CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ORIENTATION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH PROGRAMME

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Stan Fields: What is the one most important thing our society needs?
Gracie Hart: That would be ... harsher punishment for parole violators, Stan.
[crowd is silent]
Gracie Hart: And world peace!
[crowd cheers ecstatically]
Stan Fields: Isn't she lovely? Thank you, Gracie Lou.
Gracie Hart: And thank you, Stan.
[Gracie walks offstage]
Victor Melling: That was charming. Are you drunk?
Gracie Hart: I'm glad you enjoyed it. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go unscrew my smile! ” (The Internet Movie Database, 2006)

This extract from the film Miss Congeniality alone does not provide the reader (who is unfamiliar with the film) with a sense of the action/what is happening at this particular time in the film. From the extract only, the reader is unable to place it into context. It would require further reading of a great deal more of the script to enable the reader to place the extract into context. In the study of film the relationship of text to the context of the film is significant. Therefore, viewing this segment of the film would place the extract into context. Baker (2004) states that film’s meaning is derived mainly from the context of what is viewed. Film therefore has certain captivating qualities, which other forms of literacy do not
necessarily offer; this and reasons that will follow shortly, warrants the study of film at high school level.

So strong is the influence of visual media that the United Nations has proclaimed a World Television Day (StatsOnline, 2005). In 2000 the United Kingdom’s *Time Use Survey* reported that adults 16 years and over view 20 hours of television a week (National Statistics, 2003). As the world is enticed into becoming an audience that prefers to view a message, as opposed to reading it, the South African Education Department has included Visual Literacy in the Curriculum. Although Film Study is utilised in other Learning Areas/Fields such as Arts and Culture (AC), Film Study has emerged as a fundamentally important genre that is essentially instructed in the Language Learning Area/Field.

Aspects of visual literacy that might have significance for the purpose of Film Study include changes or developments in technology such as special features on DVDs that can provide teachers with insights into teaching methodologies, thus assisting them in their professional development.

The importance of Film Study as part of the Languages Learning Area/Field is stated in the official, National and Provincial Development documentation. The National Curriculum Statement aims to provide education that is equivalent in quality with other countries and “prepares learners for the challenges they will face as South Africans and members of the global community” (Department of Education, 2003:4). For this reason, Language Learning Area/Field encompasses various skills and literacies that will enable participation in society and the global world and thus language is viewed as medium for thought and communication (Department of Education, 2003:9).

The Department of Education (2003:13) maintains that “well-developed reading and viewing skills are central to successful learning across the Curriculum”. It is therefore fundamental that learners are equipped with skills and knowledge
pertaining to reading and viewing, and such skills are acquired in the Language classroom.

As society’s interest with visual texts increases, visual texts are also studied in the Languages Learning Area/Field and the study of film is one of the texts teachers can use in the teaching thereof (Department of Education, 2003:13 & 46). Thus, Film Study is considered valued as it will provide learners with necessary skills to use as functional members of society. This mini-dissertation, examines the possible use of technology in the professional development of teachers in Film Study.

1.2 LITERACY IN A MEDIA RICH SOCIETY

1.2.1 Literacy

In the early 1900s, an individual who could read, write and who had calculation skills, was deemed to be literate (EnGauge, 2001a). Current education systems world-wide now require learners to acquire these basic skills and utilise a larger variety of literacies, such as visual literacy and media literacy (EnGauge, 2001a; Department of Education, 2003:13). Freed (2003) states that “literacy grants power in any civilisation”, this is as it provides people with skills and knowledge. Literacy is therefore one of the components South African learners require in order to compete internationally (Department of Education, 2003:9).

Previously the definition of literacy was the ability to read and write, but now it has shifted to include the ability to locate and evaluate a message in various resources such as text, visuals, audio or video sources (Lamb, 2005). This is followed by learners making use of the message to complete activities set for them by the teacher.
1.2.2 Technology and literacy

“Technology is the technical means people use to improve their surroundings” (Hewit, 1997:12). Technology encompasses tools and machines (resources), which can be used to help solve problems and in so doing, satisfy our human needs and wants, and expand our capabilities (Quinn, 2005; Wikipedia, 2005). Rose (2001:17) affirms that visual technology is “any form of apparatus designed either to be looked at or to enhance natural vision, from oil paintings to television and the Internet”. This broad spectrum of visual technology includes film.

Kent and McNergney (1998:vii) state that technology will play a prominent role in the future of education, therefore teachers should recognise the importance of its contribution to literacy in education. Technology, in the broad sense of the word, will contribute to our understanding of literacy as it provides us with different information and resources and reference possibilities (Borrell, 2005; EnGauge, 2001a; Ittelson, 2002; Lamb, 2005). Literacy has evolved in order to better equip learners for the future and grant them the opportunity to keep up with global developments (Kelley, 1997; Lamb, 2005).

The following literacies have been named the “eight Digital Age categories”: “Basic Literacy, Scientific Literacy, Economic Literacy, Technological Literacy, Visual Literacy, Information Literacy, Multicultural Literacy and Global Awareness” (Lamb, 2005). Lamb does not include Media Literacy in this list. However, Media Literacy, as well as Basic Literacy, Visual Literacy, will be explained. A connection between Film Study and these three forms of literacy will be made.

1.2.3 Basic literacy

The word “basic” also means “central, elementary, essential, fundamental, key, vital ...” and so on (Makins, 1993:56). From this it can be deduced that basic
literacy comprises important and main ideas (knowledge and skills) that are encompassed in other forms of literacy.

The term Basic Literacy refers to being proficient in language and numeracy at standards necessary to function in society (EnGauge, 2001a; Department of Education, 2003:12). This broad definition of literacy requires individuals to possess knowledge and skills that will aid them in being efficient in language and numeracy.

Basic Literacy is one of the literacies required to examine Film Study. The skill/art of film analysis requires a thorough understanding of the language of filmmaking before analysis is attempted. This entails proficiency in using technical terms used in film, such as zooming in, wide-angle shot or panning camera movement. Thus knowledge and skills acquired in Basic Literacy are crucial.

1.2.4 Visual Literacy

Senses (touch, sight, hearing, taste and smell) are responsible for transporting information to the nerves, which in turn transfer these messages to the brain, where the meanings of the information received are interpreted (Potenza, 1993:10, The Exploratory, 2000). What a human eye is physiologically able to see is known as vision (Rose, 2001:6). Ranby (1993:5) notes that the eye provides the brain with visual data interpreted by the brain. Visual Literacy is the proficiency to comprehend, decipher, use and appreciate the meaning and elements of visual messages, essentially due to the sense of sight (EnGauge, 2001a&b; International Visual Literacy Association, 2002; Jonassen, 1996:492; Lightbody, 2004; Pinkel, 1998). A visually literate person is able to create images and or think analytically about an image. This is accomplished whilst understanding essential elements of visual design, techniques and the making and understanding of symbolic messages (EnGauge, 2001b; International Visual...
Film Study, however, embodies more than just Visual Literacy; it also involves the sense of hearing. Visual Literacy thus builds on the notion of Basic Literacy as it provides one with knowledge relating to visual elements. These elements include techniques, body language of the characters, movement of the camera or characters and interpreting symbols or codes. Such knowledge enables one to understand the visual message that the selected mode of media is sending. Educational media is used by the teacher or is presented to the learner so that specific educational outcomes can be achieved. For the purpose of this study, that medium is the feature film. The emphasis of Visual Literacy is thus on the aspect of analysing a visual presentation. Visual Literacy will aid teachers, as it will provide them and their learners with knowledge and skills, which can be used when attempting to understand a film. Visual Literacy includes film as a form of media therefore to understand a film in its totality; Media Literacy should also be considered when studying film.

1.2.5 Media Literacy

The Department of Education encourages teachers to incorporate literacy in the teaching of languages; one form of literacy that can be used is Media Literacy (Department of Education, 2003:9).

A medium carries an encoded message as stimulus to the receiver, or creates meaning of unprocessed information. Media embraces many forms such as drawings, films, television, printing, writing, radio and photography, thus media takes up many forms (Hart, 1991:4 & 5). Messages can be encoded in verbal or iconic messages or a combination of both. Text is mostly verbal while the moving image media (television, video, film) is mostly iconic with strong verbal coding in dialogue (Van der Merwe, 2006). The teaching of media entails studying familiar media, such as a film (Hart, 1991:8), which is one of the forms of media that the
Gauteng Department of Education encourages teachers to use (Department of Education, 2003:13 & 46). Media education aims at developing an analytical language to describe, classify and explore visual elements. Through this learners can “express themselves through the widest range of media possible” (Davison & Dowson, 1998:166). For the purpose of this study, film is the selected choice of media.

Knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired via Media Literacy education empower learners to think critically about a film. (Alliance for a Media Literate America, n.d.; Buckingham, 2003; Davison & Dowson, 1998:175; Freed, 2003; Hobbs, 1998; Lamb, 2005; Van Rooyen & Van der Merwe, 1998:243; Yates, 2004). Learners should be taught the knowledge and skills to select, decipher, access, analyse, evaluate and comprehend the film’s message and in some instances to produce their own films (Alliance for a Media Literate America, n.d.; Anon, 2005; Buckingham, 2003; De Benedittis, 2003; Freed, 2003; Hobbs, 1998; Lamb, 2005; Megee, 1997). Media Literacy allows one to apply literacy skills to media and technology messages in the teaching practice (Alliance for a Media Literate America, n.d.). Teachers’ knowledge about other forms of media, such as photography, will be valuable in the teaching of Film Study. Teachers refer to “reading” the message of any form of media (Garcia-Cardona, 2002:88). It must be understood that teaching Film Study requires technical understanding and analytical skills this will aid in finding and reading the film’s message (Davison & Dowson, 1998:175). In this study the researcher takes the stance that teachers should have a sound technical understanding of Film Study, camera angles and camera movement. However, understanding alone is not enough. Teachers should be able to demonstrate this knowledge practically by analysing the film and identifying the camera angles used in the film with the learners.

Media Literacy is a useful and relevant skill, as it provides knowledge and skills that enable people to access and appreciate media (Megee, 1997). Teaching Media Literacy can be an asset to learners, provided that their teachers are
skilled and confident in this area (Hart, 1991:8; Van Rooyen & Van der Merwe, 1998:239). Accordingly, Media Literacy skills contribute to teachers conveying sufficient Film Study skills to their learners.

1.3 FILM STUDY AS A COMPONENT OF LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Media Literacy has many components, as the term media is very broad and covers a spectrum of media forms (Davison & Dowson, 1998:175). These components include the study of advertisements, radio programmes, television programmes, amongst others (Department of Education, 2003:44). Film Study is one of these components. When the sound medium and graphic medium are combined they produce a compound medium known as an audio visual text. (Durant & Fabb, 1992:54). For the purpose of this study the feature film will be selected.

1.3.1 Film development

The history of film extends slightly more than one century, but has shown much development in this time (Fourie, 1997:1). The American film industry grew and developed into a multi-million-dollar business within the first decade of the 20th century and has been very successful ever since (Mast, Cohen & Braudy, 1992:579). In South Africa international films have been enjoyed for years. In the past, the South African film industry produced films that provided comical entertainment as well as serious subject matter, but rarely achieved international success. However, over the last few years South Africa has come to the foreground in the filmmaking industry. In 2006 the South African film, Tsotsi, won an Academy Award for Best Foreign Film.

As the film industry has developed over the years, so has the concept of Film Theory (Mast, et al. 1992:79). This expansion is mainly due to increased growth
within the film establishments, growth in educational interest and a progression in the concern for theoretical problems of signification (Mast, et al. 1992:79). The educational focus on film has lead to an increase in the teaching of Film Study. The South African Department of Education requires Film Study to be implemented in the language classroom (Department of Education, 2003:28, 29 & 44). This will enable South Africans to comply with global standards of education (Department of Education, 2003:9; Freed, 2003).

The pace of change and advancements and the expanding value of information in the world require people to stay informed, thus creating a necessity for continual development in visual literacy skills (Dean, 1991:1). In order for schools to provide their learners with knowledge and skills that they will use in the future, teachers need to keep developing their knowledge, hence a demand for Professional Development arises (Dean, 1991:1, Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Guskey, 2003:16). This mini-dissertation focuses on the possible use of technology in the professional development of teachers Film Study skills and knowledge.

1.3.2 Film Study

Film is one of the literary texts that the Department of Education requires teachers to implement (Department of Education, 2003:28, 29 & 44).

Film Study entails analysing films by using similar criteria to what is used when analysing written material. However, in Film Study there is a greater emphasis on the analysis of the content material on the one hand and the production of film on the other (Lutrin & Pincus, 2002:97). The process of film analysis entails examining basic visual elements, such film techniques, how the film is put together (editing), how the lighting contributed to the film, different shots used, sound, camera movement, and so forth. It could be argued that the analysis of other texts, such as books, also involves looking at the process of writing, in this case. This could be true as some teachers choose to discuss the process with
their learners. However, according to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), the Assessment Standards (AS) pertaining to books for example, do not require the learner to discuss the process of the writing of the book (Department of Education, 2003:26 & 27). Teachers are thus encouraged to instruct Film Study but some teachers will require development in this area. Professional teacher development will be discussed in more detail in chapters to follow.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.4.1 Background to the problem

Effective education is required to maintain relevance in a changing society (Pretorius, 1999:vi). In order to face the challenge of preparing learners to be part of the global community, the South African Department of Education has structured a well-rounded Home Language Learning Area (Department of Education, 2003:9). South Africa’s education system includes literacy in this Language Curriculum\(^1\) (Department of Education, 2003:13), and Film Study is a form of literacy study.

During informal conversations with students during her studies in Education and later as practicing teacher, the researcher detected that some teachers were not confident in teaching Film Study. In a recent conversation conducted with a High School teacher, this concern was confirmed (C. Bisotto, 2006). Barnsley (n.d.a) also substantiates that some teachers have insecurities in relation to teaching Film Study. The researcher found this interesting as her High School teachers made the teaching of Film Study appear uncomplicated, resulting in her thoroughly enjoying the topic. However, conversation with teachers in this regard, suggests that this is not always the case and that some teachers see a need for

\(^1\)In this mini-dissertation the Learning Area, Languages, Literacy and Communication (LLC), is referred to, as its recently adjusted term, Languages.
development in this area (C. Bisotto, 2006). The development of these teachers should eliminate these insecurities (Dean, 1991:1 & 3; Guskey, 2003:16).

The information gleamed from these conversations inspired this research. As the researcher has concluded that there is a need to develop the Film Study skills and knowledge of teachers, the question of ‘how’ to develop these skills in teachers emanates. There are many ways of developing teachers’ skills and knowledge, but when it comes to Film Study, these resources are limited and often dated, which poses a concern (C. Bisotto, personal communication, April 19, 2006).

1.4.2 The possibility of using technology in teacher development

Modern technology may provide the solution to teacher development as it can add an extra dimension to teaching (Juhas, 2003). As educational technology has moved into a time of change (Pretorius, 1999:vi), video programmes have become a valuable resource in teaching as they can be used for all domains of instruction: cognitive skills, motor skills and interpersonal skills (Heinich; Molenda; Russell & Smaldino, 1999:185). Video tapes are currently being replaced by Digital Versatile/Video Disks (DVDs) and so DVDs have become a modern resource (Monaco, 2000:534).

The researcher is putting forward the use of the additional features, in particular the director’s commentary, that are available on certain DVDs, as an additional resource to teachers that could develop the teacher’s understanding of Film Study. This study will debate whether or not the additional information on DVDs does enhance teachers’ knowledge and potential for effective teaching of Film Study.
To reach an answer to this debate firstly begs answers to the following questions:

- What are the theoretical perspectives on teacher development, the Curriculum and the teaching of Film Study?
- What are the possibilities of new technologies aiding teaching practice and in particular the role of Film Study in language teaching?
- What are the opinions of the respondents in the study regarding the use of additional material on DVDs, in the teaching of Film Study?

1.5 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this enquiry is to determine teachers’ perspectives on the utilisation of additional material on DVD, to enhance the teaching of Film Study.

In order to achieve this aim the following objectives will be to:

- conduct a thorough literature review to uncover the theoretical viewpoints that inform professional development and the teaching of Film Study
- explore from documented literature the possibilities of new technologies as a form of teacher resource with particular focus on additional features on DVDs
- explore by means of the empirical component of this enquiry, how English teachers perceive the use of additional material on DVDs in enhancing their teaching of Film Study

1.6 THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To obtain an answer to how teachers experience the use of the additional material on DVDs as a resource to enhance the teaching of Film Study, a generic qualitative case study was selected, as research design type. The unit of analysis is nine English High School teachers from two different schools. The forms of
Field research data collection are open-ended questionnaires and two focus group interviews. This data will be assessed by means of open coding to establish generic categories and themes. Literature resources pertaining to these themes will be explored.

1.7 RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Chapter 1 states the background of the problem and the researchers' interest in the problem. An exposition is given of the need for this research, as well as the aims of this research. Literacy is examined as this forms the foundation that is essential to introduce the learner to Film Study.

Chapter 2 encompasses Professional Development. This chapter explores the definition and characteristics of Professional Development and the South African Education Department's views on Professional Development. The demand for Professional Development will be discussed and will be linked to the researcher's suggested resource to provide professional development for Film Study teachers.

Teaching methodologies constitutes Chapter 3 and explains various concepts pertaining to the teaching of Film Study. Considering the fact that Film Study is part of the Curriculum, teachers should be adequately trained in Film Study. This examination will lead to the possibility of DVD as a development resource for the Film Study teacher. The characteristics and special features included on a DVD will be explicated for the reader. The special feature of the director's commentary is the focus of this study.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology used as well as the findings. These findings reflect the respondents’ opinions and experiences with the regard to Film Study. Their thoughts on the use of the director’s commentary feature as a development resource for the Film Study teacher will be noted.
Chapter 5 provides the reader with findings of the Field research. These findings will become information that will be used in generating recommendations.

