unable to sustain the topic for the required length. Candidate's content is often rambling and there is no evidence of the candidate's own voice or opinions. A lack of perception and a restricted vocabulary render the essay problematic. Language is often ungrammatical and unidiomatic as well as containing incorrect use of spelling and punctuation.
1	Very weak	0 – 29	Often very short. Flat, insipid. Essay may contain some areas of sense, but the content is poorly expressed. There is no evidence of voice at all. Lack of correct vocabulary makes it difficult to decode meaning. Language, spelling and punctuation is riddled with errors.

**Figure 7.3: IEB assessment grid for personal writing (IEB, 2015:46)**

The following two sections (7.3 and 7.4) are focused on the Grade 10 and Grade 11 WFT2 implementation. With the second implementation the teachers, learners and I were more familiar with the WFT. The most important observation from a practical implementation point of view was how each of the eight teachers used the WFT in her own way.

### **7.3 THE GRADE 10 IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT 2**

This section deals with the implementation of the WFT2 in the Grade 10 classes. Firstly an overview of the context at each school at the time of implementation is discussed (7.3.1). The WFT2 structure framed the discussion in order to reflect the WFT2



implementation at the four schools. The three WFT2 columns are discussed in subsections 7.3.2 to 7.3.4.

### 7.3.1 Overview of the Grade 10 context at the time of implementation

The teachers at each school chose the writing tasks for the term and the tasks where the WFT2 were implemented are reflected in Table 7.1, below. Schools A, C and D selected essays and the school B teacher chose a longer transactional piece, an op-ed, which is a newspaper page opposite the editorial page, devoted to personal comment and feature articles. In all four cases the task was new learning for the learners. The rubric was not used to explain the success criteria, however in the case of school B, an example was read and discussed to make the success criteria clear. Each of the Grade 10 teachers conducted the implementation of the WFT2 in her own way and this is seen in the discussions below.

**Table 7.1: Grade 10 writing tasks**

School	Informal	Formal	Type
A	√		Argumentative essay
B	√	√	Op-ed
C	√		Descriptive essay
D	√		Descriptive paragraphs

### 7.3.2 Grade 10 *Where am I going?*

The presentation of the *Where am I going?* column is as follows: the overview of the column (7.3.2.1), followed by a discussion on the *Task goals* (7.3.2.2) and *Goals I want to focus on/My own goals* (7.3.2.3). Lastly the findings of the *Where am I going* column are considered (7.3.2.4).

#### 7.3.2.1 Overview of the *Where am I going?* column

In response to the WFT1 findings where the task goals did not always clarify the learning intention, the formulation of the task goals was a focus point with the WFT2 implementation. The Grade 10 teachers at schools A and C formulated the goals for

the learners, and were written on the board in the way the teachers wanted the *Where am I going?* column to be completed. At school D, the learners received clear criteria and a checklist indicating the task criteria and goals; the learners formulated their goals based on the information received. At school B, the task sheet and example the learners received made the criteria clear and here, too, the learners had to formulate the task goals on their own. The rubric was not brought into the formulation of the task goals at any of the schools. While the teachers understood the importance of clarifying the task criteria, the absence of success criteria was noticeable. The learners formulated *Goals I want to focus on/My own goals* on their own.

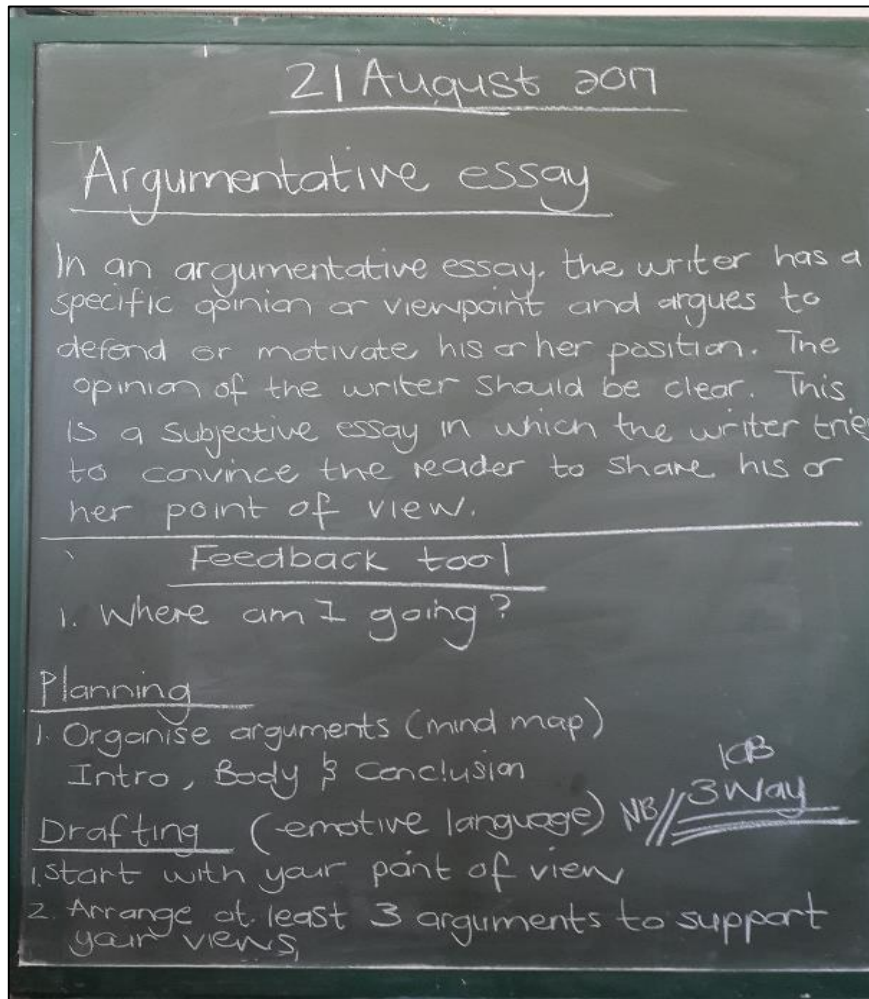
### 7.3.2.2 Task goals

The teacher at school A used the WFT2 at the beginning of the third term when the learners wrote two tasks: a meeting agenda and minutes of the meeting. The WFT2, as with WFT1, provided structure; however, the nature of the tasks demanded surface level goals. Still, the teacher and learners were comfortable with how the WFT2 facilitated completion of the two writing tasks.

With the essay the teacher introduced the task and the WFT2 and explained the planned writing lessons according to the WFT2 process: Day 1 the planning and drafting goals, day 2 feedback and editing, day 3 writing the final essay (in class), day 4 teacher feedback. The teacher had prepared the lesson by writing a description of what an argumentative essay was as well as the task goals on the board (Figure 7.4):

*“The writer has a specific opinion or viewpoint and argues to defend or motivate his or her position. The opinion of the writer should be clear. This is a subjective essay in which the writer tries to convince the reader to share his or her point of view”.*

The task goals (Figure 7.4) made the learning intentions clear: *“Planning: Organise arguments on a (mind map), intro, body & conclusion. Drafting: (emotive language) 1. Start with your point of views”. 2. “Arrange at least three arguments to support your views.”*



**Figure 7.4: School A Grade 10 argumentative essay instructions**

The teacher’s explanation included further information about the task criteria, reminding the learners that the statement of the point of view was critical, and to use conjunctions to facilitate coherence. The learners were told to focus on paragraphs and sentences using the “*three-way system*” they were taught in the first term to structure their writing (Table 7.2) (D40, 40:1, 121:385).

**Table 7.2: The school A “three-way system”**

	1	2	3
<b>Sentence</b>	Subject	Verb	Object
<b>Paragraph</b>	Topic sentence	Supporting sentence	Concluding sentence
<b>Essay</b>	Introduction	Body	Conclusion

Whereas the task goals included more detail than with WFT1 (subsection 6.3.2.2), they still reflected the criteria as a list of things to do and not how to do them. The

goals could have been extended to include how to express a strong point of view in the introduction and expand on the viewpoint in the body of the essay and how to express subjective writing. A description about which aspect of the three-way system to focus on would have created a clear goal.

The learners listed the goals according to their understanding of the instruction as seen in the examples below in Figure 7.5:

Learner R	Learner M
<p><b>1. Where am I going?</b></p> <p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Intro, Body and Conclusion</li> <li>*Organise arguments (Mind map)</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*emotive language</li> <li>*Start with your own view</li> <li>*Arrange at least arguments to support your views</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <p>I want to focus on the side lam on.</p>	<p><b>1. Where am I going?</b></p> <p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>Body</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <p>Word structure</p> <p>Sentences</p> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Give/Write a good Argumentative essay.</li> <li>* My opinions should be supported by my facts.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.5: School A Grade 10 learner task goals**

The Grade 10 teacher at school A thought that the goals gave the learners more direction than when they formulated the goals on their own:

*R: I think it was more direct compared to the first two. The first two (WFT was implemented three times in this class) you had to keep going back and resaying the same thing over and over because there was so much variety when it came to goals (D1, 1:6 - 1:7, 1193:1334).*

The teacher felt that “prescribing goals” proved to be successful in giving the learners focus on the same goals:

*R: Ja, I'm thinking now the next time I use the tool, I'll give them, I'll always prescribe goals, because at least it will give direction, we will not be all over the place (D1, 1:62, 12229:12396).*

The teacher further explained that the focus the task goals created extended to the feedback conversation and the reflections at the end of the task:

*R: ...now it even allowed for communication because they all had the same goal, so they could discuss it. It wasn't like, no I'm paying attention to this part of an argumentative essay, so they kind of worked together for this task (D1, 1:9, 1441:1660).*

The learners' abilities to respond to the task goals were compromised by their difficulty in relating to the topic "Does freedom of speech give people the right to use hate speech?" It became clear during the essay drafting that the learners found the topic challenging and struggled to articulate a clear point of view with supporting arguments. Their focus on the content was to the detriment of the other goals they had formulated. This was explained by the focus group (D 2) and the verbal protocol learner B (D 3) interviewed at school A:

*R: Because it is more like you are writing with the information that you have you don't really care about the format, the grammar, you just want to get it done (D2, 2:17, 2773:2936).*

*R: As for grammar and punctuation like tenses and like sentence construction and articulation of the three-way system, I understood that, but it was the understanding of the task that had to be taken into consideration (D3, 3:11, 1343:1557).*

The "universal task goals" focused the teaching and learning. The WFT2 showed the importance of making the task accessible to the learners so that they could demonstrate their learning. The learners' struggle with the topic and the development of arguments emerged at this stage as the gap in learning. The task goals did not enable the learners to transcend the difficulty they had with the development of their own point of view and motivating arguments as learner R explained:

*Q: What were you focusing on while you were writing?*

*R: I was just trying to focus on the argument, just to make sure I understand the topic so I could get more points (D5, 5:10, 2364:2540).*

The Grade 10 class at school B received a comprehensive task sheet which included the formal task instruction, with discussion questions (Figure 7.6) and criteria (Figure 7.7). The task instruction was to write an op-ed based on the set work. The example was read and used to analyse and discuss the nature of an op-ed, therefore demonstrating the success criteria.

**Discussion Questions:**

How much of the article relates the actual incidents – is factual? What is the opinion of the writer? How do we know? What does the writer want readers to think or feel once they have read the article? What words and phrases in the article convince the reader to agree with the writer's point of view?

**Figure 7.6: School B Grade 10 op-ed discussion question**

**Criteria:**

- Your article must be based on evidence. Show your position by using sufficient evidence from the novel. (without using personal pronouns)
- This is an opinion piece, which means you must express your own point of view.
- Think carefully about style. Although your article will include some subjectivity, you should not use an overly emotive tone.
- You must use only formal language to express yourself. Do not use contractions or colloquial expressions. Do not use clichés. State your meaning clearly.
- Your newspaper must have a name that reflects its ideals and aims, as well as an appropriate date.
- Include a headline that cleverly sums up the article, and include a byline.
- Your article should have an introductory paragraph that gives a clear overview of what it will be about.
- Include a picture with a caption that shows an incident of the animals being exploited.
- Your article must be 250 – 300 words long.
- Refer to the transactional writing rubric in your workbook for additional criteria.
- **Total: [25]**

**Figure 7.7: School B Grade 10 task criteria**

For the practise task the learners could choose their own topic. The learners completed the WFT2 for the practise task, focusing on the information from the task sheet, the criteria, what the teacher emphasised in her explanation and the example to formulate the goals. The criteria shared verbally with the learners included strategies on how to achieve the criteria.

*R: Objective writing can be achieved by avoiding personal pronouns. Succinct writing is required to adhere to the word count by careful choice of the details and including only selected key points. Important details should be included and the reader captivated (D41, 41:2, 1992:2043).*

The school B focus group explained that the example, coupled with the teacher's instructions, proved an effective way to understand the success criteria of "What I need to do":

*R: ...what I need to do and what not to do, like to prioritise our subjectivity and look at things, but then it mustn't come through. Your emotions should be like under the surface" (D11, 11:17, 3255:3639).*

*R: ... what to focus on when it came to an op-ed piece and what not to do and what to do, so I would take down as a note saying that she is emphasising not allowed to use personal pronouns; so I would take that down as a note (D11, 11:21, 3750:3953).*

The learners formulated the goals reflecting their understanding; therefore the goals were not uniform, as seen in the examples below in Figure 7.8. The practise task was completed before the formal task was written and the learners could prepare for the formal task by looking at the feedback they had received on the practise task. The formal task was written in class under test conditions, which meant that the learners could bring a prepared planning page with them. The teacher instructed the learners to draw their own WFT2 and use it for the formal task to formulate the task goals.

Learner C	Learner T
<p>1) Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals.</p> <p><u>Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Give accurate information ✓</li> </ul> <p><u>Drafting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be able to do the layout correctly ✓</li> <li>- Not to use personal pronouns ✓</li> </ul> <p><u>Goals I want to focus on:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be as specific as possible</li> <li>- Provide evidence ✓</li> <li>- Use tense accurately</li> </ul>	<p>1. Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be succinct</li> <li>• choose event carefully</li> <li>• Give all wanted information.</li> </ul> <p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on one topic</li> <li>• Avoid repetition</li> </ul> <p>Drafting:</p> <p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no contractions</li> <li>• formal language</li> <li>• subjective</li> <li>• meet criteria</li> <li>• no personal pronoun.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.8: School B Grade 10 learner formal task goals**

The practise task was used to teach the writing of an op-ed in preparation for the formal task. The teacher's evaluation was that the goals helped the learners focus on the task criteria when writing the formal task:

*R: ...as they wrote they were able to consider if they had set out like, oh I need to look out for making my tone sound more journalistic or this, that and the other. They were able to write knowing what they needed to do, but without worrying about constraints of the topic, which I think was quite nice (D10, 10:10, 2290:2586).*

As explained above, the practise task op-ed topic was the learners' choice, whereas the formal task was on the set work. The final task had to be factually correct, thus the content became the focus of the writing, as the teacher explained:

*R: I told them they could pick a topic for their practise one, it didn't matter what they were going to write on. So that sort of gave them free rein because they didn't have to worry 'am I sticking to the topic?' you know, they could just write and very much sort of adhere to their goals as they were writing because it didn't have to be about anything specific (D10, 10:8, 1786:2145).*

The "free rein" allowed the learners to focus on the skill of writing an op-ed in preparation for the formal task:

*Q: Do you think the practise task perhaps focused them more on the mechanics of the task?*

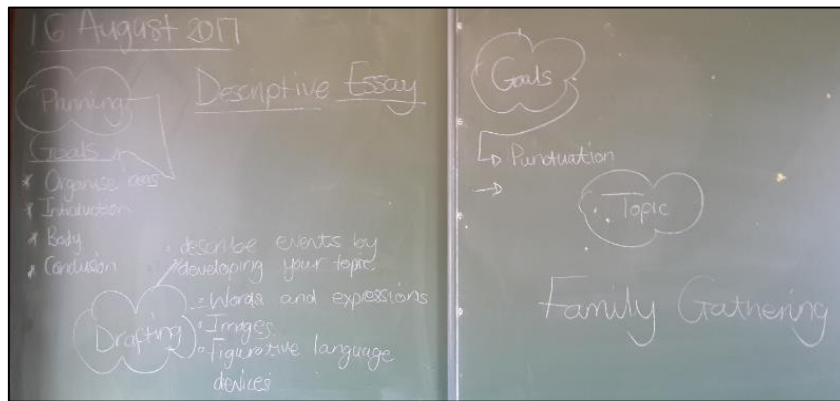
*R: Definitely, yes.*

*Q: And how did that then help them with the Animal Farm?*

*R: That was great because then on ones that I had written, you need to adopt a more journalistic style, I need to have your opinion come through, more or less in some cases, that sort of thing, I definitely noticed that had been worked on for the Animal Farm (D10, 10:12, 3828:4260).*

At school C, the teacher recognised that the task goals needed to provide greater clarity and should reflect the task expectations. The purpose of the essay was to demonstrate the learning of language conventions such as using "words and expressions", "images" and "figurative language devices" to succeed in descriptive writing. The task was introduced to the learners with the task goals already written on the board (Figure 7.9).





**Figure 7.9: School C Grade 10 task goals**

The teacher led a discussion on the writing of a descriptive essay, guiding the learners in completing the WFT2. The learners were informed that the goals addressed the criteria on the rubric, however, the rubric was not discussed or explained.

In the lesson observed the following criteria were shared as verbal instructions:

*The descriptive essay was to describe an event and a family gathering was used as an example. “Cohesive writing” was stressed and a poster illustrating childhood development used as an analogy to demonstrate how cohesive writing worked. The “flow” of the events was described as the focus on the “before, during and after”. The body should be three paragraphs, use language devices such as alliteration, oxymoron, puns, onomatopoeia (no examples given). The conclusion should “have the highlight of the day and should not include new ideas” (D43, 43:3, 158:1612).*

The clear direction given by the teacher’s instructions were reflected on the completed WFT2. As seen in the examples (Figure 7.10), the learners wrote the goals down accurately, eliminating confusion about *what* they were expected to do. The task goals served as a checklist of goals to achieve without addressing *how* to use the criteria to achieve these goals.

Learner N	Learner Y
<p>1. Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals:</p> <p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise my ideas ✓</li> <li>- Introduction</li> <li>- Body</li> <li>- Conclusion</li> </ul> <p>Drafting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the events that happens at the family gathering</li> <li>- Words and expressions</li> <li>- Images</li> <li>- Figurative language devices</li> </ul>	<p>1. Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals:</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organising ideas</li> <li>- Introduction</li> <li>- Body</li> <li>- conclusion</li> </ul> <p>Drafting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe events by developing your topic</li> <li>- words and expression</li> <li>- Images</li> <li>- Figurative language devices</li> </ul> <p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Punctuation</li> <li>vocabulary</li> <li>Structure</li> <li>Spelling</li> <li>Use of language device</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.10: School C Grade 10 learner task goals**

At school D, the teacher decided to include a short writing task in preparation of the descriptive essay, a portfolio task, later in the term. Similar to the teacher’s observation during the first implementation cycle (subsection 6.6.2.1), the WFT2 influenced the way the teacher planned the task as it focused her thinking in preparation for the task. The teacher recognised that the goals should be specific to make the learning accessible by providing details and focus on the *how* of the task:

*R: We are not specific enough in setting goals and we tell them to write an obituary, we don’t tell them how. So it really helped when I was putting the task sheet together even with the descriptive writing ...now what describing looks like because we have broken it down to the very, very minute details of adjectives or like strong adjectives and so on when we were describing (D30, 30:1, 208:887).*

A further advantage of making the *how* clear was that learners were given guidance in the formulation of goals, eliminating their fear of making mistakes:

*R: So if you say set goals, set goals for writing a descriptive essay and I haven’t told you exactly how to write a descriptive, it is very difficult to set goals because of their fear to be right (D30, 30:13, 3284:3581).*

The task sheet indicated with clarity what the task criteria were (Figure 7.11). It explained the characteristics of a good descriptive essay, the details about the task, a short example and a descriptive writing checklist (Figure 7.12).

**Grade 10 Descriptive Essay writing**

**DESCRIPTIVE ESSAYS PAINT VIVID PICTURES FOR THE READER**

A good Descriptive essay should have the following characteristics:

- The use of the 5 senses
- The use of figurative language
- Precise language
- Organisation

**Figure 7.11: School D Grade 10 descriptive essay criteria**

**Task:** Below is a list of telling sentences. Choose **ONE** telling sentence and Rewrite that sentence into a descriptive scene. This scene must be several sentences that recreate it more vividly. Think of word choice and use senses (e.g., smell, touch, sight, taste, sound) to show the scene—feel free to invent details within your revised sentences. For example:

**Tell Sentence:** The old man stood in the grass and relaxed as the sun went down.

**Descriptive Scene:** The grass caressed his feet and a smile softened his eyes. A hot puff of air brushed against his wrinkled cheek as the sky paled yellow, then crimson, and within a breath, electric indigo.

1. The boy pulled a large fish out of the river.
2. The girl stood on the corner of the busy intersection and witnessed the accident as it happened.
3. The woman had a terrible headache.
4. The meadow slowly came to life as the sun came up.
5. The hunted creature ran through the thick forest and screamed as the thorns cut into his skin.

**Word count: 100 - 150 words.**

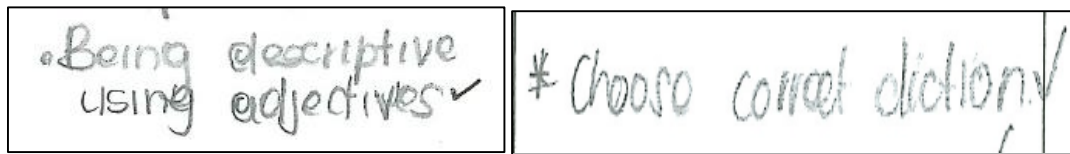
**Descriptive writing Checklist**

1. Use of 5 Senses	What do I see, hear, smell, taste, feel?	
2. Figurative Language	Analogies, similes, metaphors, imagery, comparison	
3. Precise language	Specific adjectives, strong nouns and strong action verbs.	
4. Organisation	Chronological ( time), Spatial ( Location), order of importance.	

**Figure 7.12: School D Grade 10 descriptive essay task sheet**

The focus group learners formulated the goals according to what they understood as the task criteria which emerged from the class discussion: “*For task goals you just look at the instructions then makes sure that the goals correlate with the instructions*” (D31, 31:12, 3501:3756).

Some goals (Figure 7.13) included strategies how to achieve descriptive writing, e.g., “Being descriptive using adjectives”; whereas some goals were vague: “Choose correct diction”.



**Figure 7.13: School D task goals with strategies**

### 7.3.2.3 Goals I want to focus on/my own goals

The intention of this section was to allow learners to choose the goals they would like to focus on. The *own goals* were informed for some by what they thought their learning gaps were, based on previous tasks.

The school A learners (examples in Figure 7.14) were not guided in their completion of their own goals by the gaps in their learning but rather their focus area for the writing of the argumentative essay such as “I want to focus on the side I am on”, “My opinions should be supported by facts”.

Learner R	Learner M
<p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <p>I want to focus on the side I am on.</p>	<p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <p>* Give/Write a good Argumentative essay.</p> <p>* My opinions should be supported by my facts.</p>

**Figure 7.14: School A Grade 11 learner own goals**

The learners at school C confirmed, as they did with WFT1 (6.3.2), that they were aware of their strengths and weaknesses and chose to focus on the things they usually struggled with. The *own goals* were mostly at task level (Figure 7.15):

Learner N	Learner Y
<p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <p>Punctuation Vocabulary Structure Spelling is correct Use of language</p>	<p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <p>Avoid spelling errors and contractions</p>

**Figure 7.15: School C Grade 10 learner own goals**

The focus group learners understood that they should be able to identify their mistakes and know what to improve on:

*R: Ma'am I think we all know our strengths and weaknesses. So we can decide which ones we want to improve on (D21, 21:13, 2554:2662).*

Furthermore, the focus group showed a recognition that the aim was to improve writing skills and not necessarily to only correct mistakes:

*Q: So are the goals only to improve the mistakes?*

*R: No. I wouldn't say to improve my mistakes, I would say to improve the way I write and the style I am writing (D21, 21:11, 2135:2297).*

The school D learner K understood that the task goals provided by the teacher were aimed at the specific task, therefore the task goals were goals the class shared: “So she told us like we did it as a class. So these were like group goals” (D32, 32:1, 124:250).

The school D learners formulated their own goals by adding what they thought were important in addition to the task goals and included goals from previous tasks. Learner

K added, “*use figurative language, clear introduction and organisation, spelling and grammar*”. Spelling and grammar were what she identified on WFT1 as what she wanted to work on (subsection 6.3.4):

*R: So I looked at the task goals and I felt like I needed to like expand it more. So I, my own goals I just, ja, I just created them. I felt like whatever was missing in the task goals, I had to add it (D32, 32:4, 665:865).*

The school D teacher also noted that the learners’ own goals were related to what the task required of them:

*Q: So they decided on their own which goals they wanted to achieve?  
R: But I also think that their own goals were based, they were not divorced from the task goal. So if the task goal required them to use adjectives and so then they would say, ‘The task goal requires me to use adjectives’ and then their goal would be: I am going to use adjectives (D30, 30:15, 3802:4153).*

Learner T at school B explained that identifying the gaps and focusing on them was helpful to avoid repeating the mistakes:

*R: So if I know I have got a problem with contractions and using personal pronouns when I am not supposed to, then I include that in my feedback tool and it helps me all the time (D14, 14:2, 175:350).*

Learner T at school B analysed the effect the goals had on her writing as her own goals which she focused on were not aligned with the success criteria:

*R: That I shouldn’t only concentrate on my own personal goals, because that has a very big influence on my mark, I feel like if I had um used the criteria, for example (D14, 14:16, 3121:3292).*

#### 7.3.2.4 Discussion of the **Where am I going?** column findings

The way the task goals were shared and formulated influenced the writing tasks. Where the teachers formulated the goals (schools A and C), the learners and the teachers focused on the same goals. At schools B and D the learners were given substantial information to formulate their goals, however, the individual nature of the goals meant that the focus areas differed. The teachers at all four schools did not

incorporate the rubrics, which were the success criteria. Even though the tasks were practise, or informal tasks, and not for marks the rubrics could be used to create focus areas in the goal formulation and indicate the success criteria.

As was the case with WFT1, the goals served as a way to focus the learners' writing because the expectations were stated. Similar to WFT1, the goals at schools A and C listed what the learners had to do but did not include strategies or ways of achieving the goals. The learners at school A struggled to formulate their point of view and arguments in the argumentative essay, indicating a gap in learning. It would have been possible for the teacher to adjust the learning and revisit the goals after the peer feedback when it was evident that the learners were struggling; however, the pressure to complete tasks does not always allow that level of flexibility.

At school C, the descriptive essay and topic were more accessible than the diary entry in the second term and the learners understood what was expected of them. The learners understood that the sequence of events had to be used to describe the event and to create a "*flow*". The use of language devices and how to achieve coherence in writing were not clarified thus not effectively achieved.

The learners at schools A and C formulated their own goals based on what they regarded as gaps in learning from their previous tasks. The own goals were mostly surface level goals, indicating the level of learning and feedback in previous tasks.

The goals at school B focused the learners first on the practise task and secondly on the formal task. The comprehensive task sheet and example enabled the learners to understand what was expected of them. The learners formulated their goals and were able to revise their goals for the writing of the formal task. The goals included some strategies indicating how the goals could be achieved. The *own goals* were in relation to the task and added to the task goals.

At school D, the criteria were made clear using a comprehensive task sheet enabling the learners to formulate the task goals. The clear criteria on the task sheet meant that the learners' goals were similar, as one learner put it, "*shared goals*". Similar to school B, the own goals addressed areas to support the task goals.

### 7.3.3 Grade 10 *How am I going?*

The second column, as with WFT1, reflected the learners' use of the feedback to track their progress. An overview of *the How am I going?* column is furnished in 7.3.3.1. How the *Feedback from peer/teacher/self* column functioned is examined (7.3.3.2) and *Things I can do to achieve the goals* (strategies) (7.3.3.3) explored. Lastly the *How am I going?* column findings are discussed (7.3.3.4).

#### 7.3.3.1 Overview of the *How am I going?* column

The feedback lessons functioned in a similar way to the implementation of WFT1. This was a class activity where the learners paired up with a neighbour, swapped their writing tasks and gave feedback in relation to the goals. The teachers circulated to guide the feedback and to provide comment and feedback. The function of the feedback was to allow learners to track their progress toward the goals and in discussion with their peers and teachers find a way to address the gaps. It was acknowledged that strategies could be used to address gaps in learning. The recording of the strategies was a further mechanism to determine if the feedback was received as useful information.

#### 7.3.3.2 *Feedback from peer/teacher/self*

The learners at schools A and B indicated some uncertainty about the peer feedback they had been given. At school A the learners did not fully understand the argumentative essay and their lack of understanding, as discussed in subsection 7.3.2.2, influenced the way feedback was received. The school A teacher noted that the learners' hesitation to rely on the peer feedback and their need to confirm with the teacher indicated a lack of confidence in feedback from their peers:

*R: They could assist each other but the one who was being assessed had a lack of confidence in whoever was helping them out, so I ended up having to go individually just to see exactly and give them that (D1, 1:16, 3051:3252).*

As mentioned in subsection 7.3.2.2, the task was inaccessible to the learners. Furthermore, the vague task goals and absence of strategies to support the goals



meant that the learners could not use task goals or strategies as reference points for the feedback they received.

The learners at school B recognised that peer feedback on goals such as “*grammar*” was acceptable but questioned the efficacy of the peer feedback on the op-ed as the task was new learning to them all:

*R: So we are all still learning, we don't exactly know, it's our first Op Ed. I don't think it's right for them to mark and "no, this is wrong", but for little things like grammar, that they can mark, but for the structure of an actual structure of an Op Ed I don't think it's right that they should mark it because they are also struggling with it too (D11, 11:28, 5271:5610).*

The absence of clear success criteria on the new task influenced the way the feedback was received. The fact that the task was in preparation for the formal task meant that the learners placed a premium on the feedback and needed it to be from the teacher's perspective:

*R: I don't think that it helps to get peer feedback, because they read it from their perspective and not the teacher's perspective, so they read what they think should be there in their own minds. But I most probably have something that's right, that Miss would mark right (D11, 11:24 - 11:26, 4790:4940).*

Even though the peer feedback at school B was on the practise task, the learners expected feedback from their teacher because it was a new task and they were on the same level of learning as their peers:

*R: Also I don't like when peers check your work especially because they are also learning. It's not like they have got the degree to, you know, we are all still learning, so theirs could also be wrong but they think it's the right way. So then they'll mark yours the way they think theirs was written in the best way possible (D11. 11:27, 4942:5269).*

Consistent with the findings with WFT1 (subsection 6.3.3), the surface level task goals resulted in feedback focusing on error detection and correction, as the focus group at school A explained:

*R: In mine T highlighted all the things that she was talking about, she fixed the mistakes and I have to go back and check, oh this is what I did wrong (D2, 2:31, 5899:6051).*

The learners interviewed as learner verbal protocols at school B saw the peer feedback as helpful in pointing out errors and used the feedback as a reference to edit the task:

*R: So normally if I'm doing something, so I put my feedback next to me and then I look ok this is what she said I shouldn't do, so I need to rewrite the sentence so that I don't use this particular word and yes (D14, 14:14, 2401:2640).*

*R: I also asked a friend to just read through it and just think what she thought wasn't good and what was good and then I sort of just jotted it all down (D13, 13:23, 2176:2326).*

At school C, the peer feedback also focused on error detection, which the learners recognised as useful. However, the focus group learners understood that while their peers would point out errors and in some cases do corrections, their essays were their own responsibility, and they checked their own work:

*R: My peer didn't completely correct my draft, she looked at some of the work, but she didn't like completely do everything for me. So I notice the mistakes, I had my own feedback and I went and I edited my draft and it was better for the final (D21, 21:39, 8353:8598).*

The peer feedback (Figure 7. 16) was in relation to the goals and included positive feedback such as, “Ideas organised properly on a mind map”, “good imagery achieved”.

