CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study I investigated the role that English Second Language lecturers play in mediating learning to Second language students since I maintain that this issue has not been adequately addressed. Most teachers have been trained to teach, not to think about second language learning. “Knowledge about second language (L2) learning is a valuable complement to the teachers’ other skills and knowledge” (Cook, 1991:2). If this is so, then clearly those of us who are L2 lecturers will always be less effective in the way we mediate learning to the L2 students. Of concern to us, should not only be the way L2 students learn, but also how L2 lecturers mediate learning. An attempt to understand and facilitate learning to L2 students and help teachers teach them has led to a plethora of theories, policies, laws, studies, pseudo studies and definitions about L2 learning as found in an extensive literature search.

Having carried out a comprehensive literature review, I realised that there was a lack of literature and understanding of how L2 teachers and L2 lecturers mediate learning. This question is still not fully explored, in the South African context, where the majority of the teachers and lecturers who teach, are indeed English Second Language speakers and teachers. My initial response is that the students are already at a disadvantage because the content to be mastered in the communication course is not the target language itself (English in this case), but a range of new knowledge about language and communication. In the case of the students in the Applied Communication course at the University where I teach, the new knowledge is made up of complex concepts and notions forming part of theories of communication. Students are required to apply these notions and concepts in varied contexts, answer case studies and complete formative and summative assessments based on these notions, concepts and theories.
These are all taught in English, which is a second or sometimes a third language to the students. In addition to the medium of instruction being the second language of the learner, it is also the second language, of the instructor. As an English Second Language speaker and lecturer myself, in the process of writing these very points down, I have to pause every now and then to actually think of the manner most suited to the phrasing of my points and the precise words that would convey my meaning. If this is also what happens when I mediate learning, I may without realising it, be expending more energy in class finding the right diction and the right manner in which to present the knowledge to the students, than I would be on facilitating learning.

If this is so, then I am in all probability not mediating learning in the most effective way possible. It is this realization which amongst others convinced me that the way in which L2 lecturers mediate learning to L2 students needs to be investigated.

1.1.1 Pragmatics

An important part of this investigation is the analysis of classroom discourse (politeness, social distance, social status and cultural knowledge ‘(Byram, 2000:447) which is part of pragmatics. Pragmatics, distinguishes two purposes or meanings in each verbal utterance made by speakers. The first intent is the “informative intent” or the meaning of the sentence as it is uttered; the second relates to the communicative intent or what the speaker actually meant to say. This aspect of pragmatics is referred to as ‘politeness’. In my classroom observations the pragmatics in the discourse between L2 students and L2 lecturers who come from diverse backgrounds and cultures was observed and recorded since I felt that pragmatics affected both the communicative and the informative intents that the students and lecturers contributed to the teaching and learning dynamics in the classroom.
1.1.2 Cultural and Language differences

Another aspect to be considered in L2 mediation is the combined cultural and language differences of the students and the lecturers. Such differences may also have an effect on learning, teaching, and cognition, since “Cognition is not culture-free; it is not a trait, but a process, an adaptive instrument suited to the demands of an environment as seen by the subject” (Stern, 1983: 260). He adds that there is a mistake that commonly accompanies cognitive skill development in programmes aimed at L2 students. The teachers in such a programme assume that students from a certain cultural or ethnic group share similar learning styles. The fact is that no matter what ethnic or cultural group a learner comes from, each individual learner has a unique learning style (Stern, 1983).

Just as each learner has a unique worldview and learning style, each lecturer, or group of lecturers bring their own formative experiences, their training, and their personal qualities to teaching. These aspects are termed “presage” by Stern (1983:500). According to Stern, “the language teacher brings to teaching a language background and experience, professional training as a linguist and teacher, previous language teaching experience, and more or less formulated theoretical presuppositions about language, language learning and teaching.” (Stern, 1983:500). These observations indicate that teachers bring a unique world view to their teaching. Medgyes (in Rossner & Bolitho, 1990) labels L2 teachers as non-native teachers of English. He adds that Hungarian teachers of English expend considerable energy in trying to cope with their own English language deficiencies, leaving only a small fraction for attending to their students’ problems.

Although Medgyes (1990) refers to Hungarian teachers teaching English in Hungary, this reference has relevance for non-native (L2) speakers of English teaching English in South Africa. The focus of my research is to explore the added dimension that the L2 lecturer might bring to the classroom in terms of ‘presage’ in the teaching of communication.
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is an abundance of literature on L2 learning and many studies have been undertaken on language competence of second language learners in both primary and secondary schools.

However, this study is aimed at understanding how learning is mediated by English Second Language lecturers in the Department of Applied Communication, of a University in Gauteng. Byram cited in Routledge (2000:477) states, “a critical matter for language teachers as teachers is a fluent command of the target language in terms of linguistic, pragmatic and discourse competence, and the strategic ability to negotiate meaning with their learners at an appropriate level”. I argue that if L2 lecturers are still negotiating meaning themselves, then the question of having a strategic ability to negotiate meaning with learners at an appropriate level still remains an area for investigation under the issue of how L2 lecturers mediate learning in higher education contexts.

1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

My research was guided primarily by the following question:

1.3.1 How do English second language lecturers mediate learning to second language learners?

Subsidiary questions derived from the main question are as follows:

1.3.2 What are the methodological and pedagogical experiences of lecturers when the language of learning and teaching is not the same as their first language?

1.3.3 Does a combined cultural and language difference have an effect on the way in
which learning and teaching is mediated?

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.4.1 Research Aim

The aim of my research was to examine and record how English Second Language Lecturers mediate learning, so as to recommend suggestions for improvement of such mediation. The aim is particularly important to me, because I locate myself within the study, as I am an English Second Language lecturer, and the issue of L1 and L2 lecturers is one I strongly identify with. In my experience, English L1 lecturers are usually credited with more value and worth, than L2 lecturers on the basis of their accents and pronunciation. I became especially aware of this during a teaching/lecturing term abroad and have since pondered it.

1.4.2 Research Objectives

The research objectives were:

1.4.2.1 To explore how L2 lecturers mediate learning in the Department of Applied Communication in the university where I work.

1.4.2.2 To describe English Second Language lecturers’ experiences of teaching English Second Language students.

1.4.2.3 To determine the extent to which the lecturers’ combined cultural and language differences affect the manner in which teaching and learning is mediated in the department at the university where I work.
1.5 OUTLINE OF REMAINING CHAPTERS

1.5.1 Chapter One

This chapter introduces the study, by stating the problem, aims and objective, explaining my personal interest in the study, and delimiting the scope of the investigation.

1.5.2 Chapter Two

This chapter provides an overview of the literature. The focus was on literature related to the experiences of English Second Language lecturers. Most of the pertinent literature was American, Canadian and British with some relating to European and Asian contexts. There is limited literature on South African studies relating to the topic.

1.5.3 Chapter Three

In this chapter I discussed the research methodology, data collection and data analysis. I introduce the participants in a series of vignettes and describe and give details of the observation and interviews that were conducted and undertaken. Mention is made of the limitations that hampered my study, and how I went about ensuring quality.

1.5.4 Chapter Four

The findings that emerged in relation to competence, pragmatics, use of language, difficulties faced by L2 lectures, participant’s comparisons between L2 and L1 lecturers and the participant’s suggestions are discussed in this chapter. In addition, the combined cultural and language difference between lecturer and student is considered before the chapter ends with a look at the five principles of mediation in action.
1.5.5 Chapter Five

In this chapter the conclusions that I reached after consideration of the findings are stated and recommendations are made.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review pertaining to this study as stated in chapter 1. This study investigated how English Second Language lecturers, mediate learning. In this regard, it was necessary to consult various studies that had already been conducted in this area. The overseas studies identify English Second Language lecturers and teachers as ‘Non-Nests’. The acronym ‘non-nests’ means ‘non native English speaking teachers’, as opposed to ‘nests’, who are ‘native English speaking teachers’. I considered these terms inappropriate for the purposes of my study. In the South African context, the term ‘native’ together with the term ‘bantu’ was used as a derogatory term indicating the black indigenous population and is associated with the terminology of the Apartheid era.

This literature review is presented in four parts. I begin with a discussion of Feurestein’s principles on the mediated learning experience (MLE) (Feuerstein 1980:49-82). Thereafter the debate around the issue of “native and non-native” speakers of English is presented informed by information gathered on these foci. In addition to the above, a discussion of “invisible and visible” minorities as well as the growth of non-native English speakers teaching English globally is presented. I present an in-depth argument on the “native speaker fallacy” (Phillipson, 1992: 2) and the notion of the native speaker being the more competent teacher due to his/her linguistic ability. The place of cultural factors in the mediation of learning is highlighted, before concluding the literature review.
2.2 MEDIATED LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Education has to develop the educational abilities of students. It should teach them how to think. Learning is not automatically associated with thinking. Sometimes learning is associated with memorisation, or as a means to maintain the status quo. Mediated learning takes place when a more experienced or knowledgeable person interacts with a student, in such a way that meaning is constructed or values are transmitted. Mediated learning promotes thinking skills and develops inter-actional skills says Feuerstein (1980), the pioneer in mediation of learning through enhancing thinking skills. His Structural Cognitive Modifiability and Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) theories have offered much insight into the field of cognitive development (1980).

Mediated Learning Experience is a special kind of interaction in a learning situation. Learning typically takes place either through the direct or mediated approach. According to Feuerstein (1980: xvii), learning in the direct approach is incidental, and not effective enough to ensure that learning takes place. In mediated learning, a mediator (teacher, parent, lecturer or caregiver) interposes him/herself between the student and the world of stimuli to interpret, guide and give meaning to the stimuli. In this kind of interaction, learning is intentional.

The mediator enriches the interaction between the student and the environment with ingredients that do not pertain to the immediate situation but belongs to a world of meanings and intentions derived from generations of culturally transmitted attitudes, values, goals and means (Feuerstein, 1980: pg xvii).

When a student does not interact effectively with the environment, or has trouble with learning, we as educators develop what Feuerstein calls a ‘stiff finger’. This is when the index finger points stiffly in the direction of the student indicating that the problem and failure is fixed firmly with him/her. In mediation, however, learning is an interaction
between student and mediator and responsibility for learning or lack of learning would have to point in both directions.

Feuerstein (1980) identified 10 principles which, if adhered to would ensure successfully mediated new learning. The ten principles are as follows:

1. Mediation is a mutual interaction. The mediator has the intention to share. The student wants to receive.
2. Mediation means enthusiastically, sharing your aims. It answers the students’ questions as to why the activity is important.
3. Mediation is based on of constructivism. It promotes the acquisition of principles, concepts or strategies, which can be generalized to issues beyond the presenting problem.
4. Mediation involves finding a general rule that applies to related situations, the linking events in the present with future and past events. This should lead to the student engaging in reflective thinking to reach an underlying understanding of a situation.
5. Mediation also entails instilling in the mediatee, a positive belief in his/her ability to succeed.
6. In mediated learning, the student is equipped with the ability to self regulate control and adjust behaviour. It involves teaching students to think about their own thinking and behaviour and to choose appropriate responses to a particular stimulus or given situation.
7. Mediated learning relates to sharing, sensitivity towards others and an emphasis on working together.
8. In mediation, the mediatee is encouraged to set goals and discuss explicit means of achieving them.
9. Mediation of challenge occurs when the mediator motivates the mediatee to attempt something novel with determination and perseverance and facing challenges instead of resisting and fearing the unknown.

10. Mediation should develop within the student the capacity for self-change.

In the course of my observations, I observed to what extent each of the Second Language lecturers used Feuerstein’s (1982) points of mediation in mediating learning to their students. These observations are discussed in chapter four.

2.3 NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS

Medgyes (1994), a non-native English speaker of Hungarian origin, and the director of the Centre for English Teacher Training in Budapest, studied the major differences between native and non-native English teachers. His study is of relevance to my research, as my investigation focused on how Second Language (L2) lecturers, that is, non-native English speaking lecturers, mediate learning.

I concur with Medgyes’ (1994) concern about the lack of research and information concerning teachers and lecturers whose first language is not English. He suggests two reasons for this. Firstly, that since non-Nests are scattered all over the globe, researchers may very well tend to overlook them. Secondly, that most academic literature gets written in English and thus research conducted by non-Nests in their own countries is restricted to their environments which results in their work being unknown. I can attest to the fact that there is a dearth of literature on this topic, as I have conducted extensive searches with very little success.

The distinction between who is a native and who is a non-native speaker of English abounds with ambiguities, subtleties and diverse notions such as native language, dominant language, mother tongue, first language (L1), home language, native English speaking teachers and non-native English speaking teachers of English (Medgyes, 1994). Medgyes claims that there is no clarity surrounding these terms, but posits that
Nests (L1) and non-nests (L2) differ in terms of their language proficiency: they differ in terms of their teaching behaviour: the discrepancy in language proficiency accounts for most of the differences in teaching behaviour and that non-Nests can be equally good teachers in their own terms (Medgyes, 1994).

Two hundred and sixteen teachers from 10 countries as diverse as Hungary, Mexico, Israel, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Russia were part of the Medgyes (1994) survey. The survey revealed that non-Nests in general all accepted that they were less proficient users of English. In responding to the question: “What are your main difficulties in English?” the areas pinpointed as having most frequent language difficulties were vocabulary, fluency, speaking, pronunciation and listening. However, they were very well versed in the rules of grammar, in some cases even better than the nests. Non-Nests were better able to gauge the student’s potential and empathise with L2 students while predicting potential problem areas. They were more sensitive possibly due to the linguistic, cultural and educational heritage they shared with their students. The non-nests would also have the advantage of having the L1 as a tool of instruction to help the student. Recent studies have already borne out the advantages of ‘code switching’ when teaching in a multilingual classroom (Meerkotter (1998:257).

A further interesting observation made by Medgyes was his assertion that non-Nests are prone to either a kind of schizophrenia or an inferiority complex “because we’re trying so hard to emulate an L1 standard that we either ‘go British’ or ‘go American’.

At a near-native level, we may in fact become so much imbued with the English language and the cultures it conveys that we tend to carry them over into our L1 behaviour as well” (Medgyes, 1994 : 39). He cites a possible reason for the ‘inferiority complex’ being the non-Nests innate realisation and distress that they have gaps and defects in their knowledge of English. This is corroborated by Liang (2005) and Tang (1997).
The need for professional self-discovery of non-native English speaking teachers is a necessity. “Part of being a more effective teacher of English will almost surely be coming to terms with how English relates to one’s identity” (Brady, 2003:11). Self-discovery is a guided process of reflection on all that the non-nest has learnt which helps him/her honestly to appraise strengths and weaknesses. Although many non-nests have a healthy self esteem, young professionals or those still in training, may lack self confidence or be self conscious of their lack of proficiency (Brady, 2003: 11).

Firstly, self-discovery enhances teachers’ empathy with their students who may themselves be struggling with the target language; secondly, it is necessary for non-nests to understand his/her relationship with English on the one hand and with teaching on the other. Teaching English will always be a part of the non-nests discourse since he/she has been acculturated into it but the relationship is more complex than this. Every non-Nest has to decide whether his/her immersion into English and Englishness will be partial or complete (Brady, 2003: 11).

Medgyes (1994) draws the conclusion, that to be the ideal foreign language or L2 teacher, nests should know, or at least attempt to learn the language of the L2 students, while non-nests should be ongoing students of the target language (in this case English) constantly trying to increase proficiency, since greater proficiency leads to greater efficiency.

While teaching English to Spanish-speaking students, Tseng (2003) undertook a challenge to specifically learn a Second Language. According to her this made her aware of the challenges and difficulties faced by her students. Her empathy with her students was enhanced and the fact that she had engaged in an attempt to learn their language established her credibility first amongst her non native students, and later amongst her native English speaking students.
Nemtchinova (2000) posits two approaches to the whole debate on native English speakers and non-native English speakers, both of which focus specifically on nativeness as a construct in teaching. According to the dominant approach, native English speaking teachers will always be at an advantage due to their language proficiency while non-native English speaking teachers are regarded as inherently linguistically handicapped. This does not disadvantage them as teachers in the classroom however, since they bring other benefits with them like knowledge of grammar, empathy and sensitivity towards non-native students and represent a good student model. The difference approach posits that either group may be equally bad or good for students wanting to learn a new language. A judgement based on language proficiency is therefore unjustified.

Host teachers who were attached to trainee teachers in a training programme participated in a survey in which Nemtchinova (2000) asked them to respond to questionnaires evaluating the non-nest trainee teachers in the classrooms. Altogether 56 host teachers responded. The host teachers were asked to evaluate the following characteristics with regard to non-native trainee teachers: personal qualities, command of the language, teaching organisation, lesson implementation, cultural awareness, feedback to students and self evaluation. The trainee teachers in Nemchinova’s study came from as far a field and diverse backgrounds as Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Pakistan, Turkey, Russia, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa, Brazil, Chile, and Argentina. They had been attached to their host teachers for periods ranging from two months to three semesters.

Interestingly the majority of the host teachers who participated in the evaluation of non-nest trainee teachers stated that they evaluated the native English-speaking trainees and the non-native English-speaking trainees according to the same assessment criteria. Non-native trainee teachers received no special allowances. Nemchinova’s survey
showed that non-native trainee teachers did not appear to experience difficulties while trying to communicate with their students or mediate the subject matter.

Their language was “phonologically, lexically and structurally correct, generally authentic and presented a good model for students” (Nemchinova, 2000:254). Only 7% of the non-native teacher trainees, or 3 of the 56 trainee teachers received negative comments from a host teacher, one of which was, “It was very frustrating to me to work as a master teacher with a person whose lack of fluency caused such an impediment to learning.” The study by Nemchinova contradicts the studies of Allen and Vallette 1994; Lange 1990; and Murdoch 1994 who are cited in Medgyes (1994). They emphasise target language proficiency for successful language teaching.

Ogier (2005) evaluated student’s ratings of the effect of a lecturer’s language background on a rating of teaching form. The form comprised of a five point rating scale. The two criteria on the questionnaire devised by Ogier that I found to be relevant to this study were:

The lecturer was able to communicate effectively?

Overall the lecturer is an effective teacher?

Ogier (2005) found, that there was a high correlation between how effectively a lecturer communicates ideas and information and how effective the lecturer is perceived to be by students. The results showed that overall student ratings of English Second Language (ESL) lecturers are on average 0,4 points lower than student ratings of native English speaking lecturers. Interestingly the faculty that the lecturers came from also influenced the rating. Non native Lecturers from the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities were rated slightly better (0,2 points higher) than non native lecturers from the Sciences. I inferred from this, that one of the possible reasons for the 0,2 point difference relates to the difficulty and complexity of the scientific terminology that most of the students will have encountered for the first time.
Rubin and Smith (2002) found that North American undergraduates may have stereotypical attitudes towards non-native lecturers. In a paper entitled *Effects of accent, ethnicity, and lecture topic on undergraduate perceptions of non-native English speaking teaching assistants*, they report that 40% of undergraduates avoided classes presented by non-native teaching assistant. When students perceived high levels of foreign accentedness, they judged speakers to be poor teachers (Rubin and Smith 2002: 1). Research however showed that there were very few direct effects on results which related to “accentedness”. More often than not, the reasons for avoiding classes that were being taught by non-native student teaching assistants related to factors like instructor ethnicity and lecture topic. These factors are unrelated to non-native teaching assistant’s English proficiency.