Chapter 6 presents the summary, recommendations and conclusion of this study.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This study recognises the far-reaching consequences of teaching film in a modern society. In order to encourage teachers to teach Film Study with confidence, development in Film Study is required. Means of development within Film Study is often limited or dated. Therefore a suitable means to develop Film Study knowledge and skills is thus pertinent.

Making learners literate members of society is important and literacy thus forms a strong foundation for Film Study. Basic Literacy, Visual Literacy and Media Literacy are relevant and necessary in the teaching of Film Study and thus teachers need to acquire this knowledge and skills.

The main aim of this enquiry is to determine if, and in what way, the additional material on DVDs will enhance and develop teachers’ Film Study knowledge and contribute to the teaching of Film Study. Therefore this study will conduct a literature review and an investigation to determine if using the DVD as a resource could lead to the Professional Development of the teacher.

A generic qualitative Case Study is the research design of this study and comprises of respondents from two High Schools responses to an open-ended questionnaire and a focus group interview that will place at each school to gather the teachers’ opinions on the commentary. It is thus this data that will be analysed and the findings used to draw conclusions on the research question.
For teachers to teach Film Study and surrounding literacies effectively, they require suitable Professional Development. A means to provide teachers with professional development in Film Study will accordingly be debated in this study.
CHAPTER TWO

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEACHER

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Professional Development was not prominent in earlier education systems, but recently it has become significant (Guskey, 2003:3, 16, Salpeter & Bray, 2003:34). Professional Development adds to the teacher’s knowledge by building on knowledge that the teacher already has (Johnson, Scholtz, Hodges & Botha, 2003). The current South African Education system necessitates schools to become more accountable for their learners’ knowledge and have accordingly introduced incentives for excellence to schools to promote this (Dean, 1991:1; Department of Education, 2005). Increased competitiveness between schools has additionally led to the Professional Development of the teacher.

Professional Development is one of the demands made by the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), which will be discussed in paragraph 2.4.1 (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003:3; Gauteng DTT, 2003:slide 5). A need for fundamental knowledge development exists as schools aim to be technologically relevant to society (Pretorius, 1999:vi). Professional Development of staff that includes the expansion of teachers’ professional knowledge and the development of new skills are essential (Guskey, 2003:3). As society and education keep changing, new information surrounding the teaching and learning process are needed (Dean, 1991:1; Guskey, 2003:3 & 16; Pretorius, 1999:vi). To accommodate developments and changes in approaches to education, new expertise is required by teachers in their respective grades or phases that will ensure success in the teaching practice (Dean, 1991:1 & 3; Guskey, 2003:16).
This study approaches professional teacher development in relation to Film Study. As the film industry develops, as mentioned in paragraph 1.3.1, teachers need to acquire knowledge and skills that embraces these changes.

2.2 DEFINING PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Professionals are people in an occupation, which requires them to have high levels of knowledge, skills, dedication and reliability (Houston, 1990:7). Professional teachers have been equipped to use their training effectively in the classroom, after specialised and prolonged preparation (Houston, 1990:7). This usually consists of four years tertiary training that includes practical sessions at schools, thus qualifying teachers to be deemed “professional”. *The Oxford Dictionary* states one meaning for development as “growth” (Fowler & Fowler, 1951:328); in this case, growth in knowledge. Professional Development is therefore the teachers’ growth in professional knowledge and skills (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1993:2). In this mini-dissertation the focus is on the development in effective teaching of Film Study.

2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development focuses on the continuous growth of the teacher in order for learners to get the best possible education. Professional Development has many characteristics and the following have been selected for discussion.

2.3.1 Professional teacher development is a continual process

Professional Development as an ongoing process that is guided by clear objectives and ultimately encourages effective teaching, resulting in better learning opportunities for learners. Professional Development contributes to the
talented and enthused teacher’s existing knowledge base and skills (Dean, 1991:5; Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Guskey. 2003:17; Houston, 1990:5). Professional Development, also known as teacher education, emphasises training in teaching skills, methods and procedures (Houston, 1990:17). The Integrated Quality Management System occurs annually and will result in identifying some of these areas for development. Every year development opportunities will be identified resulting in development being continuous.

2.3.2 Professional development shapes a teacher

Professional Development equips teachers with learning that directs them to possibly altering their ways of teaching, thus being suitably equipped to meet the learning and academic demands of their learners (Dean, 1991:5; Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Guskey, 2003:16; Salpeter & Bray, 2003:34). Equipping teachers with skills and knowledge is necessary as education systems change, thus requiring focused development. When the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) was introduced in 2002, South African teachers attended RNCS training. The aim of this training was to elaborate teachers’ knowledge and align it with the demands of the RNCS, resulting in a form of professional development. In order to be knowledgeable about current film techniques, Film Study teachers sought after innovative film knowledge and skills, thus requiring their professional development in this field of learning. Professional Development hence contributes to enhancing augmentation in teachers’ knowledge and skills.

2.3.3 Professional Development and professionalisation

Self-growth is another aspect of Professional Development and is important as it will ultimately improve career performance and impact teaching of content. Self-growth alludes to teachers gaining confidence as skills and knowledge are expanded, also increasing job satisfaction (Woods & Weasmer, 2004). As
mentioned in the paragraph 1.4.1, development should assist in eliminating any uncertainty that some teachers have in relation to teaching Film Study. Therefore, a development opportunity will increase a teacher’s self-assurance (Barnsley, n.d.a; Dean, 1991:1 & 3; Guskey, 2003:16).

For teachers’ development to serve a purpose, they should continuously enhance their knowledge and thus be prepared in their subject of expertise (Guskey, 2003:3; Poftak, 2003). This will enable teachers to be of greater benefit to their learners as they will be more knowledgeable in their field (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1993:2). American research claims that “the single most important factor in improving education is good teaching” (Poftak, 2003). Professional Development is important as a means of delivering “good teaching” due to the attaining of new skills and knowledge. The quality of Film Study teaching should accordingly improve as a result of Professional Development of the teacher in this field.

Professional Development is then important for a Film Study teacher as it is characterised by life-long learning that modifies teachers’ knowledge and skill, resulting in self-growth. Together all these elements will ultimately result in high quality education. A high standard of education is one of the South African Department of Education’s aims and for this reason a necessity for Professional Development was created in the South African education system.

2.4 PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Professional Development is vital for teachers as “Education is a dynamic and professional field” (Guskey, 2003:16; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1993:37). In order for teachers to remain dynamic they need to keep developing in order to avoid stagnation. Visible improvements in education are seldom evident in the absence of Professional Development (Guskey, 2003:4). In South Africa, Professional Development has increased since 1994 (Ravhudzulo, 2003), due to the reasons previously mentioned. Quality control, resulting in a professional accountability
system, is a requirement for all professionals as it promotes growth (Houston, 1990:195 & 268). This involves constant movement and innovation that implies personal professional development of the teacher.

2.4.1 The Integrated Quality Management System

The Department of Education has developed an Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) that evaluates a teacher’s performance with the goal of ensuring quality public education (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003:3; Gauteng DTT, 2003:slide 5). This evaluation is aimed at identifying areas where teachers could be developed (Gauteng DTT, 2003:slide 14). Performance standard 2 of the IQMS evaluation form particularly requires teachers to “possess appropriate content knowledge which is demonstrated in the creation of meaningful learning experience” (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003:12). Teachers, including those teaching Film Study, have to be knowledgeable concerning the Learning Areas/Fields they teach.

Teacher education pedagogy focuses on training in specific teaching skills and knowledge via feedback from certain domains for example, focused observations (Houston, 1990:17). In this case it would be the IQMS evaluation documentation. If the IQMS evaluation identifies areas for development, it is up to the School Management and the Department of Education to grant opportunities for such development. This study suggests the use of the director’s commentary feature as an opportunity for development in Film Study.

2.4.2 Professional Development and changes in Education Systems

Education systems change or develop and expect teachers to adjust their knowledge, where needed, to comply with the new system’s demands (Pretorius, 1999:xi). This happened in South Africa in 1996, when Outcomes Based Education was introduced (Pretorius, 1999:v). Professional Development
sanctions teachers to reflect on their job performance and this leads to new or alternative skills being developed that can contribute in improving learners’ knowledge (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1993:1 & 7). Teachers identify areas in education where they can acquire new skills in their pursuit of life-long learning. This in turn can contribute to learners’ demands being met. Due to the advances in the field of Film, it is crucial for Film Study teachers to keep learning and expanding their knowledge and skills. The teaching of Film Study was recommended to commence from Grade 8, but since the restructuring of the Curriculum, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) makes mention of it as early as Grade 4. Teachers, who previously did not teach Film Study, now need to develop this knowledge and skills and relay it to their learners. For teachers to keep on developing their Film Study knowledge and skills a means for their Professional Development should be provided.

### 2.5 PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

The knowledge base of a teacher is very important as teachers impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to their learners that should assist them in the future (Dean, 1991:1; Houston, 1990:389). A way to enhance and empower teachers’ learning is by providing them with more relevant learning opportunities that would lead to developing new skills and building their knowledge base, for example analysing skills. (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1993:1 & 2). Conversely, these means are limited when it comes to the development of Film Study teachers (Bisotto, 2006). Some forms of Film Study development will now be considered.

#### 2.5.1 Training via workshops

Hargreaves and Fullan (1993:23) state that training is the most successful way to convey skills and knowledge. The question that arises is how to provide teachers, who have been identified by IQMS as requiring training, with this tuition.
Traditionally workshops on various topics, in different Subject Areas/Learning Areas, have been very useful and favoured. Workshops equip teachers to understand theoretical knowledge but limit teachers’ opportunities to relay this knowledge competently into the classroom practices (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003), as time allowing teachers to demonstrate their knowledge practically is often not given. When conducting workshops on a topic like Film Study, this is a disadvantage, as application of technology, is a requirement and this necessity is seldom met by workshops (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Plotnick, 1995:2). For the enhanced learning of Film Study, teachers require, amongst other things, training in simple video production techniques (Yildiz, 2004). Bisotto (2006) states that some educators are insecure and want to be able to demonstrate their ability to apply film techniques to the workshop presenter. Workshops do not cater for such activities.

Workshops further demand time that teachers do not always have to offer. In addition, some teachers do not want to attend workshops as they have attended Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) training over the last few years. This training was very time consuming and some even feel they had inadequate facilitators (P. A. Arentsen, 2005). Additionally in relation to time, another disadvantage is that workshops are not frequently offered and teachers urgently requiring knowledge will have to wait for a workshop to be presented. By the time this is done, teachers might have already covered Film Study with their learners. One can conclude that due to time constraints and not meeting teachers’ needs, workshops might not always be the preferred option when developing Film Study knowledge and skills.

2.5.2 Text-based training

Another option is traditional print formats such as guidelines, textbooks or manuals, which cover this topic by explaining film techniques or camera shots for example lighting or camera angles (Lutrin & Pincus, 2002:97). Some teachers
favour this format, however, these resources can be difficult to get hold of and quickly become dated (C. Bisotto, 2006). These old resources may not be compatible to the learners' interests. The publishing process of guides is also time-consuming and by the time that these guides are printed, the film could be considered dated (Scholl, 2001).

One can argue that there are films such as director Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom* (the prescribed film for Grade 12) which was released in 1992 and is still being viewed. However, from Grade 4–11, teachers may choose the film their learners will be analysing, thus allowing for recent films to be selected. The researcher is of the opinion that newer films include more and different types of special effects not covered by dated study guides. This brings a new dimension to Film Study that older films usually do not offer. Recent advances in special effects can expand learners’ Film Study knowledge, for example studying the use of computer-generated images. As many guidelines are dated and do not include modern film techniques such as special effects, this form of developing a teacher’s Film Study knowledge and skills is limited. Teachers should expose their learners to an array of options and knowledge when it comes to Film Study. Therefore a means of teacher training should be explored that is firstly practical, secondly that can feature newer-released films, and thirdly that does not require so much time of the teacher’s.

After researching some of the methods used in professional development of teachers the possibility of using technology is explored. In the field of film distribution the newer method is DVDs. This mini-dissertation focuses on the use of DVDs as a support and training option for teachers of Film Study.
2.5.3 The DVD as a possible development resource

Whilst teachers are obtaining new skills and knowledge on a topic, it is vital that they consider all available information at their disposal, irrespective of the medium (Dean, 1991:1; Ingraham, 2005). Whether the use of the additional features, such as the director’s commentary or actors’ commentary, available on DVDs, is an innovative means of Film Study training, is deliberated in this study.

The DVD’s commentary highlights how the director(s) applied film techniques to the film and is arguably practical for Film Study (Dündar & Simpson, 2005; Tatsuki, 2000). Teachers will be able to merge their own knowledge with that acquired via the director’s commentary. Most special addition DVDs contain this feature, so teachers can use newly released films in their classrooms. The director’s commentary is not excessively time consuming as it is the same length as the film. Teachers can view the special features at their own time and in the comfort of their home, or even in the classroom with their learners. This type of DVD is freely assessable by the public as it can be rented from a video store and will thus increase the opportunity for new skills and knowledge for teachers (Anon, 2005).

DVDs have an easy-to-follow interactive menu selection. The DVD and its features are thus simple to use, eliminating extensive training in this regard (Tatsuki, 2000). Training teachers to use technology is significant and applicable to Film Study teachers (Dean, 1991:1; Hargreaves, 1994:3; Plotnick, 1995). Teachers enter training in the use of technology at a variety of levels of competence and experience (Johnson, et al. 2003). A teachers’ ability, or lack of, to use DVD technology, will not affect or complicate the use of the DVD. This menu option feature will eliminate this concern, as this feature offers step-by-step instructions. The director’s commentary and the DVD will be reviewed in more detail in paragraph 3.4.
In this mini-dissertation, the focus is on Film Study. The expansion of skills associated with Film Study and the related technology to implement this component of the NCS, is thus topical. For learners to understand and receive all the messages of a film, teachers have to prepare effectively (King, 2002:2). In order to do this, teachers require advanced professional development in the teaching of Film Study whilst using technology, in this case the DVD and methodologies of teaching Film Study (Lewis, 1999). Through this enquiry, the researcher aims to explore whether or not the director’s commentary feature is a step-by-step form of mentorship accordingly, developing educators’ Film Study knowledge and skills.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In the last decade the Professional Development, in particular the development of teachers’ has come to the fore. Professional Development includes the development of teachers by expanding knowledge and skills they may already possess. Therefore Professional Development is particularly relevant in the expansion of a Film Study teacher’s knowledge and skills.

The South Africa Education Department attaches value to Professional Development and has accordingly implemented an appraisal system. One of the aims for the South African appraisal system, (IQMS), is to develop the teacher in areas where development should take place.

There are methods such as workshops and guidelines, textbooks or manuals to mention a few, which can develop a teacher’s knowledge. However when it comes to development in Film Study, these options have their limitations. It is for this reason that the researcher is probing if director’s commentary feature on DVD will be a suitable means to develop educators’ Film Study knowledge and skills.
Professional Development is mandatory to improve education as learners deserve a proficient teacher. Thus, teachers should embrace the opportunity to be better equipped with educational resources. In Chapter 3, teaching methodologies relating to Film Study will be explored.
CHAPTER THREE
TEACHING METHODOLOGY IN FILM STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Film is a popular form of media and this is evident from the large number of people who go to cinemas (Fourie, 1988:19). Film is designed with the aim of portraying themes embracing a message that audiences can view, enjoy and often relate to. A film is thus able to have an impact on the audience’s emotions (Barnsley, n.d.a; Fourie, 1988:20; Mast, et al. 1992:10; Van Zyl, 1987:15). Ranby (1993:95) states that films are created to impart a message, which will result in a reaction in a person’s mind being united with what is being viewed (Johnson & Bone, 1978:2). This message is transferred via a strip of celluloid containing small pictures. This is then projected onto a screen in quick sequence and is known as a film (Johnson & Bone, 1978:2). The film’s message is relayed to the viewer through senses, such as sight and hearing (Johnson & Bone, 1978:2; Monaco, 1981:9; Van Nierop, 1998:31). As film sends a message it is also a form of communication.

Film as a form of communication “has an almost magical fascination, because the fictional world it creates offers people an escape, from their routinised world” (Fourie, 1988:19). Jonaik (2003:4) asserts that films possess the ability to influence the way society perceives a topic. As discussed in paragraph 1.3.1, society’s interest and fascination in film has lead to an increase in the teaching of Film Study. For this reason it would appear that teachers are taking Film Study more seriously (Ranby, 1993:94).

While some teachers enjoy teaching Film Study, others have concerns (Barnsley, n.d.a). Some concerns pertain to the amount of film theory definitions associated
with Film Study, while others are anxious about not being more competent than some learners (Barnsley, n.d.a & b; Buckingham, 2003). Many children today spend a great deal of their afternoons playing computer games, surfing the Internet or watching television. Before the advent of such technology, they may have chosen to participate in sport, read or just play. Because of this exposure to computers and television, learners have become more visually literate (Barnsley, n.d.a & b).

Teachers’ concerns can be eased by expanding their confidence and knowledge base and affording them more learning opportunities (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1993:1 & 2). The aim of this research is to determine what teachers’ perspectives are on the utilisation of additional material on DVDs to enhance the teaching of Film Study. In order to determine this, Film Theory, Film Study, the DVD, as well as the importance of the director’s commentary in the teaching of Film Study will be examined.

