

**PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE AND SUPPORT
OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENT TEACHERS DURING
THE PRACTICUM IN KENYA**

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**I confirm that the work submitted is my own and that appropriate credit has
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ABSTRACT

This study is an analysis of pedagogical practice and support of English language student teachers during a practicum (teaching practice) in Kenya with a view to discerning what they learnt and the issues that influenced such learning. The study was conducted against a background of calls for research that could provide information for reform of teacher education in general and English language teacher education (ELTE) in particular. The practicum is recognised as an important aspect of all professional learning and is part of most teacher education programmes all over the world. Yet, my literature review revealed that very little research exists in this area, more so in ELTE. Of the previous studies on teaching practice (TP), very few are from developing countries and certainly none (that I know of) in Kenya.

This was an interpretive qualitative case study involving seventeen participants – six student teachers, six teacher educators and five cooperating teachers. Data was generated through semi-structured interviews, observations and analysis of relevant documents. The findings generally show that the English language student teachers' practice was mainly focused on surviving the practicum and getting the desired grades to enable them graduate successfully. Consequently, though they learnt some procedural pedagogical knowledge, they were not supported to develop pedagogical reasoning, which is supposed to be the main goal of TP. Some of the issues that influenced teacher learning in this manner were: a weak link between coursework at university and practice in schools, the lack of a clear definition of the parameters of practice and inappropriate conceptualisation of support.

My study contributes to the field of ELTE by qualitatively analysing the experiences of all the key participants during one TP session and exploring the question of what the student teachers actually learn during their placements, in a more holistic manner than has featured in most previous research on TP in the field. My study also supports some earlier studies that had similar findings on some aspects of TP; for example, that student teacher learning is only effective during the practicum if there is coordination between all the partners on ELTE. I believe the findings of my study are relevant to TP in other subjects in Kenya, and also other Anglophone African countries where the system of the practicum is generally quite similar.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- B.Ed - Bachelors degree in Education
CAT - Continuous Assessment Test
CLT - Communicative Language Teaching
CT - Cooperating teacher
EL - English Language
ELT - English Language Teaching
ELTE - English Language Teacher Education
ESL - English as a Second Language
EFL - English as a Foreign Language
ITE - Initial Teacher Education
ICT - Information Communication Technology
JAB - Joints Admissions Board for university students
KCPE - Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE - Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KIE - Kenya Institute of Education
LTE - Language Teacher Education
MoE - Ministry of Education
PR - Pedagogical reasoning
PSSP - Privately Sponsored Students Programme
ST - Student teacher
SoE - School of Education
SHSS - School of Humanities and Social Sciences
TE - Teacher Education
TESOL - Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages
TK - Teacher Knowledge
TL - Teacher Learning
TP - Teaching Practice

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

My main aim in this study was to analyse the pedagogical experiences of English language student teachers during the practicum in Kenya with a view to finding out what they learnt from the placements and the issues that influenced their learning. The practicum (interchangeably called teaching practice - TP) is that session when student teachers are placed in schools to get an induction into all the aspects of the work that they will be doing upon graduation as teachers in general and specifically as English language (EL) teachers. In principle, this session is meant to enhance the learning that student teachers started at university, especially by linking their coursework to the practical aspects of English language teaching (ELT). To achieve the aim of the study, I posed two questions:

1. What are the English language student teachers' pedagogical practices during the practicum in Kenya?
2. How are English language student teachers pedagogically supported during the practicum in Kenya?

I use the term *pedagogical* consistently to define the scope of my study; that is, to indicate that my focus is on practice and support specifically related to teaching and learning in the classrooms. Basically, this includes (but is not necessarily limited to) planning, classroom presentation, testing and self-evaluation. Other aspects of professional practice that student teachers may be involved in during TP, such as participation in teachers' committees, meetings, parent-teacher conferences, co-curricular activities, games and extra duties assigned by the school were outside the scope of this study.

The practicum took place during the last semester of a four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Initial Teacher Education (ITE) course in English language teaching at one state University in Kenya. The student teachers who were taking part in this course had had eight years of primary education and eight years at secondary school during which they were taught in English, which was also a compulsory

subject in school throughout that time. During the practicum, the student teachers were supervised by teacher educators from their university and it was expected by the university that they would be guided by regular teachers of English in the placement schools (hereafter called cooperating teachers). The student teachers had to pass the practicum with a minimum mark of 50% (an average of all the assessments) before they could graduate and qualify to teach.

This was an interpretive qualitative case study involving seventeen participants - six student teachers, five cooperating teachers and six teacher educators all of whom were sampled purposively. All the six student teachers were doing their TP in schools in Safari Zone (not actual name) in Kenya. I generated data through semi-structured interviews, observations, and analysis of selected documents.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. In Chapter One, besides this general introduction, I give a detailed description of the Kenyan context where this study was conducted in terms of the education system, teacher education and teaching practice. I also highlight the main issues in teacher education in the rest of Africa as reported in some literature from the region; then, I explain my position as a researcher in that context. In Chapter Two, I present a literature review, which situates my study within the theoretical and research trends in the field of teacher education (TE) generally, the narrower field of English language teacher education (ELTE) and the practicum. In Chapter Three, I present the methodology starting with an explanation of the research design, then highlighting the negotiation of access, selection of participants, pilot study, data generation process and data analysis. I also explain why I consider my study trustworthy.

In Chapters Four and Five, I present the findings of the study on the pedagogical practice and nature of support, respectively. Chapter Six is the discussion of the findings and in the last chapter, I make some general conclusions about the contributions, limitations and implications of the study, ending with suggestions for further research and an epilogue.

1.2. THE KENYAN CONTEXT

1.2.1. Introduction to the Kenyan context

The Republic of Kenya is an independent country in East Africa neighbouring Uganda and Lake Victoria to the West, Tanzania to the South-West Sudan and Ethiopia to the North, Somalia to the East and the Indian Ocean to the South-East. Out of a population of about forty million people, there are Africans, who form the majority with forty-two different linguistic communities, Asians, Europeans and Arabs. Most Kenyans, especially those who live along the borders with other communities, are bilingual or even multilingual.

Kiswahili is spoken as a native language by one of the communities in Kenya although it has assumed the status of the language of wider communication and is also used as the National Language. That is to say, it is the language that is most widely spoken in Kenya and is seen as the language of national unity. As such it is the language used for business, politics and other socio-economic interactive situations involving multi-language communities. English is the official language; that is, all official government documents are written in English and all official transactions also take place in English. It is spoken at different levels of competence by almost all Kenyans who have had at least a primary level of education.

1.2.2. Kenyan Education system

Kenya follows the 8-4-4 system of education where after pre-primary education, learners study at primary school level for eight years, those who proceed to secondary school study for four years and those who proceed to university take various professional courses with the shortest being four years. Between one stage and another, there is a national examination which learners must pass before they can proceed to the next level. It is estimated that less than ten percent of students who sit the secondary school examination (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education - KCSE) proceed to study at university level. Generally, education is regarded as playing a very important role in the country and attracts a very high budget in government expenditure. The goals of education in the country, which I will refer to later in my discussion, are listed by (KIE, 2002:vi) as being to achieve the following:

1. foster nationalism, patriotism and promote national unity
2. promote the social, economic, technological and industrial needs for national development,
3. promote individual intellectual development and self fulfilment
4. promote sound moral and religious values
5. promote social equality and responsibility
6. promote respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied cultures
7. promote international consciousness and foster positive attitudes towards other nations, and,
8. promote positive attitudes towards good health and environmental protection

The aims of secondary education are generally extracted from these national goals, with emphasis on providing learners with opportunities to “acquire necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for the development of the self and the nation and develop intellectual ability for enquiry, interaction, critical thinking and rational judgement” (KIE, 2002:viii). English is the medium of instruction in all subjects from the fourth year of primary education except for Kiswahili and other languages. It is common nowadays to find many schools where English is the medium of instruction from year one, especially in the major towns where most classes are made up of linguistically heterogeneous learners. English is also a compulsory subject in all schools. In this research, I was concerned with the education of teachers who were being trained to teach English at the secondary school level upon qualification. Therefore, in the next section, I briefly discuss English language teaching (ELT) at secondary school level.

1.2.3. English Language Teaching in Kenyan secondary schools

According to the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) - the branch of the Ministry of Education (MoE) that is responsible for designing the curriculum and syllabuses for schools in Kenya - the main goal of ELT at the secondary school level is to enable school leavers be competent communicators in the English language (KIE, 2002). Accordingly, the MoE recommends that English language be taught using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The MoE does not give details of how

this approach should be enacted in schools. However, it explains that the emphasis must be on communication because “English is the official language of communication in Kenya...It is also the pre-eminent language of international communication. Consequently, those who master English reap many academic, social and professional benefits” (KIE, 2002:6). The emphasis on communication is also reflected in the objectives of ELT at secondary school level as written in *The Secondary English Syllabus* (KIE, 2002:viii). It says that by the end of the course, the learners are expected to be able to:

- Listen attentively for comprehension and respond appropriately
- Speak accurately, fluently, confidently and appropriately in a variety of contexts
- Read fluently and efficiently and appreciate the importance of reading for a variety of purposes
- Make an efficient use of a range of sources of information including libraries, dictionaries and internet
- Use a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary correctly
- Communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing
- Think creatively and critically

Since I will make reference to the English language teaching method in Kenyan secondary schools later, I briefly explain how CLT is defined in ELT literature, at this point. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been one of the most popular developments in ELT from the 1970s to date. It is an approach that regards communication both as a means and an aim of language learning. Its key concern is to develop a learner’s communicative competence, which proponents define as the ability of the learner to use language in an accurate, fluent, coherent, appropriate and meaningful way. The main emphasis in CLT has been to explain and put into practice syllabi and procedures which involve learners in activities that facilitate communication, as a strategy to improve their own communicative competence; depending on the linguistic needs and learning styles within the learners’ sociocultural, educational and political contexts (Savignon, 2002).

In the field of ELTE, however, it has been recognised that there are different syllabi and practices in different contexts that claim to be following CLT (Hinkel, 2006). Also, Richards and Rodgers (2001) explain that there exist different methods within the communicative approach. These include Whole Language Learning, Competency Based Teaching, Collaborative Language Learning and Task Based Language Teaching.

CLT has been criticised by some scholars in ELT. For example, Bax (2003), in an article which is entitled *The end of CLT*, argues that CLT has increasingly paid minimal attention to contexts of language learning. Kumaravadivelu (2006a) notes that research findings have shown that CLT does not offer the communicative opportunities it claims, since communication may either take place or fail to take place in every classroom situation. His criticism is summarised in the following words:

In fact, a detailed analysis of the principles and practices of CLT would reveal that it too adheres to the same fundamental concepts of language teaching as the audiolingual method it sought to replace, namely the linear and additive view of language learning and the presentation – practice – production vision of language teaching. The claims of distinctiveness are based more on communicative activities than on conceptual underpinnings (Kumaravadivelu, 2006a:63).

Despite the criticisms, at present, CLT still thrives in many parts of the world, in different interpretations as manifested in course books and other teaching resources. Moreover, it has exercised a great influence on language learning and teaching both in terms of research and classroom practice (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). I do not want to dwell much on the merits and demerits of CLT because teaching methodology is not my main focus in this study. However, the brief explanation above is necessary because it forms a key point in my analysis (later) about whether the student teachers were prepared for it at university, and how they were supported in implementing CLT during TP since it is the approach recommended by MoE (see 1.2.5 and 6.3.1).

Another key aspect of ELT in Kenya is that the MoE stipulates that ELT must be taught using the *Integrated Approach*. This involves teaching English language and Literature in English (which were earlier on taught as two separate subjects) as one subject in the school curriculum. The *Kenya Secondary School Syllabus* explains the issue of integration as follows:

This syllabus adopts an *integrated approach* to the teaching of English language. Integration means merging two autonomous but related entities in order to strengthen and enrich both. Through exposure to literature the learner will improve their language skills. They will not only enrich their vocabulary but also learn to use language in a variety of ways. Similarly, an improved knowledge of the language will enhance the learner's appreciation of literary material. On yet another scale, integration means that no language skill should be taught in isolation. Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills should complement each other... It has been

established that teaching language structures in isolation is not only boring, but it also tends to produce learners who lack communicative competence (KIE, 2002:3).

Another key document of the MoE: *Secondary English Teachers Handbook* gives examples of how the *integrated approach* could be implemented in practice. It says: “while teaching reading, the teacher may reinforce the mastery of grammar by pointing out instances of effective use of grammatical items already taught. The teacher may also generate writing tasks and debates from the reading material” (KIE, 2006:3). Eventually, the learners are simultaneously tested in both English language and Literature; for instance, a question testing writing skills may require that candidates refer to material in a set literature text. The *Integrated approach* has similarities with what Richards and Rodgers (2001:109) call the *Whole Language Approach*. According to these writers, this is “an approach based on key principles about language (language is whole) and the skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking) should be integrated in learning”.

Some Kenyan writers have written in support of the integrated approach. For example, Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) argue that the “integrated approach to language teaching considers language and literature as integral parts of a single subject matter in which Literature is treated as an integral part of English language usage; while language is reinforced, sensitised and enriched meaningfully by good literature” (p.145). This study did not seek to delve into the merits and demerits of the integrated approach. Nevertheless, it is a key aspect of ELT in Kenyan secondary schools which students of English Language Teacher Education (ELTE) in Kenya ought to be prepared for during the coursework at university. During my study, one of the issues of interest was to analyse how the student teachers (STs) were learning to implement the integrated approach during their practicum and how they were being supported in that learning by their supervisors and cooperating teachers. I explain the findings with regard to this later in this thesis (see section 4.3.1).

Another issue regarding ELT in Kenya that is worth explaining at this point is that the school contexts in which teachers operate are very diverse, in terms of English language competencies of the learners. First, there are learners of English in the so called *national secondary schools* (my italics) who are very good in English

language. Learners who join such schools are selected from amongst pupils who have excellent grades in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) exams, usually with an excellent score in English language as well. For such pupils to score that well, most of them are likely to have got very good support from their parents or guardians in terms of books and extra tuition. Most such learners also live in major cities in the country and other urban areas where they regularly communicate in English and are also exposed to modern media in English such as internet, newspapers and television. The point then is that learners of English in national schools are usually exceptional in English language and other subjects.

Secondly, there exist *provincial* and *district secondary schools*, respectively, where learners would range from very competent and/or average to very weak in English language, depending on a number of factors such as grades in KCPE and others. The point is that most of the classes for English language learners in these schools are likely to be of widely mixed abilities. The scenario poses huge challenges for teachers of English, more so for student teachers of English on teaching practice. Some of these challenges have been described by some writers (e.g. Kembo-Sure, 2003; Trudell and Schroeder, 2007).

Kembo-Sure explains that one of the key challenges facing the teacher of English is how to deal with the cultural diversity in most of their classes, especially how to motivate learners to use the language in class while also controlling the assumed better competencies of learners from some linguistic communities. He argues that teachers of English are therefore faced with the challenge of “upgrading their social consciousness (and that of their learners) ... so that they develop sensitivity to the linguistic differences and their social meanings in the African societies”. Kembo-Sure argues further that such social consciousness, among learners, “can be achieved by using different text-types and doing critical analysis of the forms and contextual meanings of the texts” (p.210).

Trudell and Schroeder (2007) add another challenge the English language teachers face - the fact that they are usually trained in Western approaches and methods of language teaching, some of which are not relevant to the classes they will teach. They argue that “pedagogical realities in many African classrooms often prohibit the

application of these teaching methods (for example)... it should not be assumed that the approaches to reading which have been popularised in the West will succeed in making independent readers in an African social and linguistic context” (pp.166–167). The issues raised above pose challenges for Teacher Education in Kenya. In the next section, I describe the process of teacher education in Kenya.

1.2.4. Teacher Education in Kenya

According to the latest Kenya National Policy Framework of Education, Training and Research, the government recognises that teachers are an important entity in the pedagogical process. Therefore, Teacher Education (TE) requires serious attention because knowledgeable teachers are needed to produce competent students (Republic of Kenya, 2004). In a recent publication, the objectives of TE in Kenya have been outlined as being to ensure that the graduates acquire knowledge of relevant content, methodology, professionalism, appropriate attitudes and deep understanding of teaching, which will enable them to diagnose and develop the educational competencies required of their learners. Such knowledge would enable graduate teachers to diagnose and develop the educational competencies required of the learners and that would enable such learners to interact effectively in the society or to continue to the next level of education (Republic of Kenya, 2004).

Most of the secondary school teachers are educated in the universities unlike their counterparts for the primary schools who are trained in Primary Teacher Training Colleges. A small percentage of secondary school teachers are trained in Diploma colleges. The student teachers trained at university level are selected by the Joint Admissions Board (JAB) from a pool of applicants and assigned to various universities. The students admitted through JAB have access to loans by the government to pay tuition fees and other requirements such as accommodation and books.

However, a number of student teachers apply directly for admission through what is called the Privately Sponsored Students Programme (PSSP). These are candidates who do not attain the points set by JAB to enable them qualify for government

funding but have got the required grades for university admission in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE). Once admitted, all the student teachers, whether selected by JAB or through PSSP attend classes together and are taught by the same lecturers.

The number of students admitted for the Bachelors degree in Education (B.Ed) is usually very high, compared to those in other programmes at university. For example, in the university whose student teachers participated in my study, the Joint Admissions Board (JAB) admits about four hundred students of B.Ed Arts in one year and a similar number for B.Ed Science. Then, about four hundred more are admitted into the Privately Sponsored Students Programme (PSSP). The university therefore has more than one thousand student teachers of Education in any one academic year.

The situation then is that for courses that are commonly taken by all student teachers of education in a particular year group, (e.g. General Methods of Teaching) the classes are usually very large even when the students are tutored in groups. Typically, one such group is made up of between two hundred to three hundred students. The issue of large student numbers is a matter that has even been recognised by the government of Kenya. In the Policy Framework of Education, Training and Research, it is acknowledged in the statement that “currently, the class sizes in universities are too large for lecturers to pay special attention to methodology and therefore the quality of the teacher is compromised. In addition, a lot of students take education courses for lack of alternatives” (Republic of Kenya, 2004: 64). The challenges described above with regard to the high number of student teachers are even more relevant to English language teacher education, which is the centre of interest in this study, and which I now turn to.

1.2.5. English Language Teacher Education in Kenya

English Language Teacher Education (ELTE) attracts one of the highest numbers of students in the Kenyan universities. In the university I studied, the numbers are usually about two hundred for JAB admitted students and an average of two hundred

for the PSSP students. One reason for this is that English language teachers are more likely to get employed faster than teachers of other arts based subjects because English is a compulsory subject in schools, hence more teachers are required for it.

All public universities in Kenya have very high numbers of English language student teachers and the B.Ed curriculum in ELTE is generally the same. On the other hand, lecturers specifically involved in ELTE in Kenyan state universities are usually very few in relation to the number of students. In the university whose student teachers participated in my study, for example, there are only four ELTE specialists. Suffice to add that the same lecturers teach and supervise Post Graduate Diploma, Masters and even PhD students. The lecturers are few because the employment of new lecturers rarely keeps up with the number of students who are admitted. As we shall read in the findings chapters later (see 5.4), the number of student teachers and lecturers certainly had an impact on the teaching practice exercise

At university, the ELTE students are offered coursework by two schools: School of Education (SoE) and School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS). In the schools, different courses are also offered by separate departments. For example in SHSS the courses are offered by the departments of Linguistics, and Literature. In SoE there are also different courses offered by the departments of Educational Psychology, Educational Foundations, Educational Communication and Technology and Educational Administration, Planning and Curriculum Development.

Therefore the content courses are offered by SHSS while the pedagogical courses are offered by the SoE (See Table 1.1 for titles of the courses). In addition, the student teachers also take common courses offered by the School of Human Resource Development (SHRD), courses such as Communication Skills, Quantitative Skills etcetera. These courses are taken by all the students at the university regardless of their specialisations and are intended to broaden the student teachers' understanding of general developmental issues beyond their professional leanings, and to improve their communication skills in English language. The entire coursework for the ELTE students is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Titles of ELTE courses at one Kenyan University

FIRST YEAR	
<i>First Semester:</i> Introduction to Education 1 Introduction to the Study of Language Introduction to the Syntax of English. Introduction to Literary Appreciation Introduction to Literary Genres Communication Skills 1 Quantitative Skills 1	<i>Second Semester:</i> Introduction to Education 2 Language and Society Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology East African Oral Literature Introduction to the Short Story in Africa Communication Skills 2 Quantitative Skills 2
SECOND YEAR	
<i>First Semester:</i> General Education Psychology Philosophy of Education General Methods of Teaching English Phonetics The English Word and Morphology. Literary Theory and Criticism Literature and Language use State Society and Development	<i>Second Semester</i> Educational Media and Resources History of Education Curriculum Development The Art of Writing The Structure of English Sentence 1 East African Fiction and Drama East African Poetry
THIRD YEAR	
<i>First Semester</i> Human Growth and Development Economics and Planning of Education The Structure of English Sentence 2 English Prosody Oral Literature Theories of Literature and Stylistics <i>Methods of Teaching Literature</i>	<i>Second Semester</i> Educational Measurement and Evaluation Public Speaking / Organizational Communication Functional Varieties of English The English Group European Fiction Kenyan Fiction and History <i>Methods of Teaching English</i>
FOURTH YEAR	
<i>First Semester</i> Sociology of Education and Comparative Ed. Environmental Education Educational Administration and Management Discourse Analysis Advanced English Phonetics and Phonology Practical English Stylistics The African Novel Major Literary Movements Teaching Practice (12 weeks)	<i>Second Semester</i> Ed. Media Practicals and Micro-Teaching Human Behaviour and Learning Advanced Research and Writing Skills Advances in Description of English Grammar English Semantics and Pragmatics Editing Skills in English Modern African Poetry Studies in Post Colonial Discourse

Looking at Table 1.1 above, it is noticeable that there are only two courses - offered during the third year - that could be said to be specifically focused on ELT, especially in terms of how to integrate content and methodology. I have italicised the courses referred to. The arrangement where ELTE courses are offered by different university departments is not unique to the university whose student teachers participated in my study. Indeed, all the students of education in Kenyan universities are taught in a similar manner and this is not different from the other universities in the East African region. Perhaps the point to emphasise then is that I established

(during interviews with the teacher educators) that there is no formal coordination between the two schools (Humanities and Education) on what the ELTE students need to cover. Actually, except for a few courses, the ELTE students largely take the same courses as those specialising in Literary Studies or Linguistics.

Also, from the Table, it is discernible that there is more emphasis on foundation courses and general procedures of teaching than on subject (ELT) specific content. In addition, each of the courses I have identified as ELT-specific lasts for only one semester of about twelve weeks. It is clear that the time is not enough to cover the topics satisfactorily. The aspects of ELT that are meant to be covered in these courses are listed in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2. Course outline of the *Methods of Teaching English/Literature* course

- Objectives of Teaching English/Literature
- Theories of Teaching English/Literature
- Teaching and learning Activities in English/ Literature
- Teaching Listening and Speaking Skills/Teaching Poetry
- Teaching Reading and Writing Skills/ Teaching Oral literature
- Teaching Grammar/ Teaching the novel, Short Stories and Drama
- Assessment in English/ Literature
- Integration of English and Literature
- Teaching Resources in English/Literature
- Lesson Planning and writing the Scheme of work for English/ Literature

Source: Course outline obtained from one Educator

Another aspect of ELTE that is important to mention at this stage is the issue of Micro-teaching. During the semester preceding the practicum, ELTE students take a course called *Educational Media Practicals and Micro-Teaching* which generally starts with the students designing teaching aids in groups to be assessed by teacher educators. They are then expected to practise teaching of/with their peers after which they teach small groups of peers, again observed by their educators. This aspect of TE is relevant to my study because it is considered by the university as one of the key preparations for the practicum. During my study, however, it emerged that this micro-teaching and other aspects of preparation for teaching practice were not conducted satisfactorily according to the student teachers, and this in turn had an effect on their learning during their practice (see 6.3.1). In the next section, I explain the general conduct of teaching practice in Kenya.

1.2.6. Teaching Practice in Kenya

The Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Kenya (for secondary school teachers), as already pointed out, takes four years with a Teaching Practice (TP) component which usually lasts for one school term of between ten and twelve weeks. Currently, most universities in Kenya post their students on TP after the completion of their coursework. The TP patterns generally follow the conceptualisation put forward by two educators (Ayot and Wanga, 1987). In their book *Teaching Practice*, they explain the rationale for TP and give guidelines on the roles student teachers, teacher educators and experienced teachers need to play during the exercise. The writers indicate that TP is a period during which the student teachers learn to put theory learnt at university into practice while educators assess their mastery of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The following statement reflects what could be considered as the main rationale for TP in Kenya:

Teaching practice is the most important aspect of training an individual to become a professionally qualified teacher and it is during this period that the student teacher is able to go out and put into practice all the theories he has learnt. Drawing from his wealth of knowledge, the student teacher should be able to apply his learning in the school environment. Indeed it is at this time that the student teacher, for all practical purposes, experiences what it means to be a member of a school community, to be involved in school activities and classroom teaching. Here the student teacher is considered a teacher since he takes full control of a class or classes allocated to him and all the duties that the head of the school, the deputy head or the head of the department may deem fit to assign to him. When he is teaching, the student teacher becomes answerable to the head of his school as well as the university or college and the two institutions must coordinate with each other for the smooth running of the teaching practice. Both the university or college and the school consider him a full member of the teaching staff for the duration of the time he is in that particular school (Ayot and Wanga, 1987:1-12).

The *Teaching Practice Guide* – written by the university to regulate the work of student teachers and teacher educators does not contain the objectives of TP in general or for ELTE students in particular. These objectives are not contained in the B.Ed programme either. However, in the introduction to the guide there is a statement which appears to be the main objective of TP. It says student teachers are placed on TP “so that they may achieve growth in knowledge, skills and attitudes as required by the teaching profession for which they are being prepared” (*TP Guide*, 1990:iii). In the absence of clear objectives of TP, it is possible that aspects of practice may be interpreted differently by the participants, as was demonstrated by inconsistencies across the schools during my study (see 5.3.2 and 6.3.2). One objective was clear, however, that during the practicum, the student teachers would

be assessed by their supervisors and they had to pass the TP in order to qualify to teach. If they did not pass, they would be required to repeat the practicum. The focus on assessment influenced the practice of the student teachers in fundamental ways as I explain later in the findings and discussion chapters.

There are some other aspects of the TP in Kenya that are important to explain further because they seemed to affect the practice of the student teachers. These are how the students were prepared for their placements, how they were posted and the responsibilities of the key participants during TP. I explain these below.

1.2.6.1. Immediate preparation for TP

The entire ITE coursework before the practicum could be considered as preparation for practice. However, in this section, I am concerned specifically with the preparation immediately preceding the placements. The University had a programme of briefing the student teachers on what was expected of them during the practicum. Such a programme was usually designed to take place only a few days before the start of the TP exercise to enable student teachers to remember what was expected of them. From my reconnaissance before the study, I established that such a briefing would normally involve advising the student teachers on general regulations governing the practicum. It would also involve distributing some stationery such as files and lesson planning books to them. This was also a session for student teachers to sort out any problems regarding their posting with the lecturers in charge of the zones where they had been posted to teach.

Nevertheless, I found out during my initial meetings with the student teachers in my study that, in their case, the briefing did not run as expected. According to them, they were not briefed at all at university on what exactly would be expected of them during TP. They informed me that they only had one meeting with supervisors and it was mainly for distribution of the stationery, announcement of telephone numbers to call when they had problems with posting and the places where they could take their teaching timetables for collection by the educators. The educators actually confirmed that the briefing for the student teachers did not take place as planned.

The practicum was the first real practice the student teachers had in teaching. That was the first time they were actually teaching real learners (not peers) for the required time of forty minutes. The fact that the immediate preparation of the student teachers for TP as explained above was not done satisfactorily seems to have contributed to the several challenges the student teachers experienced during their TP, as I report in Chapter Four.

1.2.6.2. Posting of student teachers for TP

The practicum was administered by a Teaching Practice Committee headed by an overall TP coordinator. The committee was hosted in the School of Education and was composed of representatives of different departments. The committee divided the country into zones and appointed zone coordinators. The zone coordinators were in charge of the posting of student teachers and supervisors within their areas of jurisdiction. In terms of the posting of student teachers, first the students proposed the schools they wished to be placed in. Then, the zone coordinators went to the schools to request places. Normally they asked for teaching places from Form 1 to 3 in secondary schools that were easily accessible by road.

After receiving reports from the principals of the schools on how many student teachers they would be willing to take for which subjects, the zone coordinators posted the student teachers appropriately, trying in the process to consider the student teachers' preferences. Sometimes the principals accepted fewer than the number of student teachers who had shown interest in their schools. Then it was up to the zone coordinator to look for alternative schools for the students, even those they had not chosen. Sometimes principals asked for more student teachers than those who had applied to their schools. That is how the coordinators accommodated student teachers who had missed their chosen schools.

Again, during my initial meetings with the student teachers, they told me that they preferred schools located where they could easily get accommodation. Some of them opted to live together so as to share costs and resources. Among the student teachers in my study, four of them got posting to their preferred schools. One did not get his

chosen school but was happy to be in his school of posting because it was within the area he had wanted to be. However, he feared that he would face huge challenges because this was a *national* school (see 1.2.3). The other had a problem with posting and had to look for a school and inform his zone coordinator later. It may be important to explain that it was not a policy of the university to post student teachers of the same subjects in pairs or groups. However, some of them ended up in the same schools by chance, and in some cases they were - by coincidence - teachers of the same subject as was the case for two student teachers in my study.

I explain my sampling later in detail (see 3.2.4), but it may be necessary to point out at this stage that the student teachers in my study were not sampled according to their placement schools. However, the different schools they were posted to offered unique experiences which impacted on their pedagogical experiences in various ways. This raised the issue that posting of student teachers during TP may require more thought than seems to be given at present (see 5.3 and 7. 5.2).

1.2.6.3. Responsibilities of the participants in TP

The *TP Guide* explains the roles of the student teachers, university educators and cooperating teachers during TP. It states that the student teachers are expected to prepare a scheme of work (teaching plan for the whole term), lesson plans and to teach full classes under the guidance of the cooperating teachers. They are also expected to decide on the classroom activities and teaching materials, choose the textbooks to use (where the school has more than one set), and administer tests, mark them and give learners appropriate feedback. In short, they take full charge of the classrooms where they are responsible for the learning during that placement, right from the beginning of the school term. The *TP Guide* states clearly that “during the term the student teacher takes responsibility for all the lessons allotted to him or her” (p.2.). ELT student teachers are expected to teach twelve to sixteen lessons per week. Moreover, they are expected to take an active part in involving learners in co-curricular activities related to the teaching of English language such as school debates, poetry recitation and drama (*TP Guide*, 1990: iii).

University teacher educators from the school of education go to the secondary schools to assess the student teachers and grade them. They inspect their schemes of work, lesson plans, test papers, actual teaching procedures, teaching aids and any other resources. The supervisors observe the student teacher's lessons, make written notes and then advise them after the lesson (Ayot and Wanga, 1987; Brown and Nacino-Brown, 1990). In terms of the actual supervision, Ayot and Wanga (1987) state as follows:

The supervisors usually give advice to the student teacher when they have observed him teach his class or classes. Their comments are based on the student teachers' good performance as well as his weaknesses. Where the student teacher is weak, advice on how he can improve is given, maybe changing to a different method, approach or technique, depending on the nature of the problem (p.14).

For the purpose of awarding marks, the teacher educators use an observation form (see appendices 17-22). The ELT students are not necessarily assessed by ELTE specialists because of the large numbers already mentioned (see 1.2.5.). Ideally, it is expected that out of the anticipated four to six assessments, at least one of them ought to be by a specialist.

The university recognises that it is extremely difficult to frequently (and effectively) supervise the student teachers considering the large numbers and the costs involved. Serious emphasis is therefore placed on the cooperating teachers. These are the regular teachers who are officially responsible for the classes that the student teachers have been assigned. It is also expected that the student teachers will observe a few lessons taught by the cooperating teachers and learn from them during their practice. Nevertheless, there are no clear guidelines on how the advice by the cooperating teachers ought to be given. The *TP Guide* gives a very brief statement on the role of cooperating teachers as quoted:

The headmaster will appoint a member of staff to advise and guide the students during their period in the school...When the assessor visits the school, he should invariably report to the school office first. If the head or cooperating teacher wishes to see him, they can leave word to the effect (*TP Guide*, 1990:4).

It is important to note that the student teachers and the cooperating teachers in the study did not have copies of the *TP Guide* I have repeatedly referred to in this section. The educators had read the guide but the university does not issue copies to the other participants. Also, the placement schools were not informed of what

exactly the student teachers were supposed to be involved in and what should remain the responsibility of the cooperating teachers. In addition, the university had no formal coordination with the schools other than securing placements for their student teachers.

1.2.7. English Language Teacher Education in the rest of Africa

I have not been able to find much literature on ELTE from the broader African context. Nonetheless, from my discussions with colleagues from different parts of Africa, especially from Anglo-phone countries, and the little literature I was able to access, I have been able to establish that the ELTE and TP programmes are generally similar. That is, coursework takes place at a university where student teachers are taught content and pedagogy by different faculties and at some point they are posted for TP in schools, usually at the end of coursework but in some institutions, in second and third year of study (e.g. Karugu, 2007; Tembe, 2006; Robinson, 2003; Vavrus, 2009).

Some useful insights into TE in developing countries including Africa are given by Avalos (2001) who emphasises the need for reforms in TE in line with the current “conceptualisations of teacher education around the world” which she describes as “progressive” (p.460). She identifies one of the difficulties of such reform which needs to be dealt with as the existence of “several centres of control” in TE, noting that: “In many countries...change will thus depend on the relative power over teacher education of national/state governments, the institutions themselves and the individuals within them” (p.463).

A similar situation has been identified by Robinson (2003), in the light of TE in South Africa, which is also undergoing reforms. Robinson identifies lack of adequate research literature on TE in South Africa and the rest of Africa as a challenge to the proposed reforms. One of the aspects of TE where she says the need for research is urgent is how student teachers could be supported to develop reasoning skills that might enable them to deal with the complex situations in which they will be expected to work upon qualification. She explains that in such contexts teacher learning needs to include aspects that are often ignored in TE institutions, like “the ability to

evaluate and manage information in an era of information overload” (p.21) and to use such information effectively in teaching their learners.

Tembe (2006) also comments on the need to improve TE in Uganda where English continues to play an important role as a medium of instruction in schools and the language of official communication. She also notes the need to equip teachers with the ability to deal with the great demands on them such as that of having to teach English as a second language (ESL) to learners with poor exposure to English language in schools with scarce resources and having to adopt a communicative and integrated approach to teaching which poses great challenges for most teachers. Degado (2007) discusses the TE organisation in Ethiopia which is similar in some aspects to the Kenyan context and probably representative of most African countries. With particular reference to the practicum arrangement, he identifies three major problems which often lead to its inefficiency:

Firstly, student teachers were not given sufficient time and support to develop their skills and knowledge about school teaching for there was only four weeks teaching practice carried out towards the end of the four year education program. Secondly, the main objective of the teaching practice was just to enable student teachers to demonstrate their ability to act like teachers in putting into practice the knowledge they gained in their education courses. Thirdly, the supervision by teacher educators during that time was superficial and it was meant only to judge the performance of student teachers according to a prescribed checklist. Consequently, student teachers were more concerned about passing the assessment rather than disclosing concerns about the improvement of their teaching experiences (pp.343-344)

Rubagumya (1994) presents a review of the major concerns in ELTE in Africa based on contributions of writers from a number of countries. These include inappropriate language teaching practices, impact of policy, the need to enhance critical awareness of teachers and the need for further research in teacher education and language teaching. Rubagumya summarises these concerns in one statement. He says: “most contributions in this volume have one common concern: the fact that present language education policies and practices in Africa lead to the entrenchment of the status quo, most contributions argue the need for change” (p.155).

Some of the reforms suggested by these writers have since been implemented in some countries, especially through projects supported by international development partners such as the World Bank (Vavrus, 2009). However, Vavrus’ points out

another problem regarding ELTE in Africa: the tendency to embrace approaches in both TE institutions and schools without careful planning. She gives an example of such a problem based on an ethnographic study on the perspectives of various actors in TE on the *social constructivist* (italics in original) approach to teacher education that was implemented by one TE institution in Tanzania. This was done, supposedly, in consistency with World Bank and government policy of changing from the teacher-centred and content-based teaching to learner-centred and competency-based approaches.

Based on analysis of this ethnographic study, Vavrus reported that the implementation of the social constructivist approach to pedagogy both at the TE institution and the schools was quite problematic because a number of factors were not addressed. One of the factors was the dominance of the teacher-centred methodology of teaching which was also influenced by an examination system that tested mainly memorisation of facts (such as mastery of grammatical structures). Another factor was a lack of shared understanding of the social constructivist pedagogy and how it could be implemented by the teacher educators, the policy makers and even the sponsors of the projects that encouraged the student centred approaches. She also identified the large number of learners at secondary school level, the increasing demand for teachers which led to shortening of the length of TE programmes and the lack of appropriate material infrastructure for implementing the approach. Vavrus suggested the need to consider all the contingent factors upon which constructivist pedagogy depends and the extent to which it can be successfully introduced in any context. She proposed a *contingent constructivism* that allows for “a broad range of pedagogical alternatives for demonstrating ‘excellent teaching’ in teacher education programmes and policies” (p. 310).

One aspect of Vavrus’ study that is of more immediate relevance to my study is that, she reported a successful implementation of a different approach to supervision of student teachers during the practicum, which was more appreciated by both the teacher educators and the staff as more supportive:

The first week of the BTP (Block Teaching Practice) is a time for the student teachers to adjust to the new surroundings and to get to know the routines of the secondary school. The second and third weeks are when the supervisor observes the student teacher and meets with him or her afterward to give feedback but not evaluate. It is

only during the final two weeks of the BTP when supervisors are supposed to complete the detailed evaluation form...Supervisors were taught to give feedback that is constructive and to make evaluations formative rather than punitive (p. 306).

Vavrus explained that in the other TE institutions in Tanzania and most of the African countries, supervision of TP generally involved the teacher educators telling the student teacher what to do; evaluation was conducted from the beginning and was mainly judgemental. In this respect, Vavrus' study, though not entirely on the practicum indicates that there are aspects of the constructivist approach that have an immediate positive impact on teacher learning and as she recommends – the main issue is that for successful implementation of reforms in TE or in pedagogy in schools in Africa, it is important for the educators, policy makers and sponsors to take cognisance of the prevailing contextual circumstances and to plan carefully.

The few publications from Africa I had access to and which I have reviewed above indicate the need for reforms in TE education generally and ELTE in particular. They also show that even where such reform is implemented, there is a need to do so with care, especially bearing in mind the existing contingencies. Of more immediate relevance to my study, clearly, there is very little previous research in ELTE and on the practicum from the broader African context. Next, I explain the rationale for my study based on the foregoing description of the context.

1.2.8. Rationale for my study based on the context

The need for research on aspects of Teacher Education in Kenya has been expressed by policy makers, school principals and educators in line with the proposed restructuring by the MoE (MoE, 2005). The Kenya government, in the new Policy Framework of Education Training and Research, has set one of its aims as to “improve the quality and relevance of teaching, learning and research at universities...by 2010” (Republic of Kenya, 2004:60). The document goes on to specify that:

It is imperative that the secondary teacher training programme is restructured to enable the trainees to acquire sufficient subject mastery and pedagogy (Republic of Kenya, 2004:64).

Several scholars have also consistently suggested the need for re-structuring of the TE sector in Kenya. In a keynote paper titled *Challenges of Education in Kenya in*

the 21st Century, a renowned teacher educator emphasised that teacher education in Kenya required more research that could identify aspects that needed reform so that the TE programmes could allow student teachers to “develop *reasoning* (intellectual) skills (my italics), values and ability to create and recreate new working habits and values for changing lives in a dynamic environment” (Digolo, 2006:xxv). Digolo argued further that teacher educators tended “to over emphasise the textbook approach” and called for the need to “use research results when making policy decisions affecting education” (ibid, p. xxvii). Similar sentiments were echoed by another leading educator in Kenya (Kafu, 2006) who argued that:

Since the mid-seventies, (Kenyan) teacher education curriculum has remained narrow and rigid in nature and scope...It emphasises the training rather than the preparation of teachers. There has been no attempt to make it responsive to the emerging trends in the society in general and education in particular... Consequently, a new teacher education curriculum should be designed to address the new demands of the society and those of the teaching profession. That is, the new curriculum should produce a pragmatic and creative teacher with the capacity and ability to manage efficiently the challenges of education in this century (p.11).

More recently, Karugu (2007) has also suggested the need for reform of the TE sector in Kenya especially in terms of harmonising the courses at the university with the curriculum in schools and taking care of the socio-economic changes that have been taking place internationally such as the expansion of Information Communication Technology (ICT). He argues that:

Since in both B.Ed and PGDE teacher training programmes there is a surplus of candidates, there is a need to seize the opportunity to re-structure the programmes. The situation for such an exercise is opportune in the sense that there is no pressure for satisfying manpower needs which in the past tended to constrain any efforts made towards reform (p.5).

Karugu’s views have been echoed by Rutto-Korir et al. (2007) who have pointed out that there is a need for further research that might suggest ways through which coordination between universities and schools could be instituted especially with relevance to TP. Rutto-Korir et al. observe that “there does not exist a clear formal arrangement between the School of Education and the schools...In fact, the direct involvement of the Ministry of Education is not visible at all” (p.54).

A recent study conducted in Kenya by Hardman et al. (2009) reveals the potential for enhancing teacher knowledge through a well organised and effectively supported school-based TE, though this study was not specifically about teaching practice and focused on trained and experienced in-service teachers. The study was an evaluation

of a large scale project in Kenyan primary schools called Strengthening Primary Education (SPRED), which had run from the year 2001 to 2005. The aim of the project was “to improve the quality and cost effectiveness of teaching and learning in primary schools through teachers acquiring new skills that promote active learning” (p.67). The training of selected teachers was done through long distance modules, face to face interactions with tutors in seminars and six-month teaching practice in schools which involved classroom observations of lessons and follow up discussions on all aspects of teaching various subjects with tutors. The key aim of the teaching practice was to enable the teachers to be reflective, defined as “encouraging critical thinking on beliefs and classroom practice” (p.68). Following the evaluation, Hardman et al. (2009) reported that:

Overall, the findings of the current study support the view that school-based training offers the most potential for changing pedagogic practices, particularly in developing countries like Kenya where many teachers lack training or are under prepared because of the quality of their pre-service training (p.80).

In ELTE at secondary school level specifically, Barasa (2005), based on a study that he carried out on *English language teaching in Kenya: Policy, training and practice*, observes that “the departments of languages, linguistics and literature and the faculty of education...lack a coordinated plan that could address effectively the needs of training an English Language teacher” (p.42). He concluded that there was a serious theory-practice gap in this approach to training teachers. Consequently, Barasa suggested that there is a need for further research in different segments of ELTE in Kenya, particularly on TP to find out how student teachers could best bridge the theory-practice gap. Still with relevance to ELTE, Ng’ongah (2002) also cited the need for more studies on pre-service language teacher learning following his study on the relevance of LTE coursework at a particular university to the classroom needs in Kenya. Based on his study, Ng’ongah concluded that the ELTE coursework did not adequately prepare student teachers for the secondary school curriculum. He stated that “Whereas ELTE courses gave student teachers some facts about language in general, and English in particular and also some aspects of pedagogic knowledge, the secondary school English courses aim at developing felicity in English in both the spoken and the written modes” (p.174).

The few studies I have referred to above, which are the only relevant ones I could find from Kenya during my literature review, focused on qualified teachers and not student teachers, as already indicated. It is clear from this section that there is need for more research in Kenya in TE in general and ELTE in particular so as to contribute information that may be used in the ongoing and proposed reforms by the universities and MoE. I see my study as relevant at this time of need for empirical information that may be partly drawn upon as a basis for reforms in the TE sector.

With particular reference to the practicum, it is clear that TP is considered to be a very important stage in TE. It is expected that TP provides the student teachers with the opportunity to learn to use their knowledge of content and pedagogy in a holistic form, having been taught by separate departments at university (Ayot and Wanga, 1987; *TP Guide*, 1990). As I stated earlier, it is assumed in the Kenyan context that the practicum enables the student teachers to “achieve growth in knowledge, skills and attitudes as required by the teaching profession for which they are being prepared” (*TP Guide*, 1990: iii). In spite of these expectations and assumptions, my literature search in all the Kenyan universities, at the Kenyan Institute of Education (KIE), MoE, bookshops and internet did not reveal any previous research specifically on TP. My study provides empirical insights into practice and support during TP, which could be considered during reforms in this important aspect of TE. As part of my explanation of the Kenyan context, it is important to explain my position as a researcher, which I do in the next section.

1.2.9. My position as researcher in the Kenyan context

I am a lecturer in one of the public universities in Kenya (not the one whose student teachers and educators participated in my study). I belong to a School of Human Resource Development (SHRD) which offers courses that are common to all the students at the university including the students of education. I have mainly been involved in teaching *Communication Skills in English* to students of Education as well as other courses such as *Public Speaking Skills* and *Organisational Communication Skills*. Although I teach at the university, I have not supervised student teachers on TP.

Prior to becoming a lecturer at university; I was a teacher of English language at secondary school level for more than ten years. Then, I served as a cooperating teacher to ELTE students on TP. I also served as a head of department at one school for five years and as a headteacher in another school for three years. In the process of my work in schools, I dealt with student teachers, teacher educators and cooperating teachers from several universities during TP.

Perhaps it is also necessary to explain that I have been trained as a teacher of English language in Kenya twice. Initially, I attended a two-year Diploma in Education Course (Dip. Ed) and later, I had a three year course as a B.Ed teacher. On both occasions, I participated in TP as it was a requirement for the qualification. In addition to all these personal experiences, I have studied Language Teacher Education (LTE) at Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) Degree level in Kenya and the present study is a PhD (by research) project also in TESOL. In the course of my postgraduate studies, I have read widely the literature on Teacher Education in general and LTE in particular.

The reason for this explanation is to acknowledge that, inevitably, I have views about the subject of my research which are not necessarily consistent with views of the people involved in ELTE in my context. For example, when, I look back at my Diploma training I feel that it offered better preparation for English language teachers than the degree programme, especially as the student teachers had a more appropriate preparation for their practice and support during TP in schools. I also acknowledge that now (particularly arising from my postgraduate studies) I appreciate Teacher Education and Teaching Practice as being more complex than the more common view that they are meant to equip teachers with best methods to use when they become teachers. Nevertheless, I believe my personal views and experiences have not negatively affected my study. This is because I did not aim to carry out an evaluation of either TE or TP but to understand what the TP experiences enabled the student teachers to learn and the issues that influenced their learning. Furthermore, I took sufficient care in my research design to try to eliminate any personal biases and enhance the trustworthiness of the study (see 3.6).

1.2.10. Summary

In this chapter, I have described the Kenyan context where I generated data, highlighting the systems of education, teacher education and teaching practice. I have also highlighted some similarities between Kenya and the rest of Africa in terms of LTE and TP. Finally, I have explained the rationale for my study and acknowledged my position in the Kenyan context. I outline the main issues that have come out of this chapter in Table 1.3. The next chapter situates my study within literature in the field of ELTE in general and TP in particular.

Table 1.3. Outline of the main issues arising from the context of the study

- In Kenya English is used as the official language, the medium of instruction and is a compulsory subject in schools
- Kenya follows the 8-4-4 system of education
- MoE recommends that English language be taught using the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology and the integrated approach
- The main aim of TE in Kenya is to enable graduates acquire a deep understanding of both content and pedagogy
- ELTE students are offered courses on content and pedagogy by different departments. Only two courses are ELT specific
- TP comes at the end of the coursework and during TP, the student teachers take full teaching responsibility for classes assigned to them
- The university expects the student teachers to be supported by cooperating teachers and assessed by teacher educators
- TE and TP in Kenya are generally similar in terms of organisation and practice to the rest of Africa

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

As I stated in the previous chapter, the aim of my study was to analyse the pedagogical experiences of ELTE students during the practicum. Therefore, it is necessary to situate the study within the theoretical and research literature in teacher education (TE), language teacher education (LTE) and teaching practice (TP). In this review, I start with mostly theoretical literature (not necessarily based on empirical evidence) then, later, I review research literature particularly on the practicum. To start with, let me briefly highlight some recent developments in teacher education.

2.2. TEACHER EDUCATION

Prior to the 19th century, most teachers acquired skills on the job without any formal preparation. Proper advocacy for TE started in the 19th century and gained momentum during the second half of the 20th century. It is now common in many parts of the world to find formal TE programmes, variously referred to as *teacher training*, *teacher preparation* or *teacher education* (my italics) (Korthagen, 2001). Korthagen explains that these terms have sometimes been used in literature to imply different approaches to TE. For example, *teacher training* has sometimes been associated with the view of teaching as a series of skills which people can be trained to master, and which they in turn use in the classrooms. Korthagen says further that *Teacher preparation* is in some cases considered to imply the idea of school based teacher development, while *teacher education* has been defined as a process of developing student teachers' knowledge of principles, procedures and attitudes informing teaching and learning of a specific subject at a particular level of education. The dilemma for teacher education over the years has been choosing between the approaches to TE implied in the terminologies explained above or balancing between them in any TE endeavour (e.g. Richards, 2008; Tomlinson 1995). I am aware that in some publications the terms are used interchangeably. However, in my study, I use the term *teacher education* (my emphasis) consistently according to the definition above.

In many contexts all over the world, TE currently takes place through coursework in a university (or college) and an in-school phase called Teaching Practice or practicum (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Richards, 2008). Generally, TE has been recognised in many countries around the world as having the potential to make a major contribution to the education sector as a whole, especially in the achievement of the goals of education set by these countries. However, TE is conceptualised and organised differently by various institutions all over the world so that it is difficult to discern uniform patterns (Freeman, 2001).

The literature review suggests that generally TE has shifted from the way it was viewed in the 1960s and early 1970s. Then, the main aim of TE was considered to be to equip student teachers with a set of (best) skills that they would in turn use to produce the (best) desired learning in their learners (e.g. Freeman and Johnson, 1998; Korthagen, 2001). Freeman and Johnson state that that trend, generally referred to as *process-product paradigm*, “looked at teaching as the quintessential behaviours that could be linked to specific learning outcomes and argued that these teaching behaviours if carried out effectively on a widespread basis would ensure student learning” (p.399). Over time, the aim of TE has shifted as several research findings have contributed new understandings. Currently, the focus is now on *teacher learning*, which targets what teachers need to know and how they can be supported to learn it, so that they are able to effectively deal with the different complex situations in which they are likely to find themselves in various contexts (Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Freeman, 2002; Johnson, 2006; Richards, 2008).

One of the reasons for this shift in aims of TE has been the recognition that teaching is more complex than initially assumed (Tomlinson, 1995; Whitecomb et al., 2008). Tomlinson (1995) explains that teaching is a complex skill because there is no one technique, method or approach to teaching that can be said to be the best in all contexts. He argues further that even in the same school, what works in one lesson, or class may not work in other similar situations as any teaching act usually includes several decisions, actions and considerations and these vary from one group of learners to another. Hence, there may be many more or less appropriate ways of teaching even within one national, curricular or institutional context. Tomlinson concludes that “teaching therefore requires extensive, skill, knowledge, flexibility,

judgement and wisdom” (p.29). Whitecomb et al. (2008) concur and add that other than differences in contexts, the process of teaching involves several intellectual and emotional activities going on simultaneously in a teacher’s mind. They argue that:

We work on and through our thoughts and emotions and engage students and invite their thinking. Thinking and feeling are integral to the teaching act and interwoven throughout our learning lives. In learning, we encounter frustration, pleasure, discomfort, satisfaction and fulfilment. In teaching, we experience empathy, disappointment, delight and degrees of anxiety. We rarely address this admixture of thinking and feeling in academic segments of our teacher education programs (p.269).

The main point arising from the foregoing review so far is the recognition that teaching is a complex skill and TE needs to take cognisance of this complexity by preparing teachers to be able to reason about the principles and procedures involved in teaching. As I have already indicated, my study focused on ELTE, hence from the next section, I turn to a review of literature specifically in that area. Some of the literature will refer to teaching of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), Second language teacher education (SLTE) or more generally, language teacher education (LTE). I will use the term ELTE (which is my focus) for consistency.

2.3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Developments in general TE, perhaps as expected, have fundamentally influenced conceptualisations in ELTE. For example, according to Richards (2008), like general teacher education, ELTE also started as a distinct field of knowledge in many parts of the world in the 1960s when writers began to propose specific methods of teaching and how teachers could be prepared in such methods. Richards states that during that time, up to early 1970s, “training involved the development of a repertoire of teaching skills acquired through observing experienced teachers and practice teaching in controlled settings” (p.160). Over time, the field of ELTE has expanded considerably and in the process has drawn on principles from general education, linguistics, applied linguistics and other fields such as Psychology, Sociology and even Anthropology (e.g. Freeman and Johnson, 1998; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Richards, 2008).

Also, like in general TE, it is currently recognised in ELTE that teaching is a more complex job than previously thought. Consequently, in most recent literature it is

emphasised that the main business of ELTE is to facilitate teacher learning (TL), defined as development of student teachers' pedagogical knowledge in terms of awareness and reasoning of principles, procedures and attitudes necessary for teaching a language at a particular level of education (e.g. Freeman, 2002/1989, Johnson, 2006/1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Richards, 2008/1998). For example, Freeman notes that "teacher learning is the core activity of teacher education" (2002:1) and argues that "the ways in which such learning – known as *teacher learning* (italics in original) is organized and facilitated make a difference in terms of its durability and long term efficacy" (2001:608).