The conclusion one can reach from this is that many other factors apart from perceived low levels of communication competence, contribute to negative perceptions of non-nests teaching assistants and by extension, non-nest lecturers.

In 2000, Arva and Medgyes undertook a follow-up study of native and non-native teachers in Hungary to counter the criticism against his earlier work. Critics claimed that Medgyes in his original study “over-emphasised the linguistic deficit of non-native professionals while neglecting other equally significant factors related to professionalism”. Medgyes and Arva (2000) investigated the “teaching behaviour of native and non-native teachers” They observed a group of native English speaking teachers (nests) and a group of non-native English speaking teachers (non-nests) in an attempt to examine their teaching behaviour and to analyse the differences in their stated behaviour in relation to their actual behaviour.

The researchers observed their participants’ behaviour in the classroom and thereafter conducted a 30-45 minute long guided interview with the teacher concerned. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Medgyes and Arva (2000) suggest that the different levels of language competence play a relevant role in relation to the teaching
strategies that teachers employ. Participants, who were nests, felt that non-nests were at an advantage, while the non-nests felt that the nests were at an advantage. Non-nests felt that the nests were *laissez faire*, could have completely unstructured lessons, and could do or say anything in the classroom since they were usually allocated oral or conversation or discussion periods. Nests felt that the non-nests had the advantage of resorting to the native language to enhance their explanations. Clearly, more collaboration between the nests and non-nests would have solved some of the tensions evident in the situation (Arva and Medgyes, 2000).

Matsuda and Matsuda’s (1999) collaborative model indicates that nest and non-nests have much to offer each other if they collaborate. Nests can learn from non-nests to be more empathetic and sensitive towards Second Language students and increase their theoretical framework of the issues facing L2 students. Non-nests will benefit from getting more language practice and increasing target language cultural competence.

In this regard, both Braine (2004) and Widdowson (1994) assert that native teachers are only at an advantage when it concerns the use of the language and not in the context of learning and teaching as in instructional purposes. Chomsky (1968), and later Kramsch (1997), state that ‘nativeness’ or being a native speaker as such is an idealised notion since no context is absolutely homogeneous. Lecturers and students are all affected by social, linguistic or geographical constraints. O’Dwyer (1996:21) adds that native teachers have just as much to learn, if not more than non-native teachers. He says that “non-native teachers have a distinct advantage over monolingual native speakers in that they already have a successful language learning experience behind them, which they can draw on, to inform their teaching.”

The notion that only native speakers of English can be ‘models for English’ is refuted by Myint (2003). The attributes that non-nests bring to the English classroom highlight the fact that non-nests have first hand experience of what English Second Language students are experiencing in their own struggle to learn English. The non-nest teachers
and lecturers offer to L2 students a ‘living model’ of what they can achieve through consistent hard work. The fact that non-Nests have occasional lapses can only be an encouragement to students, as they will see a non-native speaker like themselves who has lapses, but who has a clear grasp of the language and fluency as well.

Another attribute of the non-nests is their tendency to be more patient with mistakes as well as being more accepting of cultural varieties, thereby helping to ease immigrant students to accept and understand aspects of culture that are not their own. Myint concludes that the nest versus non nest debate should move away from focussing on who is better than whom at what, and should rather ask the question: “How can we best utilise the services of non native teachers in the ESL classroom?” (Myint, 2003: 16).

To a large extent, non-nests themselves believed that nests were more proficient in all language skills (Liang, 2005). Tang (1997) concurring with the above assertion, qualifies it by offering the following statistics: 100% said that nests were better speakers; 92% that nests were better at pronunciation; 87% felt that nests had a better vocabulary; and 72% stated that nests were better readers.

To perceive a nest as being the more competent teacher since he/she is the more proficient speaker is a fallacy. Non-nests should not be defined as competent or incompetent on the basis of nests competence but on their own terms according to acceptable criteria and characteristics that can be attained (Liang, 2005 & Cook, 1999). Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALPS) are important concepts related to social and academic language competence. Most non-nests have a very good grasp of BICS, but CALP remains underdeveloped, leaving non-nests, especially teacher trainees, with “academic writing anxiety” (Liang, 2005). According to Liang, a model should be developed to focus systematically on attainable characteristics of Second Language competence. The models that exist currently are inconclusive and need to be more focussed and collaborative. The model should concentrate on: authenticity, appropriate interpersonal or academic discourse and systematicity, systematic understanding of grammar structure. Such a model could help non-Nests have less insecurity in defining their identities as non-Nests in relation to nests.
2.3.1 Non-Nest Lecturers and Identity

Pessoa and Sacchi (2003) piloting a study on issues relating to being a non-nest English speaking teacher, concentrated on the impact that being a non-nest has on a teacher’s identity and the role that teacher training played in defining the identity of non-nests. Participants reported a high level of anxiety as well as a strong sense of fear and discomfort about the fact that they might be unfavourably compared with native speakers and consequently rejected in favour of a native speaker as a teacher. Even the label non-nest presented the trainee teachers with a sense of being ‘incompetent’ and ‘unqualified’ (Pessoa and Sacchi, 2003:18). Thus the non-nests face greater challenges with regard to identity and self image even though native English speaking trainee teachers faced similar anxieties.

An interesting slant is given to the whole debate concerning nests and their identities and perceptions by Johnson (2003). She writes from her perspective as a native English speaking teacher, who is engaged in a programme that mentors non-native trainee teachers of English. She states that her experience and reflection on her mentoring of Ali, an Angolan teacher trainee taught her about the unconscious and conscious ways in which nests can and do offer judgments and show bias to non-nests. This is not necessarily done out of spite or prejudice, but through the unconscious notion that ‘nests know best’. Reflecting on the experience further challenges her understanding and acceptance of herself as the English language authority in the presence of non-nests. Non-nests might find it difficult or inhibiting knowing that they have a critical audience of nests at all times, monitoring their language. Johnson comments on her, and her fellow nests’ inability, “to see others realities as a possibility for my own” (2003: 53). Johnson’s comment may be interpreted to mean that it was through reflection of
the interaction with Ali that she realised that non-natives share the same aspirations and realities with regard to language as native speakers and that in the presence of nests; they will always feel that they lack the proficiency and as such will be judged as incompetent.

In a study of non-native graduates (MA and PhD), their perceptions of themselves as professionals and their views on the differences between native and non-native teachers, Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) found consensus among participants that native English speaking teachers were fluent, accurate, knowledgeable and idiomatically correct in their use of language. They were also more informal and less examination orientated. However, Phillipson (1992) asserts that these attributes can be instilled through training and teaching and are not necessarily innate. The same graduates saw non-native teachers of English as having more insights into the learning process, having undergone a similar learning process themselves. In addition, non-native teachers were perceived as being “more aware of” negative transfer and psychological aspects of learning” (1992: 22).

Non-Nests were better prepared, used the text book more and were more examination oriented. Pessoa and Sacchi (2003) agree that competence in English alone does not guarantee teaching, claiming that training and experience are what determine a teacher’s success. Braine (1998:14)) concludes that while native English speaking teachers may create an “English rich” aura in the classroom that may motivate students, non-native multilingual teachers were probably more capable and qualitatively different compared to monolingual native speaking teachers (Cook, 1999).

2.4 THE INVISIBLE AND VISIBLE MINORITY

Lui (2004) and Hansen (2004) both provide personal accounts of their experiences as non-native English speaking TESOL lecturers of English in America. The difference, however, is that Jun Liu is, from what Hansen terms, a visible minority whilst Hansen
is from an invisible minority. An invisible minority, according to Hansen is a non-Nest from a Caucasian (white) country. Due to his appearance, he is able to blend with the nests and thus find greater acceptance amongst students.

A visible minority, on the other hand, is a non-Nest who is either Oriental or Latino or Negroid. Hansen (2004) contends that being from an invisible non-native group (Caucasian but not American or English) made it considerably easier for him to find teaching positions and to be accepted by students. However, non-Nests from visible minorities (Oriental, Asian or African) had a more difficult time and were under more pressure to perform. Often students complained about lecturers from the visible minorities on the basis of their culture, pronunciation or accents. Jun Lui interviewed Hyunjung Shin, a non-native teacher, in an article in the Non Nest Newsletter. He says: “The invisible and normative nature of whiteness is associated with the notion of the native speaker and consequently, the non native speaker construct is combined with ‘colouredness or asianess’.

These observations direct attention to the whole issue of non-nests and racism in the teaching profession. Hansen (2004) questions the assumptions made about individuals, based on race, ethnicity and language. If students perceive their teachers as being less capable because of their appearance, pronunciation and their accents, there will be severe implications for the mediation of the teaching and learning. Worse still is the assumption by students that a non-nest from an invisible minority is more capable of mediating learning than a non-nest from a visible minority.

**2.5 GROWTH OF NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING TEACHERS AND SPEAKERS GLOBALLY**

According to Mahboob, Uhrig, Newman and Hartford (2004: 100), English is the fastest growing language in the world with more non-native than native speakers worldwide. The studies consulted indicate that for every native English speaker, there are
four non-native speakers of English (Kachru, 1992). Canagarajah (1999) moots, that 80% of the English language teachers globally, are non-native speakers of English. Despite these statistics, in terms of hiring practices, more importance is given to being a native English speaker than to teacher professionalism, background and years of experience (Mahboob, 2004: 122).

Mahboob (2004) undertook a study to determine the views of those most affected by the debate on the preference of native and non-native teachers, namely, the students enrolled in colleges offering ESL programmes. Students were asked to write essays in which they had to rate their preference for native or non-native teachers of English. The essays were analysed to extract the categories on which students based their writings and comments. The list of categories that emerged is as follows: linguistic factors (oral skills, grammar, vocabulary and culture); teaching styles (ability to answer questions and teaching methodology); personal factors (experience, hard work and affect). The essays were subsequently analysed and coded according to the positive or negative comments made about the nest or non-nest teacher in each of the categories, namely: linguistic factors, teaching styles and personal factors. (Mahboob, 2004:125)

2.5.1 Linguistic Factors

English Second Language (ESL) students perceived nests as experts in oral skills. Their evaluation was mainly based on pronunciation and accent. In fact, non-nest teachers themselves had a poor self image in issues concerning accent and pronunciation in view of the fact that they seemed to be rated on these criteria instead of on their competence and capabilities. In rating the mediation of grammar teaching, the non-Nests were given far more positive comments than the nests. Almost all the ESL students agreed that the non-nests were able to explain and define the concepts and rules better than the nests. Students agreed that while nests speak the language very well, they were not good at teaching structure, as grammatically correct language was instinctive to them.
2.5.2 Teaching Styles

Two aspects were rated in relation to teaching styles, namely the ability to answer questions and the teaching methodology. Both these aspects are important when mediating learning. ESL students rated non-nests more positively on the ability to answer questions and the teaching methodologies used, compared to the ratings given to nests. The reasons cited were that non-nests were more patient in listening to and responding to questions than nests and more efficient in their preparation of lessons. Furthermore, non-nests were better able to match their teaching style to the students learning style with regard to EFL teaching/learning.

2.5.3 Personal Factors

Mahboob (2004:140) concludes that it is evident that students do not have a preference for either native English speaking or non-native English speaking teachers. They feel that both have special qualities to offer in the mediation of learning. According to Mahboob and other researchers in the field, more collaboration is required by nests and non-Nests to offer the best possible mediation of learning to ESL students.

2.5.4 Cultural Aspects

In the mediation of aspects of culture, the nests received more positive comments than the non-nests. I infer from this, that the students felt that way about culture, since the L1 Lecturers were Americans teaching in America. However, personally I am inclined to think that teaching specifically American or British culture negates the universality of English. English is no more the special enclave of the British or the American as “English is being used by non-native speakers to communicate with other non-native speakers. New literature from the Caribbean, India, South Pacific, Philippines as well as Africa- literature written in English by non-native speakers intended for a world audience - not just a non-native audience (Sukwiwat &Smith, 1981:13).
Kamhi-Stein (2004) concurs with Mahboob’s findings (2004) that non-nests have a very strong sense of cultural awareness and empathy. This worked very strongly in their favour when mediating learning. Having gone through the process of learning English as a Second Language or as a foreign language, gave the non-nests more credibility in the opinion of their students who saw them as harder working and more experienced than nests. Although I did not engage the students in our department about their views on L1 and L2 lecturers, I found that these comments made by the L2 students in Mahboob’s study to be of relevance as I felt that they echoed the feelings of L2 students generally.

2.6 THE FALLACY OF THE NATIVE SPEAKER

Pasternak and Bailey (2004) refute the entire native/non-native debate as overly simplistic. They argue that both nests and non-nests need to focus on proficiency and professionalism (155). They also agree with Phillipson’s (1992) argument concerning the “fallacy of the native speaker” although they are quick to point out that no clear definition has as yet emerged as to what constitutes a native speaker. Amin (2004: 65) concurs with Pasternak and Bailey (2004) that the native/non native debate is simplistic, and calls the narrow definitions of the category of native speakers “nativism”.

Pastenak and Bailey (2004), Phillipson (1992), and Amin (2004) chose not to get caught up in the “Whose Better at what?” debate, but offer alternative views, suggestions and solutions to existing and very real problems that both native and non-native teachers face. Pastenak and Bailey suggest that teachers need two types of knowledge before they can attain any level of proficiency and professionalism. To mediate learning effectively, teachers should have: Declarative knowledge - the things we know and can articulate and Procedural Knowledge - the ability to do things, the skill to actually plan, prepare and deliver the lesson (2004: 157).
Most teachers have some degree of each. Non-native teachers may be more efficient in declarative aspects (being able to articulate rules of grammar, knowing the content, the topic and the scheme of work) whilst native teachers may be more effective in procedural matters (carry out conversations, oral and linguistic proficiency in the target language). Pasternak and Bailey (2004) identified five teachers and tracked their procedural and declarative knowledge. They found that some lacked procedural knowledge while others lacked declarative knowledge. Based on their findings, they recommended that training programmes should use a set of criteria to assess the point at which language teachers are, and then work towards enhancing procedural and declarative knowledge in a bid to improve mediation of learning (2004:170). In a follow-up study, Bailey (2004) once again refutes the ‘Native speaker fallacy’ and quotes Braine (1999), Canagarajah (1999) and Phillipson (1992) to lend weight to her assertion that it is a myth that proficiency in a target language automatically makes one a more efficient and overall better teacher. More than proficiency in language, the professionalism of the teacher in continually keeping abreast with developments and new research and increasing language proficiency throughout one’s life, is what makes a good teacher a better teacher. My classroom visits and observations of L2 lecturers gave me an opportunity to view the proficiency vs professionalism debate, in action.

Bailey’s (2004) comments on the varieties of English spoken in the world today are also relevant to the context of the varieties of English spoken in the world and the global ‘industry’ that TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) has become. She describes the context in business and teaching universities these days, where a rich diversity of English varieties is spoken. For example, in the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where Bailey worked, the lecturers all spoke English, even though many of them had Mandarin or Cantonese as their first language. The expatriate teachers came from as far afield as Australia, Canada, Britain, Sri Lanka, India and America, yet they could not be categorised as nationals from these countries as there were Cantonese lecturers who had studied in the United Kingdom or in Australia. A Sri
A Lankan colleague had studied in Texas and worked in Alabama and the variety of English spoken by the American from California was different to the variety spoken by the American from Mississippi. According to Bailey, each lecturer provided a good role model of language learning and was an excellent teacher. Bailey (2004), reports that it is beneficial for the students to hear a range of international accents and different varieties of English. She concurs with Matsuda (1999) that “diversity is an asset in teacher development” (2004: 6), but adds that students benefit greatly when they have lecturers who are speakers of several varieties of English. It is essential to make students and lecturers conscious of the importance of cross-cultural as well as an international awareness (Klaassen & de Graaf, 2001: 281).

Delft University in The Netherlands introduced English medium instruction in an attempt to make their students more internationally aware and to be in the forefront of Science and Technology innovation internationally. When English medium instruction was introduced at Delft University in the Netherlands, it was considered an innovation and thus caused resistance from the mainly non-native English speaking staff. Klaassen and de Graaf (2001) refer to Van den Berg and Ros (1999) and Sprague and Nyquist (1991) to explain how staff respond when they are introduced to an innovation like English-medium instruction in a non-English environment. They found that it initially leads to resistance, and later causes a shift from focussing on the self and sheer survival in the classroom, to enhancing teaching skills and focussing on students’ learning outcomes.

According to Vinke, Snippe and Jochems (1998:5) the non-native English speaking lecturers who were observed at Delft University of Technology had problems in the following areas: lack of clarity; redundancy and expressiveness; likely to cover less material in the allotted time; pronunciation, accent, fluency and intonation and lack of non-verbal behaviour; less flexible in conveying the contents of the lecture material,
resulting in monologues and lack of rapport with students with regard to humour and interaction.

The researchers also noted that the aforementioned aspects in the mediation of learning were closely linked with student achievement (Vinke, Snippe & Jochems, 1998:8). With the above scenario in mind, Klaassen and Graaf (2001) researched, observed and reported on the effects of a high impact training programme for non-native speaking lecturers to non-native speaking students at Delft University of technology. A training programme for non-Nests was devised for the implementation of English-medium instruction. The training focussed on professional development and on how student results could be improved. The 3-phase training was carried out through discussions, practice sessions, observations, videotapes of presentations, peer coaching and analyses and reflection. The areas that non-Nests had to concentrate on were: non-verbal behaviour and speech structure and organisation of English and how to deal with questioning. In addition, Second Language acquisition processes and cultural issues were also dealt with. The researches found that the non-Nests benefited from such a programme. One of the salient comments and features to emerge at the end of the training was “Through being confronted with the self, their focus actually shifted from ‘how am I holding up’ to ‘what is the impact of my behaviour on my students?” (Klaassen & Graaff, 2001: 281).

Non-Nest participants in the programme had better non-verbal behaviour and better organisational skills with regard to the outline of lectures. They were better able to encourage students by directing questions and using questions as a tool to mediate learning and were able to structure the content and mediation of the lecture in such a way that they used the time available more meaningfully, leaving them freer to interact with students. In addition, clear objectives were set and more stimulating student interaction resulted (Klaassen & Graaf, 2001).
2.7 CULTURE

Culture and its associated context, together with stereotypes, plays a significant role when one considers the mediation of learning by non-Nest lecturers to L2 students. There is the misconception, that all students from one culture share a similar learning style, whereas in reality, every student has a unique learning style, regardless of the culture. The term culture is problematic, since culture is not a static aspect. Culture exists as an umbrella concept as applied to an entire society or race, or may exist within the society in the different institutions and professional contexts (Valesco-Martin, 2004:278).

One of the central questions of this study concerned the combined language and cultural difference of the L2 lecturer and what effect it had on how learning is mediated. In the study by Nemchinova (2000), that is referred to earlier in this review, Nemchinova quotes Lange, (1990:256) as saying, “Teachers should be experienced in the cultural environments of the language they teach.” The trainee teaches in Nemchinova’s study did not have problems concerning their own cultures clashing with their cultural values. Only one host teacher commented negatively on an issue concerning culture. The teacher in question had this to say about the trainee teacher she was assessing.

She is a born again Moslem and wore a chador/scarf and a raincoat everyday. She would make Islamic references to class topics and generally ignore students’ interests at times.