### 3.2 FILM THEORY AS POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR FILM STUDY

A film as such is nothing but a sequence of small pictures. Technology enables it to be viewed, and this is what brings a film into existence (Johnson & Bone, 1978:2; Stam, Burgoyne & Flitterman-Lewis, 1992:139). By the act of viewing, the audience encounters the film as a text, and so interpretation and meaning is given to the film (Stam, et al, 1992:139). Consequently, a film can be regarded as a “viewing subject as it is also a visible and viewed object” that reveals stories of thematic association, via images of objects and people (Mast, et al. 1992:10; Stam, et al. 1992:139; Williams, 1994:51). While a person views a film, it can be scrutinised, and this involves Film Theory as discussed in the following paragraph.
Film Theory is subdivided into analysis, criticism and understanding the technicalities of film (Fourie, 1997:97). Film analysis examines the task of the filmic form in conveying meaning in a film and complete film analysis acknowledges the range and diversity of the filmmakers’ achievements (Fourie, 1997:98; Mast, et al. 1992:53). The subdivision, criticism, entails developing criteria that is used to evaluate a film in relation to background knowledge of film (Fourie, 1997:98). Technical understanding entails a thorough examination of film terminology. Without this vital understanding a teacher will not be able to instruct Film Study in such a manner as to obtain the Departments’ prescribed requirements.

Film Theory includes academic and analytical activities which examine film as a marvel (Fourie, 1997:91). Film theory entails a thorough analysis of film as a means of art and communication and considers the abstract connection with the meaning, value and function of a film (Fourie, 1997:94 & 99; Williams, 1994:1 & 49). Film Theory provides a structural framework that enables one to understand and study film techniques, genres and so on (Wikipedia, 2006a).

Film Theory topics (analysing, criticism and technical understanding) are covered in Film Study lessons and in the learning outcome provided by the Education Department as noted in paragraph 3.3.3. Therefore, knowledge of Film Theory links to teaching Film Study. A thorough knowledge of Film Theory is required to implement Film Study in the classroom and to contribute to the teaching of film.

3.3 FILM STUDY

Film Study is a rapidly expanding topic and is large enough to constitute a subject on its own. However, currently Film Study forms part of the Home Language component of the Learning Area, Languages (Department of Education, 2003:28, 29 & 44; Kawin, 1992:9, Sawyer, Watson & Adams,
Learning Outcome 2 encompasses reading and viewing. This outcome states “The learner is able to read and view for understanding and to evaluate critically and respond to a wide range of texts” (Department of Education, 2003:13), thus including visual texts. The South African Department of Education believes that the language curriculum will prepare South African learners for challenges that they will be confronted with as members of the global community (Department of Education, 2003:9). This belief makes language teachers more accountable for what they teach and in so doing requires teachers to be well informed regarding their Learning Area’s content, including Film Study.

### 3.3.1 Defining Film Study

Film Study can be defined as film analysis that examines what message is being conveyed and how and why it is revealed, so that the viewer may have an improved understanding of the film as well as the director’s vision of the film (Barnsley, n.d.a; Fourie, 1997:98; Kawin, 1992:9; Van Nierop, 1998:1). This would mean that learners would have to interpret the meaning of a film and understand why this meaning is important. They do this by analysing the choices, which are often the director’s choices, made in the production of a particular film. This film analysis grants a person the opportunity to note why certain artistic or technical decisions such as location choice, camera movement, lighting and so on, were made (Kawin, 1992:9; Phillips, 1999:3).

There is a difference between studying film and Film Study: Film Study is a component of the Languages, Learning Area and Subject Area/Field in the South African Curriculum, and includes the analysis of film. Studying film includes the history of film, the making of film and is vastly extended in comparison to Film Study. Studying film further entails in-depth analyses and studies of film and is usually done at tertiary level (Robinson, 2006). Film Study also encompasses the study of signs, known as semiotics. Semiotics includes the study of language and signs. As Film Study considers the signifying systems, such as images, and aims
to interpret the meaning in film, it forms part of semiotics (Chavanu, 2003; Mast, et al. 1992:168; Stam, et al. 1992:1; Yildiz, 2004). For the purpose of this study, the study of semiotics will not be pursued. This definition of Film Study aligns with the requirements made by the Department of Education that requires learners to be able to view for understanding and to evaluate critically and respond to the text (Department of Education, 2003:28).

3.3.2 Film provides a message

Film sends a message and it is ultimately this message that teachers will decode with their learners via Film Study skills (Fourie, 1988:26). Fourie (1988:22) notes that “the inherent and structural characteristics of the feature film make it an eminently suitable medium for education and influencing the public”. This places pressure on the teacher to equip learners with the adequate needed knowledge and skills in order to study Film Study successfully.

At this juncture, it is necessary to note that there are different types of films, for example, feature films, short films and documentaries. The type of film links to the reason why the film was produced. Teachers should take cognisance of this when selecting a film and thus should select a film that will allow them to meet the Department of Education’s stipulations pertaining to Film Study. These stipulations are discussed in the following section.

3.3.3 Film Study and Department stipulations

As mentioned in paragraph 3.3, Learning Outcome (LO) 2 states “The learner is able to read and view for understanding and to evaluate critically and respond to a wide range of texts” (Department of Education, 2003:13 & 28). By means of Film Study the teacher should empower the learner to do so. The NCS then continues to state what Film Study skills, stemming from the NCS and Basic,
Media and Visual Literacies should be taught to the learners in the different grades.

For example, according to Assessment Standards (AS) 2.2, Grade 10 learners should:

"explain the use of visual, audio and audio-visual techniques such as the use of colour, subtitles, composition, dialogue, music, sound, lighting, editing, framing, styles of shot, camera techniques, camera movement, foregrounding and back grounding" (Department of Education, 2003:30).

By Grade 12 this same Assessment Standard requires these learners to now "evaluate the impact of visual" as stated above (Department of Education, 2003:31). There are five different Assessment Standards that apply to Film Study listed in the NCS (Department of Education, 2003:30 & 31). These other Assessment Standards include the learner identifying various aspects, for example dramatic structure, analysing dialogue, evaluating plot and so on, subsequently incorporating media literacy (Department of Education, 2003: 30 & 31).

The knowledge and skills acquired in Basic Literacy, Media Literacy and Visual Literacy, are outlined in the National Curriculum Statement. These skills are strengthened in the teaching of Film Study and are therefore necessary for the learners to obtain the National Curriculum Statement’s Learning Outcomes.

The Department of Education states that “well-developed reading and viewing skills are central to successful learning across the curriculum, as well as for full participation in society and the world of work” (Department of Education, 2003:13). Consequently, the successful teaching of Film Study and the different literacies that affect Film Study are important. Teachers need to have appropriate
training in Film Study and the literacies it encompasses, so that they can relate such Film Study skills and knowledge to their learners.

3.3.4 Film Study and teachers

Teachers are responsible for the enlightenment of their learners’ film knowledge, therefore it is obvious that teachers themselves require Film Study knowledge and skills (Davison & Dowson, 1998:175; King, 2002:511). It is ultimately this information that will result in their learners decoding a film’s message correctly (King, 2002:511). This is a great responsibility and teachers should endeavour to obtain relevant knowledge and skills to teach Film Study effectively. While the researcher was conducting this study, she was confronted with colleagues who did not recognise a necessity or realise that it was important to be well informed about innovation and current in developments of the film industry. Enhanced knowledge of the film industry may lead to extending the learners’ Film Study knowledge, therefore additional teacher development in Film Study is essential. There are valid reasons why it is important for teachers to possess sufficient knowledge and skills regarding Film Study. Some of these reasons will now be explored.

3.3.4.1 Empowerment through knowledge

Teachers will be empowered to understand the message of the film if they comprehend the film techniques used by the film maker (Ranby, 1993:95). A technical understanding, as mentioned in paragraph 3.1, is also validated. Most learners and teachers are familiar with basic Film Study terminology, but usually only at an introductory level (Barnsley, n.d.b; Buckingham, 2003; Yildiz, 2004). This terminology includes shots, angles, editing techniques and sometimes, sounds and lighting (Barnsley, n.d.b). A discussion on the usage of angles will lead to learners’ understanding of how filming a particular scene contributes to
manipulating the viewer. For example, if the camera angle is lower than the actor, the impression of power is created, so the viewer subconsciously views that actor as a power figure.

Sawyer, et al. (1989:64) argues that teaching Film Study at High School level, particularly Grade 12 requires teachers to have sufficient knowledge on the topic of Film. It is the researcher's opinion that this is firstly due to the increased visual stimulus that learners receive in their daily lives and secondly due to new developments, for example in special effects. Additional technological appropriate means to build on teachers’ existing Film Study knowledge and skills are required as teachers have to meet the diverse demands of their learners and provide them with a deeper level of Film Study understanding.

3.3.4.2 Learner diversity

There are two kinds of learners when it comes to Film Study, those who have had exposure to visual stimuli, including television and film and those who have not (Fourie, 1997:98). This is particularly relevant in the South African context where learners come from diverse backgrounds and may not have had the same exposure to film than learners in urban areas. According to the 2001 census (Statistics South Africa, 2001), 50% of South African households have a television. From this it can be concluded that some learners will be exposed to films, as seen on television or in cinemas, and others will not. Some schools in South Africa, especially in rural areas, often do not have basic facilities, such as electricity. The equipment essential to conduct a Film Study lesson may not be on the priority list of schools without books or computers. Not only are there learners who are not aquatinted with film but there are also culturally diverse learners. This study does not investigate cultural diversity which would have an influence on the way Film Study is taught.
Most government suburban neighbourhood schools classes consist of learners who are frequently exposed to visual stimulus and those who are less exposed. It is the teacher’s duty to accommodate both types of learners and to provide them with information that will enhance their understanding of Film Study.

This can be a daunting task as teachers have to consider the needs of learners who have not received adequate visual stimuli and those who have. While some might require extra attention, others would benefit from further stimulation. For teachers to succeed in their task they would need a thorough understanding of Film Study.

When selecting a film it is important that the teacher selects an age-appropriate film that will aid in reaching the Learning Outcome (Dittmar, 1997). Film selection allows the teacher to accommodate the diverse learners’ needs and interest (Paragraph 4.3.2, discusses the selection of DVD to be viewed). One way of selecting an appropriate film is by considering the film’s genre.

A genre is the pattern or style the director adopts when encoding a film so that it is viewed a certain way (Fourie, 1997:55). The four basic genres are tragedy, comedy, irony and romance (Fourie, 1997:52). However, as society and technology have developed, so have films. Some recent genres include: westerns, gangster films, science fiction, thrillers, adventure films, and so on (Fourie, 1997:52). As teachers and learners have different preferences for film genres, the researcher selected Miss Congeniality for the empirical research. This film encompasses four genres, namely adventure, romance, thriller and comedy and may thus appeal to more viewers as than would a single-genre film (Lawrence, Sledge & Berman; 2000). Selecting a film that includes more than one genre is therefore advisable.

Because the needs of both groups of learners, those who have been exposed to visual stimulus and those who have not, should to be considered, Film Study
requires special methodology. This special methodology creates a need for Professional Development of teachers’ in Film Study (Ranby, 1993:95).

3.3.4.3 **Critical film analysis**

Teachers should teach their learners to be film critics. It is the duty of a Film Study teacher to equip learners with adequate viewer skills. There are two types of viewers, the active viewer and the passive viewer. Such viewing skills would enable learners to recognise significant detail while watching a film, thus teaching them to be active viewers. Conversely, viewers who have not developed such skills are passive viewers (Phillips, 1999:2). This is important as active viewers are inclined to question a director’s choices, such as choice of lighting, or setting (Phillips, 1999:3). Another factor that contributes to increased understanding of a film is a learner’s ability to analyse a film (Van Nierop, 1998:1). Should a learner be able to do such an analysis, Assessment Standards such as “explain the use of visual” would be met, thus adhering to Departmental stipulations (Department of Education, 2003:28 & 30). Other skills, for example character analysis which is taught in Literature Study could be applied and reinforced in the teaching of Film Study. By teaching learners the skills to ‘read’ a film’s message, teachers enable their learners to be active viewers who critically watch films. It is therefore important that a means for teachers to update and expand such skills and knowledge should be created.

3.3.4.4 **Enjoyment factor related to Film Study**

Teachers who have adequate Films Study skills and knowledge will contribute to their learners’ enjoyment of the topic and the film (Phillips, 1999:2). Film Study is a contemporary literacy form that motivates learners by means of the enjoyment factor associated with it (Van Rooyen & Van der Merwe, 1998:239). Film Study adds the fun element to the English Language class while serious teaching and learning takes place (King, 2002:520). Research has found that with informed
guidance from a teacher, learners find Film Study increases their enjoyment of a film as they recognise the effort and creativity concerned with its production (Phillips, 1999:2). Teachers therefore have a responsibility to balance the fun aspect of film with teaching film knowledge.

3.3.4.5 Meeting the challenge to teach Film Study

Teachers who are proficient in Film Study will be able to expand learners’ thinking. A well-informed and skilled Film Study teacher is essential to reach teaching outcomes associated with Film Study (Van Rooyen & Van der Merwe, 1998:243). They should be able to demonstrate their knowledge practically by applying it to a film (Refer paragraph 2.5). Thus, a prerequisite for professional development in the field of Film Study exists.

Literature confirms that teachers have recognised that technology can supply them with new knowledge pertaining to their Learning Areas (Borrell, 2005; Dipinto & Thurber, n.d.; Juhas, 2003). This mini-dissertation considers the director’s commentary feature on a DVD as an instrument for development. In order to determine if a DVD can be used as a means of information, it is essential to understand what a DVD entails.

3.4 THE DIGITAL VERSATILE/VIDEO DISK

Digital resources have the potential to improve education. Teachers can develop learners’ sphere of literacy in the form of Film Study through a digital resource such as a DVD (D’Ambrise, 1997; Ittleson, 2002; Taylor, 2005). As the DVD was introduced in 1995, it can be viewed as an extension of basic resources in education at the time, for example the VHS tape (Besalel, 2003; Monaco, 2000:534). According to Monaco (2000:534) the introduction of the DVD was one of the most successful launches of a consumer digital product. The DVD is
consequently rapidly replacing the conventional VHS tape, as a medium for storing a feature film (Dündar & Simpson, 2005; King, 2002:509 & 515). Technology changes rapidly, and VHS tapes will soon be obsolete. It is recommended that teachers start using DVDs in their classrooms instead of standard VHS tapes. An explanation of a DVD and its features follows in order to determine if the DVD can be viewed as an educational resource.

3.4.1 Technical aspects of a DVD

A DVD is a Compact Disk (CD), which holds 8.5 gigabytes of data and Blu-ray discs can hold substantially more (Wikipedia, 2006c). It can contain over two hours of high-quality, cinema-like, digital video (MSN Encarta, 2005; Taylor, 2005). A DVD has multiple applications including music videos, educational lectures and motion pictures (D’Ambrise, 1997; Taylor, 2005). Thus, the DVD and its special features, mentioned in paragraph 3.4.2, are a suitable visual resource that can be used in a Film Study lesson. King (2002:511) states that “DVD feature films provide a wide array of pedagogical options and represent a rich resource of intrinsically motivating materials for learners”.

A DVD contains many practical features that contribute to the DVD being more advanced than the VHS tape, such as durability, compactness, audio-visual quality, availability and special features (Chun, 1996, Dündar & Simpson, 2005; King, J. 2002:509; MSN Encarta, 2005). It is thus the additional resources on DVD that make it superior and more useful to teachers than VHS tapes.

3.4.2 A DVD’s special features

A DVD’s special features can include different scenarios such as interviews with cast members, directors or the producer, deleted scenes, director’s commentary, critic’s analysis and in some cases, special scholarly commentary (Beach, n.d., King, 2002:515; Tatsuki, 2000, Taylor, 2005). The scholarly commentary
however, is seldom available. At this point it is relevant to note that not all DVDs have the same features, thus the teacher should be cautious in selecting a DVD (Tatsuki, 2000). These special features serve as a reference resource for teachers who use DVDs in a lesson (Borrell, 2005, King, 2002:515).

### 3.4.2.1 An interactive menu

An on-screen interactive menu is a feature that grants the viewer the opportunity to view the different features on the DVD. This navigational option allows viewers to choose if they want to view the movie, individual scenes or view special features (Lawrence, et al., 2000; Taylor, 2005; Tatsuki, 2000). The images on a DVD can be controlled, a frame can be frozen or scenes can be individually selected and viewed and VHS does not cater for this (Chun, 1996; Dündar, & Simpson, 2005; Robinson, & Mackay, 2003). As noted in paragraph 2.5.3, this interactive menu is easy to operate and is also very useful for teachers as they can skip to scenes they wish to view, without the inconvenience of having to fast-forward through the movie (Tatsuki, 2000). It is evident that the interactive menu function has advantages for teaching.

### 3.4.2.2 Subtitles and closed caption

Another feature found on the menu is a subtitle function and/or the closed caption function (Nice, 2006). Subtitles are written text that appears at the bottom of the screen, translating the actor’s speech into any specified language (Nice, 2006). The closed caption feature identifies all sounds, different speakers, music and lyrics, which enables hearing impaired learners to enjoy the film and make meaning of the additional effects in their own way. (King, 2002:516; Nice, 2006). This aids inclusive education as it grants hearing impaired learners or English Additional Language learners, the opportunity to follow the spoken audio via

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2 While viewing the scene, the sound effect will appear in writing in brackets on screen, coordinated with the corresponding action, e.g. in words (door slamming in the background).
3.4.2.3 The director’s commentary feature

The above features are some of the options found on the DVD. This study however explores the significance of the director’s commentary feature, as a means to develop teachers’ Film Study knowledge and skills. This feature will therefore be examined in greater detail.