Nevertheless, while scholars seem to agree that teacher learning is the essence of ELTE, what exactly prospective teachers need to learn and how they might be supported to learn remains a point of debate in the field. Indeed, such debates have extended to whether teacher learning especially in TE institutions such as universities is really necessary (Zeichner, 2006). Zeichner notes debates on more aspects of TE that have been going on in the United States of America. He claims, that "there have been vigorous disagreements about the proportion of education or non education courses that should be present in a teacher education programme, about how long a programme should be and about whether it should take place at undergraduate or graduate level" (p.332). He acknowledges that such debates are healthy, will persist for a while and some of the questions raised may only be answered through further research in the field. In the last three decades or so, the major debates in language teacher education (especially those that I consider to be of immediate relevance to my study) may be said to have broadly revolved around *models* and the *knowledge base* for ELTE. In the next section, I briefly review literature on the models before turning to the discussions of the knowledge base.

2.3.1. Models of ELTE

There are many models of LTE that have been proposed in literature (e.g. Grenfell, 1998; Grossman, 1992; Wallace, 1991; Woodward, 1991). One of the most cited expositions is that by Wallace (1991). Wallace suggested that there were mainly three models of ELTE or close variants that are practised in many institutions all

over the world. These are the craft model, applied science model and the reflective model. In brief, according to Wallace, in the *craft model* a student teacher is trained by imitating what are considered “best” practices as shown by an experienced teacher (considered an expert) in a given subject. The student teacher might learn such “best” teaching techniques through observation of the expert teacher who would in turn observe the student teacher and correct him accordingly.

In the *applied science* model, which Wallace argues is the most common of the three, theory about principles and practices supposedly based on research or knowledge of experts in the field are presented to the student teachers in a TE institution; then they are in turn expected to apply this theory in practice. Finally, in the *reflective model* the student teacher is presented with information on principles and procedures but encouraged to consider alone or with others those principles and procedures that might be relevant in particular contexts and/or situations. The student teacher might then try out these principles and procedures and make personal judgement on what seems to work or not under certain circumstances.

Wallace discusses the advantages and disadvantages of these models and concludes that the reflective model might prepare teachers better for the complexity involved in pedagogy as it is likely to facilitate their ability to reason about their work and make decisions on what is suitable in the different contexts and circumstances that they might be dealing with. Other writers in LTE such as Grenfell (1998) and Ur (1996) have also written in support of the reflective model, especially (like Wallace above) emphasising the view that it is likely to engage student teachers in thinking about their work hence developing a deeper understanding of ELT more than the other models.

An analysis of the model of the TE programme in which the student teachers in my study were involved places it in the *applied science* model based on Wallace’s typology. The student teachers spent four years at university obtaining theoretical knowledge which they were expected to apply in practice during the practicum, as I explained in Chapter One (see 1.2.5). In my study, the review of the models of ELTE is relevant in as far as there is a possibility that the model in use in my context might have had an impact on the student teachers’ practice during their placements. Other

than the debate on what might be the right model of teacher learning in language teaching, another debate that has received considerable attention is on what has come to be known as *the knowledge base* for ELTE, which I review next.

2.3.2. Knowledge base for ELTE

This debate has featured prominently in both theoretical and research literature in the field. For example, Morton et al. (2006) conducted a review of research literature on TE as part of a project that was focused on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). They reported that recent research in ELTE has been mainly concerned with “identification of the aspects of teacher education which have the greatest measurable impact and desired outcomes, particularly on student learning” (p.20). Morton et al. also identified a research interest that sought to establish what teachers need to learn and therefore what should be included in TE curricula. They concluded that there was no unanimity on what teachers needed to learn and how they ought to be prepared for their work.

The lack of unanimity notwithstanding, in the last two decades or so there have been several proposals (in general TE and ELTE) on what teachers need to learn. These proposals are relevant to my study in the sense that I am inevitably interested in analysing whether what the student teachers in my study learnt during their practicum is consistent with the current views on what such learning ought to entail.

One of the proposals on this issue that has been of considerable influence in both general teacher education and LTE was made by Shulman (1987). Shulman proposed a knowledge base consisting of “content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values” (p.8). Shulman’s framework has been cited as useful in identifying the curriculum for TE (e.g. Morton et al., 2006; Darling-Hammond 2006 a and b) but has also been criticised as being rather general and suggesting a typology of learning outcomes for teachers in all contexts, a situation which may not be tenable (e.g. Knight, 2002; McCormack et al., 2006).

Shulman has since adjusted his framework considerably. In a paper titled *how and what teachers learn: a shifting perspective*, Shulman and Shulman (2004) have proposed a different model which emphasises *understanding* as the core of teacher learning. They say that teacher learners ought to be helped to develop an understanding of “disciplinary/content/interdisciplinary knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge..., curriculum..., classroom management and organization, classroom assessment..., and learners...” (p. 262).

There have been other conceptualisations of the knowledge base for teacher learning in the TE literature. Turner-Bisset (2001) suggested a knowledge base that is more or less similar to Shulman’s, though with a few additions such as “knowledge of models of teaching and knowledge of self” (p.13). A briefer framework has been proposed by Darling-Hammond (2006a:303; 2006b:83) and consists of three categories, namely: “Knowledge of *learners* and how they learn, knowledge of *curriculum* content and goals...[and] understanding of *teaching* in light of the content and learners to be taught, as informed by assessment and supported by classroom environments”.

There have also been proposals specific to ELTE; for example, Richards (1998), identified six items as making up what language teachers ought to learn. These are: “*theories of teaching, teaching skills, communication skills, subject matter knowledge, pedagogical reasoning and decision making; and contextual knowledge*” (p.1). Richards acknowledges that there is no unanimity on what should make up the content in ELTE and attributes this to the fact that the field “draws on a variety of disciplinary sources, including linguistics, psycholinguistics, and education” (ibid). Citing a similar diversity of the sources of knowledge in ELTE, Freeman and Johnson (1998) suggested a knowledge base that they explained as follows:

The knowledge base needs to address: (a) the nature of the teacher-learner; (b) the nature of schools and schooling; and (c) the nature of language teaching, in which we include pedagogical thinking and activity, the subject matter and the content, and language learning. Taken together, these domains outline a systemic view of the knowledge-base that emphasises their constant and critical interdependence...We believe that the three domains that we propose, which we abbreviate here as the teacher learner, the social context and the pedagogical process, more accurately and appropriately capture the complex terrain in which language teachers learn (p.406)

Another proposal in ELTE has recently been suggested by Malderez and Wedell (2007). They identify three kinds of knowledge that teachers need to know which includes: “*knowing about* the subject, the aims and role of the subject within the wider curriculum...*knowing how* to use strategies to support pupils and their own learning...and *knowing to* use appropriate aspects of the other kinds of knowledge while actually teaching” (p.18). There are several other suggestions on the knowledge base for TE in general or ELTE in particular that I cannot exhaust in this review. From the proposals on the knowledge base that I have reviewed so far, it is noteworthy that there are many aspects that are recurrent and which, arguably, any programme that prepares teachers ought to pay attention to.

Considering that my study is on pedagogy in ELTE, I have identified recurring aspects of the reviewed knowledge bases that could be said to be immediately relevant to pedagogy. I identify these under a mnemonic *TEACHER*, which organises these concepts systematically for my purposes while also making them relatively easy remember. These are: Theories of pedagogy in ELT, English language content (subject matter), aims and ends of ELT, contexts of ELT, how to teach English language (classroom presentation), evaluation in ELT and reasoning ELT. Next, I briefly review literature on these aspects of the knowledge base drawing mostly from literature in ELTE and only where necessary drawing on literature in general TE. It will be clear that there are several overlaps in these details, hence there are really no hard and fast lines between them. Their categorisation in this sense is only meant to focus attention to one key issue at a time.

2.3.2.1. Theories of pedagogy in ELTE

I use the term *theory* to mean an “abstract set of claims about the units that are significant within the phenomenon under study, the relationships that exist between them and the processes that bring about change” (Mitchell and Myles, 2004:6). A theory is an effort to reach a reasonable and general set of suggestions relying on research findings, which tend to describe the phenomenon under study (Macaro, 2003). Theory tends to be concerned with general issues rather than specific issues about a phenomenon. Therefore individual cases that are not consistent with these

general issues are mostly ignored. In this way, inevitably, theory can be considered as partial (Widdowson, 2003). Richards (1998) argues that ELTE is always informed by some theories whether stated explicitly or not. He states that:

At the core of SLTE is a theory of teaching that provides the theoretical basis for the program as well as the justification for both the approach to teaching as well as the instructional practices students are expected to develop in the program. Teachers also teach within the context of beliefs that shape their planning and interactive decisions. Theories of teaching are therefore central to how we understand the nature and importance of classroom practices (p. 2).

Many writers in ELTE appear to concur that it is important to expose student teachers to the different theoretical positions that exist concerning language teaching, without necessarily prescribing one that should be followed (e.g. Macaro, 2003; Mitchell and Myles, 2004; Richards, 2001/ 1998). In ELTE, theory (as defined above) appears to exist at many different levels. First, there is the level of major theoretical movements in Education or Psychology such as Behaviourism, Cognitivism or Constructivism (Mitchell and Myles, 2004; Roberts, 1998) and the Sociocultural approach (e.g. Johnson, 2006; Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Secondly, there are theories at the level of approaches and methods of teaching such as grammar translation, the audio-lingual method, natural approach or the communicative approach (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Thirdly there are theories at the level of what we might call *view* of teaching such as didactic, discovery or interactionist view (Richards, 1998). Furthermore, there are theories at the level of techniques, for example, on issues such as wait time after questions, pair or group work, explicit or implicit teaching and others (Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Larsen-Freeman, 2000). I do not find it necessary for the purposes of my study to review literature on all these levels of theory in more detail. The key issue to reiterate is that it is necessary that ELTE student teachers at B.Ed degree level and above are made aware of these forms of theory and helped to discuss their merits and demerits in different circumstances and contexts. I appreciate that in some contexts, policy makers prescribe theories at different levels. For example, in the context of my study, I explained earlier that the Ministry of Education recommends that CLT and the integrated approach be used in ELTE (see 1.2.3). Even in such contexts, I would argue that student teachers still need to be given opportunities to discuss different options offered by the chosen approaches.

It is important to note however that theory is only one aspect of the knowledge base and should not be considered as the most important aspect of teacher learning. Similarly, it ought to be recognised that knowledge of theory does not necessarily translate into appropriate practice. The point then is to support student teachers to become aware of and be able to make sense of theory (Johnson, 1996b). As Ur (1996), argues, a “theory is a hypothesis or concept that at best generalises... it may cover a set of practices...or it can describe phenomena in general terms...or it can express a personal belief” (p.3). Therefore, it is important that teacher educators also involve their student teachers in discussing the relationships between the theories they learn to practice in their contexts.

Related to the issue of theory, it is also important to support student teachers to identify and discuss the beliefs that they hold from their many years as learners of English language and learners of teaching. In ELTE literature, these types of beliefs based on learners’ own experiences and memories of learning English language or learning to teach are referred to as *apprenticeship of observation*, a term initially coined by Lortie (1975) and which has been discussed by many writers since (e.g. Borg, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006a; Imig and Imig, 2006; Johnson, 1999; Roberts, 1998). Roberts (1998) explains that “the impact of these experiences is that student teachers come into their programmes with memories and perceptions about teachers and teaching, which may intervene in their learning to be teachers” (p.66). In many cases, these beliefs of teaching are implicit although some student teachers may hold very strong views about particular ways of teaching (Richards, 2008).

While these images about how people learn and teach may enable some people to start teaching immediately after school, largely through imitation of the way they were taught, these images are usually not based on an understanding of the principles of pedagogy and might not be easy to change during teacher education or even actual teaching (Borg, 2004). These images “tend to support conservatism in teaching, promulgating the notion that *teachers tend to teach the way they were taught*” (Johnson, 1999:19), (italics in original). Consequently, student teachers in teacher education programmes need to be assisted to develop awareness of their perceptions formed during the apprenticeship of observation, to think about them against what they learn in their coursework, deal with any emerging conflicts and

shape alternative views (Johnson, 1999). The next issue student teachers would need to learn during an ELTE programme, according to literature is content knowledge.

2.3.2.2. ELT content (subject matter)

Content knowledge means the *what* of teaching - knowledge of the subject the teacher will be teaching the learners, in this case English language (EL). It includes the main topics and issues in the subject and its core divisions (Johnson, 1999). In ELTE, these might include some aspects from core linguistics such as phonetics and phonology, syntax, morphology, and language acquisition (e.g. Kumaravadivelu, 2006b). In some contexts, the ELTE subject matter is organised around the four skills of English though at a much more advanced level than they would teach in schools so as to give them a deeper understanding (e.g. Hinkel, 2006).

According to Shulman (1987:7) “teaching begins with a teacher’s understanding of what is to be learned and how it is to be taught”. Shulman noted that content knowledge ought to be quite deep to enable teachers to relate the subject to the learners’ experiences. He explained further that “in the face of student diversity, the teacher must have a flexible and multi faceted comprehension, adequate to impart alternative explanations of the same concepts and principles (Shulman, 1987:9). Similarly, Imig and Imig (2006) note that in many educational contexts “content knowledge is supreme”, as it is believed that a substantial content knowledge empowers teachers (p.288). Zeichner (2006) also cites reports in the USA as evidence that teacher education ought to pay “greater attention to the content knowledge to be taught by teachers”. Zeichner argues that although content knowledge need not be the sole focus of TE, many research reports in the US had shown that a lack of adequate content knowledge among graduate teachers could lead to poor teaching of the same subject.

In their review of research literature on ESOL, Morton et al. (2006) also cite several research findings that support the need for student teachers to have a deep knowledge of subject matter. They report that the research highlights the necessity to include systematic detailed content knowledge in TE programmes. They report the

research as revealing that teachers who do not have adequate knowledge of subject matter tend to be confined to content as presented in textbooks and may not deal with confusions of the students on content. Morton et al. report further that such teachers minimise opportunities for students to freely debate the content. However, the research literature they reviewed also indicates that content knowledge should be offered using methods that enable teachers to present it appropriately to their learners. They observe that “the issue is not how much subject matter is taught but how it is taught” (p.23). They propose that content ought to be taught to student teachers in ways which are congruent with the types of practices considered to be effective in teaching the subject to learners, while keeping in mind the obvious differences between contexts TE institutions and schools.

From the review in this section, it is clear that ELTE student teachers need to have a deep knowledge of content. Nevertheless, there are different views in the field as to what should constitute the content knowledge for ELTE students. One of the reasons for the lack of agreement is because the field is relatively new, having only started in the form it is known today in the 1960s (Richards, 2008). This has meant that there was a misconception that “language teacher education is generally concerned with the transmission of knowledge, specifically about applied linguistics and language acquisition, and the skills in methodology and related areas” (p.29). Consequently, the debate on what ought to constitute the content of ELTE has been going on in the field. Though various emphases exist in different areas, it is generally recognised at present that linguistics and applied linguistics or second language acquisition need not be the main content of ELTE (Freeman, 1989). It has also been suggested that content taught to student teachers ought to be related to the subject matter that the student teachers will teach in schools (Richards, 2008). The issue of subject matter for ELTE, however, is still matter of debate.

2.3.2.3. Aims and ends of ELT

Literature in ELTE has also emphasised the need to engage student teachers in discussing aims and ends of ELT generally and also in the contexts in which they are teaching. According to Malderez and Wedell (2007:15) knowledge of aims and ends

includes awareness about the “goals of education, values, philosophical and historical backgrounds” in a particular context. The authors argue that the way teachers perceive the goals of education in a subject like language teaching has a considerable influence on their pedagogy. They suggest that it is important to discern whether a given society aims at producing people who will “fit into the society as it currently exists...or at actualising the potential of each individual child” (p.8). They explain that although such aims and ends are usually not clearly stated in document form, they may be discernible from approaches, methods and techniques of teaching and also the syllabus design.

As part of aims and ends of ELTE, literature in the field also explains the need to involve student teachers in awareness and discussion of the ELT syllabus and how it relates to other subjects in the curriculum. Such discussion may also involve consideration of the syllabus at other levels of the education structure, the examination system, and interpretation of the syllabus by the key textbooks in a particular context (Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Freeman and Johnson, 1998). Freeman and Johnson argue that teachers should not be viewed simply as learners and implementers of content prescribed by policy makers. They need to have knowledge of curriculum matters including the ability to choose, arrange and design resources and teacher/learner activities for that content. Darling-Hammond (2006b) concurs that in spite of the existence of textbooks, or other teaching and learning materials, teachers need to be able to relate these to the learner and the context of learning.

In relation to this, literature in TE also points out the need to identify the reasons that might make it difficult for teachers and by extension the entire curriculum to successfully achieve the goals of ELT in a particular context. Such reasons include inadequate knowledge among planners and sometimes teacher educators and teachers on what the curriculum goals entail (Wedell, 2008). Wedell argues, for example, that “inadequate state system English teacher preparation is an important reason why public school systems are not meeting new ‘communicative oriented’ curriculum goals” (p.632). Accordingly, he suggests that it is important for curriculum planners and teacher educators to be clear about the aims of ELT as

stated in the curriculum. Also, teachers ought to be prepared effectively before any changes are instituted in ELT syllabus or method of teaching.

Overall, student teachers need knowledge of the ELT curriculum in their contexts; nevertheless, TE institutions must safeguard against exposing their students to narrow and localised aims that would make it impossible for them to work in other contexts or to adapt to any changes like those occasioned by developments in Information Communication Technology (ICT) or use of the internet (Krashen, 2008). Knowledge of context is another important aspect, as I review next.

2.3.2.4. Context of ELT

Context refers to the “ecology of learning”, that is, the classroom, the institution or the community where teaching and learning will take place (Johnson, 1999:24). According to Burns (1996) “greater attention to the social and institutional contexts of classrooms is required in studies of what teachers do” (p.98). Borg (2003) explains contextual factors as “the social, psychological and environmental realities of the school and the classroom....parents, principals’ requirements...society, curriculum mandates, classroom and school layout, school policies, colleagues, standardised tests, and the availability of resources” (p.94). He suggests that these are important to bear in mind by ELTE programmes. To Borg’s list may be added the institutional contextual factors identified by Richards (1998:12). These are:

- type of school, (e.g. state, or private, tertiary)
- administrative practices, (e.g. time management, teacher’s duties, workload),
- school culture (e.g. established beliefs and practices),
- school program (e.g. reception class, pullout class, transitional class),
- level of class (e.g. elementary, intermediate, advanced),
- teaching resources (e.g. syllabus, textbooks and other resources), and
- testing factors (e.g. role of school and national tests).

Teachers also need to have awareness of the contextual factors beyond their institutions. This is very necessary, especially in the work of language teachers who often work “with materials in which values, beliefs, cultures, or philosophies may disagree or conflict” (Crookes, 2003:45). This is because pedagogy takes place within a given society which has “governments, markets, property rights, laws, explicit and implicit practices and patterns of inequality because of race, gender,

religion and disability” (Grant and Gillette, 2006:294). Grant and Gillette therefore suggest that student teachers require the knowledge on how to discern their individual or group learners’ socio-cultural contexts and the impact this might have on the way they learn. These writers suggest further that one way of assisting teachers to deal with contextual matters is to encourage them to explore their own attitudes and beliefs about the context. Imig and Imig (2006) propose that for student teachers to develop better understanding and a healthy working relationship within their sociocultural contexts, it is necessary that they participate in co-curricular activities planned in collaboration with learners, before and after the lessons. They mention some of the activities as “writing groups, book clubs, and photography classes” and games (p.289).

A key aspect of context that is identified in some ELTE literature as an independent item of the knowledge base is *learners*. Learners in this case refer to the pupils of English language that the student teachers will teach. Certainly, teachers need to know the general characteristics of their learners and the individual differences they are likely to have (Malderez and Wedell, 2007). Teacher education programmes in turn need to enable their learners (student teachers) to develop what Darling-Hammond (2006b:85) calls *pedagogical learner knowledge*. Darling-Hammond captures the need for this kind of knowledge based on research on TE programmes that she carried out in USA:

Just as medical educators believe physicians cannot properly apply the techniques of medicine without understanding how the human body works, teacher educators in these programs believe that without direct knowledge of how learning occurs, teachers have no benchmarks by which to evaluate teaching ideas or materials, construct learning opportunities or adapt their teaching when students do not respond to a particular approach. Ensuring that teachers understand who they are teaching and how they learn empowers teachers to organise their practice around the pursuit of learning rather than just covering the curriculum or getting through the book (p.85).

Overall, in terms of context, the literature suggests the need to engage student teachers in thinking about issues at the level of cultural practices, types of institutions, resources available and people involved (Kumaravadivelu, 2006b). Kumaravadivelu gives a succinct summary on context when he states that: “it is impossible to insulate classroom life from the dynamics of political, educational, and social institutions” (p.44). Ultimately, student teachers must also be supported to learn the actual work of teaching, as I review below.

2.3.2.5. How to teach English language

I am using the phrase *how to teach* here to refer to the broader process of pedagogy including planning, actual presentation of content, classroom control and use of teaching aids or resources. This aspect of the knowledge base is in my view, what Shulman (1987) called *pedagogical content knowledge* (PCK) which he defined as “the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, or issues are organised, represented and adopted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction” (p.8). PCK has been discussed widely in general TE and ELTE literature and has been interpreted in various ways. I do not intend to engage in the debate of the notion or its relevance. My reference to PCK here is only as far as it emphasises the need for student teachers to have ability to combine knowledge of a particular subject matter and knowledge of pedagogy for the purpose of actual teaching in the classroom.

Richards (1998) partly refers to knowledge on how to teach in his category called *communication skills* which he defines as “the teachers’ capacity to express themselves clearly and effectively” (p.6). In the knowledge base proposed by Malderez and Wedell (2007), *knowing how* to teach is defined as development of teaching skills, possibly, through observation of and participation in teaching followed by discussions with more experienced colleagues. The process of knowing how to teach is described as cyclical involving many rounds of such observation, participation and discussion. Malderez and Wedell, however, posit that *knowing how* to teach is not enough and identify the category they call *knowing to* teach as the most important, of the three categories of knowledge they propose. They argue that “there can be little point in knowing about things and knowing how to do things if you cannot actually use this knowledge/these skills in the right place at the right time to support learning” (pp.24-25). Therefore, knowledge of how to teach need not be seen narrowly in the sense of giving student teachers procedures to go and use in schools but in terms of developing an understanding of what procedures might work in different circumstances (Johnson, 1999; Malderez and Wedell, 2007). Johnson argues that:

New teachers need procedural knowledge about the day-to-day operations of managing and teaching...However, more importantly, they need to place this procedural knowledge...within the context of alternative models of teachers and

teaching so as to avoid maintaining the status quo and, essentially, reproducing their own apprenticeship of observation (p.52).

Literature in LTE suggests that one possible way of developing student teachers knowledge of how to teach during their TE programme is *micro-teaching*. Micro teaching is defined as isolation of specific teaching skills that student teachers are trained to implement in a “micro” set up typically involving fewer student teachers, short duration and restricted behaviours (Roberts, 1998:15). Some writers have argued that micro teaching conceived in this manner serves no meaningful purpose as it takes a narrow view of teaching which fails to recognise the complexity of the teaching process (e.g. Fish, 1989; Grossman, 1990).

However, Wallace (1991) considers it as “one of a range of techniques for developing ‘experiential knowledge’ in a controlled and professional way” (p.87). Wallace justifies micro teaching as an opportunity for student teachers of language to safely experiment with teaching and in his view this experimentation does not stop the student teachers from thinking about new ways of teaching and enhancing their repertoire after they have qualified. He argues that such an opportunity has less risk and cost and therefore could offer a smooth transition to a more risky and costly learning stage for the teachers such as the practicum. Overall, the review in this subsection has shown that knowledge of how to teach is considered as a very important aspect of English language teacher education. Knowledge of evaluation is another key aspect as I review below.

2.3.2.6. Evaluation in ELT

This is another important type of knowledge that literature identifies as important to develop in student teachers. The word *evaluation* is used here to mean testing or formative assessment. Literature identifies two related and complementary forms of evaluation: testing of the learners and self-evaluation by the student teachers. To start with the former, it is suggested that student teachers mainly require the skill of formative assessment which is a continuous process of finding out if the learning outcomes the teacher had in mind in a particular lesson, topic or skill are being met (Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Maclellan, 2004).

Formative assessment (testing) has been cited to be of value to both the teacher and the learner. This ought to be perceived not simply as the technical task of how to assign grades but developing student teachers' understanding of how to continuously assess their learners and also to use the assessments as a guide for improvement of their practice (Intrator, 2006). Testing is also an important source of feedback to learners, their guardians and other partners in the education process. Therefore student teachers need to be supported during their TE to develop a clear rationale and deeper understanding of the testing process as it forms an important aspect of their teaching (Maclellan, 2004). Ultimately, testing or formative assessment also prepares learners for summative assessment which in many contexts takes the form of national examinations that learners have to sit for at the end of a level of learning. Such exams usually have a huge impact on pedagogy as learners and parents take them very seriously since they are normally a basis of promotion to the next level of education or even employment (Roberts, 1998). It is therefore equally important that student teachers become aware of how they might prepare learners for such summative evaluation, without making it the primary focus of their teaching (Stimpson et al., 2000).

Another aspect of evaluation discussed in ELTE literature is *self-evaluation*, defined as involving student teachers in checking their own progress in learning teaching (Bailey, 2006). This involves engaging the student teachers in being able to look back to their pedagogy *locally* and *globally* to check if there are any aspects they ought to improve. Locally means in relevance to specific lessons that they are teaching and globally means broader aspects of teaching such as planning, presentation techniques and even testing of learners (Stimpson et al., 2000). Richards (2008) suggests that "measures are needed that involve teachers in self-evaluation, that enable them to monitor their growth and development over time through the use of self-directed activities such as portfolios, narratives, and journal writing" (p.173). Bailey (2006) supports engagement of student teachers in self-evaluation as a way of entrusting them with their own learning. She also argues that through participation in self-evaluation during a practicum, the student teachers might on their own identify aspects of their teaching that they may wish to discuss with their supervisors, in the process making the supervisors' tasks relatively easier. She cautions, however that this is rarely the case and the student teachers need to be

supported in the self-evaluation process as well. Next, I review literature on the final aspect of the knowledge base for ELTE according to my mnemonic; that is, reasoning of pedagogy. I review this aspect in a little more detail than the others because it is a key concept in my discussion later in this thesis (see 6.2.2).

2.3.2.7. Reasoning in ELT pedagogy

Reasoning has been defined as a higher order cognitive skill that entails the ability to raise questions, seek information that addresses those questions, assess such information against the circumstances of practice and make appropriate decisions (Kuhn, 2009). Kuhn argues that reasoning is supposed to be a goal of all tertiary education and explains that with focused attention and consistent support, it is possible to develop some degree of reasoning, especially in adult learners. Richards (1998) identifies pedagogical reasoning skills as a key aspect of the knowledge base for ELTE. He defines Pedagogical Reasoning Skills (PRS) as the “complex cognitive skills that underlie teaching skills and techniques” (p.10)...the specialised thinking and problem solving skills that teachers call upon when they teach” (p. 86). Richards built on Shulman’s (1987) earlier conceptualisation of the term pedagogical reasoning. Shulman had defined pedagogical reasoning as “the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and background presented to the students” (p.15). Both Richards and Shulman argue that pedagogical reasoning is an important concept that all student teachers ought to be helped to develop. Richards points out that while it is generally assumed that student teachers learn pedagogical reasoning skills during the ITE programmes, whether this actually happens is “seldom explored” (p.86). He explains that ELTE ought to develop student teachers’ pedagogical reasoning so that they are able to:

- relate theories of language, teaching and learning to language teaching in actual situations,
- analyse pedagogical problems and develop alternative strategies for teaching,
- recognise the kind of decision making employed in teaching and to utilise decision making effectively in one’s own teaching (p.15).
- learn to think about the subject matter from the learners’ perspective,
- acquire a deeper understanding of the subject matter,
- learn how to present subject matter in appropriate ways,
- learn how to integrate language learning with broader curricular goals (pp.97-98)

Another writer who has written elaborately about pedagogical reasoning (PR) as an important aspect of teacher knowledge is Johnson (1999). Johnson, like Richards, argues that “reasoning teaching lies at the core of both learning to teach and understanding teaching” (p.1). She justifies the need for reasoning by the fact that teaching is a complex interrelationship between several variables including the teacher herself/himself, learners, the context, the curriculum and other factors. Johnson also identifies questions that might guide a teacher in learning the skill of pedagogical reasoning. She explains that such questions are neither hierarchical nor fixed but could be expanded as student teachers discuss with peers or teacher educators. The guiding questions are listed as follows:

- Whom am I as a teacher?
- Who are my students? How do they experience my teaching?
- What do I know about my teaching context?
- What do I know about the subject matter content that I teach?
- Why do I teach the way I do?
- What are the consequences of my teaching practices for my students?
- How do I make sense of theoretical knowledge?
- Who is my professional community?
- What sort of change do I see as fit for my own teaching? (p.139).

In a recent publication entitled *Understanding Language Teaching: from Method to Postmethod*, Kumaravadivelu (2006b) also emphasises that fostering reasoning ought to be the key goal in language teacher learning. He argues from the point of view that different contexts pose unique challenges for ELT; hence no teaching methods could be practised universally. In line with that argument, Kumaravadivelu has suggested that the field of ELTE is in a *postmethod* era when the main challenge to deal with is how to develop student teachers’ reasoning skills in language teaching. He argues that:

The challenge, of course, is how to meet the demands the concept of postmethod makes in its effort to advance a context-sensitive, location-specific pedagogy that is based on a true understanding of local, linguistic, sociocultural, and political realities. And, how to help prospective and practicing teachers acquire and sharpen the knowledge, skill, attitude and autonomy necessary to devise for themselves a systematic, coherent, and relevant theory of practice (pp.224-225).

More, recently, Phelan (2009) has argued that reasoning is a neglected aspect of TE and that this neglect causes the prevalence of what she calls *technical rationality* (italics in original) in teaching, where teachers unquestioningly implement prescribed procedures. She recommends the education of teachers in practical

reasoning, explaining that it is important that teachers understand what they are doing and why they are acting in a particular manner. She explains that “a teacher’s process of defending a decision takes the form of reconstructing the chain of reasoning that led from the initial desire or objective to the final decision to act” (p.96). In the process a teacher develops an ability to draw connections between what they are doing and why they are doing it. This is what she calls *practical reasoning* of pedagogy. Youngs and Bird (In Press) explain further that it is the process of pedagogical reasoning that transforms a teacher from the initial stage of focussing on survival and classroom management to mastery of pedagogy through increasing attention to improving the learning of their pupils.

The concept of pedagogical reasoning is, arguably, consistent with Shulman and Shulman’s (2004) recent concept of *understanding*, which I reviewed earlier in this section (see 2.3.2). It also includes the pedagogical issues raised in the three categories of the knowledge base proposed by Darling-Hammond, 2006b) also reviewed earlier. Furthermore, I would argue that understanding the relationships between *knowing about*, *knowing how* and *knowing to teach* as espoused by Malderez and Wedell (2007) are dependent upon how much the teacher-learners are engaged in pedagogical reasoning. In my view, the concept of pedagogical reasoning is in line with current understanding of how teachers learn as captured in recent ELTE literature. That literature increasingly questions the theory – application approaches where teachers are supposedly taught best methods to go and apply in schools. The field of ELTE currently views teachers as people who need to be supported to reason about their work and broaden their understanding of ELT (e.g. Borg, 2006; Freeman, 2002; Johnson, 2006; Richards, 2008). I will come back to some of this literature later in relation to how teachers learn during TP (see 2.4.2).

Another development in ELTE that could be said to be consistent with the concept of pedagogical reasoning is the notion of *reflection*. Reflection is a term that has been defined and used variously in different contexts and which does not have a unanimous definition (Grant and Gillette, 2006; Morton et al., 2006; Korthagen, 2001). Here I am defining the term as the ability of the student teacher to reason about his or her teaching in terms of how s/he has taught, the circumstances influencing that teaching and how they could improve the subsequent lessons. The

notion of reflection can be traced to Dewey (1933), cited by several writers on this subject such as Roberts (1998), Bartlett (1990) and Korthagen (2001). Dewey had defined reflective thought as:

Active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends... Reflection involves not simply a sequence of ideas, but a con-sequence – a consecutive ordering in such a way that each idea determines the next as its proper outcome ,while each outcome in turn leans back on, or refers to, its predecessors (Dewey, 1933:4-9; cited in Korthagen, 2001:54)

Dewey's ideas were developed in the field of TE in the 1980s and since then reflection has become a household word in teacher education, as a result of research activities aimed at improving teacher learning (Bartlett, 1990; Roberts, 1998). Currently, reflection is seen as an activity whose goal is to enable teachers to think of how they could make the learning experiences more meaningful to the learners (Grant and Gillette, 2006). In the process, the teacher is also enabled to reason about their own practice thereby possibly developing a deeper understanding of language teaching (Korthagen, 2001). Reflection as a goal of teacher education is thus considered to be a recognition of the fact that in teaching “professional competence is gained as part of an autonomous process...one in which an individual has some personal control. It is, therefore, a democratic version of the professional” (Grenfell, 1998:15). My point in the above short review on reflection is to make connections between pedagogical reasoning and some tenets of the notion of reflection. The main point of convergence is the need to facilitate teachers to constantly think about their work so as to develop a deeper understanding and review their beliefs and practices appropriately with the aim of improving pedagogy.

Pedagogical reasoning, as an important aspect of the knowledge base for language teacher education, also has support from some of the literature on learner autonomy, teacher autonomy and teacher-learner autonomy (e. g. Smith, 2003/2000; Sinclair, 2000). Learner autonomy is another term in teacher education that has been used to mean different things and since two writers I have cited above – Kumaravadivelu (2006b) and Grenfell (1998) have used the word *autonomy*, there is need to clarify what dimensions of the term I am referring to here.

Smith (2008) defines learner autonomy (following Dam et al., 1990:102) as “a capacity and willingness to act independently *and* in cooperation with others, as a social responsible person” (italics in original). Sinclair (2000) points out that the development of learner autonomy, as defined above, is generally agreed, in many contexts, as a necessary goal of education. She identifies several aspects of learner autonomy that are relevant to language teacher education. Key among these is the emphasis on development of capacity and willingness among learners to be responsible for their learning and the need to support learners to develop autonomy in this manner. Smith (2000) concurs and expounds on the concept of learner autonomy as it would apply to language teacher education. He argues that since it is currently generally accepted in the field that “learning constitutes an important part not only of becoming a teacher but also of continuing to be a teacher...learner autonomy is likely to be as necessary for ourselves (as teacher trainees, teachers or teacher trainers) as we consider it to be for language students. As teacher trainees, after all, we are students” (p.90).

Smith therefore suggests the need for teacher education programmes to consider the development of *teacher-learner-autonomy*, which is of more immediate relevance to the concept of pedagogical reasoning, as I have discussed in this section. He defines teacher-learner-autonomy as “ability to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others” (2003:9). This definition seems to be consistent with the arguments by other writers already cited above (e.g. Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Johnson, 1999; Richards, 1998) who have emphasised that pedagogical reasoning may empower teachers to think about the several issues that are relevant to their pedagogy and to how they could improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes in the process of teaching. In this light, therefore, it is possible to see a connection between pedagogical reasoning and teacher-learner autonomy. That is, engaging student teachers in pedagogical reasoning may promote in them capacity and willingness to engage in learning more about teaching and to use what they have learnt in teaching their learners. In this way, it may be expected that the student teachers might continue to pursue their own learning and improve their own teaching upon leaving the teacher learning institutions, which is, arguably, the ultimate goal of teacher education, as aptly summarised by Smith (2003) in the following statement:

In many contexts, it might be appropriate for teacher educators to focus directly on developing a willingness and capacity for self-directed teaching and teacher-learning, linked to induction into pedagogy for learner autonomy, while acknowledging and as far as possible preparing teachers to address the constraints which might operate in practice on their actual freedom in these areas...the promotion of these capacities is highly relevant, I would argue, because they...lie at the heart of what it means to teach 'appropriately' in any context. After all, if teachers do not know how to/or are not willing to engage in self-directed teaching and teacher learning, for their own benefit and that of their students, they are, of necessity, the 'victims' of received ideas (pp. 6-8).

Another development in TE that may be considered consistent with the concept of pedagogical reasoning is the notion of experiential learning. Experiential learning, like reflection in TE is another concept where there is no single definition that is unanimously agreed upon (Moon, 2004). Nevertheless, the basic tenet in this concept is that experience is important in professional learning (Kohonen, 2001; Kolb, 1984; Moon, 2004). Kolb, argued that in this theory "learning is described as a process whereby concepts are derived from and re-formed through experience" (1984:28). The relationship between the notion of experiential learning and pedagogical reasoning is the acknowledgement by its proponents that "experience alone is not, however, a sufficient condition for learning. Experiences also need to be processed consciously by reflecting on them" (Kohonen, 2001:27). Moon (2004) argues that having an experience and learning from experience are different and one may have one experience ten times and not learn even once from it. She explains that the reason for this is because learning is a complex process influenced by many events and is not necessarily describable in terms of the length of an experience. Kohonen's and Moon's views have been supported by another writer on experiential learning who has argued that people learn professional work such as teaching "by noticing and framing problems of interest to them in particular ways, and then inquiring and experimenting with solutions" (Fenwick, 2000:249). Fenwick identifies reasoning as a key activity before and after such experimentation and suggests that it is that deliberate reasoning about one's own practice that facilitates learning.

In closing the review on pedagogical reasoning, I wish to draw attention to two key issues: First is that the concept of pedagogical reasoning, arguably, cuts across all the aspects of the knowledge base in ELTE as presented in the literature that I have reviewed in this section. In relation to this, I must acknowledge though that the other

concepts I have discussed above as being consistent with pedagogical reasoning – such as reflection, learner autonomy or experiential learning are distinct areas that have been extensively discussed in TE literature and the definitions I have cited are only tenets that I consider relevant to my study.

Secondly, the concept of pedagogical reasoning appears to embody both the content and process of teacher learning in ELTE. That is, pedagogical reasoning appears to be recognised in the literature (implicitly or explicitly) as both a goal and a means of language teacher learning. Consequently, I find it useful to adopt as a conceptual framework in my study; especially in discussing what the student teachers could be said to have learnt from their practicum experiences (see 6.2.2). The literature reviewed in this section has raised a number of issues regarding the knowledge base for ELTE. I find it necessary to highlight the key points in summary form, as this will make it easier to refer back to them in the subsequent sections. This summary is contained in Table 2.1, below.

Table 2.1. Summary of the key aspects of the knowledge base for ELTE

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theories of pedagogy: Major theoretical movements in general education, approaches and methods in ELT and beliefs that student teachers hold from their prior learning• ELT content: English language subject matter for a particular level of education• Aims and ends of ELT: Goals of education and ELT in a particular context and awareness of ELT syllabus and how it relates to other subjects• Context of ELT: Environment of ELT e.g. institution, classrooms, learners and how they are inter-related• How to teach English language: Process of pedagogy including planning and actual presentation of content in the classroom• Evaluation in ELT: Testing learners and self-evaluation by student teachers• Reasoning in ELT: The ability to seek an understanding of the relationship between principles and procedures of ELT

In the next section I review literature on the practicum, which, as I pointed out in Chapter One, is the main focus of my study.

2.4. THE PRACTICUM (TEACHING PRACTICE)

Many institutions offering Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes require their students to take part in a teaching experience in a school or a college or any other learning institution where they can interact with actual learners. This is the session that is usually referred to as teaching practice (TP) or practicum (e.g. Crookes, 2003; Derrick and Dicks, 2005; Liston et al., 2006). In some literature it is called induction (e.g. Carver and Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Collinson et al., 2009) or internship (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2006b). As I explained in Chapter One, in this thesis, I use the terms teaching practice (TP) and practicum interchangeably to refer to these field placements of student teachers. According to Richards and Crookes (1988), teaching practice can also take place at the TE institution itself, for example, by teaching English language to other student teachers who have not learnt it before. They acknowledge however that the common situation is to have teaching practice in schools. Stones and Morris (1972) trace the history of TP to the early 20th century when teaching was largely considered as craft and learning to teach was thought to take place through imitation of a master teacher who acted as a model. They say that the general assumption then was that:

The master teacher is the master craftsman and teaching practice is viewed as a process of imitation in which the master teachers' teaching skills, performance, personality and attitudes are acquired by the student, through observation, imitation and practice. The arguments advanced in support of this approach stress its effectiveness, simplicity and commonsense 'if you want to become an effective teacher, do what the effective teacher does' (p.8).

Stones and Morris note that with time, some scholars started to question the imitation model. Since then, other interpretations of teaching practice begun to emerge, although earlier models are still used in various forms, in some TE institutions. Over time, the goals of TP have been considerably expanded and currently, there is a general understanding among teacher educators that the practicum is a session for continued teacher learning; that is, a continuation of the learning that student teachers began at the TE institution (e.g. Clarke and Collins, 2007; Crookes, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Farrell, 2008; Intrator, 2006).

Due to this recognition of TP as a continuation of teacher learning, many TE institutions currently integrate field placements into their programmes so that student teachers spend some time in schools practicing teaching while also taking some

courses at college (Roberts, 1998). Roberts argues that this is due to the recognition that the common scenario where the practicum comes at the end of coursework “contributed to serious lack of integration between abstract and practical course components” (p.74). In relation to this, in some contexts, suggestions or policies have been made for an entirely school based TE, arguing that it offers student teachers a more practical training for their work (e.g. Buitink, 2009; Collinson et al., 2009; McIntyre, 1994; Tomlinson, 1995; Zeichner, 2006). The different approaches to teacher preparation notwithstanding, there appears to be a general support in ELTE literature at present that the practicum is a very important aspect of language teacher learning. For example, Farrell (2008) states that “the practicum has come to be recognized as one of the most important aspects of a learner teacher’s education during their language teaching training programme” (p.226). Several reasons have been cited for importance of TP as may be summarised as on Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Importance of teaching practice based on TE literature

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The practicum is important as an induction into the profession (Collinson et al., 2009)• Teaching practice plays a role in education similar to internship or field attachment in other professions such as medicine, law, and engineering by offering exposure to practical classroom experiences in the context of a mainstream school (e.g. Purdy and Gibson, 2008)• “An important rite of passage in a teacher’s career is the intern experience” (Graham, 2006:1118)• “The practicum is a short term intensive opportunity for professional growth...In it, with institutional support and an extensive commitment of personal time and attention, teachers move forward in various aspects of their professional lives” (Crookes, 2003:20)• “For most preservice teachers, the TESOL practicum is considered to be one of the most important experiences in learning to teach” (Johnson, 1996:30)• Extended teaching practice could give the student teachers considerable “exposure to practices of experienced teachers” (Zeichner, 2006:333)• TP may provide feedback to the TE institution regarding the progress of their students and provide a basis as to whether they should be qualified to teach or not. It also enables the TE institutions to identify aspects of their programme to improve (Derrick and Dicks, 2005).
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From the above, it is clear that the importance of teaching practice is not in dispute in teacher education or ELTE specifically. What has not been explicitly stated in previous literature in the field is what exactly the student teachers need to learn from their field placements. In the next section, I have put together ideas from different writers on goals of the practicum.

2.4.1. Goals of the practicum

Leading on from my earlier review of the knowledge base of ELTE (see 2.3.2) the goals of teaching practice may be identified as follows:

- Learning to put *theories* into practice,
- Improving knowledge of *subject matter*,
- Learning to link pedagogy to *aims and ends* of education,
- Becoming familiar with the *contexts* of pedagogy,
- Practising *how to teach* in the classroom,
- Developing the skill of *evaluation*, and
- Learning the skill of pedagogical *reasoning*.

To avoid unnecessary repetition, I will summarise these goals of teaching practice after some writers (e.g. Johnson, 1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b and Knight, 2002) into two major components: learning the (1) procedures and (2) principles of teaching. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006b) “two major components of any systematic learning/teaching operation are the principles that shape our concepts and convictions, and the procedures that help us to translate these principles into a workable plan in a specific classroom context” (p.89). He suggests that looking at language teacher learning in terms of principles and procedures may help in analysing or describing the activities of an ELTE programme or the students involved in it. Kumaravadivelu defines these terms as follows:

The term, principles, may be operationally defined as a set of insights derived from theoretical and applied linguistics, cognitive psychology, information sciences and other allied disciplines that provide theoretical bases for the study of language learning, language planning and language teaching. The term thus includes not only the theoretical assumptions governing language learning and teaching but also those governing syllabus design, materials production, and evaluation measures. Similarly, procedures may be operationally defined as a set of teaching strategies adopted/ adapted by the teacher in order to accomplish the stated and unstated, short- and long-term goals of language learning and teaching in the classroom (p.89)

Kumaravadivelu’s definitions are consistent with that of Knight (2002), another writer who also explained the difference between these two components of professional learning. Knight argues that:

Analyses of knowledge often distinguish between two sorts of knowledge. One form is *procedural* or practical knowledge (italics mine) comprising sensori-motor and cognitive skills...A second is declarative, propositional or higher order knowledge. It includes...abstract knowledge of *principles*...Practical knowledge is primarily about learning to do and higher order knowledge is mainly about sense-making and meaning....The one does not guarantee the other. They are acquired, renewed and modified in different ways, which implies that where both are needed, then a range of learning methods is also needed (pp.230-231).

Ur (1996) also writes about the difference between principles and procedures, though within the broader related themes of theory and practice. He explains that principles are propositions and are necessary but need to be reviewed depending on the lessons learnt from practice. In the same way, procedures ought to be informed by clear conceptualizations of the propositions. Ur states that “a teacher who has formed a clear conception of the principles underlying a particular procedure can then use those principles to inform and create further practice; otherwise the original practice may remain merely an isolated, inert technique” (p.14). Ur therefore, like the other writers cited above, suggests the need to involve student teachers in discussing the relationships between principles and procedures as a way of enhancing their understanding of pedagogy.

Another writer who has made similar distinction between principles and procedures in learning is Moon (2004). Though not writing specifically about teacher learning, Moon reviewed previous research which illustrated that learning may be approached at two levels: *surface* and *deep*. She explains that typically, the surface approach to learning involves getting learners to memorise the procedures that are necessary to perform specific tasks without thinking much about them or trying to connect them to other aspects of the subject matter or the task. According to her, this approach leads to a shallow understanding of issues and is usually caused by pressure or anxiety usually associated with assessment. Moon contrasts this with a deep approach to learning in which learners are supported to understand the tasks or subject matter in much detail, connect it to other relevant issues and be able to transfer that understanding to similar or other contexts. She argues that:

the learner who takes the deep approach seeks the underpinning principles and endeavours to relate material to previous knowledge and understandings. She may question the logic and argument ...The deep approach, used in a reasonably strategic manner, not only tends to produce higher quality learning in assessment tasks but enable the recall of content in a more effective manner after a period of time (p.59).

I find the distinctions between principles and procedures useful for my review of the goals of the practicum and later analysis of what the student teachers in my study could be said to have learnt from their teaching practice (see 6.2). Therefore, I summarise what the literature says about the goals of the practicum in terms of learning of procedures and principles of teaching, as discuss further below.

2.4.1.1. Learning the procedures of ELT

Generally, the aspects of the knowledge base that I referred to as *how to teach English language* (see 2.3.2.5) are procedures of teaching, hence would be relevant here. That is, procedures of ELT mainly comprise the process of actual teaching in the classroom involving introducing a lesson, taking the learners through the stages of the lesson through activities such as reading, writing, speaking by using techniques such as questioning, pair work, group work or teacher explanations of concepts. Inevitably, the procedures of teaching will include other related activities such as planning for lessons, control of learners and use of teaching aids or resources. We could also add here testing through exercises, oral or written, which are a common feature in ELT classrooms (e.g. Johnson, 1999; Ur, 1996; Woodward, 1991).

Literature on the practicum explains that during the ELTE coursework at university, the student teachers would have been exposed to several discussions regarding how these procedures may be executed. Such discussions without an opportunity for the student teachers to try out the procedures with the support of experienced teachers and educators are not sufficient qualification to teach (e.g. Bodóczy and Malderez, 1996; Brown and Nacino-Brown, 1990; Crookes, 2003; Ur, 1996). The literature refers to this issue of trying out procedures taught at university in real classrooms as *putting theories into practice* (my italics) (e.g. Ayot and Wanga, 1987; Derrick and Dicks, 2005). Crookes, 2003 argues that knowing a lot of theory of teaching is meaningless if teachers are not able to enact it in front of learners. Bodóczy and Malderez (1996) state that TP is intended to “enable students to get involved in many aspects of teaching including “planning, course design, student evaluation” among other skills, with the aim of learning from such involvement (p.59). These authors argue further that there is no one best way of teaching that is suitable to all contexts, hence TP provides the student teachers with opportunities to “construct their own views of teaching based on their experiences...make explicit and challenge their own underlying beliefs, attitudes and ingrained models of teaching, and translate their new awareness into action in the classroom” (ibid). Brown and Nacino Brown also argue that TP could help student teachers to “shake off their

fears and apprehensions and help them realise that teaching can be a very demanding experience, while at the same time being enjoyable and rewarding” (1990:4).

Another important procedure that student teachers could learn during TP is testing of their learners both through the ongoing exercises in the class and at different intervals during the school term. The student teachers might also learn to align their teaching to the requirements of the exams that their learners would do at the end of their school cycle (e.g. Derrick and Dicks, 2005).

Thus, it is acknowledged in ELTE literature that learning the procedures of teaching is an important goal of TP. However, most of that literature also emphasises the need to learn principles of ELT alongside the procedures, as I review next.

2.4.1.2. Learning the principles of ELT

As I have already reviewed above (see 2.4.1) principles have been defined as issues that underlie and/or inform the procedures, whether implicit or explicit. The principles in ELT pedagogy, arguably, include all the *other* aspects of the knowledge base in ELT as I have reviewed above and as summarised by Knight (2002) and Kumaravadivelu (2006b). That is, excluding *how to teach* English language in the classroom. Accordingly, there are principles in ELT that student teachers need to be encouraged to seek a further understanding of. For example, they need to understand that there exist various theories, approaches and methods of teaching that have different implications for pedagogy. Also, student teachers need to understand that a thorough mastery of subject matter is important so that they can explain issues to their learners with ease and avoid over-relying on textbooks. This may involve discerning how the topics they are teaching relate to other topics in the subject (Johnson, 1999; Richards, 1998).

Another principle student teachers need to understand is that there are different aims and ends of ELT in every country and though these may not be explicit in their contexts, they inevitably affect pedagogy. They need to know how the aims are interpreted and implemented by schools and therefore how those aims are likely to

impact on their pedagogy (Crookes, 2003; Wedell, 2008). In addition, student teachers need to be encouraged to understand that contextual issues such as cultures, resources and learners have a bearing on ELT (Darling-Hammond, 2006b). Moreover, they ought to be given opportunities to explore the principle that evaluation both in terms of testing of learners and self-evaluation, is considered an important aspect of the teaching profession (Intrator, 2006).

In line with my earlier review (see 2.3.2.7), ultimately, it is important to note that the overarching goal of the practicum is to enhance the student teachers' reasoning about the relationship between principles and procedures in ELT (Johnson, 1999). Johnson cites some earlier studies (e.g. Kagan, 1992) which had suggested that student teachers need to acquire procedural knowledge that enables them to function in their classrooms before introducing them to more complex connections between those procedures and the principles that inform them. She argues differently, citing counter arguments such as Grossman (1992), that student teachers can simultaneously learn procedures and principles of teaching. Johnson supports the latter argument by saying that "an early emphasis on procedural knowledge carries with it the implication that procedural knowledge is the most important aspect of learning to teach and, thus, that new teachers may focus on little else" (p.52). Johnson therefore argues that an important aspect of student teacher learning is to support them from an early stage to engage in robust reasoning of the links between principles and procedures. I explore this link a bit further, below.

2.4.1.3. Pedagogical reasoning as a link between principles and procedures

That pedagogical reasoning provides a link between principles and procedures in teaching has been supported by several writers (e.g. Johnson, 1999; Richards, 1998; Ur, 1996). Johnson argues that "if we recognise teaching as a highly situated and interpretive activity, then knowing what to do in any classroom hinges on the robustness of a teacher's reasoning" (p.10). Richards (1998) also emphasises that:

An important goal of preservice experiences for language teachers is to expose novice teachers to the thinking skills of expert teachers in order to help them develop the *pedagogical reasoning skills* (italics mine) they need when they begin teaching (p.78).

Ur (1996) gives an example of how the link between principles and procedures is important in the classroom. He argues that procedures meant to be used in the Communicative approaches to language teaching may only be used effectively and consistently if teachers fully understand the principles behind them. Kelly (2006) also supports the view that involving student teachers in pedagogical reasoning could help them to consistently question their practice, seek ways of improving their learners' experiences and adopt strategies that will be useful not only for their practicum but even after they have joined the wider professional community after qualification to teach.

It must be recognised, however, that even as pedagogical reasoning needs to be embraced as a key goal of the practicum, its development differs from one teacher to another (Youngs and Bird (2009). These writers argue that "some teachers attend to pedagogical reasoning and improvement from the first weeks of their careers while others struggle with the transition to teaching and do not reach the mastery stage until much later" (p.3). In their view, one of the main challenges facing teacher education then is how to facilitate pedagogical reasoning from as early as possible during novice teaching.