(Nemchinova 2000:252)

I inferred from this, that the comment reflected more on the host teacher’s own prejudices and mindset than on the student teacher’s predisposition to any sinister undertones.
Valesco-Martin (2004) treats the native/non-native construct as a non issue. She promotes the idea that what really matters is the “intercultural speaker”.

She defines the intercultural speaker as both teacher and student, who has to move towards developing better understanding of their own culture, and strengthen their cultural identification, thereby contributing to their overall education. The teacher/lecturer has to have the skills and knowledge of intercultural communication since they have to be the cultural intermediaries (Martin, 2004: 278).

Amin (2004) also refutes the notion of a native/non-native construct. She uses the term “nativism” and explains the term “nativism” as the belief that the national culture is embodied in certain groups of people who were born in that country. Further, it refers to the belief that these native-born individuals are native speakers and that one born outside that country to parents speaking another language, cannot attain native speaker status (Amin, 2004:72). She reports on her study which dealt with the experiences of female immigrant teachers who teach adult ESL classes in Canada. These women are all competent non-Nest teachers who are mediating the learning of English to immigrant communities in Canada. However, the L2 students often question their ability, and at times as one of them reports, their students felt cheated to be faced by what they saw as an immigrant like themselves, when all they wanted was to fast track the process of assimilation into Canadian society and culture.

The teachers in Amin’s (2004) study recorded, that with the passage of time their students accepted their mediation because of their (the teachers’) ability to empathise, know what would be important to them and share their multilingual experiences. An important aspect of their mediation was the realisation that they had to break down prejudices and stereotypes before they could successfully mediate learning. This together with planning and preparation of really effective lessons, led to “pedagogy of empowerment” (Amin, 2004:72). Mediation of learning is not just about teaching the
linguistic skill or the vocabulary, but mediating in a way that shows that transformation and enhancement as a political and global vision for humanity.

Further clarification on the issue of stereotypes and prejudices as they exist in institutions comes from Palfreyman (2005), who undertook a study on “othering” between and among staff and students at a Turkish University where he was a teacher trainer and a curriculum developer. He defines “othering” as “maintaining social distance and making value judgements (often negative) based on stereotyped opinions about the group as a whole” (2005:214).

He provides the examples of the West’s “othering” of the East concerning people, customs, minds, destiny; or white lecturer’s “othering” of non-white students. The ‘other’ is usually a socially constructed representation of one group or person towards another group. It is essentially the differentiation between “us” and “them”. Palfreyman’s (2005) research shows how people within the same institution, see each other in different cultural contexts, a phenomenon that he calls “othering”.

Palfreyman (2005) conducted his research in a Turkish University where the administrators and curriculum designers are mainly British, while the teaching staff of approximately 200 members are a mixture of two thirds Turkish and a third made up of expatriate English, Australian, South African and North American lecturers. The author himself is British but living in Turkey. He and his team conducted interviews and distributed questionnaires to administrators, Turkish lecturers and expatriate lecturers, to gauge their “othering” tendencies. They found that the administrators generally ‘lumped’ all the students and lecturers as one oriental stereotype that were mostly seen as colluding in some way to subvert the curriculum. Turkish lecturers, however, also tended to ‘other’ the students according to class, gender, background, socio-economics or geographical origin. Stereotyping the “othered” group’ allows the informant group not to concern itself with their interests as the “othered” group are then perceived as the source of the problem. Instead of engaging with the “othered” group
and finding a constructive discourse it becomes easier to stereotype and criticize. The “othered” group responds by feeling alienated and frustrated and becoming more reactionary.

Palfreyman (2005:225) states that each individual in an institution constructs a national, racial, gender, class, ethnic or institutional characteristic for either their colleagues or the students that they teach. This leads him to conclude that “interrogating biases and developing a deeper understanding of OTHERING in TESOL contexts can help English language educators to develop appropriate and authentic pedagogies and curricula for local contexts in an increasingly globalised world” (2005:214).

Palfreyman’s study is of relevance to my field of study. There is a vast cross-field of racial and ethnic tensions, and I have noted and experienced these “othering” tendencies among staff members towards students and fellow colleagues.

2.8 CONCLUSION

“The qualities that effective teachers should embody do not depend on their race or language background but on their zeal to become good teachers.”

In this literature review, I have attempted to provide literature to address the issues raised by my research questions. The writings, articles and research that I have consulted all dealt with the issues of the methodological and pedagogical experiences of non English speaking lecturers also referred to as English Second Language Lecturers (L2) mediating learning.

The work of Feuerestein (1980), Braine (1999), Kamhi-Stein (2004), Amin (2004) and Pasternak and Bailey (2004) delved into the area of mediation and clarified the relevance of mediation for this study. A large part of the research writings in the field of L2 or non-Nests teaching English focused on comparisons between native and non-
native speakers and each one’s specific strength and weakness when teaching English Second Language to students who were Second Language speakers.


The literature that I consulted points to the fact that whether the lecturer is a native speaker or a non-native speaker is immaterial. What really matters is that the lecturer has the training, proficiency, professionalism, preparedness and skill to mediate learning to students who have the will to go on learning. The notion of the native and the non-native English speaker as a mediator of learning has only come into prominence since 1991 when TESOL was forced to release a statement after numerous competent non-native teachers were discriminated against when it came to hiring practices in American and British institutions teaching English as a Second Language all over the world.

Medgyes (1994) highlighted the issue of discrimination against non-nest teachers. Subsequent to Medgyes’ assertion, non-native teachers of English on both sides of the Atlantic and in other parts of the world, have come together and formed associations, culminating in the launch of a newsletter and an annual conference that offers a platform and a forum to non-native academics, writers and researchers in the field.
In spite of the ongoing battle, and the mounting evidence emerging from the research and studies undertaken against prejudice towards non-Nests, *The Essential Teacher* drew attention to the current experiences of an individual:

> When I came to the United States in 2004, as a doctoral student in language education, I was prevented from working as an ESL instructor, being informed, that the position was open only to native speakers of English. As an EFL teacher with seven years experience in my country, this rejection both confirmed my deficiency as an English teacher and deprived me of financial opportunity based on my identity as a non-native-English-speaking teacher. What then is my standing in this profession? (Park, 2006: 36)

“What then is my standing in this profession?” is a question that is relevant in the South African context and raises issues in a South Africa still very much in the throes of a transformation. Hence, my interest in exploring in this literature review, the questions concerning how Second Language lecturers mediate learning.

The next chapter deals specifically with the research design and methodology used to collect the relevant data.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The methodology used for this study is described in this chapter. I firstly justify my choice of the qualitative research method for my data collection and subsequently describe the methods used.

Essentially, I chose a qualitative research paradigm because it was appropriate to the aims of this study, which were to investigate the experiences and challenges faced by English Second Language (L2) teachers mediating learning to English Second Language students. The study is of special significance to me, as I am also an English Second Language lecturer, teaching in the same department as the participants in my research. I felt as if I was a part of the study as a participant, as well as a researcher. It was a privilege to be able to follow my colleagues around and observe their interactions with their students and to be able to experience how the students perceive us as lecturers whilst we are teaching or lecturing. The observations, informal conversations and interviews with the participants/colleagues, brought us closer as a unit and made us more amenable to sharing our experiences, difficulties and little joys and successes. A more collaborative climate has emerged, with all of us understanding and sharing our unique contexts as English Second Language lecturers.

3.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative researchers use data collection techniques such as observation and unstructured interviews. These techniques were particularly pertinent to this study, as they enabled me to interpret the participants’ verbal responses and their style of mediation and interaction in the classroom. Had I used a quantitative design for this
study, I would not have uncovered the rich information that I uncovered with the use of the qualitative paradigm (Neuman, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln 1994).

The “human factor” in social research is brought in by being able to communicate with the participants, and by studying participants’ words it is possible to gain deeper insights and understanding of their emotions and experiences: “Qualitative research places emphasis on understanding through looking closely at people’s words, actions and records” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:9). By looking specifically at what the participants said and did in their classrooms I was able to understand and attach meaning to their words and actions. People are able to understand their situation through words, as they create their worlds through words and some people defend their arguments with and hide behind words (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Neuman, 2000; Patton, 2002). We may ask why the emphasis on words? “Simply stated, using the subjects’ word better reflects the postulates of the qualitative paradigm” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 50).

My research focussed on the experiences, difficulties, insights, and challenges of the L2 lecturers who mediate learning to ESL students and on their comments and perspectives regarding the influence of culture on mediation of learning, where the culture of the lecturer differs from the culture of the learner. I used an interpretive paradigm, because my study is located within the Department of Applied Communication in a University in Gauteng. My discussion is in a narrative form.

3.3 PARTICIPANTS

The group of lecturers that participated in my study is from the Department of Applied Communication at a university in Gauteng. I observed all seven second language (non nest) lecturers but was able to interview only six of them, as the gentleman from Ghana left at the beginning of the new Academic Semester.
In an effort to make the reader familiar with the participants, I have created a series of vignettes on each participant. Finch (1987:105) describes vignettes as “short stories about hypothetical characters in specified circumstances.” Although she is describing their use within a quantitative paradigm, they function in a similar fashion within qualitative research.

Lebo is a Zimbabwean female lecturer. She is a tall attractive woman in her thirties and is always impeccably dressed. She is slightly withdrawn, and this gives her an air of aloofness. When we became better acquainted, I realised, that it was more a sense of shyness than reserve. Lebo’s home language is Shona, one of the national languages of Zimbabwe. Her primary school education was in Shona, but at high school, the medium of instruction changed to English, while Shona remained a subject in the school curriculum. Lebo obtained her degree and teacher qualifications in Zimbabwe. She has taught in a school in Zimbabwe for four years and in a college for a further two years. In the interview situation, she was rather reticent, and needed much probing and urging to share her thoughts. However, when I engaged her in informal chats or discussions, she was more open to sharing her thoughts.

Sifiso is a Zulu male, in his thirties. He is a tall, good looking young gentleman, with a disarming smile. In staff meetings, he listens to everything that everyone else has to say and then softly but deliberately puts forth his well reasoned and substantiated view. He clearly enjoyed being interviewed, and spoke at length about his views and experiences of being an ESL lecturer lecturing ESL students. He grew up in Kwa Zulu Natal and his home language is Isizulu. He attended a primary school where Isizulu was the medium of instruction, and everybody in the school was Zulu. At high school and at University the medium of instruction was English.

Marti is an Afrikaans speaking female in her late fifties. She is the Acting Head of Department, a position that she enjoys and feels that she has really earned, through her nearly 25 years of service to this department. She admits to coming from a very
conservative and strict Afrikaner upbringing, but prides herself in the fact that she has done everything possible to make the transformation from an Afrikaner conservative ethos, to embracing the spirit of a new South Africa. Marti’s primary school, secondary school and university education was all in Afrikaans except where English was taught as a subject.

Marti’s style of leadership is to follow everything to the letter. She is a stickler for rules and regulations and seems uncomfortable with innovations. She carries an air of threat about her, and when it seems that the staff is not taking too well to an arrangement or an instruction, she resorts to falling back on the authority of the Dean as in “That’s what the Dean says” or, “That’s the way the Dean wants it.” It has not occurred to her yet, that it is possible to challenge the Dean, and she is usually uncomfortable and surprised when her authority is challenged.

Naomi is an Afrikaans speaking female lecturer in her thirties. She is pretty and petite, and always very fashionably dressed. She looks a bit stressed, and her voice has an edge of anxiety to it. She smokes rather heavily. She has a very pronounced Afrikaans accent, which she was trying hard to lose because, as she said, “If you want to get ahead, I realised that I would have to become English. So I changed my church, my friends and my bible to English.”. Soon after the interview, she left the Department, and began work in a very prestigious Marketing company.

Jabo is a South Sotho speaking male in his thirties. He is quiet and earnest and concentrates intently in meetings and discussions in an attempt it seems, to assimilate the new information and empower himself. He attended school in the township of Tembisa on the East Rand. He comes alive in the classroom and enjoys his interaction with his students who respond well to him. He is concerned about what he calls,” the narrow framework of the students”.
His medium of instruction in primary school was South Sotho, but in secondary school and in university, the medium of instruction was “English all the way”, as he puts it. He empathises with the students. “I am able to relate to the students,” he says. He feels that his township school education and the deficiencies in his learning, especially with regard to learning English are similar to the problems that most of his students have to deal with. He says, “That was the reality of the situation. You can ask any student from rural areas or the townships, they will tell you that.”

Thandi is a widowed, female lecturer in her fifties who hails from Malawi. Her home language is Chiwe, one of the 12 languages spoken in Malawi. Chiwe is one of the national languages of Malawi. Her primary school education was in Chiwe, and from secondary school onwards, the medium of instruction was English. She is vivacious, full of laughter and uses her hands and eyes expressively when communicating. She has completed her Masters in Education in the field of linguistic theories of language learning and acquisition. She is the co-ordinator of the Communication course, and tries in every way to assist and guide her colleagues, dispensing suggestions, and resources and help where required. She enjoys sharing with us stories about the strict, traditional and cultural aspects of life as a girl and a young woman in Malawi.

She lives with her adult daughters and her grand daughter, and tries often to make sense of how values and culture have changed from her traditional upbringing to the modern lifestyles her own daughters have adopted.

Asimayah is a Ghanain male lecturer in his fifties who speaks French and his Ghanain home language fluently. He is a tall and thin and wears glasses perched on his nose, very much like an absent minded professor. His favourite reading material seems to be a dictionary. He enjoys finding and correcting incorrect English word usage. He refers to himself as an A+ teacher, who can get the best results from students. Lebo, Asimayah and I shared an office, so Lebo and I were a willing audience to his discussions and views. His dream is to open and run a school of excellence of his own,
where students can be fast tracked to having superior thinking and learning skills. He has made many representations to the Ministry of Arts and Culture for funding, but to no avail. He bemoans the fact, that it is because he knows no one in “high places” who can help him.

He felt very strongly, that as part time lecturers, we were highly exploited and that we were wasting our talent in a Department that showed no appreciation for our talent. He tried to sell the idea of his school to us and promised to come back and recruit us if his plan came to fruition.

In these vignettes, I have described each lecturer in a way that the reader may be able to get a clear picture of the participant as a person, and a personality. The participants were observed in their classrooms and interviewed after the observations. Informal conversations with some of the participants also informed the vignettes.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Given that my investigation was to be conducted in a formalised educational setting I had to gain entry into the research process, ask for permission to be allowed to observe the classes of the English Second Language lecturers. It was also necessary to request the participants’ permission to allow me to interview them for about 40-45 minutes and record the interview.

3.4.1 Gaining Entry Into The Research Process

I began by visiting each of the participants individually in their offices to explain the nature of my request and to ask for their assistance in this project. Once I had explained the nature of my study, the participants were amenable to participate. I gave each of the participants a letter in which I outlined the purpose of my study and briefly explained to them the role they would be required to play. I needed their permission firstly, to visit
their classrooms and actually observe them while they taught, and then to interview them for between 30-40 minutes.

In the letter, I reassured them of confidentiality, and informed them that they would be able to withdraw from the study at any time if they wanted to without penalty. Attached to each letter was a consent form which participants had to sign if they agreed to participate in the study. Lastly, I asked each participant to write a brief comment about the mediation of learning by English Second Language lecturers. I intended to explore the comments further during the interviews.

I employed two main methods of data collection, namely observations and interviews.

3.4.2 Direct Observation

I used direct observations because I needed to observe and record the interaction between English Second Language lecturers and their English Second Language students as it occurred in the lecture rooms. I visited each participant at least three times for the purpose of observing them in the classrooms. At first I just sat in the classrooms and watched the interaction, and listened to the lesson content and the exchanges that took place between the lecturers and students, and on subsequent visits, I sat right at the back of the classroom and recorded in writing, everything that went on in the classroom as I saw it unfold, since I wanted to provide the “clearest and most complete narrative of what went on in the field” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:76).

During the observation, I had to take into account that what I was observing would be my version of what was “there” (Henning, van Rensburg, Smit, 2004). “What is observed (seen and heard) is the researcher’s version of what is ‘there’….Guided by the purpose of the research, a researcher will focus, often without awareness, on certain aspects of mise en scene…….field notes and video recordings will inevitably reflect this focus.” (Henning, et al., 2004:81).
The areas that I focused on during my observations in the classroom were: language proficiency in terms of BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) and CALPS (cognitive academic language proficiency skills); teaching organisation (how well the lecturer was equipped to mediate the content); cultural awareness (whether the lecturer was aware of cultural contexts and used it to his/her advantage); teaching style (whether the teaching style suited the content and the learners); interaction and rapport with students; ability to ask and answer questions effectively and empathy (having a general awareness and sensitivity to the needs of L2 students).

I attempted as far as possible, to record what I saw and heard without interpretation. I wrote down verbatim as much as I could of the verbal interactions between lecturers and students. My comments were jotted down in different colours, to enable me to differentiate between the actual mediation and my commentary. I tried to follow the guidelines given by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) for conducting observations.

As much as possible, the researcher tries to capture people’s exact words in the field notes. This is particularly important because the qualitative researcher is specifically trying to understand and describe what is going on in the terms used by the setting she or he is studying. In addition the researcher cannot assume that the terms used by the people in the setting mean the same as they do to the researcher (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 76).

Observations were conducted in the classrooms of the five L2 lecturers. Direct observations took place in the field. For the purposes of this study, the field of the study is the University where I am employed as a part time lecturer. The observations were carried out, by following each of the five lecturers around, to each of their classes for an entire day.
Through direct observations I was able to observe and record everything that was said and done in the classroom, including the linguistic and paralinguistic elements of the interaction between L2 lecturers and L2 students. The observations were recorded, reflected upon and interpreted during the research process. At the end of each day, the observations were written up.

I was fortunate in that the participants were my colleagues, and neither they nor I had to go through the initial stage of ‘getting to know you’ as well as the self-consciousness one would experience with disclosing oneself to a stranger (Neuman, 1991:354). In most cases, the participant and I walked down to the lecture room together from the Departmental Offices.

However, if I was teaching during the period before the observation, I would arrive at the venue with the students. Some of the participant lecturers introduced me to the class, while others asked me to introduce myself. Two of the participants made no comment to the students about my presence in the classroom.

Good field researchers are intrigued about details that reveal ‘what’s going on here?’ through careful listening and watching”. It is also necessary for a researcher to observe people and their actions, pay heed to observable physical characteristics, as well as what they do (Neuman 2000: 361).

3.4.3 Interviews

Interviews were the main research instrument. I chose face-to-face interviews to collect rich data, as an interview is one of the most important sources of information and an essential source of information (Yin, 1994; Neuman, 2000; Patton, 2002). Information obtained from open-ended interviews is reported and interpreted through the eyes of specific, well-informed participants, and can provide important insights into the situation under investigation. Although the interviews in qualitative research may take many forms, open-ended is the most commonly used in case studies. The purpose of open-ended
interviews is not to put ideas into a person’s mind, but rather to gain access to the viewpoint of the individual being interviewed. In order to uncover what cannot be directly observed, such as thoughts, emotions and intentions I conducted interviews.