2. How am I going?
Feedback from peer/teacher/self: • Ideas organised properly on a mindmap. • Good imagery achieved • Avoid slang • Nice essay

**Figure 7.16: School C Grade 10 positive peer feedback**

The learners at school C were asked to consider what they learned from the feedback about their writing. Similar to their observation on WFT1, they responded that feedback from their peers was a way to identify gaps, or weaknesses, in their writing. The learners' response to the feedback was to correct their writing:

*R: No, I would say my new weakness was spelling, because normally my spelling, I think my spelling is on point, but then this time around I think they recognised a couple of spelling mistakes. I'm sure it was a rush, I was in a rush (D21, 21:38, 7922:8155).*

The peer feedback at school D focused largely on the goals and did not resemble the close focus on error detection and correction as with schools A and C. The focus group learners felt that the feedback pointed out areas where they had "something missing" and the feedback helped them reread their work critically:

*R: I feel like if you, if my peer gives me feedback, right, and then I see that there is something missing, I will go through the essay but with a more, I would put myself like in it is not my essay, I am just going to read it.*

*R: Open minded.*

*R: Ja, open minded, then maybe then things will start popping up, then that will also help me (D31, 31:25, 7020:7357).*

The feedback in relation to the goals and the critical reading of their work helped the learners notice what they could work on, but also what they were getting right. Learner N explained what she learned about her work from the feedback she received:

*R: It made me realise it was descriptive like I said I would be.*

*Q: What made you realise that?*

*R: Not only because she said it, but once I, after she read it, and she gave me back my piece, I re-read it and then just to check if she actually did read it, then I saw that what she said was right (D34, 34:9, 2875:3171).*

Learner N recorded the feedback she gave herself "Self – Too long" as seen in Figure 7.17.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b> My goal is to invent details. Use sense of sound etc. And have the right word choice.</p> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> I would use a lot of figurative language and with using at least three of the five senses describe it with feeling</p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> The scene is very descriptive because she uses figurative language, similes when she compares</p> <p>Self - Too long</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b> Shorten my piece Use more of the sense of sound.</p>

**Figure 7.17: School D learner N: self feedback**

Learner K at school D was able to respond to the feedback (Figure 7.18) which she experienced as balanced as it not only pointed out errors but was also encouraging:

*R: I just, she showed me that I needed to polish it because it was, I couldn't see the mistakes and she also gave me positive feedback which encouraged me to like improve on the positive feedback to make it more great (D32, 32:12, 2986:3203).*

The learner L at school D observed: "I was half way to achieving the goal that I was trying to achieve" (D33, 33:12, 3243:3342). This was an indication of her understanding that her learning was ongoing and the role feedback played in enhancing it.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word choice (creative) ✓</li> <li>• Using senses such as smell, touch, taste, sound ✓</li> <li>• Invent details (being creative)</li> <li>• Elaborate and emphasise</li> <li>• Being descriptive using adjectives ✓</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using adjectives</li> <li>• Describing and elaborating the points</li> <li>• Being extremely vivid about what I am trying to say</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <p>Your paragraph is quite vivid and creates clear imagery. You can work on your word choice as well as being more descriptive in terms of the activities that happen in the paragraph.</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I'll work on my word choice and adjectives to describe the events</li> <li>• I will also write in chronological order and in order, I will do this to have a clear vivid image that I'm trying to create</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.18: School D Grade 10 peer feedback**

The feedback at school D succeeded in engaging the learners in a process where they learned from each other and recognised that a peer's perspective had value. Furthermore, as learner L demonstrated, her peer's opinion and her own opinion informed her learning:

*R: I used to, in order to like implement it into like what I was trying to achieve, eventually at the end, so I took what she was saying and I understood and I looked at it from her perspective and I used her perspective and I used my perspective and I wrote (D33, 33:16, 4329:4587).*

### 7.3.3.3 Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies)

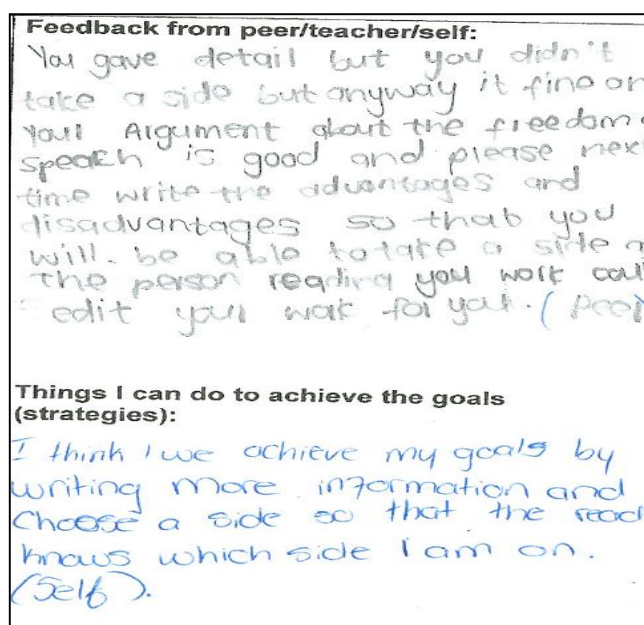
Feedback from peers, the teacher, or self, helped the learners to track their progress towards the goals. However, effective feedback also helped the learners to respond to the feedback by correcting and editing the work, thereby developing strategies to improve their writing.

The peer feedback in relation to the task goals mostly pointed out the mistakes and, in some cases, what was correct. As the Grade 10 teacher from school A observed,

the error detection feedback did not help the learners understand what their learning was, what they did to succeed or how they made mistakes:

*R: There is still that uncertainty when it comes to why did I get this wrong or why I got it right, is it just luck or did I deserve it? (D1, 1:18, 3530:3662).*

Learners who understood the task and task criteria were able to provide specific feedback such as the feedback school A learner R received on the argumentative essay: *“You gave detail but you didn’t take a side”* (Figure 7.19). The feedback also included a strategy to structure the argument: *“Argument about the freedom of speech is good and please next time write the advantages and disadvantages so that you will be able to take a side”*.



**Figure 7.19: School A Grade 10 learner R: peer feedback**

The learners at school B gave peer feedback on the practise task which was in preparation of the formal task. As demonstrated by School B learner C’s WFT2, some learners received feedback from a peer that included examples. The feedback was specific pointing out *“work on verb and subject agreement”*. However, some focus group learners still felt that they were made aware of their mistakes but they did not know what to do about them:

R: Well like S said, my grammar like that was a bit off and the writing techniques like how you write it like not opinionated but still so, in fact I didn't know how to do that (D11, 11:43, 10768:10953).

The teacher at school B was able to analyse the feedback on the WFT2, gaining insight into the process. Furthermore, she commented on the learners' WFT2 affirming the peer feedback and adding her own feedback (Figure 7.20).

<p>2. How am I going?</p> <p>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Well structured, and written</li><li>- Opinion came through strongly</li><li>- Well!!!!!! doooooooooooooone!!</li></ul> <p>- keep writing formal and in line with a journalistic style</p> <p>- fact check and provide evidence of research / quote sources</p> <p>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</p> <p>Plan write more than one</p>	<p>personal pronouns</p> <p>agreed</p> <p>- be careful with the tense in which you write your article. Eg. If an incident has already happened write that in the past tense</p>
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Figure 7.20: School B Grade 10 teacher feedback on WFT2

R: They were really able to give each other constructive feedback I think because I think they sit with their friends and they are not afraid of saying, "Oh, I think you did really well" or "I think you could improve on this". They are not afraid of being, you know, tough on each other and I think that's good because it made space for a very open, honest communication. So often times when I was going through it I was like, "Oh absolutely. I think this person said exactly the right thing and I agree" (D10, 10:27, 6747:7236).

Specific feedback that included details on how to correct the writing, "give a bit more detail but do not become subjective", or an example, "E.g. If an incident has already happened write that in the past tense" became the strategy and it would not be necessary to write a strategy down, as illustrated in Figure 7.21.

2. How am I going?
<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- you have done well in not using personal pronouns</li> <li>- be careful with the tense in which you write your article. Eg. IF an incident has already happened write that in the past tense <span style="color: red;">✓ agreed</span></li> <li>- I like your use of other people's opinions <span style="color: red;">✓ me too</span></li> <li>- give a bit more detail but do not become subjective (not saying that you were) <span style="color: red;">✓</span></li> <li>- work on verb and subject agreement</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p>

**Figure 7.21: School B Grade 10 learner C: peer feedback**

At school C the learners' feedback in relation to the goals resembled a checklist similar to the WFT1. However, the learners explained that the feedback helped them to check their writing:

*R: I used it like when I was writing my final to make sure that I didn't write all the slang words and everything (D22, 22:20, 4216:4334).*

The learners' WFT2, e.g. school C learner N (Figure 7.22), reflected a methodical approach to the feedback and editing. The strategies were listed at the beginning of the process which scaffolded the writing of the task.



1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise my ideas ✓</li> <li>- Introduction</li> <li>- Body</li> <li>- Conclusion</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe the events that happens at the family gathering</li> <li>- Words and expressions</li> <li>- Images</li> <li>- Figurative language devices</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Punctuation</li> <li>- Vocabulary</li> <li>- Structure</li> <li>- Spelling is correct</li> <li>- Use of language</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ideas organised properly on a mindmap.</li> <li>- Good imagery achieved</li> <li>- Avoid slang</li> <li>- Nice essay</li> </ul> <p>Teacher feedback</p> <p>Common errors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incomplete planning</li> <li>- Essay lacks structure</li> <li>- Language</li> </ul> <p>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of language devices</li> <li>- Imagery skills and word choice</li> <li>- Topic must flow coherently</li> <li>- Avoided spelling errors</li> <li>- Avoided comma slices</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.22: School C Grade 10 learner N: strategies**

The feedback at school D indicated what was “missing” (as the learners explained in subsection 7.3.3.2) and the learners were able to respond with a strategy, e.g., as illustrated in Figure 7.23 learner K responded to the feedback: “A bit short” by choosing an appropriate existing strategy: “Expanding my existing ideas by explaining more to make it longer”.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Invent details for the sentence ✓</li> <li>* Use senses ✓</li> <li>* Choose correct diction ✓</li> <li>* Specific adjectives ✓</li> <li>* Order of appearance</li> <li>* feeling sense</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Use figurative language</li> <li>* Clear introduction and organisation ✓</li> <li>* Spelling and grammar</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very descriptive</li> <li>- Precise language</li> <li>- A bit short</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Expanding my existing ideas by explaining more to make it longer.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.23: School D Grade 10 learner K: strategy**

The Grade 10 focus group at school D understood that their peers’ feedback would inform the reformulation of the goals or formulation of new goals in the process of the writing, thus co-creating the goals:

*R: Going back to my previous points, it is just a thing of people building on the goals you have set for yourself already. That is the main thing, it has to make a difference about having things in my head and having the feedback tool for me, is that other people get to contribute to your goals (D31, 31:51, 15937:16266).*

Similarly learner R at school A also revised her goals as a result of peer feedback. She then responded to the feedback, recognising the gap and strategy to correct it:

*R: Like I wrote my goal after getting my feedback from my friend.  
R: Ma'am she told me like in the argumentative essay I need to focus on one side because I was writing but I was not but I did not write down what side I am (D5, 5:13, 2586:2743).*

#### 7.3.3.4 Discussion of the **How am I going?** column findings

The alignment between goals and feedback was important to determine progression to be able to answer the question: *How am I going?* The learners were instructed to give each other feedback in relation to the goals. Consistent with the WFT1 findings where the goals were vague or only at task level, the consequence was vague and task level feedback.

At school A, the feedback was mostly corrective and superficial. The learners struggled with the writing of the argumentative essay and were not able to give effective feedback on the development of an argument. The task goals did not include how to achieve the goals and limited the feedback to surface level issues. The surface level feedback and the inaccessible task and topic meant that the learners did not have the opportunity to use or develop strategies to achieve their goals.

At school B, the op-ed was new learning for all the learners. This influenced their response to the peer feedback as the learners questioned the validity of their peers' feedback. They felt they needed feedback that would be aligned to the teacher's expectations. Although the task criteria included strategies, the learners found it difficult to give and receive peer feedback. The learners accepted error detection feedback on areas that they could rectify. The learners did not focus on strategies to achieve their goals, however, the task goals included strategies which may have replaced the need to write them down.

The learners at school C were open to peer feedback, welcoming its corrective nature, however, they did not abdicate their own responsibility to correct their work. The feedback was similar to the editing that they were used to and in relation to the task goals. The universal task goals made the feedback more effective because the learners focused on the same goals.

The feedback given at school D was also in relation to the goals which focused on aspects of descriptive writing. The learners were able to engage in discussions focusing on descriptive writing learning together and reading their work critically. The learning together included the addition of goals in response to the feedback. The learners responded to the feedback by thinking of things to do to achieve their goals.

The feedback needed to answer the question *How am I going?* The learners obtained feedback to check their progress against their goals. Clear and specific task goals resulted in feedback that was clear and specific. However, even if the task goals were at surface level resulting in error detection and corrective actions it added value to the process. It also demonstrated the possibility that learners could be taught to provide feedback as long as task goals were clear and included how these goals could be achieved. The learners were able to respond to the feedback by correcting their work, revising their goals and recognising the gaps in learning; these are indications of SRL.

#### **7.3.4 Grade 10 *Where to next?***

An overview of the *Where to next?* column in 7.3.4.1 explains how the last column was used by the teachers and the learners. The purpose of the column was for the learners to reflect on their goals achieved and the gaps in their learning, and this is examined in 7.3.4.2. The discussion on the *Where to next?* column findings follows in subsection 7.3.4.3.

##### **7.3.4.1 Overview of the *Where to next?* column**

The last column prompted the learners to evaluate the feedback they had received to determine which goals they had achieved. Furthermore, the sections in this column assisted in the differentiation between what could be done independently, with help,

and what could not be done. The teachers assessed the tasks and provided feedback in the form of codes, marking, and comments and, in the case of school B where a formal task was included, a mark. It was notable that the teachers' assessment at schools A, C and D was cursory, lacking detailed feedback information. The teachers gave global feedback on the assessed tasks using WFT2 to structure the feedback around the completion of the last column. The question was how the learners were able to use the WFT2 to determine their success and gaps in learning and track the progress of their learning during the writing process.

#### 7.3.4.2 Goals achieved and gaps identified

The teacher at school A understood that the goals structured the task, and furthermore, that the learners would track their goals to see if they had met the expectations:

*R: Ja, I think it helped them reflect to what the third part of the feedback tool, because as much as they would digress, they had place to go back to and remember exactly what they were expected to do this time (D1, 1:4, 808:1016).*

Therefore, the school A teacher used the WFT2 to structure the global feedback on the task, talking to each of the three columns. Using a learner's essays the main learning gaps were pointed out such as "*many learners did not plan therefore their ideas were not coherent*", "*The introduction did not succeed*", "*Grammar is poor, many learners translating directly*" (D40, 40:2, 849:932).

The function of the introduction and conclusion was explained, the teacher shared a lot of information verbally and it was not clear if the expectation was that the learners should write the down points made. The main gaps in learning were pointed out: "*The main issue is that many learners failed to argue, the good ideas are generalised and based on own opinion. The structure of the argument was poor.*" This was recognised as an area "*to revisit to find new ways to argue*" (D40, 40:2, 849:932).

The focus group learners did not regard the global feedback as helpful, the fact that one essay was used as an example was limiting and not specific to their individual needs:

R: I felt like she was generalising, it was not individual attention which was not possible because we know we made very different mistakes but she used one essay to explain (D2, 2:43, 9536:9712).

While the written feedback on the tasks was scant (Figure 7.24), the learners were able to use the WFT2 and the feedback from their peers and teacher to analyse their writing and identify the gaps in their learning.

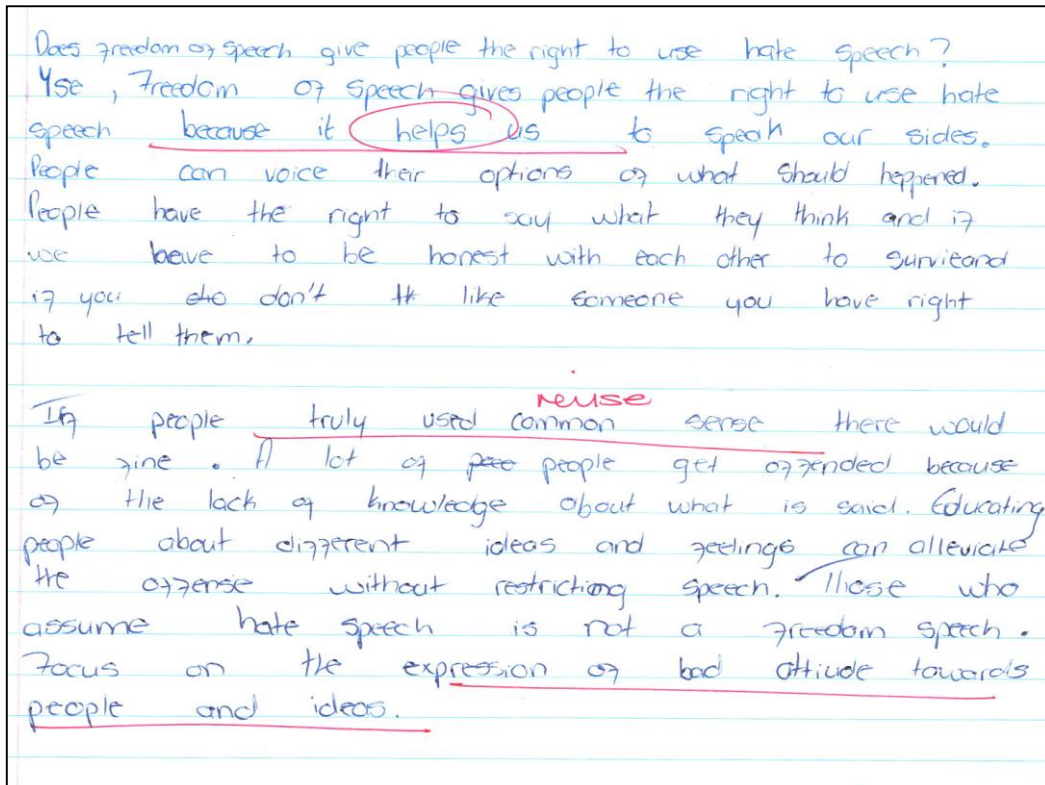


Figure 7.24: School A Grade 10 teacher feedback on writing task

It was easier for the learners to identify mistakes and areas to improve on than to recognise which goals they had achieved because the task level goals did not focus on the “how” of the criteria. The result was a lack of substantial strategies employed to write the task and achieve the goals. This was reflected in the focus group learners’ difficulty in explaining what they did to achieve the goals:

R: You refer to the previous columns and you’ll see your task goals and see how you are going with achieving them, ja (D2, 2:40, 8365:8485).

R: Ma’am I think it also goes back to the feedback thingy if like they said your sentence construction is not good and then on your final

draft they say the same thing again, I think that you get the picture that you need to improve on your sentence construction (D2, 2:39, 8084:8347).

The written feedback the learners received from their teacher was not specific or helpful in addressing the gap. Learner R responded that she did not know how to address the feedback from the teacher, “revise your paragraphs” (D5, 5:31, 5394:5594). While it was the teacher’s feedback it was not identified as an aspect of writing she needed help with. The goals and feedback in Figure 7.25 (squared in red) show how the formulation of the argument was and remained an issue (squared in yellow).

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<b>Task goals:</b> Planning *Intro, Body and Conclusion *Organise arguments (Mind map)  Drafting *‘creative’ language *Start with your own view *Arrange of best arguments to support your views	<b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> You gave detail but you didn't take a side but anyway it fine and that Argument about the freedom of speech is good and please next time write the advantages and disadvantages so that you will be able to take a side and the person reading you work could edit you work for you. (Peer)	<b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</b> <b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> I needed to focus on one side.
<b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> I want to focus on the side I am on.	<b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b> I think I will achieve my goals by writing more information and choose a side so that the reader knows which side I am on. (Self)	<b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> Learner: I need to improve in organise arguments. (mind map) I need to understand the Intro  Teacher: Revise your paragraphs.  <b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b> I need more feedback on how to use research.

Figure 7.25: School A Grade 10 learner R: completed WFT2

The global feedback and the teacher’s markings and comments were not that informative, as some of the learners mentioned. However, the WFT2 allowed the teacher to identify the gaps in the learning clearly. The learners understood from the global feedback that the development of the argument was the learning gap but that their editing had improved.

The Grade 10 class at school B had a new transactional task, an op-ed, planned as one of the formal tasks in the third term. The teacher wanted to use the opportunity to do a practise task first to teach the writing of an op-ed in preparation for the formal task. The teacher used WFT2 to teach the writing skills for an op-ed, enabling the

learners to practise the task, get feedback and use the feedback to write a better final task. The practise task focused on the first two columns *Where am I going?* and *How am I going?*

The Grade 10 teacher at school B explained that the learners used the practise task and the feedback they received to identify gaps and used the strategies to improve their writing in the final task:

*R: I think it helped them to focus on what they needed to do and set them up with what they know they are good at, know what they need to work on, that's something I know I can do again for the second article, you know, or I still need to work on (D10, 10:20-10:24, 5594:5740).*

The teacher checked the practise task and provided feedback on the tool as in the examples above (7.3.2). Implementing the WFT2 in her own way and according to her learners' needs, the teacher instructed the learners to draw and use their own WFT2 in the writing of the formal task. Comprehensive feedback from the teacher included a mark, error detection and a comment. The learners completed the last column (Figure 7.26) writing down how they had achieved their goals, identifying areas to develop as well as recording their teacher's feedback comment on the task.

Learner T	Learner C
<p>3. Where to next?</p> <p>Which goals have I achieved. (tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</p> <p>What did I do to achieve the goals:</p> <p><u>Read</u> Focused on my common mistakes, such as: repetition. I focused on my personal goals</p> <p>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</p> <p>Learner: <del>Work on it</del> Try not to repeat a statement twice, provide other examples of an interview or a source.</p> <p>Teacher: Try and include multiple specific examples and even a quote from a source.</p> <p>I need more feedback about/help with:</p>	<p>3) Where to next?</p> <p>Which goals I have achieved (tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</p> <p>What did I do to achieve the goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I used interesting words in my sentences to make it less vague.</li> <li>- I was able to give accurate information and provide evidence.</li> <li>- I was able not to use personal pronouns.</li> </ul> <p>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</p> <p>Learner: I need to edit carefully. Focus on style and sentence construction. Try to avoid repetition. Focus on important facts.</p> <p>Teacher:</p> <p>I need more feedback with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need examples to be provided for me so I can know what the article should look like. Examples such as words that I can use to improve.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.26: School B Grade 10 learners' completed *Where to next?* column**

The learners reflected on the assessed task (*Animal Farm*) and the teacher's feedback, which was detailed and included comment on the content and grammar as well as a mark allocated, as illustrated in Figure 7.27.



meets the neighbouring farmers in Red Lion in Willingdon.	was questioned on what he thinks about this. "I think Napoleon is right and therefore I will work harder and do as he says," Boxer <del>se</del> replied, proud and confident. ✓	
unnecessarily he receives help <del>to</del> to defeat the animals and claim his farm back.		report on? other animals
Just before they could attack, the animals <del>se</del> ambushed them and defeated them once again.	Napoleon wants control over the animals and is slowly going against the 7 <del>se</del> commandments. He destroys the windmill and throws	Remember, you are exposing the injustice and corruption
You can condense this into one sentence to start this next report. Snowball was then declared a hero because of his lead in the ambush. Mollie (a white	not in keeping w/ a news report	
<p>content &amp; planning: 9/15      15  language, style &amp; editing: 6/10      25</p> <p>Remember, it is a news report focusing on moments in the novel that point towards the injustices the animals are facing. Avoid recounting the plot and providing every detail from Mollie leaving to the windmill. Try and make this kind of writing more "fast paced" and expository</p>		

**Figure 7.27: School B Grade 10 learner C: teacher written comments on task**

The WFT2 was used with the final task to formulate the task goals and complete the *Where to next?* column. The teacher described how the identification of the gaps and how to fix them would transform a learner's writing:

*R: ...whereas this, if you are able to catch it before then and whether it's by writing a properly sort of detailed thing or having a lesson dedicated to getting the others to engage and all that, I think it's a really useful way to transform a learner's writing or approach to something rather than just saying, "Ok here's your essay back, let's talk about common errors and things that many of you are doing wrong and how to fix that," because they don't, they're not going to listen (D10, 10:33, 10093:10566).*

Focus group learners (D 11) and a verbal protocol learner (D 12) were able to compare the two WFT2s they used with the practise task and the formal task. They noticed

where they had made mistakes on the practise task and how they had improved on the formal task:

*R: I saw that my goals were quite similar to it, but I would go back and see what I didn't do right there and see if I improved on the next one, compared them. Like my grammar, did that improve with the formal one compared to the practise one? (D11, 11:37, 8832:9076).*

*R: Oh on the first one I wrote that I reached none of my goals, just straight to the point. In the next one Miss like wrote a message saying then I was like ok I can tick off that I had a journalistic approach and that my message was clear, but sometimes I still think that it's not really clear (D11, 11:41, 10261:10564).*

*R: When I read the feedback and what I wrote and then I compared the two and then I was like I need to edit it carefully and focus on style, what I should do there (D12, 12:23, 4996:5163).*

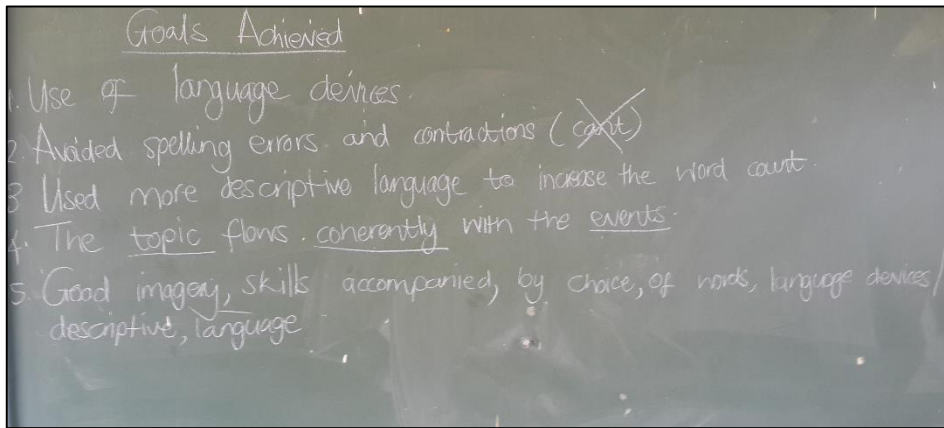
The substantial feedback the learners received on the final task enabled them to identify gaps in their learning. In Figure 7.28 the text squared in red indicates how learner C tracked her goals and what she did to achieve them. The text squared in yellow are the gaps in learning. Furthermore, one of the gaps she identified in WFT1 was: “I should learn my vocabulary and use interesting words. I should replace vague words with interesting words” (subsection 6.3.3.3) was addressed here: “I used interesting words in my sentences to make it less vague” (Figure 7.28, last column squared in red).

1) Where am I going?	2) How am I going?	3) Where to next?
<p>Task goals:</p> <p><u>Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Give accurate information ✓</li> </ul> <p><u>Drafting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be able to do the layout correctly ✓</li> <li>- Not to use personal pronouns ✓</li> </ul> <p>Goals I want to focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be as specific as possible</li> <li>- Provide evidence ✓</li> <li>- Use tense accurately</li> </ul>	<p>Feedback from peer/teacher</p> <p>Give meaning to the facts and explain. Need to expand on what I am writing.</p> <p>Avoid unnecessary information</p> <p>Make the writing more "fast paced!"</p> <p>ⓧ Avoid repetition</p> <p>Things I can do to achieve the goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supply information with the facts. Write information on those facts to explain and expand on it.</li> <li>- Try and avoid unnecessary information and repetition.</li> </ul>	<p>Which goals I have achieved (Tick in 1st column)</p> <p>What did I do to achieve the goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I used interesting words in my sentences to make it less vague.</li> <li>- I was able to give accurate information and provide evidence.</li> <li>- I was able not to use personal pronouns.</li> </ul> <p>Areas to develop to improve my writing</p> <p>beginner: I need to edit carefully.</p> <p>Focus on style and sentence construction. Try to avoid repetition. Focus on important facts.</p> <p>Teacher:</p> <p>I need more feedback with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need examples to be provided for me so I know what the article should look like. Examples such as words that I can use to improve.</li> </ul>

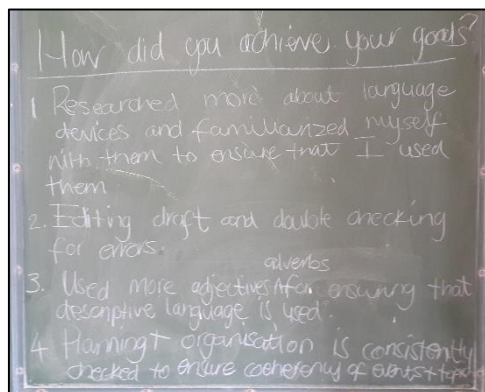
**Figure 7.28: School B Grade 10 learner C: completed WFT2**

The teacher at school C did not assess the essays closely, choosing rather to read the learners' tasks and checking their progress against the task goals. The common errors she identified informed the global feedback. The teacher started the feedback with a discussion asking the learners to share which goals they thought they had achieved and listing the answers on the board (Figure 7.29). During the lesson observed the learners shared their strategies, which were written on the board (Figure 7.30) with the teacher facilitating the learning with explanations and reinforcement of the criteria:

*The teacher explains that for the topic to flow cohesively the learners must check if the events stick with the topic. One way to check is to make sure there is one idea per paragraph and to check the planning and mind map (D43, 43:1, 5190:6560).*

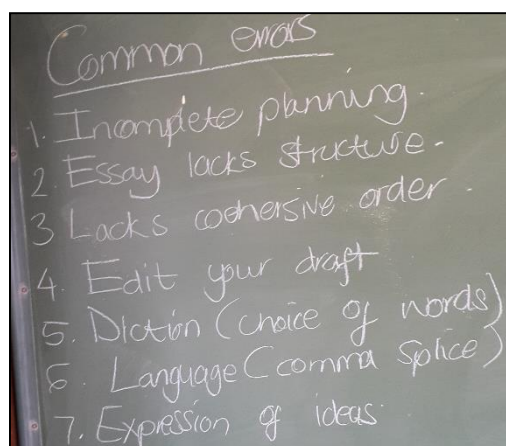


**Figure 7.29: School C Grade 10 learner goals achieved**



**Figure 7.30: School C Grade 10 How did you achieve your goals?**

The teacher wrote the common errors on the board (Figure 7.31) which the learners recorded as the teacher's feedback on their WFT2.