It is also noteworthy that no matter how well the goals of a TE course in general or the practicum in particular are formulated and executed, it is not normally possible that pre-service courses will fully develop the envisaged reasoning. The main goal therefore is to support student teachers to be able to start to operate with confidence and realise the need to reason their work as a basis for more learning and growth in the teaching profession (Crookes, 2003; Ur, 1996). Crookes explains that the university coursework and the experiences student teachers get during the practicum are intended to give them a basic competence and a licence to start teaching. He insists that teacher educators, schools and other partners must impress upon their teacher graduands the need to continue learning after the formal teacher education programme. He states that:

Upon graduating, a teacher does not stop learning; s/he simply moves from intensive, concentrated, and formal learning, to far less intensive, informal learning. Under the worst conditions, some teachers on the outside at least (appear to cease to learn - giving rise to the familiar distinction between a teacher who has twenty years' experience and the teacher who has one year of experience twenty times (p.21).

Nevertheless, Crookes explains that the practicum is extremely important as a moment for student teachers to lay a firm foundation for the continued learning and this ought to be its main goal. He insists that the practicum ought to lay an emphasis, “on structuring our teaching so as to learn from it – engaging in reflective practice - and on structuring our career and our working conditions, so as to be lifelong learners” (p.5).

Overall, what is emerging from this subsection is that there is a need to support student teachers during the practicum to develop pedagogical reasoning as a link between principles and procedures of teaching. Indeed as Crookes (2003) emphasises “being clear on one’s basis for action is a key aspect of professional practice” (p.112). Developing pedagogical reasoning has therefore emerged as a key goal of the practicum that may also enable student teachers to adopt the desire for continued learning even after the practicum. Another issue to explore then is what the literature says about how student teachers could learn this pedagogical reasoning during TP, which is the subject of the next section.

2.4.2. How do student teachers learn during the practicum?

From the literature review so far, it is clear that student teachers are basically sent out on the practicum so that they may *learn* (my emphasis) from their practice. Earlier in this review, I also highlighted that literature recognises teacher learning (TL) as a very complex process (see 2.2). Such complexity has also been identified for TL during the practicum. For example, Clarke and Collins (2007) explain that the practicum context provides several complex interactions with potential for learning for most participants; but such learning is only possible if the complexity is recognised and dealt with. They state that

...once removed from the physical setting of the university, the various players in the practicum have a degree of freedom ... For example, the faculty and cooperating teachers constantly engage in and refer to one another for guidance, advice and direction. Student teachers in most instances, become increasingly involved in these interactions, and the possibilities for mutual learning is [sic] ever present (for example, cooperating teachers often comment on learning new ideas that their student teachers bring to the practicum from their coursework). Also, the learning that occurs in the classroom is itself multi-directional and includes pupils, the student teacher, both cooperating teachers and faculty advisors (p.165).

In spite of this complexity, a number of ways in which teacher learning could be facilitated during the practicum have been discussed in literature. These include learning through practice (by doing), collaboration and supervision. I review these ways of learning subsequently, starting with learning through practice.

2.4.2.1. Learning through practice (by doing)

Several writers have argued that through practising (doing) teaching, student teachers could learn more about pedagogy than being told about teaching - as is usually the case in TE institutions (e.g. Fish, 1989; Kohonen, 2002; Kolb, 1984). Kohonen sees practice as a feature of experiential learning and argues that "the basic tenet in experiential learning is that experience plays a significant role in learning" (p.22). Kolb also argued that learning through practice could provide "a concrete, publicly shared reference point for testing the implications and validity of ideas created during the learning process" (p.21). Generally the idea that student teachers' learning started in campus can be enhanced through practice is the premise on which the practicum is anchored. Most of the reasons I identified earlier as to why the practicum is considered very important (see Table 2.2) are actually based on this notion of practice. A number of issues have been identified in turn as promoting learning through practice.

One of the key considerations is preparation for such practice (e.g. Fish, 1989). Fish emphasises that such preparation could involve pre-practicum visits to the placement schools during which the student teacher may discuss with the cooperating teachers the exact aims of the placement and the cooperating teachers would also outline any basic expectations by the school. Duties for the next school term might be assigned so that the student teacher has adequate time to prepare. Fish also explains the necessity to give a clear definition of the parameters of practice:

Although it is often given scant attention by either college or school because of the pressure of other priorities, the way in which the practice is prepared for by both institutions is of major significance. The omissions still include: the failure of school and college working together to establish a joint understanding of the place of the practice in the whole course; and the failure to elucidate the intentions and the focus of the activities of the TP teacher, tutor and student. This has also meant a resultant inattention to the respective roles of teacher and tutor during the practice (p.166).

Other than the issue of preparation for practice and definition of its parameters, it has been suggested that student teachers could benefit by teaching different groups of learners during one TP session (Richards, 1998). It is also important to pay attention to the issue of workload of the student teachers on practice. The common tendency in Kenya and many other African countries is to post student teachers to assume a full teacher role; that is to assume all responsibilities of a class and to take up a number of lessons similar to or even more than the regular teachers (e.g. Ayot and Wanga, 1987; Brown and Nacino-Brown, 1990; Vavrus, 2009). Ayot and Wanga claim that the *full-teacher* status gives the student teachers an understanding of the kind of responsibilities that they are likely to face upon qualification.

Some writers disagree with that position, explaining that the student teachers are basically learners and a heavy workload would deny them the time to concentrate on their own learning (e.g. Intrator, 2006; Liston et al., 2006). For example, Liston et al. argue that new teachers “have not yet honed efficient and consistent approaches to routine tasks so that they can focus their attention on matters more deserving; thus every aspect of a teacher’s workload is time consuming and cumulatively exhausting” (p.353). Intrator (2006) presents some challenges the student teacher is likely to face in the *full-teacher* status, the main one of which is trying to balance between being a learner and at the same time operating as an expert teacher. He suggests that one way of dealing with these challenges is to keep the workload of student teachers at a lower level than that of the experienced teachers.

Still in terms of learning through practice, some literature suggests that student teachers need to be supported to reason about teaching during the process of doing it and after. The process of reasoning in this manner is called *reflection* in some literature (e.g. Richards and Lockhart, 1994; Moon, 2002). As I explained earlier, I consider some tenets of reflection (as a strategy of teacher learning in practice) to be consistent with reasoning (see 2.3.4.7); hence in this section, I use reflection interchangeably with reasoning. According to Richards (1998) reflection in practice is “an activity or process in which an experience is recalled, considered and evaluated ... as a basis for decision making and as a source for planning action” (p.143). Proctor (1993) suggests that one way of engaging student teachers in reasoning pedagogy is by using a “cooperative discursive approach” (p.94) involving

experienced teachers and teacher educators. Like Richards, she explains that such an approach ought to involve student teachers in (among other things) “looking back in a critical way on what has already taken place, building up a body of professional knowledge, related to technical, strategic and ethical aspects of teaching, and building a personal set of criteria as a result of the reflective critical process” (pp.93-94).

Brandt (2006) also supports engaging student teachers in reasoning of their practice and recommends a change in the focus of TP in order to achieve this. She argues that involving student teachers in reasoning teaching “allows for different learning styles, provides opportunities for problem solving, encourages autonomy, and... is more likely to create meaning and learning for the novice teacher” (pp.362-363). Korthagen (2001) gives a clear example of how a student teacher may be involved in reasoning about a particular aspect of their pedagogy:

As an example, let us consider a student teacher who feels she is having trouble getting her students to be quiet at the beginning of a lesson. When the lesson is over, a process can start in which she reflects on her interaction with the children. The aim of this interaction is for her to perform better in the next lesson. She can reflect on her knowledge of how to get a workable atmosphere in class (reflection on her mental structures, created by former experiences and by what she has learnt in teacher education) and on questions such as whether she actually used this knowledge and if so, how she used it and how the children reacted...The student teacher can for example, decide to read a book on teacher student interaction, and try to enlarge her mental structure (pp.59-60)

Other activities that have been suggested as having the potential to stimulate reasoning pedagogy are writing of diaries/journals, narratives or focused discussions with peers or cooperating teachers and doing case studies (Bailey, 1990; Crookes, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Johnson, 1996; Richards, 1996). Darling-Hammond justifies the use of case studies by drawing attention to internship in other professions such as law and medicine where such activities take place and notes that they “help candidates to bridge the gap between theory and practice. She suggests that case studies may be “on students, on aspects of schools and teaching ... observing, interviewing and examining students’ work, and analysing data they have collected” (p.308).

About diaries, Bailey (1990) suggests that in order to facilitate reflection “the novice teacher must feel free to experiment, criticise, doubt, express frustration, and raise questions in the journal” (p.218). Richards (1996) suggests that the use of journals, narratives, discussions and other types of reflection can help to uncover some of the personal maxims which student teachers may draw upon as they teach. He advises that it is important for such maxims to be uncovered during teaching practice because if they are not, they might constrain the student teachers’ progress in learning new ideas.

Overall, in terms of learning through practice, it has been suggested that there is a need for strong linkages between universities and schools to develop a shared understanding for the goal of the practicum. It has also been emphasised that experience or practice on its own is not a sufficient condition for teacher learning. For student teachers to get the most out of their practice there is need for systematic collaboration amongst student teachers and between student teachers and the cooperating teachers in the placement schools. Next, I review the literature on how student teachers could learn through collaboration.

2.4.2.2. Learning through collaboration

Learning through collaboration is increasingly gaining support in TE literature. For example Lieberman and Mace (2008) explain that while in the past, learning has been considered to be an individual affair, it has become clear more recently that learning may be better facilitated when it is more social; that is, involving others doing the same or similar practice. They argue that:

In plain terms – people learn from and with others in particular ways. They learn through practice (learning by doing), through meaning (learning as intentional, through community (learning as participating and being with others) and through identity (learning as changing who we are). Professional learning so constructed is rooted in the human need to feel a sense of belonging and of making a contribution to a community where experience and knowledge function as part of community property (p.227).

Two main forms of collaboration are identified in literature – that amongst student teachers and between student teachers and their cooperating teachers in the

placement schools. To start with, I briefly explore collaboration amongst student teachers.

Collaboration amongst student teachers

In what is referred to as the “traditional model” of TP, because it is the more common in many contexts, student teachers are posted to placement schools and each one of them is assigned a classroom for which they assume teaching responsibilities (Derrick and Dicks, 2005:19). This is the model used in Kenya and most African countries (see 1.2.6 and 1.2.7) and is hailed by its proponents for facilitating independence of the student teachers (e.g. Ayot and Wanga, 1987; Brown and Nacino-Brown, 1990). However, other writers have cited some disadvantages of this model of TP. For example, Derrick and Dicks (2005) argue that it denies student teachers the support and shared experiences with peers. They observe that although the trainees have the cooperating teacher to work with and the educator - who visits once in a while - where the cooperating teacher is not supportive enough, the student teacher may experience a lot of difficulties.

Consequently, Derrick and Dicks suggest that student teachers need to be posted in pairs or groups to facilitate learning through sharing experiences. They refer to this paired or group posting as the *scaffolded approach* (p.20). They propose that in this arrangement, two or more student teachers could teach the same class either simultaneously or alternately. Then gradually, each student teacher may teach a class independently. Derrick and Dicks suggest that this arrangement enables the student teachers to share experiences about different groups of learners taught together or separately.

Crookes (2003) also supports pair or group placements and argues that “teacher learning can be conceptualized as having both individual and social dimensions” (p.6) and that pair or group placements maximises the social dimension, giving student teachers opportunities for mutual support on a numbers of areas. Also, the student teachers are able to observe each other and discuss their challenges, while developing skills of teamwork (Richards, 1998). Richards explains that peer observation may provide opportunities for student teachers to view each other’s

teaching in order to expose them to different teaching styles and to “develop a reflective orientation to their own teaching” (p.143).

Another reason given in support of the paired or group placement is that it poses less pressure on the cooperating teacher because s/he is not the only person being observed and/or consulted (Bodóczy and Malderez, 1996). These writers support the paired placement of student teachers, based on their experience of working with student teachers during an ELTE practicum in Hungary. However, they caution that the paired-placement calls for very careful planning, and requires the student teachers to exercise teamwork and tolerance for their colleagues. They suggest that where the pair or group teaching model is being used, it is important to guide the student teachers to choose their partners wisely. Some characteristics they may be advised to consider are: “friendship, mutual respect, similar fundamental beliefs about language, language learning and language teaching; ability to cooperate...and an agreement to organise schedules to have planning time” (p.61). The advantages of the paired or group placement models notwithstanding, the role of the cooperating teachers during the practicum is still deemed useful. I review literature on this briefly, next.

Collaboration between student teachers and cooperating teachers

Cooperating teachers are regular teachers in the placement schools who work with the student teachers. In some literature, they are referred to as mentors; although the term *mentor* is also defined in many different ways and could be confusing (e.g. Malderez, 2007; Hobson et al., 2009). In the literature on mentoring I refer to, the word *mentor* is used synonymously with the term cooperating teacher. Farrell (2008) explains that “learner English language teachers need lots of support and cooperating teachers are seen as the most influential people in a learner teacher’s life during teaching practice” (p.226). The cooperating teachers are expected to assist the student teachers to “to settle into the school and in coping with problems that may arise in connection with the syllabus, the scheme of work or student discipline” (Brown and Nacino-Brown, 1990:11). They are also expected “to act as role models to the student teachers by being exemplary in their plans, pedagogy and assessment of the learners” (Derricks and Dicks, 2005:10).

Bodóczy and Malderez (1996) state that cooperating teachers could help student teachers to learn from their experiences through a mutual reflection on experiences. The cooperating teachers therefore ought to have the ability “to see, record, and subsequently ‘hold up the mirror’ for the student teacher to see again, or see differently, the events of the lesson” (p.66). In some contexts, cooperating teachers also take part in assessing student teachers (e.g. Tang, 2003; Wilson, 2006). In the Kenyan context, as I explained in Chapter One, the cooperating teachers are usually the teachers who were in charge of the classes taken over by the student teachers during teaching practice.

To be able to carry out the expected roles effectively, the cooperating teacher’s roles need to be clearly understood by them as well as the student teachers so that there are no undue conflicts or tensions (Hobson, 2009; Farrell, 2008). Similarly, cooperating teachers also need to be supported through formal training, and preferably rewarded for their work in some ways (Malderez, 2007; Derrick and Dicks, 2005). According to Bodóczy and Malderez (1996) potential mentors might not at first find training necessary; hence, care needs to be taken to identify teachers who are ready to develop their skills. They assert that such identification of cooperating teachers need not be based on “any pre-defined notion of “good” teaching - but, rather, evidence of sensitivity, caring, and enthusiasm both for teaching and their own development” (pp.66-67). Since such evidence may be difficult to ascertain, perhaps the main point to consider in selection of cooperating teachers is their capacity and willingness to work with student teachers and to improve skills on how to do it effectively.

As with collaboration amongst student teachers, one of the activities that different writers identify as an important aspect of cooperative teachers’ support of student teachers is observation. Student teachers may observe the classes of cooperating teachers or vice versa. Also, such observation may be overt where one party is sitting in class and making notes or may take place during a joint teaching of a lesson or several lessons, with the student teacher as a teaching assistant (Day, 1990). Still, lessons either taught by the cooperating teacher or the student teacher may be video-recorded and observed later by the two jointly or separately as discussion points are picked from them (Richards, 1998). Richards explains that:

In preservice programs, observations (both of live teachers and videotaped lessons) can be used to help teachers develop a terminology to describe and discuss teaching, and to provide data with which to examine central concepts in their own teaching...observations of different kinds of second language classes can be used to orient student teachers to the nature of the second language classroom (its organization, practices, and norms) and to enable student teachers to develop an awareness of the kinds and levels of interaction that happen in language classrooms (p.19).

However, it has been suggested that learning from observation is not an obvious skill either and both student teachers and cooperating teachers ought to be prepared on how to do it, by the teacher educators (McIntyre, 1994). Day (1990) also cautions that it ought to be “guided, systematic and focused” (p. 43). Therefore, the main point regarding observation is that while there is a need to incorporate it as a regular aspects of the collaboration between student teachers and cooperating teachers, it is necessary that the participants agree on when, why, and how it should be done and be supported on how to benefit from such observations (Day, 1990; McIntyre, 1994; Richards, 1998).

Role of headteachers in supporting student teachers

Literature also suggests that to enhance effective collaboration between student teachers and cooperating teachers, principals or headteachers of the placement schools need to be involved actively by the TE institutions (e.g. Bodóczy and Malderez, 1996; Brown and Nacino- Brown, 1990). The more common role of a headteacher during teaching practice in the Kenyan context is usually to write a report to the university on each of the student teachers who is placed in their school. “This report usually concerns overall behaviour, punctuality, spirit of cooperation and occasionally an assessment of teaching” (Brown and Nacino–Brown, 1990:110). The headteachers also usually identify the cooperating teachers, except in contexts where the latter are identified by TE institutions and trained as mentors like in the programme reported by Bodóczy and Malderez (1996). They are also expected to organise induction of the teachers into their schools.

In the Kenyan context, headteachers are in charge of the administration of the TP teachers just as their regular staff, including giving them permission to be away from the school when necessary and assigning them duties including responsibilities for co-curricular activities (e.g. Ayot and Wanga, 1987; *TP Guide*, 1990). It has been

suggested, though, that headteachers need to play a more supportive roles in relation to student teachers than those outlined above. Johnson (2004) gives characteristics of placement schools that could effectively support student teacher practice and suggests that TE institutions need to look out for such schools. He says that such schools:

have principals who are instructional leaders and who develop personal relationships with new teachers; they give new teachers appropriate and reasonable assignments; they provide sufficient supplies and equipment to support student learning; they have reasonable and consistent policies and infrastructure; they use teachers' time well; they establish school wide standards for student behaviour; they provide coordinated student support and services and they build bridges with parents. In addition...schools with an *integrated professional culture* are crucial to beginner teacher' development...there are no separate camps of veterans and novices; instead, new teachers have ongoing opportunities to benefit from knowledge and expertise of their experienced colleagues...mentoring is organised to benefit both novice and experienced teachers, and structures are in place that further facilitate teacher interaction and reinforce independence (p.159).

In playing their roles, headteachers of the placement schools also need to recognise (and remind their regular staff) that it is not realistic to assume that new teachers will perform at par with experienced teachers in terms of practical knowledge of subject matter and general pedagogy (Imig and Imig, 2006). Similarly, headteachers need to appreciate that most student teachers are not actually ready for “the emotional drama of the classroom” and that the teaching practice is a stage for the novice to continue learning to become a teacher (Intrator, 2006:32). Consequently, “it would be considerable if new teachers were treated as novice practitioners ‘ready to learn’ with reduced assignments, limited expectations and supportive mentoring” (ibid). Liston et al. (2006) add another dimension of the role of principals; that is, they ought to offer the necessary counselling to the student teachers to enable them cope with the “inevitable paradoxes that accompany teaching [such as] gap between the ideal and the real” (p.356), which many beginners are likely to face.

To enable cooperating teachers and principals to play their roles effectively, Liston et al. (2006) suggest the need for establishing links between TE institutions and schools. They argue that it is the responsibility of the ITE institutions to “build linkages across the pre-service and induction contexts” and review TE curricula regularly to be relevant to the needs of the schools (ibid). McIntyre (1994) also points out that successful support of student teachers by cooperating teachers can

only be achieved if there is clear coordination between the TE institutions and the schools. McIntyre argues that “most of the problems of the past have been related to a lack of coherence in Initial Teacher Education, a lack of shared understandings about how people can best learn and a lack of explicitness about who is doing what and why” (p.92). Next, I review literature on how student teacher learning during TP could be facilitated through supervision by university teacher educators.

2.4.2.3. Learning through supervision

In most teacher education programmes, student teachers are supervised by teacher educators from their institutions. The process usually involves the supervisors observing the student teachers’ teaching in classrooms, and then talking about the lessons during what is commonly called post-observation conferences (e.g. Bailey, 2006; Intrator, 2006; Stimpson et al., 2000). Stimpson et al. state that “supervision is an integral part of the teaching practice or teaching practicum undertaken in schools by part-time or full-time students seeking professional initial teaching qualifications” (p. 3). Intrator (2006) explains that the main goal of supervision should be to support novice teachers to form the correct mental disposition and be ready to improve during the time. He says further that such support is important because the “journey novice teachers experience is especially intense, conflicting, dynamic and fragile” (p.234). Bailey (2006) points out what she deems as the main roles of supervisors of student teachers of language in a practicum context:

The supervisor’s role is to help novice language teachers make connections between the material in their training courses and the classroom contexts they face...the supervisor may need to guide them as they build bridges between the research and theories they have studied and the realities of the classroom teaching...so in addition to providing practical tips, supervisors’ feedback can promote reflective practice and socialize novices into the professional discourse community (pp.240-244).

In some TE programmes (such as Kenya), the main focus of supervision is assessment involving assigning of grades to the student teachers, based on classroom observations. Such assessment-focused supervision also commonly involves the supervisor telling the student teachers what to correct or acting as an “overseer of the student teacher’s performance” (Fish, 1989:165). In such programmes, the assumption is that the university based supervisor is the one who knows the best way of teaching and therefore should direct the student teacher (e.g. Proctor, 1994).

This form of supervision has been termed the *directive* model (Freeman, 1990; Gebhard, 1990) and it has been suggested that emphasis on assessment may reduce the extent of teacher learning (TL) during the practicum. Freeman argues that in the directive model, “discussion often ensues from the intervention but the roles are clear: the teacher educator *directs* and the student teacher *does*” (p.107). Freeman argues that such directive supervision may not facilitate reasoning among the student teachers:

Such a doctrinaire approach can lead to formulaic teaching and prescriptive intervention by the educator in everything the student teacher does. Idiosyncratic aspects of the student’s teaching are stymied as the relationship becomes a matter of the student teacher replicating the educator’s views and practices in the classroom. This can become a form of ‘learned helplessness’ (1990:107).

It is acknowledged, though, that the assessment of student teachers is normally an important aspect of Initial Teacher Education and need not necessarily be looked at as a negative experience. Bailey (2006) argues that “the university-based supervisor of preservice teachers represents the training program...must determine whether the trainee meets the program’s exit requirements (a summative evaluation)” (p.241). That notwithstanding, Bailey emphasises that the supervisor also has “responsibility to promote the trainee’s professional development, because the training program markets, and has a contractual obligation to provide that person’s education” (ibid). Bailey explains further that it is the support of student teacher learning that ought to take more prominence, especially because the student teachers are practising under circumstances where supervision is expected; hence they appreciate that the supervisors will offer them some insights on their teaching.

Generally, recent literature on student teacher supervision during the practicum suggests the need for a less directive interaction between the supervisors and the student teachers. For example, Freeman (1990) explains that in a less-directive supervision, the educator does not outrightly approve or disprove the views of the student teacher but prompts the student teacher to reflect on the decisions taken and techniques used. He explains that: “this form of intervention addresses the full complexity of teaching. While it may start from a focus initiated by the educator, the course it takes is determined for the most part by the student teacher and by the interaction (p.113). Gebhard (1990) also suggests that the supervisor needs to view

herself or himself as “perhaps a more experienced teacher who is interested in learning about his or her own teaching and instils in teachers the desire to do the same” (p.165). McIntyre (1994) concurs with Freeman’s and Gebhard’s views but adds another aspect of feedback: the need for shared understanding between supervisors and supervisees on the aims of TP:

Feedback is especially useful when it focuses on aspects of performance which have been agreed upon in advance, when strengths as well as limitations are identified, when the performer’s own perceptions are taken into account, when the volume of feedback is not overwhelming and in general, when it is provided in a very carefully planned, thought out and skilful way. It is especially important for those giving and receiving feedback to have shared expectations about what will be discussed and how, for them to be ‘on the same wavelength’ (p.86).

Perhaps an accurate summary of the suggestions for less directive supervision is in the statement by Fanselow (1990) who notes that the supervision process need not be “*do this because I who visited your class know more than you do and you need help*” (p.193). On the contrary, the experienced teachers and educators need to suggest “*try this to see how it alters what has been happening*” (p.196) (my italics). Fanselow justifies this suggestion by observing that classroom experiences have shown that what works in one class at one time may not work in the same way even in the same class, another day, and may have very different results in another class. Stimpson et al. (2000) suggest that in order for supervisors to guide student teachers in their learning, effectively, they also need to be supported to understand their roles and how such roles might be carried out. They explain that supervision is a complex undertaking involving “advising, guiding, counselling, modelling, coaching, evaluating and assessing” (p.4). Stimpson et al. also stress the need for consistency in supervision as stated below:

What is critically important is that there is continuity and consistency in the pre-teaching practice, the teaching practice and the post-teaching practice phases. Further, any guidelines for supervision that you and your institution, have established should be fully understood by you and shared with colleagues in the schools and, obviously with the student teachers. Where a student teacher may be observed by different supervisors over the period of a teaching practice, it is important that the student teacher receives consistent supervision. Without this consistency, the student may be placed in conflict situations and subjected to unnecessary anxiety and stress. What this means is that a lesson observation needs to be conceived as part of a continuum rather than a one off event (Stimpson et al., 2000:14)

In addition to the points above, Bailey (2006) also explains (based on her review of research literature on supervision) the need for a close coordination between supervisors and cooperating teachers during the practicum.

We should at least acknowledge that good communication between the two...is important for trainees as well as language learners. Sometimes the triangular relationship can make the practicum supervisor's job more difficult. Some cooperating teachers try to buffer the student teachers from criticism by the supervisor...Conservative cooperating teachers may insist that the trainees not experiment with new methods...but stick to "tried and true" procedures (p.234)

Supervision and collaboration during TP are consistent with the concept of situated learning or the sociocultural approach to TE (e.g. Hawkins, 2004; Kelly, 2006). From the sociocultural or situated learning perspective, teacher learning during a practicum may be viewed as a process of socialisation of the student teachers into a community of practice in the profession (e.g. Johnson, 2006; Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). Johnson (2006) explains that the main tenet in the sociocultural view is that "knowledge entails lived practices, not just accumulated information, and the processes of learning are negotiated with people in what they do, through experiences in the social practices associated with particular activities" (p.237). Lave and Wenger look at learning through practice (such as a practicum) as *legitimate peripheral participation* (p.29), a term that, according to them, involves moving from the status of a new member to a full member of a professional community. Lave and Wenger appear to suggest the importance of support such as by supervisors and cooperating teachers when they argue as follows:

Learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and that the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community. "Legitimate peripheral participation" provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, and artefacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice (p.29)...gaining legitimacy is also a problem when masters prevent learning by acting as pedagogical authoritarians, viewing apprentices as novices who "should be instructed" rather than as peripheral participants in a community engaged in its own reproduction (p.76).

However, other writers have expressed need to be cautious in adopting principles such as those posited by Lave and Wenger. For example, Fuller et al. (2005) suggest that while the concept of legitimate peripheral participation provides useful insights for learning through practice, their study of workplace learning revealed that "the patterns of participation are highly diverse" (p.66) and a lot of care needs to be taken

regarding relying on other members of the placement institution to support any meaningful learning of interns. I summarise the key issues on how student teachers learn during TP, as reviewed above in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3. Summary of key points on how student teachers learn during TP

<p><i>Learning through practice (by doing)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparation for practice is necessary including briefing and pre practicum meetings between key participants• Practice is more beneficial when STs are involved in activities that promote pedagogical reasoning. <p><i>Learning through collaboration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paired placements enhance the chances of STs learning from one another• Collaboration between CTs' and STs works better when the roles are clearly understood and if headteachers are actively involved in TP• There is need to establish effective links between partners in TE and TP <p><i>Learning through supervision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supervision that is too assessment-focused and directive may not be very conducive to teacher learning• Supervisors also need to be supported to understand and perform their roles,• There is need for consistency in supervision and also between TP and coursework
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So far, most of the literature I have reviewed on the practicum is what could be referred to as *theoretical*, in the sense that most of the views are not directly based on empirical evidence. In order to clearly identify what research on the practicum has achieved in the recent past and aspects that may not have been studied much, I review literature on previous research on the practicum in the next section.

2.5. RESEARCH ON THE PRACTICUM IN ELTE

Research on the practicum has gradually shifted in focus; generally, in consistency with the trend of research in the broader field of ELTE. Hence, in this section, in order to understand the developments in research on the practicum, I start with a short review of research trends in general ELTE. Before the 1970s, research in this field was mainly concerned with what has been referred to as process-product designs which “examined teaching in terms of the learning outcomes it produced ...the aim was to understand how teachers actions led - or did not lead to student learning” (Freeman, 2002:2). During this time, there was a general belief that “learning to teach involved mastering the specific content one was to teach and

separately mastering methodologies for conveying that content to learners” (Ibid:3). From the mid 1970s to the 1980s, questions started to be raised about the efficacy of this process-product approach to research considering the recognition that teaching is a complex phenomenon (e.g. Borg, 2006, 2003; Freeman, 2002; Freeman and Johnson, 1998). Borg indicates a shift from that thinking towards “the recognition that teachers are active, thinking decision makers who play a central role in shaping classroom events” (2006:1) and “make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically oriented, personalised, and context sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs” (2003:81).

Consequently, the mid 1980s through to the 1990s saw research in ELTE shift from the process-product paradigm to investigation of teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, perspectives and thinking. These have been termed the *hidden side* of teaching (Freeman, 2002:1), teacher *cognition* (Borg, 2006:1); pedagogical *reasoning* (e.g. Johnson, 1999; Maclellan, 2002; Richards, 1998). Other writers have referred to them using different terms. Borg acknowledges that “the study of teacher cognition is generally characterised by a multiplicity of labels which have posited to describe wholly or in part, the psychological context of teaching” (2003:83) noting that the “proliferation of terms” in TE could cause “conceptual ambiguity” (ibid). In spite of this, he observes that the trend is not necessarily a negative development in the profession. In what has been referred to as the era of consolidation in LTE research, in the 1990s and the 2000s , “the notion of teachers’ mental lives and indeed the concept of teacher learning itself was firmly established as a matter of public policy” (Freeman, 2002:8). Accordingly, most research has continued to focus on teacher knowledge (Borg, 2006). Borg explains that:

As we moved into a new millennium, interest in the study of teacher cognition showed no sign of abating...As we moved past the mid point of the current decade, the contents pages of key research journals in education, and particularly in teacher education, highlight continuing interest in the study of teacher cognition...the predominant focus today is on understanding teacher knowledge (used as an umbrella term for a range of psychological constructs) its growth and use. Teacher cognition research today is aligned particularly closely with work in teacher education; a key role for such research is to support teacher learning at both preservice and in-service level (2006:32-35)

Freeman (2002) gives a summary of the gains from the changing trends in research on ELTE. One of these is the introduction of teachers’ voices in the studies by

providing information based on teachers' own perspectives of their learning, which is so far minimal in the field. Another important development is acknowledgement of the complexity of teaching and recognition of the need for more interactions between teachers, researchers and educators. Freeman concludes, owing to these developments, that "basic questions of how teaching is learned and therefore how teacher education interventions can best be organised to support that learning will hopefully shape our work moving forward" (p.11).

Turning to research on teaching practice (TP), there has been a similar shift in focus from concern with finding out how best the student teachers were succeeding in imitating the perceived "best" practices of their experienced colleagues (Stones and Morris, 1972). Literature in TP research in the last two decades shows a major expansion in focus, covering four related and sometimes overlapping topics: student teacher learning during TP, collaboration between student teachers and their peers, support by cooperating teachers and supervisors, and organisation of TP. Subsequently, I review the previous research on TP under those topics. Though my focus is in ELTE, I also review research in general TP, since on some aspects of TP, there is very little previous research that is specific to ELTE. I need to point out that, to avoid repetition, there are several studies I have merely mentioned in this section because I refer to them in more detail in the discussion chapter (see Chapter Six).

2.5.1. Research on student teacher learning

Research on student teacher learning during TP has covered such areas as student teachers' main concerns, student teacher's experiences, what and how student teachers learn and how specific innovations by particular universities contribute to teacher learning. To begin with, some studies have shown that most student teachers are initially more concerned with their own survival in the classrooms and how to control the learners than with how to facilitate the learning of their own students (e.g. Kagan, 1992; Numrich, 1996). However, research also shows that where the practicum session is extended and the student teachers are well supported, they quickly overcome the primary concern with survival and attend to the progress of their learners (e.g. Tann, 1994).

Related to the issue of student teachers' preoccupation with themselves some research has shown that Initial Teacher Education (ITE) does not seem to prepare student teachers adequately for practice (e.g. Johnson, 1996) and that the amount of preparation at university notwithstanding, most student teachers still face huge challenges during TP (Caires and Almeida, 2005; Johnson, 1994; Leshem, 2008; Liston et al., 2006; McCormack et al., 2006). One possible reason for such challenges that has been identified by previous research is poor induction and socialisation of student teachers in placement schools; that is, student teachers are not systematically involved in activities or made to feel part of the community in the placement schools (Farrell, 2001). Researchers have also explored the question of what student teachers learn or fail to learn during the practicum. Some of the skills they learn are planning (e.g. Dellicarpini, 2009) and the ability to make instructional decisions (Johnson, 1992; Kohler et al., 2008). These writers however reported that the student teachers in their studies were not able to give clear explanations for the decisions they took during teaching. Some research has also revealed that student teachers usually have difficulties in the skills of testing (e.g. Maclellan, 2004) and dealing with learners with different competencies in particular subjects in the same classrooms (Otero, 2006).

Still related to what student teachers learn, some studies have dealt with the issue of personal practical knowledge. One such study was conducted by Golombek (1998) in North America using classroom observations and stimulus recall to explore how two MA student teachers' personal practical knowledge (PPK) informed their ELT practice. She defined PPK as "personal philosophies" (p.448) that inform student teachers' practice of teaching. Golombek found out that:

the student teachers' personal practical knowledge informed their practice by serving as a kind of interpretive framework through which they made sense of their classrooms as they recounted their experiences and made this knowledge explicit...L2 [second language] teachers' personal practical knowledge shapes and is shaped by understandings of teaching and learning (p.459).

However, findings from a similar study carried out in Hong Kong by Tsang (2004) seemed to contradict the findings of Golombek. Tsang investigated how three pre-service undergraduate ESL student teachers' PPK influenced their decision making during their interactions with English language learners. Her analysis showed that "during classroom teaching, the participants did not always refer to their personal

practical knowledge” (p.194). She attributed this scenario, to competition between several viewpoints in the student teachers concerning the circumstances of the classroom, emerging thoughts on teaching, coursework at university and the personal practical knowledge. Nevertheless, Tsang discovered that PPK featured during the student teachers post-lesson discussions as they discussed how the lessons could be improved. Although the influence of PPK was varied in the two studies, perhaps because the participants were studying at different levels, both studies found out that PPK had some impact on student teacher learning and needs to be addressed during a TE programme.

Related to the issue of PPK, some studies have suggested that student teachers arrive at their LTE courses or teaching practice with prior beliefs that need to be uncovered as these could hinder their learning during TP (e.g. Borg, 2005; DaSilva, 2005; Warford and Reeves, 2003). For example, Warford and Reeves interviewed nine student teachers of TESOL during a one semester practicum in North America in order to “understand preconceptions novice TESOL teachers might have about teaching English language” (p.47). The study revealed the existence of preconceptions that tended to influence teacher learning during the practicum. They concluded thus:

Results suggest that TESOL teacher education students do not enter with a *tabula rasa* (italics in original). This does not mean, however that the coherence systems that they are nurturing exert an omnipotent influence on their actual practice of teaching. At the very least, these preconceptions ought to be addressed openly in teacher education courses through discussion or written reflection (p.61).

The findings above on influence of student teachers’ prior experiences and beliefs were also consistent with some findings from Numrich’s (1996) study mentioned earlier. Numrich also suggested, based on her study that “in a practicum, student teachers could be asked to develop a needs analysis for the first day of teaching...if we begin with where student teachers are when they set out to acquire expertise in teaching, we may be able to offer more” (p.147-149).

A recent study in the Netherlands has shown that student teachers could successfully overcome their prior beliefs and embrace new ideas about teaching during the practicum (Buitink, 2009). Buitink’s study involved eight student teachers of

Mathematics enrolled in a one year post graduate training in education. In this study, student teachers' progress was monitored through learner reports (of pupils taught by student teachers), planning and evaluation reports, interviews and concept maps. The author stated that "looking at the content, we can conclude that the student teachers who participated in this research developed a new practical theory in which they pay attention to pupils' learning". (p.125). Nevertheless, Buitink cautioned that such development was only possible because of close coordination between the university based teacher educators and the cooperating teachers which enabled a shared understanding of what the student teachers ought to learn from their experiences.

Another issue that has been reported in recent research is the development of teacher efficacy among student teachers defined as "the teacher's belief in his or her capability to organise and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific task in a specific context" (Tsachannen-Moran et al., 1998:233; cited in Liaw, 2009:177). Both Liaw's study (2009) in Taiwan and Atay's (2007) study in Turkey showed that the practicum enabled student teachers to improve in teacher efficacy, as defined above, especially when the practicum was extended and well supported.

Cumulatively, these studies have highlighted a range of issues that point towards the complexity of teacher learning during the practicum. The issue of how teachers may learn through collaboration with peers is another aspect of TP that has been explored in research as I review next.

2.5.2. Research on collaboration with fellow student teachers

Research specifically on peer collaboration is limited compared to the other aspects of TP. Among them are the studies by Nokes et al. (2008), Hsu (2005) and Numrich (1996), all of which found out that paired placements enhanced student teacher learning opportunities during the practicum especially through discussions of shared teaching and observations of each other. The studies revealed though, that at some stage most student teachers wanted the experience of teaching whole lessons alone.

A related study was conducted in UK, by Wilson and I'Anson (2006), which evaluated the success of a model of teaching practice “which uses micro teaching as a preparation for school experience” (p.356) during which student teachers discussed one another's lessons and assisted one another to prepare for teaching in the practicum schools. The study involved a survey of the views of the former student teachers of the university who had studied under such a model. The authors reported that the former students found the experiences of teaching peers and discussing emerging issues before actual classroom teaching, important in reducing the complexity of the TP.

More recently, Britton and Anderson (In Press) have reported a study in which student teachers collaborated during a practicum in a model called *peer coaching*. This model involved pre-observation discussions amongst student teachers, observing each others' lessons during which the observing colleague took notes; then conducting post-observation conferences with the observed peers, followed by discussions. The student teachers then analysed both the teaching and the observation notes and discussed the way forward. They would then interchange roles and repeat the exercise a number of times. In this study, the student teachers had been involved in the process of choosing their partners and the main points to consider in their choice had been acquaintance with each other, interest in working together and sharing of the same teaching subject. The student teachers had been trained in peer coaching, and were supported by supervisors from their university who monitored the progress. The researchers, who were supervisors during the practicum, observed the peer coaching process, interviewed the participants and analysed the data thematically. Their findings were that the student teachers were able to learn both the principles and the practice of peer coaching with ease and that the peer coaching enabled them to develop a deeper understanding of pedagogy. This in turn improved their practice considerably over the practicum semester. Consequently, Britton and Anderson recommended “the addition of peer coaching as a requirement in the pre-service teacher training process” (p.7). However, the researchers cautioned that any implementation of the peer coaching model needs to be done with much care, especially as it requires a long time to train the student teachers and supervisors, and an extended practicum.

It is notable that the study by Britton and Anderson was some kind of innovation by a particular university and involved a small number of student teachers (four) on a pilot basis. The resources put into the training and monitoring of the process were enormous and the student teachers were not subjected to assessment by the university based teacher educators. Clearly, implementation of such a model, in TP sessions in developing countries such as Kenya, would therefore need to take into consideration the high number of student teachers, and the resources, among other factors. That notwithstanding, the key strategies emphasised in the peer coaching model, just like in the other studies reviewed in this section, are that observations of peers' classes, analyses of the lessons and support by the supervisors of such strategies, could enhance teacher learning during the practicum. Such strategies could be explored with appropriate variations depending on availability of resources in different contexts. Unlike collaboration amongst student teachers, the issue of collaboration between student teachers and cooperating teachers during the practicum has been widely researched. Next, I review a few studies in this area that are relevant to my study.

2.5.3. Research on collaboration with cooperating teachers

One of the issues that research on this area has explored is the contribution of cooperating teachers to teacher learning during the practicum. Some of the studies I have already referred to above (e.g. Atay, 2007; and Hsu, 2005) also reported that cooperating teachers effectively facilitated student teacher learning in many aspects. For example, Atay (2007) reported how student teachers' observation of cooperating teachers assisted student teachers to develop in efficacy. Another researcher who reported a similar finding is Darling-Hammond (2006b) following her study (together with others) of practica in several teacher education programmes in North America. She reported that in programmes where collaboration between student teachers and cooperating teachers was well structured and emphasised, there was very powerful impact on student teacher development. Similarly, several research papers from many different countries in the world spanning over thirty years reviewed by Hobson et al. (2009) have generally supported the importance of structured collaboration in student teacher learning during the practicum.

I have referred to several other studies on this issue in the discussion chapter, some of which have indicated that where the collaboration is not well structured or where there is no shared understanding among the participants on teaching approaches, there is usually no productive learning for the student teachers and that the student teachers might end up with very negative practicum experiences (e.g. Farrell, 2008/2001; Graham, 2006; Tang, 2003; Rajuaan et al., 2008). Some studies have also examined impacts of specific innovations intended to enhance support by cooperating teachers. For example, Wilson (2006) studied the impact of a model used by one TE institution in North America involving a replacement of university educators as regular supervisors during TP with experienced teachers who were referred to as *clinical master teachers* (CMTs). Wilson concluded that “the results of this study indicate that the participants considered the CMT model more positively than the triad model” (p.28) The CMTs had been specially trained for that role.

A similar study examined the effectiveness of a model of supervision at a TE institution in the USA (Rodgers and Keil, 2007). This involved what the researchers called a *paired-dyad model* where teams of six people - two cooperating teachers, two student teachers and two university based supervisors - worked together in one placement school. The student teachers prepared joint lessons assisted by cooperating teachers, observed one another, were observed by cooperating teachers and teacher educators and they held regular meetings to review their work. After analysis of the focus group discussions, minutes of their meetings, field notes and interviews, the researchers concluded that the “model provided an opportunity to develop, test, refine, and inform the practice of supervising and mentoring student teachers in potent ways that situate schools and colleges of education along with teachers and the university faculty as the nexus of reform” (p.79).

The studies on cooperation between student teachers and their experienced colleagues above generally show the potential of collaboration to enhance student teacher learning. However, they also identify a number of issues that the field of TE needs to resolve to improve such collaboration. In the next subsection I review some research literature on supervision.

2.5.4. Research on supervision during the practicum

Research on supervision, like other aspects of TP has also covered a range of issues. One of these has been the process of supervision. For example, Proctor (1993) investigated how educators supervise students during TP. Proctor established that teacher educators focused on aspects of teaching such as confidence, mastery of content and classroom management but different educators put emphasis on different aspects with potential confusion to the student teachers. Based on this study, Proctor suggested more studies on the conduct of TP citing “the need for better understanding of the way tutors operate when they are supervising” (p.95). Similarly, Gal (2006) reported a study done in Israel on the role of practicum supervisors in enhancing behaviour management skills among their student teachers. Among her findings was that student teachers had difficulties managing behavioural problems in their classrooms, yet supervision did not deal with this adequately.

Related to the process of supervision, there has also been research on the student teachers’ preferences regarding mode of feedback (e.g. Tang, 2007; White, 2007). These studies have generally revealed that student teachers prefer to be actively involved in the post-observation discussions. Some studies have also found out that assessment focused supervision threatens student teachers and creates a situation generally where the student teachers pay more attention to pleasing supervisors than on learning (e.g. Brandt, 2006; Farrell, 2007; Walkington, 2005).

Some studies have explored how supervisors themselves are supported during the practicum. For example, Swennen et al. (2008) conducted a study in Netherlands which showed that the teacher educators lacked the professional language to articulate expected practices coherently and consistently to their student teachers. Swennen et al. suggested that teacher educators also need to be supported to develop “the ability to link their expertise to their own practices and the practices of their student teachers” (p.541). A similar study was conducted in Israel by Smith (2005), who investigated the student teachers’ views on the expertise of the teacher educators in guiding them in their pedagogy during a practicum. The researcher also asked the teacher educators to evaluate their own expertise in supervising the student teachers. The findings were that the student teachers and educators had conflicting

views on the conduct of supervision. Smith concluded that there was need to identify the required expertise for supervision and support educators to develop appropriately.

Another recent study conducted in Australia also recommended the need to support supervisors on how to deal with their emotions as well as those of the student teachers during the practicum (Hastings, 2008). Hastings argued that this was necessary because, according to their findings, a supervisor often “finds herself having to address both the personal and professional demands of her ‘charge’ while navigating her way through the complex and often competing discourses that make up the work of a teacher”(p.508).

There have also been investigations on the value of supervision on teacher learning during the practicum. For example, Fayne (2007) carried out a survey on this issue in USA involving 222 student teachers on TP sessions spread over five years. Fayne’s study revealed that student teachers regarded most supervisors as playing a very important role in their learning. The student teachers identified some of these important roles as managing the process of TP, serving as people they could trust with confidential information, and giving comments on their teaching that usually contributed to improvement of their performance. Fayne established that “although supervisors established the rules and had the final say on whether or not the students met programme standards, they were viewed as benevolent authority figures who took the time to understand both the student teacher and the classroom context” (p.62). Fayne however identified certain conditions necessary for supervision to make this kind of contribution:

The key to success was to know when to be prescriptive, interpretive and supportive – three types of supervisory behaviour... striking the right balance increased credibility. Once rapport was established, student teachers in the study did not challenge the supervisor’s ability to evaluate them fairly and were not disappointed with the feedback that they received (p.66).

Like research on the other aspects of TP, studies have also investigated the effectiveness of specific models of supervision piloted by particular universities. One such study, which I have already referred to with respect to cooperating teachers, is that by Rodgers and Keil (2007) who evaluated an approach called *paired-dyad*

model of supervision (see 2.5.2). The researchers reported that the new model was more effective than the *triad* model which had been used by their university before. A similar innovation was studied in Canada by Ralph (2002) who examined a model called *contextual supervision*. This involved supervisors varying their styles of interaction with the student teachers according to their interpretations of the unique circumstances of individual student teachers. The supervisors decided, for example, when and how many observations and kind of feedback to give. After analysis of several cohorts of student teachers participating in 16-week practica, Ralph reported that “the accumulating results of the contextual supervision model have demonstrated that it is a useful conceptual and analytical guide with potential to assist supervisory personnel in their mentoring practices” (p.202).

Overall, studies on supervision reviewed in this subsection apparently add valuable insights to the field. Next, I briefly review research literature on organisational aspects of teaching practice that have not been covered by the review in this section.

2.5.5. Research on organisation of teaching practice

Research on the organisational aspects of the practicum have dealt with such issues as the approaches to teaching practice, partnership between universities and schools and transition between university coursework and practice in schools. To begin with, one issue that was identified almost two decades ago regarding the organisation of TP was that “a variety of approaches are currently in use in implementing the practicum requirement in ESOL teacher programs” but which were not based on any empirical research (Richards and Crookes, 1988:24). They came to this conclusion after analysing practica by several US graduate TESOL programmes, which offered courses intended to produce English language teachers for over forty countries worldwide. As a result, they suggested the urgent need for more research that could provide information to be used in improving practicum experiences.

Concerning partnership, most studies have found out that poor coordination between universities and schools (and sometimes policy makers) leads to conflicting views on guidance for student teachers during the practicum (Bartholomew and Sandholtz,

2009). On the other hand, strong partnership has been found to be beneficial to student teachers and also to improve the quality of learning in the schools (e.g. Vogel and Avissar, 2009; Wong and Chuan, 2002). Similarly, studies that have analysed the transition between coursework and practice have generally reported that coursework that is linked to practice in schools reduces the initial shock that student teachers are likely to face and enables them to concentrate on enhancing their understanding of teaching from the onset of their practice (Stocking et al., 2003).

Overall, the research literature reviewed in this section (research on the practicum) on all aspects of TP reveal that the practicum is considered an important aspect of teacher education that is getting increased attention from researchers in the field. I have summarised some of the key issues that have been raised by the research in Table 2.3, below.

Table 2.3. Key issues arising from previous research on the practicum

<p><i>Research on student teacher learning:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most STs on TP are initially more concerned with their own survival than the learning of their students• Most STs start TP with prior beliefs that can hinder their learning• With good support STs can learn important pedagogical skills during TP <p><i>Research on collaboration amongst student teachers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paired placements enhance learning opportunities for STs• Some STs do not like team teaching as it impedes the experience of solo teaching <p><i>Research on collaboration with cooperating teachers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTs can effectively support STs' learning but may also cause harm to the learning process if collaboration is not well conceptualised• There are often conflicting views between STs and CTs on style of support and pedagogy <p><i>Research on supervision during the practicum:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inconsistent supervision has potential to cause confusion to STs• Supervision that is mainly assessment-focused tends to create fear and desire to conform among STs• STs regard supervisors as important in their learning, but some supervisors lack expertise to support STs appropriately; hence they also need support <p><i>Research on organisation of teaching practice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor coordination between universities and partners often leads to conflicting views on support of student teachers• Link between coursework at university and curriculum in schools helps to reduce <i>practice shock</i> during TP.

2.6. RATIONALE BASED ON LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review informed my research in three main ways: first in terms of establishing the consistency between my study and current views in the field of ELTE. Secondly the literature helped me to identify an exact focus for my study, since there was a clear indication that the practicum in TE (and more so in ELTE) is generally an under-researched area. Out of about two hundred research articles on the practicum covering the last twenty years that I have reviewed, only about twenty five have focused specifically on teaching practice in ELTE, and of these, just two from Africa (Degado,2007; Vavrus, 2009). This shows the need for further research in this area given the significance of ELT and the high number of people involved in it worldwide.

Thirdly, I have continued to pay attention to research literature throughout this project; this has helped me to identify the contributions of my study to the field of ELTE (see 7.3). In addition, the review has shown that the research so far done on the practicum is mostly in Western contexts, especially in North America where the teacher education programmes are arguably well endowed with human and material resources. A good number of these studies are mainly on rather *special* programmes or innovations being implemented by particular institutions. Hence there is a need for more studies on practicum experiences involving undergraduate ITE programmes run by state universities, particularly those in developing countries. Indeed, many researchers have consistently made suggestions for further research on different aspects of the practicum. Such suggestions were made as early as twenty years ago; for example, by Richards and Crookes (1988) who stated that “we still possess little information on the effectiveness of current practicum practices” (p.24), and have been continued since then as cited below:

- A substantial search of worldwide databases, both educational and discipline-based, using a range of key words, revealed a surprising paucity of good-quality research on the practicum ...in higher education ... that no clear recommendations can be made with confidence (Rhyan, 1996:370).
- There has been less research within the *black box* of the (TE) program - clinical experiences...and about how the experiences and programmes designed for candidates cumulatively add up to a set of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that determine what teachers actually do in the classroom’ (Darling-Hammond, 2006a:303).

- The volume of research in this area [practicum in ELTE] remains small; additionally, given the global nature of language teaching, the geographical spread of this work is limited too (Borg, 2006: 71).
- Often, when we think of the practicum, we find ourselves focusing our attention on the student teachers to the exclusion of all other participants and practices...A singular focus on the student teacher can only provide a part of the picture (Clarke and Collins, 2007:168).
- Within English language teaching (ELT) there is a paucity of research that specifically examines the experiences of learner teachers concerning the role of support they expect, need and obtain during their practicum experiences (Farrell, 2008:226).
- There is need to answer this question through research: What are the requirements for the learning environment in school-based teacher education if student teachers are to develop a broad, high quality practical theory? (Buitink, 2009:126).

Overall, from the literature review presented above, I identified the need for research on the practicum by ELTE undergraduate students in state run universities carried out in (public) mainstream schools. Such studies appear to be very minimal in the field so far. Most of the research has tended to be on special programmes being piloted by specific Western universities and often involving post graduate students doing their practicum in language teaching centres. Secondly, most of the previous research on the practicum in the field has tended to concentrate on one set of participants; that is either student teachers, cooperating teachers or teacher educators. In relations to this, I also identified the need to carry out a study that involves all these three key participants so as to bring together all their views of *what actually happens* during one practicum session. Therefore, I posed two research questions for my study, based on the literature review and also relevant to the aims of this study as stated in Chapter One, as follows:

3. What are the English language student teachers' pedagogical practices during the practicum in Kenya?
4. How are English language student teachers pedagogically supported during the practicum in Kenya?

2.7. SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have presented a literature review on teacher education (TE), and teaching practice (TP), first dwelling mainly on theoretical literature, then examining empirical work on the practicum. I have concluded by explaining a rationale for my study based on the literature review. My aim in this chapter is to show the relationship between my study and the broader field of teacher education and the narrower area of teaching practice in English language teacher education (ELTE) in which it belongs. In the next chapter, I explain the research methodology for my study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present the details of the research process and discuss the theoretical principles and practical issues that guided my decisions. I explain the research design, highlighting the paradigm, reasons for selecting the qualitative approach and the case study method then describe the negotiation of access and selection of research participants. Next, I describe the process of data generation and data analysis and finally consider the trustworthiness of the study.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

I define research design as a broad conceptualisation of the entire research process encompassing research questions, paradigm, approach, method, sampling, data generation procedures and the relationships between them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Litchman, 2006; Silverman, 2006; Yin, 2003). Denzin and Lincoln explain the importance of a carefully conceived research design noting that it “situates the researcher in the empirical world and connects him or her to specific sites, persons, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretive material, including documents and archives” (p. 24). Yin also argues that a clear and detailed explanation of the research design enhances the trustworthiness of a study. The first aspect of the research design that I explain in the next subsection is the research paradigm.

3.2.1. Research paradigm

By research paradigm, I mean the sets of abstract views of knowledge and the process of creating that knowledge, which provide a foundation for the entire design and what the researcher makes of the findings (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Denzin and Lincoln explain that a paradigm indicates a researcher’s philosophical leaning noting that some paradigms may not be explicit but they will still influence the research process. Citing Bateson (1972:320), they note that all researchers are

philosophers in that “universal sense in which all human beings... are guided by highly abstract principles”. According to these writers, the two main philosophical concepts that govern researchers’ principles and practices are ontology and epistemology.