A researcher can never observe and interpret all the meanings that participants attach to events and situations in the world, therefore it is necessary to enquire by questioning how the individual ‘feels’ and what he or she ‘thinks’. It is necessary to probe beneath the surface or assumed meaning (Patton, 2002). These interviews granted me the opportunity to explore the feelings and views of second language lecturers about issues that affect them when they mediate learning, including their backgrounds and the difficulties that they face. In the in-depth interviews, “the conversation ensued more ‘naturally’, with rapport developing as the process continues” (Henning et al, 2004:75). The in-depth interviews were tape recorded so that I would have evidence of these interviews to assist me during the data analysis and also to keep an audit trail. The questions that I asked were guide questions leading me to a clearer understanding of the issues that I raised in my research questions. The issues dealt firstly with the methodological and pedagogical experiences of English Second Language lecturers and secondly, with the implications of the lecturer and the learner having a different culture and a different first language. Below is a list of questions that I used to guide the interviews with the participant/lecturers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your home language?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is your academic qualification?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many years did you study to qualify as a teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe your competence in English?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the difficulties that you experience in teaching English as a second language?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specify any language difficulties that you experience in teaching English as a second language?

What are your experiences of teaching in the English/communication classroom, where the language of learning and teaching differs from your own home language?

Describe any differences that you perceive in the way L1 and L2 lecturers mediate learning?

Explain who you think is more successful in teaching English/communication to L2 students. Why do you think so?

Explain whether the difference in students and lecturer’s culture has an influence on how learning and teaching takes place?

These questions were simply a guide to facilitate the interview and the discussions with the lecturers. All the interviews did not follow exactly this pattern. One of the participants needed considerable probing and urging to encourage her to provide more insights. Although she requested the questions in advance, her responses were rather brief and lacked depth. The other participants gave free rein to their thoughts and were happy to go into

In addition to the in-depth interviews, I also initiated and guided while in the field, informal conversations. These are a kind of unstructured interview (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:81). These formal and informal interviews together with the classroom observations of the L2 lecturers added depth and understanding to the context:
Classroom episodes in isolation are like snippets of conversation out of context. Outward behaviour does not mean much to us if we do not include in our observation what teachers say and do about their plans and their work schemes, curricula, syllabus, or courses of study (Stern, 1983:501).

While face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted to investigate lecturers’ experiences and methods of mediation, the open ended in-depth conversational interview allowed participants to air their views in a comfortable, conversational manner. Once the interviews were transcribed from the recordings, they were ready for coding and data analysis.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis of a qualitative study is a ‘nonmathematical analytical procedure” in which the researcher examines the meanings of people’s words and actions (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The approach that best suited my study was one that is described by Belensky (1992:44) in Maykut and Morehouse as an ‘interpretive-descriptive’ approach. In this approach, the researcher selects and interprets the data and ‘weaves’ descriptions, participants’ words, raw data from the observation notes and the recordings, and his/her own interpretations into a ‘rich and believable descriptive narrative’ (Strauss&Corbin,1990, in Neuman, 2000:22)

To uncover the meanings attached to participants’ responses and discussions, I had to read through the transcriptions, and search for the meanings inherent in their discussions. I had various notes from my observations and much data from the transcriptions of the interviews. I had to study the data to ensure that my research questions were being addressed. Thereafter, I had to categorise the data into manageable units or codes. To accomplish the categorisation everything that I had written down in both the observations and the interviews had to be coded in a way that could facilitate interpretation of the data. It was necessary to work very carefully with the data. In addition, I attempted to progress
from the narrative (description) of an event or an opinion/viewpoint to a general interpretation of its meaning. During the process I had to consciously remain aware of my own biases and preconceptions, and how these may impact on what I was trying to understand (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994: 18). Qualitative research is often regarded as being less objective than quantitative research and is often treated with scepticism, thus it was essential that credibility be established in my study.

The first step in reducing the vast amount of data collected is referred to as “open coding”. Open coding is the process of assigning tags or labels to the transcribed raw data. The next step in the analysis of the data is referred to as “axial coding”. Axial coding entails the clustering of codes into themes in a way that links the codes and themes with the data. “It reinforces the connection between evidence and concepts” (Neuman, 2000:423).

Once axial coding was completed, it was possible to identify the major themes that emerged from the analysed data. This procedure enabled me to conduct the final “pass through” the analysed data. At this point I was ready for “selective coding”, which allows for the selection of the main themes to be discussed in the findings. My overall analysis was organised “around core generalisations or major themes which emerged from the open coding and the axial coding” (Neuman, 2000:423)

I anticipated that certain themes would emerge in the process of analysis. I specifically looked for the pragmatics, in terms of the informative and the communicative content that was being imparted. I observed the level of language and discourse competence and correlated this with the lecturers’ own assessment of his/her competence. It was necessary to find out what the difficulties were that the English second language lecturers experienced, and what their suggestions were for improving the interaction with students and mediation of their learning. To understand the participants better, I delved into their linguistics backgrounds, regarding their home languages, medium of instruction in primary school, secondary school and institutions of higher learning.
Furthermore, I wanted to know more about their own preferences for either L1 or L2 teachers and lecturers. It was necessary to discuss and observe the impact on the mediation of learning if the culture of the lecturer was different from the culture of the student. Finally I had to engage in the process of “Epoche”, which is necessary, to facilitate the interpretation, analysis and recording of the data.

‘Epoche, is the process that the researcher engages in to remove, or at least become aware of prejudices, viewpoints, or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation’ (Katz 1987 36 in Maykut & Morehouse , 1994: 123).

3.6 ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS

To ensure the validity of the study, I had to take into account credibility; transferability; dependability and conformability (Patton, 2002).

**Credibility** refers to the extent to which the researcher manages to establish confidence in the true value or trustworthiness of the findings. In qualitative research this means that the findings must be true in terms of the contexts and subjects under investigation. My study was credible in that the findings emanated from authentic transcriptions of my interviews with the participants, and the carrying out of random member checks(Patton, 2002: 252).

**Transferability** refers to the extent to which findings can be applied to or replicated in other contexts, groups or settings. In terms of qualitative research, transferability is not determined by the researcher but by future users of the research findings. The self-same study that I conducted may be conducted by other researchers. (Patton, 2002:584).

**Dependability** (or consistency) in qualitative research refers to the extent to which researchers have included data to acknowledge the existence of multiple realities. I carried out member checks on two of my participants. Member checks refer to the process whereby observation notes and interview transcriptions are given to the
participants so that they can check whether or not their comments have been correctly interpreted and represented. (Patton, 2002: 262). My literature review and the other studies that I have referred to, indicate that I have taken dependability into consideration.

Conformability refers to the extent to which research findings are a function of the subjects and conditions of the research. In terms of qualitative research, research subjects, experts or other research findings establish conformability which is not necessarily confirmed by the objectivity of the researcher or the instruments. Moreover Social construction; constructivist and “interpretivist” perspective have generated new language and concepts to distinguish quality in qualitative research.

(Patton, 2002: 546)

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To conform to ethical standards that govern researchers, I received permission from the Dean of the Faculty to allow me to conduct this research. Permission was then sought from the Head of Department.

The research was made clear to all participants so that they were fully aware of what was involved. Participants were given a letter describing the research study and what they were expected to contribute towards the study.

The letter further requested their permission for observations to be carried out in their classes. Participants were required to state their willingness to be observed and to be interviewed. They were informed that the interview would be recorded, and their permission was sought for the recording as well. They had to sign a detachable slip attached to the letter inviting their participation. In addition, they were requested to share their methodological and pedagogical experiences of teaching in a second language to second language students. They were also asked to offer their insights into how a combined cultural and language difference affects the mediation of learning.
Participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any point if they so desired. They were assured of anonymity and confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms.

Nowhere would a lecturer’s name be revealed in the study. I attempted to adhere to the requirements of confidentiality by ensuring that respondents’ responses were not divulged to anybody else and were not used for anything else but for purposes of this research study. Once the dissertation has been finalised and accepted the findings would be shared with the participants who will be given the opportunity to examine the findings and recommendations and to make suggestions based on these results to improve mediation of learning in the Department.

The next chapter deals with the findings that emerged from the data collected, after an in-depth analysis of the observations and interviews.
CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the findings of my empirical research conducted with 6 English Second Language lecturers. The empirical component of my research was meant to ascertain how L2 lecturers mediate learning to L2 students, at the university where I work. The main tool for data collection was face-to-face in-depth interviews with the above-mentioned lecturers. In the course of the interviews, I asked the Second Language lecturers to: identify the specific difficulties that they encountered; to list the problems which they felt hindered their work in mediating learning to ESL students; to describe their (the lecturers’) competence in English; to identify their preferences with regard to L1 or L2 lecturers; and finally to offer their views concerning the role that culture plays in the mediation of learning.

I asked the above questions because I realised that it was not feasible to ask participants about the various principles of mediation as discussed by Feuerstein (1979), because I felt that they would all give a positive response in describing their style of teaching and mediation.

I conducted observations in classrooms where I focused on the first five principles of mediation which are: mutual interaction, sharing aims, principles of constructivism, application and reflective thinking, positiveness, optimism and encouragement (Feuerstein, 1979) as discussed in the Literature Review Chapter.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE ANALYSED DATA

Findings that have emerged from the data gathered during the face-to-face in-depth interviews, my observations conducted in the classrooms of L2 lecturers and my own
experiences as an L2 lecturer in the Department of Applied Communication at the university where I teach, will be discussed.

4.2.1 Competency In English

The lecturers interviewed rated themselves as competent speakers of English, and their L2 status did not make them feel that they had any major shortcomings in relation to the English language. However, in the course of the observations, Naomi showed a lapse in explaining certain grammatical concepts, while Lebo had to ponder over how to explain the difference in the number of lines, as compared to the number of sentences. Except in the case of the former, this did not in any serious way detract from what the lecturer was saying or clarifying. In the latter case, Lebo was able to give more clarity on the difference between ‘lines’ and ‘sentences’ in the feedback session that she gave later on in the lesson. Despite the criticism levelled at Medgyes (1994) his hypothesis concerning the discrepancy in language proficiency between L1 and L2 teachers accounts for the differences and/or lapses in their teaching behaviour. This could perhaps explain both Lebo and Naomi’s lapses. Myint (2003) contends that the occasional lapse of the non-native (L2) lecturer, can serve as an encouragement to L2 students, as they will see a non-native like themselves who has lapses, but who has a clear grasp of the language and fluency as well.

Jabo felt that he was competent, but was mindful of his limitations with regard to language, due to the fact that he came from the same disadvantaged background that the students came from, and that in school they were hardly ever taught correct grammar and language usage. He felt strongly that the majority of the students came from the same system that he had encountered as a pupil in the rural areas and in the township schools of Kwa Zulu Natal. The focus at these institutions, according to him, was only on literature throughout the year at the expense of speaking and/or writing:
“To be honest, there are limitations to my English, because, because er well the reason I’m able to relate to students is because we were also only taught literature er the set books, from January to December. You never did grammar unless you did it on your own”. Later he added, “That was the reality of the situation. You can ask any student from rural areas or the townships, they will tell you that”.

Thandi concurred with Jabo that being a non-native speaker of English meant that there was a certain lack with regard to grammar. In this respect, she corroborates both the studies of Liang (2005) and Tang (1997) who state that non nests themselves to a large extent believe that nests were more proficient in all language skills. Thandi commented:

“We can pick up a Second Language in South Africa, from radio and TV, ......for you to become a competent, effective reader and thinker, in a Second Language, you need that grammatical structure of the Second Language”.

I concur with both Jabo and Thandi’s sentiments as the L2 students have the verbal skills which they are unable to transfer to grammatically sound structures in their writing.

Marti also felt that she was a competent speaker of English, although her education was in Afrikaans. According to her, when it became evident that the medium of teaching and learning in most South African higher education institutions was going to be English, she made the conscious decision to empower herself and joined debating societies and other discussion forums where she would have ample opportunities to practise her communication skills in English. She also concurred with the fact that being an L2 speaker meant that at times one thinks in the first language and then translates into English:

*I did English in school and I wasn’t too bad so er well just now and then maybe say one word here and there ...I couldn’t think of the English word because well I read that you think in your language that you grew up with.*
The fact that ESL speakers tend to think in their mother tongue and then translate into English, results in grammatical errors since direct translation is often not possible from mother tongue to English.

Lebo believed that she is a competent speaker of English as did Sifiso. Both completed their Secondary and Higher Education through the medium of English. Naomi’s entire school experience and Higher Education was completed through the medium of Afrikaans. All her friends and family are Afrikaans as well, and the only time she heard any English spoken was in the English subject period at school. She added, that only after her divorce 15 years ago, did she realise that if she hoped to get a good job and be independent, she would have to develop her capacity for English. From that moment onwards, she changed her lifestyle to accommodate her new ‘englishness, and now feels quite competent teaching and interacting through the medium of English.

L2 speakers have a desire to identify with “Englishness” to the extent that they negate their linguistic backgrounds. Naomi appears to fall in to this category as she aspired towards proficiency in English at the expense of her home language (Medgyes, 1994; Brady, 2003). Pessoa and Sacchi (2003) draw attention to the importance of non-nests having come to terms with their identity, and not allowing the label “non-nest” to impinge on their self image.

Canarajah (1999) refers to a study carried out by Merrit and her team (1992), where she comments on ethnographic observations in African classrooms. She says that African teachers show a ‘linguistic insecurity’ which seems to come from a concern with a notion of ‘proper English’. They would be more effective if they accepted their own variations of English and accepted that even code switching is pedagogically valuable for both ‘content instruction’ and Second Language acquisition (Merrit, Cleghorn, Abagi, and Bunyi, 1992, in Canarajah, 1999)
Non-native teachers have a sense of security about the written medium. It is through the written medium that they feel the freedom to express themselves without pressure to conform and fear of ridicule (Kramsch & Lam, 1999).

My observations showed that none of the non-nest lecturers in our Department showed any “linguistic insecurity” either in speaking or writing. Each of the participants spoke with confidence and wrote equally well. The policy in the Department requires each staff member to write the minutes of the weekly meetings, and in this regard we all had an opportunity to check each other’s writing skills. As a department, we represented many varieties of English ranging from Asian, South Sotho, Malawian, Zimbabwean, Zulu, Afrikaans, Scottish, Italian and Ghanaian. Even though the variety of English spoken was standard, the pronunciations, the idiom and the accents vary considerably. The linguistic variations with regard to accents and pronunciations did not detract from the point that staff members were making whether in the classroom, or in departmental meetings and workshops.

Bailey (2004) posits however, that it is beneficial for the students to hear a range of international accents and different varieties of English.

4.2.2 Code Switching

Code switching can be “a valuable resource” in the classroom when teaching across the curriculum (Meerkotter, 1998:110).

None of the teachers that I observed and interviewed, code switched. Lebo from Zimbabwe, thought that it would be an aid to her teaching and mediating if she could code switch, but since she knew no local language except English, she was unable to code switch in her ESL classes. When she taught in Zimbabwe, the medium of instruction was English, but since everyone there spoke Shona, she could use Shona to explain or define an aspect that was particularly complex.
Lebo: I think that if I were teaching in Zimbabwe er it would be easier for me, as I could use our common Zimbabwean language if I needed to put something across.

I asked, You mean ‘code switching.

She looked a bit uncertain.

I asked: Do you know what that is?

I explained briefly

Lebo: You’re right. Code switching could really be handy. It could be helpful in class.  
(informal conversation with Lebo)

Jabo felt that even though he could speak Zulu, Afrikaans and some Tswana, he could not code switch, as it would be unfair to those students who spoke a language that he was unfamiliar with. He added that he used code switching comfortably as a tool to assist his teaching when he worked in Kwa Zulu Natal, because everyone there spoke Isizulu, but that here in Gauteng, since English was the medium of instruction in the institution, he only spoke English in his multilingual classes. He added that if students used their own language to clarify and explain concepts and complex terminology to their peers that was quite acceptable to him. Both Marti and Naomi felt that they could not use code switching as a tool for mediation, as they did not have even a rudimentary understanding of a black language. Marti, although she had registered for a course in conversational Isizulu, felt that the course did not give her enough vocabulary to use code switching effectively. It occurred to me that even though Marti tried to empower herself, it had been to no avail.
4.2.3 Pragmatics

As indicated in chapter two, Pragmatics refers to the politeness, social distance, and cultural knowledge displayed in interaction between the lecturers and students. Pragmatics is measured according to the informative content (meaning as it is uttered) and the communicative content (what was actually meant) as it is communicated (Byram 2000). My observations showed that in terms of pragmatics, each lecturer was able to deliver the communicative and informative intent of the content. The interaction between students and lecturers was at all times within the politeness framework of the lecturer/student context.

The lecturers who preferred a more communicative and interactive style of teaching had to engage in much urging and probing to get students to interact with them. The foreign lecturers on the other hand, had to deal with more challenges to their authority. Lebo commented on this aspect in her interview:

*Students seem to prefer L1 lecturers. L2 lecturers are given more flack and students try their luck to take advantage with L2 lecturers more than they would with L1 lecturers. They still have the ingrained notion that the native speaker of English has more to offer.*

This notion that Lebo has, is further corroborated by the study conducted by Saminy and Brutt Griffler (1999). Their research showed that non native Master’s and PhD students agreed that native English teachers were accurate, fluent, and knowledgeable and idiomatically correct in their use of English. However, the same students said, that non native English speaking lecturers had more insight into the learning process, having gone through the process themselves.

Sifiso concurred with the notion that an L1 lecturer would be more proficient as a lecturer in language since the L1 speaker would have grown up speaking and thinking in and being trained in English. In an informal conversation, when I pointed out that my observations had shown that it was not necessarily the case, as I had found him and two
of our L2 lecturers to be extremely proficient, professional and competent in the mediation of learning to L2 students, he blushed with pleasure at being complimented, thanked me, but refused to change his viewpoint that a L2 lecturers could be as good as if not better than a L1 lecturer.

I observed a further example of pragmatics in the interaction between the foreign lecturer and the students when I followed Asimayah, the elderly Ghanaian lecturer, up to his class.

Six students followed Asimayah up the stairs, making comments loud enough for him to hear, that perhaps it would be better if they delivered their speeches in Ghanaian or French so that Uncle Sam would understand them better. Another student called out to him, saying that they should receive the marks anyway without him bothering to hear them, since they at least had arrived for the class, unlike the rest of the class. (Observation 18/10/2005)

A total of nine students were in class, others arrived late, sauntering in without apology. He reprimanded them for not arriving for their presentations on time. While a student was busy with his presentation, some students carried on a conversation amongst themselves. Asimayah looked at them after the presentation and said:

“When there is a presentation, listen to the speaker. We expect quietness during a presentation. We don’t chaat (chat). We can write on a piece of paper and pass it on to our friend if we want to say something in a gathering (gathering) (Observation 18/10/2005)

The students who attended Asimayah’s class were all black South African students. Their side comments continued throughout the lecture. This was in marked contrast to the interaction between lecturer and students in Naomi’s class. Naomi is a white South African lecturer who continuously read from the manual during lecture time, but she was taken more seriously than Asimayah by the students. They did not intervene, or ask
questions or mimic her accent or style of speaking although she spoke with a strong Afrikaans accent and was herself an English Second Language speaker.