**Figure 7.31: School C Grade 10 Common errors**

The discussion was effective because it focused the learners' attention on the importance of not just *what to do* to write a descriptive essay but *how to achieve* the

goals. The strategies shared included surface level, process level and SRL strategies (Table 7.3).

**Table 7.3: School C Grade 10 strategies shared**

Strategy	Level
Researched more about language devices and familiarised myself with them to ensure I use them.	Process
Editing draft and double checking for errors.	Task
Used more adjectives and adverbs ensuring that descriptive language is used.	Process
Planning and organisation is consistently checked.	SRL
Consistently checking goals, planning, draft and an extensive vocabulary ensures good imagery skills, language devices and descriptive language.	SRL

The learners completed the last column of WFT2, recording the teacher's feedback and reflecting on the gaps in their learning (Figure 7.32).

Learner P	Learner N
<p><b>3. Where to next?</b></p> <p>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</p> <p>What did I do to achieve the goals?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researched more about language devices</li> <li>• Used more adjectives</li> <li>• Planning + Organisation is consistently checked to ensure coherency of events</li> </ul> <p>Areas to develop to improve my writing: Learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edit my draft</li> <li>• Focus on my diction</li> <li>• Language</li> </ul> <p>Teacher:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of language devices</li> <li>• Edit your draft</li> <li>• Expression of ideas</li> <li>• Spelling errors</li> </ul> <p>I need more feedback about/help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My punctuation, language devices and spelling</li> <li>• Ensure that you integrate words properly</li> <li>• Help myself to edit my work</li> </ul>	<p><b>3. Where to next?</b></p> <p>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</p> <p>What did I do to achieve the goals?</p> <p>I have used a lot of adjectives in order to create good imagery and write a good descriptive essay</p> <p>Areas to develop to improve my writing: Learner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fix comma splices and write essays with a better structure (format)</li> </ul> <p>Teacher: Common errors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incomplete planning</li> <li>• Essay lacks structure</li> <li>• Edit your draft</li> <li>• Language (comma splices)</li> </ul> <p>I need more feedback about/help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absent (4/9/17) celebrating Eid</li> </ul> <p>1/9/17</p>

**Figure 7.32: School C Grade 10 learner completed *Where to next?* column**

The focus group learners felt more comfortable using the WFT2 the second time as they felt they understood the process better:

*R: Ma'am it was, the first time we didn't know what was happening so we don't know how to apply the tool and what we were doing. The second time we were more familiar with it and we could apply it better (D21, 21:1, 310:515).*

The teacher felt learners were able to integrate the learning and made writing learning accessible to them:

*R: For me, I was very happy, I was excited. And I think you were witness of it as well. And I actually used this as well for one of my essays and you know I appreciated it more, I feel like I appreciated more for myself and how it made my teaching and learning for my children and myself easier and much more approachable for them, because more especially when it comes to the essays. Because that is one of the tasks that we battle with them to integrate all their writing tasks, all their writing formats and the forms of writing and how to write. So seeing them bring everything we have taught them together in harmony has made it much more appreciated (D20, 20:16, 5953:6608).*

The learners completed the WFT2, recording the gaps and the strategies, however, how accurately the learners were able to recognise the gaps in their own writing was not answered. Figure 7.33, squared in red, reflects how learner N tracked her progress using “*language devices*” and “*imagery*” and, squared in yellow, the global feedback from the teacher.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<b>Task goals:</b> <b>Planning</b> Organise my ideas ✓ Introduction Body Conclusion <b>Drafting</b> Describe the events that happens at the family gathering Words and expressions Images Figurative language devices  <b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> Punctuation Vocabulary Structure Spelling is correct Use of language	<b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> • Ideas organised properly on a mindmap. • Good imagery achieved • Avoid slang • Nice essay  Teacher feedback Common errors: • Incomplete planning • Essay lacks structure • Language Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies): Use of language devices Imagery skills and word choice Topic must flow coherently Avoided spelling errors Avoided comma splices	<b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</b>  <b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> I have used a lot of adjectives in order to create good imagery and write a good descriptive essay  <b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> Learner: Fix comma splices and write essays with a better structure (format)  Teacher: Common errors: • Incomplete planning • Essay lacks structure • Edit your draft • Language (comma splices) I need more feedback about/help with: Absent (was) celebrating Eid. 1/9/17

**Figure 7.33: School C Grade 10 learner N: completed WFT2**

While the Grade 10 teacher at school C did not use the feedback explicitly in her teaching, she understood the WFT2 as an integration of the criteria and success criteria, incorporating the elements of the assessment rubric:

*R: Because the tool itself is the rubric, the planning and the drafting, the language structure and the structure itself, so the language is integrated, the structure is integrated, the planning and the drafting is integrated, so that is how the rubric is set (D20, 20:25, 8402:8662).*

The Grade 10 teacher experienced the WFT2 as a simplification of the rubric:

*R: ...and if they can follow out on this simple writing tool automatically they have followed throughout what they believe the rubric is much more complex, so it is a simplified version of the rubric (D20, 20:35, 13460:13960).*

The descriptive tasks at school D were assessed in relation to the goals. As a practise task no mark was allocated and in her assessment the teacher did not focus closely on errors or on providing detailed comments. However, the global feedback was detailed, highlighting the common themes the teacher picked up when assessing the essays. It emerged that the learners struggled as the word count restriction limited their expression. The teacher instructed the learners to record her feedback in the

Where to next? column. In the lesson observed (D45, 45:2, 2806:2854) the learners considered the feedback as the teacher circulated, discussing her feedback comments and giving further feedback. It emerged that “the description of senses” and in particular “the feeling sense” was a challenge and would be a goal for the descriptive essay. The feedback was interactive, pointing out to the learners that the next goal “how to use sense” with examples: “the pungent smell, but extend that”.

The completed WFT2 in Figure 7.34 illustrates: how learner K at school D tracked her learning, the goals achieved, “choose correct diction”, “used figurative language” (squared in red) and the gaps identified by the feedback (squared in yellow).

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<b>Task goals:</b> * Invent details for the sentence ✓ * Use senses ✓ * Choose correct diction ✓ * Specific adjectives ✓ * Order of appearance * feeling sense	<b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> - Very descriptive - Precise language - A bit short  <b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b> * Expanding my existing ideas by explaining more to make it longer.	<b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</b> 7/8 <b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> I used lots of figures of speech and correct diction. I had the appropriate specific adjectives and I created imagery.  <b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> <b>Learner:</b> I want to get my order of appearance correctly and expand on existing ideas: feeling sense. how to use senses.  <b>Teacher:</b> It was good!  <b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b> introducing my topic.
<b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> * Use figurative language * Clear introduction and organisation ✓ * Spelling and grammar		

**Figure 7.34: School D Grade 10 learner K: completed WFT2**

The lesson concluded with the teacher asking the learners to share “What I did well” and “What I need to work on”. The word choice was instructive as it did not focus on right and wrong, indicating a recognition that the learners were engaged in an ongoing learning process. The patterns emerging from the discussion were aimed at informing the descriptive essay which would be written later in the term.



**Table 7.4: School D Grade 10 learner oral reflections on task**

<b>What I did well</b>	<b>What I need to work on</b>
Figure of speech/imagery	Cohesion/organisation
Vivid picture	Expand on ideas
Specific language/precise language	More vivid writing
Unique word choice	Not enough energy/senses
Used peer feedback to edit paragraph	

A learner in the focus group appreciated the opportunity to acknowledge success as it built confidence:

*R: It was, for me it was a very nice experience because we could be able to like not, in many subjects you won't get to say what we did well, and express like that we got to do something good, so ja. It kind of give us confidence in writing again (D31, 31:34, 9408:9654).*

The sharing of achievement and gaps alerted the learners to each other's progress and the opportunity to learn together:

*R: I feel like when I heard what people were talking about, I realised that the mistakes they make is also the same mistakes I make. So you know sometimes it is not always being you alone, maybe we can help each other out instead of being self-centred (D31, 31:35, 9671:9924).*

The descriptive writing task was to learn and practice descriptive writing as there was going to be a descriptive essay as a formal task at the end of the term. At school D, the learners in the focus group and the learner verbal protocols were asked consider how the WFT2 had helped them with their writing task. One learner recognised the value of a practise task as it gave him confidence. His remark "*I wasn't feeling it*" meant that he did not understand what was expected of him but that changed after the task was completed:

*R: I feel like for me, like after writing and [when we] were given feedback, doing the final draft, it kind of gave me a boost of confidence, because when she said we were going to write a descriptive essay, I wasn't like feeling it, but now that I have done it,*

*and getting the feedback and everything, I kind of feel like I am a little bit more ready for it (D31, 31:53, 17002:17350).*

After the completion of the practise task, the teacher continued to integrate aspects of descriptive writing into her teaching of literature:

*R: Without us even unpacking about what the poem is about or whatever, I just said to them, "Identify the descriptive," so now they are continuously practising the descriptive strategies. So I said, "Identify the descriptive strategies that are used in the poem" and they are able to go to sight, smell, hearing, feeling, all of that (D30, 30:54, 14399:14845).*

The practise task was at the beginning of the term and served to direct the ongoing teaching and learning for the term leading up to the formal assessment. The value of assessment for learning was reinforced; the teaching of descriptive writing as a practise task, evaluating the learning leading up to the formal task, "*the real thing*":

*R: So I think this will be even more effective if we use it with the practise round, use it and then with the real thing, use it again. Because it is continuous learning (D30, 30:48, 12721:12888).*

Reflecting on the use of the WFT2, a focus group learner explained how he used the rubric to determine the task expectations and the WFT2 made his mental process concrete:

*R: I also wanted to say that a difference between having a feedback tool and just writing for me is always more of a thing of when I am just writing. First thing I do is I look at the task goals and goals that are expected from us and the rubric, then I set sub-conscious mental goals, just goals. Then I write and I tick off all those boxes.*

*Q: Mentally?*

*R: Mentally. If I don't have it in my head I can just look at the rubric and make sure that everything is okay. The feedback tool for me is just like a thing where I have now put the same things on paper (D31, 31:48, 14155:14717).*

#### 7.3.4.3 Discussion of **Where to next?** column findings

The four Grade 10 teachers implemented the WFT2 in a way that was relevant to their context, the learners, the task and topic. In all four cases the reflections on the achievement of the task goals and the learning gaps indicated that the WFT2 enabled

the teachers and the learners to clearly see where the gaps were. At surface levels it was possible for the learners to see how to correct their mistakes. However, at process levels where the strategies were absent, ways to address the gaps remained elusive.

The teachers at schools A, C, and D did not assess the tasks closely, however, the global feedback was used to point out common errors and gaps in learning. The global feedback worked well at schools C and D where there were structured discussions involving the learners. While the global feedback pointed out the common errors and areas to work on, the question was whether the learners would be able to identify and address the gaps in their own learning. The substantial feedback in the form of comments, markings and a mark the learners at school B received, enabled them to analyse the feedback and complete their WFT2 successfully. The examples of completed WFT2s indicated how the tool enabled the learners to track their progress and identify their learning gaps. The learning was made visible to the teachers and learners.

## **7.4 THE GRADE 11 IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT 2**

This Grade 11 implementation of the WFT2 is discussed in the same way as the Grade 10 implementation that is, using the WFT2 structure as a framework. An overview of the context at each school at the time of implementation is provided in subsection 7.4.1. The three WFT2 columns are discussed in subsections 7.4.2 to 7.4.4.

### **7.4.1 Overview of the Grade 11 context at the time of implementation**

During the third term the CAPS guidelines stated as with the Grade 10 classes, that a transactional task as well as an essay should be written. As shown in Figure 7.5, the teacher at school A had planned to do both tasks but chose an argumentative essay as practise task to implement the WFT2. The teacher at school C planned to practise discursive and argumentative essays as *“they have to be exposed to all genres”*. At school D, the portfolio task for the third term was a discursive essay. The school B teacher had planned an essay as a formal task in term three, however, she decided to include a practise writing task, a descriptive paragraph, which focused on the practising of effective writing in preparation for the formal task and paper 3 due at the end of the term.

**Table 7.5: Grade 11 writing tasks**

School	Informal	Formal	Type
A	√		Argumentative essay
B	√		Descriptive paragraph
C	√		Argumentative/Discursive essay
D		√	Discursive essay

#### **7.4.2 Grade 11 *Where am I going?***

The *Where am I going?* column of the WFT2 focused on the formulation of the goals based on the information the learners received from their teachers and, where applicable, task handouts. The overview of the column is shown in 7.4.2.1. The two further sections in this column are discussed as follows: *Task goals* (7.4.2.2); *My own goals* (7.4.2.3); and the discussion of the *Where am I going?* column findings (7.4.2.4).

##### *7.4.2.1 Overview of the **Where am I going?** column*

With reference to the findings of the WFT1 implementation, the aim here was to determine how the clarification of the learning intention translated into the formulation of clear task goals. Understanding the importance of the goals for the success of the task, the teachers modified the way they managed the introduction of the tasks and its goals. The school A teacher formulated the initial goals for the learners and at schools B, C, and D the learners formulated the goals on their own.

##### *7.4.2.2 Task goals*

At all four schools the information shared with the Grade 11 learners was comprehensive and included verbal discussions, a task sheet, verbal and written notes, and, in the case of schools C and D, essay examples.

At school A the instruction was prepared and written on the board (Figure 7.35). The task goals formulated by the teacher were informed by the instruction but shared verbally. The learners wrote the task goals down according to their understanding and

they were not discussed any further. The task goals were focused on the criteria for argumentative writing such as a clear point of view and a range of arguments.

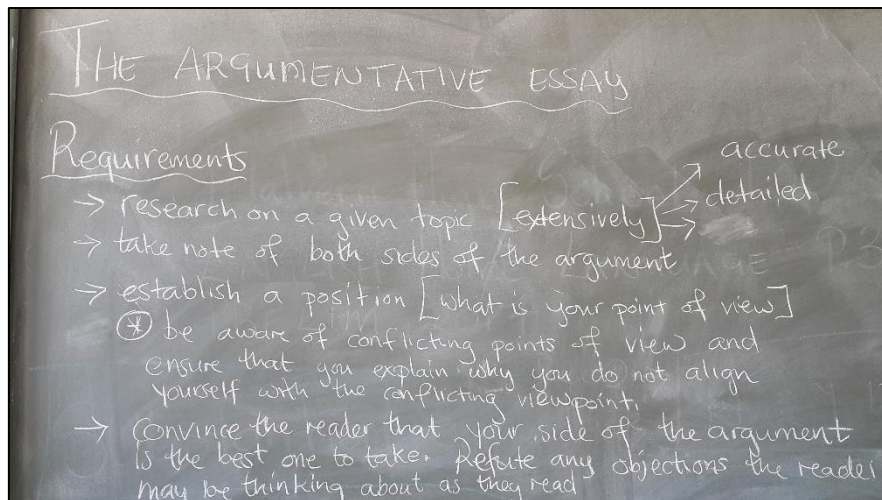


Figure 7.35: School A Grade 11 task instructions

The goals focused on what to do such as “establish your point of view (pick a side)” and “use a range of arguments to support your view”. The use of “persuasive language” was listed but not expanded on or examples given. The task goals recorded are illustrated by the task goals written by learner C (Figure 7.36).

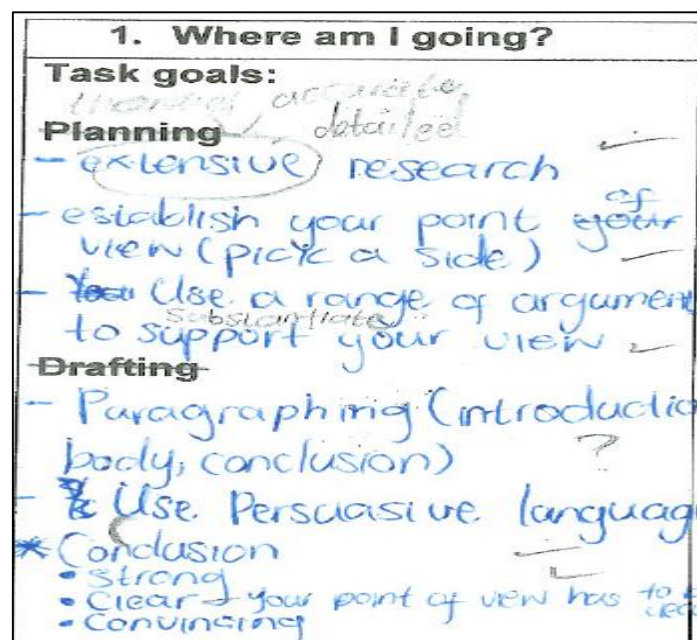
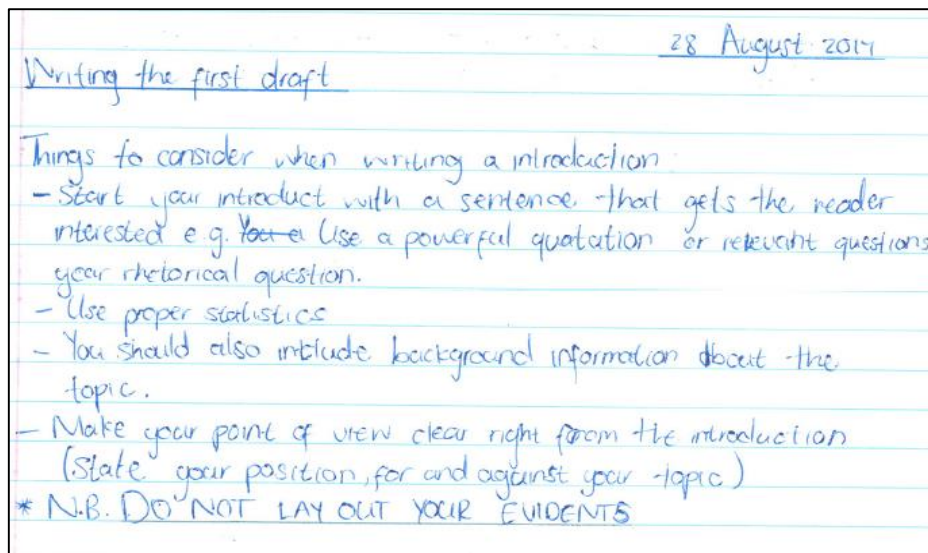


Figure 7.36: School A Grade 11 learner C: task goals

The planning of the essay was given significant attention. In alignment with the task goals, the learners listed the arguments for and against their chosen topic, arriving at a range of arguments to support their point of view. The second lesson was devoted to the writing of the introduction of the essay and, to make the discussions more effective, the learners were grouped according to the topics they had chosen. The teacher dictated criteria of an introduction which the learners wrote in their workbooks (Figure 7.37) but it was not added to the criteria on the WFT2. The teacher checked on the learning by assessing individual learners' introductions according to the criteria. At the end of the lesson, learners read out their introductions and the rest of the class provided feedback based on the dictated criteria. The manner in which the teaching of the introduction was approached resembled AFL with the teacher and learners checking writing against criteria for understanding and providing feedback.



**Figure 7.37: School A Grade 11 notes on introductions in workbooks**

The learners focused on the goals in the writing of their essays. The goals were particularly helpful in the planning of the essay as some learners were able to develop strong arguments. Furthermore, the school A focus group explained that the goals provided structure to the writing:

*R: Firstly my goals, I wrote them like in order, like from the start, I start with the research, like I wrote them in order, so that when I am writing my first draft, I do the right thing, like you know I start with research, and then the introduction. I wrote them in, so that it can be easier for me because now if it is mixed up, I look at the first one, and write that and forget that that has to come first (D6, 6:23, 5989:6479).*

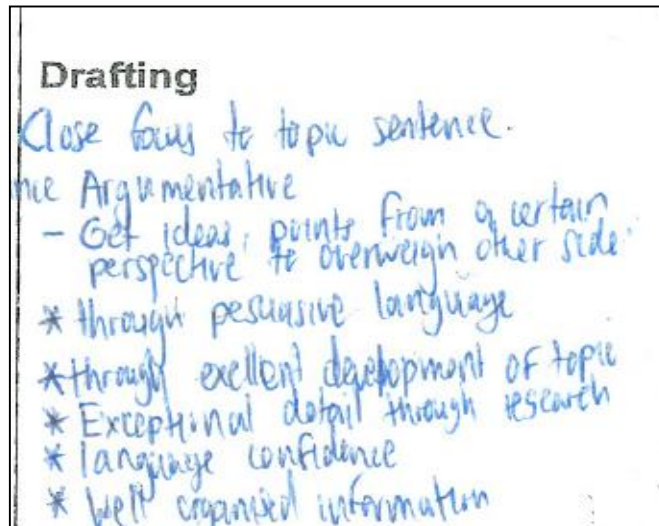
Learner C in the verbal protocol described how the goals and the structure it provided allowed her to develop an argument and added some depth to the writing:

*R: The goals that I have written, it made me write more mature things, more civilised, not just simple things, just like repeating things or something (D7, 7:18, 3014:3165).*

The structured task goals gave clear direction to the learners about the task although how to achieve the goals was not included. What was noticeable was how the teaching of the introduction was handled; the introduction alone could have constituted the practise task as there were clear criteria and success criteria. The teacher and the learners were able to check the introductions against the criteria and, while doing so, affirm and introduce strategies for a successful introduction.

The school C learners received notes on both the argumentative and discursive forms of essay writing. After a discussion on the notes, the instruction was that the learners could choose a topic from the list provided and choose which type of essay they wanted to write. The choice of type of essay created confusion despite the notes and the teacher pointing out the differences between the two types of essays. While an example was included, it was left to the learners to read on their own. The learners were not able to pay focused attention to a specific essay as both types were dealt with at the same time.

The essay rubric was distributed at the end of the lesson and the learners were reminded to use the task criteria and the rubric to formulate their goals, which they did on their own. Some of the learners consulted the rubric to determine the success criteria, but very few learners were able to include this in their goals. Where learners such as learner TM (Figure 7.38) were able to include the success criteria on the rubric, it resulted in listing the criteria: “*excellent development of topic*” and “*exceptional detail*”. Learner TM did not develop a strategy to achieve an excellent development of the topic, however, he included that “*exceptional detail*” could be achieved by doing “*research*”.



**Figure 7.38: School C Grade 11 learner TM: task goals**

In the verbal protocol, learner TM further explained how he had formulated the task goals to construct his argument:

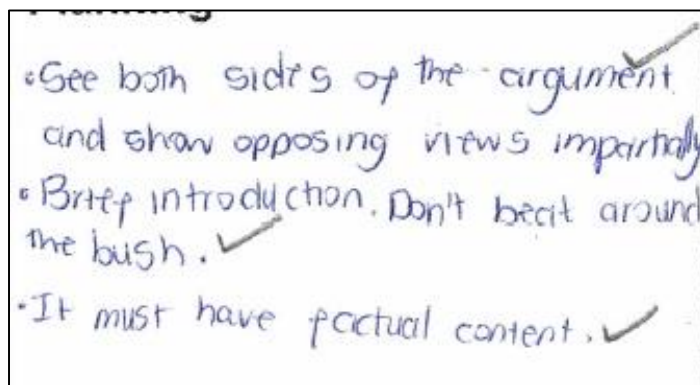
*R: My goals were like usually if it is an argumentative writing, it is always like two sides of the story, although you have decided that one, one side of the story. So I wanted to like exclude the facts for the other side, so that they must look for vouching was, has more, it over weighs the other, so that was my plan (D29, 29:2, 608:928).*

The clarification of criteria aided the formulation of the goals, as the focus group learners at school C explained, they connected the criteria with the expectations:

*R: Yes, the guideline that she gave us, I never use it when I am writing essays, so it just makes me feel as though I should use it because I feel that if you are not actually look and go through, you are not going to know the expectations of what is expected to be written (D26, 26:45- 26:46, 13251:13527).*

Therefore, some learners, such as learner A (Figure 7.39), were able use the guidelines and formulate goals relevant to the task criteria:





**Figure 7.39: School C Grade 11 learner A: task goals relevant to task criteria**

The perceived emphasis on compliance and marks undermined the formulation of the goals. Some learners in the focus group felt that they could not choose their own goals as the goals were “insinuated”, i.e., implied by the teacher:

*R: Ma'am in a sense I kind of feel that this was reverse psychology. We didn't really have our own goals, she told us, she insinuated what we should have and she sort of made us feel that we had the freedom to make our own goals but then they were there like she told us (D26, 26:9, 1908:2179).*

The influence of the marks driven environment was clear even though it was a practise task. The school C learners felt constrained in the formulation of the goals as their aim was to achieve a certain mark. The goals were regarded as what was required to achieve a certain mark and not for the purpose of learning:

*R: I think it is what M said, we didn't have our own goals and at the end it is basically for marks so I just want to get like 40 out of 50 and higher (D26, 26:14, 3079:3235).*

Some of the learners at school C struggled to understand the difference between the two essays, and this confusion influenced the effective formulation of the goals. Furthermore, the difficulty in choosing an appropriate topic and doing research for the type of essay complicated the formulation of the goals:

*R: But then Ma'am I used it in a different way because this was a discursive essay, right, so I wasn't really sure what I had to do. And I heard her saying that we needed to get information about what we are writing about, like I had to get information first in order for me to write my task goals, so that's what I did (D26, 26:12, 2462:2780).*

Learner B at school C was able to identify the difficulty with understanding the topic and how it obstructed the way she constructed her goals which was reflected in her goal formulation (Figure 7.40).

*R: The goals, really for me they didn't work as much as I wanted them to but I tried my best to focus on what the topic is about (D27, 27:8, 1800:1928).*

1. Where am I going?
<b>Task goals:</b> Essay writing
<b>Planning</b> my essay is persuasive also informative. It has enough information that someone might relate to.
<b>Drafting (first draft)</b> should have valid facts that support my argument.

**Figure 7.40: School C Grade 11 learner B: task goals**

The choice the learners had between writing an argumentative or discursive essay created confusion among some of the learners. While the learners received a lot of information about the writing of the essays, it did not help them to be clear about the learning intention and the goals.

At school D, the essay in the third term was the learners' second opportunity to write a creative essay. The essay in the first term was a reflective essay and the teacher acknowledged that the learners had found it challenging. The discursive essay was selected in preparation for the essays the learners should be able to write successfully in their Grade 12 year.

The learners received the task sheet with the instructions, an example, task topics, and the WFT2 with the discursive essay rubric printed on the back. The introduction

to the essay was a discussion about the criteria on the rubric (Figure 7.2) focussing on the “*quality of the discussion*” (IEB, 2015:48). Throughout the discussion in the lesson observed the school D Grade 11 teacher drew the learners’ attention to the criteria and how it could inform the task goals:

*...a discursive essay is an open conversation with the reader, written as an onlooker using the third person to establish impartiality. The discursive essay is as objective and neutral as possible and factual. The structure is to clearly express the standpoint in the introduction, make a point and a counter point in the next paragraph, the conclusion draws the point together (D46, 46:2, 401:1807).*

The example, which was chosen intentionally, a poorly written discursive essay, was critically examined and discussed identifying aspects which did not adhere to the criteria of a discursive essay. The following was pointed out: “*Style should be formal, the counter point was not made, and the relevance of the points made was questioned*” (D46, 46:2, 401:1807). As a result, the teacher pointed out possible goals such “*as formal style, relevance, not to use first person as it makes the writing personal, no dialogue and a good conclusion.*” (D46, 46:2, 401:1807). The learners formulated the task goals as well as their own goals in discussion with their peers as the teacher circulated and gave input.

The rubric was not brought into the lesson, however, some of the criteria required for the discussion in class and consequently the goals, were reflected in the rubric (*Quality of discussion*) which I pointed out to the teacher after the lesson. During the second lesson, the teacher reviewed the goals with the learners and introduced the rubric. Learners were asked to identify the criteria and link them to their goals which the teacher explained should be an indication that “*the goals are in the right direction*” (D46, 46:3, 2365:3141). One of the learners in class remarked that “*creating your own goals also means creating your own rubric*” (D46, 46:3, 2365:3141). The discussion enabled the learners to see the alignment between their goals and the success criteria:

*R: I didn't really look at the rubric but when I wrote my goals, when Miss asked us to look at the rubric I knew I must look at the rubric, I found that some of my goals were in the rubric already. So it just ensure and pointed that I am going the right direction (D36, 36:8, 1432:1702).*

R: Yes, because like since my goals and the rubric interlinked it is easier to focus on my goals while knowing that you are also focusing on the rubric and what they are asking (D36, 36:10, 1973:2234).

During the lesson the learners engaged in group discussions, sharing their goals. The goals formulated reflected the learners' understanding of how to achieve a quality discussion and have an awareness of the target audience. Learner K (Figure 7.41) was able to show his understanding of objective writing: "Subtly giving my opinion". Learner G (Figure 7.41) was able to describe how to achieve the goals "write in a balanced manner and maintain objectivity throughout the essay". Learner T (Figure 7.41) listed the goals as issues to avoid. The variety in the task goals was an indication of how learners interpreted the criteria and were able to formulate the goals according to their own understanding of the learning intention.

Learner K	Learner G	Learner T
<p>1. Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be less subjective Although Subtly giving my opinion</li> <li>Come up with stronger Points to fight for both sides</li> <li>use less colloquial language</li> <li>Don't be conversational</li> </ul> <p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <p>Punctuation - did you focus on this?</p>	<p>1. Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be able to write in a balanced manner and maintain objectivity throughout the essay</li> <li>Avoid verbosity or being too brief. Write appropriately so readers can understand the scenario &amp; the division ✓</li> <li>Successfully utilise register diction &amp; ideas to reflect neutral piece of work</li> <li>Discuss ✓</li> </ul> <p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain relevance ✓</li> <li>Focus on reception rather than delivery.</li> <li>Quality not quantity.</li> </ul>	<p>1. Where am I going?</p> <p>Task goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not make grammar and punctuation mistakes.</li> <li>Not be too informal</li> <li>Have only relevant information</li> <li>Not make the essay personal</li> <li>Not use dialogues</li> </ul> <p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using appropriate language at all times</li> <li>Not repeating myself</li> </ul>

Figure 7.41: School D Grade 11 learners' task goals

The learners used the ample information they received to formulate the goals. There was strong emphasis on the discussion which clearly was the learning intention. The fact that it was a portfolio task, thus for marks, meant that all the success criteria on

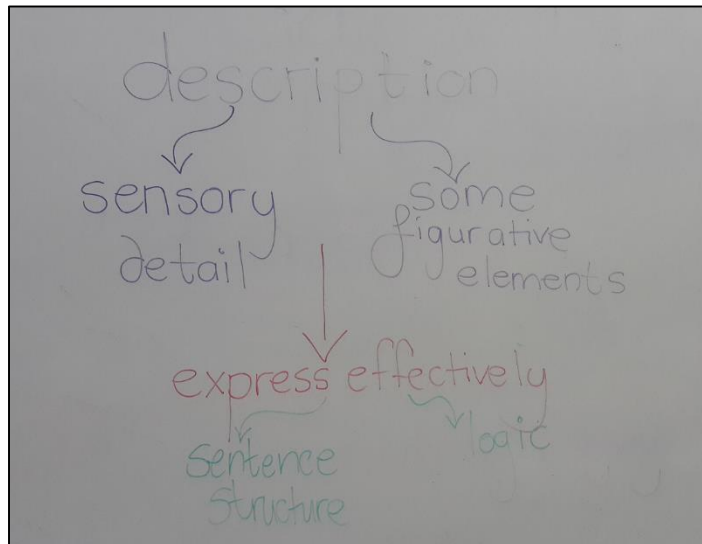
the rubric were relevant to the learners. Therefore specific goals were regarded as limiting if the entire writing task was perceived as the goal and subject to assessment. Some Grade 11 learners at schools C (D 26) and D (D 36) experienced the goals as restrictive and felt that it drew their attention away from the content they wanted to create, as the two quotes demonstrate:

*R: For me personally, I don't enjoy goals, I don't like doing that when I am writing. I prefer writing and you just go through everything and then after reading you see this is wrong, this is right, because with the goals you kind of feel pressured to like adhere to them, like this is not 2 to 3 lines, I have to change it. So you are not really focussed on the content, you are more focussed on the structure (D26, 26:48, 14387:14793).*

*R: Then with this one, I felt that I was a bit restricted, I was thinking too much about the goals instead of having my paragraphs flowing more (D36, 36:6, 941:1081).*

The difference between school B and schools A, C, and D was that the descriptive paragraph was explicitly intended to practise effective writing skills. The teacher at school B introduced the descriptive practise task to the learners by explaining that it was in preparation of the focused, personal narrative essay they would be writing at the end of the term. The importance was emphasised as *“elements of descriptive writing is used in narrative essays and makes the scene vivid for the reader to achieve a shared experience”* (D42, 42:3, 164:1750). The explanation made the purpose and learning intention of the practise task clear.