The director’s commentary is an audio commentary that is synchronised with the film (Tatsuki, 2000; Wikipedia, 2006b). This commentary allows the director to unpack the film for the viewers, explaining why certain shots, techniques, and so on, were used. This feature puts forward comments by one or more speakers, who talk about the movie as it advances (Wikipedia, 2006b). The commentary often depends on the type of film and can provide the viewer with a wealth of information, including data regarding the production process that most viewers will not be aware of (Beach, n.d.; Wikipedia, 2006b). Jurak (2006) a director, observes that some director’s commentary features may not be of much use as certain directors would talk about their feelings about the film and do not engage in helpful film study material. Therefore, teachers should select only such DVDs containing useful Film Study knowledge. An interesting customer review done by Amazon.com (2004), shows that out of the ten people surveyed, only one found the director’s commentary feature not to be useful (refer to paragraph 3.5). It is thus plausible that the director’s commentary feature can serve as a reference resource for teachers.

This upgraded film medium offers many more features than VHS. Previously more expensive than VHS, DVD prices are now on a par with VHS films. Technology provides possibilities for broader learning and teaching opportunities, therefore DVDs should also aid learning (Juhas, 2003). These features can
contribute to the teaching of Film Study as the DVD can be seen as a supplement or form of assistance for teachers, as mentioned in paragraph 2.5.3. A DVD and viewing of its special features could be an option to develop teachers’ Film Study skills and knowledge.

3.5 THE ROLE OF A DIRECTOR IN FILM PRODUCTION

3.5.1 A director creates the meaning of the film

The director’s goal is to create a film that gets a message across to the viewer (Fourie, 1997:55). A film is a result of choices, for example casting the correct actors or selecting the correct film location. These choices are interrelated and are made by a collaboration of people, managed by a director (Fourie, 1997:120 & 129). A producer of a film, often the person funding the film, hands over full authority of film production to the director (Bare, 1971:213; Kawin, 1992:364). It is the director’s task to ensure that the end product meets the original vision of the film, which is also usually the director’s vision (Fourie, 1997:129; Van Nierop, 1998:159). In order to do this, certain choices have to be made. The director is responsible to ensure that every decision made, even by other members of the team, who includes the scriptwriter, cinematographer, assistant-directors, actors and so on, will be beneficial to the end product of the film (Bare, 1971:1; Van Nierop, 1998:159; Van Zyl, 1987:20). Ohanian and Phillips (1996:18) maintain that “not only do directors have an overall picture in their minds of what is being produced, but they also know which methods to use to achieve their creation”. The director is thus involved in all stages of film production and has the final say when evaluating the product (FilmMakers.com, 2004). The director is therefore the leader in the making of the film (FilmMakers.com, 2004). All the decisions pertaining to a film are made with the director’s approval and the director has the expertise to mould the film in a certain direction. Directors, through the additional
features on DVDs, will be able to supply teachers with useful knowledge and skills relating to a film, as they are part of, and responsible for, all choices made.

3.5.2 The diverse roles of the director

The director creates the film in such a way that the audience see what the director wants them to see (Fourie, 1997:129; Van Nierop, 1998:160; Van Zyl, 1987:20 & 27). Directors are able to do this as they have been trained in certain techniques such as writing, acting and editing of the film (Fourie, 1988:23; Van Nierop, 1998:160). It has been debated whether or not directors should be trained. Some researchers are of the opinion that directors instinctively know what to do, however, most directors undergo specialised training which gives them a sound theoretical basis that includes Film Theory (Fourie, 1997:90; Princeton Review, n.d.). Film directors who do not have formal training have often proved their competency in stage productions and are seen to have professional experience (Princeton Review, n.d.).

A director’s responsibilities are diverse and encompass all aspects regarding making of the film. Some directors (e.g. Charlie Chaplin) are often co-writers or co-funders, or might even appear in the film as an actor. Therefore, they must have training in acting, writing, photography, editing, knowledge of make-up and costume design and all other elements influencing the creation of a film (Bare, 1971:14; Kawin, 1992:363). For the reader to comprehend the importance of the director, three areas of a director’s expertise are selected for more detailed examination.

3.5.2.1 Acting expertise

Together with the casting director and script writer, directors select a cast that they feel will best get the film’s message across to the viewers (FilmMakers.com,
2004; Kawin, 1992:363; Van Nierop, 1998:159). Directors are then obliged to inform the actors what is expected from each scene and would advise actors how to interpret and act a scene (Bare, 1971:213; Kawin, 1992:364). Directors must coax the best possible performance out of the actor in order to obtain the director's vision for the film (Van Nierop, 1998:160). Mel Gibson produced and directed *The Passion of Christ*, but was able to offer the actors assistance as he is also an accomplished actor. Directors with acting experience are best equipped to give guidance on acting.

### 3.5.2.2 Writing expertise

Film scripts can be created by directors and derive from novels, short stories, stage production or original ideas, which have to be transformed into films (Kawin, 1992:13). A current example of this is the *Da Vinci Code*, first published as a book and then produced as a film. A scriptwriter is selected by the director for this task (Bare, 1971:213). On completion of writing the script, each paragraph of the script is analysed and visualised by the director and then a filming schedule is created. After that, it is determined what techniques and acting movements to use (Filmmakers.com, 2004; Kawin, 1992:365; Ohanian & Phillips, 1996:9; Olson, 1993:45). As directors make informed decisions regarding the script, they would also have excellent writing skills.

### 3.5.2.3 Expertise in photography

Photography, in this context, encompasses camera and editing techniques (Fourie, 1988:23). Camera movement and angles contribute to the meaning in a film, it is thus important that the director makes correct camera choices (Van Nierop, 1998:33).

New technologies, such as digital filming and editing, can make a directors work easier, but the director requires in-depth knowledge on utilising such technology.
Editing leads to the final construction of the product. George Lucas is a director who has a strong background in editing. This knowledge will allow the director to control how the film message is portrayed and what the viewer sees (Fourie, 1988:23; Van Nierop, 1998:160; Van Zyl, 1987:27).

For the above reasons, a director’s comments might aid the teacher as these comments are delivered by a trained or experienced expert in the film process. As the director was the person directing each scene, he/she knows in exact detail why the scenes were produced in a specific order and reflected in the final product.

3.5.3 A director as manager of the filmmaking process

Directors have the knowledge to place images in the correct sequence resulting in a story unfolding and characters being developed whilst keeping the viewers’ attention (Ranby, 1993:95). This process is well planned in the production of a film. The production of a film can be divided into three stages namely, pre-production, shooting and post-production (Monaco, 2000:128).

During the preproduction stage the director decides on a scriptwriter, the style of the film, the location of the film, who the actors will be, a filming schedule and so on (Kawin, 1992:363, Van Zyl, 1987:27). The shooting of the film entails decisions including final costumes, make-up choices and camera position (Johnson & Bone, 1978:117; Kawin, 1992:363). Post-production involves editing, adding sound and music and assembling the film (Filmmakers.com, 2004; Johnson & Bone, 1978:117; Princeton Review, n.d.; Van Nierop, 1998:21). The director is therefore the creator of a film. The director must make correct, informed decisions and consequently the vision of the film must be kept in mind while making such decisions (Ohanian & Phillips, 1996:18). Each component of the final product must be organised and assessed by the director (Johnson &
Bone, 1978:117). As directors form an intrinsic part of all three stages, directors will be best suited to explain why certain decisions regarding the film were made. Ohanian and Phillips (1996:18) state that directors not only have an overall picture in their minds of what is being produced, but they also know which methods to use to achieve their creation.

To meet the Department of Education’s requirements, the director’s commentary feature is a viable option for teachers to use when acquiring additional Film Study knowledge.

3.5.4 The director’s commentary and Film Study

As mentioned in paragraph 3.3.3, the Department of Education requires a Grade 10 learner to be able to:

“explain the use of visual, audio and audio-visual techniques such as the use of colour, subtitles, composition, dialogue, music, sound, lighting, editing, framing, styles of shot, camera techniques, camera movement, foregrounding and back grounding” (Department of Education, 2003:30).

As the director’s responsibilities encompasses the above aspects, the director’s commentary should be able to shed some light on these aspects, subsequently proving valuable in developing teachers’ Film Study knowledge. A mentor is someone who guides an individual’s development, and the director can therefore be perceived as someone who is mentoring the teachers on the topic of Film Study, via the director’s commentary feature (Reh, 2006).
3.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FILM STUDY TEACHER

The increased awareness of visual literacy has placed an added responsibility on the Film Study teacher to teach skills required by modern society. It is the Film Study teacher’s responsibility to ensure that learners are presented with accurate and up-to-date Film Study knowledge. The director’s commentary provides comments made by the director on the reasoning behind the film. For this reason this mini-dissertation gathers teachers’ perspectives on the utilisation of the director’s commentary feature as a means of developing teacher’s Film Study knowledge and skills. In addition to the teacher’s Film Study knowledge base, there are other contributing factors to consider when aspiring to teaching Film Study comprehensively. Film Study can be taught in different ways and this will now be examined.

3.6.1 Teaching Film Study

If teachers were asked what the best way to teach Film Study is, they would most likely say it is a personal choice, as confirmed in paragraph 5.4. Content taught in Film Study, teaching methods, different teaching strategies and a basic model to teach literature will be examined and a model of teaching Film Study that encompasses these topics will be presented.

3.6.1.1 Content taught in Film Study

The NCS does supply guidelines outlining what should be taught in Film Study. However, literature provides teachers with an approach to teaching Film Study that should help to ensure all aspects mentioned by the NCS, such as the use of sound, lighting, editing, framing, camera techniques, camera movement and back grounding, are addressed in Film Study (Department of Education, 2003:30).
This approach is called the *mise-en-scene* approach. Barnsley (n.d.b) states that *mise-en-scene* includes studying foreground, background, camera shots and their effects, lines, characters, lighting, moment of film, camera focus and colours used. Consequently, it can be concluded that the *mise-en-scene* approach will include all aspects required by the NCS.

### 3.6.1.2 **Teaching methods**

Teaching methods can include the following:

- The teacher-centered approach whereby the teacher mostly teaches while the learners listen.
- The interactive approach includes the learners’ participation usually by means of the following activities: discussions, peer teaching that entails the learners teaching each other, and group work that involves a group of learners working together on the assessment activity or question/answer sessions.
- The individualised approach caters for the different needs of the learners, for example addressing some of the needs of learners with learning barriers.
- The experiential approach implies that one learns by doing for example role play. Learners first perceive information, then they reflect on how it impacts their lives and this is followed by learner’s applying what they have learnt to a context, for example viewing a film (Conner, 2005; Mahaye, 1998:209; Rodgers, n.d.).

Teaching Film Study should be a balance between learners acquiring information and then applying their newly acquired knowledge (Rodgers, n.d). Rodgers supports the researcher’s belief that the best way to teach Film Study is by incorporating different methods in order to meet the diverse needs of the learners.
The above teaching methods can be applied to teaching Film Study in the following ways.

- The teacher-centered approach allows Film Study teachers to explain film terminology to their learners.
- The interactive approach allows for Film Study discussions to take place.
- The individualised approach can be used in the teaching of Film Study as the subtitle function can be used that allows hearing impaired students to follow the spoken audio via readable text.
- The experiential approach highlights to learners how Film Study can impact their visually charged lives. Teaching methods can be incorporated into different teaching strategies used in a lesson.

3.6.1.3 Different teaching strategies

King (2002:512) suggests two ways to teaching Film Study.

- The short-sequence strategy uses the structure of the film as a starting point and the film is taught scene-by scene (King, 2002:512). This way of teaching allows the teacher to provide learners with pieces information that aids in learners comprehending the film. This approach should help save time as teachers can select clips on the DVD that follow the main storyline, whilst highlighting the usage of film techniques (King, 2002:513).
- The whole-film strategy entails showing and studying the whole film in its entirety, therefore the learners can follow the entire storyline (King, 2002:513).

3.6.1.4 Literature teaching methodology applications in Film Study

Cooper (1993:473 & 475) states there are certain elements and follow up procedures that should be addressed in the teaching of literature. Firstly, an introduction to the story is mandatory (Cooper, 1993:473 & 475). This
introduction will inform learners of what they are going to learn and includes the background information of a book, thus placing the book in a context. The introduction often exploits what learners already know and uses this as a starting point. An interactive discussion that is lead by the teacher is a suggested activity to facilitate the introduction (Cooper, 1993:475).

The introduction should be followed by what Cooper calls teacher modeling (1993:473 & 475). Teacher modeling constitutes empowering the learners by showing them how to use and think about strategies, for example the teacher might discuss the relevance of an illustration. This leads to teachers and learners discussing their thoughts on the reasons for the picture. The learners’ ability to voice their opinions enables them to start interpreting the text (Cooper, 1993:473). Learners can model what they have been taught, while receiving guidance from the teacher. This is known as student modeling and guided practice (Cooper, 1993:473). The learners now apply what they have learnt for themselves while receiving input and guidance from the teacher. Summarising and reflecting results in the learners reflecting on what they know, while condensing what they have learnt (Cooper, 1993:474). Learners should be made aware of where and how they will be able to use what they learnt (Cooper, 1993:474).

Follow-up strategies can be applied later in the year; this is a means of reinforcing what was learnt. These strategies include reading similar forms of text and applying obtained skills to the new text (Cooper, 1993:475). The elements and follow-up procedures are flexible but should result in learners being able to apply what they have learnt to texts.

Although film is a different medium of literacy, elements that are applied to literature studies and follow-up procedures can be applied to Film Study. When teaching Film Study, content, teaching methods, strategies and teaching methodology that apply to teaching literature can to be considered.
3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter recognises the value of Film Study as stated in the National Curriculum Statement and therefore it is crucial for a Film Study teacher to have adequate Film Study knowledge and skills. Film is a form of communication and it is the teacher’s duty to provide learners with skills and knowledge to understand this form of communication. Hence teachers’ Film Study knowledge and skills needs to be expanded. Findings reveal that sufficient Film Study training will empower teachers to understand the message of the film by analysing different aspects.

A way to develop teacher’s Film Study knowledge and skills exists and thus the director’s commentary is presented as a Film Study development resource. The director’s commentary is an audio-commentary that runs in conjunction with the film. In this commentary the director explains to the viewers why certain decisions regarding the making of the film were made. As a director’s expertise covers many matters including, acting, writing and photography, a director could clarify Film Study topics for a teacher.

The methodology of Film Study teaching can influence the learner’s comprehension of Film Study. Hence various teaching methods, different teaching strategies, ways of applying literature teaching methodology to the teaching of Film Study and Film Study content knowledge, need to be considered.

As noted in the definition of Film Study, the aim is to understand the director’s intentions with a film and so this chapter highlights that a directors input will be useful to a Film Study teacher. For this reason, the director’s commentary feature is investigated as a form of resource for Film Study.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 SELECTION OF A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher should determine the best way to conduct the particular research. This is essential as there are various types of research inquiries and research categories, including research methodologies, data-collection types, data analysis and more (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:48). An error in judgement on the researcher’s side will affect the study’s findings. The research choices of this study were therefore carefully considered.

4.2 CHOOSING A SUITABLE RESEARCH TYPE

A generic qualitative case study is the research design of this study (Borg & Gall, 1989:402). According to Biklen (1992:62), a case study is a thorough assessment of a setting, or a matter (the research question) while observing whether or not the research question will work in practice. The nine respondents will be teachers of English (Grades 8-12), teaching Film Study at two high schools in the East Rand area, in Gauteng. The Home Language Learning Area was selected for this study as opposed to other languages, as English teaching is an interest of the researcher. An answer to how teachers experience the use of the additional material on DVDs as a resource to enhance the teaching of Film Study will be derived from a content analysis of questionnaires and focus group interviews.
4.2.1 Reasoning for selecting the research paradigm

A qualitative research inquiry forms the basis for this study. Qualitative research gathers different forms of data such as verbal, visual and more, in the form of field notes, transcriptions and other written accounts (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Qualitative research was preferred for two reasons. Firstly, it best suits the research as answers in the form of open-ended questionnaire and focus group interviews that have been transcribed are included in this study (McMillian & Schumacher, 2001:29). This together with literature resources will provide the researcher with necessary information to ground this research on. Within the qualitative mode of inquiry, the interactive inquiry, namely a case study, was decided on (McMillian & Schumacher, 2001:29).

4.2.1.1 A case study

A case study is descriptive research that can be an individual theory and focuses on individual development whilst evolving understanding (Biklen, 1992:50; Farmer & Rojewski, 2001:135; Goddard & Melville, 2001:9; Henning, et al. 2004:41).

Researchers usually enter the field research with literature knowledge (De Vos, 2004:275). Case study researchers use multiple data-collection methods, including interviews and documents, that are rich in content and will engender an extensive understanding of what is being studied (Borg & Gall, 1989:402; De Vos, 2004:275). Case studies are probed from respondents’ viewpoints and must gain insight into the respondents’ thoughts on the topic (Borg & Gall, 1989:403; Henning, et al. 2004:41). Bounded aspects like time and setting enact a case study (De Vos, 2004:275 & 276; Henning, et al. 2004:40).

A case study is therefore a detailed assessment of a setting, a matter, literature, or a specific occurrence (Biklen, 1992:62), while determining whether or not the
research question will work in practice. A synthesis of data-collection methods aids the researcher in obtaining respondents thoughts on Film Study knowledge and skills being developed by additional information on DVDs.

4.3 THE UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The unit of analysis refers to in this case, people participating in the study, known as the researcher’s population group. (Goddard, & Melville, 2001:34; Marynak, 2003). Data to be used in this study is formed on the contributions made by the respondents (Farmer & Rojewski, 2001:103). These contributions will assist in determining if the director’s commentary feature on a DVD can develop teachers’ knowledge and skills in Film Study.