Lebo and Asimayah, being foreign African lecturers, had to deal with the attitude of the students, while the local (black South African lecturers) did not experience that problem. There was more order and less challenge to their authority. I wondered whether this was in any way related to the “bad press” foreigners were receiving at the time, and the general xenophobic attitudes displayed by South Africans, in particular black South Africans who refer to black African foreigners as “makwera-kwera” (a derogatory term).

In the case of the White (Afrikaner) lecturers, students were generally quiet and did not speak or comment, unless they were asked to. Although Naomi only read to the students from the manual, students asked for no clarification and demanded no explanations. Even when it was patently obvious that the majority of students were not following the text, getting the point, or understanding the new and complex terminology/concepts, no one asked for clarification or challenged the lecturer. In the course of my observation, I noted the following:

*Naomi:  “We have ten minutes let’s read from our manuals because it will be less homework for you.”*

She picks up the manual and starts reading again. The students look bored. A couple of them start packing their belongings. Others chat amongst themselves. Two put their heads down on their desks. She goes on reading from the section on ‘situation’. Then she looks up and asks for an example. A student repeats the same example she has given from the manual. She says: “OK, I’m done.” and closes the book. The students get up and leave. (Observation (09/03/2006)

Later in an informal conversation with me, Naomi said, “You know I felt so uncomfortable in class knowing that you were there. I usually have a good rapport with my students, but today it just didn’t feel right.” In two subsequent classes however,
she used the same style of teaching. I wondered whether her need to justify her style of teaching came from a sense of her own insecurity about her lack of preparation.

The students’ apparent respect for the white lecturers over the black lecturers, links with what Hansen (2004) observed. He questioned the assumptions made about the individual based on race, ethnicity and language. He then posits that students are more likely to accept a non-native English speaking lecturer from an invisible minority (white/Caucasian) than a non-native English speaking lecturer from a visible minority (Asian or African). The challenges to Asimayah and Lebo were, or so it seemed to me, to be a manifestation of Hansen’s hypotheses.

Tang (1997) and Johnson (2003) both claim that non native speakers of English themselves tend to accept that native speakers of English were better than them, this in spite of the fact, that the majority of the teachers of English in the world, are not native speakers of English. Although they do not usually say so openly, most teachers and students seem to perceive the native English speaking teacher as superior to the non native English speaking teacher. But has the time come to change this perception (Park 2006)?

Rubin and Smith’s (1990) study on the effects of ethnicity and accent on undergraduate’s perceptions of non-native English speaking teaching assistants shows that undergraduates judged lecturers with high levels of foreign accents to be poor teachers, but in actual fact, there was no salient correlation between the measured outcomes and the negative perceptions of the students. In most cases, the perception had to do with their own stereotypes and prejudices, than with the level of competence or proficiency displayed by the lecturer.

In Jabo, Sifiso and Thandi’s classes there was a more relaxed atmosphere and the interaction was more comfortable. In Thandi’s case, this was interesting, because she is not South African, but has an almost local competence in both Zulu and English. Jabo,
Sifiso and Thandi emphasised the communicative intent, rather than content. They were able to address students by name. The fact that these lecturers had learnt students’ names could perhaps indicate a cultural and linguistic relationship with their students.

Their teaching style was often bantering and engaging and they urged and probed to elicit responses from their students. In their lectures they covered less material and worked on fewer new concepts and definitions per period. This form of mediation is indicative of empathy, patience and cultural awareness (O’Dwyer, 1996; Braine, 1999; Mahboob, 2004; Liang, 2005). Marti and Naomi emphasised the informative content in their lessons. Marti and Naomi were intent on covering more ground and getting through as much content as possible, even to the extent of ‘information overload’. Marti (observation dated 15/03/2006) introduced fifteen new concepts relating to communication theory in one fifty five minute session. All these were new concepts, complex terminology that even an English first language speaker might grapple with. By contrast, Jabo (observations 22/02/2006) spent at least fifteen minutes reviewing the new concepts from the previous lecture, and then went on to the new concepts. He spent the rest of the period explaining and giving examples of non-verbal communication.

4.2.4 Use of Language And Discourse Competence

Discourse competence refers to the ability of lecturers to represent the objects, concepts and other entities that are assumed to exist in the areas of interest and the relationships that hold among them (Mauranen, 1996:195). Non-native teachers spend valuable time trying to lose accents and bring pronunciation in line with what they perceive to be native accents and pronunciation. At the same time, nests that travel abroad are hired to teach English, simply on the basis that they are native speakers, regardless of whether they have professional ability or training. This undue emphasis on linguistic proficiency absolves them from engaging with or trying to learn more about local languages, cultures and social structures (Bailey, 2004).
With the exception of Naomi, all the lecturers used language competently both in their classes and in their interviews. They understood and were able to explain the material being mediated. In addition, they were able to negotiate the meaning of the content confidently and were able to say the same thing in more than one way an ability which is referred to as redundancy (Klaasen & de Graaf 2001). Thandi, Marti, Sifiso and Jabo were all fluent and accurate during their lessons. They were well versed in academic discourse and presented the material to be mediated in a structured and easily accessible style.

In one of Lebo’s classes that I observed, she seemed unprepared, and unsure of the answers to student’s questions on the worksheet that she was using in that lesson. This resulted in the students becoming restless, argumentative and loud when Lebo was unable to clarify, or give clear cut answers to the questions in the worksheet. She then called on me to offer my suggestion and explain the answer to the students, and in that way solve her problem. If students appear to be ignorant and insecure it is acceptable but a teacher should always be well prepared so as to appear confident, secure and stable (Stevick, 1976 in Medgyes, 1994). In subsequent lessons though, she was more prepared and confident, as she became more familiar with the content that she taught.

In addition to the fact that Naomi’s teaching style was to read to the students from the manual, she misunderstood the assessment criteria set out in a handout to the students, and consequently misrepresented these to the students. In one of her classes, the following interaction was observed:

Naomi places a transparency onto the overhead projector. The writing is small and not easy to read. She fiddles with the OHP. A student goes up and assists with the focus of the projector. The rest of the students applaud him as he walks to his seat and as the students see the transparency a student says, “We did this.”
Naomi responds, “Not all of us was in class when we did this.”

To which another student retorts, “Not all of us WERE here!” correcting the lecturer’s English

A student asks, “What is a common noun?” (The task on the transparency required students to find examples of parts of speech and identifying a common noun was one of them.) In response Naomi asks the class, “Who told me yesterday what a noun is?”

No one answers.

Naomi “er…er…noun is a man, woman, table, chair…anything you can touch.”

A student asks, “What about ‘oxygen’ or ‘air’?” She glosses over the issue and moves on

(Observation 09/03/2006)

Naomi’s inability to adequately address the student’s query suggests a lack of preparedness, proficiency and professionalism. She appears to be an exception to the rule because most studies have identified L2 lecturers as being more empathetic, understanding and well prepared and …”have better insights into the structure and use of language than do untrained native speakers” (O’Dwyer, 1996: 21).

4.2.5 Difficulties Faced by L2 Lecturers Mediating Learning to L2 Students

One of the areas that was discussed at length in the interviews concerned the main areas of difficulty that the participants faced. None of the L2 lecturers experienced any difficulties with the mediation of the content. The difficulties that they experienced were those that their students faced, due to the shortcoming these students had experienced in
school. These difficulties made mediation a more challenging task. The general trends that emerged from the discussions were as follows:

The LEP (limited English proficiency) that students carry over as a result of disadvantaged schooling

Their limited English vocabulary

The poor levels of comprehension

The inability to conceptualise and use the new terminology that is being introduced and taught.

The narrow frame of reference of the students as a result of a disadvantaged school experience

The students’ mindset regarding taking responsibility for their own learning

When asked about the specific difficulties that the English Second Language lecturers encountered in relation to language and grammar problems that hindered their work, the lecturers mentioned tenses, gender, sentence construction prepositions and agreement (concord). These ‘problems’ can be traced back to the deficit created by the legacy of the Bantu Education Act and the DET (Department of Education and Training) during the apartheid era. Both Jabo and Thandi mentioned that grammar was hardly ever taught in school, and if it was, it was not taught in context, but in isolation, so that students could not see the relevance of grammar and language structures in their daily speaking or writing.
4.2.6 Participants Comparisons between L1 (nests) and L2 (non-Nests) Lecturers

Sifiso and Jabo agreed that an L1 lecturer would be more suitable for mediating learning to L2 students. Both had memories of the kind of interaction they enjoyed whilst being taught by an L1 lecturer. They preferred the style of interaction as presented by the L1 lecturer. Sifiso in particular felt that the L1 lecturer had the benefit of the pronunciation, the diction and the style of interaction over the Second Language lecturer. He added,

“It is better to be taught by a L1 lecturer, since languages are driven by their own cultures, and the L1 lecturer would have the benefit of the upbringing in that culture, and the training that was offered to him/her to teach.”

Marti was inclined to believe that whether the teacher was L1 or L2 was immaterial, as long as the individual concerned had a clear understanding of the material to be taught and was able to unpack and present it in a way that was accessible to the students. She added,

“You get good lecturers and lecturers that are not so good lecturers and that’s maybe more an individual style.”

When pressed to make a choice, she said:

_I don’t know how to really compare an Afrikaner lecturer to an English person teaching the same subject. Maybe they have...of course their background- they grew up with – from when they were little babies they were taught to think in English. I think if you think about that, then they could be better. Maybe the English person will not be so sensitive to that as the Afrikaans lecturer will be. So I think you have your pros and your cons for both._ (Interview transcription)
Lebo and Thandi both favoured the L2 lecturers while at school and at university. Both agreed that their L2 lecturers had more empathy, because they shared a similar background. Lebo’s memory of her L1 lecturers in Zimbabwe was as she put it:

“someone who was fixated on pronunciation and accent, whereas the L2 lecturer gave more clarification and more opportunities for discussion.”

Lebo gave the example of how her L1 lecturer “freaked out if you said ‘perse’ instead of ‘purse’. Thandi maintained:

*L2 lecturers naturally accommodate L2 students in their interaction, speed and style. The material to be taught may seem very simple and obvious to a L1 lecturer, but the L2 lecturer knows that you need to clarify, express, and explain in more ways than one before the L2 student understands the material to be taught.”*

Much of the literature, supports this view, that L2 lecturers show more empathy, are more patient, have an innate understanding of culture and the adjustments necessary to fit into a dominant culture, are able to be better teachers to L2 students, as well as good role models for what can be achieved (Phillipson, 1992; Canarajah, 1999; Pasternak and Bailey, 2004; Braine, 2004; Mahboob, 2004, Myint2003).

4.2.7 L2 Lecturers suggestions for improvements

In the course of the interviews, one of the issues I delved into concerned the lecturers’ suggestions for improvements in the field of work, and more especially what they perceived should be done to enhance the mediation of learning by non-Nests to L2 students. Before I report what the participants have to say about the issue of training and upgrading of skills, I would like to briefly offer my own comments. I get the impression that the policy of those who hire lecturers in institutions seems to be that as long as one has completed postgraduate studies, the ability to teach is innate.
In the Department where I work, the majority of the lecturers are hired on a part-time basis as the need arises according to numbers of students that register. The lecturers are given a manual, a brief explanation of how the department operates, assigned a mentor, and then left to find their own way. At weekly meetings the next assessment or due date and other related matters may be discussed. The lecturers are in the main part-time, Second Language or non-Nests who are in turn teaching students who are second or third language speakers of English. Since we are part-time lecturers, funds are rarely if ever allocated for upgrading or training in a way that would benefit us or the students.

The participants in the study all agreed that there was a dire need for training to take place. Lebo suggested that there was a need to identify the common problems and then put strategies in place to tackle these problems. She said:

> since the very same L2 students eventually became L2 lecturers and teachers, it is necessary to provide the opportunities and fora from now, to give them exposure to the language and its use. I think that these issues are only debated and discussed in research proposals and academic forums, but that nothing concrete is being put in to place.

Sifiso felt strongly that ongoing training was important for both L1 and L2 lecturers. Both the linguistic and the cultural aspects needed to be delved into and lecturers needed orientation into both, to deal effectively with L2 students. He also found the selection process to lack consistency. Lecturers were selected on the basis of their fluency he said, and that might not qualify them to deal with the cultural differences, conceptual shortcomings and comprehension problems faced by the students. Jabo on the other hand felt that the lecturers were doing whatever they had to. He said,

> “It is the students who need to be trained to change their mindset towards learning. They need to become more responsive and take more responsibility for their own learning.”
Marti was of the opinion that since 90% of the students were African, it was important, that each lecturer, “learn a little bit of a black language, so one can converse a little bit.” She thought that it was important that:

All service departments should be invited to the English and Communications department and made aware that they all had a role to play in the upliftment of the L2 students. Each lecturer should remember that in addition to his/her subject, they are also an English lecturer.

She added that a language laboratory and a computer centre were also a necessity, so that the many excellent language programmes that are written and available could be made available to our students.

Phillipson (1994) and Pennycock (1992) both decry the state of professional training whereby non-native trainees are not adequately orientated, into sociology, cultural studies and and/or foreign languages. In addition, Pessa and Sacchi’s (2003) study states that non-nests face many challenges such as English proficiency, lack of cultural training, training in ESL teaching and experience in ESL teaching.

4.2.8 When L2 Lecturers and L2 Students have Different Languages and Cultures

Culture plays an important role in the mediation of learning. All the lecturers agreed that the difference in culture between the lecturer and the student definitely played a role in the mediation of learning, although all of them didn’t define culture in the same way.

Sifiso, Marti, Jabo and Thandi agreed that the socialisation of students within a particular cultural context defined how they interacted and behaved in class. They all gave the example of how eye contact was interpreted differently in the African (black) culture as compared to Western (white) culture. In African culture, holding the gaze of an elder person was construed as disobedience, arrogance, flouting authority and also as issuing a
challenge. In addition, younger people were taught not to speak to elders unless spoken to, to keep quiet in the presence of elders, never to speak back, or loudly, or to challenge the wisdom of the elders. Parents and teachers are to be treated with the utmost respect. Jabo, Sifiso and Thandi stressed this aspect of African culture. Thandi put it rather succinctly when she said:

*In our culture you know younger people are supposed to be quiet and listen to the elders. Now you come to university – my lecturers especially the nest ones will want you to participate and you feel like ---goodness me I cannot participate or talk back to you because in my culture it says I have to listen to you only until you call upon me. So people may find black students very timid and quiet but it’s not that personally they’re timid in class or reserved it’s because of where they’re coming from and what kind of socialisation they come from that comes into play sometimes.*

Thandi added that in her classes, she could clearly discern the differences in the style of interaction of the students, who were learners from ex-Model C schools, the foreign African students and the local black students who attended ‘government schools’. Model C schools are schools that were previously for white learners only but in the new dispensation had to accept learners from all races. She felt that culture definitely had a role to play in the way each group responded to her teaching style.

*I find the French speaking group and the Model C group will ask questions, will interject., The rest of them - very, very quiet - we are coming to the end of the term, and some of them we haven’t heard -they haven’t said a word to me apart from accepting my greeting.*

Marti said that she found the unit on Intercultural Communications in the syllabus to be an excellent point of departure, for bridging the gap between students’ perception of culture and her own view of it. It also made a very valid contribution towards students becoming more accepting and more tolerant of cultural differences. Her concern was that
as lecturers we did not take into consideration the cultural context that the student was coming from when we set tests or used case studies.

*If the lecturer and student do not come from the same background exactly of course there will be a little gap. Like for instance when we choose case studies sometimes for our students really to know whether they could think themselves into the case study or not...whether this is quite foreign to them. So I think we as lecturers must be aware of that... When they come here many of them have never worked on a computer for instance. I was involved in a study, where the students said that they needed about a year to adapt to the Technikon. Everything is so new. Then they are accustomed to different languages in school and then their text books are also in English and in academic English at that which makes it more difficult.*

I agree with Marti on this issue. I recall a test that was set. It comprised a case study concerning complaints to a hotel manager about reservations, room service and other aspects of a foreign holiday. The majority of our students have never travelled out of Gauteng or stayed in a hotel. They could not identify with the notion of room service.

Another experience that made me realise the large gap in my world view and the world view of the students, occurred when I asked a student to fax his assignment to me. At the end of the class, he waited for me, and quietly explained to me that it was impossible to type out or fax the assignment to me as he and his family lived in a shack in a squatter camp. I remember at the time, having to re-assess my whole view of my students and myself in relation to the reality of my students, which was not the same as my reality. My mind-set could not absorb this situation as I had just returned from teaching at a college in London, where students attended college with their own lap top computers and video cameras for projects and assignments. As lecturers, we sometimes fail to take into consideration that the culture of the institution differs from the student’s culture, and the culture of the lecturer. Each person has his/her own reality to use as a frame of reference.
Johnson (2003) recounts a similar experience when she reflects on her experience of mentoring Ali, an Angolan trainee teacher (discussed in chapter two).

According to Lebo, her cultural values were very similar to the cultural values of her students. However, it was the language differences, and how they impacted on cultural aspects that interested her. She felt that there were certain terms in a language that related specifically to behaviour or actions or meanings and realities within that culture. Culture represented more than institutional or socialisation issues for Lebo. Lebo saw culture as a generational issue as well. She referred to street culture and the culture of students who were in their twenties, compared to others who were in their thirties or forties. She said that due to cultural differences, one may construe something as rudeness which was not intended to be rude.

Jabo was comfortable with his cultural milieu as he felt that the majority of the students in his classes reflected the same cultural background as his own. He tried to overcome the student reluctance to interact and respond actively to discussions in class creatively, and always encouraged this by probing and giving students contexts in which to speak up in class. He identified with their reluctance to argue and debate issues because he was brought up in the same cultural tradition of total obedience to elders and particularly to teachers at all times.

*If you understand their background you may not go to the extent of trying to keep up and try to make them realise that they can be able to speak out like any other student. My style-er I try to interact with the students as much as I can. I try to relate to their personal experiences because most of them are like me from... (unclear)... so I try to relate and interact with them. You know they are language students and in certain concepts like what they do outside...most of the time I am within the very same culture. I hear them when they communicate and I use the very same examples.*

When I observed Jabo’s classes, it was evident that he enjoyed his interaction with the students as much as they enjoyed his interaction with them. The atmosphere in the classroom was happy with a sense of fun and learning. My observation records highlight an incident in his classroom. A student arrived about twenty minutes late for his lecture,
Jabo looked at the student as he walked to his seat, and said, wryly, “Much too late for today, and far too early for tomorrow.” The students found his dry wit hilarious.

In Sifiso’s opinion, if one was not well versed in the cultural orientations of the students one was teaching, it could be quite problematic. When I probed for more details and possible examples, he said:

*In most cases we tend to overlook these things. In African culture I can’t look you in the eye simply because this shows disrespect. In white culture it’s the total opposite of the cultural inclinations of Africans. Those minor things we consider to be peripheral do play a major role as students trying to understand you as an L1 lecturer and if you are not aware of these problems then both of you cannot understand each other. Secondly to understand…the vocal cords of people are not the same. I’ve had encounters whereby people would expect me to pronounce like a white person. I cannot do that because my vocal cords are different. At the same time, my orientation isn’t the same as a white person. I might have been taught by the L1 speaker, but at home I spend much time with my parents. I listen to how they speak and what they say and my pronunciation and orientation will be informed by what I see at home, not what I see at school.*

In Jabo’s, Thandi’s and Sifiso’s cases, I saw Myint’s (2003) assertion, that non-native lecturers were “living models” for their ESL students, in action. Their presence in the classroom, their use of language, the manner in which they acquitted themselves all were indications to their students, of what could be achieved if they were willing to work hard and focus on their goals.