The focus areas were written on the board (Figure 7.42). In the lesson observed the school B Grade 11 teacher explained the expectations; the five senses must be used and that depth was expected; *“if touch is used remember texture, sight includes colour, patterns and light”* (D42, 42:3, 164:1750). To accomplish descriptive writing, learners must think of strategies such as *“sense, language, sentence structure and parts of speech”* (D42, 42:3, 164:1750).



**Figure 7.42: School B Grade 11 task criteria**

The school B learners shared ideas with a peer after considering their goals first in silence. The learners' goals differed as each focused on her own interpretation of the task, however, *"the details and use of adjectives and describing the senses"* were common goals among the learners.

The school B focus group learners described that they used the teacher's explanation to formulate the goals:

*R: I just listened to Miss because she was like, "You have five minutes, so focus on minor details, because it is descriptive, like you need to focus on your senses, so it is like senses and you have to go into it, be like very specific and describe it to the point" (D16, 16:19, 3227:3502).*

The task goals were specific, giving clear indications of how goals may be achieved: *"using specific adjectives"*, *"strong verbs and adjectives"*, *"expand thoughts and emotions"*. These were reflected in the goals learner K and learner S wrote down (Figure 7.43).

Learner K	Learner S
<p><b>1. Where am I going?</b></p> <p><b>Task goals:</b> Specific Goals to have</p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ list 5 details and</li> <li>◦ select one that is not too complex but has alot of detail</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b> CWR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ using specific adjectives</li> <li>◦ remaining on specific topic</li> <li>◦ avoiding cliché entirely</li> <li>◦ relating back to five senses.</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> (issues around my writing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ use of punctuation</li> <li>◦ Not be redundant</li> <li>◦ staying on topic</li> <li>◦ developing more on idea and explaining further</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Where am I going?</b></p> <p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detail &amp; enlarge.     ↓ describe</li> <li>- be precise on thought</li> <li>-</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- vivid <u>imagery</u></li> <li>- Strong verbs &amp; adjectives</li> <li>- expand on thoughts and emotions</li> <li>- stay focus on task focus</li> <li>- avoid redundancy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- stay focus on idea     cannot drift</li> <li>- short sentences → more distinctive     ? to keep</li> <li>- Concord errors.</li> <li>- Stick to one tense.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.43: School B Grade 11 learners' task goals**

The learners explained that they were used to using the criteria to plan their writing although in the past they would have used a mind map: *R: We never did it this way, it is kind of like with the planning part, we used a mind map (D16, 16:26, 4077:4307).* Working with their peers the learners had an opportunity to compare and explain their goals, receiving feedback and clarification if needed. The learners had access to their workbooks for reference; the rubric with success criteria was not discussed during the lessons and the learners used the teacher's explanation as focus for the formulation of their task goals.

#### 7.4.2.3 Goals I want to focus on/my own goals

The identification of the goals to focus on was to prompt the learners to consider the gaps in learning they wanted to work on. At school B, the learners were reminded that their own goals were their own journey and the goals were “universal to writing, e.g.,

sentence structure or better diction based on their own ability to write.” Learner K referred to her previous writing tasks to identify areas to focus on:

*R: I specifically looked at my previous essays and tasks and I realised what I wasn't focusing on a lot, that I needed to achieve in order to get the marks that I did want to achieve (D19, 19:1, 383:565).*

*R: So I knew that I was always redundant and I kept repeating the same things over and over again. Just to emphasise, so I knew from like a personal experience with writing not just from the teachers' feedback, that I know this is what I struggled with personally, while writing (D19, 19:9, 1642:1917).*

Both the learners interviewed in the focus group (D 16) and learner verbal protocols (D 18) used feedback comments from the teacher to formulate their own goals:

*R: ...and then for my own goals, it is like she said, it is just the comments, the teacher leaves regularly to fix those (D16, 16:18, 2622:2737).*

*R: Because usually with my writing, when I get feedback from the writing, my teacher would tell me that I don't add enough emotions, and I'm not too specific and I need to focus on the details more often (D18, 18:2, 821:1021).*

The learners at schools A, C, and D recorded their own goals according to what they thought they wanted to work on. The learners' own goals were similar to their own goals with WFT1. They were broad and did not focus on how the goals would be achieved, as the examples in Figure 7.44 illustrate.

School A learner T	School C Learner B	School D learner TT
<p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve diction.</li> <li>- Try to improve spelling mistakes.</li> <li>- Try to use persuasive language.</li> </ul>	<p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <p>I have correct grammar in all sentences. Have no spelling errors. Have a persuasive essay that has valid points facts and reasons.</p>	<p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using appropriate language at all times</li> <li>- Not repeating myself</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.44: School A, C and D Grade 11 learner own goals**



Learners in the focus group at school A explained that their own goals were based on the previous mistakes they wanted to correct:

*R: I started by looking at my previous essays and the transactionals to see where I actually make mistakes. So those are my goals, my mistakes are my goals (D6, 6:17, 4109:4421).*

Some learners in the focus group at school A included goals pertaining to the task, such as the use of persuasive language:

*R: Ma'am I would say like the argumentative, so my goal I want to push someone to believe, so I would use persuasive words to push him to believe in what I did is right (D6, 6:18, 4440:4609).*

At school C, a learner in the focus group explained that complying with the research and word count expectations were important to include as own goals:

*R: My own goal was to get enough research to actually fill the amount of words necessary to you know complete the word count with the adequate amount of words (D26, 26:15, 3245:3406).*

Learner TB at school D explained that she included her own language goals as well as the task goal she felt was important to focus on:

*Q: And how did you choose your own goals? There is spelling, yes I can see that.*

*R: And the sentence construction, and okay relevance was actually one of the task goals.*

*Q: Also something you really wanted to focus on.*

*R: Yes (D38, 38:4, 851:1077).*

The inclusion of SRL in the writing class was evident at schools B and D where the teachers expected the learners to be able to formulate the goals on their own based on the information they received. When asked why she thought the learners would be able to formulate the goals on their own, the school B teacher explained that it was an expectation that the WFT2 emphasised:

*R: I think because what we done throughout the year with our processes. We've looked at those with the tool and with how we approach writing. We look at to be able to equip them to think independently and we are quite mindful of them needing to do this*

*in a paper 3 scenario which is obviously quite a substantial chunk of assessment A and B the goal of writing is also to be able to respond to a criteria logically and accurately, which is an important skill for life (D15, 15:4, 844:972).*

*R: Okay I have given you the information, I have given you the focus, we've spoken about it, we've clarified it, now I need you to bring in some of your own thinking as well as your own ability and even if that doesn't always work, it is still an important thing that we have to keep doing until it does work (D15, 15:5, 1009:1315).*

The teacher at school D had a similar point of view, explaining that the learners needed to apply their minds when formulating the goals:

*R: Ja. I said here are their goals, I must let them reach them themselves. So I will discuss the concept and then in the goal section of the feedback tool they must find their own weaknesses in setting their goals and then set their goals (D35, 35:25, 13612:13843).*

The learners' goals reflected their focus areas and the Grade 11 teacher at school D used it in her assessment of the tasks:

*R: Ja, well that is what I have been looking at and I can see to the ones that did look at their own goals, are different. Which was quite nice because they realised that they had their own problems etc. and when I was marking the essay, I kept looking to see, well I tried as much as possible to see did they do (D35, 35:2, 720:1152).*

#### 7.4.2.4 Discussion of the **Where am I going?** column findings

Effective task goals comprise the task criteria and success criteria and include ways to achieve the goals. However, the essay as completed product was the aim at schools A, C, and D, therefore it came with many criteria which were not focused on a specific area of learning. Some learners at schools A and C were able to incorporate the task and success criteria in their formulation of their task goals, but it was not common among the learners. The Grade 11 learners at schools A, C, and D wrote argumentative and discursive essays and the difficulty they had with the essays were evident in the task goals they formulated. For these essays the content was of primary concern but not accessible to all the learners. The writing of argumentative and discursive essays was challenging for the learners and perhaps as practise task a specific focus on the formulation of an argument and use of appropriate language

would have made the learning accessible. At school B where there was close focus on how to write a descriptive piece, the learning became clear and accessible to the learners.

While the prescribing of task goals, such as at school A, will result in a focused approach to the task, the learners' formulation of goals was indicative of their learning and where they were relative to the goals. This was particularly evident at schools B and D where goals were more focused than at schools A and C. While the learners at schools B, C, and D received direction from their teachers, the expectation was that they had to formulate the goals on their own. The learners demonstrated their own understanding of the task expectations and how to respond to them resulting in a variety of goals. The learners' own goals reflected their understanding of what they wanted to focus on and were thus also varied. Similar to the task goals, their own goals did not always include how the goals would be achieved. However, some learners were able to write down goals that focused on an area they had identified as a gap in learning based on previous assessments.

### **7.4.3 Grade 11 *How am I going?***

In this section, firstly an overview of the *How am I going?* column is provided (7.4.3.1). Thereafter, the two sections comprising the column are considered. The *Feedback from peer/teacher/self* is in 7.4.3.2, followed by *Things I can do to achieve my goals (strategies)* in 7.4.3.3. The findings of the *How am I going?* column are discussed in 7.4.3.4.

#### **7.4.3.1 Overview of the *How am I going?* column**

The feedback column was adapted to ensure that the learners were aware that the feedback they received from multiple sources could be used as information. Error detection and corrective feedback dominated the WFT1 implementation and, in an effort to move away from corrective feedback, *strategies* were introduced in the section *Things I can do to achieve my goals*, which could also act as scaffolding the learning, indicating *how* to improve the writing.

### 7.4.3.2 Feedback from peer/teacher/self

Similar to the implementation of WFT1, the Grade 11 teachers allocated a lesson for the feedback and in the case of schools B and D, the lessons were structured and facilitated by the teachers. At schools A and C, the learners provided peer feedback without facilitation from their teachers, thus the peer feedback was not structured and the learners' feedback was on the entire task and focused on the criteria they regarded as important.

Consistent with WFT1, not all the feedback was recorded. The feedback learner C from school A received from her peer in relation to the goals regarding the “*conclusion and point of view*” was not recorded on the WFT2: “*When writing a conclusion sum up your argument, must be strong, clear, convincing. Remember to state your point of view*”. Learner T recorded her own reflection on her progress towards her goals, however the focus remained on surface level goals such as “*choose better words to work with*”, “*I have tried to spell more words correctly*” (Figure 7.45).

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b> accurate; thorough</p> <p><b>Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extensive research.</li> <li>- Establish your point of view (Pick a side)</li> <li>- Use a range of arguments to substantiate support your view</li> <li>- Paragraphing (Intro, body, conclusion)</li> <li>- Use persuasive language</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Conclusion           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclusion must be strong</li> <li>• Has to be convincing</li> <li>• Conclusion must be clear</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve diction.</li> <li>- Try to improve spelling mistakes.</li> <li>- Try to use persuasive language.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose better words to work with.</li> <li>- I have tried to spell more words correctly.</li> <li>- Managed to write words in full eg. don't, won't, can't.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use appropriate words and avoid using social media tendencies of writing words in an abbreviated form.</li> <li>- Try to work with a dictionary when writing.</li> </ul>

Figure 7.45: School A Grade 11 learner T: feedback

At school C, the peer feedback focused on editing as the entire task was read and surface level mistakes pointed out. The learners' expectations as explained in Chapter 6, regarding the feedback had not changed; the mistakes were pointed out and corrected:

*So it has helped me a lot because now I can identify mistakes, and learn how to, you know, to get feedback to help you when you are trying to achieve something (D28, 28:18, 7239:7398).*

The learners' preoccupation with error detection distracted their attention from the goals as the aim was to edit the entire essay as explained by focus group learners (D 26) and learner B (D 27), interviewed as a learners' verbal protocol:

*R: Like with the person that I gave it to we kind of did the same thing, we don't like to look at the goals first, we read each other's essays and then we like correct it like this is wrong, what does this mean, I don't really understand what you are getting at (D26, 26:20, 4371:4636).*

*Q: Did they look at your goals when they looked at your essay?*

*R: No, they didn't get a chance to look at my goals (D27, 27:13, 3297:3410).*

With the focus on producing an error-free essay, learner B continued to seek feedback from multiple peers with the focus on correction and detailed feedback:

*R: I asked one of my peers and I asked them to please check my essay and they gave me feedback. I asked two of my peers in the classroom and they both had quite similar, how can I put this, like what they spotted in my essay, they spotted the same things. So it was spelling errors and grammar (D27, 27:12, 2998:3295).*

The learners' goals did not include all the task criteria or success criteria and in some cases the feedback focused on the goals written on the WFT2. The school C focus group learners found this problematic because the expectation was that, as with editing, all errors should be corrected:

*R: The peer that I gave it to she actually marked my essay according to my goals, not extending beyond that, like if I didn't have something, like let's say I didn't have grammar inside my goals and my grammar was incorrect she wouldn't actually refer to that, she*

would just leave it and only focus on what I wanted in my task goals (D26, 26:18, 3932:4264).

A way of dealing with it would be for the learners to understand that the feedback was in relation to their goals, therefore they could formulate their goals to be inclusive of the areas in which they needed feedback. Where the entire essay was the aim of the practise task, the feedback was complicated. The learners expected all errors to be corrected but the task goals were not inclusive of all the criteria. Some learners gave feedback on the areas they thought were important or what they could identify such as the feedback learner TM received (Figure 7.46) which included surface level goals, confirming the learners' explanation that the feedback was not always aligned with their goals. From a teacher's point of view, the analysis thereof would provide insight into what the learner who provided feedback understood the criteria to be and where they were situated in their learning.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <p>Close focus to topic sentence.</p> <p>the Argumentative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Get ideas; points from a certain perspective to outweigh other side</li> <li>* through persuasive language</li> <li>* through excellent development of topic</li> <li>* Exceptional detail through research</li> <li>* language confidence</li> <li>* well organised information</li> </ul> <p>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</p> <p>Since Argumentative essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Getting my chosen side across, outweighing the other side strongly through providing facts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spelling errors</li> <li>- punctuation</li> <li>- Interesting introduction</li> <li>- spacing between words (Too close)</li> <li>- No word count</li> <li>- Too long conclusion (should be 2-3 lines)</li> <li>- Handwriting.....</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p>

Figure 7.46: School C Grade 11 learner TM: peer feedback

The peer feedback lesson on the discursive essay at school D was in marked contrast to the peer feedback lesson in the second term on the open letter. Whereas the peer feedback on the open letter elicited a lively discussion, the feedback on the discursive

essay was muted. The Grade 11 teacher regarded the essay as a complicated task requiring the facilitation of the feedback to make it effective:

*R: With that, that I think I will have to work for this type of essay. I think that I have, will have to spend some time. They did give, they did give each other feedback and they still enjoy that type of lesson but I think for each task, whether it is an open letter or this essay, or something even more complicated, for this to be of great benefit would be for me to spend more time telling them how to do their feedback for each different task (D35, 35:4, 2823:3271).*

The learners struggled with the writing of the discursive essay as the development of the discussion was a challenge. The focus group explained that they chose different topics and it hampered their ability to provide feedback on the content. As a result, the feedback focused on the surface level language issues, whereas the feedback needed was on the content:

*R: Ja, but like for me the problem I had with my group is that some of us, okay three out of the four of us, didn't do, did the one topic and I was the only one who did my topic (D36, 36:27, 7343:7520).*

*R: Well the discussion was mostly based on the grammar and our style of writing so, most of us in our group, like we often hear words being repeated. So one of my, like the feedback from my peer was to avoid a predictable form of writing (D36, 36:29, 8159:8397).*

The learners' expectation was that the feedback would be in relation to the "quality discussion" (IEB, 2015:48) IEB rubric criteria, but the learners struggled to provide feedback other than on task level:

*R: For the me feedback that they gave me, it was mostly about my punctuation and grammar, it was not actually about the content we had and how it was relevant to the task and how it actually was linking pros and cons (D36, 36:36, 9634:9850).*

The feedback recorded indicated that the learners did not provide feedback in relation to the learner's goals, but rather in relation to the task criteria. Learner TT (Figure 7.47) formulated goals such as "grammar and punctuation", "not to be too informal" "relevant information", "not make the essay personal" and "not use dialogue". The recorded feedback, however, focused on the criteria for a quality of the discussion to which Learner TT responded appropriately: "make my counter argument stronger."

R: I also got feedback from my teacher and then it also made me realise that even though I used examples but then I didn't, I used an example but then I wasn't able to explore it more and use more examples to make it more balanced because I used examples for my counter argument. But then in my argument I didn't really put any examples, I was just discussing the topic (D37, 37:26, 5366:5732).

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not make grammar and punctuation mistakes.</li> <li>- Not be too informal</li> <li>- Have only relevant information</li> <li>- <u>Not make the essay personal</u></li> <li>- Not use dialogues</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using appropriate language at all times</li> <li>- Not repeating myself</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <p>It is biased (you need to elaborate for both sides)</p> <p>There is a stance which is good.</p> <p>- maybe a little more of your voice needed.</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make my counter-argument stronger.</li> </ul>

Figure 7.47: School D Grade 11 learner TT: feedback

Similarly, learner TB received feedback in relation to the criteria and not her goals (Figure 7.48), however, she responded to the feedback to improve her writing.

R: I read my essay again and then I looked, because she underlined the phrases, like find it more colloquial, and I tried to find something that was more accurate (D38, 38:16, 4257:4418).

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Always use the 3rd person ✓</li> <li>* Relevance, must relate to the topic.</li> <li>* No dialogue!! ✓</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to use colloquial phrases like "nowadays" or "back in the days".</li> <li>• In the intro make a clear statement and a counter-statement.</li> <li>• Paragraph 2 is really good.</li> </ul>

Figure 7.48: School D Grade 11 learner TB: feedback



The essay was a formal task, therefore the understanding was that the entire essay would be assessed. The task goals focused on the writing of a discussion which was one aspect of the assessment rubric. The feedback did not focus on the discussion alone but included surface and style issues as well. By making “*the quality of discussion*” alone the learning intention, and consequently the focus of the feedback, the teacher would be able to facilitate an effective feedback lesson.

The second writing lesson at school B started with a discussion about planning and the best way to plan and whether a mind map was effective. It was made clear that the writing process is creative and thus can be fluid as the teacher explained: “*ideas is where the planning starts and ideas can be added as the writing progresses*” (D42, 42:4, 2393:3005).

The learners at school B wrote the descriptive paragraph while the teacher circulated, monitoring the process of feedback and the completion of the second column of the WFT2. The learners had more than one opportunity to receive feedback on the descriptive paragraph as, while they were writing the paragraph, their peers and the teacher provided synchronous feedback. The synchronous feedback included discussion about possible things to do to write effectively as well as rectifying mistakes. The synchronous feedback may have resulted in immediate adjustments on the task and it was difficult to ascertain if the feedback received and strategies used were recorded. The paucity of feedback written down, for example, in Figure 7.49 is perhaps an indication that not all feedback received was recorded.



sides of the argument and show opposing views impartially”, “I want my draft to have been based on facts, quotes and statistics” the feedback in relation to the goals were specific. Learner A from school C was able to provide feedback and a strategy on paragraphing: “Break down your paragraphs. You have more than one idea in one paragraph so as you know a paragraph has to have one idea to make paragraphs shorter” (Figure 7.50).

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See both sides of the argument and show opposing views impartially.</li> <li>• Brief introduction. Don't beat around the bush. ✓</li> <li>• It must have factual content. ✓</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I want my draft to have been based on facts, quotes and statistics. ✓</li> <li>• I want it to help with my grammar and spelling. ✓</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See both sides of the argument and show opposing sides impartially.</li> <li>• Conclude by then showing * your own opinion of the matter</li> <li>• Remember not to put contractions ✓</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have no spelling errors.</li> <li>• The transaction is understandable.</li> <li>• There are no constructions.</li> <li>• There are quotes and statistics.</li> <li>• Shows opposing sides great.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break down your paragraphs.</li> <li>• You have more than one idea in one paragraph so as you know a paragraph has to have one idea to make paragraphs shorter.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.50: School C Grade 11 learner A: feedback and strategy**

Learner TN at school C had broad statements as goals; however, the peer feedback was in relation to the task criteria (Figure 7.51). Therefore the peer feedback succeeded in bringing the learners' attention to the gaps: introduction, specific spelling and punctuation errors, word limit as well as possible strategies to use to avoid careless mistakes and redundancy.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <p><b>Planning</b> I want my planning to give the reader an idea about what I'm going to write in my essay.</p> <p><b>Drafting</b> I want my draft to help me with big words and errors.</p> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> inserting figures of speech and some flavour to my words.</p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction is good, as it does not beat around the bush and the reader is already aware of what the whole essay is about.</li> <li>• You should look out for contractions, and using capital letters in the middle of a sentence.</li> <li>• There are also careless spelling errors, and grammar mistakes.</li> <li>• Check your punctuation marks after each sentence.</li> <li>• Also lessen your words.</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go over your essay once more and read it, because there are many careless mistakes you may have prevented had you read over your work.</li> <li>• Count your number of words and scratch out unimportant and redundant ideas.</li> </ul>

**Figure 7.51: School C Grade 11 learner TN: peer feedback**

Similar to the observation from the Grade 10 learner at school D that the peers added to his goals, a Grade 11 focus group learner at school C observed:

*R: ...and then after that they read the goals and they like, "Ok this was ok, you could do this, you could add more," and they add more goals to your own goals (D26, 26:21, 4637:4785).*

Learner P at school B engaged with the WFT2 (Figure 7.52) in considerable detail. Apart from the detailed task goals and own goals, as with learner N, Grade 10 at school C, (Figure 7.33) she also wrote down strategies to use before she started with the task. When asked why she did that, she could not explain except to say it was something she just did. She responded to the peer feedback by writing down what she could do:

*R: I did, especially when she said avoid clichés, you realize ok I could be more descriptive instead of re-using somebody else's words again (D18, 18:31, 9159:9302).*

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?
<p><b>Task goals:</b> Ideas needing Descriptive writing Senses, parts of speech</p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*List details</li> <li>*Add my emotions to my writing.</li> <li>*Focus on spelling mistakes</li> <li>*Have faith in my work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Use specific adjectives</li> <li>*Use more formal/substantive words</li> <li>*Apply parts of speech</li> <li>*Apply better diction</li> <li>*Get my sentence focus in order</li> <li>*Make the read well/understanding the senses.</li> <li>*Making it personal</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Better diction/ Saying things</li> <li>*Focus on sentence structure.</li> <li>*Paragraphs should make logical sense</li> <li>*Comma Splices</li> <li>*Sentence construction.</li> <li>*Make it more entertaining</li> </ul> <p>o focused, personal narrative</p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Confident</li> <li>*Avoid clichés.</li> <li>*Do not write it as a story.</li> <li>*Develop more ideas</li> <li>*Be more figurative.</li> <li>*Make logical sense</li> <li>*Use of language</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Use a dictionary.</li> <li>*Use nouns and adjectives</li> <li>*Make a mindmap</li> <li>*Read more articles on a daily basis.</li> <li>*Read a different book once a month.</li> <li>*How to attract my reader.</li> <li>*Use figurative language.</li> <li>*Sensory detail.</li> <li>*descriptive use of verbs.</li> </ul> <p>description ⇒ vivid ⇒ SMC 5 senses ⇒ textures? lights? problems?</p>

**Figure 7.52: School B Grade 11 learner P: goals and strategies**

The application of strategies was a focus point at school B. According to the teacher, the teaching of strategies was solidified when it was applied to respond to feedback:

*R: Maybe I can remember because this task is so descriptive and we've been given strategies, and I have thought of strategies, I can go, "Oh do this a bit more". So certainly very, very interesting to watch them give one another feedback and see that some of them are pushing it and trying to go, "Actually I can suggest this, I can suggest this" (D15, 15:15, 3781:4121).*

The synchronous peer feedback resulted in the learners learning from one another. They could respond to the feedback by using strategies to improve their descriptive writing. Learner K analysed her peer's essay to determine what succeeded as descriptive writing:

*Q: And was that something you and your peer discussed or did you figure that out alone?*

*R: I decided to figure it out on my own, and I think looking at her essay as well, it was very well written and stuff and I saw a okay, she*

*is not using as many figures of speech as I am but it is still very good. So is using a lot of descriptive adjectives (D19, 19:27, 7050:7396).*

The teacher agreed that one of the advantages of peer feedback was the critical reading of another's work:

*Q: Do you think it will help them to practice reading critically or is that too hard to do with your peer?*

*R: Also interesting that, because the whole goal of what we try and do with them is get them to think critically and, because that is such a complex process, they often lack confidence in their ability to do so. But yes, absolutely, the goal of peer feedback has to be a critical assessment of each other's work (D15, 15:16, 4198:4616).*

The peer feedback enabled the learners to engage with their writing critically, add to their goals and learn from one another. However, as explained by the school C focus group, the expectation that the feedback would help them to know what to do to correct their work was not always met:

*R: ... and not what I was doing wrong, so I did not know exactly what to fix, but then I could tell that my essay was like mxm [sic] (not good), but I didn't know exactly what to fix because she only told me what I am doing right (D26, 26:17, 3710:3929).*

At school D some focus group learners felt that they would not use the WFT2 again; the explanation was that it did not provide information on how to correct the writing:

*R: Because I feel like sometimes okay people telling me where I am going wrong and I can see that I need to fix my points and stuff, but I don't think there is a point if you don't know how to fix it, if you are not told what you can do (D36, 36:67, 21986:22275).*

#### **7.4.3.4 Discussion of the *How am I going?* column findings**

As noted in subsection 7.4.2.4, at the three schools A, C, and D the complete essay was written and the product was the aim, thus the peer and teacher feedback on the draft was not focused on a specific area of writing. Additionally, the teachers gave the learners a variety of topics to choose from in an effort to make the task accessible. However, at schools C and D it complicated the learners' ability to provide feedback on the content. The learners needed feedback on their formulation of argument or

discussion, but received feedback on various areas of their writing, including error detection.

Similar to the WFT1 findings, it was again illustrated how clear task goals translated into clear feedback. Where learners had difficulty understanding the task, the learners reverted to surface level feedback because they could point out errors such as spelling and punctuation.

The practise task at school B meant that the focus was on learning how to write descriptive pieces and not an entire essay. The feedback was thus focused on the aim to use language to produce descriptive writing. Therefore peer feedback did not focus as much on error detection and the learners were able engage critically with their writing. In some cases where the task goals included strategies, the peers were able to point out ways to improve on the writing. Furthermore, some peers gave feedback in relation to the task criteria and not only on the learners' task goals and, in one example, added to the learner's goals. The peer feedback discussion and in particular feedback that included strategies, indicated how learners were able to learn from one another.

#### **7.4.4 Grade 11 *Where to next?***

A brief overview of the *Where to next?* column is presented (7.4.4.1). In this column how the WFT2 facilitated the learners' reflections on the goals they achieved and the learning gaps recognised is explored in 7.4.4.2. Lastly, the *Where to next?* column findings are discussed in subsection 7.4.4.3.

##### **7.4.4.1 Overview of the *Where to next?* column**

This section of the WFT2 required the learners to analyse the feedback information to determine which goals they had achieved by ticking their goals in the first column. The learners noted their successful strategies, recognising what they could do on their own. The next two questions *Areas to develop to improve my writing* and *I need more feedback about/help with* required the differentiated identification of learning gaps. The section discusses how the learners used the WFT2 to identify the three ZPD levels

(What I can do on my own, what I can do with help, what I cannot do) and how the learners tracked their learning progress during the process of writing the task.

#### 7.4.4.2 *Goals achieved and gaps identified*

Similar to the previous writing tasks, the teachers' feedback on the task took the form of tick marks, coded marks, comments and, at schools A, C, and D, a mark according to the rubric. Furthermore, at schools B, C, and D global feedback was provided when the learners received the assessed tasks. Therefore, learners had access to multiple forms of feedback and the expectation was that the WFT2 would reflect the feedback information so that it could be used to enhance learning.

The focus group learners at school B focused on the teachers' comments and what was underlined or indicated on their essays to determine where they were successful and where the gaps were. The comment was interpreted as addressing the most pertinent issues, both positive and negative: "*R: And then like the biggest issues will also get a comment*" (D16, 16:44, 8714:8850).

The school D teacher informed the learners that "*the absence of a comments means the writing was fairly successful*". Similarly the learners at schools A (D 6) and C (29), as they did with WFT1, judged the success of their writing by the absence of the teacher's marking or comment:

*R: With me, with my like the peers and the teacher, looking at how she edited my work, all of my goals, like she did not give me, she didn't tell me things like spelling* (D6, 6:37, 9127:9296).

Assuming that the work was correct due to the absence of feedback, indicating the contrary was not received as reliable information by learner TM at school C: "*So I am left to think that the things that I achieved were the ones she didn't list here as a mistake or something*" (D29, 29:30, 7422:7537).

A learner from the focus group at school A acknowledged that, although the examples of the peers' writing were helpful, the feedback from the teacher was still what she relied on to determine her progress:



*R: I actually like to improve my writing, I get it from my peers, like reading what they have written, it shows me like, I do really need the teacher to tell me that this and that is wrong. I had to see from my peer by reading her essay and I saw like, okay this is more interesting than mine (D6, 6:42, 10118:10411).*

The Grade 11 teacher at school A could not conduct the lesson due to other urgent school commitments, therefore the learners and the teacher did not have the opportunity to complete the *Where to next?* column on the WFT2. The learners had to consider their essays and determine the gaps in their learning without the benefit of a feedback discussion such as global feedback. The focus group participants completed the column on their own before the interview was conducted. Learner C, quoted below, explained how she used the WFT2 structure to analyse the feedback to determine success and gaps in learning and record it on the WFT2. She focused on the strategies which included “checking notes”, “checked my essay ... if it follows the writing process. I had peers to check my essays and my mistakes” as Figure 7.53 shows (squared in red).