Ontology may be defined as the nature of being or reality; while epistemology refers to the way being or reality or knowledge is studied, understood and/or interpreted (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Lichtman, 2006; Richards, 2003; Mason, 2002). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue that principles about these philosophical concepts determine the way the researcher perceives the world and approaches research activities. According to Richards (2003) there are two main paradigms ontologically: realism and relativism. Richards explains that the realist perspective looks at the world as a real one that has rules and regulations that govern behaviour. The relativist, on the other hand, holds that there is no single position or reality that is not dependent on human understanding and that people construct meanings and behaviour in different ways; hence different realities (p.34).

The ontological positions tend to be consistent with certain epistemological orientations. Broadly, there are two rather extreme stances, although along that continuum, there are various positions. These broad epistemological orientations could be identified as the “positivist/post-positivist stance on one side and the constructivist-interpretive” stance on the other (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:22). They have also been referred to as “objectivist” and “subjectivist”, respectively (Richards, 2003:35). Richards explains the main difference between these epistemological orientations, noting that it can be said that the realist believes in the existence of an *objective* truth which is possible to attain, while the relativist takes a *subjective* position – the view that knowledge is constructed as people (e.g. teachers and learners) interact (p.35).

To explain these positions briefly and broadly, from the research point of view, the positivist stance is that there is an objective reality or truth that can be attained using well established procedures and that the information thus obtained from a representative sample of a population in a valid and reliable way is generalisable to the universal population from which the sample was taken (e.g. Denzin and Lincoln

2005; Richards, 2003;). On the other hand, constructivist -interpretivist stance is that “reality is socially constructed, so the focus of research should be on understanding of this construction and the multiple perspectives it implies... An understanding of this develops interpretively as research proceeds” (Richards, 2003:38). Some researchers have suggested that it is important that researchers in social sciences show awareness of their philosophical paradigms, and acknowledge their orientations towards them, so that their studies can be read against a particular position (e.g. Creswell, 2009; Mason, 2002; Lichtman, 2006; Richards, 2003). Creswell suggests that “individuals preparing a research proposal or plan make explicit the larger philosophical ideas they espouse” (p.32). Following this advice I wish to indicate that in my study, I am working within relativist ontology and interpretivist epistemology. Mason (2002) explains that a researcher who works in the interpretivist paradigm seeks to get knowledge about how people perceive, interpret, and understand issues that affect them in their contexts. Due to this, interpretivists commonly use interviews and observations as the main techniques of data generation. She explains further that:

an interpretive approach therefore not only sees people as a primary data source but seeks their perceptions or...the ‘insider view’ rather than imposing an ‘outsider view. Other data sources are possible according to this approach, for example, texts, but what an interpretivist would want to get out of these would be what they say about or how they are constituted in people’s individual or collective meanings (p.56).

I acknowledge (from my reading) that these philosophical paradigmatic issues are not necessarily agreed upon by all researchers and debate on them is continuing (e.g. Creswell, 2009; Dörnyei, 2007; Lichtman, 2006; Silverman, 2006). As Lichtman points out, there are so many expositions of paradigms that sometimes they become confusing. She states that “anyone who is not confused here doesn’t understand what is going on” (2006:3). Nevertheless, researchers generally agree that the relativist -interpretivist paradigm - as explained above – is consistent with the qualitative approach, case study method and data generation process as I explain in the subsequent sections.

I have thought it necessary to explain the paradigm mainly because in my context, the realist/positivist perspective is very dominant and largely considered to be the only right way of doing research. Hence, my entire research design might be

evaluated against a positivist perspective, which may create a picture that the study is not trustworthy. In consistency with my paradigm (and again for clarity) it is important to state that I used the qualitative approach as I explain below.

3.2.2. Qualitative approach

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) give a definition of the qualitative approach to research that I find useful to adopt in my study. They say that:

The word qualitative implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on process and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between a researcher and what is studied, the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers seek answers to questions on *how* social experience is created and given meaning (p.10).

Qualitative research is guided by the principles that research can be subjective, particular, and context-based and need not necessarily be based on simple random samples and be generalisable (Nunan, 1992; Richards, 2009/2003). Gillham (2000:10) summarises the advantages of qualitative research from a range of sources, which I consider relevant to my study. He notes that qualitative methods enable the researcher to:

1. To carry out an investigation where other methods – such as experiments – are either not practicable or not ethically justifiable.
2. To investigate situations where little is known about what is there or ...going on.
3. To explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more 'controlled' approaches.
4. To 'get under the skin' of a group or organization to find out what really happens – the informal reality which can only be perceived from the inside.
5. To view the case from the inside: to see it from the perspective of those involved.
6. To carry out research into the *processes* leading to results (for example how reading standards were improved in a school) rather than into the 'significance' of the results themselves.

I have used the qualitative approach because it is more appropriate in investigating the issues I am concerned with in this study based on my understanding of the approach as reviewed above. Secondly, a review of literature in language teacher education (LTE) indicates that the qualitative approach is recommended where researchers are aiming at in-depth analysis of interactions involved in various aspects of language learning and teaching (e.g. Richards, 2009). Following a review of the use of qualitative research in the field of TESOL since, 2000, Richards points out that:

Qualitative research... has opened dimensions of insight into the processes of language teaching and learning that were not even discernible on the horizon twenty years ago, and developments in the new millennium promise even richer understandings in the future (p.159).

I am aware of some criticisms of qualitative research; for example, some writers have claimed that it lacks in rigour and objectivity. Such criticisms have been reported by several writers (e.g. Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Gillham, 2000; Richards, 2003; Stake, 1995). Stake, for example, cites Miles (1979) who had referred to “Qualitative Data as an Attractive Nuisance” (p.30). Gillham (2000) notes that “qualitative methods are essentially descriptive and inferential in character and, for this reason, are often seen as ‘soft’. But description and inference are also necessary in ‘scientific’ research” (p.10). As expected, such criticisms have been countered by qualitative researchers. For example, Richards (2003) notes that “qualitative inquiry is anything but a soft option - it demands rigour, precision, systematicity and careful attention to detail” (p.6). Berliner (2002) concurs and argues that “educators often need knowledge of the particular...A science that must always be sure the myriad particulars are well understood is harder to build [and] will always have a better chance to understand, predict, and control the phenomena they study” (p.19).

In spite of the criticisms, the advantages that the qualitative approach to research offers (as discussed above) and its appropriacy in answering my research questions influenced my decision to work within this approach. More specifically, to obtain answers to my research questions, I had several sessions of interviews and observations with some of my participants, I sought clarifications and analysed the documents they were using or producing (see 3.6). To access the participants in this manner required negotiation and flexibility that would not have been possible with large numbers of participants using probability samples. More importantly, the qualitative approach enabled me to get much more detailed and trustworthy data on teacher learning and support during teaching practice than I would have obtained if I had approached the study quantitatively. For example, I would not have been able to get specific details on how the student teachers were planning and teaching during the term or how they were collaborating among themselves, with cooperating teachers and teacher educators (see Chapters Four and Five), if I had taken a large sample of student teacher and used only questionnaires to elicit responses.

3.2.3. Case study method

In this project, I used the case study method, defined after Creswell (2007) as a piece of research which “involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system” (p.73). I acknowledge that there are many different, sometimes conflicting definitions of *case study* (Gerring, 2007) and some scholars may not even look at it as a method (VanWynsberghe and Khan, 2007). However, some writers (e.g. Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2005) consider case study as a method. Creswell says that a case study can be viewed as a method within the qualitative approach. Stake concurs that a case study is a “process of inquiry” (p.444), which really is what I mean by the word *method* in this context. Many writers suggest that the main reason for choosing the case study method of research is because it allows for an in-depth understanding of different perspectives on an issue (Creswell, 2007; Gerring, 2007) using multiple techniques of data generation (Gilham, 2000) and involving several participants “within [their] real life context” within the boundary of the case (Yin, 2003:14). Accordingly, the case study method gave me the chance to analyse the experiences of English language student teachers in depth using multiple techniques to generate data from the student teachers themselves, their cooperating teachers and university based teacher educators.

One of the challenges that have been identified in this method is that identifying clear boundaries of a case may be problematic (Creswell, 2007; Gerring, 2007; Stake, 2006). Creswell asserts that “the case researcher must decide which bounded system to study recognising that several might be possible candidates for this selection” (pp.73-74). This is more so considering that a case can mean “an individual: it can be a group... it can be an institution ...a town, a profession (Gillham, 2000:1). Nevertheless, as Gerring (2007) explains, “a case may be created out of any phenomenon so long as it has identifiable boundaries” (p19). Consequently, I need to point out that my study is a case of one university in Kenya. This is because it is the *umbrella* institution under which all the participants in my study were operating – in terms of involvement in teaching practice. Having said that, I also need to explain that I consider the six individual student teachers who participated in my study as embedded or multiple cases (Bassegy, 1999; Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003), within the main case - the university.

This is because the student teachers were operating in different schools with their own cooperating teachers and unique circumstances. However, the student teachers worked with different teacher educators who were key participants but who were not attached to individual student teachers. Hence, the teacher educators could be said to have been outside the boundaries of the embedded cases but within the broader case of the university. This scenario fits within the complexity involved in resolving the issue of *boundedness* in a case study (Stake, 2006) Stake explains that:

The case has an inside and outside. Certain components lie within the boundaries of the case; certain features lie outside. A few of the outside features help define the contexts or environment of the case. The case researcher considers many features of the case. Some are selected to be studied (p.3).

Generally, research literature identifies two type of case study based on the purpose of the research: *intrinsic* and *instrumental* (e.g. Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2003). According to Stake, the intrinsic case study is concerned with the particular case in order to learn about it more deeply. In the instrumental case study, “the case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else” (2005:445). Creswell explains further that in an instrumental case study, “the researcher focuses on an issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue” (p.74). Instrumental case study is similar to what Bassey (1999) calls *theory-seeking case study* (author’s italics) which he says is concerned with “particular studies of general issues. The singularity is chosen because it is expected in some way to be typical of something more general. The focus is the issue rather than the case” (p. 62). It is also consistent with Yin’s (2003) category of “exploratory case study” (p.14) in which he says a researcher explores for example how a specific activity is carried out within a particular context and why it is carried out in that way. However, Stake (2005, 1995), cautions that there are no hard and fast boundaries between the intrinsic and instrumental case studies.

Going by this typology, I would like to point out that my study is an instrumental case study. That is, my aim in studying the student teachers from one university was in order to investigate what the English student teachers learn during teaching practice and the issues that influence that learning. My focus was not on the intrinsic features of the university or the student teachers for their own sake but on analysis of their experiences related to teaching practice. The point in choosing to focus on one

university was because it was not feasible to cover more universities in Kenya in view of the time and resources I had. In addition the ELTE programmes in Kenya (as I explained in Chapter One) are generally similar across all the universities hence the university I chose was quite typical in terms of the conduct of TP.

In choosing the case study method, I am aware of some criticisms that have been posited against it. For example Gerring (2007), Flyvbjerg (2008), VanWynsberghe and Khan (2007) identify a number of these, the main one being that most case studies involve very few individuals, who are not necessarily typical or representative and because of that, its findings are not generalisable to broader contexts. Flyvbjerg (2008) identifies more criticisms which she calls misunderstandings about the case study research. She says: "Others would argue that the case study would be well suited for pilot studies but not for full-fledged research schemes. Others again would comment that the case study is subjective, giving too much scope for the researcher's own interpretations. Thus the validity of the case study would be wanting, they argued" (p.219).

Such criticisms, however, have been considered as misplaced by case study researchers who have argued that it is not the main goal of case study to generalise; that it is interested in understanding the particular, noting that this is a very important aspect of social science research (e.g. Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2005; VanWynsberghe and Khan, 2007; Yin, 2003). Creswell argues that "as a general rule, qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize from one case to another because the contexts of cases differ" (p.74). VanWynsberghe and Khan (2007) also explain that "the focus of the case study within the interpretivist paradigm is on a particular reality that is of relevance to the phenomenon under study...A goal of the research is a description that goes deep enough to provide analysis" (p.8). I will explain the issue of generalisability in relation to my study later (see 3.8); nevertheless, most writers recommend that to counter these criticisms it is necessary for researchers to provide clear and detailed descriptions of the entire research process so as to provide a strong basis for any interpretations that are made.

3.2.4. Sampling

Mason (2002) defines sampling as the way through which the people who will be the sources of data are chosen and accessed. She reiterates that this process needs to be done carefully because it has implications for the trustworthiness of the findings. Mason acknowledges that “the conventions of sampling in qualitative research are less clear-cut or well established than for statistical and quantitative research” (p.124). That notwithstanding, she explains that sampling in qualitative research is mainly guided by two principles - practicality and focus of the study. She therefore suggests *sampling strategically* (my italics) which she defines as sampling that targets a relevant range of contexts, participants or characteristics related to the issue under investigation. She supports this type of sampling as follows:

One of the driving logics of some forms of qualitative research is that whatever it is we seek to investigate, it is likely to be complex, nuanced, situated and contextual. If we sample strategically across a range of contexts, we increase our chances of being able to use that very detail not only to understand how things work in specific contexts, but also how things work differently or similarly in relevant contexts. From there we may be able to develop cross contextual generalities which are very well founded because they are based on the strategic comparison of sensitive and rich understandings of specific contexts, whose significance in relation to a wider universe we can demonstrate (p.125).

The major aim of sampling in qualitative research is to identify participants who are likely to give rich and in-depth information on the issue being studied so that we learn the most about it (Dörnyei, 2007). Creswell (2007) adds what I consider important aspects of sampling in a qualitative case study. He suggests the need “to select cases that show different perspectives on the problem, process or event” under study and also to go for accessible cases (p.75). Accordingly, in my study, I selected three categories of participants: student teachers, cooperating teachers and educators who were participating in the teaching practice process because I believed that they would provide various perspectives on teacher learning during the practicum. Also, I selected all my participants purposively, particularly going for those that I could access. Stake (2005) indicates that “for qualitative fieldwork, we draw a purposive sample, building in variety and acknowledging opportunities for intensive study....That may mean taking the most accessible or the one we can spend most time with” (p.451).

Another important issue to explain regards the number of participants. Mason (2002) explains that “if you are using a theoretical or purposive sampling strategy, then

whether or not the sample is big enough to be statistically representative of a total population is not your major concern”(p.134). She argues that in this type of research “the key question to ask is whether your sample provides access to enough data, and with the right focus, to enable you to address your research questions” (ibid). However, Yin (2003) advises that in spite of possible limitations in resources, “if multiple candidates are qualified to serve as cases, the larger the number you study the better” (p.77). Mason (2002) cautions, nevertheless, that although the number should be big enough to permit reasonable data relevant to the research focus, the number should not be “so large as to become so diffuse that a detailed nuanced focus on something in particular becomes impossible” (p.136). Creswell concurs that “the more cases an individual studies, the less the depth in any single case” (p.76). Still on numbers, Gerring (2007) states that “for practical reasons – unless a study is extraordinarily long - the case study format is usually limited to a dozen cases or fewer. A single case is not unusual” (pp.21-22). In my study, I was aiming at a number of participants that I could manage to study in considerable depth using multiple sources of data, within the time I had and bearing in mind the need to take care not to be too intrusive and so interfere with their practice.

Before fieldwork, I made a detailed timetable that covered the time I would be in the field (see Appendix 1) and while thinking through it, I realised that it would only be feasible to effectively engage a limited number of participants. Next, I give a detailed explanation of how I negotiated access to various research sites and selected the university and the seventeen participants in my study.

3.3. NEGOTIATION OF ACCESS AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

In this section, I start by highlighting the ethical considerations that guided the decisions I report here, the selection of participants and the pilot study.

3.3.1. Ethical considerations and choice of research sites

Ethical considerations are emphasised in all research situations. Mason (2002) stresses that qualitative researchers are called upon “not only to carry out data generation and analysis morally...but also to plan our research and frame our

questions in an ethical manner” (p.41). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) also advise that “to say that the goal of research is production of knowledge is not to say that this goal should be pursued at all costs. There are ethical issues surrounding social research just as there are with any other human activity” (p. 263). Research literature advises that (in terms of ethics), researchers are required to tell the truth, all participants must be given accurate and detailed information about the research, their express consent, confidentiality and anonymity must be assured, any sort of harm has to be avoided and the researcher may need to show appreciation of the participants’ support in any appropriate manner (e.g. Cohen et al., 2007; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007/1995).

My first step in taking care of the ethical considerations was to seek a research permit from the Ministry of Education (MoE) as required in Kenya (see Appendix 2). Secondly, I had to get permission from the relevant gatekeepers at the university so as to involve their student teachers and teacher educators in my study. At this point, let me explain that I chose this particular university purposively because the student teachers were out on TP between September and December, 2007 when I was ready for my fieldwork. Before going for fieldwork, I had got in touch with the TP coordinator of the zone where I intended to carry out my study (hereafter called Safari – a pseudonym) which was convenient for a number of reasons. First, I had a house in Safari zone; hence I would not have to pay for accommodation. Secondly, Safari zone has a number of secondary schools where I expected many student teachers would be posted on TP. Thirdly, I expected that it would be comparatively easy for me to be granted access in these schools as I already knew some of the headteachers and teachers of English language. Finally, I would have a chance to be with my family for the six months I would be in the country for data generation.

Through the TP coordinator at the university, I was able to get the permission of the university and the telephone contacts of about fifteen student teachers of English who would be working in Safari zone. At that point, the educators who would be working in Safari were not yet known because they had not been posted. I decided to approach the student teachers first after which I would know the relevant headteachers and cooperating teachers to consult. I initially contacted ten English language student teachers, arranged initial meetings with them individually and

explained the details of my study and how I wanted them to participate in it. In terms of research ethics, I explained the following issues:

1. I had permission from their university to involve them in my study and that their participation in my study would not affect the results of their teaching practice. My study would involve interviewing them and observing their teaching a number of times, spread over the three months of their TP.
2. They were free to decline to participate in the study, some aspects of it or to be audio recorded but if they accepted I would request them to sign consent forms.
3. Much as I really wanted them to participate to the end, they would be free to drop out if they felt so and they did not have to explain why.
4. The information they would share with me would be treated with utmost confidence and would not be revealed even to the university or the schools.
5. They would remain anonymous; hence in producing my report, I would use pseudonyms.
6. The data would be strictly for the purpose of research but I may publish some sections of it and their accepting to participate would be taken as consent to use the data for publications.
7. They would have a chance to read my observation notes and listen to the audio tapes if they wanted. Also I would send each of them some sections of the report draft where they featured and request them to check if I had cited them accurately. This would depend on whether they would give me their postal or e-mail addresses.
8. I would not be paying them for participating in the study but whenever we had a meeting outside the schools, I would reimburse their bus fare and pay for their meals.
9. They should not expect me to correct their teaching or advise them on what to do as that was not my aim and might conflict with what their educators wanted.
10. During the study, if there was any assistance that they thought I could give like typing some of their work or lending them a book, they could feel free to let me know.

Two of the ten English language student teachers declined to participate because they thought my observation of their classes would put them under undue additional pressure. Also, since I had planned to involve only six student teachers, I later called two of them and explained that it would not be possible to observe them regularly due to the distance from Safari town but I might contact them later and request for interviews. This did not become necessary; therefore, I later called them towards the end of TP, thanked them for accepting to participate and explained why I was not able to involve them as earlier requested. As for those who accepted, I gave them the chance to seek any clarifications, we discussed the details and started the process as planned. One issue worth pointing out is that they all declined to sign consent forms. I think this was because initially they did not really trust that I would use the information given strictly for purpose of research; hence the reluctance to commit themselves in any manner that might endanger their practice or safety. I believe this scenario was also prompted by the political situation in the country then - parliamentary and presidential elections were due and there was a lot of mistrust especially between people from different ethnic communities. By the end of the first week of the start of the practicum (September 3rd- 7th, 2007), I was able to start conducting the initial interviews (see Table 3.1).

Of the six student teachers I was to work with (four female and two male), two ladies were to teach in one school, that meant I would be operating in five schools. Other than one student teacher whose school was about fifty kilometres from Safari town, the rest of the schools were within a radius of about twenty kilometres. One student teacher, Ben, would be teaching in a *national boarding girls'* school, Eve would be teaching in a *provincial boarding girls'* school, Caro was to teach in *provincial mixed* school; Ann and Faith were to teach in a *district mixed day* school and Dan would be in a *private girls boarding and day* school (see 1.2.3). Eventually after data analysis, I realised that the different contexts in which the student teachers taught offered a variety of experiences in ELT that made my data richer (see 4.3.3 and 5.2.3). All these student teachers, it turned out, were acquainted with one another as they had been in the same ELTE class at University. None of them had had any teaching experience before the practicum.

After getting the consent of the student teachers, I visited the five schools and talked to the headteachers. I introduced myself to them and explained the purpose of my study and all of them promptly gave me permission to observe the student teachers in their schools and interview their cooperating teachers. The cooperative teachers were equally willing to participate in the study, after I explained to them how they would be involved, although their interviews would come later in the term. Next, I briefly explain the pilot study which I carried out simultaneously as I was engaged in the process of negotiating access for the main study.

3.3.2. Pilot study

Research literature highly recommends the pilot study as a very necessary stage in the research process. For example, Yin (2003) calls the pilot study the “final preparation for data collection” (p.77), stressing its importance in assisting the researcher to refine data generation procedures, the research questions and to improve the entire research design. Particularly with reference to interviews, Nunan (1992) suggests that “because of potential problems in the use of the interview...it is very important that interview questions are piloted with a small number of subjects before being used” (p.151). Nunan explains that in this way the researcher will be able to establish if the questions s/he is asking are giving relevant data. This makes it possible to remove irrelevant questions or to revise some so that the interviewee does not get confused. He reiterates that “it is important for all elicitation instruments to be thoroughly piloted before being used for research” (ibid).

In terms of choosing participants for a pilot case study, Yin (2003) advises that “in general, convenience, access and geographical proximity can be the main criteria for selecting the pilot case or cases” (p.79). He also indicates that in a pilot study, a single case may be used even in a multiple case study design. As far as reports from pilot studies are concerned, Yin advises that there is a need to indicate what the researcher has learnt from testing the design and procedures. In view of the above advice, in the pilot study, I involved two student teachers, one teacher educator and one cooperating teacher. The sampling was based on convenience and accessibility. I had got in touch with five ELTE student teachers from the University where I teach before I went for fieldwork. These student teachers were out on a three months’

practicum from May to August, 2007 around Safari town. Like the student teachers in the main study, they had completed four years of coursework at university where they had had very similar ELTE coursework. By the time I was arriving in Kenya, they were just concluding their TP; therefore, I was not able to observe them teaching.

However, I was able to interview two of them and got some documents from them such as lesson plans and assessment forms written by their teacher educators (the other three were not accessible). I had one interview with each of the student teachers, lasting about one hour, I audio recorded and transcribed them. I used the interview guidelines I had prepared although these had to be modified because the pilot interview was a one off session as opposed to the interviews for the main study which were designed to be conducted three times in the course of the term and would cover issues I had observed in class. I was also able to have one interview with one of the cooperating teachers and one of the teacher educators who were involved in TP in the Safari zone.

I transcribed the four interviews and analysed them in three stages; first, I read the transcripts in detail to be thoroughly familiar with them and coded them to identify emerging themes, based on the research questions. Secondly, I re-grouped the sections under the various themes I had identified. Thirdly, I merged some of the themes to come up with what seemed to be the main issues. I also analysed the documents the student teachers had given me in the same way as the interview transcripts and identified the main issues that seemed to be emerging from them as suggested in research literature (e.g. Braun and Clarke, 2006; Dörnyei, 2007; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

For the pilot data, I stopped at this point, for two reasons. One, I did not have enough time to do further analysis because I had to take off some time to negotiate access for the main study. Two, I realised the data, even from the four interview transcripts and two sets of documents only were much more massive and time consuming than I had anticipated, hence I could not analyse them conclusively in the three weeks I had for the pilot study (see 3.5 for a detailed explanation of the analysis of data from the

main study). Nevertheless, I had learnt important lessons from the pilot study based on which I made the following decisions before embarking on the main study:

- Reduce the interview time from one hour to between thirty and forty five minutes, because I realised that the participants tended to lose concentration in the last fifteen minutes of the interview, and not much new information was forthcoming. One way I planned to do this was to reduce the number of questions for each interview session by re-distributing certain questions through the three interview sessions that I had planned for the term.
- Revise the interview guidelines to fit the shorter time mentioned above but also to avoid issues that tended to be too general and not relevant to pedagogical practice and support in ELT which was the focus of my study.
- Make the interviews more conversational since I discovered as I listened to the tapes that I had tended to ask questions without sufficient probes. This was also noted by my supervisors when I sent them some transcripts.
- Change my interviewing venue because the place I used during the pilot study was located in a rather noisy place; hence there was a lot of background noise in some audio recordings. I managed to book a seminar room in a hotel located in a quiet surrounding in the outskirts of Safari town.
- In terms of data analysis, I realised that I would need to work out a more systematic approach to the process since I had felt the pilot data analysis had been rather disorganised. Also, I made a list of the themes that had emerged from the data so far so that I could use it as a starting point during the analysis of the data from the main study.

With these lessons from the pilot study and the simultaneous negotiation of access and selection of research participants for the main study as I explained earlier (3.3), I embarked on the actual data generation process which I explain in the next section.

3.4. DATA GENERATION PROCESS

As I have already indicated, I used interviews, observations and documents to generate data. In total, I conducted 17 interviews and 22 observations with the student teachers, five interviews with the cooperating teachers (two student teachers

shared one cooperating teacher) and six interviews with the teacher educators from the university. Thus in total, I had 28 interviews and 22 observations over the three months of the practicum and several documents as I will explain later (see 3.4.3.). Next, I explain why I chose the techniques mentioned and how I used them in the process of actual data generation with different sets of participants.

3.4.1 Generating data using interviews

Interviews are defined in research literature as conversations between researchers and participants deliberately intended by the researchers to generate relevant information in line with the aims of the study (e.g. Cohen et al., 2007; Fontana and Frey, 2005). Interviews are one of the most important sources of data in case studies because they allow participants to report their thoughts and experiences thereby providing rich data that is necessary to understand the cases in depth (e.g. Gillham, 2005; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). In this study, I considered interviews as my main source of data because they were consistent with the relativist-interpretivist paradigm and the qualitative case study design I had chosen. As Borg (2006) suggests, “in selecting which methods to adopt in collecting data about teacher cognition, researchers may want to consider how these choices are consistent with the broader approach and research tradition (e.g. interpretive) a study is located in” (pp.168-169). Secondly, the interviews enabled me to develop a rapport with the participants that facilitated free exchange of information as the participants talked freely about TP. I found out, as Gillham (2005) states, that “the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is responsive or interactive, allowing for a degree of adjustment, clarification and exploration” (p.3). In summary, the interviews suited my study in terms of the factors noted by Gillham (2005) who says that interviews are suitable when:

1. Small numbers are involved,
2. They are accessible,
3. They are ‘key’ and you can’t afford to lose any,
4. Your questions... are mainly ‘open’ and require an extended response with prompts and probes...to clarify answers,
5. If the material is sensitive in character so that trust is involved: people will disclose things in a face-to-face interview that they will *not* disclose in an anonymous questionnaire (pp.3-4).

I used semi-structured interviews; that is, I started from some broad questions that acted as a guide to the issues to focus on (see Appendices 3, 4, and 5) and modified them during actual interviewing. As Stake (2005) notes, “a plan is essential, but the

caseworker needs to anticipate the need to recognize and develop late emerging issues (p.453). Semi-structured interviews are distinguished from structured interviews which mainly involve a selected set of questions administered more or less like an oral questionnaire (Fontana and Frey, 2005; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). Semi structured interviews are also used widely in research in ELTE and have been noted in previous research in the field to offer several advantages that have been cited by a number of researchers in this field (e.g. Borg, 2006; Nunan, 1992; Roberts, 2006). For example, Borg (2006:218) explains that they enable the researcher to develop a relationship with the participants that in turn makes it possible to generate data that are “qualitatively richer than those generated by closed questions” (p.218).

In relation to this, the semi-structured interviews enabled me to develop reasonable trust with my participants so that often they revealed to me information that I would not have known. For example, some of them alerted me when their teacher educators were in their schools for supervision, in case I wanted interviews with the latter. Also, as Richards (2003) posits, I found the semi-structured interviews to proceed as conversations between the participants and myself, and due to this issues came up that were of relevance to the study, yet which I had not planned to ask about. For example, some student teachers talked about the cooperating teachers influencing them negatively by skipping “difficult” topics in English language.

I interviewed five student teachers three times each during the twelve weeks of TP. The sixth student teacher, Faith, pulled out after the first two interviews and observations. The first interviews, which took place in the first week of TP, were intended to capture their views on ELT, preparedness, expectations and initial experiences. During these initial interviews, the student teachers were rather tense; most of them answered questions in very short phrases and my probes did not yield so much information. I conducted the second sets of interviews during the sixth and seventh weeks and the third interviews came during the last two weeks of the practicum. The subsequent interviews centred on issues I had noted during the observations of the student teachers’ lessons and I also asked about their experiences during the other lessons I had not observed. This was necessary because I recognised, as Charmaz (2005) posits, that “like snapshots, interviews provide a

picture taken during a moment in time...multiple visits over time combined with the intimacy of intensive interviewing do provide a deeper view of life than the one shot structured informational interviews can provide” (p.529).

By the time we had the second and third interviews, we had developed mutual trust through discussions held during some informal meetings; hence the student teachers were quite relaxed and forthcoming with information. I had also mastered all the key issues I wanted to discuss with them and improved in my interview skills too; for example the ability to probe their answers and to guide them to issues that were of immediate relevance to the study. All the interviews were audio-recorded using digital recorders and also cassette recorders (as back-up), and lasted for between thirty to forty five minutes. I sought the permission of each student teacher before audio-recording at every session. Table 3.1 indicates the schedule of interviews and observations for the student teachers and cooperating teachers (CTs).

Table 3.1: Schedule of interviews and observations of student teachers and cooperative teachers

Name	WK 1	WK 2	WK 3	WK 4	WK 5	WK 6	WK 7	WK 8	WK 9	WK 10	WK 11
	3-4 th Sept.	10- 14 th	17- 21 st	24- 28 th	1-5 th Oct.	8- 12 th	15- 19 th	22- 26 th	29- 2 nd	5-9 th Nov.	12- 16 th
Ann	1 st int 7 th		Obs 1 20 th		Obs 2 4 th	2 nd int 12 th		Obs 3 23 rd		Obs 4 7 th	3 rd int 14 th ACT 14 th
Ben	1 st int 7 th			Obs 1 27 th		Obs 2 11 th	2 nd int 15 th	Obs 3 22 nd	Obs 4 2 nd	BCT 7 th	3 rd int 14 th
Caro	1 st int 6 th	Obs 1 14 th	Obs 2 19 th			Obs 3 12 th	2 nd int 16 th	Obs 4 23 rd	CCT 29 th		3 rd int 13 th
Dan	1 st int 7 th			Obs 1 28 th	Obs 2 5 th	2 nd int 11 th		Obs 3 25 th		Obs 4 8 th	3 rd int 16 th DCT 12 th
Eve	1 st int 8 th			Obs 1 26 th	Obs 2 5 th	2 nd int 13 th		Obs 3 23 rd	Obs 4 1 st	ECT 8 th	3 rd int 15 th
Faith	1 st int 8 th		Obs 1 20 th			Obs 2 10 th	2 nd int 18 th				

The interviews with the cooperating teachers went on as planned; that is, I successfully conducted all of them during the last three weeks of the practicum because, then, I was able to capture details of their experiences of working with the student teachers and the educators during almost the entire TP. As with the student teachers, their interviews were also audio-recorded and lasted about forty minutes. By the time I had interviews with them, we had become more or less acquainted due to my frequent visits to their schools. They were therefore very cooperative in setting the appointments and quite relaxed during the interviews. I always interviewed most of them in my seminar room though two of them (Ben's and Caro's cooperating teachers) had offices where we conducted the interviews.

As for the teacher educators, the interviews did not work as planned. The main reason was that they were always on the move. After assessment of a student teacher in one school, they would be in a hurry to go to other schools in the same zone or in other places. Therefore, it was not possible to have interviews with them in the field. Similarly, it was not possible to meet the teacher educators immediately after the practicum because the university was closed for December holidays soon after; hence I had to wait until January when the university would be open. Unfortunately, in January, violence broke out in the country following a disputed presidential election and it became extremely dangerous to travel, while the university also remained closed. Ultimately, I was able to conduct interviews with all the educators during the first two weeks in February, two months after the teaching practice.

Another issue was that the teacher educators had not been attached to particular student teachers; that is, one teacher educator supervised several student teachers, while one student teacher may have been supervised by several educators. The information I got from the educators was therefore rather general on the conduct of that particular teaching practice session. Nevertheless, during the interviews, I was convinced that they had adequate recall of details of interaction during the TP. This was because I already had data from the cooperating teachers and student teachers; therefore, I was able to corroborate what they told me. Also, I used the information I had to prompt them where necessary. For example, I asked some of them why they insisted on supervising particular student teachers at odd hours such as after school hours or very late into the term when learners were doing exams. Overall, I found the

data from the educators of value in providing their perspectives of teacher learning during the TP and of issues that influence it

3.4.2. Generating data through observations

I used observations in addition to the interviews for a number of reasons. To begin with, observation has been identified in research literature as an important technique of data generation in qualitative research. For example, Gerring (2007) states that “an *observation* (italics in original) is the most basic element of any empirical endeavour” (p.20). Adler and Adler (1994:389), cited in Angrosino (2005:729), also argue that observation is “the fundamental base of all research methods in social and behavioural sciences” (p.729). Secondly, the observations enabled me to see for myself what the student teachers were doing so that I was not just relying on what they reported. As Gillham (2000) says, “the overpowering validity of observation is that it is the most direct way of obtaining data. It is not what people have *written* (writer’s italics)...not what people *say* they do. It is what they *actually* do (which may also be reflected to some extent on records)” (p.46). Stake (1995) also argues that observation enables the researcher to develop “a relatively *incontestable description* (author’s italics) for further analysis and ultimate reporting” (p.62).

Thirdly, it was important to observe the student teachers in order to analyse what they were learning during the TP by looking for any changes in their practice. Using observations to study teacher learning is recommended in the field of language teacher education (LTE). For example, Borg (2006) states that “observation clearly has a central role to play in the study of language teacher cognition by providing a concrete basis in relation to [how] what teachers know, think, can be examined” (p.231). He notes, though, that in most LTE research, observations have been carried out alongside other techniques of data collection such as interviews and journals. In such a scenario, the interviews could take place after observations to explore the thoughts behind the observed actions. Borg explains further that “a three-stage sequence of initial background interview, classroom observation and follow-up interview is a further option commonly used” (p.247).

Fourthly, through the observations, I was able to identify several issues that I took up during the subsequent interviews. For example, I noted certain changes in the way the student teachers taught (such as using more pair and group work) and it was important to find out why the student teachers had decided to teach differently. In this way, I identified some of the issues that seemed to influence student teacher learning during the practicum. I have highlighted the changes noted through observations in the findings chapters and discussed the issues that seemed to influence them in Chapter Six (see 6.3).

Another important issue I need to explain is how I decided on four observations for each student teacher. I initially planned to conduct six observations of each student teacher over the twelve weeks – roughly one observation every two weeks, covering each of the skills of English language and the aspects that fall under what is called *Literature in English* in the Kenyan context (see 1.2.3). This number of observations was intended to closely monitor the student teachers' progress. Nevertheless, I had to balance this with the necessity to avoid too much intrusion into the student teachers' practice. Since they were being assessed by their teacher educators, they were already under pressure. Thus when negotiating with them, most of them stated that four observations was the maximum they could take comfortably. Therefore, I decided to have a *first interview – two observations – second interview – two observations – third interview* arrangement (see Table 3.2). The issue of number of observations has also been discussed in LTE research literature. For example, Borg (2006) advises that:

There is obviously no 'correct' figure to aim for in making decisions about the number of observations which are required in a study of language teacher cognition. However, given that reactive behaviours by teachers and students are likely to decrease over time, observational data collected on several occasions over a period of time may be more valid...we must also remember that decisions about how many observations to conduct and for how long will also be influenced by practical issues such as the time available to the researcher and the availability of the teachers (p.246).

In terms of actual conduct of the observations, as with the interviews, we agreed on the convenient dates and times because I did not want to surprise them as their teacher educators did. During every observation, I always made sure I arrived in good time, we would have a conversation and the student teachers always showed me their lesson plans and the schemes of work before we went to class together. I

always sat at the back of the class, observed their teaching and took notes focusing on the classroom arrangement, what the teacher was doing, what the learners were doing and what resources they had or used and how they were using them. I tried to note as much as possible about what was going on in the classrooms (Richards 2003; Scrivener, 2005). I have given excerpts of the observation notes in the findings chapters (Chapters Four and Five), indicated by abbreviations – *OBS* – after every citation (also see Appendix 28 for an example).

Therefore, my approach to observation was what some research literature refers to as *observer-as-participant* (Borg, 2006) and *focused-observation* (Angrosino, 2005). Borg defines observer-as-participant status (based on Burgess, 1984:80) as one in which “contact with informant is brief, formal and classified as observation” (p.228). Angrosino defines focused observation as one which concentrates only on events relevant to the topic under investigation. Similar to the interviews, most of the student teachers were rather tense during the first observations. However, during the subsequent sessions, they had got used to my presence and their reactive behaviours were considerably reduced. They taught without consistently paying attention to my presence as they had done during the initial observations.

3.4.3. Documents as data

The documents that the student teachers used during their teaching were an important part of my data as they made it possible to corroborate information from the observations and interviews (e.g. Yin, 2003) and to check for progress made during the practicum, especially from the lesson plans which were made on a daily basis. In addition, the documents had information that I could not obtain from the interviews and observations; for example, the details of the teacher educators’ comments. As Stake (1995) suggests, “quite often documents serve as substitutes for records of activity that the researcher could not observe directly” (p.68). Some of the documents also raised points that I followed up during interviews such as why the student teachers wrote certain statements (e.g. lesson well taught) in the remarks columns of their schemes of work, and what they meant by such statements.

The documents I analysed included the *scheme of work*, which is a plan of what the student teachers would teach for the whole term, broken down into weeks and lessons and showing mainly the class, topics, lesson objectives, teaching aids and textbook references (see Appendices 24-26). Another key document was the *lesson plan*, which was mainly extracted from the scheme of work but more detailed because it showed the different activities the teacher and the learners would be doing and the time each activity would take (see appendices 10-16 for examples). I also analysed the assessment forms written by the teacher educators during supervision (e.g. see Appendices 17-22). Particularly for the lesson plans, due to the sheer volume, I only made copies for the lessons I observed. In addition, I obtained copies of the main textbooks they were using, the syllabus, as well as some test papers the student teachers had set and marked. From the teacher educators, I was also able to obtain the course outlines for B.Ed and ELTE (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2) and a copy of the *Teaching Practice Guide*, which as I said in Chapter One (see 1.2.6) was not available to the student teachers and the cooperating teachers. I refer to these documents in Chapter Four and Chapter Five.

3.4.4. Lessons from the fieldwork

I learnt several practical lessons from the data generation process that could be summarised as follows:

- A detailed plan for the field is extremely necessary because this kept me focused although I reviewed my plan from time to time.
- A pilot study is very important as it provides insights for the main study like the ones I have stated above (see 3.3.3).
- A clear explanation of the details of a study to participants and discussion of the terms of engagement facilitates mutual trust with all the participants, which makes the process of data generation considerably smoother.
- It is important to plan for more time in the field than initially envisaged as it is possible that unforeseen circumstances could delay getting some data, as happened to me concerning the teacher educators.
- Initial interviews and observations may be rather tense and may not yield much information, especially when one is dealing with participants who are not acquainted with the researcher. In this light, if only one interview or

observation is planned, it is important to attempt some prior acquaintance but where feasible, it may be helpful to have two or more sessions.

- Finally, based on my field experience I would like to suggest that the skills of data generation, such as interviewing and observing, improve as one continues to do them, hence the more the better.

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

In the process of data generation as explained in the previous section, I accumulated a data set consisting of interview transcripts, observation notes and selected documents. My next task was to make sense of this volume of data, a process that has been described in research methodology literature as “rigorous”, “chaotic”, “challenging”, “messy”, “complex” and “iterative” (e.g. Braun and Clarke, 2006; Dörnyei, 2007; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Lichtman, 2006). From the onset, I want to point out that I used *thematic analysis*. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that:

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently, it goes further than this and interprets various aspects of the research topic (p.78).

Several research books and articles including those mentioned above have suggested different approaches to thematic analysis. Bearing their suggestions in mind, in my analysis, I used a six point procedure involving the following steps: which I shall explain in the subsequent pages: 1. Transcribing the data, 2. Re-familiarising myself with the data and noting initial thoughts, 3. First phase coding, 4. Second phase coding, 5. Third phase coding, and 6. Producing a report.

3.5.1. Transcribing the data

I transcribed the interviews as the data generation process was going on. Thus, by the time I left the field, I had transcribed all the interviews except those of the teacher educators, which I conducted late in the fieldwork, as I have already explained. I had also typed the notes that I had taken during the classroom observations (see Appendix 28 for an example). Transcription has been recognised in research

methodology literature as the first step in data analysis where a researcher has recorded material (e.g. Dörnyei, 2007; Braun and Clarke, 2006). I decided to transcribe “everything”; that is all the utterances as recorded. I did this for three reasons: First, I was not sure at that stage how important each utterance might turn out to be during the analysis (including *you know, well, I mean* etc.) and I did not want to take chances. Secondly, I thought I might use the data in future publications or for teaching purposes and the details might be important. Thirdly, I realised that in the process of this type of transcription, I was developing a thorough grasp of my data, especially as I transcribed all the data myself as suggested by Dörnyei (2007). The entire transcription process went on for up to three months after my fieldwork, and my experience was that it was a very tedious but worthwhile process. By the end of the transcription exercise, I had a data set of 345 pages and a box of documents. My next task then, considering that the transcription had spanned a long period of time was to re-familiarize myself with the data, which I explain next.

3.5.2. Re-familiarising myself with the data

At this stage, again following my synthesis of suggestions in research methodology literature, I started reading over each transcript. To begin with, I just read each one of them for a general idea of what the data was saying and noted some initial thoughts. After the initial reading, I copied the data into separate files and edited them – removing some fillers, stutters, probe cues and repetitions that did not seem to add anything different to the data. For example, I deleted words or phrase like *yes, mmm, then, you know, like, as in, and really*. I took care though not to delete any statements that I thought might add some tone or meaning to the data. This process referred to as *pre-coding* (e.g. Dörnyei, 2007:250) not only enabled me to re-familiarise myself with the data but also helped to consolidate the data by removing unnecessary words and phrases. In the process, I further noted issues that seemed to be emerging from the data. Dörnyei says: “these pre-coding reflections shape our thinking about the data and influence the way we will go about coding it” (ibid).

3.5.3. Coding the data

The terms coding or codes, categories and themes are used to mean different things by various writers (see e.g. Creswell, 2007; Dörnyei, 2007; Richards, 2003; Silverman 2006; Yin, 2003). This makes it necessary for me to state that in my study, I am using the term *coding* as defined by Dörnyei (2007). He says that “coding involves highlighting extracts of the transcribed data and labelling these in a way that they can be easily retrieved or grouped” (p. 250). Thus in my work, I use the term *code* to refer to a label that I gave to particular chunks of data that I highlighted and grouped as making a particular point relevant to my study. I use the term *category* to mean a broader heading under which several codes may be grouped (something like a sub theme) and *theme* to mean a major topic (in my case –within the area of teacher learning) under which a set of categories may be grouped.

I started my coding with the interview data from student teachers, whom I considered the principal participants in my study because I spent most of the time with them and most of my data is from them. I started the coding process with the transcripts from their first set of interviews, then second and third in that order. My reason for doing this was because every set of interviews (first, second or third) covered similar issues and was likely to yield similar codes that would cut across all the student teachers. After coding the interview data from student teachers, I moved to teacher educators, then cooperating teachers, using codes I had generated from the student teachers’ transcripts, but adding where necessary, as I will explain later (see 3.5.3.1). I analysed my data manually; that is, I coded without the use of computer software. This was mainly because the training for the relevant software – like Nvivo, was not readily available at the time I was ready to embark on data analysis. I did the process of coding in three phases that I explain below.

3.5.3.1. First phase coding

During the first phase of coding, I saved each transcript as a separate Microsoft Word file and assigned each transcript an identification symbol; for example, Ann’s first interview was assigned A1 (see Table 4.1). I went through each transcript, highlighted chunks that I felt “talked” about a distinct issue in relation to the student

teachers' practice and/or support during the practicum and assigned them a code. For example, if I felt a chunk was dealing with *planning for teaching or challenges during TP*, I coded the section appropriately. Where I felt a chunk dealt with more than one aspect of the student teachers' experiences, I double or triple coded it. For example, there were some chunks I coded *reception/induction of student teachers / allocation of classes by the school*. At this stage, where I thought I could not find a suitable code for any section, yet I felt it was relevant to some extent, I highlighted such a chunk and designated it as *other* or *later* to indicate that I would need to go back to them.

There were also some chunks of data that I did not find relevant, some of which seemed to be digressions during the interviewing process. Such chunks I labelled *bank* because much as I felt they were not relevant, I did not want to discard them entirely just in case I wanted to go back to them at some stage (Braun and Clarke, 2006). For example, I had chunks of data on the student teachers' family circumstances, experiences at University and relationships with regular teachers that were not of immediate relevance to my study. Besides coding them as bank, I marked what they dealt with such as *bank-family circumstances*. As I moved from one file to another, I kept adding codes, and by the end of the first phase coding of all the interview data, I had a total of 38 codes. I then *copied* the chunks of data from the original files and *pasted* them under the new codes taking care to note the identities of every chunk, so that I could trace the original source later. I decided to code interview data more or less conclusively before moving to observational or documentary data. With my list of 38 codes, corresponding to the same number of highlights of data, I moved to the second phase of coding. Appendix 6 shows the list of codes I had from the first phase of coding.

3.5.3.2. Second phase coding

At this phase of coding, I grouped similar codes (from the list of 38) together to avoid unnecessary overlaps and repetitions which I had noted in the first phase of coding. I worked with the guidelines offered by Dörnyei (2007:252) who states:

There will inevitably be some similar or closely related categories, which can be clustered together under a broader level. At this point, we need to look at all specific extracts that are linked to the newly formed broader category to decide whether the new label applies to all of them or some may need to be re-coded. If the majority of

the extracts fit the new system, this can be seen as a sign of the validity of the code. Once we have finalised and revised the list of codes, we may want to go back to the original transcripts and recode them according to the new categories. In some studies, this process is iterated more than once.

Accordingly, during this second phase, I merged several codes, downgraded some codes and upgraded others. That is, I made some codes into categories in the manner I explained earlier and grouped some codes under the new categories (see Appendix 7). After this re-coding, I went back to the data as coded during the first phase, saving that phase as a separate file, just in case I would need to get back to it at some stage. Then, I copied and pasted according to the new categories and codes. I also went back to some of the chunks of data I had marked as *other* or *bank*. While some seemed to fit into the new labels, others remained “irrelevant”. Thus in this second phase coding, I accomplished three major tasks: One, I removed redundancies and overlaps (Dörnyei, 2007), created hierarchies of codes (Litchman, 2006) and reduced or “winnowed” the data (Creswell, 2007:152). This phase was probably the most iterative and involved going back to the original data numerous times. As Litchman, 2006:164) explains:

By this time, you have reviewed many interviews and coded them. You can now review your codes and look for ones that overlap or are redundant. You might find that you will rename some of your codes...These codes can then be organised into hierarchical categories, in which some codes will be subsets of larger categories.

By the end of this phase, when I re-read my data with the new categories, codes, and relevant extracts under them. I had done a more elaborate grouping than in the previous phase (see appendix 7). At the end this phase, as Braun and Clarke (2006:90) say, I had “a collection of candidate themes and sub themes and all the extract data that have been coded in relation to them”. The size of data had also been reduced substantially, since in the process I had *banked* more data that seemed out of the scope of the study.

3.5.3.3. Third phase coding

In this phase, I grouped the themes, categories and data under them into two further broad groups; that is, according to the research questions. Next, I re-read the data as they were under the new themes and came up with new codes – those which summarised what the different extracts of data were saying. In the process, I banked more data that did not fit the new themes, categories and codes. Next, I coded the

observation notes and documents using the themes, categories and codes from the interview data which I considered quite stable then.

Most of the observation and documentary data fitted within the codes, categories and themes I had generated during the analysis of interview data. However, analysis of the observation and documentary data influenced my decision to promote some codes into categories (sub-themes) because certain issues that had appeared minor in the interview data were captured more prominently in the observations and documentary data. For example, testing of learners, which had not featured much in the interviews emerged as a main issue from the observation data; hence its inclusion as a sub- theme in the third phase coding. Similarly, I promoted some codes that had been subsumed under *challenges of ELT during TP* at the initial phase of coding to distinct categories under the themes of *teaching learners with different competencies in EL*, also following analysis of observation notes. Like in the observation data, analysis of the documentary data also influenced the promotion of issues that had earlier been grouped under others to distinct codes. Examples include *self-evaluation in ELT* and *comments by supervisors*.

At the end of this phase, I reorganised all the codes under new categories (sub-themes and main themes before grouping them under the two research questions, as stated above. This reorganisation was necessary in order to accommodate the changes occasioned by the analysis of observation and documentary data as explained above, and resulted in the outline as shown in Appendix 8.

3.5.4. Producing a report of the findings

After regrouping the data as per Appendix 8, I reviewed the coding and the entire document and after careful reading, I further re-grouped some sections and banked some. This done, I embarked on a *narration*; that is, giving an explanation of the data in a manner that they would make sense to a reader. In the process, I paraphrased a lot of the data and retained some as citations. This process entailed, further moving of some sections, demoting some (sub-themes or categories) into codes and promoting other codes into sub-themes. It also involved trying to ensure that each theme was distinct enough to stand on its own while also working on the

coherence within the themes. As Braun and Clarke (2006) say: “data within themes should cohere together meaningfully while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes” (p.91). This phase also involved moving back and forth, sometimes going back to the bank or the original data. I also read the draft several times, making several amendments in the process. I ended this phase by producing the first report of the findings in two chapters according to the research questions (see Chapters 4 and 5) more or less in the manner that they are now, of course after several revisions.

It is important to explain that at the stage of producing the report of the findings, I was faced with two options: either to report the data thematically or to report the data by individual student teachers. Initially, I analysed the data and wrote the reports under the six student teachers as cases. However, I noticed that the data was quite similar among all the student teachers and the report appeared quite repetitive; hence I later, I decided to present them thematically, under the two research questions. Secondly, I wanted to capture how the student teachers were supported by the teacher educators; yet, the teacher educators were not attached to particular student teachers (see 3.2.4). Therefore the option to report the data thematically made it possible to capture the similar patterns across all the student teachers, infuse the information relevant to the teacher educators (and cooperating teachers – where they were shared, like in the case of Ann and Faith) and also to avoid unnecessary repetition. Nevertheless, I took care to identify and report unique practices and aspects of support concerning different student teachers. For example, I have explained that the different schools in which the student teachers taught had varied resources for ELT and learners with different competencies in English language (see 4.3.3). Other examples of experiences that were unique to specific student teachers that I reported are that Caro was able to observe (and was also observed by) cooperating teachers and that she reported learning much from this activity and also that Dan was the only student teacher supervised by an ELT specialist (see 5.2.5 and 5.4.4.1, respectively).

3.5.5. Lessons from data analysis

In conclusion to this section, I state a few lessons that I learnt from the process of data analysis. First, I realised qualitative data analysis is surely iterative; there is a lot of back and forth movement between the different stages; hence it is not as smooth as the description I have given in the foregoing pages may suggest. Secondly, I noted that data analysis is quite a rigorous, time-consuming and messy process, as many researchers have indicated. As I explained, the entire process from transcription to producing the initial report took me about eight months, after data generation, yet even during the final compilation of this thesis, I have had to go back to some original data a number of times. Thirdly, data analysis in my experience requires a lot of reading of research books and articles as well as previous research reports or theses to find out what other researchers did or suggested. The reading helped me to come up with a consistent approach to analysis and to get backing for different stages of the analysis process. Similarly, data analysis requires a lot of consultation with colleagues and supervisors to help check that a reader may identify the coding process as logical, whether the themes are clear and if the emerging narrative is coherent. At every stage of my coding, as reported above, I requested some of my fellow research students to read through some transcripts to check the logic of the coding and the narrative. This consultative process inevitably involved my supervisors and I had to make several revisions based on their suggestions as well. The main benefit of this type of consultation with colleagues and readers was that it made me sensitive to doing analysis in a manner that would be logical to other readers.

Ultimately, I wish to suggest, based on my experience, that there is a need to have a clear roadmap in mind, so as not to lose focus. What helped me in doing this was that I identified *thematic analysis* as appropriate for analysing my data then located key publications on this approach (as cited in this section) that I referred to repeatedly and which offered invaluable guidance. Finally, in spite of the rigorous nature of data analysis, I learnt that every phase accomplished gave me some sense of achievement in my research project and general confidence as a qualitative researcher. In the next section, I explain why I consider my study trustworthy.