Naomi felt that cultural differences between lecturers and students existed, but that they did not in any way impact on her teaching and mediation. She said that she sometimes used the non-verbal cues from the students to understand them and their needs. Her style of teaching was as she put it “a lecturing style”, and it worked quite well for her.
Cultural and language differences between the lecturer and the students undoubtedly play an important role in the mediation of learning, as is evident from the responses of the L2 lecturers who were the participants in this study. Their responses alluded to the fact that culture does not only relate to one’s traditions and upbringing within a particular cultural context. Culture includes the ethos of the institution one studies in, the company one works for, the generation or age group one belongs to, and the sub-culture one identifies with. Our department includes in its syllabus, an entire unit on culture and related cultural issues. Since both lecturers and students come from highly diverse cultural backgrounds, the students are given ample opportunity to exchange ideas and share their cultural contexts with each other. In this way, a more multicultural and tolerant climate emerges. The culture and work ethic of the business world and the world of work is also examined to prepare students for the world of work. In this respect, I think that we have succeeded to some extent in promoting the notion of Intercultural communication, and strengthening the cultural identification to which Valesco-Martin (2004) alludes.

4.3 THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF MEDIATION IN ACTION

The title of this study focuses firstly on the L2 lecturer, and secondly on the aspect of mediation. The principles of mediation, or the Mediated Learning Experience, is the brainchild of Feuerestein (1980) and are discussed in Chapter two of this study (Literature Review) in some detail, but for the purposes of the classroom observations of the L2 lecturers, I concentrated on the first five principles namely; mutual interaction, sharing aims, principles of constructivism, positive/optimistic and encouraging, application/reflexive thinking.

4.3.1 Mutual Interaction

Lebo and Naomi did not use the opportunity afforded by the class time to interact as fully as was possible with the students. Their style of teaching was less mediational and more lecturing. Lebo was detached and stood to the left front of the classroom and maintained
an aloof stance. She kept the notes in her hand all the time and only looked up to acknowledge answers to questions that she asked from the exercise that was being done. The students did not agree with some of her answers, and argued vociferously with her, until she called on me to resolve the dilemma. In the next class, she was more interactive and animated, as the material had become more familiar to her, and as her confidence improved, so did her interaction with her students. Naomi however, remained detached and aloof throughout. Even when explanations were asked for, or clarification was requested, she glossed over the issue and carried on reading. Sifiso, Jabo and Thandi used every opportunity to interact with their students, and attempted at all times to keep within the frame of reference and understanding of the students by asking questions and offering clear examples and explanations to clear up students’ confusion.

4.3.2 Sharing Aims

In keeping with the principles of mediation the lecturer has to share the outcomes of the lesson with the students, so that the students become aware of the importance of the activity. In the course of my observations, I noted that most of the lecturers were able to share their outcomes with their students, and show the relative importance of the activity. However, Naomi was remiss in this regard, as she continued to read from the manual and was unable to communicate her aims adequately.

4.3.3. Principles of Constructivism

In this mediation strategy, the lecturer is required to build on what the students already know. The new knowledge has to be linked with what is already known, so that the student can extend the principle to incorporate the new concept or strategy. In addition, the lecturer has to be able to show how this activity/lesson/concept can be applied to the real world and not only be of relevance to the immediate concerns of the examination or test.
The topics that were being covered by the lecturers at that point in time lent themselves particularly well to this aspect of mediation. The topics under consideration were: non-verbal communication, barriers to communication, interviews, inter-cultural communication, skimming and scanning and comprehension.

Except for Marti and Naomi, who were more focused on covering content and getting through the units of work quickly, the rest of the lecturers were able to use this principle of mediation quite well, to show the relevance of what was being done in the classroom, to the world of work and in day to day interpersonal interaction.

Five lecturers began by revising previous work, and Jabo re-taught the section when it became evident that students had not grasped the concepts adequately. Only Marti and Naomi did not recap or revise.

4.3.4 Positive/ Optimistic and Encouraging

Jabo, Sifiso and Thandi were very involved, enthusiastic and energetic. They moved around the classroom, trying to involve as many students as they could into the discussions. They knew many of the students by name. Referring to a student by name makes a student feel that he/she has a special, recognisable identity, and is not just one of many faces in a lecture room. This leads to enhanced learning. The fact that a lecturer knows the names of students could also suggest that more interaction and exchanges are taking place in that class. Humour was also used to make the lesson more interesting. Their style was interactive, but at the same time they were able to mediate in a positive, optimistic and encouraging manner. The examples and explanations given were relevant to the topic being mediated. The students seemed more at ease, and more responsive in these classes, than in Marti’s and Naomi’s classes.
4.3.5 Application/Reflective Thinking

Mediation in this instance relates to the student being given enough opportunities to apply what has been learnt to related situations and to reflect in order to achieve a deeper understanding of what is being taught.

There were not many opportunities for application and reflection because the lecturers are compelled to maintain the pace set by the co-ordinator of the course. In addition, at weekly meetings, the co-ordinator explained what had to be done for the rest of the week and also suggested the activities that lecturers could use in class. Time is always at a premium and very often lecturers have to move on to a new unit, even though students might not have grasped the concepts. Despite these limitations, Tandi and I endeavoured to assist students through group work where they shared knowledge and applied what they had learnt.

4.4 Personal Insights

I experienced the discrimination as a visible, non-nest myself, when I taught English in Dublin and England both at school and college level. I can thus empathise with the teachers in Amin’s (2004) Canadian study because I was told in a school in England, “Why don’t you go back to your own country, you stinking immigrant”. However, as time passed, I was acknowledged as the expert in the class on matters relating to language. Additionally, whilst teaching in Dublin in Ireland, I was introduced often as Miss M’otala who is here from Africa to teach English and this was followed by a bemused grin and invariably questions about how an Asian from Africa could teach English to Irish learners.

Perhaps the most enduring theme that I encountered in this debate has come from Canarajah (1999). He gives the non-native speakers an instant to reflect on their own backgrounds, their immersion into English and the identity that they have forged with Englishness. He does so by recounting the story of his introduction to the structures of
English, talking of charismatic rural teachers in poor villages throughout the developing world, who initiate such learning in their students. Some of these students then go on into the first world and continue their studies up to doctoral level.

In retrospect, my own teachers of English came from really poor coastal villages in KwaZulu Natal. They had no prospects of ever leaving their impoverished environs. Their native tongues were either Tamil or Gujerathi or Hindi. Yet their love of English poetry and literature transported them into another realm. They carried us, their students, along instilling in us the pleasure and enjoyment of the English language, over and above our own languages, to the extent, that today we have left our mother tongues behind.

These teachers do not have nor can teach pronunciation and the Queen’s English, but instil in their students:

- a curiosity towards the language, the ability to intuit linguistic rules from observation of actual usage, a metalinguistic awareness of the system behind language and the ability to creatively negotiate meaning with speakers and texts. These are the secrets of successful language acquisition that were passed on to me by my village teacher (Canarajah, 1999: 91)

4.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have presented the pertinent aspects that I observed in the classrooms of the L2 lecturers who were the participants in this study, and what they shared with me in the course of their interviews. The belief that native speakers of English have a better command of the language and are therefore more proficient speakers and lecturers has already been proved to be unfounded, since non-Nests in many parts of the world speak English with a fluency that sometimes surpasses native speakers (Canarajah, 1999; Myint, 2003; Liang, 2005 and Cook, 1999).
The dissertation is brought to its finality in chapter 5 where the conclusions are drawn from the analysed data. In addition recommendations are made for future research.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present my conclusions and recommendations for the study that I have undertaken. The topic ‘Second Language Lecturers’ Mediation of Learning’ still has many aspects to it that require further investigation, especially in the context of South African Education, which is still in a state of transformation.

The comments and insights I have brought to the topic are by no means exhaustive nor has it reached saturation point, but it is my hope, that I have at least provided a springboard for future discussion. Although the issue of L2 lecturers’ mediation of learning is hotly debated in The United States of America and in Canada, by non-native teachers and lecturers, I found that in South African academic writings, very few academics and researchers have actually dealt with the subject matter. In the light of the language policy for education which takes into account home language or mother tongue, first additional language (FAL), second additional language (SAL) and the language of learning and teaching (LOLT), I believe, that much more work is necessary in the field of Second Language lecturers’ mediation of learning as this topic has not been fully explored.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to investigate how English Second Language lecturers mediate learning to English Second Language Students. The conclusions that I arrived at emerged from the findings reported in the previous chapter. My main objectives were to identify L2 lecturers’ experiences of teaching L2 students and to explore whether the lecturers combined cultural and language differences affect the manner in which teaching and learning is mediated in the Department at the University where I work.
At this point it is not possible to conclude that the objectives have in fact been met as the sample comprised only seven participants and cannot be deemed representative of all English Second Language lecturers. However, for the purpose of this study with these seven lecturers I believe that I achieved what I set out to achieve. My conclusions are discussed below under the relevant sub headings.

5.2.1 Competence

As previously stated, I observed the classes of each participant and subsequently interviewed these participants. The conclusion that I reached from my findings was that each participant showed competence in the way that he/she used language. Each participant also felt confident enough to rate himself/herself as a competent speaker and writer of English. There were one or two lapses, but these did not detract from the work or material being mediated at the time. The shortcomings that were discussed in the findings came from Naomi, an Afrikaans speaking lecturer. The conclusion that I drew from these shortcomings was that her entire educational background, including university was conducted through the medium of Afrikaans. The black South African lecturers on the other hand, had mother tongue instruction up to the end of primary school and then received their instruction through the medium of English at secondary school and university. They however, felt that they had not been given adequate training in aspects of grammar and language.

5.2.2. Difficulties

Grammar is mentioned repeatedly as an issue, when the African L2 lecturers were asked about the difficulties that they had experienced as L2 lecturers. The black lecturers blamed the system of education under the Department of Education and Training or Bantu Education in the previous dispensation for their shortcomings. An interesting conclusion that emerged was that L2 or non-nest lecturers in all of the studies conducted overseas were credited with having a better knowledge of the rules, constructs and structures of grammar than the L1 lecturers. The overseas L1 lecturers on the other hand
were credited with better pronunciation, enhanced vocabulary and use of idiomatic expressions and superior understanding of local culture. It is only in the South African context, that grammar has proven to be the weak point of the English Second Language teacher. I concluded that the comments of the black L2 lecturers indicate that insufficient scaffolding and constructivist mediation was offered to L2 students in school to meet their needs in respect of English grammar and language skills (Vygotsky, 1978).

Jabo made an extremely pertinent comment during his interview, when he said, that the mindset and perception of the students needed to be changed. He was of the opinion that the students needed to be taught to take greater responsibility for their own learning and also to break out of the narrow perspectives that they have of the world and life in general. His concern was not about the L2 lecturer who, he felt was competent and keeping abreast of developments, but for the L2 students, who refused to take responsibility for their own progress and success, and needed to be ‘spoon fed’ as it were. Sifiso agreed with him that at times we as L2 lecturers made too many excuses to accommodate what we perceived to be a disadvantaged student, but who in actual fact was one who was taking advantage, and becoming lazier and more apathetic due to being perceived as disadvantaged. I realised from this discussion, that some of us in the Department actually fell into that category, and that only a lecturer from the similar background to the student could have vocalised these sentiments, as the rest of us feared being seen as insensitive, or racist or politically incorrect (Amin 2004 & Mahboob, 2004).

5.2.3 Culture

Two conclusions emerged from the findings on culture. Firstly, that culture is individually defined, and that culture, language and identity are inextricably linked. Secondly, that even though all the lecturers belong to one Department, within one university, there was a tendency towards ‘othering’ (Palfreyman, 2005). I concluded that ‘othering’ is more insidious than discrimination, because in ‘othering’ we tend to group
ourselves in a way that creates an ‘us and them’ outlook and in this way the informant group refuses to take responsibility for the lack of progress or the failure of the ‘othered’ group. All the lecturers in the Department, L1 and L2 agree that at entry level, most of the students have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) with regard to language, comprehension, reading skills and grammar. However, the lecturers and co-ordinators of the Applied Communication Course at my institution are prepared to re-assess the course to accommodate the LEP students in this regard. Sonderling (1998) states that it is language that helps us to make sense of the world. Learners and lecturers’ perceptions of the world are mediated by language. If this is so, then it is easy to see the potential for miscommunication where lecturers see linguistic diversity as a deficit rather than an asset on which further learning can be built. In the Department where I teach, the students are learning through a language that is not their own, nor that of many of their lecturers. The mismatch between the students and the lecturers’ language can impair students’ learning.

In observing Jabo’s classes I saw how meaningful, interactive and fulfilling mediation could be when the lecturer and the majority of the students share a culture and a language. By comparison, observing Naomi’s classes showed how uninspiring, clinical and dull a class can be when the lecturer is detached and aloof. I concluded that mediation of learning could have a more positive impact on the students, if the students and the lecturer shared a common language and a common culture. In one of Naomi’s classes, that I observed, there was an uncomfortable moment, when it felt, as if she was trying too hard to let the students think that she was streetwise and savoir-faire in the ways of black township culture. She tried to use the non-verbal signs that commuters use for taxi services into and out of town, but she didn’t know them, and she ended up being laughed at. From this interaction I inferred that she was trying too hard to identify with her students and her smile was too fixed. Consequently, some of the students saw through the veneer of integration, and sat stony faced throughout the episode. I experienced a similar episode in one of my own classes, a few years ago, when I thought it would be funny to do an imitation of a black person speaking pidgin English, and was met by an embarrassingly, stony faced silence. These faux paxs that both Naomi and I were guilty
of indicated to me that a lack of cultural awareness, sensitivity or empathy does not auger well for mediation to take place successfully.

One of the host teachers in Nemchinovas’ (2000) study commented on her non-native trainee teachers:

She knew what the students were going through because of her own experience. She herself was still adapting. Her situation and adaptation process proved very helpful to the students.

Another comment about the non-native trainee teacher:

The trainee teacher used the fact that she is not a native speaker in a very positive constructive way. She related certain incidents and emotions around learning a second language in a way that I could see was comforting to the students and let them know she understood them.

I observed similar traits of empathy, patience and interaction in Jabo’s, Sifiso’s and Thandi’s classes and concluded, that their L2 status made them aware of the struggle the students were undergoing to learn in a second or third language.

5.2.4 Participants Preferences of L1 and L2 Lecturers

When the L2 participants in the study were asked to choose whether they preferred L1 or L2 teachers /lecturers, three of them chose L1 lecturers. I concluded that their assumption was that competence in language, vocabulary and grammar meant that a person was also a more proficient lecturer. L1 lecturers are automatically treated as if they are more professional and more proficient, in hiring and teaching practise worldwide, yet there are more non native speakers and teachers of English throughout the world (Canarajah (1999), Myint (2003), Kuchru (1996). Non-nests may not exhibit the same level of accuracy and fluency as a native speaker, but the literature on non-nests generally agrees
that non-nests do achieve “comfortable intelligibility” (Kenworthy, 1987:1, in Medgyes 1994)).

Despite the fact that there are more non-native speakers of English worldwide both L1 and L2 students are more likely to challenge the authority of non-native lecturers, especially if they are foreign African lecturers. The same challenge was not presented to foreign or non-nest lecturers who were Caucasian (the notion of visible and non-visible minorities. This clearly indicates that prejudice and discrimination still exist in many institutions that employ non-nest speakers of English. The conclusion that one can draw from this scenario, is that as English Second Language speakers we are more likely to have negative mind sets against other L2 lecturers like ourselves. Studies by Tang (1997), Liang (1997), Hansen (2004) and Jun Lui (2004) bear testimony to this.

However, in my observation of the L2 lecturers, I concluded that the majority were indeed professional, proficient, empathetic and competent in mediating learning more especially to L2 students. Furthermore, the black South African L2 lecturer has the added advantage of knowledge of more than one of the official languages. This makes South African L2 lecturers more empathetic and sensitive to the needs of English L2 students (Matsuda and Matsuda, 1999; 2001; Kamhi-Stein, 2004; and Myint, 2003 have conducted research in this regard. In my case for example, being Asian I speak Gujarati and Urdu. Being Muslim, means that I have a working knowledge of Arabic. The language of learning and teaching has always been English, while Afrikaans was a compulsory second language studied at school. In addition, I also speak IsiZulu fairly well, as I grew up in an outlying area of Kwa Zulu Natal, and had a Zulu nanny and other Zulu children as playmates.

The theory that L1 lecturers are the best teachers has been disproved by many research studies which have been referred to in the literature review [Canarajah (1999), Braine (1999), Phillipson (1992), Mahboob (2004), Uhrig, Newman and Hartford (2004)] The end result of all those studies referred to in the literature review confirm that native
English speaking teachers are only at an advantage when it concerns the use of language and not in the context of learning and teaching as in instructional purposes. It is a conclusion that I endorse.

5.2.5 Lecturers’ suggestions for improvement

From the comments that the lecturers made, and the discussions that we had, a very important point that emerged, was the issue of training, or rather the lack of training. Each of the participants spoke at length about the need for training, and made suggestions for the improvement and enhancement of English Second Language lecturers’ mediation of learning to L2 students.

I concluded that the university chose to ignore the debate around the entire issue of the facilitation and mediation of learning by L2 lecturers to L2 learners. Lecturers and students alike are expected to automatically attain a native like command, proficiency and comprehension of not only spoken English, but academic English as well.

Despite the fact that the majority of the lecturers in the entire institution are Second Language speakers of English, no training programme has ever been implemented to assist these lecturers with the mediation of English to Second Language students. It is apparent that the need exists for such a programme to be facilitated as in-service training. Tried and tested programmes exist internationally, and the entire debate around the issue of the non-native speaker as teacher and lecturer is indeed gaining momentum. Elsewhere in this study, I have described just such a training programme that was facilitated very successfully at Delft University in Holland.

5.2.6 Code Switching

I concluded that participants were not code switching as a tool of mediation. Each of them knew what it was, and had heard of its efficacy, but felt constrained to use it. Foreign lecturers could not code switch as they did not have the knowledge of the local
languages. The white South African lecturers knew no local black language, and even though one of them had attended a course in functional IsiZulu, she did not feel sufficiently empowered to use the language in class. The black South African lecturers knew another language well enough to code switch, but felt that it would be unfair to the multilingual nature of the class to use a language that would benefit only a few of the learners in the class. While multilingualism is a goal that is highly desirable in teaching at an institution where students represent so many diverse cultures and languages, the language policy does not favour such an approach, as a practical solution to the issues surrounding multilingualism. However code-switching, “can be a valuable resource” in teaching across the curriculum. Meerkotter (1998:260) avers that without this resource, “students would be disempowered in the teaching and learning situation”

5.3 TRAINING, TRAINING AND MORE TRAINING

The conclusions I have reached about all the problems encountered by ESL lecturers, need one solution, which is training. For linguistic and professional competence to be attained, for difficulties to be overcome, for deeper cultural and social ties to be forged, training is the key to unlock the talent and confidence of every L2 lecturer to achieve his/her potential.