*R: How was I able to, I looked at the goals and then I compared, and then if this one is not okay, and this one is going with, is not corresponding with my essay, then I know, okay, I like that and say next time I have to do this. Then following like that, so that is how I see, okay, I have improved (D7, 7:34, 6722:7021).*

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<p><b>Task goals:</b>  <i>Identify arguments, obtain</i>  <b>Planning</b>            - extensive research ✓            - establish your point of view (pick a side) ✓            - Use a range of arguments to support your view ✓  <b>Drafting</b>            - Paragraphing (introduction, body, conclusion) ?            - Use Persuasive language ✓            * Conclusion            • Strong            • Clear your point of view has to be ✓            • Convincing</p> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b>            * Take note!            - Time management ?            - handwriting has to be clear ✓            - Grammar (Spelling) ✓            - Sentence construction ✓            - To not exceed the number of words given. ?</p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <p>* your handwriting is much more clear this time ✓            * your essay was convincing ✓            * you showed different points of your views of each side ✓</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1st column)</b></p> <p><b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> I check my notes about how to write a persuasive essay and I checked my essay (argumentative) if it follows the writing process. I had my peers to check my essay and my mistakes.</p> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b>  <b>Learner:</b>            Time management. To not exceed the number of word given. Paragraphing.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b></p> <p><b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b></p>

**Figure 7.53: School A Grade 11 learner C: completed WFT2**

Learner T at school A recognised that the teacher’s feedback on the gaps in learning would become the focus areas in the next task:

*R: Like it helps me improve like on the following task that we do, that involves writing. I tend to think that is why she told me maybe that I should write words in full and should avoid using like, you know ma'am, instead of writing things, I should have, may have chosen better words (D9, 9:21, 4805:5085).*

Learner T used the feedback she received during the writing to inform her goals achieved and gaps in learning such as “spelling and ... contrived word forms”. She identified these as areas she needed more help with: “paragraphing”, “spelling and avoiding contrived word forms” (Figure 7.54, squared in yellow). Squared in red, “improved my format as well as grammar” and “improved spelling” is how she tracked her progress during the process from her goals to feedback and how she achieved her goals, “consulting with others” and “using a dictionary”.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<p><b>Task goals:</b> <i>academic; thoughtful</i></p> <p><b>Planning:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extensive research.</li> <li>- Establish your point of view (P.O.V.)</li> <li>- Use a range of arguments to support your view.</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Drafting-</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paragraphing (Intro, body, conclusion)</li> <li>- Use persuasive language</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Conclusion:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conclusion must be strong</li> <li>• Has to be convincing</li> <li>• Conclusion must be clear</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve diction</li> <li>- Try to improve spelling mistakes</li> <li>- Try to use persuasive language.</li> </ul> </p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose better words to work with.</li> <li>- I have tried to spell more words correctly.</li> <li>- Managed to write words in full eg. don't, won't, can't.</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use appropriate words and avoid using social media tendencies of writing words in an abbreviated form.</li> <li>- Try to work with a dictionary when writing.</li> </ul> </p>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</b></p> <p><b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I have improved my format as well as grammar by consulting with others.</li> <li>- Improved spelling mistakes by using a dictionary.</li> </ul> </p> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b>  <b>Learner:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop my paragraphing and ability to separate them.</li> <li>- Work more on spelling and avoid contrived word form.</li> </ul> <b>Teacher:</b></p> <p><b>need more feedback about/help with:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I need more help with spellings and avoiding contrived word form.</li> </ul> </p>

Figure 7.54: School A Grade 11 learner T: completed WFT2

The global feedback from the school C teacher on the marked essays focussed on the common errors identified. The errors were mostly at task level: “*language, sentence construction, tenses concord and word choice and punctuation which indicated a lack of editing*” (D44, 44:1, 01:1520). The teacher’s comments on the WFT2, for example Figure 7.55, were an indication of her expectations regarding the success of the tasks: “*Sentence construction poor. Too many grammatical errors. Check spelling too. Word count. Use factual evidence and be more persuasive*”. The dissonance between task criteria and success criteria was evident, supporting the learners concern about the goals and the alignment with the teacher’s expectations (subsection 7.4.2).

Illustrated in Figure 7.55 (squared in yellow) the feedback regarding the “*figures of speech*” which was in relation to learner TN’s own goals, was accepted, however, the learner expressed difficulty responding to feedback without understanding what to do:

*R: My teacher’s feedback outlined that the last, the last, my goal to insert figures of speech and you know, and some flavour it never really worked and she also identified the grammatical errors. So I still stand on that, I don’t know what is grammar, so I can’t fix it (D28, 28:17, 6255:6525).*

In Figure 7.55 the limited progress learner TN made was illustrated “*Planning and drafting*” (squared in red). The goal to use figures of speech was not achieved (squared in yellow). As was discussed in subsection 7.4.3.3, the peer feedback was clearly informative and helpful, however, the WFT2 clearly reflected the learner’s difficulty with the task. This gap could have been addressed if the task goals had been clearly stated and aligned with the learning intention.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<b>Task goals:</b> <b>Planning</b> I want my planning to give the reader an idea about what I'm going to write in my essay. <b>Drafting</b> I want my draft to help me with big words and errors.  <b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> inserting figures of speech and some flavour to my words.	<b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The introduction is good, as it does not beat around the bush and the reader is already aware of what the whole essay is about.</li> <li>You should look out for contractions, and using capital letters in the middle of a sentence.</li> <li>There are also careless spelling errors, and grammar mistakes.</li> <li>Check your punctuation marks after each sentence.</li> <li>Also lesson your words.</li> </ul> <b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go over your essay once more and read it, because there are many careless mistakes you may have prevented had you read over your work.</li> <li>Count your number of words and scratch out unimportant and redundant ideas.</li> </ul>	<b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</b> <b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> Planning and drafting  <b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> <b>Learner:</b> need to improve my vocabulary - need to read more books - need more work on grammar  <b>Teacher:</b> Where are the figures of speech? Sentence structure... - Too many grammatical errors - Check spellings too. - word count had evidence and be more persuasive. <b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b>

**Figure 7.55: School C Grade 11 learner TN: completed WFT2**

The teacher's feedback on the final draft did not in all cases align with the task goals. The fact that some learners did not understand the difference between argumentative and discursive writing emerged as the major learning gap and undermined constructive feedback on the goals. It would, however, be possible for the teachers and the learners to consider the gaps in learning and use these to inform the next writing tasks. Focusing the task goals on a clear learning intention and strategies to achieve the goals would avoid confusion and result in specific feedback. Learner TM at school C came to the conclusion that the WFT2 was his own rubric, in other words, it structured his writing and clearly showed his goals and progress:

*R: Mm. Oh, it shows me like that when I, when I am writing, I don't just write because usually I haven't actually used that rubric, I only did the planning and so forth. So this is my own rubric that I would understand because I might not be having the same goals as somebody else. Let's say a teacher was to use these to mark, they would probably give me higher marks because they see, okay, this was, this is what you want to achieve (D29, 29:35, 8903:9183).*

At school D, the essay was a portfolio task for the purposes of marks which was the same as a formal task in the GDE schools. Thus the essays were assessed according to the rubric and a mark allocated. As part of the global feedback, the teacher informed

the learners that the marking was not focusing closely on language errors but on the goals they had looked at together. The learners received substantial feedback (Figure 7.56); the teacher marked the essays indicating errors by underlining or making comments, there was a mark and an indication on the rubric where the mark was allocated. In addition the teacher commented on the WFT2, both in the *Teacher* area and on the goals (Figure 7.57).

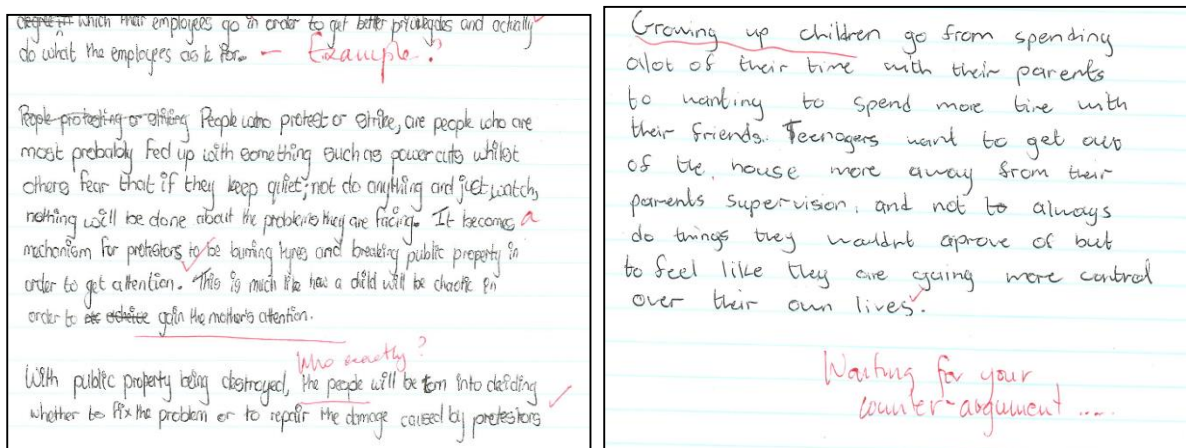


Figure 7.56: School D Grade 11 teacher feedback on writing task

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<p><b>Task goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not make grammar and punctuation mistakes.</li> <li>- Not be too informal</li> <li>- Have only relevant information</li> <li>- <u>Not make the essay personal</u></li> <li>- Not use dialogues</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using appropriate language at all times</li> <li>- Not repeating myself</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <p>It is biased (you need to elaborate) for both sides</p> <p>There is a stance which is good.</p> <p>- maybe a little more of your voice needed.</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <p>- make my counter-argument stronger.</p>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</b></p> <p><b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b></p> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b></p> <p><b>Learner:</b> Try to make my argument stronger so that it balances my essay. Be able to balance putting my own opinion but not make the essay personal.</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b> Argument is clear and fair - some examples of failures of [unclear] (e.g. violence, lived things, could have helped your discussion to be more assertive).</p> <p><b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b></p> <p>Making my argument clearer and adding more relevant examples to get my point across.</p>

Figure 7.57: School D Grade 11 teacher's comments on WFT2

Unlike schools A and C, the learners at school D used the feedback from the rubric and the teacher's comments to determine which goals they had achieved:

*R: Well for me it showed me that I did achieve most of these goals, especially like here in the quality of discussion which counted for most of the marks (D36, 36:14, 2537:2690).*

Furthermore, the learners at school D used the rubric to determine the gaps in learning too:

*R: Well she did write the commented points and then we go to the rubric and I saw where I lost my marks, which is by the register and target audience, that is how I saw (D36, 36:43, 11668:11977).*

*R: For me it is like to look at the rubric to see where I can improve, because I lost most of the marks on the introduction and conclusion. She told me that my conclusion is lacking, I don't know like, elaboration, explaining more of what I said (D36, 36:44, 12205:12451).*

The teacher was able to engage in her feedback on the WFT2 with the goals and identify the gaps in learning, therefore aligning the goals and the success criteria:

*R: It is has given me structure. Where I would normally scribble all over the rubric, I can now refer back to their feedback, their initial goal setting and my feedback is now in line with that (D35, 35:7, 5483:5679).*

The teacher noticed that the use of the WFT2 influenced the assessment of the essays. Whereas in the interview in the first term she expressed her frustration with marking all the mistakes, the WFT2 provided a structure to the assessment, allowing a focus on the task goals:

*R: Well I still use the rubric, it has made me consider the rubric in a different way. Good thing that I was, they were together, because what I found is that instead of being so fixated on their use of language and all those punctuation and stylistic errors, I realised now that my, their goals, my goals, for a discursive essay, are relevant in a specific way, I was no longer nit-picky, (D35, 35:14, 8594:8983).*

Learner TB was able to identify goals achieved (Figure 7.58, squared in red) and the gaps in learning (Figure 7.58, squared in yellow). The WFT2 indicated how the *Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies)* section was either superfluous because the feedback included strategies or there was an absence of strategies.

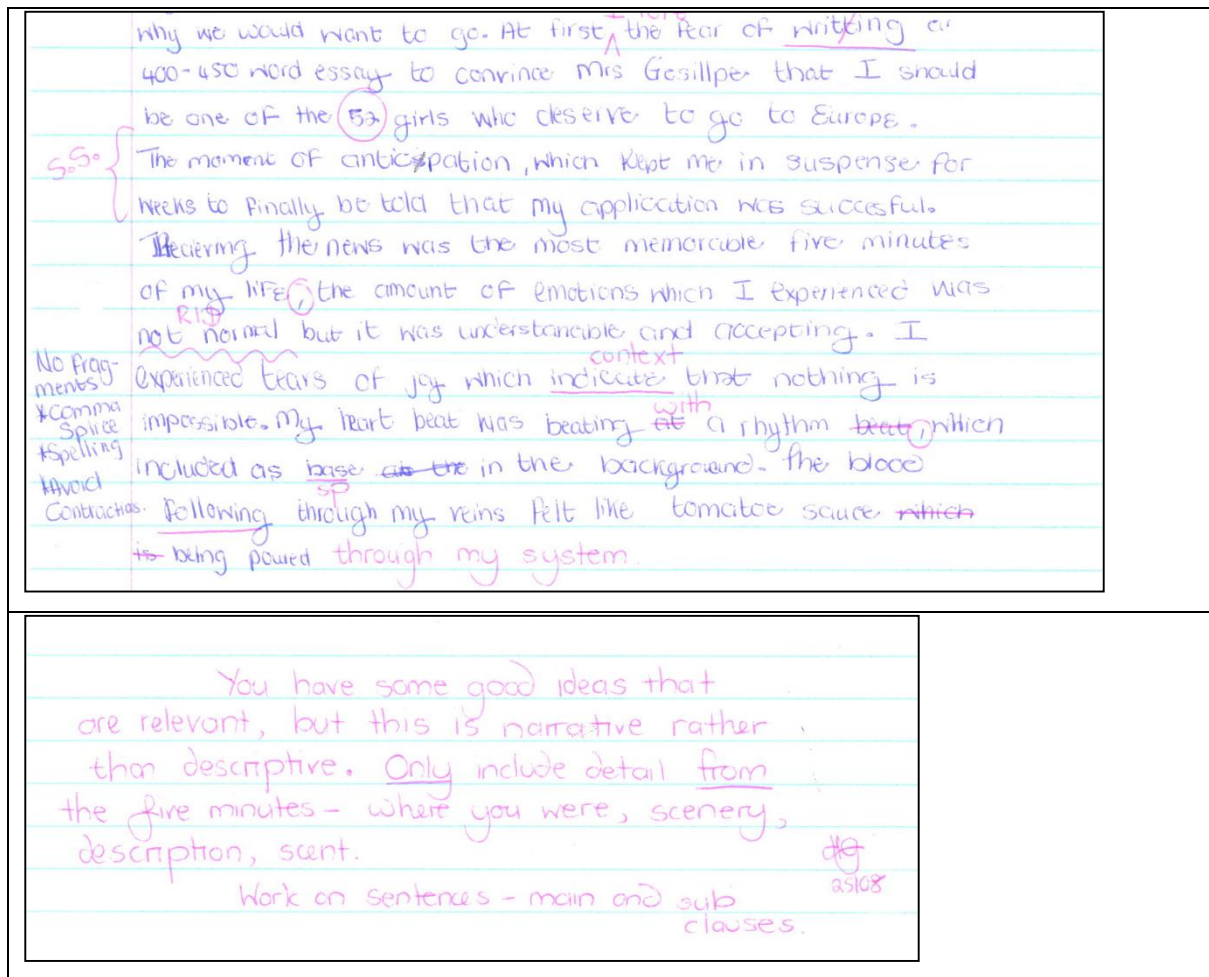
1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<b>Task goals:</b> Always use the 3rd person Relevance, must relate to the topic. No dialogue!! ✓	<b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> Try not to use colloquial phrases like "newscasts" or "back to the city". In the intro make a clear statement and a counter-statement. Paragraph 2 is really good.	<b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1st column)</b>  <b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> I made sure that I didn't make personal statements.
<b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> * Relevance, Never personalise * Spelling ✓ * Sentence constructions * Elegance	<b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b>	<b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> <b>Learner:</b> I will try to avoid to become narrative when I'm writing. I must focus on not being one-sided and explore the topic. I should also focus more on the topic and not go off topic. <b>Teacher:</b> You lapsed into narrative. Arg + counter arg not clear. Do not mix up your paragraphs. Parents' views?? <b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b> My arguments and make my counter arguments clear. My points must be more clear and valid. I need help with not mixing up my paragraphs and stick to one point as I am writing my paragraphs

**Figure 7.58: School D Grade 11 learner TB: completed WFT2**

The Grade 11 focus group at school D observed that the WFT2 allowed for a systematic completion of the writing:

*R: I think the tool helps me be systematic in writing, like, because now all the time we need to do process writing, but now it is like I can see, the process has become like rigorous because I am doing things step by step (D36, 36:55, 17148:17370).*

At school B the teacher provided global feedback on the descriptive paragraphs she assessed. The paragraphs contained detailed feedback in the form of marking and editing marks, followed by an informative comment at the end of the paragraph (Figure 7.59).



**Figure 7.59: School B Grade 11 learner P: teacher comment on task**

The learners were reminded that the WFT2 was crucial as analysis to inform the next piece of writing. The teacher pointed out areas of success such as “*use of senses, good detail and use of imagery*”, and things to avoid: “*repetitions, pay attention to sentence structure and use of finite verbs.*” (D42, 42:2, 4501:4941). While the things to avoid were not explicit in the task criteria, they formed part of the ongoing language learning and spoke to the learners’ own goals. The learners used the teacher’s feedback comments to determine their learning gaps:

*R: I determine that when I looked back at my paragraph and I kind of like mentally like ticked I did this, I can see I did this, I wasn't too redundant, I didn't repeat it, emphasised on this (D19, 19:39, 11301:11493).*

The teacher handed out a recently completed formal transactional task. The learners analysed the feedback on the formal task, comparing it to the descriptive paragraph,



synthesised the feedback and completed the WFT2. The comparison of the two tasks enabled the learners to further analyse the gaps in their learning.

Learner K explained that she was accustomed to self-reflection and used the reflection page in her workbook to record the areas she wanted to focus on, thus the WFT2 overlapped with her practice:

*R: I'm like okay. If this is a major problem in my cycle test then it also reflects on my essay, so I need to focus on that as well. And I also looked at my green book, I have a page where I write the areas that I need to focus on, so I went back to that in my previous essays (D19, 19:38, 10538:10809).*

Her completed WFT2 (Figure 7.60) showed, squared in red, her tracking of her progress and, squared in yellow, the gaps identified by the teacher and what she felt she needed help with.

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<p><b>Task goals:</b> Specific Goals to have</p> <p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>list 5 details and</li> <li>select one that is not too complex but has alot of detail</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting Cue:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>using specific adjectives</li> <li>remanning on specific topic</li> <li>avoiding cliches entirely</li> <li>relating back to five senses</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b> (focus always my writing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of punctuation</li> <li>Not be redundant</li> <li>staying on topic</li> <li>Developing more on idea and explaining further</li> </ul>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b> - Really good / But do not over complicate</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>finding synonyms and connotations</li> <li>expand on mind map ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1st column)</b></p> <p><b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mind mapped on different aspects of the topic in order to avoid redundancy</li> <li>focused on more personal aspects in order to make ideas more descriptive</li> <li>tried looking for synonyms in order to avoid cliches</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> Learner:</p> <p><b>Teacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sentence structure - more specifically main and subordinate clauses</li> <li>finding better expressions</li> </ul> <p><b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b> staying on topic</p>

**Figure 7.60: School B Grade 11 learner K: completed WFT2**

The WFT2 below (Figure 7.61) is an example of how learner P at school B used the tool to plan the goals, think of strategies, record peer feedback and reflect on the feedback information to determine the goals achieved and the gaps in learning. While the completion of the WFT2 depended on the classroom contextual factors, including

the way the WFT2 was implemented by the teachers, the learners' engagement with the WFT2 illustrated the learning in process. Figure 7.61 reflects one learner's engagement with the WFT2. While it may seem detailed, it may also reflect the learner's need to focus her writing learning on the gaps in her learning. However, the important point to note was that the WFT2 made the process open to analysis both by the learners and the teachers.

(2/3) page

WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL LEARNER NAME: KCOYM GRADE: 11C

Type of task: Descriptive writing

Phases:

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next? (30/05/2017)
<p><b>Task goals:</b> <i>Writers needing descriptive writing, 5 senses, parts of speech</i></p> <p><b>Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*List details</li> <li>*Add my emotions to my writing.</li> <li>*Focus on spelling mistakes</li> <li>*Have faith in my work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Drafting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Use specific adjectives</li> <li>*Use more formal/substantive words</li> <li>*Apply parts of speech</li> <li>*Apply better diction</li> <li>*Get my sentence focus "I" order</li> <li>*Make the text feel/understand my five senses.</li> <li>*Making it personal</li> </ul> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Better way of diction</li> <li>*Focus on sentence structure.</li> <li>*Paragraphs should make logical sense</li> <li>*Comma splices</li> <li>*Sentence construction.</li> <li>*Make it more entertaining</li> </ul> <p><i>focused, personal narrative</i></p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Confident</li> <li>*Avoid clichés.</li> <li>*Do not write it as a story.</li> <li>*Develop more ideas</li> <li>*Being more figurative.</li> <li>*Make logical sense</li> <li>*Use of language</li> </ul> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Use a dictionary.</li> <li>*List nouns and adjectives</li> <li>*Make a mindmap.</li> <li>*Read more articles on a daily basis.</li> <li>*Read a different book once a month.</li> <li>*How to attract my reader.</li> <li>*Use figurative language.</li> <li>*Sensory detail.</li> <li>*descriptive use of verbs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1st column)</b></p> <p><b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Used descriptive language</li> <li>*Writing was personal.</li> <li>*Used a mindmap to separate ideas</li> <li>*Expand relevant ideas</li> <li>*Had no faith within me/writing</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b></p> <p><b>Learner:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Include finite verbs + subordinate clauses</li> <li>*Think quickly</li> <li>*Have a focused idea.</li> </ul> <p><b>Teacher:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Work on sentences</li> <li>*Include 5 senses</li> <li>*Ideas needing descriptive writing should be effective</li> </ul> <p><b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Diction finding</li> <li>*Creating an imagery imagination.</li> <li>*Stay focused on one idea.</li> <li>*Make it personal.</li> <li>*Make the writing come alive</li> <li>*Vivid, shared experience.</li> </ul>

*Effective writing -> diction -> suggestions. -> sentence structure -> finite verbs. -> main clause -> subordinate clause.*

*description -> vivid -> shared experiences -> adjectives -> detail -> imagery -> focused -> 10 minutes.*

*5 senses -> textures? -> lights -> patterns?*

Figure 7.61: School B Grade 11 learner P: completed WFT2

#### 7.4.4.3 Discussion of the *Where to next?* column findings

The last column on the WFT2 allowed the learners to reflect on where they were in their writing learning. The learners were able to use the WFT2 to track their learning, identify goals achieved and the gaps in their learning.

The feedback from the teacher on the completed task was analysed to determine their successes and the differentiated gaps in their learning. The learners' completion of the

WFT2 and the teachers' comments on the WFT2 indicated clearly the alignment or lack of alignment between the task goals and the teachers' expectations.

The learners used the teachers' feedback as well as the feedback they received during the process of writing to complete the last column. The learners at schools A, C, and D found the essays challenging. The lack of feedback and strategies recorded indicated their difficulty, it was thus possible for the teachers and the learners to clearly see that there were gaps in learning regarding the writing of these essays.

The quality of the learners' responses and the strategies they used to achieve their goals were not as important as the purpose of the question was for the learners to analyse how they achieved their goals. A further function of the last column was to inform the formulation of task goals for the next writing task. The information regarding strategies used or not used, as well as the gaps in learning, was indicative of where the learners were in their learning.

## **7.5 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FROM GRADE 10 AND 11 IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT2**

Sections 7.3 and 7.4 dealt with the WFT2 operationalised at curriculum implementation level, representing the learners' experience at curriculum attainment level. While the subunits at each of the four schools had their own contexts, themes emerged from the implementation and the key findings discussed below are organised using the WFT2 structure. *Where am I going?* (7.5.1), *How am I going?* (7.5.2), and *Where to next?* (7.5.3).

### **7.5.1 *Where am I going?***

With reference to the findings in chapter 6 (6.7) the clarifying of the task goals was an area to develop for the WFT2 implementation. The teachers made the task goals more specific, however, the majority of the goals still indicated what to do and not how to do it. In cases where the task goals were shared or universal this created a common focus in the writing. The success criteria relating to the assessment rubric were absent and, as most of the tasks were practise tasks, the assessment was not formal and a mark was not allocated. However, the assessment criteria were not made clear and their

absence meant that the teacher and the learners did not agree on what success looked like. Where an example was available (Grade 10 at school B and Grade 11 at schools C and D), it did aid the learners in understanding what a successful task should look like.

Most classes wrote essays and the difficulty in formulating goals addressing the content was evident. It was easier to formulate surface level goals aimed at the *language style and editing* rubric criteria than goals relating *content and planning* to the expression of their ideas to produce the content. Consistent with the WFT1 findings, the learners' formulation of goals indicated their understanding of the learning intention. This was clear where the completion of the whole writing task was the learning intention. The learners understood that the entire task and all the criteria would be assessed, with the result that there were too many goals to allow for effective, focused assessment for learning. Where the writing task was aimed at practising a specific skill, such as Grade 10 school D and Grade 11 school B, the task goals were clearer and not as varied.

The writing task type and topic must make the task accessible to the learners so that they may demonstrate their writing learning. Where the task type or topic was difficult to understand, as with Grade 10 at school A and Grade 11 at schools C and D, it undermined the learners' ability to focus on the achievement of the task goals.

The learners showed an awareness of their own learning needs and, in some cases, their own goals augmented the task goals (Grade 10 at school D and Grade 11 at school B). The learners did not all use WFT1 or previous tasks as a reference to decide on their own goals. It is anticipated, however, that as an intervention such as the WFT2 is continuously used, the learners would identify the learning gaps or areas they wanted to address with more clarity and detail.

### **7.5.2 How am I going?**

The feedback in the classroom was in relation to the goals and because some of the goals were at surface level, the feedback was corrective. Furthermore, where the whole writing task was understood to be the learning aim, the learners needed all mistakes to be corrected. The learners were able to provide feedback particularly

where the task goals, such as surface level goals, were well understood. The feedback on the content was more difficult, especially where the learners were new to the tasks or where the tasks or topics were not well understood. Not all the learners were comfortable with the peer feedback, in particular where there was new learning such as with Grade 10 school B. The learners preferred feedback from the teacher as they felt it was more reliable.

The feedback lessons created discussions about the task goals and there was evidence of learners learning together (7.3.3 and 7.4.3). The function of the feedback was not only for error detection, but rather to facilitate a conversation about how to achieve the goals. In some cases the feedback resulted in a review of the goals or adding new goals. The learners could respond to corrective feedback on surface level goals. However, it was difficult to respond to feedback on *content and planning* or *structure* (features of *text*, *paragraph development* and *sentence construction*) where strategies were absent. However, on the whole the learners found the feedback helpful in identifying errors or, as in the case of Grade 11 at school B, noticing recurring issues in their writing.

Similar to the implementation of WFT1, the response to the *How am I going?* column of WFT2 was an indication of the level at which the learning was taking place. The feedback confirmed the level of the tasks stated in the first column; if the task goals were clear and at task level, it was easier for the learners to give each other corrective feedback. In general, the learners' ability to provide feedback was determined by how they themselves understood the task criteria and success criteria.

In the case of school D Grade 11 where the task goal focused on the *quality of discussion*, the feedback illustrated how difficult it was for the learners to provide feedback on goals that were not either right or wrong. The learners did not receive adequate scaffolding to provide feedback and stumbled over the topics as they could choose their topics from a list of five.

### **7.5.3 Where to next?**

The last column on WFT2 was adapted to include the three ZPD levels: *What I can do on my own*, *What I can do with help*, *What I cannot do*. These levels allowed for a

differentiated view of the gaps in learning. The learners were able to evaluate the feedback they received to complete the last column. The section, specifically for the teacher's comment, was helpful as either the teacher completed it or the learners recorded their teacher's comment.

The teachers' comments indicated the alignment or lack thereof with the task goals. The teachers' comments clearly indicated their expectations and, in some cases, these were incongruent with the task goals and the success criteria. The last column allowed for reflection on the learning, and the learners were able to analyse their task, and the feedback, to determine the areas of achievement and the different gaps in learning. In certain cases the feedback did not address the gap in learning. However, it was recognised by the learners that it was possible that the gaps would be incorporated and addressed in the next writing task.

The teachers' comments in this section reflected their expectations of the learners and did not always consider the learners' goals. The dissonance between the teachers' success criteria and the learners' goals would have been aligned if the success criteria, such as the rubric, had been agreed on. Some learners recognised that the WFT2 incorporated the task goals and thus the success criteria. Therefore if the WFT2 was used as a guide to writing and assessment, the teachers' assessment and the learners' goals would be aligned.

The WFT2 with the AFL and process writing steps integrated provided a structure represented by the three feedback questions. The use of the WFT2 facilitated the use of feedback to improve learning, but also to make the learning open to analyses by both the teachers and the learners. It was again clearly shown that the task goals predicted how effectively the feedback would be used to improve learning. It also demonstrated how strategies could be used to scaffold the learning, particularly when they were included in the task goals and reinforced in the feedback provided.

## **7.6 TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS ON WFT2 IMPLEMENTATION**

The evaluation of the tool represented the teachers' perception of the curriculum at implementation level. The reflections are discussed in three subsections: WFT2 structure (7.6.1), task goals (7.6.2) and learning gaps (7.6.3).

### 7.6.1 WFT2 structure

In the same way WFT1 influenced the teaching and learning, there was a solid indication that with WFT2 the task goals structured the writing task, both for the teachers and the learners. The Grade 11 teacher at school C explained that the *Where am I going?* column became the planning phase of the task:

*R: Because it has the, it has the elements that make up an essay anyway, so it was easy because when you are writing an essay, you need to plan, you need to draft, you need to focus on certain things because it picks out the criteria for writing anyway (D25, 25:59, 10106:10359).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school C observed that the WFT2 acted as a scaffold for the learners as it provided structure to the process of checking their progress:

*R: Because you could see from their essay writing that they were able to, it's scaffolded their essay, it scaffolded their essay and they were able to draw back and check on the task goals I had given them, their task goals and their topic and that made their essay much more cohesive than before (D20, 20:5, 1578:1775).*

### 7.6.2 Task goals

With the implementation of WFT1, the task goals materialised as an important element in the implementation of AFL and the use of effective feedback. The formulation of the task goals is discussed in subsection 7.6.2.1 and how specific task goals communicate the learning intention in subsection 7.6.2.2.

#### 7.6.2.1 Formulation of task goals

Responding to the WFT1 findings and the critical role of the task goals, the teachers were asked to think about goal formulation in terms of *what* and *how* they wanted the learners to learn. The task goals directed how the learning would take place, therefore, the task goals articulated the task criteria and the success criteria; the task goals showed how the learners would achieve success. In other words, teachers had to be

very clear about what the learning would be and how they, and the learners, would know that the learning was successful.

The process of converting task and success criteria into task goals was complex. The matter was complicated in schools where the writing of a complete essay was the goal. If the completion of an essay was the primary goal, it was quite difficult to focus on specific areas for learning and the assessment reverted to focus on language, style, editing, and structure. Therefore, the task goals functioned as a checklist with the attention on surface level goals.