3.6. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Trustworthiness is the degree or extent of certainty that the research process is truthful, careful and rigorous enough to qualify it to make the claims that it does (e.g. Creswell and Miller, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Lichtman, 2006). Traditionally, the terms *internal validity*, *external validity*, *reliability* and *objectivity* have been used to demonstrate the trustworthiness of a research project. However, some qualitative researchers advocate the use of different terms such as *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* instead, respectively. The argument for the different terminology is that in relativist-interpretivist qualitative research generally, the way trustworthiness is evaluated is rather different from the realist-positivist paradigm and the quantitative approach where the former terms are predominantly used (e.g. Creswell and Miller, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Creswell and Miller (2000) explain the use of these terms as follows:

The constructivist or interpretive position emerged during the period of 1970 to 1987 ...and it is reflected in stances toward validity today. Constructivists believe in pluralistic, interpretive, open-ended, and contextualized (e.g., sensitive to place and situation) perspectives toward reality. The validity procedures reflected in this thinking present criteria with labels distinct from quantitative approaches, such as trustworthiness (i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) (p.125-126).

Nevertheless, all the researchers cited above acknowledge that the general concerns postulated by the concepts of validity and reliability as criteria for assessing the quality of any research are worth taking into consideration even in qualitative research, even though the terminology used and the ways of ensuring the rigour may differ. In agreement with these views, but in consistency with relativist-interpretivist paradigm within which I am operating (see section 3.1), I use the terms credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, respectively. Nonetheless, I show the consistency of my definitions to the definitions in the traditional terms so that readers of this thesis (especially from my context) who may not be conversant with the qualitative terminology will follow my explanations. Next, I give definitions of these terms, based on research literature (e.g. Creswell and Miller, 2000; Gillham, 2000; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Mason, 2002; Yin, 2003) (see Table 3.2, below) and thereafter indicate how I observed them in this study.

Table 3.2: Terminology used to define trustworthiness in research and their meanings

In qualitative research	In quantitative research	Meaning
Credibility	Internal validity	Extent to which the study actually investigates what it claims to investigate and reports what actually occurred in the field.
Transferability	External validity	Extent to which the research findings may be transferable, relevant or generalisable to other cases or contexts.
Dependability	Reliability	Extent to which the research procedure is clear enough to readers e.g. to enable other researchers to carry out similar studies in the same or other contexts.
Confirmability	Objectivity	How <i>neutral</i> the researcher is and to what extent s/he influences the findings

3.6.1. Credibility

I addressed the questions of credibility in a number of ways. First, I involved peers and experienced researchers in reviewing my key concepts, methodology and analysis and to help check the credibility of my rationale, research process and report as suggested in research literature (e.g. Stake, 2006; Mason, 2002). This kind of consultation went on throughout all the stages of the study and was very useful in ensuring that I focused on the stated aims of the study and carried out the necessary tasks credibly. Secondly, I followed the principles of *triangulation* (e.g. Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Stake 2005) to ensure that I had access to different and detailed perspectives on the student teachers' practice and nature of support which were the main issues of interest in this study. Stake (2005) explains that "triangulation has been generally considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verify the repeatability of an observation and interpretation" (p.453). In relation to this, my data were generated from three sources (student teachers, cooperating teachers and teacher educators) working together during the teaching practice session. Through this, I was able to get different perspectives of the key participants and corroborate their individual reports on all the issues that came up regarding TP. For example, it was possible to check information given by both student teachers and teacher educators on preparation for practice and conduct of supervision. According to Yin (2003) "any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be much more

convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode” (p. 98).

At a different level of triangulation, I used three techniques of data generation (interviews, observations and documents), which made it possible to explore different aspects of the phenomenon – teaching practice - thereby generating very rich data. This aspect of triangulation is highly recommended in qualitative case studies (e.g. Gillham, 2000; Yin, 2003). Gillham (2000) emphasises that a researcher “should look for different kinds of evidence: what people *say*, what you see them *doing*, what they make or *produce*, what documents and records *show*” (writer’s italics) (p.20). At yet another level, the research design made it possible for me to build a *chain of evidence* through several observations and interviews so as to probe and confirm/disconfirm earlier data (e.g. Creswell and Milner, 2000). For example, the subsequent interviews made it possible for me to seek explanations from student teachers on some aspects of their practice that I had observed and also to check consistency in what they had told me earlier. It was also possible to go back to important issues that I may not have covered satisfactorily in the earlier interviews.

Another suggestion in research literature on how researchers may enhance the credibility of their findings is *member checking*, which involves giving drafts of the research report to participants to confirm that they have been reported accurately (e.g. Creswell and Milner, 2000; Stake, 1995). In relation to this, in the process of data generation, I showed some participants transcripts and observation notes, which they all said were accurate. Later, after producing the findings chapters, I sent some sections to the participants that I could reach by e-mail. I sent such drafts to three student teachers, one cooperating teacher and three teacher educators. In spite of many reminders, only one teacher educator responded and the statement was that the report was “clear, detailed and reflects the nitty gritty of TP in Kenya, I look forward to reading the final document, hopefully in book form, congratulations”. I think the lack of response was mainly because internet services are paid for rather expensively in Kenya and most of the participants did not see the need to spend money on this kind of checking. Also, member checking is a new concept in our context, which the participants may not have found necessary.

3.6.2. Transferability

Transferability is generally defined as the extent to which the findings of a study may be relevant or (to use a more common term) generalisable to other contexts (Richards, 2009). The issue of transferability in case study research appears to be problematic because there are divergent views as to what sort of generalisations can be claimed. Some writers argue that there is no room for generalisations from qualitative research and/or case studies (e.g. Creswell, 2007; Gillham, 2000; Richards, 2003). Richards (2003) states that “it might be said that the power of qualitative research derives from its ability to represent the particular and that this distinguishes it from those sorts of research which depend on generalisability” (p.10). Gillham (2000) argues that “in human behaviour, generalization from one group of people to another, is often suspect-because there are often too many elements that are *specific* (author’s italics) to the group or institution. For example, what is true about one school...may well not be true about another” (p.6).

Nonetheless some writers in research methodology suggest that it is possible to make some degree of generalisation. For example, Yin (2003) suggests the possibility of arriving at *analytic generalisations* based on data from multiple cases in different contexts. He says: “the contexts of the two cases are likely to differ to some extent...if you still can arrive at common conclusions from both cases, they will have immeasurably expanded the external generalizability of your findings, again compared to those from a single case alone” (p. 53). In relation to this, my data analysis revealed very similar patterns amongst all the participants in the study concerning particular aspects of teaching practice. For example, the student teachers’ approaches to teaching and progress made were quite similar (see Chapter Four), the cooperating teachers’ relationships with the student teachers’ and the teacher educators’ conduct of supervision were also consistent across different schools (see Chapter Five).

Based on these similarities, it may be possible to suggest the sort of generalisations posited by Bassey (1999) and Stake (1995). Bassey (1999) argues that it is possible to make a *fuzzy generalization* from case study. He says that such a generalisation “arises from studies of singularities and typically claims that *it is possible, or likely*

or unlikely that (italics in original text) what was found in the singularity will be found in similar situations elsewhere” (p.12). Stake (1995) also suggests the possibility of readers of a case study making for themselves what he calls *naturalistic generalizations* (my italics). These are the kind of generalisations that people make because they are interested in the case and compare it to other cases with which they are familiar.

Ultimately, it was not my objective to generalise to the whole of the Kenyan context or teaching practice in ELTE in general as this is not consistent with qualitative case study (e.g. Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995). Creswell (2007) observes that “as a general rule, qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize from one case to another because the contexts of the cases differ” (p.74). Stake (1995) also emphasises that “we do not choose case study designs to optimize production of generalizations...the real business of a case study is particularization, not generalization” (p.8). This notwithstanding, I believe the findings of my study are relevant to other participants in TP in Kenya and similar contexts (see 7.3.).

3.6.3. Dependability

Richards (2009) explains that “dependability in qualitative research involves an interrogation of the context and the methods used to derive the data” (p159). Yin (2003) suggests that one way of enhancing dependability is to make clear and detailed descriptions of the steps followed in the case study. He says “the general way of approaching the reliability problem is to make as many steps operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone were always looking over our shoulder” (p. 38). To ensure dependability in my study, care has been taken to make a *thick description* of the entire research process in a manner that makes it possible to carry out a similar study in another context, if necessary (Ponterotto, 2006). Ponterotto traces the origins of the term thick description to Ryles (1949) and Geertz (1973) and based on a synthesis of several views defines the term as:

the researcher’s task of both describing and interpreting observed action...describing fully the participants of the study without compromising anonymity...describing the setting and procedures in adequate detail [that] provides a context for understanding the study’s results...adequate ‘voice’ of participants [and] a thickly described discussion section... [that] merges the participants’ lived experiences with the researchers interpretations of these experiences (pp.543-547)

Stake (1995) also explains that “a substantial body of description” is a way of ensuring dependability in case study research (p.110). He says “we want to tell quite a bit about the case that almost anyone, who had our opportunity to observe it, would have noticed and recorded as much as we did” (ibid). Accordingly, in this study, I have explained different stages in reasonable detail to ensure a thorough understanding of the context, the rationale based on literature review, the data generation and analysis. I have also explained the findings elaborately supported with actual quotations from the participants (see Chapter Four and Chapter Five) and where appropriate, I have identified the possible limitations. For example, I have stated that it was not possible to interview the teacher educators immediately after supervising the student teachers (see 3.4.1) and that there was only one response when I tried the process of member – checking (see 3.6.1). It is also necessary to mention that the pilot study enabled me to identify some weaknesses in the data generation process which I corrected to enhance the dependability of the study, as I stated earlier (see 3.3.3). I also analysed the data in a consistent manner (the detail of which I have provided - see 3.5) that is possible to follow in a similar study.

3.6.4. Confirmability

Questions have been raised about how confirmable qualitative case study research is so that policy actions can be based on its findings, if and where necessary. These questions also involve how objective or neutral the researcher is and to what extent s/he influences the findings (Flyvbjerg, 2008; VanWynsberghe and Khan, 2007). Consequently, many writers now suggest that the researcher ought to acknowledge his or her role in the research process and admit any possible influences. For example, Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) observe that though researchers might have an influence on what they study, this does not rule out the trustworthiness of the findings. They say that researcher influence may actually work to their advantage, although it should be minimised. These writers argue that “how people respond to the presence of the researcher may be as informative as how they react to other situations” (p.18).

Gillham (2000) also notes that as with all human beings, it is normal and usual for researchers to carry their prior conceptualisations and prejudices of/on issues into the fieldwork exercise, based on their education and experiences. He says “we carry a lot of conceptual baggage with us...this familiarity can blind us and close our minds” (p.18). His advice is that the researcher should be conscious of this from the onset, acknowledge the position with regard to the issues being studied and struggle to maintain an “open mind” (ibid). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) assert that “indeed, rather than engaging in futile attempts to eliminate the effects of the researcher completely, we should set about understanding them” (18). According to Richards (2009), “confirmability in qualitative research depends on making the data available to the reader and this in turn depends on *transparency* (my italics) of representation” (p160). He argues that one way researchers have successfully dealt with the question on their neutrality is to attempt more representation of the voices of the participants and the different perspectives, as much as may be allowed by the space available to report these.

In my study, I have acknowledged my position with regard to my research context and explained certain views I had on the subject of my study even as I engaged in data generation (see 1.2.9). In addition, I would acknowledge that my position/ status made my data generation more smooth than it would perhaps have been. For example, the fact that I am a university teacher educator based in Safari zone in Kenya means that some of the headteachers and teachers in the schools where the student teachers were doing their teaching practice were familiar to me. Due to this, I found it easy to get access to the schools and to interact with them during data generation. I also believe that although I was not a lecturer at the same university as the student teachers in the study, the fact that I am a lecturer in a Kenyan university facilitated the acceptance by most of them to participate in the study. This however could have been partly responsible for some of the unease during the initial interviews and observations, as I reported earlier (see 3.4). However, as we interacted more and they became assured that I was not evaluating them, the initial tensions lessened and the interactions were more conducive for data generation. Therefore, as Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) say, my status in the Kenyan context actually facilitated the research process.

3.7. SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have explained the details of the data generation and analysis process in my study. In summary, this study is situated within the relativist-interpretivist paradigm. It was a qualitative case study, involving six student teachers, five cooperating teachers and six teacher educators, sampled purposively. I ensured that the relevant ethical issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and avoidance of harm were taken into consideration. I used semi structured interviews, observations and documents to generate data from the participants after which I transcribed the data and analysed them thematically. Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation, chain of evidence, and thick description. It is expected that readers may be able to draw analytic, naturalistic or fuzzy generalisations from the findings, which I present in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENT TEACHERS DURING THE PRACTICUM

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter and the next, I present the findings of the study according to the research questions. As a reminder, the questions were:

1. What are the pedagogical practices of English language student teachers during the practicum?
2. How are the English language student teachers pedagogically supported during the practicum?

In this chapter, I present the findings of the study related to the first research question under four related themes: planning for English Language (EL) lessons, teaching EL in the classroom, testing in ELT and self-evaluation in ELT. To begin with, I present the symbols that indicate the sources of the citations that will feature in the findings chapters in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Symbols used to indicate sources of data

A1, A2, A3,	Ann's first, second and third interviews, respectively
AOB1, AOB2, AOB3, AOB4	Ann's first, second, third and fourth observations
ACT	Ann's and Faith's cooperating teacher
B1, B2, B3	Ben's first, second and third interviews
BOB1, BOB2, BOB3, BOB4	Ben's first, second, third and fourth observations
BCT	Ben's cooperating teacher
C1, C2, C3,	Caro's first, second and third interviews
COB1, COB2, COB3, COB4	Caro's first, second, third and fourth observations
CCT	Caro's cooperating teacher
D1, D2, D3	Dan's first, second and third interviews
DOB1, DOB2, DOB3, DOB4	Dan's first, second, third and fourth observations
DCT	Dan's cooperating teacher
E1, E2, E3,	Eve's first, second and third interviews
EOB1, EOB2, EOB3, EOB4	Eve's first, second, third and fourth observations
ECT	Eve's cooperating teacher
F1, F2	Faith's first and second interviews
FOB1, FOB2	Faith's first and second observations
ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6	First to sixth teacher educators

4.2. PLANNING FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LESSONS

In this section, I present findings on the student teachers' experiences regarding planning for ELT in three related sub-themes: planning for a new syllabus, planning for unfamiliar subject matter and making schemes of work and lesson plans.

4.2.1. Planning for a new syllabus

The study revealed that the student teachers taught a syllabus that was relatively new to them. They had not seen the syllabus before the practicum, for example, during their studies at the university. A second reason was that the English language (EL) syllabus they had experienced as learners in schools had since changed. This presented a situation where they were planning to teach EL without having a clear understanding of the aims and topics of EL at secondary school level, which are contained in the syllabus (see 1.2.3.1 and Appendix 27). For example, although all the student teachers stated that they knew that the main aim of ELT was to improve learners' communication in EL, they all said the improvement in communication was meant to enable learners to pass exams. For example, Ben said during his first interview: "nobody has ever told me about exact aims before this TP. I thought it was to improve students' communication so that they can pass the exams. But now I know there are specific aims to be achieved when you are teaching" [B1]. Another student teacher, Faith stated similar thoughts: "It is the language used in all subjects, so students have to be taught well to be conversant with it so that they can answer questions in the K.C.S.E (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education) examinations".

During the practicum, one of the key aspects of the student teachers' practice was to write specific lesson objectives based on the broader aims stated in the syllabus. For example from the broad aim of "to enable learners communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing", a student teacher would be expected to derive a specific objective such as "by the end of the lesson, the learner should be able to write a letter of apology correctly using the appropriate format and tone". All of them reported that this activity of deriving specific objectives from broad aims of ELT presented a major challenge because they had had no guidance on that at University.

The student teachers also said that deciding exactly what topic to teach in what lesson, during the planning was quite challenging as well, especially because the syllabus was new and they thought some of the topics, as presented in the textbooks were quite “advanced” for the classes. Gradually, though, they felt that they developed a better understanding of the syllabus as they studied it and discussed with their cooperating teachers, as Caro stated during her first interview:

To be honest, I had not seen the syllabus before I came here, so at first, choosing what to teach in which class was a problem because even the textbooks like *Head Start English* looked too advanced for Form 1... some things, even me I did not understand...you know this syllabus is new and complicated...we did not do some of those things in school... I have had a look at the syllabus and we discussed with one cooperating teacher. At least now I know the topics I need to teach in which class. Like in Form 1, even if I am teaching writing, I just concentrate on sentences, paragraphs and short narrative and descriptive compositions but in Form 3 or 4, maybe I need to tell them about argument ... you see that's the problem they should give us the syllabus early, like in campus because the syllabus is not in bookshops [C1].

I asked the teacher educators during interviews why the student teachers had not seen the syllabus by the time they left the university. They stated that the main reason was because the EL syllabus in the secondary schools at the time the student teachers were doing the practicum was new and had been designed without adequate consultation between the ministry of education and the universities.

There are a lot of curriculum changes at secondary school level but we are not involved in those changes at all or made aware of them promptly. Therefore we may not really be able to prepare the student teachers appropriately for the syllabus they are likely to find in schools. Also, the syllabus for English Language keeps shifting...according to Ministry of Education's reviews but at the university we feel we do not necessarily have to change just because the ministry has changed. Our student teachers during TP find themselves in that confusion [ED2].

The key issues here then, are firstly, that the changes in secondary school English syllabus were not promptly communicated to universities; secondly, even when they became aware of the changes, the universities did not feel obliged to change their courses. The third issue is that the student teachers faced the challenge of planning to implement a syllabus that was new to them largely because it carried aims and topics that they did not learn at school and were not exposed to at the university. A similar aspect of the student teachers' practice was that they had to plan for subject matter that was relatively unfamiliar to them, as I explain next.

4.2.2. Planning for *unfamiliar* subject matter

At secondary school level in Kenya, EL as subject matter consists of the four skills of *Listening, Speaking, Reading* and *Writing* as well as *Grammar*. The subject also includes aspects of what was previously taught as a separate subject called *Literature*. Such aspects include *Poetry, Drama, Short Stories, the Novel* and *Oral Literature* which deals with *oral narratives, proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters* and *songs*. During the interviews, the student teachers stated that they found the EL subject matter at the secondary school level generally unfamiliar. This presented a major challenge to them while they were planning; hence they had to read widely to learn the unfamiliar aspects and revise what they had been familiar with when they had been in school but had since forgotten. In EL, some of the topics they identified as unfamiliar included aspects of *grammar* such as phrases (noun, adjectival and adverbial), types of sentences (such as simple, compound and complex), among others. In *reading*, they identified skimming, scanning, interpretive reading and analysis of texts. As for *writing skills*, they had to read formats of most of the functional writing skills such as inventories, diaries, notices, minutes and reports.

In Literature, most of the student teachers taught learners in Forms 1 and 2 where the aspects to be taught included mainly *Oral literature* and *Poetry*. Some aspects of Oral literature that they reported they had to revise included types of narratives such as *legends, myths* and *aetiological narratives*. In Poetry, they reported that they had to re-learn *aspects of style* such as *imagery, alliteration, onomatopoeia* and *idiophones* and how to teach them. Another challenge some of them faced was planning to teach a *novel* they had not read. This was reported by two student teachers, Eve and Caro who taught Form 3 where the literature content included *set books*. Eve requested to be exempted from teaching set books because she had not read them, but Caro taught one novel in Form 3. Most of the student teachers thus reported experiencing several challenges planning for a subject that was generally unfamiliar to them as illustrated by Caro's statement below:

When you finish university, you think you've finished with reading. After all you say what is in secondary school that you don't know? You were there and you have already read a lot more at university since school. So before TP you assume you will just pick the textbook and go to class and that at times you will not even need it. But when you are planning and you realise you don't know the topic or you might go to class and find a student knows more than you know, you just have to go back to books. Because some of those things you have forgotten and some have changed since

school because the English subject has changed. And also to explain well you must understand well. Like they have given me a novel I have not read, so it is like I have to read even late at night just like in campus [C1].

The documents I analysed confirmed that the EL subject matter the student teachers had to teach at secondary school level was to an extent not covered in their coursework at university. The *English Language Syllabus for Secondary Schools in Kenya* (Appendix 27) shows a variety of topics in both EL and Literature that are supposed to be covered from Form 1 to Form 4. A comparison of the syllabus and titles of the ELTE coursework at the university (see Table 1.1) illustrates that there was indeed some inconsistency between the content and that at secondary school level. Consequently, most of the student teachers thought that the coursework at university did not familiarise them with what they would be expected to teach during TP; for example, as captured in Ben's statement during his second interview:

At University, English is divided into so many units like Phonetics and Phonology, Syntax, Morphology and others. Then when these things are taught, they are just those big university stuff. Here it is *Grammar*; you know *tenses, spelling, direct and indirect speech* and *passive, active voice* and such things. No more Chomsky and things like transformation. When you come here to teach, you cannot start telling the students about tree diagrams in syntax or the use of stream of consciousness technique in creative writing. The university stuff is inconsistent with syllabus here in schools; so we have to think of relating them when planning...So it is like we were taught other subjects in campus and we are dealing with others here...It is challenging [B2].

While the university coursework is perhaps intended to afford the ELT students more advanced insight into the theoretical principles that inform practice, the key point is that in the practicum scenario the student teachers found themselves in a situation where they had to plan to teach subject matter that was generally unfamiliar to them and therefore had to spend time reading the subject matter in order to be able to teach it competently. Perhaps the climax of the planning for ELT came with writing the exact topics they intended to teach during the term, which is what I present next.

4.2.3. Making *Schemes of Work* and Lesson Plans

Teachers of all subjects at secondary school in Kenya are required to plan at two levels. First, they have to make a *scheme of work*, which usually contains all the topics in a particular subject and class during the whole term, broken down to specific lessons during the week. The structure of the schemes of work will vary from subject to subject and from university to university. In ELT and for the

university whose students were involved in my study, the scheme of work was supposed to show the specific lesson topics, the objectives, learning activities, teaching aids and references for each intended lesson (see Appendices 23 -26). Secondly, for every lesson the teachers had to prepare a *lesson plan*, based on the scheme of work but with more details of the introduction, development and conclusion and the exact activities the teacher and the learners will be doing during the lesson and for how long.

One of the findings regarding this aspect of the student teachers' pedagogical practice was that most of them initially did not consider preparation of schemes of work and lessons plans as an important component of their teaching practice. As they got more involved in teaching, though, most of them realised that these were very necessary. They learnt that changes to their initial plans were often inevitable considering the day-to-day realities of pedagogy. Types of changes included breaking down some topics into several sub-topics and including more activities. At times adjustments had to be made "because there are some topics that you realise cannot be finished within one lesson" [F2]. However, one student teacher indicated that she did not find the schemes of work necessary. She stated that there were several factors that dictated what she would decide to do during particular lessons, which made it difficult to follow the schemes of work as planned.

I don't find the schemes of work necessary; you find that in my schemes of work, I might have indicated that I will use group discussions, but when I go to class, I don't use them. Or at times, I have indicated that I will have a chart and then on the day that I am supposed to go to class, I look at the content and I say I don't think that I will need a chart for this, So I go and use the chalkboard... or I realise I had schemed to teach some topic in one lesson and then when it comes to the exact day I realise that it is supposed to go for two lessons. So, I make adjustments, I teach this lesson and then the following lesson, I do the same and I finish up [E2].

Similarly, another student teacher, Caro, stated that she found lesson plans unnecessary and consequently stopped writing them as soon as she felt there would be no more assessments. She indicated that she saw no difference between teaching using lesson plans and teaching without them. She thought that lesson plans were only necessary when one was beginning to teach but once a teacher had made them for some time, they became an unnecessary burden. One of the reasons she felt like that was because the regular teachers in her school did not make the lesson plans.

Lesson plans were just cumbersome; it is too much, if you already have the schemes, and you have everything in the scheme, and in your mind you know it is forty minutes, you will program your mind and how to conduct your lessons. You don't have to have it on paper, five minutes - *introduction*, twenty minutes - *development*, you can lesson plan in your mind... So I stopped making them when I knew they [supervisors] would not come again and my classes were the same...I think they [lesson plans] are only necessary for beginners. Like during the beginning of the term I was a beginner. I used to try planning accurately but still in class, the time became less or more than I had prepared, but now as the TP continued, I got some knowledge, so right now I don't need a lesson plan. After all, even the regular teachers do not make them [C3].

The views of these student teachers, Eve and Caro that schemes of work and lesson plans were not necessary, respectively, suggest that there was need for discussions, perhaps with teacher educators, on the role of these two documents in planning to teach. For example, Eve might have considered the scheme of work as a firm entity that was supposed to be followed to the letter, hence when she realised she had to make adjustments, in her view, that rendered the schemes of work unnecessary. On the other hand, the student teachers' views could have been influenced by the practice of the regular teachers. For example, Caro did not really deny that the lesson plans were important; the main reason she stopped preparing them was because they were cumbersome and the regular teachers did not make them. Despite the challenges reported, all of the student teachers felt that they improved in their lesson planning through practice. For example, they felt that they planned more accurately for the forty minutes they had for each lesson, and were more systematic in planning different aspects of a topic, as Dan reported:

I cannot make a good judge of myself but from my point of view I can say that I have improved in making lesson plans as time goes. Because at first I used to have a problem in time management; sometimes I planned for a lesson and it took much more time than expected, I didn't finish by the time the bell rings. But now, I have experienced finishing my work on time, more or less as I had planned...Also, now when I plan, I can think of the topics that will smoothly link with the next one. Like if I am teaching about *writing a will*, maybe I also plan for a debate in the next lessons, for example about whether the girl child should be allowed to inherit wealth or not... So, I believe I can plan better now [D2].

Interviews with educators and cooperating teachers also indicated a general view that the student teachers improved on lesson planning as the practicum progressed. The educators pointed out that initial assessment showed more mistakes in lesson planning which, according to them, led to "disorderly" lessons. They said that in their experience, the student teachers improved on lesson planning with time and consequently showed better teaching in their classes towards the end of TP:

Generally the first assessments indicate that student teachers have very sketchy lesson plans, you know with quite scanty details of lesson development and activities and because of this their classes are very disorderly. You know they jump from one issue to another. But the later assessments show fewer mistakes and better order; the lesson plans indicate more precise activities identified and the time they will take. So you see less digression... So I think mainly the student teachers learn that good planning is the key to a successful lesson [ED3].

The cooperating teachers also indicated that the student teachers seemed to improve in lesson planning with time. According to some of them the learners reported enjoying their lessons more. Below, Eve's cooperating teacher stated that such reports suggested the student teachers had planned better.

I can't mention the exact areas of improvement but one: she used to come for consultations regularly when she was planning for lessons, but these days I find her planning for similar lessons without asking, then I feel she's comfortable. Also the learners have said they are really enjoying in class; that they are participating well. When I asked her what she does to make them happy, she said she plans for more activities that involve the students kind of learning through playing, through games... It is like she has just improved [ECT].

The general view of the student teachers, educators and cooperating teachers was that the student teachers improved in lesson planning. The main reasons given were that the student teachers improved in timing content to fit within the lessons, prepared for more precise and detailed activities; that learners reported they enjoyed the lessons more and that the student teachers consulted less on lesson planning. However, when I analysed the student teachers' lesson plans for the lessons I observed during the practicum, I noticed that they remained quite similar throughout the term. In some cases, the lesson plans were actually exactly the same as the previous ones, save for changes in *date*, *class* and *topic*. For example, although Ben was teaching two separate classes different topics, there was really no clear difference between his lesson plans for the third and fourth lessons that I observed (see Appendices 11 and 12). Similarly, there were no major difference between Eve's lesson plans for the third and fourth observed lessons in terms of learning activities (see Appendices 15 and 16). This similarity in lesson plans was common in the other sets of lesson plans that I analysed. During subsequent interviews with the student teachers, they explained that at times they did not change the lesson plans much due to the pressure of work they faced; hence sometimes they reproduced the lesson plans for similar topics that they had taught in the past.

I realise that you are so busy during TP... When you are not in class, you are always busy marking, especially the exercises and essays in English, which are there everyday. It is just so hectic. I get so tired, at the end of the day. In the process, sometimes you find yourself with no time to think deeply about lesson plans, so you find yourself reproducing the ones that worked well before for similar topics [E2].

From these experiences, it is clear that planning was quite a challenging aspect of the student teachers' pedagogical practice. Nevertheless, they gained valuable experience considering that they were dealing with a new syllabus, unfamiliar subject matter and this was the first time they were making schemes of work and lesson plans. Next, I analyse the student teachers' actual practices in the classrooms.

4.3. TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

The student teachers' practice in the classrooms could be summarised into three related sub-themes: implementation of the *integrated approach* to ELT, facilitation of learner participation in class and ELT in different contexts. To start with, I present the student teachers' experiences in implementing the integrated approach in ELT.

4.3.1. Implementing the *Integrated Approach* in ELT

In Kenya, EL is supposed to be taught following what the Ministry of Education (MoE) calls the *Integrated Approach*. This approach, as I explained in Chapter One, involves teaching EL and Literature (which were earlier on taught as two separate subjects) as one subject in the school curriculum (see 1.2.3 for details). A key document of the Ministry of Education: the *Secondary English Teachers Handbook*, gives examples of how the *integrated approach* could be implemented in practice.

None of the skills should be taught in isolation. The teachers should as much as possible integrate the teaching of the skills. For example, while teaching reading, the teacher may reinforce the mastery of grammar by pointing out instances of effective use of grammatical items already taught. The teacher may also generate writing tasks and debates from the reading material (KIE, 2006:3).

At the university, however, the courses in English language and also in Literature were not integrated in the manner explained above nor did the student teachers have much practice in this approach (see 4.2.1). I was keen to investigate how they were implementing the integrated approach in ELT.

During the observations of all the six student teachers as they taught classes ranging from Form 1 to Form 3 (no student teacher in the study taught Form 4), through the three months of the practicum, I saw no clear evidence of *integration* in the manner envisaged in the document cited above, that is the idea that “*no language skill should be taught in isolation*”. The student teachers taught English Language or Literature separately and even within these areas, they taught the skills distinctly (for example, *Writing* or *Poetry*, respectively); they further identified the subtopics (such as writing *diaries* or *aspects of style* in poetry). Table 4.2 shows the classes I observed and areas, skills and subtopics taught as explained above.

Table 4.2: Classes observed, dates and topics taught during the practicum

Participant	1st Observation	2nd Observation	3rd Observation	4th Observation
Ann	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Writing Topic: Diary and Addresses</i>	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Reading Topic: Vocabulary</i>	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Grammar Topic: Complex sentences</i>	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Revision Topic: General</i>
Ben	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Grammar Topic: Noun Phrases</i>	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Literature Topic: Poetry: Aspects of style</i>	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Writing Topic: Letters of apology</i>	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Reading Topic: Vocabulary*</i>
Caro	<i>Class: Form 3 Skill: Writing Topic: Reports</i>	<i>Class: Form 3 Skill: Grammar Topic: Conjunctions</i>	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Literature Topic: Poetry Aspects of style</i>	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Reading Topic: Vocabulary*</i>
Dan	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Writing Topic: Letters of apology</i>	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Speaking Topic: /p/ and /b/ Pronunciation</i>	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Writing Topic: Note making</i>	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Literature Topic: Drama</i>
Eve	<i>Class: Form 1 Skill: Reading Topic: Vocabulary*</i>	<i>Class: Form 3 Skill: Literature Topic: Poetry: Imagery</i>	<i>Skill: Grammar Topic: Compound /complex Sentences</i>	<i>Class: Form 3 Skill: Writing Topic: Minutes</i>
Faith	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Grammar Topic: Complex Sentences</i>	<i>Class: Form 2 Skill: Oral Literature Topic: Songs</i>		

Nevertheless, from my observation, and from student teachers' comments after lessons, some student teachers could be said to have been making an effort to implement the integrated approach during some lessons. I have indicated such lessons where I observed some elements of integration using asterisks (see Table

4.2). For example, Ben was teaching *reading* during the fourth observed lesson as shown in the Table and his focus was on new words (vocabulary). In the process he asked the learners to construct sentences using the words. Construction of sentences in this manner might be said to be an aspect of *Grammar*. After the lesson, Ben told me that he had been trying to integrate the two skills of *Reading* and *Grammar*. However, there was no particular grammatical structure the learners were asked to use. The following summarised notes that I wrote during Ben's lesson illustrate this.

TR asks the age bracket of adolescents. An argument ensues among learners e.g. from 8-20; 9-18 etc. TR asks learners to stop giving chorus answers and raise their hands. ...The loud reading of 'vocabulary' continues and TR asks for definitions of the words, some attempt. TR asks learners to construct sentences using the word *illicit*. One does and TR asks class if they accept the sentence which they do. TR asks learners to give opposite meanings of the words. Learners look at the dictionary and give words i.e. *adolescent - adult; illicit - licit*. TR asks them to construct sentences using the opposites. At some point learners disagree with TR on pronunciation of *punitive* and say the dictionary says it is pronounced /pjunativ/. The trend continues until the bell rings -i.e. reading definitions, construct sentences, opposite; synonyms [BOB4].

I noted a similar kind of integration while observing another student teacher, Caro. While her focus as observed during the fourth lesson was - like Ben's - on *vocabulary*, she also engaged learners in practising the pronunciation of the "new words" they were learning. Like Ben, Caro also told me after the lesson that she was trying to integrate *pronunciation*, which she considered an aspect of *Speaking*, with *Reading*. I made the following notes during that lesson:

Learners start reading aloud in turns... As the reading continues, some of the appointed readers have problems pronouncing certain words correctly...While learners have been reading; TR has been listing some words on the CB. Those words are italicised in the text. E.g. *pleasant, frantically, disrupt, eulogy, gadget, rent*. After the students have read the passage in turns. TR asks learners to pronounce words listed on the CB...TR leads learners through a practice exercise which involves filling blank spaces with appropriate words. She corrects their pronunciation in the process...asks learners to write sentences with words or opposites in pairs [COB4].

Another illustration of an attempt to integrate skills was observed during Eve's first observed lesson on *Reading* whose focus was also on *vocabulary*. She also told me after the lesson that she was trying to implement the integrated approach. Eve, like Ben, also asked the learners to construct their own sentences using the new words, and like Caro, also drew the learners' attention to the correct pronunciation of the words. Within the skill of reading, she involved the learners in answering comprehension questions besides the new words she was dealing with.

TR asks learners to construct their own sentences using the italicised words, orally. She corrects some of the sentences and approves some, complimenting students for correct answers or for trying. ...TR corrects learners' pronunciation...leads learners in answering recall questions orally as she gives summary of the text. E.g. *who're the volunteers? What activities do they take part in?* [EOB1].

From the above observations, I could say that the student teachers were putting into practice some elements of the *integrated approach*. Indeed they also told me after the lessons that they had been trying to integrate the skills as recommended. However, from my observations, it was not very clear whether they were making a conscious effort to do this or it happened by chance. The aspects of integration I observed may have been accidental, especially considering that *the* observations did not show consistency in implementing the approach by individual student teachers or among all of them. It is observable, however that in the three attempts at integration noted above the focus of the lessons were on *reading*. This suggests that *reading* might have presented the student teachers with a better opportunity for integration, compared to the other skills, perhaps because they found it possible to use extracts from the passages to try to teach different skills.

Analysis of the lesson plans for evidence of integration showed that the student teachers planned for specific topics. For example, Ben's plans for the lessons I observed showed that he planned to teach Grammar (*the noun phrase*), Reading (*drugs and drug abuse*), Writing (*letters of apology*) and Poetry ("a freedom song"), respectively (Appendices 9-12). It is noticeable, however that in the sections for activities, *reading* and *writing* are indicated. However, these are reading and writing activities related to the subtopics being taught in the particular lesson. This trend was also noticeable in Eve's lesson plans (Appendices 13 -16) as well as the other lesson plans for the observed classes. I explored the issue of implementation of the integrated approach during the subsequent interviews.

I asked the student teachers to talk about their experiences concerning implementation of the integrated approach. Practically all of them reported that the concept of integration was very difficult to implement in practice. They felt that what they learnt at the university about the approach was not clear enough to enable them put it into practice. Moreover, they reported that in their experience the integrated

approach was confusing to both learners and teachers and as a result they just taught the skills in English and Literature separately but they tried to integrate when they thought it was feasible. The other point that emerged was that the student teachers felt they were not supported in their efforts to implement this approach because the teacher educators who went to supervise them did not talk about it. Eve's statement below was representative of the student teachers' view on implementation of the integrated approach.

The integration theory is problematic in practice. I get mixed up when I am teaching say poetry - say *metaphors* then you expect me to teach grammar too, for example. Students already find the metaphors too difficult, now when you bring up *subordinate clauses* in the same lesson for example, learners get confused and even the teacher finds it difficult to switch from one concept to another... Sometimes I try but many times I don't bother, I just teach entirely the skill I have planned for; whether it is writing a letter or comprehension... fortunately even the lecturers who have come to see me are not English language specialists, so they have no idea what the hell this integration business is all about and none has mentioned it... You know we were not taught properly about this integration thing in campus [E2].

Part of the problem with implementing the integrated approach was perhaps the fact that the regulation of the university stipulated that the student teachers had to teach two subjects in which they would be assessed separately by the teacher educators; hence it was difficult to think about English as one subject in practice, as Ben said:

Okay now this one [integration] is a bit complicated although I am trying... but how do I integrate but at the same time separate them because am supposed to be teaching two subjects? ... That is, the university expects you to come and do your TP on the two subjects - English Language and Literature - and at the same time integrate them. But when you get on to the ground it is not very much clear. So it is up to you to bring out the difference between the English Part and the Literature part. It is difficult [B1].

Another student teacher, Caro, looked at integration from the perspective of how she was taught English as a student at secondary school. During that time, according to her, English and Literature were not integrated. So she said that she just taught EL the way she was taught though she said when she was teaching literature, sometimes she tried to integrate.

When I was in high school, English wasn't integrated ... ok we had a textbook called *Integrated English* but we even had two teachers - one for language and the other for literature ... Even the exam we did, two papers were for English and one paper was Literature ... But this time the English curriculum wants you to integrate skills from Literature and skills from grammar. That is difficult... So in most lessons I just teach English, like only grammar the way we were taught in high school, without integrating any literature, but if I teach literature, then I can try to integrate grammar, maybe it becomes a bit simpler then... But to say the truth it is very hard to bring in literature

elements into grammar; it's just not working, they're two different subjects, literature should be there on its own and English grammar should be there on its own [C2].

Another experience that the student teachers cited with regard to this form of integration was that it was difficult to practice with learners who were weak in English Language. For example, Faith said during her second interview: "My students are quite poor in English... even basic English alone is difficult for them, now if you add integration you are like adding insult to injury" [F2]. In this scenario, I inquired from the cooperating teachers whether they had guided the student teachers on implementation of integration. It emerged that most of them expected the student teachers to have the most current conceptualisation on integration given that they had just left the university. One of them expressed that as quoted below:

That integration thing is a problem even to some experienced teachers... We expected the TP teachers were taught about it since it was introduced when they were in college but they are also at a loss. But I don't blame them... they say the university does not deal with contents like what we teach at secondary school... [BCT].

The teacher educators confirmed that from their experiences, student teachers had difficulties in implementing the integrated approach in practice and tended to teach the skills in EL and literature independently. They also concurred that the university coursework did not prepare the student teachers adequately for the integrated approach in ELT considering that the student teachers were taught English and Literature as two separate courses at the university. One of them made the following statement which captured the views of the others:

What we saw during the teaching practice is that most of the student teachers who taught English Language mainly emphasized on the language part, that is, English at the expense of Literature. This could be taken to mean that maybe they were more comfortable with teaching English Language than the Literature part... I don't think the university prepares the students adequately for this sort of integration they are supposed to practice in the schools since at the university level the two subjects are treated separately; Literature is Literature, English is English... when they go to the secondary school level, they are expected to teach it as an integrated subject [ED3].

In summary, the data presented in the foregoing subsection indicate that during the practicum, the student teachers were faced with the experience of putting a theoretical concept of integration in ELT into practice without adequate preparation and guidance. Against this background, most of them just taught particular English skills during English language lessons.

4.3.2. Facilitating learner participation in ELT

The issue of participation of learners in ELT is strongly emphasised in the EL syllabus. It gives details of the activities the learners could be involved in for each of the skills and grammar as summarised in the statement below:

The teacher should ensure that appropriate communicative opportunities are provided in the classroom for the learner to develop these skills. Reciting poems, reading, telling and writing stories; discussing contemporary issues, doing exercises orally and in writing, identifying meanings of words and grammatical structures in real contexts; individual presentations, pair work, group discussions and debating; dramatising, role-playing and speech drills can facilitate the acquisition of these skills (KIE, 2002:7 -8).

Generally, my observations and interviews indicated that the student teachers initially found it quite difficult to facilitate active engagement of learners with the English language in the manner stated in the syllabus as cited above. Gradually though, there appeared to be improvement by all the student teachers. Below, I give some illustrations of the student teachers' practices and since the pattern of improvement was generally similar, I give only a few examples.

To start with during Ann's first observation (AOB1), she was teaching *writing* particularly *diaries* and *addresses*. I noted that she rushed through the two topics, as apparently the forty minutes allocated for one lesson seemed inadequate to cover both and the lesson was quite teacher centred as illustrated in the notes below:

- TR introduces topic – says the class would be learning how to write *diaries* and *addresses* during this lesson; she asks learners: *what's a diary?* One learner volunteers an answer, TR offers a definition, which she reads from her notes. *i.e. a diary is personal record of daily events...*TR then reads aloud *further explanations about diaries* that learners record in their notebooks. She writes some of the explanations on the CB in no particular order and some are written in incomplete sentences over others...Some parts of the CB are erased by hand to write more when there is still space on the CB...
- TR says: *now let's talk about addresses; - What are addresses?* Before any learner can attempt to answer, TR gives definition – reads from her notes and asks learners to copy in their note books. *E.g. Address gives where a company or person can be found; i.e. name, building number, street name, town or village.* TR then writes same information dictated to students on CB; she dictates notes on *types of addresses* from the textbook. Learners write notes dictated by teacher... [AOB1].

Ann's approach to teaching was similar during the second lesson (AOB2). Though the lesson was on *vocabulary*, she also included aspects of *literal* and *inferential comprehension*, hence tending to hurry again in order to cover these aspects of reading. However, unlike during the first lesson, there was notable improvement in

facilitation of learner participation. Ann used questions to involve learners and gave them time to answer questions before she gave the correct answers. She also made reference to the previous lesson during her introduction and wrote new words and their meanings on the chalkboard more neatly and clearly and complimented learners who answered her questions.

Notes on Ann's subsequent lessons indicated that although there was still a tendency to rush due to the *large* amount of content she was trying to cover within the comparatively short time of the lessons, she was able to facilitate more learner participation in the lessons especially through questioning. For example, during the third lesson (AOB3), she allowed a longer wait time after asking questions and complimented the learners for the answers given. She also urged those who were not near textbooks to move and share with others. By the fourth lesson (AOB4), she was even able to 're-direct a question asked by a learner to the classmates who actually answered it well and she only came in to add and give explanations. She was also able to get more learners to participate saying: *let's have somebody else*, besides trying to get all learners to read and answer the questions. Ann had consistently improved in her introductions for example; she smoothly linked the previous lesson on *clauses* with the present one on *complex sentences* in a manner that learners could connect. The improvement was also seen in chalkboard use where in both the third and fourth lessons, I noted "the chalkboard erased well and divided neatly into columns, with topics and sentences clearly written". This development could partly be attributed to practice and the advice from the supervisors on procedures of teaching (see 5.4.4.1).

The second example of improvement in facilitating learner participation was observed in Dan's teaching. During his first observed lesson on *letters of apology*, he defined the letters, explained how letters of apology should appear, all these based on notes that he read from the textbook and asked learners to copy. He asked learners to read aloud a letter of apology, which was perhaps an effort to get them involved, but some learners had no textbooks hence did not participate. Dan's introduction made no reference to a previous lesson and he did not ask what the learners knew about *letters of apology*. On chalkboard use, he wrote letters that were tiny and not legible enough to be read from the back of the class; he mixed small and capital

letters, which some learners copied as they were on the chalkboard. During Dan's second lesson on *pronunciation* (see DOB2), some challenges were still discernible. For example, he was explaining pronunciation using *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA) symbols which the learners did not seem to know about. However, generally, like Ann, Dan was able to facilitate better learner participation as shown in the notes I made during that lesson.

- TR reviews the previous lesson by asking learners questions on punctuations, particularly the use of *the full stop* and *exclamation mark*...
- TR asks learners to take out their textbooks *New Integrated English pg 162*. TR rubs CB clean, divides it neatly into three columns and writes topic: SPEAKING: PRONUNCIATION OF SOUNDS /p/ AND /b/. The letters are big and can be read clearly from the back. TR appoints two learners to read a dialogue in the textbook aloud, others follow with their eyes. TR asks learners to read the text aloud again now in pairs. TR writes some words using IPA symbol on CB. Learners look on, some murmur –what's that? TR hears them and says: "*by the way the symbols are written phonetically. Phonetics is study of sounds*".
- TR draws a Table with two columns and asks learners to fill first column with words which have the sound /b/ and the next with words which have the sound /p/. He gives the examples of *cab* and *cap*. Learners raise a few words to fill the Table; TR encourages more to try and compliments them.
- TR asks students to read second conversation aloud in textbook in pairs and get the words with the sounds from there and use those words to fill the Table. TR walks around the class checking what the students have written on their Tables, and confirming from the teachers' copy of the text before marking the answers [DOB2].

The trend continued during Dan's subsequent lessons that I observed with some improvement noted in involvement of learners; for example by asking them to read a text and make notes in pairs during the third lesson, shortening the sentences until only *main ideas* remained (DOB3). During the fourth observed lesson, Dan noticed learners who were not paired up and asked them to; he asked questions which the learners were invited to discuss in groups before reporting back to the whole class as he moved around to help the groups and interjected to explain points that the groups had left out. As I have pointed out repeatedly, Dan also continued to improve on aspects of general pedagogy such as introductions, conclusions, chalkboard use and confidence (DOB4).

The next example was Caro, whose third observed lesson was clearly a big improvement over her previous lessons in terms of learner involvement in ELT. Unlike her first observed lesson which had been more of a lecture on the writing of *reports*, and her second lesson where she was mainly dictating and explaining notes

on *conjunctions*, the third one was an interesting lesson on aspects of style in *Poetry*, where learners participated actively as I wrote in the observations notes below:

TR asks learners: *You have done aspects of style before – repetition, imagery, etc?* Learners answer - *yes*. TR asks learners to name the aspects of style that they have learnt before. Learners give answers in chorus: E.g. they say *imagery, similes, and metaphors*. TR says: *next time, do not give chorus answers; I will appoint people who talk, ok?* TR gives out typed copies of the poem. Then asks learners to read the poem first silently, then aloud in turns (stanza by stanza) - students volunteer to read by raising their hands as teacher appoints them. When they have finished reading the poem, TR asks: *So, is it love or lust?* Learners laugh and start debating among themselves. TR asks them to discuss *themes* in the poem in groups and report answers to class, she moves around and assists. TR then tells groups to recite poem to class, learners seem to enjoy this. She then asks learners to identify rhyming words, as she writes the words on the CB e.g. *trust = lust; hand = stand; much = touch; preachers = teachers*. She uses questions to lead the class in identifying other aspects of style in the poem such as *Alliteration, consonance and assonance* [COB3].

Caro's fourth observed lesson on vocabulary (see COB4 – 4.3.1), also showed similar improvement. Although she tended to spend more time on correcting pronunciation than engaging learners in manipulation of the new words she had set out to teach, she used questions to involve learners in filling blank spaces with appropriate words and asked learners to write sentences in pairs using words and their opposites, before reporting back to the class.

Finally, like the others, Eve's earlier observations showed a problem with facilitation of learner engagement with the subject matter while the subsequent observations showed consistent improvement. To avoid unnecessary repetition, I give just one example from her fourth observation. Eve used a teaching aid – a chart which she repeatedly drew the learners' attention to. I noted that the teaching aid was clearer than a previous one I had seen her use; she also got learners to act out some parts of a meeting and to discuss the importance of minutes in groups.

TR introduces minutes by asking questions e.g. *when are they written, by whom?* Learners answer TR's questions. Explains layout of minutes and uses a chart to illustrate that, the chart is clearly written and easy to read even from the back of the class. TR draws learners' attention to the chart as she explains guidelines on taking minutes e.g. - *heading in capital letters; title has name of group, date, etc*. Gives learners a brief task to "meet" in groups and appoint a secretary to take minutes using the layout. She goes round checking. Then asks class to discuss importance of minutes in their groups and present to class [EOB4].

From the findings presented in this subsection, I could say that all the classes of the student teachers were initially quite teacher-centred. This was not really surprising

because that was the first time the student teachers were actually involved in real classroom teaching. However, they improved gradually in facilitating learner participation in EL learning especially by use of questions, group work and sometimes drawing attention to teaching aids. I have also indicated general improvement in aspects of teaching that are more generic in nature such as use of the chalkboard, introductions and conclusions of lessons and general confidence of the student teachers as they went about their practice. Nevertheless, there were still instances of lecturing and a tendency to rush as I have pointed out.

During the interviews, I explored the issue of learner participation with the participants. Most of the student teachers (just as I had observed) felt that their earlier lessons were not “learner-centred”; they attributed this to lack of confidence in the earlier stages. However, most of them (as I had noted too) felt they had improved in the skill by trying out techniques in practice and as they talked to their fellow student teachers. For example, Dan stated that in the last half of the practicum, he could involve learners better in his lessons.

In the beginning I realised that I used not to involve students very much. But now I have tried as much as possible to make my lessons learner-centred. I actually know that making the lesson student centred is much more effective than just trying to explain things myself – as we were told in campus...I can also say that my confidence has improved with practice and discussions with my fellow TP teachers, like Ben. I can now use pair work, group work and even debate [D2].

Closely related to this, the student teachers also explained that they found EL lessons to be more enjoyable when they tried methods that involved the learners more. According to them, they discovered through practice that lecturing about the language was not effective while use of questions and answers, group discussions and recitations of poetry were more exciting. As Eve explained, like Dan, she discovered this by trying out different techniques.

By teaching English in class throughout this term, I was able to discover that the more you involve the learners the more the lesson succeeds. I have actually tried different techniques and they worked. Like class discussions, question and answer method, and then I discovered that teaching is not just lecturing, it is about involving the students to do most of the work... By trying the methods, you see which works, like if it is poetry, when you teach maybe *similes* or *metaphors* and once you've explained to the students the meaning of that, you get them to recite a real poem in groups, identify the similes and metaphors that are in the poem then you go through the exercises that they do, they've done the right thing, you feel satisfied as you see them enjoy lessons more and you feel happy [E3].

The teacher educators also felt that in their experience, the student teachers gradually improved in involvement of learners in their lessons. As I noted regarding their views on planning (see 4.2.3) their explanations were partly based on the fact that the assessment forms on the student teachers' files showed more "positive" comments on involvement of learners and better marks as the TP progressed.

In my assessment, the first days they would be panicking a bit, trembling a bit but as time goes by they learn the confidence; that's very critical. I always tell them to stop overworking themselves and to pass on some of that work, even talking to learners. Most of the ones I have seen towards the end of TP would really be quite confident in their presentation. And that confidence takes the form as I have said of more learner work than teacher work in class. Also you see more progressive comments on involvement of learners on the previous assessment forms on the files and I would say even better marks [ED5].

Improvement in comments by previous supervisors and even improvement in marks may not be relied upon as firm indicators of improved involvement of learners. Nevertheless, it is clear that the student teachers improved in this aspect of their practice since the teacher educators' views were consistent with the student teachers' feelings and my own observations.

Despite the general progress made in involvement of learners, one activity that featured prominently and consistently in most of the lessons by all the student teachers throughout the practicum, was *reading aloud* of the textbooks. One issue I observed about reading aloud was that most learners did not do it fluently. This prompted most of the student teachers to correct the pronunciation of the learners and in the process some learners felt more uneasy and other learners laughed at their classmates. This could have caused some sort of anxiety as well as diverted the focus of the lessons.

To give a few examples, during Ann's second observed lesson, while she was teaching *reading skills*, I noted that "TR asks learners to read the passage in the textbook aloud in turns, starting with the one at the far corner.... TR helps learners when they get stranded" [AOB2]. A similar scenario was observed in Ben's first observed lesson: "TR asks learners to read the definition of *noun phrases* (NPs) and other details as written in the textbook in turns" [BOB1]. Reading aloud was also used by Dan when he was teaching *Writing*. Here it was done twice, first by the learners in turns and then again by the teacher. During the interviews, I asked the

student teachers why reading aloud was very prominent in their pedagogical practice. Some of them told me that it was the way they were taught and even that some of the cooperating teachers taught like that, hence it was normal to do so. However, some of them explained that they felt that it was an effective way of involving learners in their lessons and also a way of discovering the learners' weaknesses.

There are some students who shy off... you find they are hiding when you are there, so when you tell them to read aloud at least they become active and I think in the process become more confident... I can't just go to the class and then tell students to read the passage silently and answer the questions on that day. I will not be sure that they have read. Also, it is a way of knowing if they can pronounce the words correctly. So, I think I should involve them by telling them to read aloud and then they can read silently on their own later and answer the questions [A2].

Overall, from the above analysis, reading aloud seemed to be used for several reasons: one was to serve where learners did not have enough textbooks, second was to highlight features of the topics such as poetry or specific sounds being taught and third as a strategy of involving learners in the lessons. Nevertheless, although the student teachers could have found reading aloud to be a useful strategy of involving learners, in most lessons, it appeared to be used inappropriately, for example, the reading of notes on rules of *noun phrases* or *letters of apology*, among others. Therefore, the issue of teaching method, particularly the role of reading aloud in ELT, ought to have been one of the topics of discussion between the student teachers and the teacher educators during the post-observation conferences.