5.3.1 Implementing a Training Plan

In the literature review, I discussed a training plan that was devised especially for non-native lecturers lecturing to non-native students at Delft University of Holland. The researchers who reported on the programme stated that a definite improvement in the quality of teaching and the professional outlook of the lecturers had occurred. I believe that such a programme that takes into account non-verbal communication, speech, organisation, grammar, effective questioning and cultural issues, could go a long way towards enhancing the mediation of learning by L2 lecturers. In addition, there is a dire need, to address the LEP problems or the students’ shortfall in language and grammar. Lecturers need to have interventions to assist them with the teaching of relevant aspects
of grammar as part of better oral and written communication. Gay (1986:155 in Israelstam, 2003) points out, “however sincere and genuine, personal caring is no substitute for professional competence.” In addition she argues that it is unfair to teach in a multicultural environment without having adequate professional preparation.

5.3.2 Tutorials

I think that there is a need, to schedule tutorial periods into the timetable. The tutorials will have fewer students than current class numbers. They should offer students and lecturers more time for oral interaction in the form of discussions and group work. In this way both the L2 lecturer and the L2 students have more intensive sessions to practise aspects of grammar, oral presentations and oral assessments.

5.3.3 “If we get past the budgetary constraints”

There is a standing joke in our Department, about any shortages or special needs that cannot be met. We put it all down to “budgetary constraints”, a term coined by our ex HOD. If we could get past the “budgetary constraints”, a resource centre, a reading room, a media lab/writing centre and a language laboratory would transform the Department from one that merely administers tests that are usually beyond the capacity of the students to one that can use the talents of both L1 and L2 lecturers to get on with actively mediating learning, so that skills development is not just a catchword, but a reality.

A number of limitations were encountered in the course of this study, which are elaborated on below.

5.4 LIMITATIONS

This study was limited firstly by the fact that it had to be presented as a mini dissertation in partial fulfilment of the M.Tech degree. I believe that far more has to be said about Second Language lecturers’. 
The primary limitation in this study is that I am a part-time lecturer at the campus and the participants were also mostly part-time lecturers. Being part-time means that we usually spend only the mornings on the campus, with the result, the availability of my participants was minimal. It was also rather difficult to arrange times when both they and I were free, as we all have classes at the same time and there are usually no lectures scheduled for Fridays. This meant that much negotiating and planning had to go into arranging for me to follow them to their class rooms to carry out the observations. I would have liked to have undertaken follow-up interviews, to explore certain issues further, but the participants could not avail themselves, due to time constraints.

A further limitation was that the number of participants was very limited. A study of this nature should be carried out with a far larger component of participants to get a truly representative overview of how English Second Language Lecturers mediate learning. However, the Department is small, and to find a large number of second language lecturers, that would be willing to participate in such a study, all lecturing in one department at any one time, is a limitation in itself.

The fact that most of the studies concerning L2 lecturers had been conducted overseas was also a limiting factor. It would have been preferable to have had more insight into the issue from a South African perspective, but there is a dearth of South African literature and research in this field.

Another limitation was my own inexperience as a researcher when I embarked on this project. The research methodology training and workshops were conducted for the first time this year. Experts in the field presented very interesting and informative insights into the whole field of the philosophical underpinnings of research, research design, methodology, interviews, case studies ethnographies, data collection and data analysis and other related aspects. My proposal was completed in the previous year and my dissertation had to be submitted by the end of the first semester of this year. As a result what would have been an excellent experience did not benefit me as it should have. In
spite of these limitations, I carried out the research, data collection and data analysis to the best of my ability, and have learnt some very relevant and important lessons and gained insight into the field of research and academic writing.

5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The whole area of English Second Language lecturers’ mediation of learning, especially in a South African context needs far more research and study. Given the turbulence of our educational and linguistic history, and the vast number of languages spoken in South Africa, there is a huge vacuum in understanding how we teach and learn language, and who should be teaching it. The field is wide open, untapped and just waiting to be researched. The scope of this study was limited firstly by the lack of literature in this field, and secondly, by the fact that I had access to only seven lecturers. To get a really representative study of how English Second Language lecturers mediate learning, the study may be transferable to other institutions by using a larger number of participants, from more varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

5.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The problems that L2 lecturers encounter are typical of problems faced by lecturers generally and overcoming these problems requires training and practice. Most of the L2 lecturers that participated in this study are particularly successful at creating effective learning environments for their L2 students, and this reinforces the notion that English Second Language lecturers bring their own strengths to the mediation of learning to L2 students. I hope that this study will bring recognition to the L2 lecturer’s ability and in so doing look “beyond their accents and pronunciations” (Braine, 1998:14). I also hope that this study may creates an awareness of L2 Lecturers’ personal and professional qualities as well as the multilingual and multicultural experiences that they bring to the mediation of learning.
When I formulated this topic and submitted the proposal, I had no idea that the journey to this point would be such an arduous one. It has been a painstaking, but a most rewarding journey in the course of which I have gained much insight, and grown academically and personally.
CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY

**L1:** First Language

**FAL:** First Additional Language

**L2:** Second Language

**Nest:** Native English Speaking Teacher

**Non-Nest:** Non Native English Speaking Teacher

**ESL:** English Second Language

**Tesol:** Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

**BICS:** Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

**CALPS:** Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

**SAL:** Second Additional Language

**LOLT:** Language of Learning and Teaching

**LEP:** Limited English Proficiency
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APPENDICES

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS OF SECOND LANGUAGE LECTURERS (non-nests) undertaken by Razia Mayet in February and March 2006 in a University in Johannesburg

LESSON 1

Asiamah (SA) - Ghanaian

18 October 2005

8:15 – 9:10

Lesson – Speeches

The 6 students all followed him up the stairs making comments about speaking Ghanian and French in their presentations. They suggested that they receive the marks anyway since they at least arrived unlike the rest of the class. There were 9 students in class, others arrived late.

SA: started of by giving them a few tips on voice projection, body language and posture. He also reprimanded them for not arriving for their presentations on time.

He stopped the first speaker by saying “so far we have not heard you. You are speaking so fast”. The student spoke for half a minute and stopped.

“In civilised society when we are called upon to present we must prepare. If we read we must learn to read and look at the audience. Even President Mandela reads his speeches”.

“In many places today you have to hand out copies of your speeches and presentations so if you have not prepared anything and you cannot write down your presentation you will be a failure. If you write it shows your literacy”.

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Student 2 spoke about “following your dreams”.

SA: said “we have English English and American English. Sometimes we speak slangs but do not write slangs”.

SA: writes on the board ‘gonna’. He says “don’t speak like this. You will spoil your presentation; you may speak like this in your dormitory and dining halls but not in class and work”.

Speaker 3 spoke on “Computers and Technology”.

SA: “when there is a presentation listen to the speaker. We expect quietness during a presentation. We don’t chaat (chat) we can write on a piece of paper and pass it on to our friend if we want to say something in a gaatharing (gathering)”.

Student 4

SA: “a very good accent (accent) thank you a good presentation. She is not from South Africa – but never mind we are all Blacks, we are all African”.

Students call out “Sabira Sakina” SA she comes up.

Student 5 came up

SA: “let’s listen to the sister”. (The student is dressed in Islamic garb)

SA leaves the class to chastise learners who are noisy outside.

Student 6 “Limpopo”

SA: “she has done well but she has forgotten one thing, Limpopo has beautiful girls like her. You must be proud of your abode where you come from. Talk well of your place and be proud of it “. 
Informal chat with LEBO (LB) 18 October 2005

LEBO: Learners seem to prefer L1 lecturers. L2 lecturers are given more flack and learners try their luck take advantage with L2 lecturers more than they would with L1 lecturers. Still the ingrained notion that native speaker of English has more to offer.

An added dimension to the issue of mediation by L2 lecturers – learners in the classes came from very diverse language and cultural groups. In each class there may be at least 4-5 different language/religions/cultural groups – each at different levels of English competence.

I think that if I were teaching in Zimbabwe – it would be easier for me – as I could use our common Zimbabwean language if I needed to put something across.

Me (Razia): you mean ‘code switching’ do you know what that is? (I briefly explained code switching).

LB: you’re right – code switching could really be handy. It could be helpful in class.
LESSON 2

Lebo

Monday, 17 October 2005

11:15

L – Lebo

M – Mediation

Only five learners attended class. LB handed out test papers to learners.

The lesson was on paragraphing style of writing.

L: “Let’s take out some piece of paper to write on to continue from last time.”

M: Learners were given Rubrics. The rubric was explained to the learners as a general guideline.

L: Learners were asked to “internalise” the criteria in each set of criteria was discussed.

M: A learner was asked to read aloud the assessment criteria in each block. The learner had to be given 3 explanations/instructions before he/she understood what he/she had to do and where he/she had to read from.

Topic sentence was explained and an exercise from the manual was chosen. The topic sentence was written on the board. Learners were asked to write it down on a piece of paper.
L: “choosing the right careers is a very difficult decision.”

L: ‘What are the two important things given?

A learner answered “a career” and “difficult decision”.

A second learner was chosen to read the next set of assessment criteria on supporting sentences.

L: explained that supporting sentences were examples, justifications and so forth.

Learners were invited to give ideas or suggestions for supporting sentences.

One male suggested → frustrations of choosing the wrong career

One female suggested → bad decisions and wrong things

One male suggested → you could become ashamed

L adds – in midlife/mid career a person may change their career path.

Learners were then asked by L to “put one sentence” to add to the Topic Sentence.

A learner asked “write one sentence or a whole paragraph”.

Another learner also asked for clarification. While they were writing L added that their sentence could be a justification or example or any support sentence.

Learners then wrote in silence for about five minutes.

L: “You must do a good job to write supporting sentences”.

L: “Consult your list for transitional devices. Also use your manuals for more examples”. [L found a handout and read out from the hand out a list of transitional devices. Students were aware of these therefore they were discussed previously].

A learner asked for further clarification about support sentences and connectives.

Another learner asked whether “reasons” or “examples” should be given.

L: “It depends on the line you wish to follow”.

On the board L wrote the words “examples, justify, definition, explain, cite and data”.

“It depends on how you wish to develop your idea – what angle you want to follow in your argument”.

“Use the connectives to develop your paragraph”.

Pixie was asked to read the next set of assessment criteria which dealt with sequencing.

L mentioned “Unity” “Coherence” “Logical” “Time Progression”. Most important to least important these terms were quickly explained in passing and L moved on to writing sentences and subject, verb and object [the boy is kicking a ball] was broken down to show what subject, verb and object mean.

The next set of Assessment criteria were; read which related to grammar, spelling.

Learners required clarification about how they will be penalized with regards to grammar and spelling.
“Finally Punctuation” L said “Pixie read the last set of assessment criteria which dealt with Punctuation.

L reminded learners that they now needed to complete their paragraphs by adding another four more support sentences. Learners were reminded to keep the criteria in the rubric in mind when writing.

Leave room in your second sentence to allow you to move on to a connecting idea.

A learner asked “five lines or five sentences”.

L tried but could not really mediate the difference between lines and sentences. But after the learner read out the information she had written. L was supportive of what she had written and told her she had two sentences that were developing her Topic Sentence quite well.

Learners worked silently on their task. At the end of the period L asked learners to hand in their work with their names written on “for safekeeping”.
LESSON 3

LEBO

Monday 20 February 2006

10:15

Lesson: Scanning

Skimming

L introduced the topics and handed out budget speech. While handing out she explained what the handout was about.

“In scanning we are not reading for detail. What are we doing?”

L: “We quickly zoom our eyes on to what info we are extracting”.

L: “Look at the specific column when I ask the question”.

L: “Scan quickly and find by how much is revenue for small business increased”.

L handed out new handout.

L: “We’re still skimming and scanning. Not reading for comprehension.

The learners kept up conversation amongst themselves.

The overhead projector didn’t work. L wrote questions on the board. Learners began working through the questions.

L: “Let’s move fast through this. You shouldn’t be taking forever. Try to aim for the 10-12 minutes you should be taking.”
L: according to our time span we should be finished now. We have less than two minutes according to our time span.

Learners got into a shouting match about the answers.

Learners are becoming argumentative and loud. Shouting out answers and not getting positive directions about the answers. Some are guessing and L is loosing the class and the question. Learners are arguing with her and amongst each other now.

She moves on to the next question without putting to rest the issue or finalising the answer.

She tries to allocate marks to each answer to get a total mark for the answers.

L: “Put your total – don’t lie to yourself or cheat to yourself”.

A student shouts out “but you didn’t tell us it’s for marks”.

L: “Continue reading your notes and prepare for the test on Thursday”.

(NO SUM UP OF WHAT WAS DONE STUDENTS BEGAN MILLING AROUND AND PREPARING TO LEAVE)
LESSON FOUR

LEBO(LB)

20 February 2006

11:15

Logistics

The learners wanted verification of the times and venues.

LB mentioned the test and one learner shouted from the back “what test?”

LB asked a student in front to verify that she had informed them of the test.

LB handed out handouts on the budget.

LB: “I will be asking general questions on the budget that was announced yesterday”. (having done this in the previous period, she seems more prepared.)

LB and finally, (long pause while LB looks for a relevant question) “can anyone make up a question we can scan for”?

No one could come up with a question.

LB summarised the main points. “With the next exercise you need to find a piece of paper to write on. Remember skimming and scanning is all about speed”.

LB put the transparency on the OHP but did not focus it. (I tried to ignore this, but after watching students struggle for at least 5 minutes, suggested to LB to focus it)
LB: “Are we all finished now? Check your answer and reward yourself with a tick”.

LB wrote down some answers on the board and called out others. “Check your work and put your mark out of 20”.

LB: “Let’s go back and look at what we did last time to guide us. Open to page 15”.

LB read out and explained the points from the manual. She referred to the notes to highlight the points.

LB: “Some people finished much earlier since they put this into practice”.

(LB displayed better level of preparedness. She summed up and ended clearly)
LB gives examples of how relationships can be built or cemented or destroyed through communication.

(LB GIVES GOOD EXAMPLES, ALSO AN INTERESTING START TO THE INTERPERSONAL.)

LB keeps the book in her hands and refers to it and reads from it, but gives examples and refers to real life situations.
Financial Information Services

Small Group Communication.

LB gives examples and explains – asks students for more examples.

Mass communication – (reads the definition and gives examples from book) but asks learners for more.

“You should look at organisational communication from the manual. It’s quite a mouthful”.

LB then asks learners to look at the questions that were given to them do work out in groups previously. LB hands out the group’s papers to the group leaders.

LB places a written out transparency on the OHP.

A learner was asked to read the short extract. Then the questions were dealt with and answers were elicited from the students. The questions were answered by students and added onto and further elucidated by LB.

Students were confused by the term “channel”.

LB explained and gave examples to clarify.

Communication Needs was discussed next.

A student shouted out an answer.

LB asked for justification and explained further.

Learners discussed amongst themselves trying to find a satisfactory answer.
A few learners were not satisfied by LB’s discussion and answers and challenged her to clarify her position.

LB explained that if the justification was valid that’s what was relevant.

LB used the terms ENCODING and DECODING incorrectly. A student pointed this out to her. At first she was uncertain – but quickly realised her mistake and clarified the issue by going back to the question and re-explaining.

A learner was called to read out a case study aloud. The questions on the case study were then dealt with.

The case study was from a past year paper – and LB used the opportunity to explain how answers should match mark allocation.

A student asked about the word “quote” as used in the passage. LB stated that as long as the correct scenario was alluded to in the case study it was fine if the exact words were not quoted.

For the last answer – LB referred students to the manual to find the answers in the relevant section.

She suggested that students should rather say what the manager should do and not what he should not do.

“Emphasise the positive”.

She ended by reminding them of the date and venue of the test.
LESSON 6

SIFISO(S)

22 February 2006

11:20

Job Interviews (Transparency is up and ready)

We’ll unpack what job interviews mean.

(Puts up transparency on OHP) – goes through the bullets on transparency and explains the assessment process.

S: “Hiring the right person → what does this mean?”

Students offer answers.

S: Effective person

Efficient person

Suitable person

Sifiso works his way through each bullet on transparency – he engages his students in asking questions and delves and nudges them to answer in more depth.

S: “What do we mean by responsibilities – lets unpack the term. Are they Duties?” I expect you to …………..

Sifiso engages the student and leads her to the answer by encouraging.

Sifiso makes mnmnmmnm sounds showing that he is listening and also showing that they should go on.
Doesn’t focus on one student – moves around and asks different student questions.

S: “As an interviewee you will have the structure explained to you but at the same time you, the interviewee, will prepare and have a structure in your mind. You will be organised and prepared → How will you prepare

→ What you will do.

A student says as an interviewee you just want the job.

Sifiso says “the interview is not about desperation it’s about following the rules and……..”. “Things that could go wrong in interviews or problems”.

A student says “over confidence”.

Another says “complacent”.

Sifiso deals with each of these and discusses issues pertaining to them and overcoming it.

S: Don’t you get nervous in an interview? Mr Mta… you have been in this situation – how did you deal with it?

S: “Mostly nerves are a consequence of not being prepared. You need to prepare and know your responsibilities and keep the structure in mind.

Mr Sifiso gave more details of how the assessment will be dealt with.

“Each student pair should structure their interview like this:

Opening
Mr Sifiso asked students if they had questions.

A student asked about “opening”.

Mr Sifiso explained in depth and described a scenario to clarify.

“An interview is a well planned, well structured conversation”.

A learner asked about dress codes. Mr Sifiso replied by giving more scenarios. He also mentioned Non-Verbal ones – like punctuality and formality.

Another learner asked about arriving with dreadlocks. Mr Sifiso dealt with the questions confidently and knowledgeably.

“Unprofessional behaviour → Picking your nose, flicking the pen, crossing and uncrossing legs”. At all times remain within “Professional Parameters”.

Mr Sifiso concluded by thanking the class.
LESSON 7

Mr JABO(M )

22 February 2006

13:30

Accounting (two groups are squeezed into one class)

Mr M greets the class. The class is restive. It’s hot and crowded.

M: “Where did we stop the last time?” – no one replies, everyone’s talking amongst themselves.

Verbal communication is done. Now we move on to Non-Verbal Communication. How would tell a lay-person what Non-Verbal Communication is?

M. Defines and writes the title on the board. “Can you remember the non-verbal categories?”

Writes “Categories” on the board, then under it “Kinesics” → bodily movement.

M gives many examples of Kinesics.

The second category Haptics is written on the board and examples are given and role-played of aggressive and soft touching.

“Our body action doesn’t lie”. Each category is written on the board and role-played, examples are given and some humour is introduced for each category. Questions are asked which try to elicit answers to explain the concept.

A student walks in late. M says “too late for today too early for tomorrow”.

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Proxemics is explained and the distances are clearly shown.

M: “This word is too hard – it’s Greek. Ok – let’s make English now”. (He then explains and unpacks the terms).

_The Review/Revision ended and the new section starts._

**Functions of Non-Verbal**

Each function again written on the board and for each, clear examples are given and explained with actions were appropriate and humour is used and clarifies the issue further.

**ENJOYS ROLE PLAYING THE NON VERBAL CATEGORIES . OFFERS CLEAR AND RELEVANT EXAMPLES WITH HUMOUR AND CLARITY**

Placed a transparency on OHP of the perspectives picture.