The Grade 11 teacher at school C explained that the goals should function as a checklist for the learners to know what to do:

*R: They referred to their goals, well most of them did, not a lot because they still had errors, but they were supposed to use the goals to refer to, to check, it is kind of a check list (D25, 25:13, 1632:1817).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school D explained that the practise task gave her the opportunity to give the learners feedback on their goal formulation:

*R: Well like I said, it helped me to be more specific and it helped me also to validate their goals and whether or not they have met them. Or to help them refine their goals, like if I could see that their goals were not specific enough (D30, 30:50, 13159:13395).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school C recognised that her feedback would inform the learners where their essay writing was successful and where there were learning gaps:

*R: ...then the assessment part would immediately also benefit me because then I would write the children achieved this low mark not because they don't understand how to write an essay, they didn't meet all their task goals (D20, 20:44, 16631:16846).*

The teaching of descriptive writing succeeded at school B Grade 11 and school D Grade 10 where it was focused on the specific aim of learning the skill of descriptive writing, including how descriptive writing could be achieved. The Grade 10 teacher at school D could focus the goals on descriptive writing:



*R: Now what describing looks like because we have broken it down to the very, very minute details of adjectives or like strong adjectives and so on when we were describing (7.3.1) (D30, 30:1, 208:887).*

The expectation was that if the task criteria and goals were provided, verbally and in written format, the goals would be clear, specific and the same for all the learners. However, the learners' understanding of the criteria varied and the teacher or learners might have added goals while in the process of writing.

#### *7.6.2.2 Formulation of own goals*

The differentiation between task goals and own goals may not continue to be necessary as learners may develop their SRL skills to integrate specific task goals they want to focus on for their own learning. It could also be possible to differentiate the goals as the learners choose to focus on areas they need to develop. There may be learners who do not need to focus on sentence construction as they have identified it as a goal achieved in a previous task. The Grade 10 teacher at school D explained:

*R: Because a lot of, like I feel like the lazy kids are going to go straight to the task goals and write those down as their own goals, and the more intelligent ones will go there and go, well I am already really good at this, okay let me focus more on this (D30, 30:58, 16257:16516).*

The WFT2 illustrated the differentiation where each learner could focus on his/her own level of task goal, writing and achievement:

*R: And for someone else who is more, you know I found with S, who is the top achiever, I mean his descriptive essay, his descriptive essay relied heavily on adjectives and adjectives and figurative language, whereas for the weaker boy, his focus will be on senses, because that is the simplest way for him, whereas the higher learner was able to integrate the senses and the figurative language (D30, 30:19, 5167:5564).*

The Grade 11 teacher from school D made it clear that she expected her learners to be able to use the gaps in learning to inform their goals:

*R: Ja. I said here their goals, I must let them reach them themselves. So I will discuss the concept and then in the goal*

*section of the feedback they must find their own weaknesses in setting their goals and then set their goals (D35, 35:25, 13612:13843).*

### **7.6.3 Learning gaps**

The teachers were asked to reflect on how the WFT2 helped them to identify gaps in the learners' learning. Teachers and learners referred to the "strengths and weaknesses" in terms of goals achieved and gaps in learning. Furthermore, the gaps would inform the next writing tasks' learning goals, as the school C Grade 10 teacher explained:

*R: You know, so that has actually shown me my children's weaknesses and my children's strengths and that has shown me what is it that I need to work on more, language structure and conventions (D20, 20:38, 14365:14554).*

*It would make it easier for me because then I would pick up immediately what is that they don't understand, what is it that I need to work more on them with? (D20, 20:43, 16462:16626).*

According to the Grade 11 teacher at school C, the WFT2 allowed the learners to identify the gaps in learning by looking at the teacher's comments and in relation to their goals:

*R: It makes it visible because now they also can see where they are actually failing, like they are failing, they can now see that where their problems are per se (D25, 25:44, 7399:7561).*

*R: ... like if we give them back this tool, and if they read through it, if they read my comment, and they go back and read their goals, they can then see where the disparities are, where the problems are and they can try and fix them (D25, 25:45, 7564:7792).*

The Grade 10 teacher at school A recognised that one of the aims of the WFT2 was to monitor the learning. With the WFT the gap could be addressed where in the past the teacher would have continued without awareness of the gaps, which she described as "revelations".

*R: I think the whole purpose of the tool is to do that, because now there's revelations the following day like you would have moved on, right (D1, 1:58 - 1:57, 9876:10229).*

The Grade 11 teacher at school D read the learners' reflections on the WFT2 to determine the gaps the learners had identified; she used it to track their progress. She recognised that the WFT2 showed the learners' reflections on their learning and how they could be aligned with the teachers' learning intentions:

*R: I have seen their reflection on where they can now pick up their weaknesses. Which helps me a lot because now those weaknesses that I have been going over all throughout the year, I can see that they are now thinking about their learning. Seeing actually where they do generalised too often or they do get too emotive. So it just helped me see that they are now in sync, they have some aspects of what I have said throughout the year (D35, 35:8 - 35:9, 5910:6284).*

Other teachers noticed too how the WFT2 reflected the learners' thinking. The Grade 10 teacher at school A remarked that the learners' completion of the WFT indicated where the "thinking stopped":

*R: So you will even see those that couldn't finish their essays, they got lost somewhere, and they didn't know how to come about achieving a certain goal. Then you could tell they were lost because when you look at their tool it's only up to a certain point. Then it makes sense to me, you can't write an essay completely if you couldn't complete your tool. So then I thought OK now maybe because they couldn't complete a step, it meant the thinking also stopped, you know (D1, 1:52, 8212:8680).*

Similarly, the Grade 11 teacher at school B explained to the learners that their engagement with the WFT2 reflected their engagement with the writing task:

*R: The teacher guided them by explaining that they will internalise and replicate what they have done well. The teacher commented that the most developed responses on the WFT are an indication of their level of engagement and thinking about work. The more simplistic answers are an indication of looking for shortcuts in writing process, it is transferred into writing process (D42, 42:1, 5176:5737).*

The WFT2 therefore not only indicated the learning gaps but also gave the teachers insight into the learners' thinking processes.

## 7.7 DISCUSSION OF THE WFT2 IMPLEMENTATION

The second implementation of the WFT succeeded at an operational level with the teachers and the learners understanding how the tool could be used. Consistent with what Wiliam (2014) claims, the teachers made the WFT their own, integrating it into their lessons in their own way.

The WFT2 succeeded, as did WFT1, in combining the AFL and process writing steps and the teachers believed that the WFT2 would be useful in future writing lessons. The tool also succeeded in providing a structure to the writing process, making the formulation of task goals and the feedback critical components. The learners could follow the planning, drafting, revising steps of process writing and used the goals as a guide to their writing. The feedback was effective in helping the learners check their progress against their goals and identify gaps in learning.

The WFT2 illustrated that the formulation of clear task goals that are aligned with the task criteria and success criteria was complex. The task goals must clearly reflect the learning intention and should be as a result of an effective teaching phase (subsection 3.2.3). The WFT2 made the learning intentions, which may have been intended or unintended, visible. Particularly where the writing of an entire essay was the goal, the learning intention was the writing of an essay; however, the assessment was, as directed by the rubric, of all the elements of essay writing. The difficulty the school A learners had understanding the writing of an argumentative essay and their inaccessible topic, indicated that answering *what* and *how* to do the task might not be enough but that the *why* also needed to be addressed. If learners understood the purpose of the tasks and what they meant for their learning to write, the *why* and the *what* and the *how* would become the task goals.

The feedback was a strong indicator of the level of learning taking place. The levels of the task goals were reflected in the feedback the learners received; surface level goals resulted in corrective feedback. The learners' expectations of peer feedback remained that mistakes would be eliminated. The corrective feedback addressed that need, however, because the feedback was largely in relation to the task goals, not all the mistakes were always corrected. Learners had to use other sources of feedback such

as synchronous feedback from the teacher and their own assessment of their writing to improve their drafts.

Peer feedback was not as effective where the learners felt unsure about the validity of the peer feedback as it would influence their result. This reinforced the notion that learners accepted peer feedback on task level goals where the success criteria were clear. However, peer feedback on content might be received as subjective in the absence of clear success criteria.

Task goals that included scaffolding in the form of a strategy might focus on the use of the specific strategy to achieve the goals, eliciting actionable feedback. In the descriptive writing, the use of specific adjectives would be a strategy, the use of PEE or RID were also specific strategies that could be implemented and could provide feedback on. The use of the three-way system at school A Grade 10 could be used as a way to teach paragraph writing; a topic sentence followed by a supporting and a concluding sentence. Learners with their peers could be taught to analyse paragraphs by identifying these sentences. In such cases, learners could learn from one another about the use of strategies.

Effective, actionable feedback would focus the learning on how to achieve the goals. Where the task goals and feedback did not include strategies, the feedback was not always actionable. The learners acknowledged this by explaining that the feedback was helpful but did not always inform them what to do to correct the mistake or improve their writing. The section *Things I can do to achieve my goals (strategies)* could become superfluous if the task goals included strategies and these were incorporated in the feedback received. Some learners restated, or added to their goals, after receiving feedback and that may be a better way of focusing the learning received after the feedback.

The purpose of indicating the goals achieved in the *Where to next?* column was firstly to allow learners to acknowledge their success; this was reinforced by recording what they did to achieve the goals. The use of strategies was included in this section and for some learners it replaced the *Things I can do to achieve my goals (strategies)* in the second column. This section emerged as a replication of *Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies)*. Furthermore, the surface nature of some goals did not support

the development of strategies. The recognition of goals achieved and the strategies used to achieve the goals addressed the aspect of ZPD: what the learners could do on their own.

The statement: *Areas to develop to improve my writing* required the learners to consider the goals they had achieved or partially achieved and the gaps in their learning. The areas could be language or writing skills or other areas such as handwriting or time management. This section addressed the aspect of ZPD where the teachers and learners knew what they could do with some help. Learners used their teacher's, their peers' and their own feedback to identify the areas. However, it was difficult to determine how accurately the learners recorded the feedback information.

The teachers' comments in this section reflected their expectations of the learners and did not always consider the learners' goals. The dissonance between the teachers' success criteria and the learners' goals would have been resolved if the success criteria, such as the rubric, had been agreed on. Some learners recognised that the WFT2 incorporated the task goals and thus the success criteria. Therefore if the WFT2 is used as a guide to writing and assessment, the teachers' assessment and the learners' goals would be aligned.

The WFT2 became feedback; the teachers and the learners did not separate the three steps regarding all as part of feedback. Neither the teachers nor the learners used the information from WFT1 to inform the WFT2 goals. The teachers did not have the opportunity to engage in depth with WFT1 and it was accepted that WFT2 implementation would be conducted without reference to WFT1.

The absence of an agreement regarding success criteria resulted in the assessment concentrating on the rubric categories of *Language, style and editing*, and *Structure* as these might have been easier to assess by detecting errors. The category of *Content and planning* is critical for creative writing as it demands that the learners develop *intelligent, thought-provoking and mature ideas*. The teachers did not teach to this category beyond clarifying the task type and topic. The task type and topic are essential to the accessibility of the task for the learners to develop their thoughts and ideas.

## **7.8 CONCLUSION**

The WFT2 was both practical and effective in its implementation of the AFL and process writing steps. With the WFT2 structuring the lessons and process the teachers and learners worked together through the steps, therefore, the WFT2 acted as a scaffold to the writing process.

The feedback in the classroom between the learners, their peers and their teachers was more focused where the task goals allowed it. Furthermore, where strategies, or ways to achieve the goals were included, this also created a scaffold for the learners' response to the feedback. It was not successful in all cases as the learners explained that they did not know how to improve their learning if they had not been told what to do. The teachers' feedback strategies, such as codes and written comments, were effective and do not necessarily have to change. The substance of the teachers' feedback should align the task goals and the success criteria, then their feedback would be actionable and effective.

## CHAPTER 8

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 8.1 ORIENTATION

In this chapter, a summary of the research process followed to answer the research questions is provided and the conclusions and recommendations emanating from the study are presented. The research process is summarised in section 8.2. Sub-research question 6, *How successful is the practical intervention implemented for the effective use of feedback as a part of assessment for learning in writing and presenting?* is answered in section 8.3. In section 8.4 the research reflections are discussed followed by policy, practice and research recommendations linked to the conclusions in 8.5 and lastly the chapter is concluded with closing thoughts in section 8.6.

#### 8.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROCESS UNDERTAKEN

In this section a brief overview of the research design implemented (8.2.1) and a summary of the three cycles of investigation are provided (8.2.2).

##### 8.2.1 Overview of research design

During the conceptualisation of this research I decided that a case study design with an action research methods (Chapter 4) was most appropriate to address the research problem and main question:

***How can feedback be implemented to form an integral part of the assessment for learning process to improve learning in Writing and Presenting in English Home Language in the FET phase?***

Case study design is widely used in education to investigate a current problem situated in the day-to-day context of education and, in this case, secondary schools. One independent school and three Gauteng Department of Education schools were purposively selected. In each school one Grade 10 class and one Grade 11 class, as well as the teacher and the learners were the subunits of each case. The aim of the



study was to address the research problem by developing an appropriate intervention for the English Home Language writing classes in the Further Education and Training phase. The practical intervention in the form of the WFT required the teachers and learners to work with me to improve practice, therefore a participatory action methodology was appropriate (subsection 4.3.3<sup>2</sup>).

The research, consisting of three phases, investigated the design and implementation of a WFT to facilitate the effective use of feedback in English Home Language writing lessons. The five research sub-questions used to answer the overall research question for the study manifested at three phases of the research. The first phase included teacher interviews and learner focus groups as I explored the current practice in EHL writing classes to answer the following questions:

**Sub-question 1**

*How is assessment for learning presently viewed and applied by English Home Language teachers in teaching Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

**Sub-question 2**

*What strategies do teachers consider successful for providing feedback for learning in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

**Sub-question 3**

*How is feedback received by the Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

The conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 3 of the thesis informed the initial development of the WFT; however, the current practice findings of phase one were critical in the further development of the WFT. During the two subsequent implementation cycles, sub-research question 3 was included with sub-research question 4 and 5 as it was important to establishing the efficacy of the WFT.

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<sup>2</sup>Section and subsection references as to where content summarised in this chapter can be found in the rest of the thesis are made in brackets where pertinent.

#### **Sub-question 4**

*What comprises an effective assessment for learning process in English Home Language Writing and Presenting in the FET phase?*

Process writing is explained in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement document and was implemented by the teachers using their interpretation of the process. The synergy between process writing and assessment for learning is clear and the WFT aimed to integrate the steps for effective implementation. Sub-question 4 addressed how the implementation of the WFT was seen as a measure of an assessment for learning process in teaching and learning Writing and Presenting in English Home Language.

#### **Sub-question 5**

*What constitutes a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback as part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?*

Research sub-question 5 focused on the WFT as a practical intervention; how the teachers and learners were able to use the WFT to integrate feedback effectively in the writing classroom.

The first phase established current practice. The two implementation cycles of the research that addressed these research sub-questions are summarised in more detail in the next subsection. Research sub-question 6 is answered in section 8.3.

### **8.2.2 Summary of the research conducted**

The present practice in English Home Language writing lessons in Grade 10 and 11 was established in the first data collection phase and a summary of findings linked to this is presented in 8.2.2.1. This is followed by the summary of findings for the two WFT implementation cycles in 8.2.2.2 and 8.2.2.3.

### 8.2.2.1 *Current practice in English Home Language writing lessons*

The current practice in the English Home Language writing classrooms in Grade 10 and Grade 11 reflected that process writing was implemented to a certain degree in most cases. However, at schools A and C the process writing implementation was rather mechanical and aimed at achieving an error-free product. The teachers expressed the importance of the writing process: the planning, drafting and editing and revising of the writing task, although the process was only most rigorously applied during the formal writing tasks (see 5.2.2.2). School B teachers did not implement process writing as part of the writing learning. At school D all the writing tasks were for the purposes of marks and, while the writing tasks were planned, drafted, revised and rewritten, the process was not defined as process writing as such. The teachers and the learners provided feedback on the drafts; however, the focus of the feedback was largely on editing and not necessarily on learning.

At school B there was formative assessment as part of the teaching philosophy, reflecting the focused teaching of skills leading up to the formal assessments (5.2.2.1). Informal assessments were part of the teaching programme at schools A and C, where the tasks were referred to as practise tasks and used as preparation for the formal tasks (5.2.2.1). It was not clear how methodical or effective the use of the practise tasks were, or if the choice of the practise task was determined by the teachers' learning intentions. The formal tasks were closely assessed by the teachers using the assessment rubric provided by the Gauteng Department of Education specific to the type of task such as a transactional task or essay. The rubric was used as an assessment tool and not as a teaching tool, therefore, the rubric was a tool to allocate marks and not a part of the teaching of writing (5.2.2.3).

Peer feedback or feedback from others was used to edit the draft to produce an error-free final task (5.2.4.1). The teachers provided multiple forms of feedback on the final task; however, the feedback focused mainly on error detection and correction. The written feedback in the form of comments mostly lacked scaffolding. In all the cases it seemed that the teachers assessed all the aspects of writing and the feedback was unfocused and not for the purpose of addressing specific gaps in learning (5.2.4.2).

The teachers used various feedback strategies which included the mark on the writing task, markings such as underlining and codes, as well as written comments. The learners received the feedback as error detection, thus there was an overwhelming focus on the correctness of the writing and not on learning how to write (5.2.4.3).

The development of the WFT1 was informed by the conceptual framework and its theoretical underpinnings. The design of the WFT1 for the practical implementation emerged from the findings of the first phase of data collection. The writing lessons typically comprised three lessons: 1.) the introduction and planning; 2.) the drafting and editing and writing of the final draft (which in some cases might have been part of homework); 3.) Feedback on the assessed task. The three steps seemed to dominate the current implementation of writing and were thus incorporated in the WFT1 design.

### 8.2.2.2 Summary of WFT1 implementation

The WFT1 (Figure 8.1) integrated the assessment for learning and process writing steps at an operational level framed by Hattie’s (2011) three feedback questions: *Where am I going? How am I going? Where to next?* so that feedback drove the process. The teachers were able to implement the WFT1, assimilating it successfully into the way they had planned the teaching because the WFT1 followed the process writing steps they were used to namely planning, drafting, and revising, editing, proofreading, and presenting texts (5.2.3).

WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL		
NAME: .....		GRADE: .....
Type of task:		
Topic:		
Where am I going?	How am I going?	Where to next? Feedback on final. Check against goals.
What are the task goals:	Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:	Which goals have I achieved?
My own goal:	Things I have to do to achieve goals:	What do I have to work on in the next task?
		How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?

**Figure 8.1: Writing Feedback Tool 1**

The implementation of WFT1 (Chapter 6) focused on how it integrated assessment for learning and process writing and how it allowed teachers and learners to use feedback in the learning process. The key findings as they relate to each of the columns are now discussed. First the focus is on the task goals, then on the feedback and lastly on the assessment reflections determining the goals achieved and learning gaps.

- *Task goals*

The formulation of task goals emerged as an area to address (6.8). The vague and surface level task goals did not indicate how the goals could be achieved or how they were aligned with the success criteria. Where the learners formulated the goals on their own based on their understanding of the task criteria and success criteria, it resulted in disparate goals which were not aligned with the teachers' expectations (6.4.4.3). The task goals as reflected on the learners' completed WFT1s indicated clearly what the learners understood the learning intentions to be. The writing assessment rubrics were not included in the teaching or explicitly used as a guide to what the success criteria were (6.5.1). The role of the assessment rubric in assessment for learning would not only be to assign a mark but, more importantly, to clarify what success looked like; it represented the attainment levels as determined by the relevant assessment body (6.2).

The formulation of the own goals required self-regulation as it reflected the areas the learners thought they needed to focus on, which were mostly task level goals. The formulation of the own goals were also vague, indicating a surface level awareness of the learning gaps (6.5.1).

- *Feedback*

The feedback, which was mostly directly focused on error detection and corrective in nature (6.5.2), confirmed the surface levels of the task goals. The corrective strategies were consequently also on surface level and sometimes included in the feedback. As a result, the section *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* was confusing and some of the learners did not know how to respond to this section. How to complete the

section *Things I have to do to achieve my goals* had to be explained in some classes as the learners did not know what to write down.

The WFT1 allowed the learners to use the feedback to check their progress against their goals and respond by correcting their work. In some cases where the feedback did not only focus on the goals but also the task criteria, new goals were added. This kind of feedback was very useful in aligning the learner's goals with the task criteria. It further indicated how varied the learners' task goals were - a result of the vague learning intention and lack of clear assessment criteria.

The way learners received feedback was further made clear during the WFT1 implementation. The peer feedback in the form of error detection and correction, and was received as such by the learners. However, the feedback did not enhance the learning by helping the learners to understand how to improve their writing. The teachers gave positive feedback in their written comments and also pointed out areas to work on; however, the teachers' feedback did not always align with the task goals. The teachers' criteria for success only emerged clearly with the final assessment of the task and not always when the task was introduced.

- *Reflections on goals achieved and learning gaps*

The reflections in the *Where to next?* column illustrated the learners' evaluation of their progress towards their goals. By considering the assessment and feedback on their writing tasks, the learners were able to see which goals they thought they had achieved, as well as noting gaps in their learning (6.5.3).

The learners recorded the feedback they received and their response to the feedback; however, it was not possible to determine how much of the information they received was recorded. Some of the feedback information may not have been understood at that point and may only have become relevant to the learner at a later stage. The learners received feedback from multiple sources (such as their peers, teachers and self), and in multiple ways (verbal, written, and global which is to the whole class). Coupled with the fact that the feedback was not always in relation to the goals, a rather messy reflection of writing learning emerged.

The WFT1 succeeded in creating structure for the learning of writing with the task goals and feedback emerging as critical aspects. The teachers regarded the WFT1 as an appropriate strategy for the implementation of process writing and using feedback to enhance learning. The teachers remarked that the WFT1 implementation brought structure to the writing lessons (6.6.1). While it was similar to their previous practice of process writing, it also made the process clear to the learners. Furthermore, the process became a concrete practice in the lessons. The aspects of self-regulation where the learners used the goals to structure their writing, and the feedback tool to track their progress, identify the gaps and address them, were regarded as effective. It seemed that the learners understood what process writing meant and also how feedback helped them in the writing process.

The feedback, as implemented by WFT1, introduced elements that I had not anticipated such as how the learners will respond to completing the WFT. The learners were new to the feedback process with the WFT1 and there was uncertainty about how to record the feedback on the tool. Some learners recorded the feedback themselves while some preferred a peer to write the feedback down. Furthermore, the accuracy of the recorded feedback could not be verified.

### 8.2.2.3 Summary of WFT2 implementation

WFT2 (Figure 8.2) was adapted according to the WFT1 implementation findings and the input received from the teachers. The teachers approved of the WFT1 design because of its synergy with the process writing steps and the structure it created. The teachers from two Gauteng Department of Education schools (schools A and C) felt that *planning* and *drafting* should be included in the *Where am I going?* column because it was a criteria in the assessment rubrics. The place for comments for the learners and the teachers were welcomed as the comments became part of the WFT and the process. The three levels of the zone of proximal development were included in the *Where to next?* column to allow for a more detailed identification of what the learning gaps were. The task goals formulation and corrective nature of the feedback emerged as critical issues during the implementation of the WFT1.

WRITING FEEDBACK TOOL	LEARNER	NAME: .....	GRADE: .....
Type of task:			
1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?	
Task goals:	Feedback from peer/teacher/self:	Which goals have I achieved? (Tick in 1 <sup>st</sup> column)	
Planning		What did I do to achieve the goals?	
Drafting		Areas to develop to improve my writing: Learner:	
Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:	Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):	Teacher:	
		I need more feedback about/help with:	

**Figure 8.2: Writing Feedback Tool 2**

- *Task goals*

The task goals should clarify for the learners the learning intentions and the goals need to be informed by the task criteria and the success criteria. Task goals and feedback are closely related as task goals determine the learning and consequently the level of feedback expected and provided. In response to the two issues of the task goals and feedback, the teachers agreed that the learners needed more direction in the formulation of the task goals.

The teachers understood that the learning intention must be clarified by answering the question: *What do I want the learners to learn?* (7.2). In response to the curriculum, the learning intentions included the task criteria, what the learners must do; and the success criteria, how learners would know they were successful. Therefore a close alignment between the task goals, task criteria and success criteria was needed (Black, 2015; Clark, 2012), (2.3.2). The alignment was undermined where the learners formulated the goals according to their understanding of the task criteria and success criteria which was incongruent with the teacher's learning intention. The formulation of



task goals was challenging as the teachers' learning intentions were either not clear or too broad, furthermore, the success criteria were not clarified.

- *Feedback*

The task goals formulated as a list of what to do allowed the learners to check their progress against the goals. However, such a checklist resulted in surface level, corrective feedback. Task goals at process level such as use figurative language and adjectives for descriptive writing including specific goals with strategies, led to process level feedback. Strategies act as scaffolding either included in the task goals or as feedback, allowing actionable and thus effective feedback. Scaffolded feedback was, however, the exception rather than the rule (7.5.2). The learners did not all complete the section *Things I can do to achieve my goals (strategies)*. When the feedback was corrective it replaced the need for a strategy. Furthermore the question, *What did I do to achieve my goals?* in the last column, confused the learners as they saw it as a duplication.

The feedback during and after the drafting of the writing task was an opportunity to engage with peers and the teachers about the progress made towards the goals (7.5.2). Corrective peer feedback was more readily accepted as it functioned as editing, however, the learners were not always confident that the peer feedback was correct. The focus on errors and whether the task was for marks undermined effective use of feedback for learning. The learners further explained that while it was useful to know what they had done wrong, they needed feedback on how to correct their work (7.7). This speaks to the need to address understanding of writing and not only error-free writing.

- *Reflections on goals achieved and learning gaps*

The reflection on goals achieved and identification of gaps in learning should direct the next learning phase. The learners analysed the teacher's feedback in the form of marking codes, comments and marks allocated to identify the goals achieved and the gaps in the learning. Unlike WFT1, the last column on WFT2 represented the three levels of the zone of proximal development (Figure 3.1) *What I cannot do*, *What I can do with help*, and *What I can do on my own* (3.2.12) by first identifying the goals

achieved, thus what they are able to do. Then the gaps in learning were made specific by differentiating between what learners needed help with and what they could not do. The learners used this information to request feedback on specific gaps, making the learning more focused.

The identification of successful strategies, and the gaps in learning, allowed the teacher to use this information to plan the learning intentions for the next writing task. Differentiation could be built into the task goals as the learners identified their individual learning needs, may develop strategies to address these and ask for feedback on specific goals.

The teachers' engagement with the WFT2 during the lessons and when assessing the task gave them the opportunity to see the learners' thinking about their task goals, progress made and strategies used (7.6.3). Some teachers used the WFT2 to write feedback on the task goals or the peer feedback provided. The teachers' comments on the WFT2, in line with the WFT1 findings, indicated the alignment, or lack of, between their learning intentions and what the learners understood them to be. The teachers' feedback strategies did not change, the teachers' strategies included verbal synchronous feedback, written corrective feedback, written comments, and mark allocations. However, the WFT2 encouraged feedback at the three stages of process writing as implemented in the classroom, formulating goals, drafting, and evaluating the assessment feedback. Furthermore, the feedback was somewhat more focused and specific to the task goals.

The issue of the clear and available success criteria remained unanswered. The three Gauteng Department of Education schools used the WFT2 with their practise tasks which were not for marks, however, the teachers and the learners needed to understand what success according to criteria looked like. According to the theory of formative assessment (2.3), there must be agreement on what the success criteria are. As the rubrics are the assessment tools and contain the success criteria, they must be used to develop an agreement between the teachers and the learners of what constitutes a successful task. Therefore, as mentioned before, the task goals should be a combination of the task criteria and what must be done to achieve success.

The teachers' assessment of the tasks, particularly at schools A and C, concentrated on the rubric categories (7.2) of *Language, style and editing*, and *Structure* as these might have been easier to assess by detecting errors. The category of *Content and planning* is critical for creative writing as it demands that the learners develop "*intelligent, thought-provoking and mature ideas.*" For this category, error detection assessment is not appropriate, and in the absence of clear success criteria is perhaps more subjective and easily challenged by the learners. The teachers did not teach to this category beyond the task type and topic. The task type and topic are essential to the accessibility of the task for the learners to develop their thoughts and ideas. Once they understand why they are writing the task, for example, that an argumentative essay is to develop an argument, a topic such as: *School uniform should be optional* can be used to practise the skills of argumentative writing.

As a result of the WFT1 implementation where the use of the assessment rubrics was lacking, the rubrics were printed on the back of the WFT2. It was notable that the Grade 10 teacher at school C and the Grade 11 teacher at school D were able to link the rubric with the WFT. Additionally some learners came to see the WFT as their rubric, thus a structure to direct and track their learning (7.4.4.2).

The following practical issue regarding the use of the WFT came to light: the learners at schools A and C stuck the WFT2 into their books where the task was written and the learners at school B and D filed their WFT2s with their writing tasks. The learners need to have easy access to the information on the WFT in order to track their learning and link learning with other tasks.

The two implementation cycles' findings informed the answering of the main research findings discussed in the next section.

### **8.3 DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS**

The study aimed to find a way to use feedback to implement assessment for learning in the teaching and learning of Writing and Presenting. The previous section summarised the current practice in English Home Language writing lessons and how the WFT1 and WFT2 worked when implemented in the Grade 10 and Grade 11 English Home Language writing lessons.

Research sub-question 6 will be answered in this section to address the success of the WFT implementation:

*How successful is the practical intervention implemented for the effective use of feedback as a part of assessment for learning in Writing and Presenting?*

The findings also act as conclusions to the study and are focused on the efficacy of the WFT and are discussed in sections 8.3.1 to 8.3.3.

### **8.3.1 Main conclusion 1: The WFT as scaffold for the assessment for learning and process writing steps**

The WFT provided a structure for the successful implementation of the combined assessment for learning and process writing steps. The three feedback questions (*Where am I going? How am I going? Where to next?*) which formed the structure of the WFT, encourage meta-cognitive thinking about broad learning goals. The way the WFT acted as a scaffold is discussed in the following subsections; structure 8.3.1.1, learning intention 8.3.1.2, feedback 8.3.1.3 and learning gaps in 8.3.1.4.

#### *8.3.1.1 Structure*

The conceptualisation of the WFT included the integration of the assessment for learning and process writing steps (3.3.2). The teachers' current implementation of process writing in the classroom included mostly three or four steps: planning, drafting, editing, and the final draft (Chapter 5). This was taken into consideration with the initial design of the WFT, thus the structure that the WFT created easily integrated the tool into the writing lessons. The teachers felt comfortable that the WFT allowed them to follow the steps they were used to in their previous practice (6.6.1), furthermore, a teacher observed that the **WFT made the process “logical”<sup>3</sup>**, helping the learners understand the necessity of the steps (6.6.1).

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<sup>3</sup>Key findings linked to the main conclusions are highlighted in **bold** in these sub sections.

However, as Hawe and Parr (2014) explain, while there may be certain aspects of assessment for learning present in the classroom, it does not mean that it will result in improved learning. **The WFT structured the writing process in class and included the implementation of assessment for learning practices**, most notably the effective integration of multiple feedback opportunities and self-regulated learning. The clarification of goals and the success criteria is an absolute necessity for formative assessment (2.3.2) and this fact became abundantly clear with the implementation of the WFT. The first column: *Where am I going?* required the formulation of the task goals which directed the learning and the feedback in the writing task.