4.3.1 English Film Study teachers

English Film Study teachers were representing two High Schools on the East Rand, in Gauteng. These schools were selected based on availability, time, travel and convenience. Ideally it would be of greater benefit to this study if one of these schools was in a rural area. As it was too time consuming and difficult to find a rural school in the researcher’s geographical surroundings that offers English as home language, this was not a practical option.

It is important to note that the research had to be conducted at government schools as respondents must be familiar with the demands of the National Curriculum Statement which forms a platform for the Film Study discussions. Respondents will additionally be questioned on training that the Department of Education has offered with regard to Film Study. If the respondents do not work in government schools, they will not be able to address these matters.
Within a school, the principal was requested to preferably select one teacher per grade to join in this study. The word ‘preferably’ was used as not all schools have one English teacher per grade, some teachers teach more than one grade. In some schools selected teachers teach Film Study, thus teaching Film Study to a few grades as opposed to just one. Nine respondents were used in this study.

The principals were requested to select these teachers, as they know their staff’s schedules in relation to extra-mural activities, as opposed to the researcher. The sample size, of a minimum of three respondents per school, is big enough for the researcher to conduct a focus group interview, however more respondents are permitted (Lewis, 1995). The respondents will remain anonymous and will have to sign a consent form allowing the researcher to use their responses, this as required by the University of Johannesburg’s ethics requirements. Two focus group interviews, one per school, will be held to increase the possibility of valid results (Lewis, 1995).

4.3.2 Selection of DVD to be viewed

The DVD that teachers are provided with is another factor that can contribute to the success of this study. The researcher elected to use the feature film *Miss Congeniality* on DVD. This decision was based on the following reasons.

The researcher requested, via e-mail, schools to submit a list of films currently viewed in Film Study and the grade level at which these films are studied. *Miss Congeniality* was one of the films mentioned (Jordaan, 2005). The researcher therefore ascertained that the film is viewed by certain schools at High School level in Film Study lessons. This film is however not viewed at the two High Schools where the field research was conducted, thus aiding this research. The respondents can provide this research with impartial answers as they have not taught *Miss Congeniality* and therefore are not influenced by prior perceptions resulting from the teaching of this film. The researcher selected this DVD as it
would provide a sense of authenticity to the research, resulting in teachers noting the seriousness of their responses.

Films viewed during class should convey a message to the learner. These messages often relate to social situations (King, 2002:512). *Miss Congeniality*’s messages include that beauty is skin deep as the main character transforms from a ugly duckling into a beauty pageant contestant. Another relevant message is that good conquers evil (Lawrence, et al. 2000). As High School learners can associate with these themes, the researcher was of the opinion that this DVD would communicate a germane message to the learners.

*Miss Congeniality* has an age restriction of thirteen years (Lawrence, et al. 2000). High School learners can thus view this film as it has appropriate content and they will be able to understand it (King, 2002:512). The researcher additionally considered the learners interest when selecting this film (Kellner, 1997; King, 2002:512). Due to the number of genres like adventure, romance, thriller and comedy (genre is discussed in paragraph 3.3.4.2), this film will appeal to more learners as opposed to a single-genre film.

The researcher deemed *Miss Congeniality* a feasible film to use to determine if the additional information on DVDs can enhance educators’ Film Study knowledge and skills. This is because *Miss Congeniality* is an entertaining film that conveys a social message, is age appropriate and is studied at High School level.

The researcher has viewed the *Miss Congeniality* director’s commentary feature and is of the opinion that this commentary will develop teacher’s Film Study knowledge. The director, Donald Petrie, supplies the viewer with various reasons for his choices regarding aspects of the production process. Some of the reasons pertain to the choice of scenes used and deleted. He explains the choices for the different locations and the setting up of the scenes. Petrie comments extensively
on the characters, which includes the reasoning for the selection of the actors. The director explains how different camera shots and lighting was used to emphasise certain elements, for example short lens. Dull close up shots were used to make the character Gracie Hart seem unattractive. Later in the film, once this character has undergone a transformation, longer lenses, full length shots and more colours are used to make her appear more beautiful then she is. Thus the director plays with the use of colour and camera angles to develop the character. It is additionally explained how make-up and the use of costumes contribute to the character development.

Petrie explains that it is important to supply the viewer with background information and how some scenes supply the viewer with information to be used in later scenes. For example, Gracie and Victor go to a restaurant and she plays with her wine glass. This is reflected in a later scene when she plays a melody on the wine glasses as her talent in the talent section of the pageant. He repeatedly draws the viewer’s attention to details like this that will aid the study of the film.

The director also comments on the writing of the script, the importance of the sound and music, equipment used and special effects. Miss Congeniality director’s commentary feature provides teachers with many reasons for the director’s choices and therefore the researcher selected this film.

4.3.3 The selection of respondents

It is imperative to select suitable respondents who provide the researcher with useful data (Henning, et al. 2004:71). The respondents in this research are teachers of English, who teach Film Study. This consequently qualifies them to be of use in this study.

The respondents and factors such as the film, Miss Congeniality, will contribute to this study, by providing relevant insight into the teachers’ opinions. This data
will be processed and used in determining whether the director’s commentary can enhance educators’ Film Study knowledge and skills.

4.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The research design entails the following methodology:

- Respondents will be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with a specific film (without any additional features) before the initial open-ended questionnaire.
- An open-ended questionnaire is to be completed by the respondents, before they encounter the film with the director’s commentary. This is to collect the baseline data on how they currently teach Film Study at High School level, and what problems (if any) they experience.
- After completing the open-ended questionnaire, a film on DVD, with director’s commentary, will be given to teachers to view at home. The director’s commentary provides information that is unique, and allows teachers to develop teaching methodologies that they had not previously used.
- Focus group interviews will be conducted after they have viewed the film. The teachers may give their candid opinions of how they experienced the added feature as well as on the potential of using these features in Film Study.

Data from the questionnaire and transcribed interviews will be analysed by means of open coding to identify themes and generic categories for description and triangulation. These categories will also be explored in the literature (Henning, et al. 2004:108).
The way in which the evidence will be obtained and data analysed can be seen as a reliable method, if it shows consistency or irregularities between the respondents’ replies. This will contribute to the validity of the research as the theoretical framework can be mirrored in the questionnaire and interviews, and internal methodological consistency will be adhered to. The intervention will be done in such a way that no leading or guiding of the respondents will occur, thus complying with ethics requirements made by the University of Johannesburg.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

A case study can integrate a variety of qualitative data-collection methods (Biklen, 1992:50; Borg & Gall, 1989:402; Henning, et al. 2004:42) and this study uses two.

4.5.1 An open-ended questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire is a qualitative data-collection method that will be used to obtain a background of the respondents (Henning, et al. 2004:35). This questionnaire will furthermore lead to respondents getting acquainted with the topic (Goddard & Melville, 2001:47). Open-ended questionnaires sanction respondents to reply to questions by presenting their personal opinions, as opposed to questionnaires where respondents merely select the most applicable answer out of a list of provided responses.

An open-ended questionnaire is of value to this research as the respondents’ individual views will be obtained before they view the DVD. This type of questioning allows for the questionnaire to start off broad and for questions to narrow down, providing the researcher with specific information in the respondents own words (Biklen, 1992:51; Borg & Gall, 1989:424). An open-ended questionnaire will consequently be able to supply the researcher with the respondents own feelings and responses relating to Film Study. The researcher
selected this form of questioning as it was concluded that an open-ended questionnaire would be the best form of questioning to establish baseline data on how teachers' perceive Film Study. This data will be coded in the same way as the focus group interviews.

4.5.2 A focus group interview

Experiences of Film Study teachers will be derived from a content analysis of questionnaire and focus group interviews.

Literature suggests that it is necessary to plan interviews based on previous findings (Borg & Gall, 1989:444). In this mini-dissertation, findings were made in literature were consulted in planning the focus group interview.

A focus group interview is one of the data-collection methods used in a case study (Henning, et al. 2004:49). A focus group interview aims to explore concerns relating to a topic by obtaining information from respondents (Barnett, n.d.). This interview provides the opportunity for more than one person to be interviewed at the same time, under the supervision of the interviewer in a relaxed environment (Advertopia.com, n.d.; Lewis, 1995). This form of interview authorises the researcher to meet with all the respondents from one school at the same time. The sample of educators per school will be sufficient to conduct this type of interview, as each school will be expected to have a minimum of three respondents represented (Lewis, 1995).

A focus group interview is favoured for this study above conducting interviews on an individual basis. This will conserve time as all the respondents, per school, are interviewed at the same time. Because of the time constraints of this research, this choice deemed advantageous. As teachers are interviewed together in a relaxed setting, they tend to inspire each other and at times enter into debate.
This enables interesting and useful information to come to the fore’ (Advertopia.com, n.d.; Lewis, 1995).

An interview should have a plan as it is a valuable data-collection tool (Borg & Gall, 1989:444; Goddard & Melville, 2001:49). A semi-structured interview assists the researcher to ensure that the respondents do not dwindle off the topic, but that the interview remains cynosured, for this reason delivering informative and functional findings.

The effective way of conducting an interview should provide noteworthy information. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that a focus group interview will be the best method suited for this study, resulting in the research question being answered by data being collected.

4.5.3 Data processing

Information from the questionnaires and the focus group interviews will be analysed and coded by the researcher (Henning, et al. 2004:106). In this research open coding will be used. Open coding commissions the researcher to read all data to obtain a comprehensive picture of the data, codes are then decided on according to what that data means to the researcher (Henning, et al. 2004:104 & 105).

Once the researcher has generated codes, these codes are grouped into themes. The researcher will determine what themes or categories are relevant to this study and so that they can be processed and ultimately used as findings (Henning, et al. 2004:104 & 105).

As a novice researcher, this seemed to be the most suited and beneficial way of coding the data gathered. This will be of paramount benefit in determining
whether the perspectives of teachers regarding the use of additional material on DVDs to enhance the teaching of Film Study.

4.6 CONCLUSION

Qualitative case study was a suitable choice for this study as this research design will provide the researcher with necessary information as foundation for this research.

The population group/respondents were English Film Study teachers, represented by two East Rand High Schools. Such teachers were selected as they teach English and are thus deemed to be familiar with Film Study. Two focus group interviews were conducted to gather information.

The film Miss Congeniality is feasible to use in determining whether the additional information on DVDs can enhance teacher’s Film Study knowledge and skills.

The research design enabled candid opinions on the potential use of the director’s commentary feature on DVDs. Open-ended coding is the selected method of data analysis and will show consistency or irregularities between the respondents’ replies. This will contribute to the validity of the research.

The researcher is convinced that the selected research design is the design that will be of the greatest benefit to acquiring an answer to the research question. Now that the research process was explained the findings of the research can be reviewed in relation to whether or not the additional information on DVDs can develop educators’ knowledge of Film Study.
CHAPTER FIVE

FIELD RESEARCH: DATA DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The reason for using a generic qualitative case study in the research design was explored in Chapter 4. This case study allowed the researcher to assess the research question to determine (based on teachers’ perspectives), if the director’s commentary feature can serve as a development resource for Film Study. Two data-collection methods were used: in the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix D) background information was gathered on the teachers and their views on Film Study before they viewed the director’s commentary feature found on the DVD. In the focus group interviews (Appendix E & F) data was gathered after viewing, allowing teachers to express their opinions on this feature and on other Film Study topics.

This chapter describes the results for this study and was synthesised by analysing the results reflected in Appendices A and B and ordering the codes into themes and sub-themes. Coding for the open-ended questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A. The coding for the focus group interviews can be found in Appendix B. The following themes and sub-themes were identified:

Theme 1
- Background information on the respondents

Sub-themes
- Teaching experience of the respondents
- Film Study training of respondents
Theme 2
- The respondents views of Film Study

Sub-themes
- The importance of Film Study
- Film Study knowledge of the teachers
- Film Study skills, values and knowledge relating to the learners
- Professional Development opportunities and resources
- A need for development of Film Study resources

Theme 3
- The teaching of Film Study

Theme 4
- Responses on the director's commentary feature

Sub-themes
- Teachers' perceptions on the focus of the director's commentary
- The respondents' views on the use of the feature as a development resource

5.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE RESPONDENTS

The unit of analysis for this study was nine High School Film Study teachers who work at two different Schools on the East Rand, in the Gauteng province. Results reflected in Appendix A, indicate that four of the nine respondents are heads of departments. They were selected for specific reasons, including their knowledge base pertaining to the language teaching. Their input should to be very valuable and insightful.

5.2.1 Teaching experience of respondents

Of the nine respondents, four have been teaching between one to five years, one has taught between six to ten years and two have taught between eleven and
fifteen years while two have taught for over twenty years. This composition of teachers indicates that the teachers involved in this study represent different years of teaching experience. The researcher is of the opinion that this balance between significantly experienced, experienced and novice teachers will add an interesting dimension to the findings as different groups might have received different forms Film Study training (Appendix A).

The nine respondents teach Film Study to different grades. Four respondents teach Grade 8 and 9, three teach Grade 10, five teach Grade 11 and four teach Grade 12. Thus, each grade was represented by more than one participant. It must be noted that most teachers teach more than one grade (Appendix A). Both High Schools have a large English department. At the one school only three teachers could participate in this study as they are the specialists in Film Study and consequently teach the whole schools’ Film Study component. They do teach other aspects of English but their forte is regarded to be Film Study.

5.2.2 Film Study training of respondents

Three respondents received Film Study training at university; one attended a course and the remaining five all proclaim to be self-taught, usually via reading material about Film Study (Appendix A).

The different positions held at the schools, the levels of experience, the variation in different grades taught and the different training the respondents received should contribute to useful data that will be indicated later.
5.3 THE RESPONDENTS’ VIEW OF FILM STUDY

5.3.1 The importance of Film Study

In the questionnaire respondents were asked if they recognised a necessity for Film Studies to be included in the Revised National Curriculum Statement. Appendix A reveals that eight of the nine respondents regard Film Study to be very important; six of them denote to the fact that we live in a “visually charged age” and thus learners need to be exposed to and understand visual messages. As Film Study is a form of visual literacy education, it does play an essential role in forming literate learners.

One respondent did not see “the true value of ‘watching a movie’ in terms of education” and stated that the curriculum should rather focus on teaching spelling and writing. The remaining eight respondents’ had opposing views. They felt that film forms “an integral part of our lives” and that Film Study is “important as it opens up the world of film to the learners” as it “teaches appreciation for literacy”. In addition to being a form of literacy that learners can relate to, some affirm that Film Study makes the learner become “aware of how film can manipulate their emotions and responses”. Film Study will encourage the learners to be “educated about film as a powerful medium for propaganda etc.”. Film Study additionally teaches learners how to “decode visual images”, while allowing them to realise what constitutes the film making process. Some maintain that Film Study adds “some fun to English”, while others mention that “film viewing is replacing reading as a hobby” (Appendix A).

In the focus group interviews it was asked if the respondents thought Film Study is important in today’s society. As learners are regularly exposed to visuals and

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3 This research was conducted during a time of change in terminology; RNCS has been renamed the NCS.
“understand visuals probably better than words”, teachers viewed Film Study to be important. They believed that “there’s a lot of propaganda” and that learners are obliged to “assimilate” Film Study in everyday life. Film Study teaches the difference between “what is good film and what is bad film”, thus enabling learners to realise that not “all film is acceptable”. Film Study reaches “many children that have learning problems” and thus Film Study is under-recognised and is not “utilised to its full potential” (Appendix B).

Teachers felt discontented that some learners “haven’t had the base given by Film Study”. This alluded to the fact that learners required this basic knowledge. Film Study “boosts learners enthusiasm” and has them “bouncing off the ceilings” resulting in learners being excited regarding literature when studying the book about a film. One “can use film to draw a parallel between book and film”, as films based on similar themes as set work readers, can be viewed thus aiding the learners’ “comprehension of the book” (Appendix B).

Respondents felt positive about the inclusion of Film Study in the RNCS and regards this discipline as relevant to today’s society.

5.3.2 Teachers’ Film Study knowledge

Questions (Appendix A) about respondents’ confidence in teaching Film Study reveal that they enjoy teaching Film Study as they are “confident”, “feel well-equipped” and prepared as they have Film Study knowledge. Others “feel adequate to teach Junior High Film Study and Grade 10, not really confident to teach Grade 11 and 12”. The respondents think Film Study teachers should have confidence and sound subject knowledge.

This was confirmed by the focus group interview. For a Film Study teacher to be confident, “preparation is the starting point”. A “Grade 8 teacher would have as much knowledge” as a Grade 12 Film Study teacher in order to steer their
learners in the right directions. None the less, Film Study teachers do recognise a need for Film Study knowledge and skills development and state that they “need support in” obtaining this knowledge and skills (Appendix B).

5.3.3 Film Study skills, values and knowledge relating to the learners

Group data (Appendix B) reveals that the respondents classify learners into two groups. The one group is excessively exposed to visual stimulus and "sit in front of the TV for ages" while the other group of children “wouldn’t be exposed to frequent advertising watching and things like that". Accordingly the teaching of Film Study is altered to suit the learners’ needs, for example a child that receives vast visual stimulus will require more in-depth Film Study teaching as opposed to a child, for example from a disadvantaged area, who may only learn “basics like what is a film” by means of a book donated by companies.

It is maintained that by “reading your different classes” and knowing what group to reinforce work with or what group to supply extension work to, one can overcome the obstacle of having these two types of learners in one class. It is additionally suggested that a strong foundation in Grade 8 will eliminate this concern as “by the time they get to Grade 10, they do have that knowledge”.