M used this resource to show how in communication different Non-Verbal signs can be ambiguously interpreted depending on your culture and background.

M used eye contact as an example of cultural ambiguity. Blacks don’t keep eye contact (it shows lack of respect). Whites keep eye contact (shows honesty).

M gave a scenario of a young White women interacting with an old Black man. She’s the teller at the bank. The scenario showed how different actions can be interpreted differently by different cultures.

M concluded with info on test.

**USED INTERESTING SCENARIOS TO CREATE MEANING**
Lesson 8

Thandi- Malawi

2 March 2006

08:15

Feedback Test

Ms Thandi: “We have to find out where we went wrong – not only find out the correct answers”.

Thandi called out to individual learners from the register to answer. Realised that learners she was calling had the wrong answer some were shy to give an answer – so she asked those who had it right to respond.

She looked at the examiners instruction and stressed to learners that need to understand the instruction.

USES HUMOUR WELL.

i was mesmerised and puzzled by the strange things you wrote.

She then asked me to explain the term malaprop to the class.

Thandi explained in detail the “qualification” (what was required in this answer was to say degree or diploma).

Thandi took time to actually clarify the requirements for each question.

Thandi explained to the students the necessity of organising all their work into a portfolio.
LESSON 9

(Thandi) - Malawi

3 March 2006

13: 30

Credit Group

Review of Test

Ms Thandi handed out the papers. She begged forgiveness if she mis pronounced any names. She said “as Thabo Mbeki says”, I am an African, (“not a South African”). (she has a good sense of humour and makes cute comments. The learners seem tired and listless. When she asks them why, they say that it has been a long hard day. And they are hungry.)

Thandi: “Lets be senders and receivers of communication, lets give feedback and learn from this. Don’t hide your paper away. Tell yourself next time I will do better and show you Ms Thandi.

(she is encouraging and draws out her students to follow and excel)

Thandi: “Why didn’t you get 5 out of 5? I know when I had the transparency up you looked and said Duh; Duh - now you see what happens; you have to follow – you never know when it will come back”.

Student asks for a spelling. Thandi asks the learners – a few chorus the spelling but still wrong. So she corrects them and points out the part of speech and how that shows the spelling. She calls on me again to explain malapropisms)
She says “hooligan Katrina” but no one corrects her so she says “was it a hooligan who went to New Orleans or a h-u-r-r-i-c-a-n-e”.

(some learners catch the joke and laugh)

Thandi explains in detail what a Personnel Agency is and what they do.

Some learners could not give the differentiation between the post and the personnel agency.

Thandi explained and clarified.

THANDI EXPLAINS IN DETAIL, SHE PRAISES THE LEARNERS FOR THEIR RESPONSES. LEARNERS ARE NOW MORE FOCUSED ON THEIR SCRIPTS AND ON REMEDIATING THEIR WORK.

Thandi: “Last question was marks for mahala right?” one learner says “No”.

Thandi checks and says “oh I can see why you are saying “No”.

(Thandi again explains in detail how to read and interpret the instructions as many did poorly in this section.)

A learner gives three correct answers in a row.

(Thandi says “He got it all this morning” learners laugh)

Thandi tells them about the CED and what the criterion is. She talks about “discourse competence” and the importance of writing correctly and using a dictionary.

A student says “but the CED is our own opinion – we can say what we like”.

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Thandi explains that even when you give your view you critique you must give an informed opinion.

She gives a detail example of opinions of President Bush and differentiates between the report and article.

Thandi concludes the class by thanking the learners.
LESSON 10

Thandi - Malawi

3 March 2006

11:15

Accounting Group

Thandi: “What have we learnt so far? Can we say we know unit 1 before we move on to unit 2.

(learners keep walking in 10 minutes into class. There is some confusion about the number of learners in the class. Thandi spends some time explaining about the register and other procedural matters.)

Thandi: “Did we know enough to answer the test”. Students say it was “fine” “okay”. No real opinions forthcoming so she doesn’t pursue it.

One learner asks “from your marking, what do you think?”

Thandi says that some doing very well others not well so she can’t comment until all are marked and analysed.

Thandi: “What is Non Verbal communication”? 

Learner: Sign language.

Thandi: “Do you mean the language of the blind and deaf”? 

Learner: “blind can’t see”.

Thandi writes in dumb and deaf – erases blind.
Thandi asks learners for examples of Non Verbal communication. She writes responses of learners on the board and discussed each one. She explains that each happens in a “context” – usually “social”.

Thandi: “I’m trying to come from your knowledge to the knowledge in the book.

Thandi role plays the Non Verbal communication: from; blush; threaten; flirty; walking tall; confident; boredom.

Skim the information in book.

(SHE EFFECTIVELY MAKES THEM USE THE SKILL TAUGHT IN THE PREVIOUS LESSON)

What percentage is verbal?

What percentage is non verbal?

What percentage is tone?

What percentage is body communication?

Learners are focussed and either watching, listening, following In manuals

Thandi writes on the board.

Functions

Thandi asks learners to call out the functions from the book.

She forgets the spelling. Students shout out the spelling. She goes back to the manual to check. Some students giggle. She writes down the words.
1. Repeating – Thandi goes around the class asking learners to show Non Verbal actions that are examples of “Repeating”.

2. Contradict – Thandi the non verbal does not support the verbal. Learners talk among themselves and laugh, but show examples of the the functions non verbally

3. My feelings are embedded in my non verbal not in my verbal.

   Thandi shows with actions and facial expression how contradictions occur in non verbal. She asks for examples.

   **THANDI NOTICES THAT ONLY ONE SIDE OF THE CLASS IS RESPONDING AND PARTICIPATING. SHE HOLDS UP AN IMAGINARY BALL IN HER HAND AND THROWS IT TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CLASS THAT IS QUIET AND SAYS “THE BALL IS IN YOUR COURT” SHE THEN GETS A RESPONSE FROM THAT SIDE AS WELL.**

   Thandi: “Non Verbal is very strong in communication. You must be able to recognise it”. When you come out to do your presentations you will be able to see who is supporting and who is undermining you from the non verbal communication.

   **Substitute**

   Now we will look at this function and it will be the last for the day.

   Students grin /laugh enjoying the input. Many talk amongst them selves

   They become restive and prepare to leave. Thandi reminds them to buy the manual and read the relevant section.
NAOMI: We are starting off with Communication Theory.

All right Communication Theory.

Can anyone tell me what they think of Communication? When I think of communication I think of someone telling me something.

NAOMI adds “what about communication with yourself or billboards, adverts”.

The first type is Intrapersonal communication.

NAOMI writes Intrapersonal communication on the board. (Then reads the note from the manual).

Interpersonal is the second type. (She then reads the note from the manual).

She says “if you pick a fight with your friends it’s interpersonal.

She goes on reading from the manual.

NAOMI writes down small … communication – reads the note from manual.

Writes down mass communication – reads the note.

Then asks the learners “is it clear? Do you understand”? 
No response from learners. She goes on reading from manual.

NAOMI says “let me sketch a few scenarios”.

*Gives a brief example of each type eg. “I am thinking about what I’ll do this weekend”.*

She points on the board to Intrapersonal.

NAOMI: the definition of communication is very important I want you to learn it off by heart.

She then says “let’s do this current event diary”.

Goes through the article. Using the criteria.

Learners felt it’s sensational.

NAOMI says it’s newsworthy.

Who → Mr Milamalika

What → NAOMI says it’s about the rape. Students disagree – say it’s about his death.

When she is unclear changes her mind thrice about it.

She goes through the article and looks for punctuation and grammar errors in the article.

NAOMI: “Interesting isn’t it?” – (no one responds).

She says “I think so”.

NAOMI puts up another transparency of an article/report – much longer than the previous one and smaller writing.
She says “We have only five minutes to do this”. She again looks for grammar and spelling errors in article and judges its merits instead of explaining that learners work will be assessed.

Ends of abruptly by saying “thank you class”
LESSON TWELVE

Thandi - Malawi

28 February 2006

08:15

“I had hoped you would all write a paragraph for me on why you are or are not voting”. (students all groan she laughs and starts the lesson of the day)

Thandi call out a student. “Stand right against the board. What do you see with your nose against the board?”

She draws a small circle – calls it scanning.

Another student stands slightly further.

Thandi draws a bigger circle – calls it skimming.

Thandi very …. Explains and gives examples of each type of reading still using analogy of piece or chunk of meat.

(A SMALL BUT EFFECTIVE EXERCISE, THAT EFFECTIVELY SUMS UP THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCAN AND SKIM)

Thandi writes on the board “Interactive Reading”, “Critical Reading”, “Study Reading”

Thandi calls out a big girl – asks her to remove her shoes – takes off her own shoe and puts on the learners huge shoe. Says “see I’m trying to get into the writer’s shoe”.

She explains interactively and creates understanding using lovely little ways of clarifying and showing meaning
“Critical reading” → explains to critique (own opinion of another) to view/assess/evaluate. Clearly explains and links to the current events diary.

“Study Reading” → a student asks about study without Comprehension.

Thandi discussed regurgitating, rote and why these are not good methods.

“Reading for understanding”.

“Reading with understanding”.

A student clearly explains both phrases and Thandi reiterates for the learners understanding.

Thandi refers learners to the manual – gives them two minutes to skim the three types of knowledge for reading.

Learners are asked to close books and give the three types of knowledge in reading.

   a) linguistic
   b) background
   c) stylistic

   Each is explained very effectively. New terminology clarified.

   Thandi asks the learners to open to an exercise in the manual to fill in the answer to demonstrate their linguistic and background and stylistic knowledge.

She asks students to do the “BLOGGS” exercise incorporating their linguistic and background knowledge. Students have to replace the word “bloggs” with an appropriate word that would fit the context of the sentence and the paragraph
Mr Sifiso put up a transparency. Learners were asked to copy the transparency. Its an assignment on cultural artefacts. Each learner had to discuss the significance of the artefact in their own culture.

Writing on the transparency is a bit small

Mr Sifiso asked learners revision questions on non verbal communication.

Students were asked to show “Yes” and “No” Non verbally according to their cultures. Tswana, Sotho and Xhosa students showed the same action non verbally.

The term culture was explored using Artefacts as an example (hair style; shoes; clothes etc.). An artefact is an object treasured in a culture.

He moves around the class. Calls out to different students to respond about artefacts in their culture that is revered. Learners are engaged in this discussion for awhile. He probes about their artefacts. Many show that they do not really know, or are unaware about artefacts in their culture.

Mr Sifiso asks “do you really understand and value your culture”? 

Mr Sifiso says “you will have to research your culture and understand the spear, the calabash etc. what you need to do guys is know your own culture; corporate culture and societal (each others) culture.”
You need to understand your culture first to know your own traditions, and what you treasure in your culture. What sentimental value do you have for it?, what is its significance?

This will help us to understand as Blacks, South Africans, and then as Africans. In the workplace we will meet others from other cultures.

MR Sifiso has a very clear insight into the issues concerning culture—be it local, corporate and intercultural.

You will have to do a written assignment and then present it in groups orally, to understand your cultures and others better.

Don’t thumb suck this – research it – talk to your elders.
LESSON 14

Mr Sifiso – South African

7 March 2006

10:15

Public Relations English

Mr Sifiso began by asking learners for feedback about the assignment. Learners were full of excuses and reasons for why they couldn’t. Someone couldn’t get the questions to them.

A learner stated loud and clearly that the way to save the situation was to write down the questions on the board. She said in English and used a few Zulu phrases to explain the situation to the lecturer.

The learners comfortably used English and Zulu. Sifiso said “when do I see you again”? They said “ngusasa” (Zulu for tomorrow).

Another learner said “ithlisa sir” (bring it down).

The learners wrote down the questions from the OHP chatting amongst themselves.

Lecturer said “can you keep quiet and write”.

The lecturer walked around the class talking to individual learners and they are extremely comfortable with the lecturer. Learners speak amongst themselves, some in English and others in zulu.
Mr Sifiso: “On your manuals Pg 13 there are two tasks; paragraph writing and facts and opinion. You must do them at home on your own to save time”.

Learners carry on writing from transparency and chatting amongst themselves. Mr Sifiso walks around talking to learners asking how far they are and if they’ve finished.

“Alright guys by Thursday you must have answered the questions. Then we will discuss them and go on to the tasks from the manual”.

Learners packed up and left fifteen minutes before the period ended.
LESSON 15

JABO— South African (Zulu)

9 March 2006

Period 3

Mr M starts off by writing “Barriers” on the board. Then he goes back to same revision of “Types of Communication”.

He asks students to identify the type of communication and reads a brief scenario of a TV announcer announcing the winner of Miss South Africa.

Learners are slow to respond so he asks did you understand the types of communication we looked at yesterday? Must we go through it again?

A few students say they need more input. He asks if they bothered to read. He reminds them of the test and says “space yourself don’t congest yourself as the tests approach”.

M writes the four types on the board – asks learners to identify examples. Only two or three students respond. He says, “we always say ladies first but today I want gentlemen first”.

A few learners answer – one says, “It’s the first time we are hearing these things”. M gives out further examples to highlight the type of communication.

Mr M asks what is a “Barrier”. He says anything that interferes with the message or distorts it”. “We have internal and external barriers. What is another word for internal? Are we all clear with the word internal and do we know what a barrier is?”

“What is”? – Mr M refers students back to directive words – reminds them to listen carefully to the question and identify keyword.
“If I said ‘What is ‘ don’t give me examples’.”

He uses the noise in the passage as an example of external barrier and reminds learners about not making a noise in the passages when they are free.

Mr M has the attention of all the learners. They listen and follow his explanations. He gives clear examples to clarify semantic barriers.

If I ask, “Is Mr Mavings here” ← if you say → I don’t know but I’m sure he is in his office”.

“You can’t say ‘I don’t know’ and ‘I’m sure’ in the same sentence”.

He gives another good example about jargon and how doctors write and the semantic barrier it can cause

Stereotype

A student gives a clear definition “its when you judge a group based on one bad habit”. A student asks if stereotypes will ever change. M says they do. Give examples of how Black men now have changed perceptions of a woman’s role.

M reads an article from Sunday Times Magazine that carries many subjective views about men and women. Interesting banter and chat follows – where M and students comment on these issues.

This leads into a discussion on “Context”.
LESSON 16

NAOMI – South African (Afrikaans)

9 March 2006

NAOMI asks, “How are you?” some students reply – she says in French “commeci come ta”.

She says, “We are on page 28. I left you with the definition”.

She holds manual in her hand and reads from the manual. She picks out a term from the manual and briefly explains it.

She mentions the symbols and uses the taxi symbols for Johannesburg. She says, “I clued up” – “can anyone learn me any others”.

She says, if I used this symbol in Timbuktu I’ll stand forever.

She turns the page over in the manual and says there are four elements; Sender, Receiver, Message, Feedback.

She uses herself in the class to explain each component. She goes on reading from manual. The learners are unresponsive.

She uses the example of Coco Cola in Africa – having misread the target ad not getting the message across.

NAOMI: “Lets wrap up what we’ve read so far”.

“What’s a Sender?” – one student mumbles a few answers.

“What’s a Receiver?” – “remember an example of Coco Cola”.

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“What’s Channel?” - “makes a joke about love letter”.

“What’s Feedback?” – “the response …………….” A learner completes the statement.

For homework please read from Page 29 – 33.

A student asks, “What is it about?”

NAOMI: → briefly shows them the page and gives the title.

She says, “don’t include ……………

She puts on the same transparency for CED.

A student says, “we did this”.

She says, “not all of us was in class when we did this”.

A learner says, “not all of us Were here.

She fiddles with the OHP. A learner goes up and fixes it – the rest applaud.

A learner asks, what is a “common noun”

She says, - “who told me yesterday what a noun is”

Er..er.. noun is a man, woman, table, chair.

She says, “anything you can touch”.

A student asks, “what about ‘oxygen’ or ‘air’”.

She asks what are the newsworthy events.

Learners start chatting amongst themselves.
She says, “we have ten minutes let’s read from our manual because it will be less homework for you”.

She picks up the manual and starts reading again. The learners are bored. One or two start packing – talking amongst themselves. More learners chatting. Two put their heads down on desk.

She goes on reading - Situation asks for examples. One student repeats her example. She says, “ok I’m done” and closes the book.
LESSON 17

MARTI - South African (Afrikaans speaking)

15/03 /2006

08:15

Management

Handout test papers to a few students. Marti circulated register.

“All right, we’ve started with Communication Theory. We started with categories need and then went on to the definition”.

Marti reminded students about the test and about being on time after the long weekend for the test. She also wrote on the board the date; day; and the sections to be tested on and the pages from the manual.

“I hope you read the notes”.

Marti referred the learner to the model/diagram in the manual. She drew two faces on the board. Asked learner what they represented. Labelled them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Sender</th>
<th>Receiver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☺</td>
<td>Background</td>
<td>Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☺</td>
<td>Context</td>
<td>Context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The dotted area is the context. Marti explained how one carries ones background around with one all the time. Background is everything from the time I was a baby. Marti acted out carrying your “background” with you wherever you go and how it impacts on your communication.

She spoke about language/culture and how the experiences in life and cultural background impacts on communication. She gave example of French and Chinese learners. She spoke of “eye contact” in cultures.

Mentioned how age and life’s experiences also influence the way we communicate e.g. a raped girl → she will be very reserved in the way she interacts with men.

Putting together:

The Message – is influenced by all your

[ENCODING] experiences

[DECODE]

The Sender and Receiver both Encode and Decode.

Both bring the me backgrounds.

“The message goes through a channel in a medium in a code”.

Used the classroom situation to demonstrate the process and how Face-to-Face communication is taking place and that they are communicating even though they are sitting still and doing nothing. With their frowns and smiles and nods.
Marti asked learners to give other examples of channels. The telephone, letter, email, radio, TV, newspaper. Marti reminded them of Mass Communication that was done in the previous period.

Wrote on board

Verbal } Marti explained and gave examples
Non Verbal } of Verbal and Non Verbal

She explained how the senses also are a source of non-verbal communication.

Marti went back to the model she has on the board and went through all the elements/components.

Marti introduced the concept feedback on the model.

“Have you ever experienced the situation when you said something. Then you had to tell your receiver – ‘No that’s not what I meant at all’ – you misunderstood”.

“If the lecturer is too soft, or you are too inhibited ….. The message might not get there. What are these called in Communication?”

(No one answers).

Marti writes on board

Interference external

internal
Marti asks for examples of external interferences and internal interferences. A learner gives the example of noise outside the class. Marti elaborates on internal. Hunger, tiredness, headaches your parents had a fight, your boyfriend/girlfriend sacked you, daydreaming. Marti explains the difference between Internal and Physiological barriers.

headache vs deafness or eyesight
Marti explains semantic to the class using the example of the word “grass” and “coke”. The learners were amused. She whispered to a girl “do you have grass at home”? The girl said yes – she thought it meant lawn. Marti explained it can be construed as drugs.

Marti also used the word “gay” as an example. The learners were very amused.

Marti used the opportunity to remind them of Dictionary work – and how the context of how the word is used should be kept in mind.

Marti wrote on the board Psychological Filters

Mindset [Marti explained it in detail with examples]

(Politics and Religion pre 1994)

(Students start to get restless. Information overload has set in).

Attitude

(Marti said that they would continue tomorrow)While they move about she tells them about some homework. Students start leaving.