4.3.3. Teaching English language in different contexts

The student teachers in this study, as I explained in Chapter One, were posted to four different types of schools: national, provincial, district and private (see 1.2.3 and 1.2.6.2), which offered different experiences. To start with, one student teacher, Ben, had the experience of teaching in a national school. Such schools select learners who have managed to score top marks in primary school examinations (usually more than 400 marks out of a possible 500). They would have usually scored excellent grades in English as well. During my observations of Ben's classes, I noted that the learners participated freely in discussing the topics they were dealing with during the lessons. They spoke eloquently in many cases without even waiting to be appointed by the teacher, as would be common in most Kenyan classrooms. While this contributed to

very lively lessons, I observed that Ben faced the challenge of controlling learners during his lessons and was overwhelmed at times. For example, during Ben's third observed lesson [BOB3], learners engaged in discussions about writing formal and informal letters, as I noted below:

One learner asks the difference between *yours faithfully/yours sincerely*, TR re-directs question to class then an argument ensues ... Another learner asks why it's necessary to write a signature in a letter. TR re-directs question back to the class... there is another heated discussion...One learner complains that her question is not answered. Another question arises about why some addresses are slanted while others are "blocked". TR points out that the two forms of addresses are both correct. Some learners disagree and refer to textbooks with different formats...An argument ensues that is sustained for long. One student says she wants the debate to come to a close and gives a detailed explanation of the format of an official letter, citing references. Others listen and clap for her at the end. TR asks 'do you agree'. They agree and the argument ends [BOB3].

While a similar trend was observed in the fourth lesson, this time the teacher seemed to exercise more control and he insisted that the learners had to show by hand when they wanted to speak. I also noted more teacher initiated discussions and a better control of the class than the earlier classes (see BOB4, 4.3.1). During the interviews Ben said that he tried to practice techniques that would fit the learning style of the girls. Such techniques, he said he learnt by talking to the cooperating teacher and other teachers in the school. For example, he said he was advised to re-direct the learners' questions to the class and to be very flexible and creative while teaching.

One of the challenges I have faced is that the students are exceptionally bright, they are very keen and sharp...you know these girls can just embarrass you in class. You know they sometimes know more than we do or we have forgotten...So when I talked to the cooperating teacher and others, they advised me that I should throw back the questions to the class and then don't make conclusions right there. So now when they ask a question and I am not sure, I tell them to go and research, that I will also go and research about that question. When we come back, they are the first to remind me that they have found the answers...I could just make the girls learn by themselves...I find that very interesting as in am learning also [B2].

Ben's cooperating teacher confirmed that the learners in her school were both exceptionally bright and frank with their teachers. She said that the school also promoted a culture of frankness and active participation among the learners. She indicated that for Ben to have taught the learners in that school successfully without complaints the student teacher had to make extra effort and added that a student teacher who was keen could learn a lot from the girls as well.

I think Ben has learnt a lot from doing his TP in this school. First, the fact that he has made it through teaching these very bright girls, he must have worked very hard.

Because these girls are not the type of students you can take for granted, and they accept that. They would actually come and complain, and they have thrown some TP students out of class in the past; but they did not in his case. The student teacher must have worked very hard to make sure he makes the girls comfortable, so they'll not come to complain, which I think was a plus for him. He has survived the term and has actually told me that he has learnt a lot from the girls. The most important thing is to let them participate, they don't just want to be told things and Ben learnt to do that [BCT].

Another aspect of Ben's practice that was different from other student teachers was that he had all the resources he needed for ELT. During my observations in Ben's school, I noted that all learners had their own textbooks and additional reference books as well as dictionaries in their desks. There were many more supplementary texts kept in cupboards in the classes. Ben confirmed that he had all resources he needed for ELT. He said: "I have very many resources, everything I need is here really... and the principal says I should ask if there is anything I need which is not in the school" [B2]. The availability of resources seemed to enable Ben's learners to find out a lot of information on their own as I have already indicated above.

Two student teachers taught in the provincial schools. Such schools also selected learners who had passed their primary school exams usually with average marks or more. The two student teachers who taught in such schools (Caro and Eve) reported that the learners in their classes, as opposed to Ben's learners, were of very mixed abilities in English language. For example, Eve reported that she found some learners "really sharp" and she had to do a lot of reading in order to be able to answer some of their "tough questions". But some learners were both weak and disinterested.

I realized that the students give you ups and downs...there are the really sharp students who normally perform well. They even asked me very tough questions in class which I was not so sure about, so like in class, I would just tell them, I would look at it and tell them the answer later. They used to make me read so much...But some of the students are so annoying, they are just so slow. Sometimes you teach something so many times, and they don't get it, yet even when you offer to help them outside the class they are not interested, they don't come. So it is difficult to handle such differences in the same class. It is like some students are in the wrong class [E2].

I confirmed this during my observations in both Eve's and Caro's schools. For example, I noted that when they asked learners to read aloud, some of them read the text very fluently and fast while others found it very difficult to read even basic words. When the teachers asked them some questions, for example to construct

sentences using certain words, some learners seemed to answer her more consistently and correctly while others were really struggling. Eve admitted during interviews that she paid more attention to learners who were “sharp” in class, though she also encouraged the weak ones to consult her out of class. Caro, on the other hand reported that at times she organised remedial classes for the weak learners.

In terms of resources, while Eve’s school provided most of the materials she needed for ELT, in Caro’s school, lack of textbooks also presented a serious challenge to the extent that Caro got rather impatient and almost incited learners as I noted during my first observation: “TR asks: *do you have a suggestions box in the school?* Learners say *yes*. TR then says: *why don’t you suggest that you should have more textbooks?*” [COB1]. Caro also had to buy a novel which she would read aloud in class for the sake of the many learners who did not have the book.

The other student teachers taught in schools that had very few resources for ELT and, according to them, exceptionally weak learners in English language. Ann and Faith were teaching in one *district* school and also Dan was teaching in a private school. In the Kenyan context such schools (usually) admit learners who have failed to secure admission in *national* or *provincial* schools because their marks in KCPE were below average. Faith described her experience of teaching such learners as “thoroughly challenging” during the second interview.

Ah, most students are so poor I tell you, extremely weak. Some of them cannot even read simple words in English Even if you ask them to read the word *read*, it is like they have to really look at it properly and take it letter by letter. That’s the problem. Even when I gave them an easy exercise, like to write the past tense of words like *read* and they say *readed*. So you wonder why it is a problem. Then there is also the challenge of the extreme influence of L1 on spoken English. And this is thoroughly challenging sometimes so that you’d pick a student to read and he’d refuse because he is not confident in himself, he thinks if he reads others will laugh at him [F2].

As a result of the challenges of teaching weak learners, some student teachers got quite discouraged. For example, Ann felt so discouraged by the weak abilities of her learners that the cooperating teacher felt she had to advise her to “keep trying”.

I would say to some point Ann needs to be ready to kind of bear with what it takes to teach English language to very weak students... I have been here for some time and I know it can be discouraging if maybe you are giving your best and the students don’t seem to understand and they are not making any effort to. So, if she can hang on despite the toughness she can make it. I have to keep encouraging her to keep trying, sometimes she feels really demoralised [ACT].

In such contexts, one of the main challenges the student teachers faced was how to facilitate active learner participation in EL lessons. Nevertheless, the student teachers seemed to improve in involving even the “weak” learners in lessons, through trying different strategies. These schools (where Ann, Faith and Dan taught) also had very scarce resources for ELT. For example during Ann’s second observation, I noted that: “books are shared by groups of three or four learners –there are actually three textbooks shared among the twelve students”. The lack of enough textbooks always caused disruption as learners had to keep moving around to where the texts were. Ann tried to cope with this lack of textbooks by doing a lot of writing on the chalkboard and borrowing books from colleagues and consulting fellow student teachers who were teaching in nearby schools. In addition, Ann stated: “sometimes I photocopy materials which I can use again and again or I even bring cuttings from old newspapers” [A2]. Similarly, in Dan’s school, at times learners could not participate effectively in EL lessons due to lack of textbooks.

Overall, the different contexts where the student teachers taught posed varied challenges in terms of abilities of learners in English language and availability of resources for ELT. The student teachers devised different strategies for coping with their circumstances. Clearly, the unique issues in different contexts need to be taken into consideration by the teacher educators who go to assess them. The differences in TP contexts also raise questions about the nature of support offered by the teacher educators (see 5.2). In the next section, I present another pedagogical practice that the student teachers were engaged in during the practicum, testing learners.

4.4. TESTING LEARNERS IN ELT

Testing took various forms including exercises given in class as part of regular lessons, Continuous Assessment Tests (CATs), mid term exams and the end of year examinations. Considering that the student teachers had not been involved in setting, invigilating or marking such tests before, I would say from the outset that through practice they seemed to have learnt some valuable testing skills. Nevertheless, there are specific aspects of testing that presented different challenges to the student teachers that I present next.

4.4.1. Setting, marking and revising exams

Setting, marking and revising EL tests presented challenges to the student teachers. To begin with, Ann was one of the few student teachers in the study who was given the task of setting tests for her class on her own (the others set tests in collaboration with cooperating teachers). What I observed was that Ann lifted her test directly from the learners' textbook through photocopying, raising a number of issues, mainly the possibility that the learners had already seen the 'test' considering that they had the textbooks. I also noted during her fourth observation that: "the passage is a photocopy from a textbook...some words are not visible. Questions are directly appearing as in the original text; the marks for the questions seem to have been increased" [AOB4].

Unlike Ann's test, the test Ben administered was set out neatly on computer printouts, writing was clear, spaces were provided for learners to write the answers and the marks for each question was also clearly indicated. Ben told me after that lesson that they had set the exam as a team of EL teachers. Although he was involved in setting some aspects, the whole team decided on what to include in the exam paper. The difference between Ben and Ann's setting was therefore indicative of the difference in support between one student teacher (Ann) who had very minimal support in terms of materials and guidance for setting exams and another student teacher (Ben) who was well supported in the two aspects.

In terms of *marking* and *revision*, in both cases, the student teachers faced a number of complaints from the learners during the *revision* sessions; mainly that in some sections, they were not awarded marks where they had written correct answers. I observed the two student teachers revising these tests and reacting to the complaints about marking, I noticed that the learners had written a variety of possible answers that the student teachers did not consider as correct, perhaps because the answers were not in their marking schemes. Ben, for example, admitted to the learners that he had not awarded them marks in some cases when they were deserved:

TR gives marked exam papers to learners. TR asks other students whether they are satisfied with their marks...an argument erupts...Most learners complain that their papers were *under marked*. Some learners read textbooks in poetry - *Understanding poetry* where there is an explanation on aspects of style...to show the teacher that the answers they had written were correct. TR accepts that he seemed not to have awarded

the students marks in some deserved sections and says he would reconsider that. TR asks them to follow him outside class after the lesson to solve the problems related to marks. [BOB2].

During the subsequent interviews with the student teachers, I asked about their experiences with regard to setting, marking and revising tests. Most of the student teachers reported that the practice had been very valuable given that they had not had that kind of experience before the practicum. For example, Ben said: “I learnt a lot about marking and even making marking schemes... I think the main challenge I faced was that I had interpreted the marking scheme narrowly when there were many alternative answers...” [B2]. Dan also reported that the experience he had in testing was an important aspect of his practice.

We cooperated with the teachers in setting and marking exam papers, and they kind of guided me on how to award marks...like for the composition, we made the marking scheme together; for example, we awarded marks for the format, language, relevance, and so on...I now feel competent to mark although I know that I still have to go through more practice [D3].

The cooperating teachers confirmed that the student teachers had gained important skills in testing. They indicated that testing had posed a challenge to the student teachers because it was a skill that took time to master and the student teachers would perhaps improve with time. For example, Ben’ cooperating teacher said that although Ben had made progress in setting and marking tests, he would require more practice in order to be competent in this aspect of pedagogy.

I think he has made good progress although I think he still requires practice to improve especially in the area of marking. During the time for marking the first exam, there were so many complaints by the girls, you know about things that were correct but he marked wrong, or things he had marked wrong in some students but marked correct in others. I think he had to re-do the marking. You know, when the students realise the teacher is not sure of his answer, they can lose confidence. They start saying “I think that next time I will just convince him that I’m right” [BCT].

What emerges from the practice of the student teachers with regard to setting, marking and revision of tests is that they felt that they learnt valuable skills. Nevertheless, they needed appropriate support from cooperating teachers and teacher educators, which in some cases was lacking.

4.4.2. Impact of learners' performance in tests on student teachers

This subsection relates to the student teachers' feelings about the performance of their learners in the tests they gave. Some of them interpreted the poor performance of their learners in the EL tests as a sign of a weakness in their teaching; for example, Eve stated as follows during her second interview

I think English language teaching is challenging because, like you go to class, you teach about something, a certain topic. You take your time explaining all those things and it's like everybody participated in class and understood. And then when you test the students like through the assignments, when it comes to answering the questions, you realise that many of them have failed, and you even make comments in their books like "were you in class?"... But you also feel like maybe you did not teach them well. It's like the learners did not understand the English language when it was taught. It is like the learners just take it like theory, when the teacher is talking. But when it comes to putting things into practice, it is just hard. It is very discouraging [E2].

The cooperating teachers confirmed the feelings among some student teachers initially that if learners did not do well in tests, then the teachers did not teach well. The cooperating teachers said that some student teachers felt quite discouraged as a result of this feeling. For example, Ann's cooperating teacher advised her that poor performance of learners was not necessarily attributable to "bad" teaching.

Ann used to get discouraged when students did not do well in exercises or failed tests... You know, when she is marking, this is what she taught, but the feedback she is getting is not what she expected. So, she was kind of discouraged... So I had to advise her that as far as teaching English is concerned it takes time, it takes effort, you have to have a heart to get learners to understand things, to mark their books and correct them, to encourage them to speak and write correctly, to get them to participate in discussions because it can be very, very discouraging... I had to tell her that it's not obvious that once you teach, you will get your students to understand very well or to pass all the tests you give based on what you have taught... scores in tests do not necessarily show lack of good teaching [ACT].

Eventually, the student teachers realised that learners' performance tests did not necessarily show that the teachers did not teach well. For example, Caro stated that: "I have realised it doesn't follow... I think some students don't have time to revise or just don't care... English is not an easy subject" [C3]. Caro realised from her practice that performance of learners in tests could be attributed to several other factors such as lack of strong foundation in English Language, constant practice and exposure.

Well, I realised that as regards to English, a good foundation is very important. Now that is a problem with my learners... then another thing I noticed is that these students are not exposed to the use of language as such so that even if they speak to you, they lack confidence... I have also realised, because I am teaching Form 2, that there are some things they did not learn well earlier... For example, *subject verb agreement* is a topic in Form One Grammar, but some students in Form Two have serious problems. For example, sometimes instead of saying *she has*, they say *she have* and such things,

and you still find such in Form Two. But I have made my Form Two students practise a lot and they seem to be improving, their mistakes are less, sometimes you hear them correcting themselves [C3].

Another issue that emerged with regard to testing, especially the performance of the learners on tests was that the student teachers felt there was need for a lot of patience in ELT. Some student teachers felt that if one kept encouraging the learners and even repeating what had earlier been taught, but which learners did not seem to have understood, eventually one realised that the learners were improving. This kind of improvement could at times be seen in better scores in exams and at such moments the teacher would also feel encouraged.

Ok teaching is like a give and take exercise. I mean giving the students the best, and expecting the same from them...When I teach and students don't seem to understand what I am telling them, I feel bad. At first I wondered whether I would make it. But I realised if you are patient with students you start to feel good, you start to enjoy a bit. You know just keep encouraging them and even repeating things. So when later you give students maybe an exam, or they do maybe a joint exam with other schools and they perform well, I feel like I really taught well because most of the things that were set I had taught them personally [A3].

Overall, the student teachers seemed to have had valuable practice in different aspects of testing. They felt they had practised the skills of setting and marking exams but more importantly perhaps, gradually came to appreciate that poor performance of learners in tests was attributable to many possible factors and their teaching was not necessarily to blame. Ultimately testing skills posed a challenge and as the cooperating teachers pointed out, would require further practice. Consequently the need for support in this aspect of student teacher experience during the practicum was clearly demonstrated.

4.5. SELF - EVALUATION IN ELT

The *Teaching Practice Guide* explains that self-evaluation is meant to involve the student teachers in thinking about the lessons already taught in terms of what went well and what might need improvement. Accordingly, after every lesson, the student teachers were expected to write a self-evaluation on the lesson plans, a summary of which they should record in their schemes of work. During the study I wanted to find out how consistently the student teachers engaged in this aspect of their practice,

what exactly they wrote and how they were supported in this activity. I also asked the student teachers to give a self-evaluation of what they had learnt from the entire practicum. To start with, I present findings on the written self-evaluation.

4.5.1. Written self - evaluation

Analysis of the lesson plans and schemes of work revealed that most of the student teachers did not write comments on the self evaluation space on the lesson plans consistently. Those who did write general comments that did not portray a clear evaluation of their lessons. For instance, Ben's Form 1 scheme of work for the *third* and *eighth* week (see Appendix 24) and Eve's Form 1 scheme of work for eighth week (see Appendix 25), show that the student teachers wrote remarks like *well done, covered, taught well or taught as planned*. Such remarks did not clearly indicate student teachers' experiences of teaching those classes. Similarly, in the lesson plans appended (Appendices 9-16), the student teachers did not write the expected remarks in spite of evidence that there were adequate spaces. I have chosen these particular pages of the schemes because they contain records of lessons that I observed, and in both cases, there were issues the student teachers could have written for purposes of self-evaluation in their *remarks* columns. The lack of use of the remarks column was noted in all the schemes of work that I analysed. However, one student teacher, Caro, wrote remarks that could be said to have demonstrated *better* self-evaluation (see Appendix 26) than all the other student teachers in the study. While she also had several general phrases like the *lesson was successful*, she made remarks such as:

- *Time was not enough so I was not able to tackle functions of the sound devices.*
- *I managed to differentiate between onomatopoeia and idiophones, but need to revise.*
- *I extended to the next lesson because the teacher told me to.*
- *I managed to complete within time and introduced modal verbs.*

During the interviews, I asked the student teachers what influenced the types of remarks that they wrote. All of them acknowledged that honest self-evaluation might have assisted them to improve their understanding of ELT. However, most of them stated that they were not being sincere due to fear that the supervisors might interpret some of their statements as weaknesses, as Eve stated during her second interview:

Yes I have been filling the evaluation column, but honestly, I have never admitted that my lessons were not successful. If I write that, assessors might ask me questions about that and maybe I would be required to go back to it. But I think I need to go ahead, anyway, I move on whether objectives were achieved or not. At times I don't comment, I just say *the lesson was successful* or *well taught* and I move on. When those assessors come, they should find me on time with my schemes...But when I start teaching proper, I don't think I will do the same. I would teach some topics even two or three lessons until students understand. But because am limited by what the assessors expect of me, I just move on [E2].

I analysed copies of the assessment sheets the supervisors had written, which they left with the student teachers, to find out what comments they had made regarding the student teachers' self-evaluation and I report the findings next.

4.5.2. Facilitation of self - evaluation by teacher educators

There was only one reference to the use of the *self-evaluation* columns by the student teachers. This was written during Ben's last lesson of the entire practicum, which was actually an arranged supervision. Ben had actually stopped teaching because the learners were doing exams. The educator had written: *the remarks columns in the schemes of work and lesson plan should be updated to reflect a variety of the learning achievements* (see Appendix 22). Again, it is noteworthy that even in the supervisor's comment, the concern was with *learning achievement* and not the student teacher's progress.

Besides this teacher educator, there were two supervisors who had posed questions in their comments that may have prompted the student teachers to think about their lessons. The two questions were: *Is it possible that you need no resource materials in this lesson plan? Are there any resources you can utilise in teaching?* Note that the two questions concerned the use of teaching resources. Perhaps such questions could have provoked some self-evaluation in the student teachers concerned. They may also have been starting points for discussions during post-observation conferences. Next, I present the student teachers self-evaluation of the entire practicum.

4.5.3. Self - evaluation of the entire teaching practice

Generally, the student teachers reported that they improved on their ELT through practice. However, they said that they discovered practice alone was not enough; there was also need for one to think critically about what they had done and how they could improve on their practice. Moreover, they stated that TP ought to take a much longer time than the three months they had had; for example, Dan said that:

I have realised that in teaching the most important thing is practice, when you get to do something regularly; you get to do the work much better than you did earlier...because in practice you observe and then reflect on what you do, after observing what seems to work and what does not seem to work... like group work, thinking about it and how to improve it...And I can say that knowledge is something that sometimes you acquire eh, there is a word I want to use but it's not coming, yes it is *passive*, you don't know that you have known something but you sometimes acquire things without knowing that you know them ... So, I think that a TP period which is one year is may be enough, for example myself if I start working next year I am sure I will have better experience than I had in the beginning of it [D2].

While Dan's main point above is that he found himself improving in his teaching as he thought about the previous lessons in terms of what went right or what may have gone wrong, other student teachers also stated that thinking about the challenges they faced helped them to improve on their practice. As they dealt with some of the challenges, they felt that they were making progress in learning to teach.

Okay I realized that teaching is not easy. There is a lot of thinking to do when you are preparing and also when you are in class. Sometimes you must even reason what to discuss with students you know, out of class. But it is manageable. As in you only feel satisfied when you have taught a class and you leave knowing that the students have understood. Then teaching is something you improve in as you do it by thinking about what you have done. And it also depends on how a teacher relates with the students; you do not become too firm on them or too lenient. Yeah, you have to balance. I have got the skills, the knowledge, the experience of teaching boys and girls in a mixed school. So far I think practice is what makes a teacher [C3].

The student teachers also reported engaging in several discussions with their peers on how to improve their subsequent lessons. When I met the student teachers informally, the discussions on how their learners were behaving and what they were doing to improve were very common. This was perhaps an important aspect of self-evaluation that ought to have been encouraged (see also 5.3).

Overall, on self-evaluation, the student teachers could be said to have engaged in some thinking about their previous lessons and, in the process, they decided on strategies that they could use to improve on the subsequent lessons. This highlights

the potential of self-evaluation to facilitate teacher learning during the practicum, if supported appropriately. However, the student teachers were reluctant to put their genuine self-evaluations in writing for fear that the teacher educators might have interpreted them as weaknesses and possibly given them poor grades. This suggests that it was necessary, before and during the practicum, for the student teachers and their teacher educators to discuss the practice of self-evaluation and develop a shared understanding of the aim of the activity.

4.6. SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have presented findings on the question of the EL student teachers' pedagogical practice during the practicum. Generally, the student teachers faced numerous challenges during their TP in all the aspects of their ELT, including planning, actual teaching in class and testing. Nevertheless, the findings indicated that the student teachers made progress in certain aspects of teaching; for example, in planning material that would fit within the times of the lessons, understanding of the subject matter through reading more about it and facilitating involvement of learners in English language lessons. The student teachers also had the experience of participating in setting, marking and revising of tests in English language. The key findings from this chapter are also summarised in Table 6.1 in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER FIVE

PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENT TEACHERS DURING THE PRACTICUM

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter answers the second research question in my study: *How are the English language student teachers pedagogically supported during the practicum?* Three main sources of support were identified: cooperating teachers, fellow student teachers, and teacher educators from the university. Findings in this chapter are therefore presented under these three sources of support. To start with, I present an analysis of the support by cooperating teachers.

5.2. SUPPORT BY COOPERATING TEACHERS

The *Teaching Practice Guide* written by the university whose students and educators participated in my study defines *cooperating teachers* as follows:

These are secondary school teachers who *surrender* the classes that student teachers teach during teaching practice. As they have first hand knowledge of the behaviour, character, strengths and weaknesses of the pupils, student teachers are advised to *seek their assistance* whenever needed...It is particularly important for the student teacher to stay on good terms with the cooperating teacher as it is difficult to learn and make practical progress when one does not respect the person whose *assistance* may often be needed (pp. 3-5). [The emphases are mine].

The handbook gives no further details about the roles of cooperating teachers. Nevertheless, my reading of the extract above was that the university expected the cooperating teachers to offer some support (called assistance) to the student teachers. I confirmed this expectation during my interviews with the educators who said that they expected the cooperating teachers to facilitate the student teachers' practice in a number of ways:

We expect the cooperating teacher to be like the mentor of this student teacher so that everything the student teacher is doing, he should be under the guidance of the cooperating teacher, and the student teacher should be observing what the regular teacher does. So that before he goes to give a CAT [continuous assessment test], for example, the regular teacher should be aware of it; should have gone through it and actually ratified it to be ok. Sometimes the regular teacher can come and sit in this classroom and listen to how the student teacher is teaching, and therefore the

cooperating teacher is expected to be like a small supervisor in his own right, but on a more regular basis than us [ED1].

In view of these expectations, one of the issues I was interested in was whether and how the university educators coordinated with cooperating teachers to support the student teachers.

5.2.1. Coordination between educators and cooperating teachers

In spite of the emphasis on *assistance* of the student teachers by the cooperating teachers as stated in the *Teaching Practice Guide* and the expectations reported during the interviews, all the educators said that there was no official coordination between the university and the cooperating teachers.

We have no formal arrangement with the cooperating teachers. It is like an ad hoc relationship. The student teacher gets there and then he is told: *you are inheriting this subject from so and so*. So he looks for that so and so who gives him the materials and so on. Then most of these cooperating teachers switch off from the classes; they do not attend to those classes any more; so they leave it all to the young teacher [ED5].

Furthermore, even when the teacher educators visited the schools for supervision there were no consultations or discussions between them and the cooperating teachers and the educators on the progress of the student teachers or on how the student teachers could be supported to learn from their practice. Interviews with all the cooperating teachers revealed this lack of coordination as reflected in statements from one of them:

They [supervisors] do not talk to us...I would say that's kind of what happens ...I think it's not right. Because, I feel maybe if say somebody comes, assesses and feels that maybe a student teacher needs assistance in a particular aspect of English teaching, since the lecturer is leaving, they can talk to the cooperating teacher...but they don't do that...if you talk to them, it is by chance when say it is break time as they are waiting to assess but just casual talk, sometimes about irrelevant things like politics. Usually they are in a hurry to leave [ACT].

The educators seemed well aware though of the need to have some structured coordination with the cooperating teachers but they said the university had never got round to doing that. They revealed that due to the *ad hoc* arrangement, they were also aware that most of the cooperating teachers did not seem to understand what was expected of them in terms of supporting the student teachers, or did not really bother because they had not been consulted, yet as one educator explained, the cooperating teachers could not be blamed for this.

Well, it is true that we should have some formalised arrangement with schools which stipulates how the cooperating teachers and even the heads of schools can assist our students during teaching practice. But there is a disconnect somewhere; there is a problem on our part, we do not prepare them for that role. So our student teachers receive very little assistance from our cooperating teachers... Not because those teachers are not willing, but because as a university, we have not gone out there to define their role [ED3].

The educators also confirmed that they hardly had time for any meaningful discussions with cooperating teachers. Most of them cited lack of time as the main constraint, especially in view of the fact that the student teachers were very many and the supervisors would always be in a hurry to move on to the next school.

It is true we do not talk to cooperating teachers when we go to schools for assessment. You see, we are very few and we have very many students so that if you go to a school and also want to talk to a cooperating teacher, you might not assess all students in the field... The only thing I know we do is when we get to the school, you may get to sign the visitor's book in the headteacher's office, so that you can get to know if the student teachers are behaving well or not; if they handed in their confidential forms to be written by the headteacher at the end of TP; that is it [ED2].

In these circumstances, the cooperating teachers who chose to support the student teachers just did so because they felt it was necessary but not that it was obligatory. Sometimes they chose to assist because they had certain relationships with the student teachers or based on their own previous experiences.

Eve was with me at University so I feel it is good to assist her; also, I just think it is good to help because when I came here, the previous English teacher had just left and I had nobody to consult and I faced a lot of challenges. At times, I could be forced to look for assistance from teachers outside this school. In most cases I was doing most things on my own, so I saw it good for me to help always when it is necessary [ECT].

I was also interested in the experiences of cooperating teachers in ELT and in working with preservice teachers and I present the findings on this next.

5.2.2. Experiences of cooperating teachers in ELT

Three cooperating teachers out of the five who participated in the study had less than two years teaching experience since leaving the university. In fact, in two schools the cooperating teachers themselves had been on TP during the previous year. Eve's cooperating teacher said: "I actually did my teaching practice here from September to December last year, in this same school. Then the school later gave me a job in January, this year". Ann and Faith's cooperating teacher had done her practicum

only three months before: between January and April, and was “called back in September to step in for the regular teacher who was away on maternity leave” [ACT]. In Dan’s school, the cooperating teacher had about two years’ teaching experience in ELT. Although she had graduated three years before, she had been employed by a Non-Governmental Organisation and only took up ELT the year before Dan’s practicum. Thus it was only in two schools (Ben’s and Caro’s) where the teachers had significant experience in ELT. Both of them had taught EL in more than two schools and had experience of working with student teachers during the practicum. I asked the teacher educators what they thought about the limited experience of some cooperating teachers in ELT and their general explanation was as follows:

Some of the well established schools where we would want to post our students on TP claim they are overstaffed and don’t want their teachers to be idle. They also say they are in competition with other schools so the student teachers are likely to teach poorly or would not cover the syllabus fast and weaken their chances of competing effectively against other schools. So, most of our student teachers end up in *young* schools, so to speak, which generally have teachers who were just recently employed; in fact, in some schools, some of the teachers are not even trained [ED5].

In view of the fact that there was no marked difference in experience between some of the cooperating teachers and the student teachers, there is a possibility that the pedagogical support expected from the cooperating teachers may not have been really effective. I now turn to the actual process of cooperation and analyse the support the student teachers received.

5.2.3. Induction of student teachers

The first one to two weeks of the practicum was expected to be extremely important for the student teachers as they would receive induction that would lay the foundation for their practice for the rest of their time in the schools. Indeed the activities of the induction week were explicitly identified in the *Teaching Practice Guide*:

The First Two Weeks of Teaching Practice: Student Teachers report to the schools to which they have been posted on the opening day at the latest. Area supervisors go around all schools solving problems, giving advice, checking on the progress with the schemes of work and collecting timetables. Student teachers prepare their timetable, may observe some lessons, write their schemes of work, plan their first lessons and start teaching (p.2).

In reality, though, in most of the schools, the student teachers were not allocated classes until towards the end of the first week. In Ann's and Faith's school, for instance, there was no learning during the first week as learners had been sent home for fees, as she said: "we have been shown where the classrooms are, introduced to the students in each class... so I have not schemed, coz I have not been allocated the classes" [A1]. In Ben's school, although he reported to school on the first day, he had to wait until towards the end of the week when he was assigned classes.

The first day we came, on Monday, there was a staff meeting. Then we were told what we were expected to do during the term. Then we were given an off on Tuesday because that was the time the students were opening the school. On Wednesday we went and met the Head of the Department that is, English. She introduced me to the two classes I am supposed to be teaching. On Thursday the teachers showed me where they stopped teaching when they departed for the holidays and today, Friday, I am planning so that I can start teaching next Monday [B1].

Dan was still unsettled during the first week as the headteacher of the school he had been posted to said he was not aware of his posting and the school had "enough" TP students. Therefore, he was looking for another school. In Eve's and Caro's schools, learners were doing exams during the first week. Eve said: "I have been planning but in terms of teaching, I have not done much because, in the first week learners were doing tests, and the teachers were marking" [E1]. Caro was asked to participate in invigilation of exams without any induction, which she felt was unfair.

In this school, they have tests during the first week... the teachers of English told me to invigilate; I tried telling them: "please just give me time so that I finish my planning", yet they didn't understand, I am finding it so hard but I can't say no, I just give in. I don't know what to do in those classes ... I just go there, sit in front of the class till the paper is over, walk out... But then one experience, I have had in class, when time is up I tell students, "bring your papers", they just laugh at me, but when their teacher comes in and says "papers", they bring them forward. So it's like the students don't respect the TP teachers as much as they do to their teachers. I think it will be hard for me [C1].

Another point about induction was that there was no uniformity in allocating the student teachers' classes to teach across the different schools. In most of the schools, the student teachers were assigned Forms 1 and 2, as recommended by the university. However two student teachers were also assigned Form 3 classes. Eve was assigned Form 3 class because there were two student teachers of English; so, after sharing the lessons in Forms 1 and 2 she had not attained the twelve lessons the university required her to teach. Caro was also assigned a Form 3 class in a manner that could cause confusion to a student teacher:

In this school, Form 1 should not be taught by TP teachers, they say we can make their foundation shaky; so I am taking a Form 2 class, that is six lessons and four lessons in one Form 3. The regular teacher of that Form 3 class is taking the other four lessons. You know in Form 3 and 4 each class has eight lessons in one week. The teacher asked me to take only the English language part; he'll take the literature part because they are working on set books which I have not read; though there is a novel he feels I can just read quickly and teach...Even the language part, he has asked me to start Form 4 work because he has cleared Form 3 syllabus. So, I have ended up with ten lessons per week, six in Form 2 and four lessons in Form 3 [C1].

The possible area of confusion was that the content to be taught to the Form 3 class assigned to Caro was spilt into two with her teaching English language while the other teacher taught Literature. This was contrary to the integrated approach recommended by the Ministry of Education (MoE) as I stated earlier (see 4.3.1). The other possible area of confusion was teaching Form 4 content to Form 3 learners, which was likely to be quite challenging to both the learners and the student teacher.

The lack of consistency in assigning classes to the student teachers and other aspects of induction in general could have been as a result of the lack of coordination with the schools referred to earlier (see 5.2.1). In the scenario there was likelihood that the student teachers would have very different experiences during their practicum. Nevertheless the data indicates that the cooperating teachers offered some valuable pedagogical support on ELT to the student teachers, as I present next.

5.2.4. Guidance on ELT by cooperating teachers

The data generally reveals that the cooperating teachers offered the student teachers some guidance in interpretation of the syllabus, planning for lessons, presentation of ELT content in class and testing. For example, Ann's and Faith's cooperating teacher, in spite her short experience in ELT, was quite supportive. She said: "when they [student teachers] came, I helped them to prepare schemes of work and to know what kind of books they were to use. Also we made the first few lesson plans together" [ACT]. Both Ann and Faith corroborated the cooperating teacher's statement and reported that they found her guidance useful.

I learnt much from her especially during those early days...asking for necessary assistance whenever I needed it...I also asked for some resource materials on particular topics that I am teaching. For example, on Monday am going to teach formal and informal letters, the cooperating teacher has notes that she has given me [A1].

Some cooperating teachers also offered valuable guidance on teaching the 'new' syllabus which as we saw earlier had changed since the student teachers themselves had left school (see 4.2.1). For example, Caro's cooperating teacher stated that they: "discussed syllabus coverage, aware that in the new syllabus many things have changed in the recent past" [CCT]. Caro confirmed that she got a lot of support from the cooperating teacher, in many aspects of ELT:

I had not seen the syllabus before and looking at the textbooks a lot of things have changed since we were in school...my cooperating teacher told me that the syllabus is not always consistent with the new textbook - *Head Start English* - He pointed out those parts and advised me that I could use the old books for some sections. ... He also advised me that my lesson topics are very huge so I need to reduce them to be covered in one lesson and also to allow time for exercises [C1]...I consult him in many areas...like there was a topic I really didn't understand. ...You know it was not easy for me to tell the difference between *idiophones* and *onomatopoeia*. So he explained to me the difference and gave me examples and he told me how to teach it, and when I went to class, the lesson was successful [C2].

Another aspect of ELT that the student teachers gained from the cooperating teachers was setting and marking of tests. For example, Dan's cooperating teacher said she "had to guide him on how to set the EL tests because these days we use a new format which tests functional skills, cloze tests and oral skills:.. we also discussed preparing and interpreting the marking scheme for uniformity among us" [DCT]. Dan reported during his subsequent interview that discussions on testing and marking were some of the most valuable aspects of the pedagogical support he got during TP (see 4.5.1).

The cooperating teachers also shared their experiences on the learning styles of the learners in their schools, especially with regard to ELT. For example, Eve's cooperating teacher cautioned her that "there is a culture in this school of girls copying from one another; also, some of the girls avoid doing assignments". So she advised Eve and the other student teacher to watch out and seek support from her and the rest of the teachers. Ben's cooperating teacher also made him aware that the girls in the school were very sharp and quite frank with the teachers, unlike learners in most schools in Kenya. Furthermore, they liked to be given opportunities to participate in learning EL, as I explained in the previous chapter (see 4.3.3). In addition, in Ben's school, the cooperating teacher showed him a sample scheme of work which gave him a better starting point than his colleagues in the study. Looking at Ben's own scheme of work, he seemed to have derived a lot from the sample.

Nevertheless, a keen analysis of the sample (Appendix 23) shows that it may not have offered much help to the student teacher in terms of ELT in the Kenyan context such as using the *integrated approach*, and facilitation of learner participation in using EL for communication as stated in the syllabus (see 4.2.1). The sample scheme was not only rather brief but also gave very general highlights of activities that did not really indicate what exactly the learners were supposed to do in each lesson. Since the lesson plans were extracted from the schemes of work, it may not have been surprising that Ben's lesson plans were also quite brief (see Appendices 9-12).

5.2.5. Classroom observation of/by cooperating teachers

In four out of the five schools to which the student teachers were posted, the cooperating teachers did not observe the student teachers' lessons. The cooperating teachers gave various reasons for not observing the student teachers in class or arranging for the student teachers to observe their classes. Mainly, they stated that they had not seen it happen in the past, and there were no complaints from learners:

I did not go to observe him in class...I didn't get any complaints like 'we are not being taught well', or something like that...in the past we've not observed student teachers in class. Maybe, unless the person is just interested, but if you see things are going smoothly, you say 'let me just leave the teacher alone' [BCT].

However, in one school, observation of fellow teachers in class had been introduced as one of the strategies for improvement of teaching. The student teacher in that school, Caro, found herself being observed and observing others, and from the subsequent interview, she reported as follows:

At first I found it annoying... I just thought they didn't trust that I could deliver, that's why they were putting somebody to watch. But later on I thought it wasn't bad because they would for example tell me maybe 'this you should have done this way... next time maybe you will be teaching this topic you can get more materials from a certain place and such stuff...I also watched the cooperating teacher...he actually challenged me in the way he did his work, organized and so confident but I felt like I could manage to teach at least in a similar way... that boosted my self-esteem and kind of prepared me for assessments...I was relaxed because we talked about it freely. I would even ask like certain questions, maybe to get it clear from him, unlike when I was talking to my supervisors with whom I was sort of tense [C3].

Generally, the picture portrayed in this section is that the cooperative teachers were always supportive. However, this was not always the case as revealed by the findings I present in the next section.

5.2.6. The lack of support by some cooperating teachers

There was evidence during the study that some of the cooperating teachers were not supportive. Similarly, even those who were willing to help were not supportive all the time. Furthermore, some student teachers felt that there were aspects of the work of the cooperative teachers that amounted to bad examples. One issue which featured was that the cooperative teachers waited until they were consulted by the student teachers and even then, at times acted like they were being bothered by the student teachers. Ann, for example reported as follows:

She [the cooperating teacher] was always willing to help but she always waited for us to ask her. If you don't ask, she just assumes...she was answering the questions we asked her concerning English teaching...textbooks the necessary materials and syllabus. But at times you know you ask her something and it is like you are a bother, like a few times she would just say 'you are supposed to know that' or like she asked me to set Form 1 test and when I asked what to set she just said 'just do it the way you feel like'...So she helped but at times it was hard [A2].

Caro also reported that she was dealing with two cooperating teachers and while one was always ready to help, another was generally unsupportive. She decided to deal only with the one who was ready to answer her questions and discuss her work. During my first interview with her, she explained how one cooperating teacher had made her work difficult:

I have two cooperating teachers, Mr. Kiki [not his real name], the one who was teaching Form 3 and the other who gave me Form 2. The one for Form 2 is never around, so even questions on Form 2 work, I have to ask Mr. Kiki...The Form 2 teacher is so uncooperative; she even refused to surrender a class to me... Ok, initially I was supposed to teach Form 2 South and Form 2 North, but she refused to give me North, that's how I ended up in Form 3. ...When I ask her to explain something to me, she gets annoyed so fast, she is so irrational, God forgive me for saying that, but that is not all. I am supposed to teach a novel in Literature, *Coming to Birth*, there is only one copy of that novel in the library. And she borrowed it, her name is recorded in the library, but when I ask her, she says: "I have not heard about that book...So, eventually I had to buy my own copy...I find it hard to deal with her [C2].

Earlier in this section (see 5.2.3), I also explained that Caro was asked to invigilate tests during the first week without any induction and she felt she was being "bullied" by some teachers of English in the school. She also indicated that teachers in her school never made lesson plans, hence she also stopped when she realised she would not be assessed again (see 4.2.3). Similarly, Eve felt that at times her cooperating teacher and other teachers in the school were unfair to her and acted as poor role models, as she stated during the third interview:

The head of department wants me to rush through this term's work, so that I finish the syllabus. I've told her, it's so hard on my side because I have already planned for twelve units this term...I've tried to explain to her am a TP student, I have to take my work step-by-step. I don't have to rush because I'll blunder...Even the students won't understand if I start rushing. But she says that the students were behind because at one time they were not taught when their teacher was sick. So, now sometimes I even come during weekends because I don't want to annoy her. ... Then I noticed that my colleagues in English department don't even make lesson plans and they don't have schemes; they carry the textbook the way it is, mark where they have reached and where they are supposed to start from next time. Still if they don't like some topics they skip; like another teacher didn't like the topic on *relative clauses*, she even asked me to go and teach her class but I wasn't free. So, she said she will skip that... And because I was the one who was setting the end term exam, she asked me not to set that area... So I wonder if they are good example to us [E3].

In conclusion to this section on support by cooperating teachers, I could say that even though the teacher educators expected the student teachers to gain from the expertise of the cooperating teachers, several factors did not make their support very effective. These include the lack of formal coordination between the university and the cooperating teachers, the lack of preparation of cooperating teachers on how to support student teachers and the fact that some cooperative teachers were unsupportive in many ways and not the role models the teacher educators expected they would be. From the study though, it was noticeable that most of the student teachers got some useful induction and guidance in ELT during the teaching practice. While the findings in this section suggest that support by cooperating teachers has a potential to enhance student teacher learning during TP, where that kind of support is uncoordinated and inconsistent across schools of placement, it equally has the potential to cause confusion to the student teachers. In the next section, I report findings on support by fellow student teachers.

5.3. SUPPORT BY FELLOW STUDENT TEACHERS

Student teachers supported each other in different ways during the practicum. The first form of mutual support was reported amongst those from the same university in the same school. The second was a case of two student teachers of English from the same university teaching in different schools but sharing a house. Thirdly, two student teachers of English from different universities doing their practicum in the same school shared thoughts on ELT. The fourth form of support was of student

teachers of different subjects doing the practicum in the same school. I present these different forms of support in the subsequent sub-sections.

5.3.1. Student teachers of English in the same school

Two student teachers in the study - Ann and Faith - were posted to teach the same subject – English - in the same school. They reported working together in a number of ways including making schemes of work and lesson plans, discussing how to teach particular topics and encouraging one another when the TP became difficult at times. Faith talked about how they benefited from being in the same school:

We assist one another a lot, sometimes because you find that I am taking the Form 2 class and Ann is taking the Form 1 class. So I can sometimes go teach her class and she at times teaches mine. It's not part of the timetable but our local arrangement... Whenever one has a problem or doesn't understand something, we talk about it. Once in a while we use one another as teaching aids in class... For example when I was teaching the types of *oral narratives*, I just explained to her that I would need her to give an example of a legend or a myth. So she prepared for the same. So I went to class with her, after I had explained, she would tell the students a narrative. Sometimes, we helped one another in preparing the lessons. So it was very useful to have a colleague in the same department... and we are usually together... [F2].

During my visits to their school, I usually found them working together and during my informal meetings with them I realised that they jointly bought some teaching materials, shared books borrowed from other places and always discussed lesson plans. A number of times, they were the only teachers I found in the staffroom of the school, when others had left.

5.3.2. Student teachers of English in different schools living together

Ben and Dan reported a different but very useful kind of mutual support. They taught in different schools but lived in the same house hence shared rent and other expenses, thereby, reducing their costs substantially. Besides making life cheaper, they discussed ELT and reported gaining ideas from their different contexts.

We have supported one other in different ways. Apart from the work we are doing in TP, we are living together and encouraging one another in life... we combine resources like when we pay house rent, it is much cheaper than it would have been for one individual. Concerning TP, I usually tell him my experiences and he tells me his. Like the way he involves his students because during the first or the second week of the TP, I used to tell him that my students don't participate very much in class. But he used to tell me that his students are very good and eager to do things in class. So that is one of the aspects... when we were in college we were friends and for TP we chose schools in the same zone and decided to live together... It was our idea [D2].

As I explained in the previous chapter, during my observations, I noted that learners in Ben's classes participated quite actively in EL lessons while Dan's earlier lessons seemed to be mainly teacher-centred. During the last two lessons I observed, I noted that Dan was able to facilitate more learner participation. During my informal conversations with Dan, he told me that he had decided to try out some of the strategies Ben used in his school, as they had discussed (see 4.3.3).

5.3.3. Student teachers of English from different universities

Eve was also working with another student teacher of English in the same school who was studying in a university in a neighbouring country - Uganda. There are currently many Kenyan students studying in Ugandan universities, some of which have campuses in Kenya and therefore allow their students to do TP in Kenya. Eve reported differences and similarities in the way they were prepared to teach and issues they were expected to pay attention to during their TP.

We share many things, monitor each other's work. We ask one another: *how did you teach this? How do you approach this?* At times, we prepare teaching aids together. It saves us time and resources you know. Yeah, some things differ, especially preparation, for example, scheme of work, lesson plan but there are some similarities as well. When they write remarks [self evaluation] on the lesson plans, we do it on schemes of work. Also they have a place on their lesson plans where they indicate how they are going to use the chalkboard, while we do not have that. The other thing is that they were thoroughly briefed on what to do when they come out here, while still at college, for us we had a briefing day but it turned out that we were just given the lesson plan books and then we dispersed. Then their university notes are very relevant to content at secondary level and they have a handbook on English Language Teaching. I read his materials and they are very useful [E2].

Just like I said about Ann and Faith, during my visits to Eve's school, I observed the two student teachers working closely in planning for ELT. I also spoke informally to the other student teacher and, as Eve says above, the preparation for TP and resources he had were seemingly more adequate than Eve's.

5.3.4. Student teachers of different subjects in the same school

Ben was working in the same school with another student teacher from the same university, though their subjects were different. He indicated how both of them gained from one another; he said "we share ideas, as in, how to make teaching more effective and interesting...also most other teachers are not in our age bracket, so we

spend more time among ourselves” [B2]. Caro also worked with two other student teachers in the same school. Though they taught different subjects, they assisted each other throughout the TP period:

We are encouraging each other... in fact the help I get from them is psychological...I don't know how I can explain it, as in you sit, you discuss your problems, something you don't understand, or when you are disappointed in something they encourage you. Sometimes we discuss what the supervisors have told us and so on [C2].

Generally again, the data presented in this sub-section demonstrates that the student teachers gained both pedagogical and psychological support from each other. However, it is important to note that the support by peers as reported above was by chance and not an arrangement that the university facilitated. Perhaps the support by peers might have been more consistent if this kind of collaboration was discussed and formalised by the university. In the next section, I analyse the support by teacher educators from the university.

5.4. SUPPORT BY UNIVERSITY TEACHER EDUCATORS

Teacher educators (interchangeably called supervisors in this section) from the university played a dual role of supporting student teachers' pedagogical practice and assessing their teaching. The *Teaching Practice Guide* defines supervisors as “regular examiners during teaching practice. Most of them are specialised in Sciences, Languages or Social Sciences, they also give advice particularly in their area of specialization” (p. 3). The teacher educators attended a seminar before they could be posted to supervise the student teachers in zones that they would have applied for. The *Teaching Practice Guide* states that: “Attendance at the annual orientation session for supervisors is a condition for being assigned the task of supervising during that year” (p.16). One of the educators described the session as follows:

It is a two day seminar, where various subject specialists are allocated thirty minutes to present their papers outlining any distinct differences between a scheme of work and lesson plans maybe in English language and another subject as provided for by the school. They also talk about certain features that must be looked for in maybe a Grammar, Reading or Literature lesson, teaching procedure, and then you invite questions from participants for the next thirty minutes...If you are well prepared you put in a few examples of previous assessments and comments to try and draw the attention to weaknesses of previous assessments. Then direct them to what they should look for when assessing English language student teachers [ED2].

After the seminar, the supervisors were expected to supervise student teachers in any subject. Although the seminar mostly concentrated on assessment, the educators also discussed the issue of supporting the student teachers to learn from their pedagogical experiences. Nonetheless, during the study, it emerged that assessment tended to overshadow the pedagogical support aspect of the teacher educators' work.

Each of the student teachers who participated in the study was "supervised" four times during the entire practicum. While the number may seem small, the teacher educators seemed to shape the student teachers' behaviour fundamentally. This was because the student teachers were aware that they would be assessed and had to pass TP if they were to graduate from the university. In this section, I present the different aspects of the teacher educators' interactions with the student teachers, analysing the nature of support they offered. To start with, I present findings on what the process of supervision involved.

5.4.1. Process of supervision

The study revealed that the educators were clearly aware of what the entire process of supervision ought to entail. They stated that it ought to begin with a *pre-observation conference* before a student teacher was observed in class. After that there was supposed to be a *post-observation conference*. All the educators interviewed knew this procedure, as one of them elaborately described:

Ideally you have to be there at least an hour early; talk to the principal... Normally, we find the student teachers in the staff room. In most cases, these are students who do not even know you, because you don't need to have taught them to go and assess them anyway... So introduce yourself and relax them a bit...then we should have a *pre-observation conference*: ask to look at the student's file containing the schemes of work, lesson plan, sitting arrangements in classrooms and comment sheets by previous supervisors. Also, copies of any tests they have given, marking schemes and the mark lists. The supervisor is supposed to sign on the documents. After that you go to class for *actual observation* by that time perhaps you have looked at the student teacher's schemes of work and lesson plan; you might have even seen the teaching aids, but at that level you don't assess yet. When you go to the class; you sit at the back with the learners and observe the teacher as you write comments and award a mark. Then you move out ... look for a private place for a *post-observation conference*. So at that level is when you first of all ask the student about how she or he felt about the lesson. After that, systematically go over the comments you wrote then leave a copy with the student teacher to refer to later [ED5].

However, in practice, the supervisors never went through this process entirely as it is described. They stated that they had so many student teachers to assess in many different schools that they did not have enough time to go through the entire process. Sometimes the schools would be far from each other and they had to travel long distances to reach the next school:

But we do not actually follow that process in practice. I must admit, if you did that then you would not get time to assess other student teachers elsewhere. There is a day I had to assess eleven students all in one day, yes, arriving there at 7.30 a.m. because they were all in the same school until 7.30 p.m...with some co-operation from the headteacher and the students; finally I addressed all of them as a group...So the very large number of student teachers cannot allow us to do the correct thing...In my experience, either the assessors would be very fast in those *pre-* and *post* conferences or overlook them...Maybe the assessor has just come from school A, is going to school B, and due to time pressure, he left that fellow in school A without a post-conference, he is arriving when the teacher in school B is already in class, so there is no pre-conference also. After that, the lecturer is again rushing out to catch a lesson in school C...So I should say from reports by my colleagues, maybe only 20% of the assessors manage it, 80% might not be achieving that [ED2].

One of the additional pressures on the process of supervision was the fact that there was a minimum number of assessments that each supervisor was expected to carry out per day as well as a minimum number of assessments each student teacher was expected to have so as to qualify for a grade for the practicum.

A teacher educator is expected to do a minimum of five assessments per day spread over different schools usually...We expect to assess the student teachers six times, but I think we just manage about four - two times in each subject. It may not be adequate but I think it serves the purpose within the financial constraints we have [ED6].

Due to the pressure on the educators, sometimes student teachers were assessed at "odd times". This would be after the official class hours; there were also cases when they were assessed very late in the school term when the learners were sitting for exams and those affected felt unhappy about it, as Ann's statement shows:

The last supervisor came at a very odd time; first it was very late in the term, in fact the students were doing exams; secondly, the lecturer came after 5pm...and she was so rigid, I think she was supposed to come and assess us a week earlier...because the date she wrote on the assessment form was the week before ...I asked her but she was very rude and she was claiming that it was our mistake, that we did not inform the zone coordinator that the students were doing exams, she didn't care. She just said "you have to teach or else I will just say that you did not want to be assessed". She couldn't understand. The students cooperated very much but I felt very bad [A3].

Another aspect of supervision was that it was a requirement of the university that student teachers be assessed and awarded marks in two subjects. Therefore, the ELT student teachers were assessed in *English* and *Literature* as if they were two separate

subjects; yet the two were supposed to be taught as one integrated subject (see 4.3.1). Apparently, the requirement had not been revised to be consistent with the *integrated approach*. The student teachers felt that this caused confusion:

I have had two assessments by the same supervisor: one in English and another in Literature...But now I am confused because I was struggling to follow the *integrated approach*...Why don't they just decide if English is one subject or two [C2].

I asked the teacher educators why they assessed the student teachers in the “two subjects” in spite of the integration, and whether they also saw the possibility that it could cause confusion to the student teachers. They explained that the requirement of assessment had been set by the university before the new integrated syllabus in English language was introduced by the Ministry of Education. They explained how this mode of assessment applied to ELTE students:

For English /Literature student teachers, although it is an integrated syllabus, we want to assess them when they are teaching both components of English Language and when they are teaching aspects of literature. For them to pass TP, they must have been seen and awarded marks in two teaching subjects. So to be fair to them we separate the two. But also, most of the student teachers I have seen in English just seem to teach them separately anyway [ED6].