The academic levels of learners should be expanded each year, as teachers are “actually building on” the previous year’s knowledge of Film Study. This requires teachers who instruct Grade 11 and 12 to be sure of the facts and have sufficient Film Study knowledge as one is “teaching it on a deeper level”.

Learners are required to “think laterally”, not to “mess around” and to be involved in the Film Study experience. This should result in learners being able to “understand what is being communicated through visuals”. Teachers will be able to aid learners in Film Study knowledge by making use of resources on the topic.
5.3.4 Professional development opportunities and resources

This section leads to interesting findings as teachers have opposing views on Film Study textbooks. Some teachers reflected in their questionnaires that there are not “too many” Film Study resources available, while others were aware of “numerous books” that include Film Study. Even though teachers do have their own resources on Film Study “only a few pages per textbook are dedicated to Film Study” as Film Study is “considered a small part of the curriculum”. These “concise” resources include text-books such as “English in Context”, “Macrat”, “Reel life”, “Matric Matters” and “Strictly Ballroom Study Guide”. Teachers however feel that available Film Study resources “need to be updated” as they are “fairly poor” and “need to be more comprehensive”. It is also noted that teachers feel Film Study resources should “explore” special effects “in more detail”. Others use the “Internet” or “featurettes” available on DVDs as a resource. Other respondents felt that there is not “much available” or were not aware of any Film Study guidelines and mentioned that they “had to create” their own guidelines (Appendix A).

Information from Appendix A additionally reveals that selecting the correct film is essential. The films teachers select to be viewed during Film Study is also a teaching resource. Although it is not a resource that will develop teacher’s Film Study knowledge, it is an obvious necessity in the Film Study lesson. The respondents comment that their “HODs chooses” their films and that these selections are often based on the learners’ age and “themes” depicting moral values that would appeal to the “interest level of the learners”. The film must encompass different “film techniques” and portray “good film work” thus constituting a good quality film. For example “Dead Poets Society”, “The Mighty”, “Remember the Titans”, “Aladdin” and so on. Grade 12 teachers “teach the prescribed film, Strictly Ballroom”. On occasion films that will “link to other material” studied later in the year are selected, for example viewing
“Gladiator” could supply a background and set the scene for the studying of the set work book, Julius Caesar.

Data collected during the interviews indicates that some textbooks such as “Reel Life”, “The Witness Study Guide”, “English in Context”, “Insight” and “English handbook and Study Guide” by Lutrin and Pincus are “solid”, “excellent for basic camera angles” and include sections which are “quite good”. Some teachers find resources not helpful “unless your resources are up to date” as learners cannot relate to the examples. Hence teachers make their “own things” and feel that “a little bit of a resource would not go amiss”. Teachers “have not seen any” resources from the Department of Education and are not aware of any information on special effects being available “in an actual book”, only on “featurettes” and the “Internet”. There are “some ‘stunning movies’ with wonderful themes” available and as Film Study is “not prescriptive” (besides Grade 12). These themes can be explored. Limited amounts of Film Study resources can be an advantage as resources can “encourage laziness on the teacher’s side and stagnation” (Appendix B).

From these findings the researcher concludes that there are Film Study resource available that can serve as a foundation for a teacher, however, they are dated, not very comprehensive and do not include explanations on modern film techniques, such as special effects.

5.3.5 A need for development of Film Study resources

When asked to mention the Film Study development opportunities offered by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), all respondents said they did not know of any. One stated that “we haven’t received anything regarding Film Study in the documents that we’ve received” and that “from the department we haven’t received anything for the FET this year”. Respondents are of the opinion that teachers “need to have support” or resources that will assist them
in the teaching of Film Study. Film Study teachers feel that they are “making educated guesses” and some form of guidance would be appreciated. A Film Study resource would be beneficial if it would lead to the development of a teacher’s Film Study skills and knowledge. Teachers mention that such a resource would be very beneficial for “disadvantaged schools” and that such a resource might take the form of a book be provided to teachers to give them some form of guidelines. It is therefore presumed that these disadvantaged schools have resources and equipment to conduct a Film Study lesson (Appendix B).

These findings reveal that most of the respondents acknowledge a need for a Film Study development resource.

5.4 THE TEACHING OF FILM STUDY

The teaching of Film Study “depends on one teacher to another” as the different teachers teach Film Study in various ways (Appendix B). In addition to the teacher, the teaching of Film Study also depends on the school. Although both schools in this study taught Film Study in a similar way, there were underlying differences. These differences are even apparent in the use of Film Study equipment; one of the schools still uses video machines while the other school uses DVD players and even has an audio-visual room that boasts a “big screen” (Appendix A).

In the questionnaire (Appendix A) it was disclosed that the respondents enjoy teaching Film Study but find faulty, “outdated equipment” and the “sharing of equipment frustrating”. It annoys teachers to “impress the importance” of Film Study to their learners “as learners view Film Study as fun”. Another frustration teachers have to contend with is teaching the same film “over and over” as it “gets tiresome and boring”, for example Strictly Ballroom, as this film has been
the Grade 12 prescribed film for a number of years. Other frustrations relate to limited time constraints and "boring" film terminology. The different schools teach Film Study as follows.

School X lays a strong Film Study foundation in Grade 8. Their Grade 8 learners are first introduced “to the genre of film” and basic film elements and techniques. It is important for their learners to have “background notes” and knowledge “to enable them to become literate and to know the terminology and language of film”. Teachers in this school supply their learners with these notes.

The film is then viewed. After this initial viewing, discussions occur whilst individual scenes are analysed This is for Grade 9 to 11. No discussions take place before the viewing of the film; they “first show the film”.

After viewing “general discussions” take place. In Grade 8 and 9 School X focuses on discussions surrounding film “terminology” for example long shot, whereas in Grade 11 learners “should know what a long shot is” and can start identifying these for themselves. As “the Grade 12 year has become so short”, their learners view Strictly Ballroom in Grade 11 and no Film Study takes place in Grade 12.

By selecting films with “relevant” themes, School X aims at getting their learners interested in Film Study by selecting films with themes that are “relevant to them and get them involved” (Appendix B).

Data synthesised from Appendix A states that, typically School Y starts Film Study by reinforcing film technique definitions such as “editing, sound, camera angles, lighting, shot, plot, character and special effects”. Data was also captured during the interview (Appendix B). School Y, encourages “incredible lateral thinking” and does not mind how Film Study is taught, as long as
teachers meet Film Study outcomes. These respondents teach their learners the “effect” of film techniques. This approach encourages learners to think imaginatively as they “teach the child that if they can back up the statement that they’re making, it is then acceptable”. Their views can thus differ from the teacher, as long as it can be substantiated. “They’re allowed to watch the film once”. “But because of shortage of time”, “scenes which best portray” character development and scenes relating to the essay topics are then viewed. School Y believes in teaching the basic “mise-en-scene” structure entailing “sound and editing”, to their Grade 8 learners. As the learners progress in Grades, so Film Study becomes “more complicated” and in Grade 12 “they can actually analyse the film themselves”. It is believed that Film Study is taught “very thoroughly” at this school as learners “are not allowed to talk” and “mess around” during lessons. Their learners are challenged to stay focused, as learners are required to make their “own notes” on Film Study. Film Study is also linked to teaching “cartoons and Visual Literacy” and other literature studies like set work readers.

During the interview (Appendix B), the question was raised of whether or not disadvantaged schools teach Film Study, “as some of these schools do not have electricity” which is essential to operate Film Study equipment. One teacher has “seen books that go out from companies that simply sponsor” them to disadvantaged schools. As previously mentioned, these books do not go into as much depth as School Y does when teaching film. “Basic background knowledge” such as what is movie is, constitutes their Film Study component. Thus, Film Study can be taught even without basic facilities like electricity (Appendix B).

Both schools follow their own methods of teaching Film Study. However a common factor of both is that viewing of the film and teaching of film techniques/elements must take place. These respondents acknowledge the importance of good film selection. Even though the respondents do experience
frustration associated with Film Study, most of them enjoy this component. For teachers to instruct for example, film techniques, a knowledge base in Film Study is a requisite. It is due to this and the fact that teachers recognise a need for Film Study development (Refer to paragraph 5.3.5) that the researcher has considered using the director’s commentary feature on DVDs, as a means of development.

5.5 RESPONSES ON THE DIRECTOR’S COMMENTARY FEATURE

5.5.1 Teachers perceptions on the focus of the director’s commentary

These findings are all generated from the focus group interviews (Appendix B). Four respondents did not recognise that the director’s commentary feature focused on anything worthwhile. One teacher would not use this feature as it is “subjective”.

An opposing view is that the director’s commentary “formalises things” for the teacher as the director draws the viewer’s attention to certain matters that one will now notice, “because you’re informed” of them. This is as the director puts forward “reasons” for why certain decisions were made, thus making “it a lot clearer”.

The director’s explanation of the choice in characters and “how he sees the character” is commented on. As “character development” is mentioned as an element that is focused on during Film Study, this could develop the teachers’ knowledge with regard to these choices such as the use of lighting in contributing to change the character’s appearance. It is furthermore found that the director supplied a lot of “background information”.

These findings also reveal that the director draws the viewers’ attention to the “use of colour”, “lighting”, “the mood”, “camera angles” and the “storyline”. It
is mentioned that the director’s commentary feature will aid teachers in evaluating that they have “actually assessed it correctly” themselves.

Some respondents feel that the director’s commentary feature is “going to form part of the future of Film Study”. The director’s commentary feature is “easy to get hold of” as it is “accessible”. It is also mentioned that one can get both “the film plus the resource on one disc”, “for one price”.

Teachers can take what they have “learnt from the director” and “apply that in the classroom”. Those opposed to it feel this feature will only benefit “very intelligent learners”.

Various respondents did not find the director’s commentary feature to focus on anything meaningful, while others found it very useful and advantageous and could mention film elements that were addressed by the director. It can therefore be deduced that as some teachers find the director’s commentary feature useful, others do not.

5.5.2 The respondents’ views on the use of the feature as a development resource

The director’s commentary feature on DVDs was presented to the respondents as a Film Study development resource (Appendix B). The director’s commentary feature was labelled as “very interesting” and as making “things a lot clearer” for teachers as the director “gives a lot” by supplying the viewer with “reasons” for choices made. Others enjoyed the notes made on the “actors and how he chose them”. Teachers regard the director as serious and “professional” as the director focuses on “the craft of directing”. Thus, the director’s commentary “approaches the film from the analytical aspect” as the director explains his reasoning behind the decisions that were made, and therefore this feature will help as a teacher’s development resource. The director’s commentary feature is
also viewed as a resource that will help one to “understand the storyline” and characters. As a result, the director’s commentary feature “will help you” if you do not have Film Study skills and knowledge. Consequently this knowledge becomes assimilated.

Teachers “should still have resources and background notes” but should use the director’s commentary feature as “an extra tool to analyse” the film, as teachers will get insight into the director’s choices. Teachers would “view it and use it” and “incorporate” what the director has to say into the teaching of Film Study and would even show this feature to the learners as “reinforcement” of what was said. Thus, teachers “would not only rely on it” and would use this feature in conjunction with another teaching resource. As this feature provides the teacher with “some support” and confirms to the learners that the teachers’ views are correct. Some teachers are positive about the director’s commentary feature as a resource as one is “really seeing the director’s imagination” as portrayed by the film (Appendix B).

The director’s commentary feature “sums up, reinforces and reaffirms” the teachers’ beliefs on the film. Therefore the director’s commentary feature would certainly contribute to the development of a Film Study teacher (Appendix B).

Some respondents did not identify or notice the director commenting on film techniques. However, they felt that “it would help if they gave the reasoning behind why they did it” and “if he had said in this part … scene we chose to position her over there and used this angle and this shot”. If reasons for these choices were included, it would be very useful and “would have helped” develop teachers. A concern is expressed by a respondent that if the director’s commentary feature was to be used as a development resource, “it would be too fixed” and finds the director’s commentary feature “as stifling” (Appendix B).
Other respondents however would not use the director’s commentary feature. They feel the director’s commentary feature is “problematic” as it is “long winded” and “didn’t find it would help”. Some teachers do not find the director’s commentary feature useful but do make use of “featurettes” found on DVDs to validate claims made in the teaching of Film Study, as this feature contains “cutting edge” information. These teachers did not think that the director’s commentary feature would be a useful Film Study development resource but thought observing a Film Study teacher conducting, “workshops” or “team teaching” could contribute towards a teacher’s development in Film Study. Other teachers commented that workshops in Film Study are not feasible as the person presenting the workshop will have be to very knowledgeable on the topic of Film Study or the presenter “is going to be hung up to dry” by teachers attending the workshop. (Appendix B).

Three respondents found the director’s commentary feature useful, two would support it if the director’s comments were useful and five did not find it useful at all. The three respondents who supported using this feature were from one school, while the other respondents were from another. The findings to this question are thus inconclusive as teachers from one school supports the director’s commentary feature as a development resource for a Film Study teacher and the others do not.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The two types of data-collection methods generated many findings. These findings supplied the background on the participants relating to their teaching position, teaching experience and what grades they teach. These findings include the advantages associated with teaching of Film Study, the knowledge required, Film Study resources, the need for Film Study resources and Film Study knowledge pertaining to the learner.
The findings reveal that teachers recognise the necessity of Film Study forming part of the Language Learning Area/Field (for Grades 7, 8 and 9) and the Subject English (Grades 10, 11 and 12). Hence it is felt that Film Study will aid learners in understanding the visual stimuli that they are repeatedly confronted with. The findings additionally present how these respondents teach Film Study.

The research question is addressed and the results of the respondents’ perceptions on the use of the director’s commentary feature as a Film Study development resource are stated. Although favoured by some teachers, other teachers found the director’s commentary feature of no use and thus, the findings for this research are not conclusive.

The findings of this Chapter will be merged with literature findings of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 and will be presented in Chapter Six, as well as the recommendations of this study.
CHAPTER SIX

A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this enquiry was to explore what teachers’ perspectives on the utilisation of additional material on DVD, to enhance the teaching of Film Study, are. An open-ended questionnaire was used to gather teachers’ opinions on Film Study before the film and director’s commentary feature was viewed. Two focus group interviews were conducted following the participants viewing of the DVD. Through the analysis of this data four main themes emerged, generating a number of sub-themes.

In this chapter the research is summarised, findings are revealed and recommendations are made in relation to the research question.

6.2 RESTATEMENT OF THE STUDY’S PROBLEM STATEMENT AND AIMS

Chapter One acknowledges the necessity of teaching Film Study in a modern society. It is stated that some teachers have concerns about the amount of film theory definitions such as close-up shots, wide-angle shots and zooming-in, relating to Film Study. Therefore, the necessity arises to develop these teachers’ Film Study skills and knowledge.

Literacy forms a foundation for Film Study. Basic Literacy, Visual Literacy and Media Literacy are three sub-disciplines of literacy that impact on Film Study. Film Study includes analysing technical elements to discover the film’s message.
This research was conducted by means of a literature review and a generic qualitative case study. Nine High School teachers of English were consulted in order to gather information on the research question. The director's commentary feature was questioned as a means of Professional Development in Film Study.

6.3 FINDINGS IN LITERATURE AND FIELD RESEARCH

6.3.1 Professional Development as an imperative

Literature has revealed that over the last ten years the Professional Development of teachers has come to the fore. This development aims to expand teachers’ existing knowledge and skills. The rapid development of the film industry requires teachers to be informed as these changes occur.

The South African Education Department recognises the importance of Professional Development and has implemented the (IQMS) appraisal system. This system aims at identifying areas where teachers need development, in order to improve the quality of education in South Africa.

Field research reveals that three of the nine respondents received training in Film Study, the remainder are self taught. The respondents maintain that the Gauteng Education Department has not made any Film Study development opportunities available. Therefore they have made use of textbooks such as Reel Life to gain foundation knowledge of Film Study. All respondents agreed that textbooks on Film Study are dated, were not comprehensive or detailed enough and did not encompass special effects. As a result some respondents consult the Internet or featurettes, available on DVDs, as a teacher’s resource. Most of the respondents acknowledge the need for the development of teachers’ resources pertaining to Film Study.
Literature and field research findings therefore recognise that there is a need to develop Film Study teachers. The director’s commentary feature on DVDs could be considered as a development resource to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

**6.3.2 Teaching Film Study**

The need and necessity of Film Study as well as different ways of teaching Film Study was examined in literature and field research.

Findings in literature note that it is the Film Study teachers’ responsibility to enrich their learners with skills, values, attitudes and knowledge in order for them to understand film as a means of communication. Concerns teachers have relating to Film Study can be resolved by further development in Film Study. These could include viewing films through technical understanding of film techniques and analytical activities entailing the reasoning behind, for example, the sequencing of a film. This knowledge will contribute to a teacher’s Film Study knowledge.

In relation to the teaching of Film Study, literature stated that the content must meet the requirements set out by the NCS, therefore the *mise-en-scene* approach is suggested as an effective methodology. Teaching Film Study can encompass different teaching methods such as the teacher-centred approach, the interactive approach and the experiential approach. Two basic teaching strategies presented: the short-sequence strategy, that entails studying film scene by scene, and the whole film strategy, that involves viewing the whole film at once. Using the methodology of teaching literature and extending this to Film Study teaching is examined. This includes introducing learners to the book and background setting of the book. This is followed by the teachers engaging in teaching content surrounding the book, which is known as teacher modelling. Discussions then take place whereby the learners can mirror information
acquired by the teacher. Learners then implement what they have learnt by completing various activities, for example answering questions. It is concluded that Film Study can be taught in a similar way.