### 8.3.1.2 Learning intention

The teachers' learning intentions are firstly informed by their interpretation of the intended curriculum (van den Akker *et al.*, 2006). Then, taking the learning context into account, the learning intentions are further informed by the gaps in learning identified in the previous task, the task criteria and the success criteria. Therefore, once the learning intention is made clear, it is made accessible to the learners by the formulation of the task goals. The task goals should be specific and include how the learning will take place at implementation level (van den Akker *et al.*, 2006).

Task goals convert the criteria (what you are going to learn), and the success criteria (how do you know you have learned), to how you are going to learn. **The tension between the implemented curriculum by the teachers and the experienced curriculum by the learners was present throughout the WFT1 and WFT2 implementation.** The dissonance between the learners' understanding of the task and the teachers' expectations, as reflected in their comments, was made clear particularly with the WFT2 implementation.

Translating task criteria and success criteria into effective task goals is complex as it requires a solid pedagogical content knowledge of the processes underlying the criteria for effective writing and how it will manifest as successful writing. However, if the writing task is preceded by effective teaching (2.3.2), then the formulation of the goals will follow as part of the teaching. **The learners' formulation of the task goals indicated their understanding of the learning intention. This understanding was, however, fractured as the teachers' intentions often only became clear in their**

**feedback on the tasks.** Therefore the learners' goals made their understanding of the learning intention clear and open to scrutiny and correction by the teachers.

The task goals answer the questions *Where am I going?* as well as *why* the task is performed, in other words what learning will be achieved. At this early stage it is possible for the teachers to identify gaps in understanding and provide feedback to address the gaps and revisit the task goals. The reformulation of appropriate task goals should position the learner relative to the task goals and his/her learning in order to address the gaps. **The implementation of WFT1 illustrated how the task goals were not specific and did not include how the learning would take place (6.6.5 & 6.8).**

**Learners may be taught how to formulate goals, leading to a point where they will be able to formulate goals for formal and informal tasks which will serve as an indication of how well the learning intention, task criteria and success criteria were understood.** Learners will then be able to formulate goals not only for the achievement of a task as an assessment for learning activity, but under test or examination conditions as well.

The learners' own goals created the opportunity for differentiation, thereby addressing learners' individual learning needs. Self-regulating learners are able to identify their learning needs and take responsibility for their learning (Zimmerman, 2013). **When learners choose their own goals in addition to, or prioritising task goals, their individual learning needs are addressed.** Teachers engaging with the learners' own goals may inform the teaching or put interventions in place to address the gaps in learning.

#### 8.3.1.3 *Feedback*

The goals formulated in the first column of the WFT led to the drafting of the writing task which took place in class with the learners engaging with the task goals and receiving feedback from their peers and teachers. Feedback was provided to the learners in relation to the task goals which were formulated based on the learning intention, task criteria and success criteria, and the own goals based on the learners' perceived gaps in learning. However, as Hattie and Timperley (2007) point out, to

provide and ask for actionable feedback learners need to be clear about what the learning goals are and what success looks like, which was not always the case in the schools investigated.

Hargreaves (2012:12) contends that when the learning intention is focused on narrow learning goals it will limit the feedback given. **Therefore feedback in relation to the goals illustrated the level of learning with surface level goals eliciting corrective feedback (7.5.2). In addition, where the task goals were not aligned to all the task criteria, the feedback from peers in relation to the learning intentions provided an opportunity for the learners to add goals or restate the goals in order to achieve success.** The feedback also created the opportunity for the learners to address the learning gaps using established strategies or developing their own strategies to achieve the goals. It became clear that well formulated goals which included strategies indicating how to achieve the goals, led to actionable feedback. Furthermore, **the strategies could be reinforced or applied after the feedback and in that way act as scaffolding.**

The feedback information was used to correct the draft, with the learners responding to specific feedback such as error detection. This type of unfocused written corrective feedback (2.5.4) proliferated but was not effective in improving learning. The provision of actionable feedback is more complex than corrective feedback. As Clark (2010) explains, feedback with high quality information leads learners to understand what to do to correct their writing. **Feedback that includes information about why there is a gap and how the gaps in learning can be addressed in order to achieve the goals, would be regarded as high quality and thus effective.**

The paucity of writing strategies present in the formulation of task goals and in the feedback provided meant that the learners learned what they had done wrong, but were not clear on what they could do to correct or improve their writing. Effective feedback is scaffolded information about learning (Torrance, 2012) and understanding why there is a gap and how to address it (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The teachers did not always provide scaffolded feedback, or explain why there was a gap in learning. However, analysis of the learners' completed WFTs illustrated not just the errors, but also the gaps in understanding. **Therefore the teaching and learning was made explicit by the deliberate use of feedback, and the scrutiny of the WFT may lead**

**to teachers adapting their teaching of writing strategies to address the gaps in learning** (Hattie & Gan, 2011).

#### *8.3.1.4 Learning gaps*

The learners completed the last column of WFT2, *Where to next?* after they had interpreted the feedback they had received on the assessed task. This column on WFT2, where the teacher comments on the learners' tasks were written by the teachers or recorded by the learners, illustrated how the teachers' expectations were not aligned with the learners' task goals. **The goals achieved and gaps in learning categorised according to the zone of proximal development levels are important to inform the learning intention for the next teaching and learning sequence.** The assessment of the task by the teacher and the learners' interpretation of the feedback are the attained curriculum (van den Akker *et al.*, 2006); it reflects the achievement but also how the learning was experienced. In other words, did the learners achieve the goals and did they understand why there were gaps and how to address them?

The use of the WFT not only successfully implemented assessment for learning and process writing steps, but also made the process open to the analysis of the learners and the teachers. **The WFT made the progress of writing learning concrete (6.6.1), thus the teachers and the learners could use the WFT to focus on aligning their efforts to improve learning.**

#### **8.3.2 Main conclusion 2: The WFT facilitated multiple opportunities for feedback**

The central role feedback plays is in the alignment of the task goals with the learner's actions towards achievement of the goals. **The WFT facilitated feedback in various ways.** Firstly, it structured the feedback in the form of the task goals which indicated the learning intention; the peer, teacher or self feedback on the writing; and the use or introduction of strategies to improve their writing; secondly, the type of feedback varied from error detection and correction to comments in the form of guidance and suggestions about how to address the gaps. Thirdly, feedback was provided in different forms, verbal and written, and at various stages of the writing learning. **The Grade 10 teachers at schools B and D described their experience of feedback**



with the WFT as “*layered*” (6.6.3.4). The description was a significant indication of feedback from various sources, in different forms, at different times and levels, and a more nuanced view of feedback than mere error detection. The discussion that follows is 8.3.2.1 continuous feedback in the classroom, peer feedback (8.3.2.2) and feedback from teachers (8.3.2.3) and lastly 8.3.2.4 feedback at zone of proximal development levels.

#### *8.3.2.1 Continuous feedback in the classroom*

Feedback in the writing classroom is continuous; while learners plan and draft their writing task, feedback is requested from teachers and peers. **The learners also use self-regulatory strategies such as monitoring their own work to provide self feedback.** In order to make the feedback meaningful it has to form part of a structured system, such as formative assessment, which is aimed at using effective feedback to address the learning gaps. **The structured design of the WFT1 and WFT2 made the feedback processes visible; the task goals were written and open to be questioned or changed, and the feedback received recorded.** While it was not clear how much of the feedback received was recorded, it was perhaps not the critical question at this stage. The importance of feedback was that it should move the learning forward as learners engaged with the learning gaps and how to address them. The synchronous feedback in the classroom created the opportunity for discussion between the peers and the learners and their teachers. Furthermore, the learners were able to engage in self feedback as they checked their writing by comparing it to their task goals and making corrections.

#### *8.3.2.2 Peer feedback*

The efficacy of peer feedback in the South African English Home Language lessons was not the focus of this study. When the study was conceptualised, I did not expect peer feedback to play such an important role in the implementation of the WFT. The understanding was that teachers routinely provided feedback on drafts; however, when the current practice was established (Chapter 5) it transpired that the learners did not necessarily receive feedback from their teachers on the draft. The learners edited the drafts and could approach a peer or other to assist them; therefore most of the learners were new to structured peer feedback as a class activity. **Overall, most**

**learners experienced peer feedback as helpful, even if it was mostly to point out errors.** Learning is mediated through social activity (3.2.1.3) and peers play an important role in learning (Gan & Hattie, 2014). However, as was the case with the implementation of WFT2 in particular, the learners questioned the quality and the reliability of the peer feedback (Gan & Hattie, 2014). Nevertheless, where the task goals were clear, as in the example of Grade 10 at school D, and the peer feedback facilitated by the teacher as a classroom activity (Grade 11, school B), the feedback generated rich discussions. **Furthermore, feedback created opportunities for learners to learn from one another. Thus effective peer feedback became a promising possibility.**

### 8.3.2.3 *Feedback from teachers*

The teachers continued to utilise the feedback strategies they were used to (Chapter 5), such as verbal feedback, written feedback in the form of marking codes, short comments on the writing tasks as well as a written comment on the task. While convergent feedback dominated, it was as a result of surface level goals. The absence of strategies, either included in the task goals or taught and used, meant that the feedback was often not specific (Hawe & Parr, 2014). **If teachers build in strategies to support the execution of processes underlying the writing, the feedback may develop to be divergent.**

While the efficacy of global feedback from teachers is questioned (2.4.3), in the schools in this study it was a common practice when the assessed writing tasks were returned to the learners. Where the learners felt it was too generalised (Grade 10, school A) (7.3.4.2), it was not helpful; however, where it was provided in a structured way and involved the learners, such as the Grade 10 classes at schools B, C and D (7.3.4.2), it did contribute positively to the learners' understanding of the gaps in learning and how to remedy these. **The WFT can be used to provide global feedback in relation to the task goals and highlighting the common gaps creating a context where the global feedback becomes meaningful to the learners.**

#### 8.3.2.4 Feedback at zone of proximal development level

The three sections in the last column of the WFT2 (*What did I do to achieve the goals? Areas to develop to improve my writing; I need more feedback about/help with*) required the learners to analyse the assessed tasks to determine their goals achieved and gaps in learning. However, the learners also used the feedback they received from their peers and teachers when writing their drafts to identify the gaps. The last column was structured according to the zone of proximal development and further layered the feedback as the learners had to identify what they had done to achieve their goals, areas of their writing learning they wanted to improve and, lastly, gaps in learning they could not resolve on their own. **Learners develop their own understanding of their learning needs and will be able to request specific feedback and not simply respond to the feedback they receive.**

The learners' experience of the attained curriculum materialised in their experiences of the WFT and the result of the learning, that is, the goals achieved and the gaps identified. This was further evident during the learner verbal protocols when some inconsistencies emerged about the feedback received and recorded. I did not regard it as critical because some learners may not have recalled their actions perfectly, I was aware that what the learners were thinking during the process may not have been accurately reflected on the WFT. Furthermore, classrooms are complex environments where learning is not a neatly followed process. **The WFT reflected the individual nature of learning and how it could be used facilitate the use of feedback to enhance learning.**

The WFT created feedback between the processes of planning, drafting, rewriting and responding to the assessment. Additionally, there was feedback within each section as the learners engaged with the task goals, feedback on the draft and finally on the assessed task. Furthermore, the WFT design allowed each of the three columns to function as a process on its own where the learners considered each of the three questions: *Where am I going? How am I going? Where to next?* The structure formed steps to follow within the writing process.

The WFT emerged from the CFW and was adapted during the implementation process. The WFT was successful in drawing attention to the assessment for learning

process and feedback. **Notably, the WFT drove the writing process through its structure and incorporated feedback within each column.** The WFT became feedback as feedback was not an element of the tool but the WFT *raison d'être*.

### **8.3.3 Main conclusion 3: The WFT enabled the application of self-regulated learning in writing**

Clark (2012) claims that assessment for learning is synonymous with self-regulated learning. Feedback as an essential component of assessment for learning, is a driver of the process and fundamental to self-regulated learning. **It may be assumed that when assessment for learning strategies are successfully integrated in teaching and learning, self-regulated learning will manifest in the classroom. However, the value of the WFT in this respect was that the self-regulated processes were made concrete and thus visible.**

As illustrated in Figure 8.3, each of the sections in the columns facilitated self-regulated learning (in blue) informed by the two models presented in Chapter 3, namely Zimmerman's (2013) phases and sub-processes of self-regulated learning and Winne's COPES model (Winne, 2014). The self-regulation built into the WFT in each of the three columns guided the learners through self-regulatory learning processes. The columns representing the forethought (*Where am I going?*), performance (*How am I going?*) and reflection (*Where to next?*) phases of Zimmerman (2013) interfaced with the assessment for learning and process writing steps. The learners responded to self-regulation by using the goals to structure their writing and feedback to track their learning, evaluating the assessment on the task. This confirmed Pellegrino's (2006) notion that the teaching of meta-cognitive strategies are most effective when integrated in the teaching and learning in the classroom.

Therefore, successfully embedding self-regulated learning into the execution of the WFT and combined with this, is the zone of proximal development (3.2.1.2) process (in red) in the last column. **The sections in each of the three columns acted as prompts, enabling the learners to firstly apply self-regulatory practices in the process of writing, and secondly, identifying differentiated gaps in learning through the zone of proximal development questions.**

1. Where am I going	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next?
<p><b>Task goals:</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Demonstrate understanding of learning intention by formulating task goals using task criteria and success criteria to plan execution of the task.</p> <p><b>Goals I want to focus on/my own goals:</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Use feedback information from previous tasks to identify gaps in personal writing learning and formulate goals to address gaps.</p>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self:</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Focus on goals and task.            Use goals to track progress.            Use goals and feedback for self-instruction.            Asking for help or feedback            Producing the draft.</p> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve the goals (strategies):</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Respond to feedback using self-instruction by applying corrective strategies or strategies to improve writing.            Restate goals to achieve success.</p>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved?</b>            Analyse and evaluate assessment.  <b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Identify successful use of strategies  <b>ZPD</b>            Things I can do on my own</p> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Identify areas to improve based on feedback  <b>ZPD</b>            Things I can do with help  <b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b>  <b>SRL</b>            Identify gaps in learning  <b>ZPD</b>            Things I cannot do and need help with</p>

**Figure 8.3: WFT with self-regulatory learning and zone of proximal development**

This section focused on the deliberation of the main findings and conclusions of the study. Methodological reflections and thoughts on the conceptual framework are addressed in the next section.

## 8.4 RESEARCH REFLECTIONS

In this section reflections on the research methodology used for the study are provided (8.4.1). In the light of the findings elucidated above, the conceptual framework used is also reflected upon (8.4.2). The research findings led to the revision of the conceptual framework to include assessment for learning as a critical component of formative assessment. The adapted formative assessment process with the assessment for learning approach is discussed in 8.4.3.

### 8.4.1 Methodological reflections

The aim of the study was to design and implement a practical intervention for the effective use of feedback in the English Home Language writing classroom. My intention was that an effective practical writing feedback tool should not be limited to

a particular setting, but that it should be implementable regardless of the school's context. As explained in section 8.3, the WFT did succeed at the practical implementation level, despite the lack of teaching resources and large class sizes in some cases, and teachers' training and teaching experience. Insights gleaned in the implementation of the research methods for these purposes are now considered in terms of: school contexts; sampling; study duration; participant roles and researcher position (8.4.1.1 – 8.4.1.5).

#### *8.4.1.1 School contexts*

The schools had their own contexts which had an impact on the WFT implementation. School A was perhaps the most challenging as the class sizes, particularly the Grade 10 class, were big (43 learners) and the learners' attendance erratic. School B was a task focused, results driven environment with a multitude of extra-curricular activities, bringing with it a frenetic pace to the school programme. Of all the schools, I spent the least amount of time at school B due to the programme being organised and well communicated. At school C the different lesson times, depending on the timetable, were somewhat disruptive, with the duration of the lessons not always consistent. This led to a fairly rushed atmosphere at times which made planning and completion of tasks a challenge. This meant that some of the observation lessons had to be rearranged. School D had smaller class sizes and longer lessons and a three term schedule. The longer time in class and per term for teaching and learning aided the study; the 55 minute lessons in particular were conducive to the WFT implementation as this allowed ample time for feedback discussions. However, like school B, it was a very busy school with a full afternoon school programme, adding to the demand on the teachers' and learners' time. In all four schools and eight classes, finding time for meetings and interviews was difficult. However, as diverse and challenging as the schools may have been, each in its own way was able to participate in the study and implement the WFT successfully.

There were aspects of the current teaching environment that I had underestimated. The first was that I did not anticipate that the number of Writing and Presenting tasks were limited to one or two per term, or the perfunctory nature of the task execution. I also did not expect that in most cases only one writing task per term was comprehensively assessed. My understanding was that there were multiple

opportunities for writing and that there would be more flexibility in the choice of writing tasks in which to use the WFT.

As only the writing lessons of the chosen tasks were observed, I was not able to report on how the teaching and learning in other English Home Language lessons supported the writing tasks.

#### *8.4.1.2 Sampling*

As explained in Chapter 4, the close proximity of the schools alleviated logistical constraints, however it limited the choice of Gauteng Department of Education schools to quintile 4 and quintile 5 schools. The quintile 1, 2 or 3 schools are no-fee schools and generally under-resourced with contexts often very different from quintiles 4 and 5. The inclusion of these schools would have added more depth to the study incorporating a better representation of South African schools and should be considered in future research.

The decision to include two grades, Grade 10 and Grade 11, was to use the intervention across grades to further ensure the accessibility of the WFT for English Home Language writing classes. Furthermore, the Grade 10 and Grade 11 learners would have had exposure to process writing in the previous grades, facilitating the implementation of WFT in their lessons. I was aware that the inclusion of the Grade 11 classes may be problematic as there is often already a focus on the Grade 12 examination preparation even at Grade 11 level. While this may not always manifest consciously in the lessons, there is pressure to complete tasks for marks and complete the curriculum, particularly the literature curriculum. Furthermore, the Grade 11 year end results are used for tertiary study applications in South Africa and I knew it would be inappropriate to compromise the assessment of formal tasks or examinations. Therefore the planned Grade 11 writing tasks were used for the study whereas with the Grade 10 teachers the arrangements, particularly with the second WFT implementation, were more flexible. The Grade 10 teacher at school A used the WFT2 more than once with practise tasks, the Grade 10 teacher at school B used the WFT2 with a practise task and a formal task. At schools C and D the Grade 10 teachers included a practise task for the sake of the research.

#### *8.4.1.3 Duration of study*

The decision to conduct the study over one school year was because I wanted to study the WFT implementation with a group of learners as an English Home Language class, and their teacher. If the study had continued over two academic years, the class composition and teacher would not have remained the same. Furthermore, the Gauteng Department of Education does not permit research to be conducted in the last term of the school year. The duration of the study spanning the first three terms of one academic school year was limiting in several ways. The first was that there were only two WFT implementation cycles; a third cycle would have been an opportunity to further modify the WFT. Second, the time spent with the teachers discussing the implementation was limited to time between lessons and one 15 to 30 minute meeting before the second implementation. A longer study would have made it possible to have more time with the teachers to develop the use of the WFT further, particularly the formulation of the task goals and the alignment of goals and feedback with the success criteria.

#### *8.4.1.4 Role of the participants*

The successful, practical implementation of the WFT as an intervention in English Home Language writing lessons required the participation of the teachers and the learners. Therefore, as explained in Chapter 4, a participatory action research method was chosen. Partial participation was required that focused on the implementation and revision of the WFT1 and WFT2.

The participation of teachers and learners in the study meant that there were certain limitations such as the number of writing tasks where the WFT could be used. The most challenging part of the participatory action research was that the teachers implemented the WFT according to how they understood the tool, their own teaching style and the context of their classroom and learners. This meant that once the lessons had started, I had to maintain the role of outsider (as explained in Chapter 1, 1.5) in order to respect the teachers and their relationship with their learners. This role meant that I designed the intervention in the form of the WFT with the input from the teachers, however, the practical implementation was conducted by the teachers in their classrooms. Nevertheless, as the study progressed and the teachers and the learners



grew comfortable with my presence, the lines blurred. The teachers and the learners started to include me in their lessons, asking for clarification or discussing aspects of the implementation during the lessons. I had to consciously focus on observing how the implementation process unfolded as the success of the WFT depended on how it would allow for the effective use of feedback in the eight different subunits with their own contexts.

The participants were instrumental in the development and successful implementation of the WFT. The learners interviewed on their use of the tool and their experience of feedback on writing were instructive. The teachers' reflections on the WFT (6.6 & 7.6) indicated their engagement with the tool and how it augmented the Writing and Presenting lessons. The learners interviewed were particularly open and insightful about their use of the tool demonstrating a keen ability to reflect on their learning.

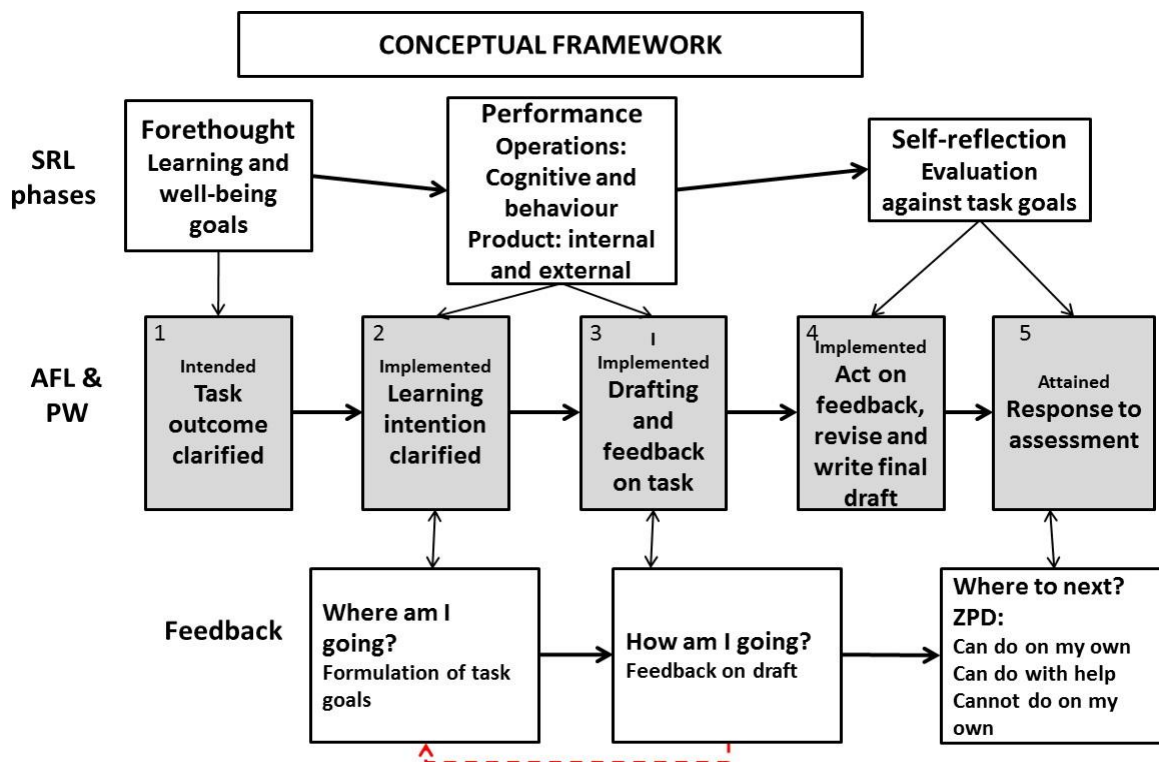
#### *8.4.1.5 Researcher's position*

Action research is principally concerned with the relationship between insiders and outsiders and the clarity is necessary for considering issues of research validity and ethics (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Smith (2018:26) reflected on the four categories of positionality for action researchers proposed by Herr and Anderson (2005) namely the insider, insider in collaboration with other insiders, outsider in collaboration with insider(s), and reciprocal collaboration. However, Smith (2018:26) concluded that the most appropriate description of her role was that of insider outsider reciprocal collaboration.

As the study progressed, my position changed; while I was an outsider to the schools, I was an insider as a fellow language teacher. I observed and experienced the issues the teachers were grappling with such as rigid curriculum expectations and limited time allocation for writing lessons. As I worked with the teachers to plan lesson observations and WFT implementation I became closer to being an insider. The shared goal of the intervention and collaborative, creative interaction moved me, similar to Smith (2018), to the role of insider outsider reciprocal collaboration. Equality in the relationship between researcher and participants is an aim in participatory action research (Dickson & Green, 2001:246) and this was achieved by the clarification of my role and the give-and-take nature of the interactions.

## 8.4.2 Conceptual framework reflections

The conceptual framework (Figure 8.4) based on theoretical underpinnings, as presented in Chapter 3.3, led to the conceptualisation of the WFT.



**Figure 8.4: Feedback in writing conceptual framework**

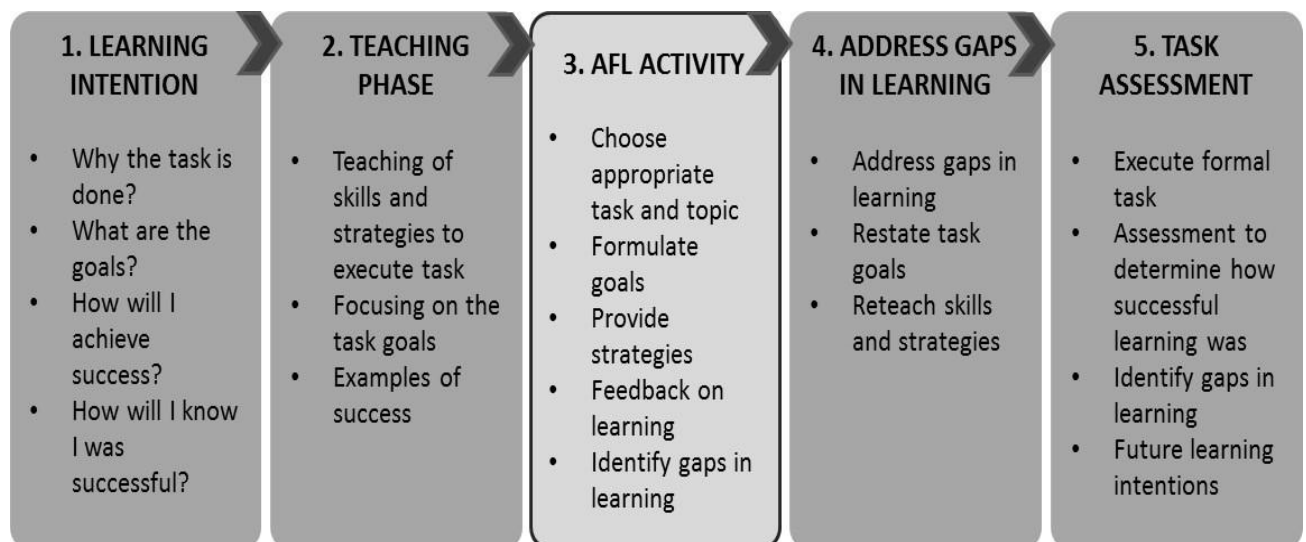
The WFT design emerged after the first research phase when the current practice was established (Chapter 5). The WFT design focused on the practical implementation therefore it had to be aligned with the current practice of process writing in the English Home Language classrooms in Grade 10 and Grade 11. Furthermore, the design had to result in a concise document facilitating an uncomplicated implementation.

The CFW structured the planning of the research phases, and the intervention, in the form of the WFT, structured the two implementation cycles. The interview questions, and in particular the second implementation cycle, were informed by the development of the WFT. Furthermore, the analysis of the efficacy of the tool was structured by the WFT. Therefore the CFW and the intervention in the form of the WFT became the lens through which the writing lessons were viewed and the WFT implementation evaluated.

The WFT succeeded in its purpose to effectively incorporate feedback as part of assessment for learning in writing lessons to improve learning. However, during the WFT implementation, two critical gaps emerged in the learning of writing: the vague learning intention and the subsequent lack of alignment between the learning intention, feedback and the success criteria. A further issue was how effectively the practise tasks were used for the assessment of learning. It was established that in most cases the completion of the practise task was the primary learning intention and not necessarily the learning of specific writing or language skills.

### 8.4.3 Assessment for learning as part of formative assessment

The research findings led to the revision of the conceptual framework to include assessment for learning as a critical component of formative assessment. Assessment for learning in writing is best implemented as a task, in Writing and Presenting a writing task, as part of a teaching sequence integrated in a formative assessment process. The five-step formative assessment process suggested by Black (2015) (3.2.3) has been adapted for the teaching and learning of writing and is illustrated in Figure 8.5 below. The five formative assessment steps incorporate an assessment for learning activity (3) which, in the teaching of writing, constitutes the practise task.



**Figure 8.5: Formative assessment process with assessment for learning in writing lessons**

The assessment activity, in the case of writing, an essay or transactional task, puts the teaching and learning needed in place as explained by Black (2015) in section

2.3.2. The teachers decide on the learning intention for the teaching and learning phase, based on their interpretation of the curriculum and their learners' learning needs. The first step in the formative assessment process is to determine what the learning intention for the learning phase is and how it will be assessed in the formal task at the end of the teaching sequence (step 5).

Below follows an explanation of how assessment for learning in writing may be implemented at the operation level of the curriculum with reference to Figure 8.5 above. The example of a descriptive essay will be used to illustrate how the assessment for learning activity fits into the formative assessment process.

- *Step 1 Learning intention*

As discussed above (8.3.1), the learning intention represents the curriculum, task criteria, success criteria and the learners' needs. Step 1 in Table 8.1 illustrates how the success and task criteria are aligned to form the details of the learning intention. The learning intention is descriptive writing (Why is the task written?), success criteria (How will success be recognised?) and the task criteria (What to do?). The topic is carefully chosen as it should be appropriate to the learners' context, thus accessible; however, it should also be suitably challenging. The task should be based on what the learners are already able to do, but should also elicit new learning.

**Table 8.1: Step 1. Learning intention**

Success criteria based on rubric	Task criteria	Topic and type of task
<b>Content and Planning</b> Develop coherent ideas in essay format	Effective introduction, body, conclusion	Suitable challenging but accessible topic
<b>Language, style and editing</b> Style and register Vocabulary Language conventions	Carefully chosen words and expressions Images of sight, sound, hearing, taste, touch for vivid description Figures of speech Nouns, adjectives Verbs, adverbs	
<b>Structure</b> Sentence construction Paragraphs	Sentences, clause, subclause, phrases Paragraphs – topic sentences, subordinate clauses	

- *Step 2 Teaching phase*

During step 2 the teaching phase activities and exercises are used to teach the skills and strategies, reflected in the task criteria, the learners need to achieve their goals (Table 8.2). Importantly, the teaching phase should include examples of what successful writing looks like that are in relation to the success criteria the teachers expect. During this phase teachers and learners engage in activities aimed at the writing goals that include feedback discussions building towards the achievement of goals. To continue with the example of descriptive writing, teachers may use appropriate texts in teaching literature or comprehension texts to expose the learners to examples of good descriptive writing.

**Table 8.2: Step 2. What and how am I learning?**

Teaching phase
Plan and structure teaching activities aimed at success and task criteria. Use examples and exercises to teach skills and strategies. Use feedback to engage with learning activities. Build vocabulary.