This aspect of supervision partly explains some of the challenges the student teachers faced in trying to implement the integrated approach in ELT as we saw in the previous chapter (see 4.3.1). Next, I present findings on the schedule of supervision.

5.4.2. Schedule of supervision during the practicum

Supervision comment sheets show two major ‘waves’ in the schedule; that is, there was one week, three weeks into the practicum (between 20th and 26th September, 2007), when all the student teachers in the study were supervised. Then, there was a lull of about one month before there was another wave of supervision (between 23rd and 29th October, 2007). The next wave of supervision came during the last week of the practicum (15th November, 2007), (see Figure 5.1).

The other notable aspect of supervision schedule was that except for Caro, the other student teachers in the study only had *two days* of supervision, involving two different supervisors. That is, one teacher educator supervised a student teacher twice (in two separate “subjects”) in one day; then another supervisor did the same on another day. One question that arises is to what extent this schedule of

supervision made it possible for the educators to effectively support the student teachers' pedagogical practice. This is especially considering that the student teachers were not supervised for three weeks, yet they had taken full responsibility for their classes from the beginning of the term.

Clearly, the schedule did not take into consideration the need to spread the supervision to allow for progressive pedagogical support of the student teachers through the discussions they would have had with the supervisors. Another possible analysis is that the main focus of supervision was *assessment* otherwise if the objective was to support the practice of student teachers, it would not have been necessary to supervise them very late into the school term when they had actually stopped teaching and the learners were doing exams. Figure 5.1 shows the weeks when the student teachers were supervised.

Figure 5.1. Schedule of supervision during the practicum

NAME	WK 1	WK 2	WK 3	WK 4	WK 5	WK 6	WK 7	WK 8	WK 9	WK 10	WK 11	WK 12
	3-4 th Sept.	10- 14 th	17- 21 st	24- 28 th	1-5 th Oct.	8- 12 th	15- 19 th	22- 26 th	29- 2 nd	5-9 th Nov.	12- 16 th	19- 23 rd
Ann												
Ben												
Caro												
Dan												
Eve												
Faith												

5.4.3. Impact of supervision on student teachers

I also analysed how the supervision process influenced the pedagogical practice of the student teachers. In this sub-section, I present different aspects of this influence.

5.4.3.1. Supervision kept student teachers “on their toes”

One of the major influences of supervision on the student teachers was that it kept them ‘on their toes’, meaning that it kept them active, focused and keen to score high marks during their TP. One student teacher, Caro, captured this in her interview when she revealed that the realisation that there would be no more supervision made her stop doing certain things that she had always done.

Supervisors keep you on your toes, you know; you have to work hard to earn your marks. But when the supervisors are through, you also relax, like my last supervisor told me the four times they had assessed me were enough. So I also relaxed; I was not writing the lesson plans any more...I wasn’t now using the teaching aids, but earlier, I was even using a radio in class, charts and such things, but now the chalkboard was my only teaching aid ... I stopped because they were just cumbersome [C3].

One of the reasons supervision kept the student teachers ‘on their toes’ was because they were not informed when it would take place. The educators said if the students were informed, they might only be prepared when they expected supervisors.

We don’t tell the student teachers who is going to see them when; unless that is an arranged assessment; for example, if the student teacher was sick and missed the routine assessments. Otherwise they are told to always expect assessors all the time they are on TP. When we post the student teachers, within the first week they submit their timetables to the zone coordinators, so we will be able to know when which student is scheduled to teach what subject in which class. ... This helps; otherwise, most of the student teachers would just be joking around, they would only be serious when they know supervisors are coming around [ED6].

Most student teachers felt though that since it was a learning exercise, it was necessary for the supervisors to let them know when they would be supervised so that they would not panic when they saw the supervisors. .

I would really appreciate if a supervisor tells you they’re coming... To me, I think am always prepared...but if my supervisor tells me, he’s coming, I think my tension in class will reduce, but if you have a lesson and then you just see somebody walk in and tell you, “I am your assessor, I am going to class with you”, you just start shaking, you are tense, you don’t know where the tension has come from, so that’s what happened to me. ... The first time my supervisor came she ambushed me, compared to the second time she came. The second time she came, we’d agreed with her and I told her the lesson I’d be having so I was prepared. In fact if you look at the feedback she gave me, the second set of comments was better than the first [C2].

Other student teachers felt the same as Caro and even some cooperating teachers. For example, Dan’s cooperating teacher felt that if the student teachers knew the dates of supervision, they would be better prepared:

They just ambush them. So, the student teachers cannot do very well because a lot of times they panic. So, I think because this is teaching practice, the lecturer should prepare the student teachers psychologically, at least so that they know when the lecturer is coming. I have even seen a case where a lecturer came in the morning, the

student teacher was assessed, then the same day in the afternoon, another lecturer comes and says 'within twenty minutes arrange for another lesson', even if you didn't have a lesson on your timetable, it does not help. It becomes like a ritual and the student teachers hate it; so they don't even pay attention to what the lecturers are saying yet that is what is supposed to be important [DCT].

Perhaps because the student teachers were not informed about the dates of supervision and the process seemed to focus so much on assessment, the student teachers were scared of the teacher educators, as revealed in the next subsection.

5.4.3.2. Student teachers' fear of supervision

Most of the student teachers stated during their interviews that they were scared of supervision. Most of them based their fear on negative reports they had received from their predecessors at university, especially to the effect that supervisors were usually too critical, sometimes unfair and ultimately that the supervisors might not give them enough marks to enable them qualify to teach. Ann's statement cited below reflected this fear which was common to all the student teachers.

I am quite scared of them [supervisors], according to the experience from my friends, they can give you a grade that is below average, your life will depend on what they will write on the assessment sheet...Am not being pessimistic but anything can happen! You can really prepare well and not impress the assessor. There are some people who are never impressible...I know this from the experience from my friends...past TP teachers...they prepared well but they told us they were given very low grades [A1].

The student teachers also feared that some of their learners would not behave well when they were being supervised, hence they might fail to impress the supervisor, during the lessons observed. The concern with learner behaviour during supervision was so strong amongst the student teachers that they were not sure whether they should punish learners if it became necessary. Also, the student teachers felt that they taught in a more "comfortable" manner when supervisors were not in class.

One thing I fear is the behaviour of my students when my supervisor will come. They might fail to participate actively. Will I force them? Some of them who think I have been hard on them might want to revenge on me; you know you might not be liked by every student in class [C1]...One thing that is really bad is that the time a student teacher teaches without a supervisor she is very comfortable, because there is no one there for her to please, she's there to teach. But when the supervisor is seated in class, things change. Like the first time my supervisor came, I was only there to please her, I kept looking at her, and my learners, as in: *have I done something wrong...are the learners behaving well?* Yeah, so that is the reason why I think I even finished my lesson before time [C2].

During the interviews with the teacher educators, all of them confirmed that most student teachers were indeed scared of supervisors. They attributed this fear, though, to events that had taken place in the past and which had since been rectified.

Well, there was a time there were complaints of lecturers harassing student teachers. But I think it was a long time ago. For example, there was this colleague lecturer that at one time all student teachers on TP dreaded. One time, it is on record that he thought a student teacher was misleading the learners in terms of content. So he stopped the student and said: *you sit down I will teach this topic*. The assessor thought he was doing it in good faith; but overall you can see the embarrassment this caused the student teacher...So word went round and I remember that assessor was stopped for some time. Sometimes you get a few odd reports. Like we have heard cases where an assessor doesn't go to school at all; he simply goes to an hotel and calls the student teacher so that they can negotiate on how many marks to give. But from my experience, at least in my Zone, I have not seen it; I think 99% of the lecturers do their work well. There are isolated cases once in a while but overall I think it is ok [ED5].

One of the reasons for fear of supervision though seemed to be the fact that the student teachers were not quite clear of what the supervisors would be assessing. The student teachers did not have any documents that could guide them clearly on what to do or expect. As I said in Chapter One, they were not given copies of the *Teaching Practice Guide*, which contains such guidelines but which only the teacher educators had.

Moreover, the student teachers were not briefed by their teacher educators on what the assessment would entail; as I explained earlier (see 1.2.6); they did not seem to have been prepared well for teaching in general or TP in particular. Faith said during her interview: "we were not told the specific things they will be looking for. I only have a rough idea...Maybe the teaching method, if am following my lesson plans, the introduction, development, the conclusion and also the dressing code" [F1]. Similarly, this fear could have been aggravated by the fact that the student teachers were dealing with a new syllabus and unfamiliar subject matter (see 4.2.2).

Despite the general fear presented above, the data showed that many supervisors were generally very supportive and were able to make student teachers relax. All the student teachers in the study actually made such favourable remarks about their supervisors except the one already referred to who went to supervise Ann so late in the term and could not accept her explanation that the learners were doing exams (see 5.4.1). Thus the student teachers reported that most supervisors managed to

carry out amicable discussions with them, for the short time they had, as exemplified by Ben's statement below:

The lecturer came and one good thing with him is that he asked "are you ready?" You know, he could bring you to the mood as in you don't have to worry about him. He said "It is just a normal class, so go and show me how far you can teach. So, when he came, at first I was somehow panicking. And during the first assessment, I wasn't sure about some things. But we discussed, he asked me my feelings and I shared with him the challenges in this school and he gave me some tips on how to improve. And the second time he came in at least my marks showed I had improved. I went and worked on the weaknesses I had in teaching, then everything was okay [B2].

Ben's report above suggests that there is potential for supervision to be very supportive of student teacher learning. It would appear that the fear of supervision could be thawed with amore friendly approach to the exercise. However, as long as the fear stood the student teachers always thought of how to please the educators during supervision.

5.4.3.3. Special preparations when supervisors were expected

In spite of the date of supervision remaining a secret, somehow the student teachers would have a rough idea about when teacher educators might visit their schools. Indeed the student teachers confessed to me during our informal meetings that the first person to be assessed would pass the information and in a short while all the student teachers in the zone would be alerted. In such cases where the student teachers expected supervisors, they made special preparations for their lessons.

When we know the assessor is coming you make your lesson plan according to what you think will make them happy, even making some funny things in the name of teaching aids - like diorama - that we don't use in other days...you need to prepare for marks you know; have the files neat, organizing the lesson plan and maybe putting some things in order...You teach a *plastic* lesson. When we don't expect them, you just, prepare what you know the girls will enjoy and be more flexible [B3].

I found out that even learners were given special preparation; when student teachers suspected that supervisors would be coming, some of them prepared learners by asking them to read about what they would be teaching – so that the learners could participate more actively. The learners, on the other hand, would be more cooperative, mainly because they did not want to "let their teacher down". Ann and Caro reported this kind of preparation of their learners:

When the assessor is there even the students who normally don't raise up their hands make sure, they do...I just inform them like today when I suspect the supervisor is coming tomorrow. I tell them I will teach you this, maybe nouns...and then they will be aware of what I am going to teach them the next day. So, the next day when I ask a question all their hands are up...I can't just go to class and tell them participate. Yeah, they need some time [A2].

The time my supervisor came for the first time, I was scared that some students were going to disappoint me...I had expected them to shoot very hard questions ... so that the supervisor sees I cannot respond well to their questions, my fear was about such. So I told them that I am always around, so things which are not so directly related to that lesson, they can ask me later. So whenever the supervisor came they were very good...they did not want to let me down [C2].

Regular teachers would also usually be more cooperative than usual. Even the headteacher would ensure that the conditions were quite conducive; for example, if there were students who were supposed to be on punishment at the time of supervision, they would be asked to go to class for the sake of the teacher on TP.

That day when the lecturer asked me to arrange for a class at 5pm, students were supposed to be leaving school for home. You know, this is a day school. The other teachers went and looked for the students, convincing them to stay behind and be taught for my sake. On that day the headmistress was also present. There were some students who were to take a punishment and they were Form two's, the class I was meant to teach. So she told them just to leave the punishment, and go to class [A3].

From the above issues we may conclude that the supervised lessons would often be 'plastic' and did not portray the usual pedagogical practice of the student teachers. Consequently the kind of advice offered by the teacher educators based on the lessons they observed could be said to be misplaced. Ultimately, there is also the question of what exactly the teacher educators discussed with student teachers during supervision, which I address in the next section.

5.4.4. Comments by supervisors

Two main issues emerged concerning the supervisors' comments to the student teachers. First was that they were mostly on general pedagogy and second, they were mainly evaluative and directive.

5.4.4.1. Comments by supervisors mainly on general pedagogy

The study revealed that, during the brief *post-observation* conferences the supervisors managed to hold with the student teachers, the comments they gave were

mainly on general pedagogical practice, not specifically relevant to ELT. Among the issues they talked about were preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans, statement of learning objectives, maintenance of records such as learners' attendance and test scores, and records of what they had taught. They also told the student teachers about the involvement of learners, rewarding of learners, procedures such as introduction, development and conclusion of a lesson and also the use of teaching aids. Some of the comments centred on broader professional issues such as mode of dressing. All the student teachers in the study reported this during the interviews. I have decided to give more quotations on this, covering most student teachers to illustrate the range of generic issues the supervisors talked about.

He told me that I had a problem in getting the names of the students; that if I wanted the students to be very much attentive in class I should involve them by mentioning their names and also encourage them as in, the students will feel the teacher knows who is who in class. So they will be very much attentive and participate in class [B2].

I learnt [from the supervisors] that there is a mistake I made in stating my lesson objectives as in I'd used the word *identify* twice. I wanted the learners at the end of this lesson to identify some things, then again I wanted learners to identify something else, but then she told me 'you have to test different things, so the moment you use something like *identify* your next objective should be *explain* or *state*, something like that, so that at the end of the lesson you've tested more than one area' that is what I learnt from her [C2].

At the end of the lesson, we went out and then she gave me the comments she had recorded. She gave me the strengths of my lesson and the weaknesses, she was the one talking. She said that the introduction part was well done. She told me that I reviewed the previous lesson well and linked it to the current lesson that I was teaching. She also told me that I had performed well as far as chalkboard use was concerned and that the control of the class was also okay. She said the students were involved and generally the lesson was also good. Then she advised me to avoid chorus answers and file names of students in my class [F2].

He made a comment that he noticed that I wrote my teaching aid in a hurry, but as for the lesson he said, I was very okay, that I taught very well in class. He advised me on things to do with my file, the schemes of work and that I didn't have the general objective. Then he said next time, I should try and make a teaching aid in time [E2].

Basically, she was correcting areas like maybe the mode of dressing. I didn't button my blouse completely...She just told me that a teacher should button, and look smart. Ah, and shoes, they should not be making noise when you walk around... that when you have them while teaching students, they can be quite uncomfortable. ...She also talked about how I should be rewarding students. She recommended maybe clapping for the correct answers given by the students. ... I have been commending others, not all the time, I thought I can't say *very good, very good, very good* to all the students after every answer. She then told me to make the class lively by involving the students more but this is not easy because of the topic we were doing and also maybe if you ask students questions and then they don't answer, what do you do? [A2].

Certainly, one of the reasons the comments were more on general pedagogy was because most of the educators were not ELT specialists. Out of the six educators who assessed the student teachers and who participated in the study, only one of them was an ELT educator. One of the reasons given for this was because the ELTE department at the university did not have enough educators, compared to the number of ELTE student teachers:

In English Language Teacher Education right we are very thin compared to the number of student teachers. We have had to work with part time lecturers from other universities but they don't go out on TP ...During the last TP we had a total of about 400 ELT students in the field; about 200 *regular* students, about 150 or so *privately sponsored* students; add another 20 or so who are doing Guidance and Counselling but specializing in English and Literature as their teaching subjects. Then, there are also about 30 PGDE students doing English/ Literature. So the number is monumental. You can see where our problems begin and end [ED2].

Looking at the supervision forms (see Appendices 17-22), I confirmed that the comments were mainly on general pedagogy, just as the student teachers had stated during interviews. Although there was reference to *subject matter*, almost in all cases, it went like: *teacher demonstrated good mastery of the subject matter*. Out of all the supervision comments analysed, there was only one direct comment on ELT. This was given during Dan's first supervision (see Appendix 19) and it said: *you need to emphasise the impact of stress on meaning too*. Dan said during his subsequent interview that it was the most relevant supervision he had:

He told me that I did not emphasise *stress* in meaning. For example we were dealing with words which are either nouns or verbs depending on which part is stressed; words like '*compliment, compli'ment*'; '*contract, con'tract*'; '*project, pro'ject*'. His comments were very useful. Because later I came to know that when I'm teaching about something, I need to emphasize on the meaning because that is what is more useful... Yes he was an English language specialist. I know him [D3].

All student teachers felt that they would benefit more if they were assessed by ELT specialists. They indicated the aspects of ELT that they had trouble with and which they had expected support in but which they did not get. Some of the aspects they mentioned were integration of English and Literature, teaching of some functional writing skills and some topics in grammar. On the other hand some student teachers felt lucky that they had got away with certain mistakes because the assessors could not discover them, as they did not know the subject matter:

I was lucky... if he was an English language specialist, there are terms that he would have wanted me to use in class in explaining *repetition*. I felt like the way I explained some terms that morning, you know after preparing a teaching aid in a hurry, somebody else would have discovered they were not satisfactory. I personally knew I

did not explain the different types of repetition in poetry, you know like *refrain*, *chorus*, role of repetition in poetry and relationship between repetition and *rhyme* or *rhythm*, etc.... Yeah, I think if he had been from the English department, he would also have advised me you know, on issues like how to *integrate* the topic with language, such things. But I think he didn't discover that. Instead he talked about things like the teaching aid was not bold enough or that I did not hang it at a central place in the classroom etc [E3].

During my interviews with the educators, most of them confessed that they tended to concentrate on the general aspects of pedagogy and avoided talking about ELT content because they did not feel competent enough to address the issues. As illustrated by a statement from one of them, below, they feared that they might confuse the student teachers or indeed contradict what the student teachers had been taught by their educators at University. Consequently the educators felt that the ELT student teachers would benefit more from a specialist.

When I go to assess an English Language lesson, what I'm actually interested in is not the content. I'm interested in whether the student is able to display - general things that a teacher should do in any class. So, I will look at how the student is prepared. That does not need a language expert. I'll also look at learners' questions and responses. How does he control the class? And all other things that are general education in nature. But because I don't have the knowledge of the content, I wouldn't bother so much about the content ... you might contradict what they have been taught to do... I feel that we are not very enriching to the English student teachers because you might not know if a student does not have good mastery of the content. I think they would benefit more from experts in that area [ED1].

Indeed, as the teacher educator said, some student teachers reported that there were instances when the comments they were given did not seem appropriate to ELT. Some of them also felt that some of the comments contradicted what they had been taught at University and that some of the lecturers actually gave them inconsistent comments to the ones they had been given earlier during the practicum.

It's like everybody gives their own comments based on their area of specialization, this lecturer who comes from the History department even quoted examples from history. Then I wonder how it applies to English, in fact he was telling me I can have a specific objective then he gave some example from something to do with the *struggle for independence*, which is a topic in History. I almost asked him what that had to do with the grammar, the *comparatives and superlatives* that I had been teaching but of course I didn't. How could I? I think comments from English/literature specialists would be more relevant than those from somebody in another department [E3].

Generally, I have a problem with some of the comments they make. The first assessor will come and say you should have examples of sentences you will teach or state time an exercise will take. Next time another will say you don't need examples in a lesson plan but you need to avoid asking too many questions and use group work... Like in *reading*, one would tell you to let learners read aloud and enjoy as you correct their

pronunciation; another would say let them read silently or don't correct them. At the end of the day you don't know whose comments to follow [C3].

The one ELT educator in the study stated during his interview that indeed he had received complaints from ELT student teachers about some inappropriate comments by the non specialist educators and the fact that student teachers felt that they did not gain much from the general comments given, when it came to ELT teaching.

There are two things that come through, one the non specialised lecturers do not seem to help the English language student teachers much in terms of content; and the ELT student teachers have written such complaints severally in their confidential reports. Two, sometimes they give misplaced comments, like they insist that they want a teaching aid for every aspect of language... In some subjects, people talk about *reality* as crucial to teaching. So, teachers go to class with *salt, carrots* and say *this is a carrot*, but for a language teacher, at times you feel that learners already know several nouns, for example, so you do not need to bring the objects to class [ED2].

In this subsection, therefore, several issues have arisen which perhaps constrained pedagogical support in ELT. While the comment on general pedagogy may have been useful anyway and may have contributed to the overall improvement we saw in the previous chapter (see 4.3.2), there was clearly lack of specific comments on ELT. Hence, the student teachers felt they lacked advice even in problematic areas, sometimes they felt confused by conflicting comments, yet some were happy that they “escaped with mistakes” that ELT specialists would have spotted. Also, the only student teacher who had specialist supervision felt he had gained, raising the need for more specific pedagogical support. Another issue that emerged was that the supervision was mainly evaluative and directive, as I present in the next subsection.

5.4.4.2. Supervision mainly evaluative and directive

One of the findings of this study was that supervision mainly involved teacher educators assessing what the student teachers had done right and wrong and consequently assigning grades and then giving the student teachers instructions as they listened passively. Most of the supervisors, as I indicated earlier (see 5.4.1) seemed to recognise that the student teachers ought to be involved in the discussion; but they mostly cited lack of time as one of the constraints to that mutual discussion, hence most of them just ended up ‘giving’ comments to the student teachers.

We rarely have time for student teachers presenting their own views. We quickly give our comments and rush elsewhere. Any discussion we have probably is when a student

is complaining, because you have not given them enough time for example to prepare for lessons, where necessary, and I think the students have also taken advantage of this because they know that you will not talk about certain things, you will give them their mark and just walk away. Probably the only thing they'll ask you is "what did I get sir? Can you please show me my grade?" Of course we are not supposed to show them the grade [ED2].

The student teachers' interviews also revealed that the process of supervision was mainly directive. Sometimes, they kept quiet even when they thought they did not agree with what the educators were saying or when they had questions to ask. The student teachers felt though that it was important that teacher educators listen to their views as well.

Being student teachers we always just say *yes* to every assessor because you do not want to argue with them...of course you cannot explain anything; you just say *yes madam or , yes sir, it's ok*. These are your assessors, and they are supposed to grade you at the end of the day, because you don't want to lose marks, you just have to go with whatever they say. But I wish they could ask us our views about the lessons [E3].

Perhaps one of the reasons that the supervision was mainly directive was because that was the 'culture' the student teachers were used to – where they listened to the teacher educators who were supposed to know "better" anyway. During the initial interviews, they indicated that they expected lecturers to correct their mistakes:

I expect the supervisors to correct the mistakes that maybe I will make so that when the next supervision comes, I will have ironed out the mistakes...and I will learn to avoid those mistakes in future...the lecturers know better than us [A1].

I expect them [supervisors] to correct me because I know I have my weaknesses. So, I know when the supervisor comes in he is the one to show me that "this is your weakness, you should improve in this area and this one". So generally it is the corrections...I just expect him or her to correct me on where I am weak... [B1].

I will appreciate being told my weak points. Because I'd be thinking that I am the best yet I have some weaknesses...I expect to be given corrections, and I expect to be appreciated where the lecturer feels that I have done well. And I expect to be told that "*this is not the way it goes*". So that I may be able to make a good teacher when I become one [D1].

It is also noticeable from the supervisors' comment sheets (see Appendices 17– 22) that the feedback was evaluative and directive. For example, from Caro's fourth lesson, there were statements like: *adequate preparation had been made... introduction was apt...the learners were appropriately reinforced...chalkboard was well used in highlighting the salient features of the lessons* and so on. Such comments are clearly discernible in practically all the other comment forms. Some evaluative and directive comments are included in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Some evaluative and directive comments in the supervision forms

<p><i>Include learning activities and resources for every part of the lesson</i></p> <p><i>Avoid chorus answers - pick one student to respond at a time</i></p> <p><i>Be more creative on use of resources; avoid talking to the chalkboard</i></p> <p><i>Split lesson objectives for clarity... vary the aspects to look for</i></p> <p><i>Avoid pocketing when teaching</i></p> <p><i>Provide ample time for assignment before you give the answer</i></p> <p><i>Summarise salient points of the lesson on CB</i></p> <p><i>Chart should be placed at the centre and not extreme right</i></p> <p><i>There should be a recap of the whole lesson</i></p> <p><i>The assignment should have been written on the CB</i></p> <p><i>Cut down on use of phrases 'ok' and 'are we together'</i></p> <p><i>Try to activate dormant learners by using questioning techniques</i></p> <p><i>Remarks column on scheme of work should be updated.</i></p> <p><i>All the objectives are clear and stated in measurable terms</i></p> <p><i>Objectives...were simple and stated in behavioural terms</i></p> <p><i>Pupils responses were adequately rewarded</i></p> <p><i>The learners were appropriately reinforced</i></p>

From the evaluative and directive comments by supervisors as illustrated above, we could say that the educators' feedback seemed to be focused on student teachers' behaviours and did not address the possible reasons behind the behaviours. Also, the educators' comments seemed to imply making judgement on how *well* the student teachers were teaching more than posing questions that might have helped the student teachers to think about their lessons and learn from their practice. This was not taking cognisance of the fact that the student teachers *learning teaching* during the practicum (from the supervision point of view). Therefore the evaluative comments may not have helped the student teachers to learn from practice, which was meant to be the main purpose of TP according to the *Teaching Practice Guide* (see 1.2.6).

Similarly, based on the directive nature of the comments we could also say that the supervisors assumed the existence of a best teaching method or procedure that all the student teachers ought to follow regardless of the unique contexts in which they taught. This is probably the reason they alluded to what and how things *should* have been done during the lessons. Consequently, a question arises as to whether the evaluative and the directive nature of the supervision could have helped the teachers to make progress in understanding teaching in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes, which was the objective of the practicum. This is a question that I will take up in the discussion chapter.

5.5. SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have presented findings that answer the question: *How are English Language student teachers pedagogically supported during the practicum?* The findings indicate that there were mainly three sources of support: cooperating teachers, fellow student teachers and educators. The key findings from this section are summarised in Table 5.2, below:

Table 5.2. Key findings on support of student teachers during TP

<p><i>Support by cooperative teachers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooperating teachers were not prepared for expected support• There was no systematic coordination between university and schools• Some cooperating teachers gave valuable guidance on ELT• Induction of STs and responsibilities were different in various schools• Some cooperating teachers were unsupportive <p><i>Support by fellow student teachers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paired or group placement of student teachers was not policy of the university• Student teachers supported each other in various ways, pedagogically and socially <p><i>Support by teacher educators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supervision was mainly assessment-focused, evaluative and directive• Student teacher practice was mainly geared towards pleasing supervisors• ELT student teachers were assessed in two teaching subjects despite integration• Supervisors' feedback were mainly on general pedagogy

Overall, I could say the main finding on the question that this chapter sought to address is that there were gaps in the conceptualisation of pedagogical support of the English language student teachers during the practicum, which influenced their practice and learning in various ways. In the next chapter, I discuss this issue further, and other key findings presented in the previous chapter, exploring what this study highlights about teacher learning during the practicum, especially in ELTE.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

6.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I discuss the key findings in relation to the aim of the study and literature in the field of English language teacher education (ELTE) - in particular - and teacher education (TE) in general. The main aim of this study, as I stated in Chapter One was to analyse the pedagogical experiences of English language student teachers during the practicum in Kenya with a view to finding out what they learnt from the placements and the issues that influenced their learning. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two main sections – the first is a discussion on what the student teachers (STs) learnt through practice and in the second section I explore the issues that influenced teacher learning during the practicum. Before I start the discussion proper, let me explain how I conceptualised teacher learning in this study.

Teacher learning was defined in this study as development in pedagogical knowledge in terms of awareness and reasoning of principles, procedures and attitudes necessary for teaching a specific subject matter at a particular level of education (e.g. Freeman, 2002/1989; Johnson, 2006/1999; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Richards, 2008/1998). The word *pedagogical* is used here to refer to the process of teaching and learning and is necessary in this definition to delimit my focus from other aspects of professional teacher learning that were not within the scope of my study, such as participation of student teachers in school programmes like staff meetings, parent-teacher conferences and co-curricular activities.

My main assumption in this discussion is that student teachers are sent out on a practicum so that they can enhance the teacher learning process that they began earlier at university through practical experiences, supported by more experienced teachers and teacher educators from the university (e.g. Brandt, 2006; Clarke and Collins, 2007; Crookes, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Farrell, 2008; Richards, 1998).

As I stated in Chapter One, the university whose student teachers participated in my study (hereafter, the university) stated in their *Teaching Practice Guide* (1990: iii) that the main goal of the practicum was to give student teachers an opportunity to “develop deeper understanding of and achieve growth in knowledge, skills and attitudes as required by the teaching profession for which they are being prepared”

Such goals of TP were also reflected in the general goal of TE in Kenya, which is: “to ensure that the graduates acquire knowledge of relevant content, methodology, professionalism, appropriate attitudes and deep understanding of teaching, which will enable them to diagnose and develop the educational competencies required of their learners” (Republic of Kenya, 2004). Such goals of TE are also consistent with the revised national goals of education in the country which, among other issues, emphasise the need “to promote individual intellectual development and self-fulfilment of learners at different levels of education” (e.g. KIE, 2002; MoE, 2005). Looking at these aims of the practicum, whether stated by the University, MoE, or literature in ELTE, they are consistent in so far as they point out that the main goal of TP is to facilitate further TL as defined above.

The main issue of interest in this discussion, then, is whether the English language student teachers could be said to have had the development expected of them during TP as stated by the university and the MoE, and also as currently envisaged in ELTE literature. In other words: what exactly could the student teachers be said to have learnt during the practicum? This is what I turn to in the next section.

6.2. TEACHER LEARNING DURING TP

Teacher learning is a complex phenomenon that is not easy to categorically identify, describe or even quantify (Borg, 2006; Freeman, 1989). Freeman acknowledges that in a TP context, the issue of learning becomes even more complicated because the key feature of learning is change, which in itself is equally complex. He states that:

Change does not necessarily mean doing something differently; it can mean an awareness...an affirmation of current practice,...change is not necessarily immediate or complete...some changes are directly accessible...and therefore quantifiable, whereas others are not; (and) some types of changes can come to a closure while others are open ended (1989:28).

Freeman advises therefore, that in order to identify learning during a practicum situation, one needs to spend sufficient time with student teachers, observing what they do and the documents they produce as well as getting their own views of what they feel they have learnt. Similarly, Borg (2006) advises that “conclusions about a lack of change in studies of teacher cognition should always be qualified with reference to how change was actually operationalized” (2006:278). Aware of the complexity of identifying learning as explained above, in this study, I considered learning to have occurred when the data consistently and corroboratively suggested that there was development in teacher knowledge in terms of awareness and reasoning of principles and procedures of ELT (see 2.4.1).

6.2.1. What the student teachers learnt during TP

Having spent a whole term with the student teachers (STs) during which I observed each of their classes four times and interviewed each of them three times; having had in-depth interviews with their cooperating teachers and teacher educators and having analysed lesson plans, assessment forms and other documents (as I explained in detail in Chapter Three), I believe that I can identify some aspects of teacher learning (TL) that took place during the practicum, as summarised in Table 6.1 below:

Table 6.1. Summary of aspects of TK the STs acquired during TP

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They became aware of the approach, contents and aims in the secondary EL syllabus and improved in knowledge of EL subject matter at that level• They developed awareness of the practical challenges of ELT in Kenyan schools• The STs learnt to prepare EL lessons that could fit within stipulated time and to state lesson objectives and learning activities• They learnt how to use the chalkboard effectively, e.g. more legibly and better organised• They improved in coherence of lesson presentation in ELT through introduction, development, conclusion and giving assignments• They improved in classroom control, e.g. ability to keep learners focused and draw their attention to specific points in the lesson• They improved in facilitating learner participation in EL lessons through use of questions, pair work and group work• They acquired skills of setting and marking English language tests |
|--|

Looking at the summary of what the STs learnt and considering that this was their first experience of teaching, I would argue that they experienced considerable development in teacher learning. Clearly, TP offered them important exposure to the work of teaching in general and ELT in particular. In relation to this point then, my study supports previous research which reported that the practicum plays a significant role in exposing STs to the actual processes involved in teaching in schools (e.g. Atay, 2007; Borg, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2006a and b; Dellicarpini, 2009; Kohler et al., 2008; Johnson, 1992). For example, following a review of many studies on the practicum, among other aspects of LTE, spanning over two decades, Borg (2006) stated that:

It is also clear that practice teaching and early classroom experiences...provide first-hand encounters with the realities of life in schools and classrooms from a teacher's perspective (pp.276-277).

A similar conclusion was arrived at by Darling-Hammond (2006b) after studying several TE programmes in North America, including their practicum experiences. She stated that the practicum emerged as a very powerful influence on STs' development. Dellicarpini's (2009) study, also conducted in North America, revealed that student teachers were able to improve remarkably in writing lesson plans especially according to the way they had been taught at college.

Both Kohler et al. (2008) and Johnson (1992) reported that the practicum enabled student teachers to develop the ability to make instructional decisions. Another study on development of teacher efficacy during the practicum conducted in Turkey by Atay (2007) involving ELT student teachers participating in a year-long practicum also revealed similar findings. Following analysis of the focused group discussions of 75 student teachers and other sources of data, Atay concluded that:

The classroom teaching made them [student teachers] aware of their strengths and weaknesses in managing instruction and engaging students in English lessons; thus they became aware of the complexity of the teaching task. This awareness in the initial stages made some of them work hard to improve themselves...pre-service teachers' efficacy was also influenced by watching others teach... observing their cooperating teachers affected their self-perceptions of teaching competence as the prospective teacher compared himself/herself with the model teacher (pp.214-215).

However, most of these studies have not been conducted on ITE programmes run by state controlled institutions or in mainstream schools. The studies I have referred to

were also mostly on particular approaches to the practicum piloted by specific universities. In this respect, my study makes a contribution by reporting that TP in a conventional (state run) undergraduate programme also enabled student teachers to learn some important skills in ELT such as planning, facilitating learner participation, testing and to develop awareness of English language syllabus and subject matter at the secondary school level.

Having stated that the student teachers received useful exposure to teaching, I wish to point out, as I discussed earlier, that professional knowledge may be viewed as consisting of two broad components: knowledge of *procedures* and knowledge of *principles* (e.g. Johnson, 1999; Knight, 2002; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b, Richards, 1998). To recapitulate, procedures of ELT mainly comprise the process of actual teaching in the classroom from introduction to conclusion and the techniques the teacher uses during that moment. It also includes related activities such as planning and any others prescribed in the syllabus by policy makers (see 2.4.1.1).

On the other hand, principles refer to issues that underlie and/or inform the procedures whether implicit or explicit. In ELT, such principles would relate to theories of ELT, views on English language as subject matter, aims of ELT in particular contexts, practice of evaluation and role of reasoning in ELT (see 2.4.1.2). In a nutshell (and with reference to my review of the knowledge base of ELTE – 2.3.2), procedures involve *how* to teach English language in the classroom while principles concern the pedagogical reasoning that informs the classroom teaching.

Again, as I explained earlier (2.4.1), I find these distinctions useful for my discussion of what the student teachers in my study could be said to have learnt from their TP. Accordingly, the STs in my study could be said to have learnt mainly the general procedures of ELT. I will refer to this type of knowledge as *procedural pedagogical knowledge*. Some TE literature has referred to such form of knowledge as *technicist* (e.g. Malderez and Wedell, 2007; Tomlinson, 1995). Such general skills of teaching are important especially for beginner teachers “because they find being able to execute a very structured set of procedures confidence-boosting and supportive in the early stages of their career” (Malderez and Wedell, 2007: 13-14). Nevertheless, it is preferable that STs be provided with opportunities to learn the principles behind

such procedures so that they perform them because they understand it is likely that such procedures would be more helpful to learners.

My interpretation above that the student teachers who participated in this study seem to have learnt mainly procedural pedagogical knowledge during the practicum supports similar findings as reported in some previous studies. For example, both Kohler et al. (2008) and Johnson (1992) - already referred to above – found out that although the student teachers in their studies developed the ability to make instructional decisions, they were not able to give reasons for the decisions they made. In Johnson's study, the student teachers' lessons were videotaped and played to them and they were asked to give comments on what prompted the decisions they had taken. Her study revealed that the student teachers made decisions mainly based on desire to maintain the flow of the lesson.

The general concern of student teachers and beginner teachers with procedures of teaching is also consistent with some previous research on TP (e.g. Kagan, 1992; Numrich, 1996), which revealed that teachers learn in a sequential manner, based on immediate needs. Kagan identified such a sequence as consisting of survival needs such as ability to maintain classroom control, need to be able to teach, need to be able to pay attention to the learner and need to pay attention to learner differences in their teaching.

Numrich (1996) also concluded, after using diaries to find out the views of ESL student teachers over a ten-week teaching term, that during "the first weeks of the practicum, the teachers were preoccupied with their own teaching. Little if any mention was made of their students' needs or learning in their diary studies" (p.135). The difference between these studies and mine is that they were concerned with in-service beginner teachers while my study involved pre-service student teachers in a practicum context. Secondly, both Kagan's and Numrich's studies showed that gradually beginner teachers were able to overcome their initial concerns with getting procedures right and begin to be more innovative and reflective about their work. In my study the data suggested that the student teachers, in spite of the general improvement referred to above, were not able to overcome their initial concerns with survival and procedures for most of the practicum.

While I acknowledge the importance of procedural pedagogical knowledge for all teachers (more so for beginner teachers), the point I am making is that my study suggests that at the time of the study, teacher learning during TP may not have made it possible to achieve the goals of the practicum as stated by the university, the goals of TE as stated by MoE and as generally understood in the wider field of ELTE (see 1.2.6 and 2.4.1).

In addition, given the complexity of teacher learning, I may not categorically say that the student teachers failed to learn any principles of teaching. However, the data suggests that the student teachers were not presented with opportunities to engage in pedagogical reasoning about their practice; hence, may not have benefited from the practicum as they would have had they had such opportunities. In the next subsection I explore further this lack of opportunities for development of pedagogical reasoning.

6.2.2. The missed opportunities for development of pedagogical reasoning

As I stated in the literature review section (see 2.3.2.7), the concept of *pedagogical reasoning* refers to the ability to engage in thinking about the different aspects of ELT, especially on the relationship between procedures and principles of teaching. It involves seeking to understand *the reasons* for doing things and includes decision making and problem solving skills that teachers call upon when they teach. As I stated earlier, pedagogical reasoning arguably brings together all the aspects of the knowledge base and how they interact in informing ELT (Johnson, 1999; Kuhn, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2006b; Maclellan, 2004; Phelan, 2009; Richards, 1998; Youngs and Bird, In Press).

The key tenet of pedagogical reasoning is asking the *why* questions about teaching; that is, thinking about the reasons for carrying out procedures, seeking information to answer the questions and examining the information against the context of teaching then taking appropriate decisions (Kuhn, 2009). Through provision of opportunities during teaching practice (TP) for student teachers to engage in reasoning about

teaching in this manner, a student teacher may develop in understanding practice and could adjust attitudes and procedures as appropriate. As Malderez and Wedell argue “if a teacher does something simply because they are expected to...they are likely to do it in a very different and probably less effective way from another teacher who may have chosen to do the same thing because they believe it will, at that moment and in that context, help the learning of their pupils” (2007:13).

Therefore, pedagogical reasoning, in my view, is both a goal and a means of TL during the practicum (see also 2.3.2.7). That is, the practicum ought to develop pedagogical reasoning in student teachers and the appropriate way to do this is by involving them in pedagogical reasoning of their ELT practice. As Johnson (1999) explains “if we recognise teaching as a highly situated and interpretive activity, then knowing what to do in any classroom hinges on the robustness of a teacher’s reasoning” (p.10). Richards (1998) also emphasises, “teacher education needs to engage teachers not merely in the mastery of rules of practice but in an exploration of the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and thinking that inform such practice” (p.xiv). I acknowledge that it is perhaps not possible to completely develop pedagogical reasoning of student teachers in a practicum context even with the best of support and resources. Nevertheless, the session ought to enable student teachers to have a firm beginning in that direction by providing appropriate opportunities (e.g. Crookes, 2003; Johnson, 1999; Maclellan, 2004; Richards, 1998; Youngs and Birds, In Press).

As I stated in the previous sub-section, in my study the data suggested that the STs missed opportunities to engage in pedagogical reasoning in ELT during their practicum. Again, I have to reiterate that this should not be taken to suggest that the STs did not gain any pedagogical reasoning at all. Arguably all teaching involves some degree of reasoning and all student teachers most likely had to raise several questions about several aspects their work (Johnson, 1999; Youngs and Bird, 2009). Nonetheless, going by the conceptualisation of pedagogical reasoning I have summarised above (and as discussed in more detail in section 2.3.2.7), I could identify the missed opportunities for the development of pedagogical reasoning during the practicum analysed in this study as indicated in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2. Summary of indicators of the missed opportunities for development of pedagogical reasoning in ELT during TP

- STs were not supported to reason about the CLT method and *integrated approach* in ELT, and to implement them as recommended by MoE
- STs were not appropriately prepared and supported for the *EL subject matter* at secondary school level, especially the ability to think about it from the learners' perspectives
- STs were not guided to understand the *aims of ELT* and how these could relate to their lessons
- STs were generally instructed by CTs on units to cover in the textbooks without understanding the principles on which the texts were based; Consequently, ELT was mainly done through *reading aloud of the textbooks* and the STs followed guidelines in teacher's copies even where they were inappropriate
- STs lacked guidance on how to handle learners with *different competencies* in EL in their classes; thus, some reported not paying attention to weak learners because they could not think of how to make them improve. Similarly, most of them admitted using teaching aids even when they were not necessary
- STs admitted a reluctance to be honest in their *self-evaluation* of ELT as they feared teacher educators might under-grade them; most supervisors did not comment on self-evaluation
- Overall, the STs' ELT was mainly influenced by *desire to please supervisors* and not based on what they thought was the appropriate way to teach; teacher educators did not seem to discern this nor to be able to discuss specific aspects of ELT.

By identifying the lack of opportunities for development of pedagogical reasoning, my study enhances our understanding in the field of ELTE of some of the issues that TE institutions may need to pay attention to during the practicum, which perhaps have been previously unattended to in contexts such as Kenya.

Some previous studies on the practicum have reported such missed opportunities for development of pedagogical reasoning during TP in specific aspects of teaching (DaSilva, 2005; Maclellan, 2004; Otero, 2006). DaSilva investigated Brazilian student teachers' development in teaching the four skills of English – speaking, listening, reading and writing - during a practicum. She found out that although student teachers taught the four skills as they were instructed at university because they were being assessed on that criterion, interviews revealed that they were not

supported to understand the way they were teaching and stated that they would revert to how they were taught at school, which most of them appeared to prefer.

Maclellan (2004) carried out a study in the UK involving content analysis of thirty student teachers' writings on assessment. Maclellan stated that "novice teachers' knowledge about assessment is under-developed" even after several weeks of teaching practice (p.533). Otero's (2006) study conducted in Canada involving student teachers in her Science methods course at university revealed that student teachers did not develop an understanding of the reasons for using different teaching methods and exercises in their classrooms. She emphasised that it was important that student teachers be supported to understand alternative methods of teaching so that they could "become better equipped to help students move further in their understandings with respect to an academic objective" (p. 250).

The difference between my study and the ones highlighted above is that while these studies focused on particular aspects of the student teachers' learning (such as the four skills of English language, testing and teaching methods) mine was more holistic as I was concerned with all aspects of the student teachers' pedagogy. In this way, I would argue that my study adds to our understanding of missed opportunities for development of pedagogical reasoning in ELT that the practicum experiences ought to address but which may go unattended, such as those I have summarised in Table 6.2.

More recently, there have been some studies on pedagogical reasoning, more similar to my study (Phelan, 2009; Youngs and Bird, in Press). Phelan studied practical reasoning - defined in the study as "a teacher's capacity to discern particulars and make wise judgement about how to act in pedagogical situations and contexts" (p. 93). This was a case study of one student teacher – Douglas – enrolled in a postgraduate TE programme in secondary language arts during a 15 week practicum. Phelan used semi-structured interviews and observations as sources of data and from this study, suggested that the student teacher was engaged on two types of reasoning, instrumental and practical. She argued that *instrumental reasoning* was based on "propositional knowledge of literature and teaching methods" (p.109). In her analysis, Douglas also engaged in *practical reasoning* while teaching in the

classroom, based on “his perceptiveness in reading particular situations, and to imagine possible actions” (p.111). She concluded that practical reasoning is possible to develop during the practicum but on condition that the student teacher already has a sound mastery of propositional knowledge in the subject matter and teaching methodology as well as consistent support by both teacher educators and cooperating teachers who have similarly sound (or even deeper) propositional knowledge. The point to note from this study, however (and its main difference from my study) is that the student teacher in question was a much older learner (38 years) who had earlier had a successful career in the publishing industry and therefore, as Phelan explains, transferred some reasoning skills from the previous occupation.

Youngs and Bird (In press) analysed assessment documents of about 180 undergraduate student teachers at a TE institution in the United States of America during a 30 week practicum. The student teachers were enrolled in a five-year TE programme for certification to teach at secondary school level. The practicum was organised in two phases with the first phase mostly involving observation of cooperating teachers while teaching only two lessons a week – in close collaboration with the cooperating teacher. The next phase involved taking full teaching responsibility for one to two classes. The *embedded assessments* that the researchers analysed involved asking student teachers to identify and discuss a pedagogical issue involving one or more learners in terms of causes, possible reasons, suggest ways of dealing with the situation and to identify, implement and assess two or more courses of action. These embedded assessments were done during the two phases of the practicum with the second phase assessment being pitched at a “more advanced level of pedagogical reasoning” (p.4). After analysis of the rubric of the assessments and interviews with the participants, the researchers concluded that:

The data seemed to indicate that, when provided with the support of specified assignments and the opportunity to work with instructors, the secondary teaching candidates in this sample were able to engage in pedagogical reasoning that would be expected to help them move toward mastery of teaching...many of the candidates were able to turn their attention away from themselves and aspects of classroom management to hypothesise about factors that seemed to be affecting their pupils' performance, to modify their instruction accordingly, and to analyse the consequences of their decisions and actions (p.7).

The researchers concluded that one of the possible reasons the student teachers developed pedagogical reasoning was because the assessment challenged the

candidates to engage in thinking about their work, trying to understand different aspects of their practice, deciding what changes to make and explaining the reasons for them. The difference between this study and mine was that the TP was staged in two phases, well extended and the student teachers had enormous support. The mode of assessment was obviously different and the teacher educators and cooperating teachers had been trained for it, while they also had several meetings to review their assessments and the feedback from the student teachers.

From these two studies (Phelan, 2009; Youngs and Bird, In Press), it is notable that with support, it is possible for student teachers on TP to develop pedagogical reasoning. What such development seems to call for, which featured strongly in the two studies, is a well-informed, systematic and consistent support during an extended teaching practice. Nevertheless, as Youngs and Bird point out, it is important to recognise that development of pedagogical reasoning is gradual and activities meant to promote it may be more effective when introduced in phases.

My study, on the other hand, shows a situation where the circumstances of the practicum did not make it possible for the student teachers to develop any significant pedagogical reasoning. In this light, my study shows that while it may be possible to develop pedagogical reasoning during the practicum (as suggested by the two studies above), such development may not be possible due to a number of issues. In the next section, I discuss some issues that could possibly constrain the development of pedagogical reasoning during the practicum.

6.3. ISSUES THAT INFLUENCED TL DURING TP

The study revealed a number of issues that influenced what the STs learnt during the practicum. Four such issues could be identified as the most prominent: relationship between coursework at university and practice in schools, definition of the parameters of practice, conceptualisation of support (in terms of collaboration and supervision) during practice, and coordination between the key partners in ELT. The influences of these issues on practice were neither necessarily direct nor distinct. The

discussion is therefore an attempt to draw connections between several aspects of practice based on analysis of data from various sources.

6.3.1. Relationship between coursework and practice

Three possible connections could be drawn between coursework at university and ELT practice of the STs during the practicum. These were emphasis on general procedures of teaching at university, a weak link between coursework at university and subject matter in schools and the lack of a smooth transition between coursework at university and practice in schools.

To begin with, at university, there was emphasis on general procedures of teaching at the expense of ELT specific methodology. The student teachers clearly did not have enough time to explore approaches, methods and techniques that are specific to ELT during their coursework. As I reported in Chapter One, the general procedures of teaching were taught at university in courses called *General Methods of Teaching* and partly in the foundations courses (especially Educational Psychology) which dominated the TE curriculum (see 1.2.5). In summary, these procedures entailed stating lesson objectives in all subjects in “achievable and measurable” terms and following a generic lesson structure comprising *introduction, development, conclusion* and *assignment*. It appears that the university assumed that the general procedures of teaching were transferable to all the specific subjects the STs would be teaching.

The teacher educators were in turn to assess the student teachers on how well they were applying the general procedures of teaching as they were taught at university, as exemplified above. This resulted in student teachers following the same procedures in practice because that is what they would be assessed on without necessarily being facilitated to reason their relevance in ELT. Also, these procedures were in conflict with the recommendation of the Ministry of Education (MoE) that communicative language teaching (CLT) and the integrated approach be used in ELT (see 1.2.3). The consequence was that the STs therefore found themselves faced with the challenge of establishing *a balance* between working according to the

procedures taught at university, which they were to be assessed on while also trying to follow the communicative method and integrated approach as recommended by MoE.

This balance happened to be offered by textbooks which contained most of the procedures taught at the university. For example, every unit of the English language textbooks stated the objective to be achieved, specified topics to be taught and the exercises to be done by the learners. This was ironic because the textbooks were ostensibly approved by the MoE on the basis of how well they met the principles of CLT and the integrated approach. Considering the goals of teacher education and TP in Kenya, both the coursework at university and actual practice in schools arguably contributed in restricting teacher learning to procedural pedagogical knowledge and prevented any discernible progress in the development of pedagogical reasoning.

Studies by Caires and Almeida (2005) in Portugal, Johnson (1994) and Liston et al. (2006) in North America also reported that one of the major challenges student teachers reported was the need to perform according to the procedures taught at the university, which reportedly took their attention away from reasoning about teaching based on their experiences. McCormack et al. (2006) also conducted a study in Australia that examined the experiences of fifty beginner teachers and reported the challenge posed by a weak relationship between coursework and practice.

Early career teachers have to navigate their way through...dominant school culture, formal supervision for accreditation, and coupled with curriculum demands and contextual factors, to establish their own repertoire of teaching practice within the realities of their school and classrooms. For most this is extremely challenging (p110).

The second issue as regards the relationship between coursework and practice was that there was a weak link between content at university and subject matter in schools. Basically, the university content was mainly organised in terms of linguistics, covering such areas as Phonology, Syntax, Morphology and Prosody (see 1.2.5) while the subject matter in schools was structured in terms of the four skills of English, Grammar and literature (see 4.2.2). Consequently, the student teachers reported that they found the subject matter they had to teach in schools unfamiliar. Perhaps this was one of the reasons for the STs' over-reliance on the textbook

procedures during TP. It also partly explains why some STs, like Ben, could not answer questions that some learners raised that were not based on the textbook he was using (see 4.2.). All student teachers also reported that they had to read thoroughly in order to understand the subject matter.

These findings are consistent with some previous studies on the practicum that have investigated similar issues. Studies in the wider area of ESOL, reviewed by Morton et al. (2006) revealed that teachers who did not have knowledge of content that is appropriate to the subject matter they were supposed to teach, tended to be confined to topics and procedures as presented in textbooks and were not able to deal with confusions of the learners on subject matter satisfactorily.

A study by Johnson (1996) also found out that initial teacher education (ITE) did not seem to prepare student teachers adequately for practice in terms of subject matter, among other aspects, in ELT. Johnson found out that, as a result, student teachers tended to show a lack of “reasonable amount of control over what and how they will teach during the practicum” (p.47). More recently, some reviews of research literature in LTE have also suggested that there is need to present STs with content knowledge that is closer to what they will teach in their classrooms and therefore in a manner that is not divorced to how they will teach it (e.g. Dellicarpini, 2009; Kohler, 2008; Richards, 2008; Vavrus, 2009).

The third issue in the relationship between coursework and practice was that there was a lack of smooth transition between teacher learning at university and practice in schools. This is in relation to the finding that the STs did not feel ready for teaching practice at the time they were being posted because they felt that they had not been well prepared for it. One aspect of the poor transition that perhaps had one of the most direct influences on practice was lack of any reasonable micro-teaching. There was only one opportunity for each of them during which one taught for ten to fifteen minutes. For all the STs in my study, their micro-teaching was supervised by educators who were not specialised in ELT and there was no sufficient time to discuss the teaching because of the high number of STs (see 1.2.5). During my study, both STs and teacher educators agreed that the micro-teaching was inadequate and identified aspects of practice that more sessions of micro-teaching with better

focused discussions may have addressed. These included such issues as what is the exact subject matter to be taught and what information is needed to teach it, what amount of work might fit in a forty-minute lesson, how English and literature might be integrated in teaching and how learners might be involved actively in lessons.

A study was conducted by Stokking et al. (2003) in Netherlands on how *practice shock* amongst student teachers could be reduced. The writers reported that among other remedies “it seems that the practice shock experienced by beginning teachers can be neutralised to a fairly large extent, by making the transition to the profession a gradual one” (pp.335-345). Williams (2009) also conducted a study in North America whose aim was to analyse a collaborative project between student teachers and adult language learners in Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL). He found out that coursework that is well related to practice “provides an important bridge between work in the courses and the future work in the classroom....It also offers them [STs] with a natural spring board for the creation of learner tasks and materials” (p 74). Involvement of STs in effective micro- teaching while still at university is one of the ways in which the transition between university work and practice, as suggested by the studies above, may possibly be bridged.