Field research found that the respondents represented a spectrum of Film Study teachers as they differed in teaching experience, teaching positions and opinions on Film Study.

Eight of the nine respondents recognised the importance of teaching Film Study. Their reasoning was that Film Study introduces the learners to the world of Visual Literacy which will aid the learners in understanding the visual stimuli that they are constantly presented with. The one respondent who did not see a need to teach Film Study thought core concepts such as spelling and reading should be focused on instead.

The eight respondents noted that Film Study has a place in education. They believe Film Study enthuses the learners by adding a fun element to the English Language classroom and by accommodating all learners, including those with learning barriers. Teachers find that teaching Film Study allows them to draw comparisons between films and set work books. Others noted that the large varieties of wonderful themes available on films are an asset to teachers. Respondents selected films based on educational value and felt that these films should include film techniques and well as moral themes that will appeal to the learner.

The schools teach Film Study in a similar fashion. School X teaches a strong Film Study foundation in Grade 8 that includes a very through explanation on film techniques. They then view the film and teaching and discussion concerning certain scenes take place. In Grade 9 to 11, learners first view the movie then analyse it. This school issues their learners with notes. School Y encourages their learners to think more laterally. This school teaches film techniques, such as
*mise-en-scene*, then watch the film and lastly analyse the film. They teach their learners to construct their own conclusions but to be able to substantiate them. These learners are encouraged to stay focused as they have to formulate their own Film Study notes. School Y furthermore utilises Film Study as an opportunity to provide a background for set work readers, by selecting appropriate films.

Thus, various methods of teaching Film Study were identified depending on the Grade level of the learner. Some teachers favoured explaining terminology before viewing for lower grades. For higher Grades some teachers demonstrate filming techniques before learners view and analyse the particular film, while other choose to do this only after the film has been viewed.

Literature and field research thus concluded that Film Study is valued as a part of the Language curriculum and to expand the general literacy skills of the learner. It was additionally noted that teaching Film Study is non-prescriptive as there are varieties of teaching methods, strategies and approaches to teaching the subject. A structure that includes all these varieties can be found in paragraph 6.5.

### 6.3.3 Director’s commentary

The following are findings generated from literature. Film Study aims to improve the viewers’ comprehension of films by explaining the director’s objectives and intentions of the film. This is accomplished by analysing different technical elements, such as lighting, the use of music and sound effects. For teachers to be competent in this area, they should have substantial Film Study knowledge and skills. Where teachers lack knowledge and skills the director’s commentary feature on certain DVDs is put forward as a means by which to develop teachers’ knowledge in Film Study.

A DVD is of high technical quality and includes special features. One such feature is the director’s commentary. Because of these special features, DVDs are superior to VHS tapes and are rapidly replacing them.
The director’s commentary feature runs in conjunction with the film. The director informs viewers about various aspects of the film’s production. These include an array of topics, such as location selections and the use of special effects. The director’s commentary feature can thus be seen as a form of mentorship, whereby the director mentors the viewer (teacher) about aspects that will be taught in the Film Study lesson.

As the director is crucial to any film, the director’s commentary feature can be regarded as a useful development resource for teachers. Directors have the expertise to make informed decisions that will lead to the achievement of their vision for the film. A film can be regarded as a visualisation of the director’s imagination. A director could thus elucidate Film Study topics for a teacher. For that reason this study explored teachers’ opinions on the use of director’s commentary feature as a development resource.

When asked what the respondent’s perspectives were on the utilisation of the director’s commentary feature as a development resource for Film Study, the respondents’ comments delivered mixed results as reflected by the field research. Some of the respondents deemed it helpful, usable and informative while others found it of no use. Respondents who found the director’s commentary feature useful, found that the director commented on topics that would be discussed in Film Study, for example, use of colour, lighting, music, camera angles and selection of characters. These respondents furthermore found the director’s commentary feature of use when evaluating their own Film Study knowledge and ability to apply that to a film. Respondents in favour of using the director’s commentary feature regarded it easy to use, accessible, affordable and practical.

Literature findings indicate to the fact that the director’s commentary feature on DVDs would be beneficial as a Film Study development resource. However,
respondents did not show an overwhelming positive reaction. It is therefore inconclusive whether the director’s commentary on a DVD can be regarded as a Professional Development resource for Film Study.

6.4 SHORTCOMINGS OF RESEARCH

This topic has not been researched in South Africa before and as the DVD features are so recent, there is not adequate published research available on this topic. Therefore many Internet and Internet database resources had to be consulted on certain aspects.

Some respondents commented that the director of *Miss Congeniality* did not comment on film techniques. However, the researcher has viewed the director’s commentary of this film and has made reference to particular comments made by the director in paragraph 4.3.2. For this reason the objectivity of these respondents’ comments can be questioned as evidence of the director addressing Film Study elements, are presented in the study.

Some respondents tended to dominate the discussions during the interviews and although respondents’ thoughts inspired other respondents and led to discussions, one-on-one interviews, might have lead to more concrete results.

As the researcher was bound by time, the study was only conducted at two High Schools and the findings were inconclusive. If more schools were included the result of this research could have been more conclusive. It may be argued to investigate the comprehensiveness of this study across other South African Subgroups. However this goes beyond the limits of this study.
6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher anticipated that findings in paragraph 6.4 would serve as suggestions and possible solutions for the need teachers identified in Film Study development. Literature and field research provided findings that led to interesting recommendations that do not always pertain to the research question. For example, it can be suggested that another film be prescribed for Grade 12 as *Strictly Ballroom* is becoming dated.

Through combining certain aspects of the methods implemented by the respondents in their teaching of Film Study and literature findings on this topic, the researcher was able to construct a recommended structure that could aid teachers in teaching Film Study. The following structure is suggested:

- As learners are becoming more visually literate teachers should not teach Film Study in the same way as teaching content knowledge. For example, when teaching the use of background noises in films. This needs direct experience with the sound effects for learners to comprehend the concepts. Film cannot be studied line by line but must be analysed based on how the film is composed, thus the visual material must be studied. Film Study teachers will therefore have to plan their lessons carefully in order to encompass all the expanding content knowledge. The researcher is of the opinion that content taught in Film Study, different teaching methods, different teaching strategies and by using Cooper's model for teaching literature mentioned in paragraph 3.6.1.4 as a foundation, a structure for teaching Film Study successfully will transpire.

First the context and setting of the film should be explained to the learners. Learners must understand the film's intended context as different societies and countries view things differently. For example *Miss Congeniality* is set
in the context of a beauty pageant. The following is a part of the script from *Miss Congeniality* that will serve as an example to illustrate this point.

“**Stan Fields**: What is the one most important thing our society needs?
**Gracie Hart**: That would be... harsher punishment for parole violators, Stan.
[crowd is silent]
**Gracie Hart**: And world peace!
[crowd cheers ecstatically]” (The Internet Movie Database, 2006).

For learners to understand the context of this quote and the humour associated with it, they would have to know that when most beauty queen contestants are asked what they find important, they usually, in a somewhat mendacious premeditated manner reply, “world peace”, as is the expected reply in the film (as indicated in the script extract). Learners who do not have a background into the world of beauty pageantry probably will not understand the film’s humour. Thus providing a background and context knowledge of a film is essential.

The next step would be to explain or revise film techniques and terminology such as zooming in. This can be explained to learners during introductory lessons, thus constituting the teacher-centered approach. As learners develop their Film Study knowledge, teachers will spend less time on teaching film techniques in the higher grades as learners should have knowledge from previous years.

Once learners have a basic understanding of film techniques and what the film is about, the film can be viewed, hence incorporating the whole-film approach.

After viewing the film an interactive approach resulting in a classroom discussion could be engaged in. It is suggested that the learners freely take part in discussions and thus contribute to the Film Study lesson. Now
teacher modeling takes place and the teacher starts analysing the film by pointing out certain elements such as the use of different camera angles. This can be emphasised by reviewing selected scenes from the film that point out the use of the camera angle, thus making use of the short-sequence approach.

With guidance from teachers, learners should now be able to start identifying film elements for themselves. After studying the film, learners usually engage in some sort of activity for example writing an essay or answering questions on the film and the use of the film techniques. Peer teaching, role play or group work could also take place, hence encompassing different approaches to teaching such as the experiential approach.

Teaching film terminology can be compared to teaching grammar aspects of a language, in that there are certain guidelines, such as the protocols for teaching spelling that are continuously applied in writing and reading. In films there are similar guidelines such as the teaching of camera angles and editing in the film. In the same way as grammar guidelines can be applied in teaching of language, film terminology can be applied in the teaching of Visual Literacy. These guidelines could be applied later in the year in the studying of other mediums such as a picture cartoon. For example, one could study the grammar used in the cartoon, such as the usage of slang. Likewise one can study why a medium close-up shot of the cartoon character is used instead of a full length shot, thus applying Film Study elements to the cartoon. By reinforcing Film Study knowledge one is able to apply the follow-up strategies as mentioned in paragraph 3.6.1.4.

Although this suggested structure may encourage successful Film Study teaching, it is up to the individual teacher to find a structure that works for
him/her. Effectively teaching of Film Study can depend on a range of methodologies.

In relation to the research question the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- Due to an indecisive outcome of the research question, the director’s commentary feature still remains a possible form of development for a Film Study teacher. Further research could possibly lead to a sure answer to this question. Thus the researcher proposes that this topic be researched in more depth.

- As suggested by Macrat Publishers, a teacher’s resource providing teachers with information on how to use the director’s commentary feature could be formulated. This will bring the advantages of the director’s commentary feature to teachers’ attention. This resource could additionally include a list of DVDs that contain useful director’s commentary.

- Development opportunities focusing in Film Study should be generated by the Department of Education. If textbooks are the chosen resource for this purpose, the Film Study component in textbooks should be updated and expanded to be more comprehensive and to include special effects.

- In the event of it being decided to conduct a workshop on Film Study, the researcher recommends using a lecturer from the South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance, to equip teachers with the best available knowledge on Film Study.

- Another possible development opportunity could be team-teaching as an instructional strategy indicated by the field research. This will grant teachers the opportunities to learn from each other while sharing ideas.
6.6 CONCLUSION

As education is challenged to keep abreast of developments, literature has acknowledged the need for Professional Development. Film Study is an ever-expanding topic and some teachers have insecurities relating to teaching it. The researcher thus explored the need for development of Film Study teacher’s knowledge and skills. Although most of the respondents considered themselves adequately equipped to teach Film Study, they did recognise a need for development in this sphere. Due to the expansion in the film industry they could need to re-acquaint themselves with new Film Study knowledge.

Development opportunities such as textbooks, manuals and workshops were explored. Literature and field research revealed that textbooks are available but are dated. The field research provided information that confirms that textbooks do provide teachers with a solid foundation of Film Study knowledge. However, it is revealed that teachers do not find Film Study components in textbooks to be detailed and textbooks do not include topics such as special effects. Thus, using a textbook as a development resource has its limitations.

Workshops were another means of a development opportunity. Literature noted that workshops did equip teachers to understand theoretical knowledge but limited teachers’ opportunities to relay this knowledge competently into their classroom practices. Workshops can be time consuming and require adequate facilitators. Although one respondent thought workshops could be a useful development opportunity, another commented that it would not work as the facilitator would have to be highly competent or would be ridiculed by teachers attending the workshop. Workshops thus too have restrictions when being used as a development opportunity for a Film Study teacher.

With the rapid developments of visual technology the researcher contemplated using the additional features on DVDs as a viable option for development of Film
Study knowledge and skills. This feature of the director’s commentary gives the teacher insight into the different aspects regarding the production of the film. As this is an authentic source of information the commentary can be seen as a form of mentorship for the novice Film Study teacher or for the upgrading of existing knowledge. In the field research the participants were not unanimous about possible application of a DVD as envisaged by the researcher and therefore the findings are inconclusive, although some positive experiences were recorded.

It would seem that the use of the director’s commentary feature is a personal choice as some teachers find it of use and others do not. Thus, the use of the director’s commentary feature as a Film Study development resource is plausible.
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### APPENDIX A CODING OF QUESTIONNAIRES

**Key**

- Respondent 1
- Respondent 2
- Respondent 3
- Respondent 4
- Respondent 5
- Respondent 6
- Respondent 7
- Respondent 8
- Respondent 9

| FS = Film Study |
| DC = Director’s commentary |
| HOD = Head of Department |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background on respondents</th>
<th>Respondents’ views on FS</th>
<th>Teaching FS (Methodology)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>Importance of FS</td>
<td>Frustrations concerning FS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Live in a visual age, therefore learners need to understand visual messages.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Films form an integral part of our lives.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important as it opens up the world to the learners.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaches appreciation for literacy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Need FS as learners are exposed to visuals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They need to be aware of how film can manipulate their emotions and responses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very important as we live in a visual world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Need to know how visuals can be manipulated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important that people are educated about film as a powerful medium for propaganda.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Live in a visual world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of HOD respondents</td>
<td>Outdated equipment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 HOD.</td>
<td>Quality of equipment not good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited time frame to teach FS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old equipment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very few.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of other teachers</td>
<td>N/A.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 teachers.</td>
<td>Learners view FS as fun, therefore teachers must impress the importance of it at all times.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience</td>
<td>Film terminology is boring.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>Learners repeat teacher’s views.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching between 0–5</td>
<td>Don’t see it as educational.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years</td>
<td>FS is just fun that doesn’t improve English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 teachers.</td>
<td>Too much detail can ruin the movie.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents</td>
<td>Watching the same movie over and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching between 6-10</td>
<td>above.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

106
| Number of respondents teaching between 0–5 years | 4 teachers. |
| Number of respondents teaching between 6-10 years | 1 teacher. |
| Number of respondents teaching between 11–15 years. | 3 teachers. |
| Number of respondents teaching between 16–20 years | 0 teachers. |
| Number of respondents teaching 20 years + | 2 teachers. |

**Film is replacing reading as a hobby.**
- Live in a visually charged world.
- Learners need to learn how to decode visual images.
- Don’t see the value.
- The true value of ‘watching a movie’ in terms of education.
- Rather teach spelling and written form.
- Teaches learners different aspects of film.
- Allows learners to realise what goes into a film.
- Adds some fun to English.
- There is a need for FS.
- TV is a powerful medium that learners need to understand and appreciate.

**Teacher’s FS knowledge**
- Well equipped due to experience and equipment.
- Can offer learners insight.
- Confident.
- Fairly well equipped.
- Created own FS notes.
- Well prepared due to reading.
- Enjoys sharing FS knowledge.
- Well equipped as it was part of training.
- Have adequate knowledge but a comprehensive study guide will help.

**Film Study resources**
- Adequate to teach Junior High Film Study and Grade 10, not really confident to teach Grade 11 and 12.

**Basic guidelines for teaching FS**
- “Mise-en-scène”
- Editing.
- Sound.
- Colour.
- Angle.
- Lighting.
- Shot.
- Focus.
- Positioning.
- Special effects.
- Plot.
- Character.
- Camera angles.
- “Mise-en-scène”.
- Colour and lighting.

**What FS teachers offer learners**
- Well equipped due to experience and equipment.
- Can offer learners insight.
- Confident.
- Fairly well equipped.
- Created own FS notes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>FS Training of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>1 teacher</td>
<td>Wits University and experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No training in FS = self taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attended Department courses and reading material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School days and self taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>4 teachers</td>
<td>Self taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>3 teachers</td>
<td>Self taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>5 teachers</td>
<td>Pretoria University = elective subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>4 teachers</td>
<td>University, self taught and textbook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**English in Context, Macrat is very useful.**

However special effects needs to be explored.

Don't know of any guidelines.

Macrat is sufficient.

Besides Macrat, don't know of others.

Resources need to be updated.

Macrat and other old resources.

Outdated, poor and needs to be more comprehensive.

Had to create own guidelines.

Might find guidelines on the Internet.

English in Context.

Reel Life.

Matric Matters meet teacher's needs.

Macrat.

Internet.

Textbooks are concise on the topic.

Don't know of any guidelines.

Only a few pages per textbook are dedicated to FS as FS is considered a small part of the curriculum.

Textbooks give good descriptions and pictures that help explain.

Guideline for Strictly Ballroom.

Not too much available.

Resources are old fashioned.

**Selected films over last 5 years**

Strictly Ballroom.
| High school days and self taught | Dead Poets’ Society.  
The Mighty.  
Shakespeare in Love.  
Strictly Ballroom.  
Aladdin.  
Willow.  
Strictly Ballroom.  
Dead Poets’ Society.  
Shakespeare in Love.  
Strictly Ballroom.  
Gladiator.  
Witness.  
Remember the Titans.  
Shakespeare in Love.  
Strictly Ballroom.  
Remember the Titans.  
Racing Stripes.  
Shakespeare in Love.  
Strictly Ballroom.  
Gladiator.  
Witness.  
Remember the Titans.  
Cool Runnings.  
Racing Stripes.  
Gladiator.  
Remember the Titans. |
### Respondents’ views on FS

**Importance of FS**

We live in a visual age, the children are surrounded by visuals all the time and they understand that probably better than words.

And they need to actually be able understand what is being communicated through the visuals.

So I think it’s important.

So we must then move with them and then try to have a balance and teach them what is good film and what is bad film.

### Teaching FS (Methodology)

**How FS is taught**

School X

Well it depends if it’s like the first time they are taught Film Study.

I personally think that you should first introduce them to the genre of film and just explain what is a basic camera shot and so forth and then they can watch the movie first.

We do that because we want them to first get the plot, the storyline and get to know the characters before they need to focus on specific things and analyze the work and the characters.

I think it depends on one teacher to another.

### Responses on the DC’s commentary feature

**Teacher’s perspectives**

I wouldn’t simply just put the film on and let the director just comment on everything because obviously it’s not enough detail.