- *Step 3 Assessment for learning activity*

As explained in section 2.3.2 (*Appropriate activity to demonstrate achievement of the learning goal*), an appropriate process writing activity is important to allow learners to demonstrate learning. Implementing the WFT, the learners are actively involved by formulating the goals, using feedback to assess progress towards the goals, and addressing the gaps in learning. Thus the appropriate assessment for learning activity, or practise task, should lead learners in the practising of skills and identifying and addressing gaps leading up to the formal assessment at the end of the teaching sequence.

Feedback on the writing task will be as per the WFT from multiple sources such as peers, teachers and self, and in different forms - synchronous, verbal and focused written feedback (2.5.4). Feedback will focus on specific learning, aligning the task goals with the success criteria, and ideally should be a continuation of the feedback discussions the teachers and learners engaged in in steps 1 and 2. The practise task must not be seen in isolation but rather as a marker in the process, an activity as an opportunity to address differentiated gaps, raising expectations at learners' individual learning level.

The learners use the information from the WFT to direct their own learning by asking for specific feedback to address their learning gaps. More accomplished learners may set suitable challenging goals for themselves to improve their writing and may not only focus on addressing gaps in their learning. The learners' reflections from the *Where to next?* column on the WFT will be used as information about the gaps in learning, either to address in step 4, or to be taught and learnt in the next teaching sequence.

- *Step 4 Address gaps in learning*

The learners have the opportunity to ask for and use feedback to address the gaps in their writing. The teachers, having assessed the learning in the practise task with the learners, use information from WFT to address gaps, restate goals, and re-teach skills and strategies.

- *Step 5 Assessment of task*

Learners use the WFT to execute a formal task by formulating goals and providing self feedback. When the assessed task is considered with the teacher, the subsequent task goals are developed based on the success achieved and gaps identified.

These steps support the notion that the essential purpose of formative assessment as a practice is to move learners' learning forward while their learning is still in the process of development (Heritage, 2011; Carless, 2011).

This subsection concluded the research reflections. The policy, practice and research recommendations as a result of the study are furnished in the next and last section of this chapter.

## **8.5 POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the conclusions drawn from the study, recommendations for educational policy are offered in the following sections: Policy (8.5.1), Practice (8.5.2) as well as Further research (8.5.3).

### **8.5.1 Policy**

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for English Home Language (DBE, 2011) is a detailed guide about the curriculum content and assessment procedures which the Gauteng Education Department schools and the Independent Examinations Board school, to a lesser extent, adhere to. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement is not a rigid prescription of what must be done, however, the scope of writing teaching and learning was found to be limited and thus the following recommendations are offered:

- *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement guidelines on writing development*

First, there are no clear guidelines on how to use formative assessment with assessment for learning as an approach in Writing and Presenting. The use of

formative assessment with the assessment for learning activity having being integrated, as suggested in section 8.4.3, means that the assessment for learning activities could be strategically planned to assess the learning. These assessment for learning activities do not have to be writing activities, although in this study there was a strong indication that a well-planned writing activity may be particularly useful for the assessment of language learning. It would be instructive if the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement indicated with the use of the WFT how assessment for learning is to be used in the teaching and learning of the four skills: *Listening and Speaking, Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting, and Language Structure and Use*.

Second, process writing is included in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement as the way to conduct writing tasks, however, as discussed previously (2.5.2), it is not made clear how the elements of process writing can be used effectively to improve learning. The implementation of the WFT, as has been demonstrated in section 8.3, facilitates the implementation of assessment for learning and process writing steps. The WFT and the way it facilitates the alignment of task goals and assessment makes it a valuable tool to use in the teaching, learning and assessment of writing. However, it may also be used in teaching the other language skills such as *Listening and Speaking*, where assessment rubrics are used for assessment.

Third, the negative effect an inaccessible writing task or topic has on the learners' ability to learn to write was illustrated in the implementation of WFT 1 (Grade 10 at schools A and C, 6.3.2.2) and WFT2 (Grade 10 at school A, 7.3.2.2 and Grade 11 at school C, 7.4.2.2). Easy access to appropriate high quality, current writing resources such as a resource bank would support the teachers in their teaching of writing. Ideally, the ready availability of topics for the different grades, quality examples and challenging, differentiated topics would greatly support the effective teaching and learning of writing.

- *Development of assessment rubrics for writing tasks*

The universal rubrics used by the Gauteng Department of Education schools for assessment of writing is problematic as the universal rubrics do not allow for the effective assessment of different types of writing tasks. Additionally, the rubrics do not



allow for the different levels of learning from Grades 10 to 12. It was demonstrated in section 2.5.3 how the Independent Examinations Board essay rubrics for the different types of essays may enhance the focus on specific skills to achieve the task. It is thus recommended that assessment rubrics for writing in English Home Language be revised to include task specific rubrics and rubrics for the various attainment levels in Writing and Presenting in the Further Education and Training phase.

### **8.5.2 Practice**

The conclusions reached regarding the implementation of the WFT in writing classrooms were used to arrive at recommendations for writing teaching practice.

- *Formulation of task goals*

The task goals direct the learning of the writing, they guide the learners' efforts as well as the feedback and assessment of the writing. The formulation of task goals proved to be challenging as the task goals should effect the implementation of the curriculum and accommodate the learners' diverse learning needs. Using a structured process, as encouraged by the WFT, will simplify the focus on learning and facilitate the formulation of goals. However, teachers will need support and guidance in the form of training and personal development about how effective learning intentions based on the curriculum are set and how goals are formulated, while being mindful of their learners' learning needs. Teachers will then be able to teach learners how to set task goals, making this a realistic expectation in learning of writing.

- *The provision of effective feedback*

Effective feedback does not only focus on the end product, but also on the learning process. Furthermore, feedback is specific and actionable. Specific means it is clear and focused, not only on the learning intention or goals but also to the learners' needs; and actionable means strategies are used to scaffold the feedback. The learners confirmed that the most helpful feedback not only informed them about the gaps in learning, but also how to address the gaps. Providing such feedback is complex and requires time as well as multiple opportunities. These are lacking as writing tasks are seen as imperatives and not opportunities for learning. The teachers need training in

structuring the teaching of writing to allow for time to provide meaningful feedback. If the WFT is used to provide focused feedback that is not aimed at correcting all the errors, feedback will become meaningful to the teachers and the learners. The teaching and use of strategies to achieve goals and to use it as scaffolded feedback will improve the quality of feedback.

- *Sharing clear success criteria and the active use of the assessment rubric*

Black (2015), referenced in subsection 2.3.2, states that teaching and learning are led by the assessment of the task. Teachers and learners need to know and agree on what success looks like in order to track progress and address learning gaps.

The rubric was not used as a tool of instruction but in some cases the rubric criteria were used to enforce compliance, a possibility explained by Hattie and Gan (2011) and Torrance (2012) in 2.3.2. The descriptors on the assessment rubrics need to be demonstrated with effective learning activities and examples to make them accessible to the learners, e.g. “*Lively sentence construction*” (Gauteng Department of Education essay rubric Figure 7.1) may be difficult to identify by some learners but could be recognised in examples of writing. In the writing classes investigated here, the clarification of the success criteria was an area that remained unresolved. The absence of the rubric as teaching and assessment tool for writing learning was glaring. There is a need for the rubrics to be seen as a way to share and agree on success criteria and not only as a tool to allocate marks for the assessment of a writing task. Furthermore, it will be useful if teachers are able to adapt or modify rubrics to suit the specific writing task and learning needs. The learners must be taught to use the rubric, it will further develop their self-regulated learning if they are able to use a rubric to assess their own work. Using the WFT, the success criteria according to the assessment rubric to be used may be integrated in the teaching and learning of writing which may be a way to overcome the convergent nature of the writing assessment rubric.

- *Practical consideration for the use of the WFT information*

As mentioned in 8.2.2.3, the learners’ access to completed WFTs is limited if it is filed or stuck in their work books. A method should be devised to allow the learners to have

access to the information on the WFT e.g. a personal file or book where the WFTs are saved. It will be possible to develop the WFT as a digital application learners could download on their mobile devices where the WFT could be used and information curated. However, the development of an application was not explored in this study as I wanted the WFT to be accessible to all learners regardless of their context or ability to access technology.

### **8.5.3 Research recommendations**

Throughout the process of conducting this study, and in particular in the two WFT implementation cycles, issues in need of further investigation were called to attention. The following are recommended:

- *Research to develop the use of the WFT*

First, the two implementation cycles of the WFT allowed insights to be gained in how assessment for learning and process writing function in the classroom. However, the limited time between the two implementation cycles did not accommodate a thorough consideration of possible changes to the WFT. A third implementation would be of value to further explore how the WFT could be optimised in the classroom. An important aspect would be to explore how effectively the gaps in learning are used to inform future tasks and how effectively the gaps are addressed.

Second, as pointed out in 8.2.2.3, the WFT could be modified to accommodate the recording of strategies in a section called “*writing toolbox*”. Learners could use strategies and develop their own, curating them in a section on the WFT. Learners learn in different ways and, as indicated, the WFT enabled the identification of differentiated learning gaps. Further research is needed to establish how learners’ self-regulatory capacities may be further developed to effectively use strategies to improve writing. Research on the teaching and use of strategies and how the WFT facilitates this is needed.

Third, while the findings were that the learners received feedback as helpful in improving their learning, further research is recommended on how and why the learners record the feedback on the WFT. As reported in Chapters 6 and Chapter 7,

not all the feedback the learners received was written down on the WFT. How the learners manage and respond to the feedback they receive in conjunction with the use of the WFT needs to be explored further.

Fourth, the WFT made the processes in the writing classroom visible and some teachers explained that the WFT reflected the learners' thinking (7.5). More research is needed to develop the WFT as a tool that can be used to focus on the development of self-regulated learning in writing. Additionally, how the WFT could be used to assess self-regulated learning and be used as an intervention when self-regulated learning is identified as a gap in learning should be investigated.

Fifth, the WFT was primarily used by the learners as a tool for learning. Further research is needed to establish how it could also be used as a teachers' tool. The WFT could be adapted to plan, record and analyse teaching practices. Teachers could also use their version of the WFT to record the learning gaps identified and evaluate the success of strategies used. The efficacy of the feedback used in the classroom could be reflected on the WFT for analysis and development by the teacher.

Sixth, further implementation of the WFT as part of formative assessment will be an opportunity to investigate how effective the WFT is in addressing the gaps in learning. It will be very useful to implement the WFT with groups of learners in a combined quantitative and qualitative longitudinal study where actual improvement in learning may be measured.

Finally, using participatory action research as methodology at a particular school's English language department, implementation of the WFT with various teachers and grades could be explored. The use of the WFT in several grades with the teachers investigating and sharing ways to improve teaching practices and the effect of the WFT on language learning will be valuable in the further development of the WFT and its use.

- *WFT as universal teaching and learning intervention*

Apart from investigating the WFT implementation at quintile 1, 2 and 3 schools its universal application in other subjects should also be pursued. Assessment for

learning as an approach to formative assessment is not exclusive to language learning. While the WFT could easily be used in subjects such as Business Studies, History and History of Art where rubrics are used to assess essays, further research is required to establish how it may be used in subjects such as Mathematics and the Sciences.

- *Tertiary teacher training for the implementation of formative assessment with assessment for learning as an approach in English Home Language*

Firstly, research into how language teachers are trained at tertiary level to implement formative assessment with assessment for learning as an approach is needed. The development of assessment knowledge and skills may address the gap between theoretical knowledge of teaching and assessment and practical implementation. Training teachers to use an intervention such as the WFT and training teachers to design their own interventions needs to be further investigated.

Secondly, teacher training is needed in the formulation of process level task goals, the teaching of strategies to achieve goals and provision of effective feedback. The foundation of learning intentions informing goal formulation and giving effective feedback is strong subject knowledge. How language teacher training needs to be developed to include these requires further research.

- *Teaching and assessment of unconstrained writing skills*

Snow and Matthews (2016:57) explain that fundamental literacy skills can be grouped into two categories. The first category is constrained skills, for example, the 26 letters of the alphabet, or a set of 20 to 30 common spelling rules. Constrained skills are finite and have a ceiling; young children can and do achieve perfect performance, thus constrained skills are easy to teach and assess. The second category is unconstrained skills such as vocabulary and background knowledge (Snow & Matthews, 2016:57). These are large domains of knowledge learnt progressively through experience and are more difficult to teach in the classroom. Furthermore, unconstrained skills are open-ended and, consequently, much harder to assess.

The Gauteng Department of Education essay assessment rubrics (2.5.3) have three categories. The category *Content and planning* is similar to unconstrained skills in literacy and the *Language, style & editing* as well as *Structure* are closer to constrained literacy skills. It was evident at some schools that the teaching and learning in writing tended to focus on constrained skills such as spelling and punctuation which responded to corrective feedback; this was an indication of a rather limited learning intention. The writing of “*Outstanding original content and thought provoking and mature ideas*” as expressed in the essay rubric (Figure 7.1) did not receive as much attention. However, the development of thoughts and ideas are essential skills (DBE, 2011) and learners are deprived of that opportunity if teaching and learning of writing remain limited to constrained skills. Therefore, research on how the WFT could be used in the teaching and assessment of unconstrained skills are managed, is recommended.

## **8.6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

The purpose of this study was to find an effective way to use feedback in the writing classroom for the enhancement of learning. While the writing classrooms investigated were not devoid of feedback - in fact there were multiple opportunities and ways of feedback provided, the feedback was not always used to improve the learning of writing. The WFT succeeded in integrating feedback as part of assessment for learning in writing lessons. Furthermore, by using the WFT, the learning of writing was open to analysis by the teachers and the learners. The teachers and learners were able to identify the goals successfully achieved, as well as the learning gaps, in order to address them.

The self-regulatory aspects of the WFT meant that the learners could track their learning and differentiate the gaps in their learning and respond to the feedback received. The challenge is for teachers to recognise learners as capable of self-regulatory learning, therefore, able to assess their own writing. It must also be recognized learners can request and use feedback from their teachers, peers and self to address the learning gaps and move their writing learning continuously to higher levels.

Self-regulation brings ownership to the learners' learning progress. Language as a tool for the vibrant exchange of ideas and the nurturing of dialogue, with others and the self, is essential to learning. Importantly, skilled writing is a vital means of the development of thoughts and ideas, and expressing them. When learners discover the sense of empowerment that the articulation of their own ideas in writing brings, language becomes a thing of wonder.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### LESSON OBSERVATION GUIDE

##### THE TOOL IMPLEMENTATION

###### Lesson observations

Process writing in English Home Language usually takes three to five lessons depending on the context and particularly the duration of the lessons. All the lessons will be observed during the implementation of the feedback tool to determine the following:

###### Lesson 1: Planning the essay

1. How are the criteria shared?
2. Which strategies are effective in reaching agreement with the learners regarding what the success criteria are?
3. How do the learners answer the question Where am I now? Do they look at their previous work? Do they assess their current understanding against the rubric and success criteria?
4. Are the learners able to note their own goals in relation to the success criteria to answer the question Where am I going?

###### Lesson 2: Drafting the essay

1. How do the learners answer the question: How am I going? Are they able to express goals in relation to the rubric and success criteria and use strategies?
2. Who do the learners ask for feedback?
3. Which other sources do the learners seek feedback from?
4. What kind of feedback do the learners ask for? Corrective feedback on task and process level?
5. What is the focus of the feedback requests; is it task or process orientated?
6. What is their response to feedback – accept, challenge or ignore?
7. Which self-regulatory strategies are evident?
  - 7.1 How is own work monitored?

Explain decisions, justifications made, uncertainties addressed.
  - 7.2 How is the learner evaluating information provided?

Comparisons made, emerging themes identified, reflection on own learning?

7.3 What learning goals achieved?

7.4 How have ideas changed?

#### Lesson 3: Revising the essay

1. How do the teachers provide feedback? Written corrective feedback /notes on essays/codes used to point out mistakes?
2. How do the learners respond to the feedback - accept, challenge or ignore?
3. How does the feedback provided help the learners with taking steps to reach their goals?

#### Lesson 4: Assessing the final product

1. How do the learners analyse the assessment of their essays?
2. How do they respond to the feedback?
3. How do the learners reflect on and link where they were to where they are now?
4. How do the learners answer the question: Where to next?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **TEACHER INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE**

#### **ESTABLISHING THE CURRENT PRACTICE**

##### **Teacher semi-structured interviews**

One teacher per class (one Grade 10 and one Grade 11) will be interviewed. It may be a minimum of three teachers if the same teacher teaches the Grade 10 and Grade 11 classes and a maximum of six if there are different teachers for each Grade at each school.

1. What is your understanding of formative assessment (FA)?
2. What is your understanding of assessment for learning (AFL) as expressed in CAPS and how it should be implemented?
3. How many training sessions or workshops have you had on the implementation of AFL?/FA?
4. For my understanding explain the step by step (or lesson by lesson) implementation of process writing in the teaching and learning of essay writing.
5. How many lessons do you allocate to the process?
6. Which rubric do you use? CAPS or your own?
7. How do you use the rubric in the process writing process?
8. How do you share the rubric with the learners?
9. How do you use the assessment criteria in teaching process writing?
  - 9.1 How do you share the assessment criteria with the learners?
10. How do you mark the drafts?
11. How is the marking of the drafts different from the marking of the final task?
12. What kind of feedback is used most of the time? (Written, corrective and coded? Direct or indirect?)
13. How do the learners make use of the feedback?
  - 13.1 How do the learners respond to the feedback?
  - 13.2 How do you show/tell/indicate to them what they must do to reach the success criteria?
14. How do the learners analyse the assessment result and feedback on the final product.

## APPENDIX C

### TEACHER INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE

#### FIRST IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT

##### Teacher semi-structured interviews

1. How did the feedback tool facilitate the implementation of process writing?
  - Which strategies were most effective in helping you and the learners identify and agree on success criteria for a good essay?
2. How did the three feedback questions influence your feedback?
  - On task level?
  - On process level?
  - On self-regulation level?
3. Which type of feedback did you find most effective: written corrective, indirect or direct or coded?
4. How did the learners respond to your feedback?
5. How did the feedback influence the revising and editing of the essays?
6. How effective was the feedback tool in helping learners answer the questions:  
How am I going?  
Where to next?
7. How did the three questions (where am I? How am I going? Where to next?) influence process writing?
8. How did the three questions (where am I? How am I going? Where to next?) help the learners to achieve the desired outcome successfully?
9. How has the feedback tool enabled the learners to think about their own learning needs?
10. How effectively were the learners able to develop strategies by using the feedback tool? Task level, process level and self-regulation level?
11. How has the conversation about writing an essay between you and learners changed?

## **APPENDIX D**

### **TEACHER INTERVIEWS SCHEDULE**

#### **SECOND IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT**

**A03T10Q01** How were the task goals formulated?

**A03T10Q02** How were the own goals identified?

**A03T10Q03** How were the learners able to use the task goals to write the task?

**A03T10Q04** How have the task goals influenced the way the learners approach the task?

**A03T10Q05** How were the learners able to give feedback in relation to the goals?

**A03T10Q06** How did the feedback help learners to check how they are going?

**A03T10Q07** How successful was the feedback in helping the learners edit their tasks?

**A03T10Q08** How were the learners able to use strategies to improve their writing?

**A03T10Q09** How has the WFT influenced your feedback?

**A03T10Q10** How has the WFT helped you to check on the learning?

**A03T10Q11** How have the learners' thinking about writing changed?

**A03T10Q12** How has the WFT helped you to identify gaps in learning?

**A03T10Q13** How can the WFT be used to plan the where to next?

**A03T10Q14** How has the WFT facilitated the assessment of writing?

**A03T10Q15** Why were you able to integrate the WFT in the writing lessons?

**A03T10Q16** How has the WFT changed your strategy towards teaching writing?

**A03T10Q17** Would you use the WFT in future? Why?

**A03T10Q18** How would you modify it for better use?



## **APPENDIX E**

### **LEARNERS VERBAL PROTOCOLS SCHEDULE**

#### **FIRST IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT**

##### Lesson 1: Planning the essay

1. How did the clarification of success criteria, discussion of the rubric and agreeing on outcomes help you to know what you have to do?
2. How were you able to reach agreement on what the success criteria are?
3. How did this first step help you to set your goals towards achieving success/writing a good essay?
4. Which new strategies do you think you used when planning your essay?
5. Who did you ask for feedback? What did you need feedback on?

##### Lesson 2: Drafting the essay.

1. Who did you ask to provide feedback? Can you explain why?
2. What kind of feedback did you need to take the right steps towards achieving your goals?
3. What kind of feedback was the most helpful?  
(Written/corrective/direct/indirect/coded)
4. How did the feedback help you in drafting your essay?
5. How do you know how well you are progressing towards your goals?
6. How were you able to connect the rubric and success criteria with what you have done in your writing task?
7. Who do you think you receive the most helpful feedback from, and can you explain why?

##### Lesson 3: Revising the essay

1. How did the feedback from the teacher help you to take steps towards achieving your goals?
2. Which type of feedback was the most helpful; corrective, direct, indirect, coded, written or verbal?
3. How did the feedback on the task help you to know how you are progressing?
4. How did the feedback on the process of writing help you know you are progressing
5. How did the feedback help you to accept and fix up/correct, revise and edit your writing? revise?
6. What were the challenges in interpreting the feedback you received?

7. After receiving and responding to the feedback, how were you able to adjust what you do to move closer to your goals/use strategies to write a good essay?

#### Lesson 4: Assessing the final product

1. How did you identify areas of success in your writing?
2. Did the feedback and the steps you took help you to see what you got right in relation to the success criteria?
3. What process did you follow to identify areas of development for your next writing task?
4. How were the questions (where am I now/where am I going/how am I going/where to next) helpful in completing the essay?
5. How have the reflections been helpful, or not?

## **APPENDIX F**

### **LEARNERS VERBAL PROTOCOLS SCHEDULE**

#### **SECOND IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT**

**A03LVP10Q01** How did you formulate your goals?

**A03LVP10Q02** How did you choose your own goal?

**A03LVP10Q03** How did you use the rubric in the process of writing your task?

**A03LVP10Q04** How did the goals influence your thinking about the essay?

**A03LVP10Q05** How did you use the goals in planning your essay?

**A03LVP10Q06** How did you use the goals in writing your draft?

**A03LVP10Q07** What did the peer feedback make you realise about your writing?

**A03LVP10Q08** How did you use the feedback information to improve your draft?

**A03LVP10Q09** How did you know what to do to edit /improve your draft?

**A03LVP10Q10** How has the feedback changed your thinking about writing?

**A03LVP10Q11** How were the strategies you used effective in achieving your goals?

**A03LVP10Q12** How has the use of strategies changed your thinking about writing?

**A03LVP10Q13** How were you able to determine which goals you have achieved?

**A03LVP10Q14** How did your teacher's feedback help you to improve your writing?

**A03LVP10Q15** How did you identify areas to improve on?

**A03LVP10Q16** How has the WFT changed your thinking about writing?

## **APPENDIX G**

### **LEARNER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS**

#### **ESTABLISHING CURRENT PRACTICE**

A selection of 10 learners per class will be interviewed.

1. How do you do the planning of your essay?
2. Do you refer to the rubric when planning and drafting the essay?
3. How does the rubric guide you to know how to write a good essay?
4. What kind of feedback do you need regarding vocabulary, spelling grammar, content, structure while drafting the essay?
5. Who do you ask for feedback when writing the draft?
6. How does the feedback help?
7. How do you use the feedback you get from your teacher on the draft essay?
8. What kind of feedback do you find most helpful?
9. How do you know whether your essay was a good essay?
10. How helpful is it to check and read the rubric again when you get your marked essay?
11. How do you know what to do differently for the next essay?

## **APPENDIX H**

### **LEARNER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS**

#### **FIRST IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT**

1. How did the feedback tool help you to know how to write a good essay?
2. What were some of the goals you had?
3. How were you able to put steps in place to reach your goals?
4. How did you use the rubric and success criteria to plan your task?
5. How did you feel about the discussion on the rubric, success criteria and agreeing on it?
6. Who did you ask for feedback most of the time?
7. What kind of feedback did you ask for most of the time?
8. What kind of feedback did you find most useful?
9. Would you say you have greater understanding on what to do to write a good essay?

## **APPENDIX I**

### **LEARNER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS**

#### **SECOND IMPLEMENTATION OF WFT**

**A03LFG10Q01** How has the WFT changed the way you approach writing?

**A03LFG10Q02** How did you use the rubric in the process of writing the task?

**A03LFG10Q03** how did you formulate your goals?

**A03LFG10Q04** How did you use the goals in the writing of your essay?

**A03LFG10Q05** Was the peer feedback in relation to your goals?

**A03LFG10Q06** What did the peer feedback make you realise about your writing?

**A03LFG10Q07** How did you use the peer feedback to edit your draft?

**A03LFG10Q08** How did you know what to do to edit or fix up your draft?

**A03LFG10Q09** How were you able to determine which goals you have achieved?

**A03LFG10Q10** How did you decide which areas you want to work on to improve your writing?

**A03LFG10Q11** How can you use our teacher's feedback to improve your writing?

**A03LFG10Q12** How has the WFT changed your thinking about writing?

## **APPENDIX J**

### **DOCUMENTS ANALYSIS**

Analysis of lesson plans, assessment plans and assessment rubrics will focus on the planning of process writing.

How is process writing planned in terms of the goals and outcomes for each lesson?

How do the assessment tools reflect assessment for learning practices?

How do the teachers reflect on the process?

### **Analysis of writing tasks**

1. The essays will be analysed to determine how the feedback facilitated or perhaps hindered process writing.

Written comments

Coded remarks or words

Feedback relating to goals set for the task

Feedback focused on task/process/self-regulation

2. The types of feedback used will be analysed.

Direct or indirect feedback

Corrective feedback

Reflective feedback

3. Feedback on essays will be analysed to determine how it enabled the learners to answer the three feedback questions on three levels.

Feedback on goals learner wanted to reach

Feedback on how task is conducted or should be conducted

Feedback on self-regulatory strategies

4. Learners' responses to the feedback will be studied to determine how effective feedback was in their learning.

Accepted feedback and used fix-up strategies

Accepted feedback but justified decisions and strategies

Accepted feedback and asked for further clarification or development

Rejected feedback with own explanations

Ignored feedback

## APPENDIX K: WFT 1 ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

<b>Where am I going?</b>	<b>How am I going?</b>	<b>Where to next</b>
<p><b>What are the task goals:</b> How were the task goals and own goals formulated? Do the task goals reflect learning intention?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do task goals align with task criteria and success criteria?</li> <li>2. On which levels are the goals? Task and process level?</li> </ol> <p><b>My own goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do the own goals address personal gaps in learning?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Feedback to check my progress towards my goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is feedback in relation to the goals?</li> <li>2. OR is feedback in relation to task criteria and success criteria?</li> <li>3. Is feedback on task and process level?</li> <li>4. Is feedback actionable?</li> </ol> <p><b>Things I have to do to achieve my goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the strategies specific and actionable?</li> </ol>	<p>Feedback on final. Check against goals.</p> <p><b>Which goals have I achieved?</b> How is the feedback used to identify success?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the goals achieved aligned with task goals and feedback?</li> </ol> <p><b>What do I have to work on in the next task?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the learning gaps identified a result of feedback, mark, comment or own assessment?</li> </ol> <p><b>How has the feedback changed my thinking about how I achieve my goals?</b></p>



## APPENDIX L: WFT2 ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

1. Where am I going?	2. How am I going?	3. Where to next
<p><b>Task goals:</b> Do the task goals clarify learning intention, task criteria and success criteria? How were the task goals and own goals formulated?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do task goals align with task criteria and success criteria?</li> <li>2. On which levels are the goals? Task and process level?</li> </ol> <p><b>My own goals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do the own goals address personal gaps in learning?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Feedback from peer/teacher/self</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is feedback in relation to the goals?</li> <li>2. OR is feedback in relation to task criteria and success criteria?</li> <li>3. Does the feedback indicate gaps?</li> <li>4. Is feedback actionable?</li> </ol> <p><b>Things I can do to achieve my goals (strategies):</b></p> <p><b>Response to feedback?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are the strategies specific and actionable?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Which goals have I achieved?</b> (Tick in 1<sup>st</sup> column)</p> <p><b>What did I do to achieve the goals?</b> How was feedback successful in reflecting on writing ZPD –What I can do on my own</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are strategies used?</li> <li>2. Strategies and goals aligned?</li> <li>3. Task and process level strategies</li> </ol> <p><b>Areas to develop to improve my writing:</b> ZPD – What I can do with help Learner: Teacher: <b>I need more feedback about/help with:</b> ZPD – What I cannot do.</p>

## APPENDIX M: PRIMARY DOCUMENTS DENOTATIONS

### GRADE 10

DESCRIPTOR	CHAPTER 5	CHAPTER 6	CHAPTER 7
School A teacher	D2	D1	D1
School A learner focus group	D18	D3	D2
School A verbal protocol learner N	N/A	D4	N/A
School A verbal protocol learner M	N/A	D5	D4
School A verbal protocol learner B	N/A	D6	D3
School A verbal protocol learner R	N/A	N/A	D5
School A lesson observation	N/A	D2	D40
School B teacher	D9	D11	D10
School B learner focus group	D24	D13	D11
School B learner verbal protocol T	N/A	D14	D14
School B learner verbal protocol J	N/A	D15	D13
School B learner verbal protocol C	N/A	D16	DC
School B lesson observation	N/A	D12	D41
School C teacher	D5	D23	D20
School C learner focus group	D20	D25	D21
School C verbal protocol learner L	N/A	D26	N/A
School C verbal protocol learner Y	N/A	D27	D24
School C verbal protocol learner N	N/A	N/A	D22
School C verbal protocol learner P	N/A	N/A	D23
School C lesson observation	N/A	D24	D43
School D teacher	D7	D34	D31
School D learner focus group	D22	D37	D31
School D verbal protocol learner K	N/A	D36	D32
School D verbal protocol learner L	N/A	D37	D33
School D verbal protocol learner N	N/A	D39	D34
School D lesson observation	N/A	D35	D45

## GRADE 11

DESCRIPTOR	CHAPTER 5	CHAPTER 6	CHAPTER 7
School A teacher	D3	N/A	N/A
School A learner focus group	D19	D8	D6
School A verbal protocol learner C	N/A	D9	D7
School A verbal protocol learner T	N/A	D10	D9
School A verbal protocol learner L	N/A	N/A	D8
School A lesson observation	N/A	D11	D39
School B teacher	D10	D17	D15
School B learner focus group	D25	D18	D16
School B learner verbal protocol A	N/A	D 20	D
School B learner verbal protocol N	N/A	D 21	D
School B learner verbal protocol S	N/A	D22	D17
School B learner verbal protocol P	N/A	N/A	D18
School B learner verbal protocol K	N/A	N/A	D19
School B lesson observation	N/A	D19	D42
School C teacher	D6	D28	D25
School C learner focus group	D21	D30	D26
School C verbal protocol learner B	N/A	D31	D27
School C verbal protocol learner TN	N/A	D32	D28
School C verbal protocol learner TB	N/A	D33	D29
School C lesson observation	N/A	D29	D44
School D teacher	D8	D40	D35
School D learner focus group	D23	D42	D36
School D verbal protocol learner M	N/A	D43	N/A
School D verbal protocol learner S	N/A	D44	N/A
School D verbal protocol learner TT	N/A	D45	D37
School D verbal protocol learner TB	N/A	N/A	D38
School D lesson observation	N/A	D	D46