But I think you know he gives us a lot of you know.

Because he has directed the film he’s put his artistic touch on this section of the film or he puts it on the whole film.

So it does make it a lot clearer.

I would definitely use it.

But I wouldn’t only rely on it, obviously.
Because they see film and they think all film is acceptable.

And also it’s done so subtly they fix on emotions.

That they need to be conscious of it and then it becomes subconscious later and they know where they’re being manipulated and where they are not.

So they don’t know that you are having your imagination manipulated, in a film you have no imagination.

So it’s really killing imagination, film.

I think it’s very important cause we live in a very visual world.

And children need to understand interpret a lot of the visual media that comes their way.

I believe there’s a lot of propaganda. And they need to be able to what’s the big word um…

Assimilate.

Yes, you know what is fact and what is fiction.

Otherwise they’d be lead astray

But it is very important to have a background and scope, a view on things, first.

I also think it depends on the level, you know grade 8 and 9 you need more discussion where as with the grade 11s by that stage they should know what a long shot is and they have been exposed to film work.

So what I do is I show them the films first.

I don’t discuss a thing with them and then after that I go back and I do my teaching.

And we tend to teach it in Grade 11 because um the Grade 12 year has become so short, so in actual fact between grade eleven and twelve they are only doing one set work movie.

Well they have been over the years extensively and to all sorts of background notes and things to enable them to become literate and to know the terminology and language of film

I show the film first and then have a general discussion on it before we go to the terminology and technology and just get their interest in the issues that are raised.

Especially if they are relevant to them

Yes and all, the notes he makes about actors and how he’s chosen them.

That was I found it very interesting.

But sometime with other commentary…um… it’s more a personal thing, if it’s the actors, they talk, they will see other kind of things and in the movie and try to amuse you in a way.

But the director’s more serious and you know very professional and it’s the craft of directing that he is focusing on.

He approaches it more from the analytical aspect.

You should still have your resources and your background notes and that is just helping you, um, it’s an extra tool to analyze this movie.

It can definitely help.

by just providing some support to what you have taught.

Help make the learners believe what we actually saying.

You’re really seeing the director’s imagination in a film.
and yes, to be discerning viewers.

But I do believe that it is important for the children to believe understand what they see on the film wasn’t just a once off.

That there were reasons.

You know, I believe it’s very very sad that they haven’t had the base given by Film Study.

Ja, I feel that it’s a under recognised aspect of our curriculum.

I really do, there’s so much value in it.

And in the world that we live in with some many children that have learning problems this is a way to reach them.

And I don’t think it’s utilised to it’s full potential.

Advantages of FS

They understand that probably better than words.

Then suddenly Film Study arrived and they were just about bouncing off the ceilings to get their word in.

and get them involved.

So that they really enjoy the film itself and then start.

They really need to have a personal involvement before you start making it education and teach them the different techniques of film and the use of sound and music and all those kind of things.

School Y

We also start Film Study in Grade 8 and there we use a basic recipe if you will. Grade 9 it gets slightly more complicated.

Grade 10 more complicated still.

So you’re actually building on what you taught in Grade 8.

By the time they get to matric, technically they can actually analyse a film themselves.

I don’t believe there is anything wrong in you seeing one angle and somebody else seeing another angle.

We encourage incredible lateral thinking in this school.

Where as we teach the child that if they can back up the statement that they’re making, it is then acceptable.

Not all directors comment on specific things.

But it will help you if you don’t know.

Even if you don’t understand the storyline and why they chose to use this character.

I would use it as reinforcement with the children.

I would, view it and use it and take what he said and incorporate it into my teaching of the film.

Sum up and reinforce and reaffirm.

From a teaching point of view I don’t really believe it was helpful at all.

I think it was very interesting getting inside the characters.

And from that point of few as far as background information is concerned (Nods head yes).

But as far as a teaching tool is concerned it wasn’t any help at all.

No I wouldn’t have used it as a teacher’s resource.

But I’ll be honest I fast forwarded and because there wasn’t, we weren’t
And now having done that form of literature, you know as a visual literacy, their approach to literature has been amazing.

Definitely has boosted their enthusiasm.

Can use film to draw a parallel between book and film.

Aids comprehension of book.

And I think that’s very sad for me cause there are some stunning movies with wonderful themes.

But I’m happy with that because that’s what I enjoy about Film Study. (limited resources)

I believe, I don’t know, sometimes it encourages laziness on the teacher’s side and stagnation.

It’s not prescriptive at all.

And in the world that we live in with some many children that have learning problems this is a way to reach them.

**Teacher’s FS knowledge**

Well you would go into more detail (teaching different Grades).

We start with the theory, they obviously need to know all the film techniques so we teach them definitions.

But we do not stick to the definitions, we teach the effects there of.

They’re allowed to watch the film once.

And then we select certain scenes.

And we usually, I don’t want to say teach towards an um… topic.

But because of the shortage of time we select a theme or two, character development and then perhaps the essay.

And then we select certain scenes which best portray those aspects.

I believe we teach very very thoroughly.

They don’t mess around during Film Study.

They’re not allowed to talk, no.

It’s not stifling but we encourage them to focus and take notes.

So they don’t get handouts, on themes and everything neatly packaged.

They have to compile their own notes.

getting anywhere.

You know it was very long winded and that sort of thing.

The very intelligent children might be able to get something out of it.

I didn’t find it would help.

It’s too long and they get bored very very easily.

I thought it was problematic.

Maybe if he had said in this particular scene we chose to position her over there and use this angle and this shot.

That would have helped us, yes.

So sometimes it will help if they gave you the reasoning behind why they did it.

The only problem is I then see it as stifling.

I think that is why children enjoy Film Study so much. Because it is not prescriptive.

Ja it would be too fixed.

**What DC focuses on**

How he sees the character.
Obviously you’re teaching it on a deeper level.

So yes you would need more knowledge.

But I would think that a grade 8 teacher would have as much knowledge knowing where you are going with this.

We need to have support in that (referring to FS).

Number one subject knowledge.

Must have a sound knowledge.

I believe preparation is the starting point and there after the world is at your feet.

**Learners, s, v & k**

**Academic levels**

I also think it depends on the level, you know grade 8 and 9 you need more discussion where as with the grade 11s by that stage they should know what a long shot is and they have been exposed to film work.

Well you would go into more detail (teaching different Grades).

And I believe that the exciting part about it here is that even at Grade 11 respondent 4 and I will most probably teach totally differently.

But at the end of the whole film course their essays will still be spot on.

And I don’t believe that that is problematic at all.

We all seem to follow that recipe of "mise-en-scene", Sound and editing …

And also we incorporate the filming techniques in the study of cartoons and visual literacy.

So we reinforce it.

We do take certain aspects (of FS) into other areas of English as well.

Visual literacy as a whole.

What I use is featurettes from other movies.

When we are coming to the notes, then I’ll show them that movie.

I don’t even know if disadvantaged schools do Film Study to be honest with you. I don’t know if they do.

Again those particular schools don’t have facilities.

Not all directors comment on specific things.

he gives reasons why he chose to do this.

So it does make it a lot clearer.

You’re really seeing the director’s imagination in a film.

Yes and all, the notes he makes about actors and how he’s chosen them.

And then how they used color and light.

The characters and the plot and then you start to realize that music.

With setting the scene and the mood, um, the lightening that they’ve used, the angle that they’ve used.

He did speak about the camera angles and the shots.

He specifically mentioned some of them.

Storyline.

From a teaching point of view I don’t really believe it was helpful at all.
Obviously you’re teaching it on a deeper level.

So yes you would need more knowledge.

But I would think that a grade 8 teacher would have as much knowledge knowing where you are going with this.

We’ve taught Film Study from grade 8 so by the time they get to grade 10 then they do have that knowledge

Let’s say we have a new child, that comes from a school that hasn’t done it, I mean they do receive notes that also includes the basic terminology.

I think you just know how each of your classes respond.

And you’re going to know, your one class you can talk quickly and they interact with you.

And the other class you have to tell them exactly what’s going on.

So it’s just reading your different classes and knowing how they’re going to take it.

We also start Film Study in Grade

They don’t have access to um… DVD players and like some of them don’t have electricity.

I also think when it comes to Film Study in the rural areas. I have seen books that go out from companies that simply sponsor um… overseas books to underprivileged schools.

And when it comes to things like movies um… or everyday life they’re very simple studies

They don’t really go into depth like close ups, long shots anything like that. It’s simple just the basics like actually what is a movie?

You know they kind of seem to want to give them that background knowledge of where it comes from.

Rather then how to study the actual movie in depth.

But it would actually be useless teaching it as in depth as we would.

But yet again on the other hand when those children hit Varsity and that sort of thing…

You know, I believe it’s very very sad that they haven’t had the base given by Film Study.

That there was a thought process behind it. I think it was very interesting getting inside the characters.

And from that point of few as far as background information is concerned (Nods head yes).

It was more talking about what he based his characters on.

Maybe if he had said in this particular scene we chose to position her over there and use this angle and this shot.

But I didn’t see that he did that.

I would go as far as so say, if he had stated a reason as to why he did it.

Because I mean you can pick up the angles and things just by watching the movie.

So sometimes it will help if they gave you the reasoning behind why they did it.

As to why he chose that colour and camera angle.

But if he told us, that would be nice.

The only problem is I then see it as stifling.
8 and there we use a basic recipe if you will. Grade 9 it gets slightly more complicated.

Grade 10 more complicated still.

So you're actually building on what you taught in Grade 8.

By the time they get to matric, technically they can actually analyse a film themselves.

Visual exposure

We've taught Film Study from grade 8 so by the time they get to grade 10 then they do have that knowledge.

Let's say we have a new child, that comes from a school that hasn't done it, I mean they do receive notes that also includes the basic terminology.

And you see that type of child wouldn't be exposed to frequent advertising watching things like that.

Where as our children they are, they sit in front of the TV for ages. I also think when it comes to Film Study in the rural areas. I have seen books that go out from companies that simply sponsor um…overseas books to

And I believe that these parallel studies are very exciting (between film and setwork).

But again it takes confidence on the teacher's part.

Number one subject knowledge.

Must have a sound knowledge.

Or you must be over open to suggestions by the children.

I believe preparation is the starting point and there after the world is at your feet.

See I’m worried about the subjective side of it.

Because I believe that that would stifle lateral thinking.

Advantages of DC

When I taught Strictly Ballroom, I used the DVD and it really to the children they enjoyed it so much.

You notice them, because you’re informed of it.

But now you’ve learnt from the director’s commentary and now you can also apply that in the classroom and get your children to notice them.

Whether you’ve actually assessed it correctly yourself.

It just formalizes things for you.

I think it’s the future of Film Study.

It’s going to form part of the future of Film Study.

And it’s easy, it’s accessible, if you have a DVD player and a t.v, how easy is that to get hold of a resource?

You get the film plus the resource on one disc.
And when it comes to things like movies um... or everyday life they’re very simple studies. They don’t really go into depth like close ups, long shots anything like that. It’s simple just the basics like actually what is a movie?

**Learner’s responsibilities**

We encourage incredible lateral thinking in this school. They don’t mess around during Film Study. They’re not allowed to talk, no. They have to compile their own notes.

They really need to have a personal involvement before you start making it education. But I do believe that it is important for the children to believe understand what they see on the film wasn’t just a once off.

And children need to understand interpret a lot of the visual media. Yes, for one price.

No I wouldn’t have used it as a teacher’s resource. I think that perhaps from the view of the very intelligent children.

What I use is featurettes from other movies. It’s so cutting edge.

Keeps it up to minute.

**Balance of DVD**

It just formalizes things for you. Reinforces.

Whether you’ve actually assessed it correctly yourself. What I’ve picked up with Film Study is people do not notice things.

You notice them, because you’re informed of it. It’s also about um...the subconscious messages or that you are receiving the whole time and you don’t even know you’re receiving them, the
that comes their way.

And they need to be able to what’s the big word um…

Assimilate.

Yes, you know what is fact and what is fiction.

And they need to actually… be able understand what is being communicated through the visuals.

Film Study resources

With teaching matric, we’ve had that same set work for so long.

But when you talk about the department supplying, well there is no option really matric you are stuck with that it.

Not really resources.

You are given the film and it’s not neatly packaged and it’s up to you to make of it as you please.

Obviously with guidance like the Witness guidelines and then Strictly Ballroom guidelines.

I’ve use the book called “Reel life” before.

children don’t know.

So when the director comes in and comments then you realize, oh hold on, I’m thinking about that, that’s what’s happening there.

I don’t think he really did that.

But I didn’t see that he did that.

So sometimes it will help if they gave you the reasoning behind why they did it.

As just opposed to they did it.

DVD as a development resource

For sure it would (contribute to development).

I would use it as reinforcement with the children.

I would, view it and use it and take what he said and incorporate it into my teaching of the film.

Absolutely.

Ja, definitely.

Well it depends from film to film…

Not all directors comment on specific
But I show the children the photos and they think it’s hilarious.

For a total new comer, it’s a solid book it really is (referring to Reel Life).

So I make my own things.

So we have no problems with there being so few resources.

The fewer the better.

Because in Reel Life it would cause great hilarity because it is so old fashioned.

So unless your resources are up to date.

But honesty teachers who are qualified and who have a will a passion about their subjects, they will make a go of it.

Reel life, is excellent

It’s excellent for basic camera angles and that kind of thing, ja.

Pincus, the English handbook, Pincus. That’s also got a section which is quite good.

English in Context and what’s the
other one, Insights.

Resources on special effects

What I use is featurettes from other movies.

I always buy a DVD with two discs so that I can get the bonus features.

You can also get extra information from the Internet.

But it’s particularly zoned for the American Colleges. Where the directors have given them what landed on the cutting floor and that sort of thing.

That sort of stuff you can get from there.

But in an actual book, no

Need for FS development

We haven’t received anything regarding Film Study in the documents that we’ve received.

I have a lot of stuff I can draw on all the time.

From the department we haven’t
received anything for the FET this year.

We need to have support in that.

Because they want us to teach film studies but we don’t have the support or the resources to do that.

Also to diversify and not just look at a film as such but possibly…sitcoms or different genres of visual communication

I mean we’re making educated guesses.

But if he told us, that would be nice.

|4,6,7 & 8 = not aware of development opportunities from Departments side. |

There might be in the Teacher centre you know and so on.

I haven’t seen any.

Will take a very bold person to teach FS to teachers.

But it would be nice.

For more disadvantaged schools.
And that’s where I feel maybe a little bit of a resource would not go amiss.

Ways to develop FS skills and knowledge

Experience, practice.

On the job training.

And other teachers help you and you muzzle along.

Experience does it ja.

plant the seeds and then it’s up to you to grow the harvest.

they could even go sit in for a few sessions to see how a experienced teacher teaches it.

Like a workshop.

I learnt a lot from sitting in on one of the teacher’s lessons.

But you see we’ve overcome that by team-teaching.

It boils down to the teacher.

You’ll educate yourself, you’ll do what you need to do.
You know, you can have all the resources in the world but if you’re not motivated and if you’re not interested in giving your learners the best you can do then it doesn’t matter.

A week of just team-teaching.

(6 of the 9 = self taught).
APPENDIX C SAMPLE CONSENT FORM

Request permission to conduct research at a school.

To (principal's surname), School Management Team and the School Governing Body.

Study in the Department Education Studies (Faculty of Education) at the University of Johannesburg.

1. The aim of the study is to determine if, and in what way the additional material on DVDs will enhance and develop educators' Film Study knowledge and contribute to the teaching of Film Studies in Grade 8 – 12 English language classes.

   My research question is thus: How does the director’s commentary on DVDs, enhance educators’ knowledge and potential for effective teaching of Film Studies?

2. The South African Education system has included film study in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), from Grade Four to Grade Twelve (Department of Education, 2002). Research however shows that educators are however concerned by a number of aspects of Film Study.

3. My research, which I would like to conduct at your school, will entail the following:
• Participants will be given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with a specific film (without any additional features) before the initial open-ended questionnaire.

• An open-ended questionnaire is to be completed by the participants, before they encounter the film with the director’s commentary. This is to collect baseline data on how Film Studies is currently taught at high school level and what problems (if any) are experienced.

• After completing the open-ended questionnaire, a film on DVD, with director’s commentary, will be given to educators to view at home.

• A focus group interview will be conducted after they have viewed the film.

• Additionally I will request that on the day of the focus group interview, the educators bring any textbooks or reference books they might have covering Film Studies, for me to view.

4. Safeguarding the participants:

• All participants ( principals and educators) will be asked to sign consent forms to participate in this study.

• The respondents will be informed, in writing, what is expected of them and will be informed about the research process.

• Tape – recorded interviews will be analysed (using pseudonyms) and be stored in a locked facility.

• The respondents’ anonymity is assured and all possible procedures will be put in place to ensure that participants are not harmed in this study. All information will be regarded as confidential.

• Interviews will be explored and findings will be kept in a protected location.

• The participants’ Human rights will be adhered to.
5. This study’s finding could benefit the teaching of film studies in your school.
   A “Sinotec” DVD player will also be donated to the school as a token of my appreciation.

Accordingly, I hereby request that you sign this document below, in order to indicate that you are *au fait* (familiar) with the conditions stated above and that you are aware of this research. This letter needs to be signed and dated as it forms part of the requirements for ethical research as mandated by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education.

Thanking you in anticipation.

___________________
Memory R. Hawley

I, the undersigned, ………………………………………………., do hereby indicate that I have read and understood the aim and reasons for undertaking the above-mentioned research as contained in the letter. I hereby give my consent to __________________________ to continue with the inquiry.

_____________________________                     Date: ____________________