Overall, my study supports previous studies referred to in this section, particularly on the point that a weak transition between coursework at university and practice in schools could restrict student teachers’ practice to concentration on procedures and survival strategies. This kind of practice may impede the development of pedagogical reasoning among student teachers. Another issue that could have influenced teacher learning during TP, which I discuss next, is the lack of clarity in parameters of practice; that is the guidelines that were provided on the exact roles of student teachers and what they were expected to do or not do during their TP.

6.3.2. Definition of the parameters of practice during TP

By parameters here, I mean “a limit or boundary which defines the scope of a particular process or activity” (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2006: 1038). I am particularly concerned here with the definition of parameters of practice by both

the university and the schools. Literature on TP suggests many possible and sometimes even conflicting parameters of practice during TP. Such parameters include the student teacher (ST) as an *apprentice* or *intern* to the master teacher (Stones and Morris, 1972), the ST as *partial teacher* (Derrick and Dicks, 2005; Richards, 1998); or the ST as a *full member of the teaching staff* taking part in all the activities of the school (Ayot and Wanga, 1987; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

In my study, the assumed role of the STs was that of *full-member* of the teaching staff, taking part in all the activities of the school. The *Teaching Practice Guide* actually stated that the STs would be operating as any other regular teacher in the placement schools. The problem that arose from this role was that STs were therefore mainly considered as regular teachers (especially in terms of pedagogical responsibility for their classes) and not as learners of teaching. This was probably one of the reasons most of the cooperating teachers completely surrendered the classes to them from the beginning of their practicum, as the schools assumed they did not need much pedagogical support (see 5.2.3). The other consequence of the full-teacher role was that it put too much pressure on the STs in terms of workload. The heavy workload and the lack of support in turn left the student teachers with very little chance to engage in activities that could enhance their pedagogical reasoning during the practicum. Therefore, my study suggests that the *full-teacher* role during TP may not be suitable for teacher learning especially when there is only a single practicum and this role is expected from the beginning.

Another issue regarding the parameters of practice was that even within the full teacher role, there was inconsistency in several aspects of practice for the student teachers in terms of induction, allocation of classes, and assignment of extra duties (1.2.6 and 5.3). While I appreciate that it was perhaps inevitable that every context would be different from the other, my study illustrates the point that where parameters of practice are not clearly defined every student teacher may be exposed to experiences that are significantly different from the others. For example, some student teachers (Caro and Eve) taught Form 3 classes while the rest taught Forms 1 and 2. Clearly these student teachers faced different challenges with regard to the topics to be taught and levels of learners; hence different opportunities to develop pedagogical reasoning.

Another effect of the inconsistencies across the schools was that the student teachers left the field with different perspectives of and/or attitudes to teaching (see 4.2). For example, during my informal meetings with the student teachers towards the end of TP, out of the six student teachers, Ben, Dan and Eve told me that they were looking forward to being teachers of English while Ann and Caro said that, considering their experiences, they would want to do other jobs even though they were trained teachers.

In this respect, my study supports similar previous research that has shown the disadvantages of the full-teacher role of STs during the practicum. One possible consequence that has been identified is poor socialisation of student teachers in many placement schools, especially due to the heavy workload and poor support. For example, Farrell (2001) reported that some student teachers' experiences were largely negative and discouraging and concluded that such experiences during the practicum have a potential effect on the teacher learning.

Similarly, a study by Liston et al. (2006) of pre-service practicum teachers and those in the first year of teaching in North America identified several challenges STs faced under such TP circumstances. Some of the difficulties they identified included dealing with the pressures of heavy work in classrooms and other aspects of teaching and absorbing the negative attitudes by some of their experienced colleagues and learners towards them. Intrator (2006) also identified challenges that STs faced during TP when they acted as full time teachers in their placement schools. He noted that such STs had to (among other challenges) balance between portraying themselves as qualified professionals who know what they are doing, against the need to be humble and to portray the desire to seek support from experienced teachers in the spirit of "commitment to inquiry and willingness to learn from error" (p.233-238). He observed that no ST would be able to learn well under such circumstances.

I acknowledge that clear definition of parameters of practice, consistency across the schools or lighter workload on their own would not have led to development of pedagogical reasoning. However, the point is that the student teachers' practice was

limited to classroom teaching only. They were not involved in other activities that could have facilitated the development of pedagogical reasoning.

Some previous studies on the practicum have identified various aspects of practice that student teachers could be involved in to enhance teacher learning during TP. For example, Flowerdew (1999) reported a study in Hong Kong which showed that staged practicum that involves English language student teachers in different aspects of practice was quite successful in increasing student teachers' focus on improving their learning experiences. In the staged practicum student teachers were involved in observing teaching (initially on video then real classes), then working with experienced teachers as assistants before practising teaching of their own classes. Youngs and Bird's (In Press) study that I have already referred to (see 6.2.2) also identifies a staged practicum as more conducive for teacher learning than the one-off session.

A recent study done in Taiwan by Liaw (2009) also revealed that group discussions among student teachers and their peers or cooperating teachers on their teaching experiences provided more opportunities for student teacher learning. She stated that "the sense of *performance accomplishment* expressed in the classroom and the *verbal persuasion* (italics in original) received in the group discussions enhanced their personal teacher efficacy" (p.179). Another recent study conducted in Ethiopia by Degado (2007) reported that involving student teachers in writing weekly journals during the practicum is an aspect of practice that could enhance their reasoning. Following his longitudinal study which involved evaluating the success of the journals, he reported that:

Journal writing enables student teachers to disclose their concerns about their teaching experiences and deepen their understanding of the complexities involved in teaching. It also enables teacher educators to provide individualised attention to support and pose questions to raise the level of reflection in student teachers through reading and responding to their journals regularly...the findings of this study indicated that through getting student teachers to reflect on their teaching through journal writing, teacher educators could gradually move them from the stage of passivity to a stage where they could take greater responsibility for their teaching and learning (pp.354 – 355).

Other studies have also shown that involving student teachers in operating within a particular framework of practice focuses their attention on their learning. Chitpin et

al. (2008) carried out a study in Canada involving 33 student teachers in which they analysed how what they called the *objective knowledge growth framework* (OKGF) enhanced the student teachers' reasoning skills. They concluded that working within a particular framework during the practicum could facilitate "a self directed professional development tool to help them [student teachers] cognitively and critically confront the complexities of the teaching/learning process and their relationship to pedagogical knowledge" (p. 2056).

A similar framework of practice called an *inquiry-based-practicum* was studied by Schultz (2005) also in Canada over three years. The study aimed at finding out whether student teachers could learn better through posing questions on different aspects of their practice. Schultz reported that "it seems evident from the insightful responses of the teacher candidates in our study that they were thoughtful and ready to engage in discussions about teaching that went beyond gaining immediate proficiency" (p. 160). This approach to practice is similar to the use of *embedded assessments* analysed in the study by Youngs and Bird (In Press), which reportedly involved student teachers in inquiring about their practice; hence enhancing their pedagogical reasoning (see 6.2.2).

Overall, these studies illustrate that clear definition of parameters of practice with activities deliberately designed to enhance student teacher learning have succeeded in practicum arrangements in other contexts, including Ethiopia, a country next door to mine (Degado, 2007) with more or less similar circumstances. Hence, my argument in the foregoing section is that my study shows that sending student teachers on teaching practice without clear definition of parameters of practice, limiting their activities to classroom teaching only and failure to involve them in aspects of practice that provide opportunities to discuss and think about classroom teaching partly contributed to the lack of development in pedagogical reasoning. I discuss this issue further in relation to conceptualisation of support in the next subsection.

6.3.3. Conceptualisation of support during the practicum

My study shows fundamental influences on TL related to the way pedagogical support was conceptualised by the participants during the practicum. Two main aspects of that support which I discuss below are conceptualisation of supervision and collaboration, starting with the former.

6.3.3.1. Conceptualisation of supervision

Supervision was perhaps the most powerful influence on the STs' practices especially because the teacher educators had to assess and grade the STs and the grades would in turn determine whether the latter would pass their B.Ed degree course or not (see also 1.2.6). Clearly, based on the data, supervision was conceptualised by the university and therefore the teacher educators mainly as *assessment*. One of the issues to pick up for discussion then is: what does the study show as the contribution of the assessment-focused supervision and what could be identified as its constraints to teacher learning during TP?

It is possible to identify some contributions of the assessment-focused supervision to teacher learning. First, it kept the STs on task; that is, as long as the STs expected to be supervised, they endeavoured to prepare thoroughly for lessons and to teach at their best, especially in terms of what they thought supervisors would want to see. Indeed when they realised that there would be no more supervision, some of them became rather relaxed; for example, Ben and Eve, repeated previous lesson plans while others, like Caro, stopped writing lesson plans.

Secondly, the supervisors through their comments guided the STs on how to improve on the general pedagogical procedures. In relation to my discussion in the previous sections, one discernible key influence of supervision was that the STs knew the teacher educators expected them to get the general procedures of teaching right. Consequently, the STs concentrated on improving these procedures, which they did relatively successfully. My study therefore shows that the assessment-focused supervision makes a contribution to some aspects of teacher learning. Specifically, it

encourages STs to take their practice more seriously than perhaps they would have without it, mainly because they want to pass the practicum.

Yet, therein lies a problem; too much focus on assessment seemed to constrain the development of pedagogical reasoning because STs mainly concentrated on using sets of procedures that they believed would please the supervisors. Consequently, as reported in Chapter Five, the STs taught what one of them (Ben) referred to as *plastic* lessons (see 5.4.3.3). By this they meant that they did not necessarily aim at learning to teach in a way that might have been effective in enabling the learners to understand and improve in English language, but aimed at pleasing the supervisors. In this way, supervision made student teachers dependent on what might earn them better grades.

That kind of dependency has been recognised in TE literature as unsupportive of student teacher learning because it gives the impression that the supervisors' views about teaching are the best regardless of the context and may constrain creativity and innovation among the STs (Bailey, 2006; Bartlett, 1990; Freeman, 1990). For example, Freeman argues that "such a doctrinaire approach can lead to formulaic teaching...where the student teacher comes to depend on the teacher educator's standards and criteria in a *did I do it right?* relationship (p.107). Freeman's views were not based on an empirical study. My study gives evidence that assessment-focused supervision may lead to formulaic teaching in the manner explained above.

Some recent studies have also found out that supervision that is assessment-focused may constrain teacher learning, during the practicum. Farrell (2007) reports a case study of one English language student teacher in Singapore who failed her practicum, and had to repeat with him as the supervisor. He reports that one of the reasons the ST gave for her failure was because "she was too nervous when the supervisor and cooperating teachers (CTs) observed her teaching" (p.195). After analysis of several post-observation interviews with the ST, Farrell identified some maxims the student teacher had been working with which could have contributed to her failure in the initial practicum. The main one was what Farrell called *maxim of conformity*. That is, the student teacher always "attempted to predict what her

observers (e.g. supervisor and CTs) wanted to see in her classes” and conform to them (p.199).

As in Farrell’s study, the STs in my study also stated that they were nervous when they expected supervisors and always tried to conform to what they thought supervisors expected. A study conducted by Brandt (2006) in the UK also identified several problems related to the assessment–focused supervision. One such problem was that:

...trainees felt compelled to perform key techniques according to their tutors’ expectations and preferences... these problems arose because assessment was a priority for tutors in TP. In this context, developmental practice and feedback tended to acquire a secondary function (p.356).

Similarly, Caires and Almeida (2005) carried out a study in Portugal to assess 224 STs’ experiences during TP on several dimensions including supervision. Among other findings, the survey revealed that the STs identified “the constant evaluation of their performance by the supervisors (and) the high impact of the teaching practice assessment on their final grade” (p.118) as some of the most challenging aspects of their practicum. Walkington (2005) also concluded based on his survey of 240 pre-service teachers’ practicum experiences in Australia that “the traditional practice of pre-service teacher supervision where the focus has been...the assessment of performance is limiting to the future teacher’s growth as a professional” (p. 63).

Another key finding from my study regarding supervision was that the feedback sessions, described as *post-observation conferences* were mainly directive and evaluative. That is, the student teachers were passive listeners as the supervisors did all the talking; telling them what was right or wrong with their teaching (see 5.4.4.1). Thus again, the teacher educators appeared to have conceptualised supervision mainly as correcting student teachers. This approach also clearly constrained student teachers’ development of pedagogical reasoning.

Tang (2003) reported constraints to teacher learning after conducting a study in Hong Kong examining the dynamics of challenge and support on student teachers’ experiences during a 5-8 week student teaching. This was a longitudinal qualitative case study that ran for two years involving seven STs in an ITE programme for

secondary schools. Tang's study revealed that when post-observation conferences focused on evaluation of the student teachers' classroom performances, they led to "unproductive learning experiences and threatens a student teacher's sense of self as a teacher" (p.492). Tang's study showed; however, that where supervisors discussed other pedagogical issues arising from the observations, the student teachers reported better professional learning.

Similar findings were also reported by Gal's (2006) study in Israel and Wilson's (2006) study in United States which involved analysis of feedback sessions between supervisors and STs on a practicum. These studies revealed that feedback that is mainly directive denied STs the opportunity to discuss other issues that were more pressing to the STs such as behaviour management of the learners.

Still related to the process of supervision, some studies have investigated the forms of supervision that student teachers preferred and which seemed to enhance the opportunities to reason about their practice. For example, White (2007) sought to find out student teachers' preferences regarding feedback by their supervisors during a practicum in New Zealand. The study revealed that student teachers preferred supervisors to give them the opportunity to discuss specific lessons regularly. However, they also preferred written feedback which they could later refer to.

In a later study, White (2009) analysed a model of feedback based on the principle of *conversation* in which supervisors posed questions to student teachers intended to engage them in reasoning about their teaching and pitched at the different stages of student teachers during the practicum. The model of feedback also involved three stages of observation and analysis, coaching of the student teacher by the supervisor and the reflective stage. Generally, the findings suggested that using carefully formulated questions pitched at the level of the student teachers, coaching at the appropriate stage and engagement of student teachers in conversational reflection on their teaching contribute to improvement of the quality of feedback, which in turn enhances the learning of student teachers. Another study by Tang (2007) in Hong Kong focused on the ways in which feedback was communicated in post observation conferences in teaching practice supervision. Tang found out that:

Enhancing (student) teacher participation in making judgement on performance and setting targets for improvement in teaching practice supervision maximize teacher ownership of the assessment process, and promotes self-regulated learning and growth orientation. The teacher develops evaluative skills through analysing his/her own teaching...This contributes to the development of self-assessment capability which is a key skill for professional life (p.1080).

Overall, the discussion in this subsection shows that assessment-focused and directive supervision constrains student teacher learning during the practicum in many ways. It also makes student teachers nervous and frustrated at times. My findings are thus consistent with the other studies reviewed in this discussion. Perhaps the main contribution of my study with regard to assessment-focused and directive supervision is that it increases the geographical spread of such findings in ELTE, hence enhancing our understanding of supervision during TP in more contexts. In particular this study and the others cited here show that assessment focused supervision (which remains the norm in many contexts) is to a large extent a constraint to teacher learning.

There are two other important issues that need to be pointed out. First is that like the study by Tang (2007), my study also shows that some STs reported gaining useful insights from supportive supervisors. Though the student teachers felt that most teacher educators never gave them the chance to talk about their teaching, they also reported that some supervisors facilitated discussions about their teaching that enabled them to think about their lessons from other perspectives (see 5.4.4.1). Secondly, the supervisors were also usually under a lot of pressure to supervise a certain number of student teachers per day (minimum of five), some of them in schools that were many kilometres apart. The main reason for this rule was to enable the teacher educators supervise the large number of student teachers. This probably influenced the supervisors' mode of interaction with the STs. For example, it could have been the reason some of the supervision was done at odd hours, like after school or during exams. Clearly, we cannot expect any fruitful discussion under such circumstances. Another issue regarding the conceptualisation of supervision is *self-evaluation*, which I discuss next

Self-evaluation, as I explained earlier (see 4.5), involved STs appraising themselves; that is, looking back on each of their lessons and commenting on aspects that

required improvement. The impact of the assessment-focused supervision on the self-evaluation was that most of the STs were not honest in their remarks because they feared that the educators might consider their admission about unsuccessful lessons as incompetence and give them lower marks. As such most of them simply wrote “lesson well taught”. Also, none of the educators discussed the self-evaluation with the STs, except one during Ben’s last lesson (see 4.5). This is an example of how focus on assessment prevented engagement in an activity that could have facilitated pedagogical reasoning among the STs. Self-evaluation, well supported might have stimulated the STs’ thinking about their lessons, in terms of aims, learning outcomes, learner participation and revealed aspects of their ELT that required follow up or improvement. Such thinking is important in the development of pedagogical reasoning (Johnson, 1999).

The issue of self-evaluation during the practicum has also been studied previously. For example, Tan (2006) conducted a study in Thailand involving ELTE students at Masters Degree level in self-assessment of their own lessons from the point of view of their learners and supervisors. The study revealed (among other findings) that self-assessment gave STs an opportunity to “look at teaching through multiple but complementary lenses...not only to review their practice from a wider perspective but also to examine their own beliefs and assumptions about teaching and to experience the change within themselves” (p. 260).

My study, however shows that focus on assessment mars such gains as reported in Tan’s (2006) study because the STs did not engage in it with honesty. Nevertheless, one student teacher, Caro engaged in self-evaluation consistently and perhaps more honestly because she indicated what she considered as weaknesses of her lessons. During subsequent interviews, she stated that the self-evaluation enabled her to become more aware of her weaknesses which she endeavoured to correct in the subsequent lessons. Although this was the experience of only one student teacher hence the need for caution in making any conclusion, the finding raises a possibility that, if done honestly, self-evaluation may facilitate some reasoning of pedagogy. My study therefore adds to Tan’s study in the finding that there is no gain in self-evaluation if STs are not honest about the comments they write on the lesson plans

due to fear of losing marks, and if teacher educators do not really pay attention to it during the practicum.

In the wider field of TE literature, I relate the issue of self-evaluation with the notion of reflection in the sense of reviewing practice in order to learn from it. Such literature says that in a practicum, reflection might involve recalling of the classroom activities and also thinking about and trying out alternative strategies that could make the learning experiences more meaningful to the learners. A student teacher could be assisted to isolate issues and challenges, read relevant publications and get different viewpoints about the issues (Grant and Gillette, 2006; Richards and Lockhart, 1996). In doing this, student teachers would possibly be enabled to be more thoughtful of their own pedagogical practices thereby developing deeper understanding of the ELT concepts (Bartlett, 1990; Roberts, 1998); and in the process possibly developing teacher-learner autonomy (Smith, 2003/2000).

In relation to these views, I would argue that my study suggests that the lack of sufficient support for self-evaluation and other reflective activities by supervisors could partly have contributed to the gaps in development of pedagogical reasoning. Some of the reasons there was insufficient support and lack of reflective activities were because of the focus on assessment (as I have argued above), considering STs as regular teachers and not as learners and perhaps the lack of enough time and/or sufficient awareness amongst the teacher educators and cooperating teachers on activities that could promote pedagogical reasoning.

One aspect of my study that has not featured much in previous research on TP (going by my literature review) is the issue of *non-specialised supervision*. As I reported earlier (see section 5.4.4.1), only one out of the six STs in my study was assessed by an ELT specialist (and only on one occasion). The ST, Dan, reported gaining more insights from his discussion with this supervisor on ELT than he had in all the previous supervisions. All STs reported that the non-specialised supervisors sometimes gave them comments that were irrelevant to ELT or that conflicted with what they had learnt about ELT at university. The only ELT educator who participated in the study also confirmed that the STs had complained about

inappropriate comments by non-specialised supervisors. Indeed the teacher educators confessed that they avoided commenting on subject matter.

Some of the reasons given for the non-specialised supervision were that the ELT teacher educators were very few compared to the number of STs in the subject and that there was an attempt to have all teacher educators in the school have a similar number of supervisions. The main reason, however, in my analysis, was that the university assumed that any teacher educator, regardless of the area of specialisation could successfully supervise student teachers in any subject, including ELT. This links to the point I raised earlier that there was emphasis at the university on general procedures which all student teachers were expected to apply during practice (see 6.3.1). My study therefore demonstrates that non-specialised supervision may not contribute to development of pedagogical reasoning in ELT. If anything, it partly contributes to constraining TL because the supervisors only concentrate on general procedures of teaching as they do not feel competent to discuss ELT. By showing the constraints of non-specialised supervision (which is common in many TE programmes, especially in Kenya) during TP, my study makes a contribution by highlighting an issue that has not featured much in previous research in the field.

6.3.3.2. Conceptualisation of collaboration

The data revealed that collaboration between the STs and cooperating teachers (CTs) in my study was conceptualised as *brief induction - surrender of classes then some intermittent consultation on a needs basis* (see 5.2). Clearly, this approach to collaboration was not consistent with the aims of the practicum as stated in Kenya and understood in the field of TE generally. The main role of CTs in TP is considered in the literature to be to offer professional support in terms of assisting STs to settle into the school and to cope with problems that may arise in connection with the syllabus, planning or working with learners (e.g. Bodóczy and Malderez, 1996; Farrell, 2008; Gal, 2006; Wilson, 2006). They are also expected to facilitate a mutual reflection on experiences that may enhance the development of pedagogical reasoning for both themselves and the STs (Intrator, 2006; Tang, 2003). They ought

to act as role models to the STs by being exemplary in their planning, pedagogy and assessment of the learners (Derricks and Dicks, 2005).

Overall, CTs are considered to be very influential in a student teacher's practice during the practicum as they spend a reasonably longer time with the STs than educators (Farrell, 2008; Graham, 2006). These roles of the CTs are also assumed by the university I studied (as stated by the teacher educators during interviews); that is, they expected CTs to offer pedagogical support to the STs. In spite of this understanding on the role of CTs, in my study, their support of the STs was limited to very basic induction involving introducing them to learners, providing basic resources and showing them which units of the textbook they were expected to cover.

This is not to suggest that there was no assistance at all by the CTs. Indeed, I reported earlier that the CTs offered some important guidance on the procedures of teaching (see 5.2.4). Nevertheless, the guidance was not consistent across the placement schools. Also, some of the CTs were not cooperative at all and more importantly, some of them added pressure to the STs by insisting that they had to cover large units of the textbook so as to complete the syllabus. Indeed, some of the CTs were not good role models as they influenced STs negatively. For example, Caro stopped making lesson plans because her CTs did not make them and Eve's cooperating teacher skipped some topics she was not comfortable with. Again, I am not necessarily blaming the CTs here because the shortcomings in their professional support, I would argue, arose out of the lack of a clear conceptualisation of collaboration by the university.

My literature search has revealed many previous studies in ELT that have investigated the issue of support by CTs especially in ESL/EFL contexts, some of them focusing on mentoring. For example, several research papers from many different countries in the world spanning over thirty years reviewed by Hobson et al. (2009) have generally supported the role of collaboration in student teacher learning during the practicum. Hobson et al. report that: "It is clear from the synthesis of research evidence presented here that beginner teacher mentoring has great potential to produce a range of benefits for mentees" (p.213).

In relation to this, similar studies in various contexts have identified specific ways in which cooperative teachers successfully supported teacher learning. For example, Harrison et al. (2006) examined practices of cooperating teachers in the UK and reported that some effective practices included “discussion, clarification of subject knowledge, or assistance [of student teachers] with related activities such as marking” (p.1062). Walkington (2005) also identified meetings between student teachers and regular teachers, especially at the start of TP, as a very important aspect of cooperation. He noted that “the groundwork produced through sharing experiences alleviates the potential for misunderstanding later [and] allows each to more easily expose their core beliefs about teaching in a non-threatening way” (p.60). Walkington also found out that where the meetings involved the university based supervisors as well, it reduced the student teachers’ fear of supervisors especially during classroom observation.

However, there are studies, like mine, which have also revealed that when collaboration is not well conceptualised and organised, there is no meaningful support student teachers get from it in terms of teacher learning. For example, Farrell (2008) conducted a study in Singapore to explore the views of 60 PGDE student teachers on experiences of working with CTs. The study further analysed the specific challenges of eight STs working with CTs. Farrell’s general finding was that the STs did not find much professional support from the CTs. He reported that:

During the interviews all eight learner teachers spoke about the conflicting roles and not too cordial relationships they had with their CTs. For example, Shu Jun mentioned that the CT was ‘too controlling and wanted us to do everything his way. Her sentiments were echoed by Verpa who said that her CT had given her ‘no freedom to do what I wanted because she was scared I might mess up exam grades. Andy reported that his CT ‘abandoned me completely during the practicum and saw my teaching as a break for them’. As she said: *Here’s the book, go and teach the class* (p.234).

The study by Tang (2003) whose context I have already explained (see 6.3.3.1) reported similar findings. She summarised the STs’ experiences of working with CTs as *detachment, affiliation, engagement* and *isolation*. In her analysis, the STs who reported affiliation and engagement with CTs gained much professional insight. On the other hand, those who were detached or isolated from their CTs felt they had “unproductive learning experiences” during the practicum. Overall, Tang concluded that in many schools STs did not gain much professional support from the CTs

because “the school adopts a position of letting STs have “borrowed” classrooms for practice rather than actively facilitating their learning or engaging them into the wider school life” (pp. 489-491).

Some studies have also shown that there is often conflict between student teachers’ (and sometimes teacher educators’) views on teaching and those of the cooperating teachers, which - if not harmonised - can lead to inconsistent support. Rajuaan et al. (2008) conducted a study in Israel to investigate student teachers’ views on the extent to which cooperating teachers assisted in their learning. The researchers reported that there was often conflict between the nature of support student teachers perceived as important and relevant to them and what the cooperating teachers thought.

Similar conflict in perceptions between cooperative teachers and supervisors were also reported in Graham’s (2006) study in North America, which examined the perceptions of cooperating teachers working with one TE institution. Graham reported that “the data revealed critical differences both in the conceptualization and the operationalization of the role of the cooperating teacher” (p.1127). She found out that while some participants on TP viewed the cooperating teachers’ work as demonstration of expertise in teaching to be copied by student teachers, others thought that the cooperating teachers ought to allow student teachers an opportunity to form and develop their own understanding and styles of teaching. She reported further that the different conceptualisations led to inconsistent approaches to collaboration with student teachers.

My study supports these studies that have shown that cooperating teachers may not offer student teachers much professional support that could enhance their pedagogical reasoning without the CTs themselves being trained and supported in their roles or without proper coordination with the university. On the other hand, like some studies cited above, my study also shows that there is potential for CTs to offer effective professional guidance. This is because, even without the training or formal coordination, there was evidence in my study (like Tang’s 2003 above and others) of helpful collaboration in some contexts.

From my study, one example of the potential of cooperation contributing to development of pedagogical reasoning during TP that I wish to discuss is that of observation of student teachers by CTs and vice versa. One of the student teachers observed the CTs and was also observed by them. This student teacher, Caro, reported that she felt confident that she could also teach the way the CT did, despite her lack of experience. In some aspects of teaching though, she felt challenged that she needed to think more about how to involve her learners (see 5.2.5). Nevertheless, neither Caro nor the CTs who participated in observation were prepared in any way for the exercise. Also, there was no evidence of any focused discussions after the observations. Perhaps due to this, as both Caro and the CT reported during the interviews, their main aim was to compare the procedures of teaching. In this respect, my study shows that although observation by and/or of CTs may enhance TL during the practicum, without clear direction, it may only lead to imitation of procedures of the kind I have discussed so far.

Another issue regarding collaboration worth highlighting was the cooperation amongst STs themselves. The STs in my study were posted individually; however, by coincidence or out of their own initiative, some of them ended up in the same schools and collaborated in different ways that they said enriched their experiences. Part of the progress made by the STs in learning procedures of teaching – as I explained earlier could be attributed to the discussions they had with their peers (see 5.3). The point then is that my study shows the potential of enhancing TL during TP through paired placement in the practicum schools.

The success of such collaboration among STs through paired placements has been reported in recent research in TE. For example, Nokes et al. (2008) carried out a study in North America of 23 STs who were placed as partners, during a 15 week practicum. Some of the STs in their study knew each other before while others did not. The STs were encouraged and supported to collaborate in all aspects of teaching including planning and instruction. Generally, Nokes et al. found out that “student teachers enjoyed a rich learning experience...settings allowed for solo and team teaching...pupil learning was facilitated by having two student teachers” (p. 2168). Secondly, the STs were able to share experiences, not only about the same group of learners, but also about more groups taught together or separately.

The main weakness reported by the participants was that “pair-placed student teachers were not having the ‘real experience’ of solo teaching” (ibid). Similar sentiments were expressed by student teachers in Numrich’s (1996) study. Numrich reported that many student teachers had been paired up to plan for lessons and teach classes together; however, “most of them chose to teach their own separate lessons during their allotted teaching time...This decision was a fairly common one. Perhaps novice teachers feel a need to discover their teaching selves” (pp.136-137). These disadvantages of paired placements suggest that while it is useful, it could be encouraged at the initial stages of the practicum (or earlier sessions where feasible) rather than during the whole practicum.

Another study similar to Nokes et al. above was a survey of 40 student teachers conducted in Taiwan by Hsu (2005). Hsu investigated how student teachers seek support from peers, cooperating teachers and university based supervisors, on what issues they seek such assistance and whose support they found useful. Hsu found out that:

In this study, student teachers most frequently sought help of student teacher peers. For student teachers, student teacher peers played the role of supportive friends, sources of professional knowledge and sounding boards for ideas and actions. The roles student teacher peers played can be seen from the big range of problems they talked about, and the high frequency of their interaction (p.315).

An ELTE programme in Hungary also successfully tried out paired placement of STs during TP. From their experience in this approach, however, the teacher educators reported the need to discuss with the STs in advance the skills of teamwork and tolerance for their colleagues. Also, the teacher educators found out that the pair or group teaching model, especially in language teaching, worked more smoothly when the STs were allowed to choose their partners on the basis of those they knew they could easily collaborate with (Bodóczy and Malderez, 1996). A similar success in paired placements was tried in the *peer coaching* model of TP reported by Britton and Anderson (In Press), which I reviewed in detail in section 2.5.2. These researchers found out that peer coaching enhanced student teachers’ understanding of pedagogy.

The gains reported by STs who collaborated in various ways in my study support the previous studies cited above which found out that collaboration among STs was an important strategy for facilitating pedagogical reasoning during the practicum. The difference between these studies and mine is that all the studies I have cited involved well supported teacher education programmes mainly in developed countries. My study, therefore, adds information in the field on the feasibility of such paired-placements in other contexts, especially in the developing world. I would argue that paired-placements are perhaps even more appropriate in developing countries where TE programmes have fewer resources and the numbers of STs are generally larger. More importantly, my study suggests that paired placement may enhance opportunities for STs to team teach and to discuss their teaching and share ELT resources, among others, thereby enhancing their chances of developing pedagogical reasoning. This shows further that a narrow conceptualisation of collaboration merely as working with CTs on a needs basis, and which does not include the collaboration among the STs reduces the chances for development of pedagogical reasoning.

6.3.4. Coordination between the partners in TP

In the foregoing sections, both in the discussion of what the STs learnt and issues that influenced such learning, I have referred mainly to the three sets of participants who participated in the study. These participants represent two major types of institutions: universities and schools, and these institutions are in turn linked to the Ministry of Education (MoE), which influences their practices in various ways. Other organisations that are linked to the universities and schools in terms of TP, though indirectly are the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and textbook publishers.

There is evidence from my study that all these institutions (hereafter referred to as *partners*) have an influence on teacher learning during the practicum. Unfortunately, there is also evidence that there was no meaningful coordination between them with the consequence that their varied and (sometimes inconsistent) influences on STs' experiences continued to constrain teacher learning in some salient ways. I have

already alluded to several aspects of this lack of coordination in the different aspects of the foregoing discussion. However, for emphasis, I will review some of the issues here.

The MoE, as the umbrella organisation under which all the partners above fall, gives guidelines (through policy documents) on what they expect to take place in the institutions. In teacher education, MoE states that it expects STs to be supported to develop deep professional understanding, growth, creativity, innovation and critical thinking (MoE, 2005). Although, MoE does not decide what the ELTE curriculum ought to be, they expect the university to train STs in principles of communicative language teaching (CLT) and the integrated approach, as this is what they expect the STs to use in the field.

However, as I stated earlier, the university does not necessarily train the student teachers in the kind of methodology the MoE expect, one of the arguments is that the student teachers are not necessarily being prepared to teach a specific syllabus but to gain broader perspectives in ELT. Another reason is that the university is not (in most cases) consulted when MoE makes changes to the ELT syllabus. The consequence of this is that there is some confusion during teaching practice. A case in point is that the university considers English language and Literature in English as two different subjects in which the student teachers are to be assessed separately while the MoE and schools expect that English and Literature be integrated into one subject - English.

Yet, the practice in schools is not consistent with what the MoE policy documents say. As the CTs reported, they were not able to guide the student teachers on CLT or the integrated approach recommended by MoE. Their main reason was that they did not understand the “theory” (which is not surprising because they were trained by the same universities). Secondly, a separate syllabus released by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) identified specific skills in English language that the learners would be tested on (KNEC, 2006). In that syllabus, which the teachers and learners regarded as very important, the different skills in English language were not integrated in the manner recommended by the MoE. The schools considered the KNEC syllabus more important because ultimately, their success was judged on the

basis of the performance of the learners in the national examinations. The English language teachers in the schools therefore mainly taught the skills in both English language and literature in isolation. This approach to ELT was influenced further by the textbook writers who interpreted the syllabus mainly in terms of what the learners would be tested in by KNEC. The teachers chose the textbooks which they believed would best meet the examination requirements and aimed at drilling the learners on those topics so as to prepare them well for the examinations.

During TP, the schools expected the student teachers to follow the textbooks faithfully as instructed by the cooperating teachers, which worked well for the student teachers as I discussed earlier (see 6.3). In terms of teacher learning, this analysis reveals a hidden constraint that could go on for many years unnoticed. That is, successive generations of teachers could end up being trained in drilling learners in selected skills of English language, those identified by the popular textbooks as being necessary to pass the national examinations. This scenario could perpetuate the textbook method in ELT that ultimately is not consistent with the goals of language teacher education or the aims of ELT as stated by MoE in Kenya and indeed the field of ELTE. I would argue that the consistency between the stated goals of teacher education and ELT may be improved with better coordination between the different partners.

The lack of coordination between partners in ELT has been reported in research literature before. For example, a study was carried out by Wong and Chuan (2002) in Singapore whose focus was on evaluation of a partnership model between a teacher training institute, the ministry of education and schools taking part in a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programme. The authors reported that the partnership between the various institutions enabled both the university and MoE to “better prepare the trainee teachers to take on the challenges of the ‘real’ classroom by involving schools much more in teacher training and preparation” (p.203). Nevertheless, the study highlighted some problems with such a partnership which included: “the lack of common understanding of issues in educational quality between schools and the institute of education ...e.g. in connection with grading of student teachers during the practicum (p. 204).

A similar study by Vogel and Avissar (2009) examined “a ten year old partnership between a special education department at a teacher training college and a special school in Israel. The researchers found out that partnership was effective in facilitating student teacher meetings with several professionals more regularly than in institutions that were not in such partnership. They concluded that such a partnership was not only beneficial to the student teachers but also improved the quality of learning in the schools while also keeping university lecturers in touch with the curriculum demands and contextual circumstances in the school (p.134). Another recent study in the US by Bartholomew and Sandholtz (2009) on school-university partnership reported that:

the district administrators viewed teachers as implementers...In contrast, the university partners viewed teachers as learners, aiming to involve teachers as decision makers in professional development; to emphasize instructional choices; and to explore the complexities of teaching...These contrasting views created dilemmas for the work of the school-university partnership (pp.158-160).

My study, like the studies above, illustrates the complex nature of coordination or partnership between the university, schools and education administrators, especially in terms of the differences in perspectives. The difference between these studies and mine is that while they were done in contexts of reform of the teacher education programme in relation to learning in schools, in my study, I only explored the issue of coordination in terms of how it influenced teacher learning during a practicum. My study highlights how such a lack of coordination restricts teacher learning and indeed ELT practice to the textbook method, and hence impedes the development of any reasonable pedagogical reasoning as envisaged by the university, the country and the field of ELTE. By providing such empirical evidence on the impact of the lack of coordination between partners in ELTE, my study enhances our understanding of the complex issues that influence teacher learning during the practicum. It also emphasises the need for policy makers in education to understand that all partners affect or contribute to the whole system in different ways, hence the need to facilitate close coordination.

6.5 SUMMARY

From this discussion, the main point I wish to underscore is that teacher learning in ELT during the practicum is a complex issue in a number of ways. The first aspect of

this complexity is the difficulty of unpacking what exactly student teachers could be said to have learnt through their practice. This complexity notwithstanding, my study has suggested that the student teachers mainly learnt procedural pedagogical knowledge and were not able to develop any discernible pedagogical reasoning as anticipated by their university, country and in the field of ELTE. The next complexity is in unpacking the exact issues that influenced teacher learning during the practicum. This is complex because it is difficult to identify a one-to-one relationship between the practices and the circumstances of the practicum. Nevertheless, based on my analysis, four related issues interacting together could be identified as having been prominent. These were the relationship between coursework at university and practice in schools, definition of parameters of practice, conceptualisation of support, in terms of collaboration and supervision, and coordination between the partners in ELTE.

Overall, although all the student teachers in my study passed their TP and graduated as new teachers (as they informed me at the end of their TP) the lack of proper rationalisation of the practicum, arguably impeded their development in pedagogical reasoning. Ultimately, I would argue that although my study focused on student teachers of English language, I am convinced that the findings would be relevant to student teachers of any other subjects on a practicum under similar circumstances. This is especially considering that the STs of all other subjects at the university I studied and other universities in Kenya (and indeed the entire East African region) have generally similar arrangements as the participants in my study. In the next chapter, I make some conclusions on the whole study.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

7.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I give a brief summary of the entire study, identify the contributions and limitations of my study, and then indicate implications for policy and practice. I also give suggestions for further related research and finally, I reflect on what I have gained from the research process.

7.2. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In this study, I analysed the pedagogical practice and support of English language student teachers during the practicum. I carried out the study in Kenya at a time when the need for empirical information that could be used for reform in TE and indeed the entire education sector had been called for by both scholars in Education and the MoE. There has been concern that universities do not produce teachers who have a deep understanding of their work and who can in turn develop the intellectual abilities that are necessary for learners' to interact efficiently within the increasingly complex socioeconomic circumstances in the country and the rest of the world (e.g. Digolo, 2006; Kafu, 2006; Karugu, 2007; MoE, 2005).

As a practitioner in ELT in Kenya for over a decade, I identified TP as a key stage of TE, which had been largely ignored by previous educational research in Kenya, that had mainly focused on instruction in English language and other subjects, curriculum implementation, school administration and performance of learners in examinations. My study was therefore motivated by the desire to generate empirical data that could be considered, among others in the on-going reforms. I chose STs of ELT because the English language plays a very pivotal role in the Kenyan education system as a medium of instruction, compulsory subject and official language.

In terms of literature, my study fitted within the current understanding in the field that teacher learning and how that learning may be supported is the main goal of TE (e.g. Borg, 2006; Canagarajah, 2006; Richards, 2008). Many scholars have indicated

that although the practicum is considered very important in TE as a bridge between training and practice and is included in most TE programmes all over the world, very little previous research has been done on its conceptualisation, implementation and benefits (e.g. Buitink, 2009; Crookes, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Clarke and Collins, 2007; Farrell, 2008). Of the existing studies on TP, most are on special programmes such as short intensive courses on TESOL or innovations that are being piloted by particular universities (e.g. Brandt, 2006; Britton and Anderson, In Press; Chitpin et al., 2008; Graham, 2006; Rodgers and Keil, 2007; White, 2009). Hence there have been calls for more research on conventional undergraduate ELTE programmes and to increase the geographical spread of such studies, especially in ESL/EFL contexts (e.g. Borg, 2006; Buitink, 2009; Farrell, 2008; Richards, 2008). The lack of research on the practicum is especially notable in developing countries where my literature search revealed only two studies on specific aspects of TP (Degado, 2007; Vavrus, 2009). This minimal research on TP in ELTE generally and in Africa in particular indicated a gap in the field that my study contributes to.

My research was a qualitative case study of one university in Kenya involving seventeen participants: six student teachers, six teacher educators and five cooperating teachers working together during a practicum. Data was generated over three months using semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. Data was analysed thematically and presented according to the research questions. I then discussed the findings in relation the aims of the study.

Generally, the study showed that the student teachers clearly made some considerable progress through practice but the teacher learning process mainly involved going through the procedures of teaching and that the student teachers were not supported to develop discernible pedagogical reasoning as envisaged by the teacher education institution, Ministry of Education in Kenya and ELTE literature. I have identified key issues that could be said to have influenced teacher learning during the practicum. These were: a weak relationship between coursework at university and practice in schools, the lack of a clear definition of parameters of practice, ineffective conceptualisation of support and absence of formal coordination between the partners in ELT. From my study, I have identified what I consider to be the main contributions to knowledge, which I highlight in the next section.

7.3. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on my knowledge of the context of the study, the literature review I carried out and analysis of the data, I would say my study makes important contributions to knowledge, especially in the field of ELTE. I have signalled most of such contributions in the discussion chapter; thus in this section I highlight the key ones.

To begin with, in the Kenyan context, I have not come across any study specifically on the practicum in ELTE or even general TE. A few publications exist on the practicum that I have made reference to such as Ayot and Wanga (1987), Brown and Nacino Brown (1990) and a number of handbooks for STs written by various universities. None of these publications are based on empirical studies. Therefore, my study is the first I know of in Kenya and indeed in Africa that has investigated the practice of English language student teachers (STs) during the practicum and offered an insight into what the STs learn and the possible influences on such learning. I must acknowledge though that perhaps some similar studies exist but which (due to poor resources in Africa, generally) are not published, especially in a manner that could be accessible on the internet. Nevertheless, with regard to Kenya, my visits to all the public university libraries and leading bookshops did not yield any. Based on this, I would say that my study contributes empirical evidence that would be useful in the proposed reforms in the TE in Kenya. In this light, my study is also very likely to be relevant to other Anglophone countries in Africa.

Methodologically, I believe my study also makes significant contributions. To start with another reference to the Kenyan context, my study highlights the qualitative approach as a viable option for studying educational and social science issues. I say this because qualitative methodology in research is uncommon in the Kenyan context and quantitative surveys are considered the more “acceptable” way of doing research. For example, during the data generation process, some scholars I talked to expressed doubt (unfairly in my view) about the trustworthiness of my study based on the “few participants” involved and other aspects of my qualitative design. As such, I believe my study may contribute to the greater acceptance of qualitative research in the Kenyan context. This is because I have supplied sufficient detail on

the research design, data generation and analysis process through a thick description that I believe clearly demonstrates the logic of my findings and discussion.

Still on methodology (and now considering the entire field of ELTE) my study involved all the key participants in the practicum, namely: student teachers, cooperating teachers and teacher educators. In this way, my study brought together all their perspectives and highlights the lack of coordination and convergence in their practices as one of the constraints to teacher learning during teaching practice (TP). The issues related to practice and support could not have been analysed in this holistic manner if only the student teachers had been involved. Involving all the key participants in TP also provided the necessary data source triangulation that enhances trustworthiness in qualitative research (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2006; Creswell, 2007). Most previous studies on TP have tended to involve only one set of participants. Similarly, my study involved the use of multiple techniques in data generation: semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. Through such triangulation, and especially considering the fact that the interviews and observations were repeated over three months of the practicum, my study demonstrates the feasibility of combining several sources to generate rich data and enhance the trustworthiness of a qualitative study.

In terms of the substantive findings, my study has suggested that in circumstances and contexts where student teachers are not appropriately prepared for TP, parameters of practice are not clearly defined, support is insufficient and coordination between the partners is poor; the STs learn mainly procedural pedagogical knowledge and may not be able to develop any discernible pedagogical reasoning as intended by the university, MoE and the field of ELTE. I believe from my awareness of TE programmes in many countries in the developing world that the systems are quite similar to the Kenyan one. Yet very few previous studies have analysed the issues that influence the practicum in ELT in such contexts. Hence, my study adds important information to the field that enhances our understanding of the complex inter-related issues that need to be considered when planning a practicum, in ELTE and other subjects. Such information may also be relevant to practicums in other professions or some aspects of workplace learning.

7.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Having identified the contributions of my study, I must acknowledge that there are a few issues that may be considered as limitations of the study which I explain below.

To begin with, my research was a case study of one university during a single practicum session and involved seventeen participants, as I have already pointed out. This might be seen, especially in my context, as a limitation given that surveys involving large numbers are more common and are usually considered the norm. My sample was necessitated by the constraints on time and other resources; nevertheless, considering my experience of ELTE in the Kenyan context, I am convinced that the participants in my study were typical of any other TP participants elsewhere in Kenya and perhaps similar TE programmes and contexts. Having said that, I must reiterate that the main goal of my study was to generate empirical evidence that could contribute to our understanding of student teachers' practicum experiences in ELT and not necessarily to make wider claims to generalisation. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw analytical, fuzzy or naturalistic generalisations from my study (Bassegy, 1999; Stake, 2006/1995; Yin, 2003), (see Chapter Three). That notwithstanding, I wish to acknowledge that, in retrospect, I realise that involvement of the principals in the schools of the practicum, some learners and administrators in charge of teaching practice or ELTE at the MoE may have provided more insights; and including them as participants would probably have been feasible with the addition of only a few further resources.

Another limitation that I wish to acknowledge is that I was not able to interview the teacher educators promptly; that is, just after their supervisions of the STs. Still in relation to that, it may have been preferable to also listen to and record the pre- and post-observation conferences between the STs and the teacher educators. This however was not possible because I was not able to know when the teacher educators would be in the schools since they were supposed to keep this a secret even from the STs. Secondly, the teacher educators were always in a hurry to observe students in other schools, usually in distant places, hence it was not possible to get their audience even at the end of the day. Nonetheless, I later had in-depth interviews with the teacher educators at a time when they were freer and I am convinced they

recalled their experiences during TP with sufficient detail and accuracy because I was able to corroborate the information they gave me with what the student teachers and the cooperating teachers had told me.

Another aspect of my study that might be considered limitation was in the number of interviews and observations. I may perhaps have obtained richer data if I had had more than the three sets of interviews and four observations with the STs. In short, it may have been preferable to spend more time with the STs to get more insight into their practice. The reason this was not possible was because the STs were already under so much pressure of work and assessment that I had to limit my intrusion into their work so as to enable them concentrate on their practice. In any case, as I carried out subsequent interviews and observations, I realised that the same issues were recurrent.

In relation to this, I wish to acknowledge that qualitative issues such as teacher learning are perhaps better studied in an extended, more ethnographic approach preferably involving participant-observation as a key aspect of data generation with several cohorts of student teachers and other participants. Hence this study could have been enriched by spending more time with the participants while preparing for TP, during the actual practicum and possibly making a follow up after the qualification of the STs as teachers. These were, however, not possible due to the fixed time (12 weeks) of TP and the lack of resources to follow this kind of design. Nevertheless, it is an approach I intend to take up (hopefully with support of research funding agencies) during my career as a researcher in English language teacher education.

Finally, I recognise that the practicum involves more than the pedagogical issues I was interested in. The limitation then was that my study only paid attention to pedagogical experiences in ELT. In the process, perhaps there were other wider professional issues that had influence on practice that I could have missed. Nevertheless, limiting the scope of my study to pedagogical issues in ELT was necessary to enable me to accomplish the project within the time and other resource constraints on my project. I always asked the participants to raise any issues I may not have observed or asked them that they felt were pertinent to their practice. Often,

they did raise important issues, mainly on the challenges they were facing, most of which I analysed but some of which were outside the scope of my study. Through this, I was able to cover most of the relevant professional issues.

In spite of the limitations identified above, I have confidence that I took sufficient care to maximise the trustworthiness of my study. Hence, in the next section, I explain some of the implications for practice and policy in ELTE that arise from the research.

7.5. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

These implications arise from my analysis of the issues that I have identified in the discussion as possible constraints to teacher learning during the practicum; hence what may need to be done to improve student teachers experiences during teaching practice. The major implications are outlined below:

7.5.1. Relating coursework to practice

There is a need to create more linkage between the departments that offer the subject matter and pedagogy courses at university, on one hand, and to link the coursework to subject matter in schools, on the other. Such linkages might partly address some of the huge challenges during practice such as unfamiliarity of the STs with the English language subject matter and the syllabus and the failure to use communicative language teaching (CLT) and implement the *integrated approach* in ELT in schools, as recommended by MoE. Also, there is a need to improve the preparation for practice by strengthening the micro-teaching exercise. By doing this, the STs might feel more ready to teach by the time they are placed in schools.

Similarly, in the last few weeks preceding the practicum, there is a need to thoroughly brief the STs on the responsibilities expected on them and how they are expected to relate with others during their placements. Such briefing also ought to involve re-acquaintance with the ELT syllabus, recommended approach and key textbooks in schools. In addition, there is a need to have student teachers discuss

possible challenges and to make pre-practicum school visits. The university could request placement schools to assign lessons to STs during such visits. The Diploma in Education (Dip.Ed) programmes in Kenya, for example, are known to successfully organise such pre-practicum visits, which enhance familiarity with the school set up, facilitate earlier preparation and enable STs to look for resources they might need. During my study, both teacher educators and STs reported that there was no briefing before TP, with the consequence that STs did not really know what exactly was expected of them. In relation to this, it would be helpful to give STs handbooks to refer to, with detailed guidelines on what to do during TP. Such handbooks already exist and with necessary updating, taking into consideration suggestions from empirical studies such as this one (and views of STs who have participated in previous practicums), they could offer very useful guidance.

The preparation suggested above has reportedly been taking place at the university in the past but has recently been ignored; hence it just needs to be re-introduced by the Teaching Practice Committee. I think the pre-practicum school visits could be organised by the zone coordinators but because this may require an additional expense for the student teachers, the university could request the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) which partly sponsors the TP to provide funding towards this, as recommended by the zone coordinators.

7.5.2. Defining and broadening the parameters of practice

There is a need to clearly define the roles of student teachers and the responsibilities they are to be assigned during the practicum. Such definitions could include the classes and number of lessons to be assigned, whether they could be assigned other duties like additional subjects or co-curricular activities and what sort of induction they need. Such definitions of duties ought to be discussed with the schools to avoid the kind of inconsistencies revealed by my study.

In terms of broadening the parameters of practice, it may be helpful to post student teachers in pairs or groups. The STs in my study were posted individually; however, by coincidence some of them ended up in the same schools and collaborated in

different ways that they said enriched their experiences. The fact that the STs were able to collaborate in this manner informally suggests the feasibility and perhaps greater benefits of paired placements if they are prepared for it, with perhaps no additional costs for the university. Such paired or group placements might also mean the STs are posted to fewer schools and, with careful planning, within a smaller geographical region. This may possibly reduce the pressure of travelling to many schools for the supervisors. This may, in turn, enable the teacher educators to have more time for pre- and post-observation conferences with the STs, which the participants in the study reported was a problem. Some student teachers already organise paired placements informally and end up in either the same school (like Ann and Faith) or neighbouring schools (like Ben and Dan), hence it is highly feasible for the TP committee to formalise this and during the preparation for TP already discussed above, discuss with the student teachers how they could work together to facilitate shared learning.

Still on broadening practice, student teachers also need to be trained in self-evaluation skills so that they may find it easier to engage in the practice while on placement. The self-evaluation skills could be practised and discussed during the micro-teaching sessions at university. During TP, their remarks on the self-evaluation spaces on the lesson plans could form part of the discussion points with teacher educators during the post-observation conferences.

7.5.3. Re-conceptualising the role of cooperating teachers

There is a need to define the nature of professional support expected of the cooperating teachers (CTs) working with the STs in the placement schools. Such professional support would include assisting the STs to settle into the school, assistance with obtaining teaching resources, discussion of the syllabus and planning, discussion of the teaching method, classroom management and testing. They could also facilitate mutual reflection on experiences that may develop a deeper pedagogical understanding in ELT for both themselves and the STs.

Perhaps one of the issues to emphasise in terms of support by CTs is the need for them to work together with the STs, maybe initially using them as teacher assistants then gradually leaving the STs to take more responsibility for the classes as they gain more confidence. The CTs might also be trained to have STs observe some of their lessons and in turn observe the STs, then discuss emerging points from such observations. Such arrangements would mean that the CTs are playing an active role in the STs' practice and do not just surrender their classes totally, as was the case in my study. This arrangement would also address the complaint by some headteachers (reported by teacher educators) that their regular teachers remained idle after giving up their classes to the STs on practicum.

Inevitably, these suggestions imply a need to identify and train the CTs for their roles in TP. They also call for very close working relationships between teacher educators, student teachers and CTs. Since the stated goals of TP are to develop deeper professional understanding, growth and creativity, it would be important to train the CTs to go beyond just taking the student teachers through the procedures of teaching to facilitating discussions with them. I recognise that the reconceptualised roles of CTs may require some incentives or payment and hence additional resources for the university. Commitment of additional resources in this manner, in my view would be a worthy investment.

I am aware, from my knowledge of the context, that several experienced teachers in several subjects (English language included) are pursuing part time Masters Degree courses at the university. The starting point might be to work with such teachers, perhaps through a unit on cooperation with student teachers added to their coursework by the departments they are registered in. Such training would also need to focus on changing attitudes of cooperating teachers towards student teacher learning. Those who are not in such programmes could be identified by the zone coordinators and offered the same units perhaps through short courses organised by the departments and certified appropriately. Since teachers in this context are promoted partly on the basis of such certification, most of them may be willing to participate actively. Funding for this could be set aside from the income from Privately Sponsored Students Programme (PSSP), which normally has an allocation for staff development.

7.5.4. Re-conceptualising supervision during the practicum

My study suggests the need to reduce the focus on assessment during the practicum. This could be done by giving the STs a grace period during which they concentrate on practising teaching through, among other things, guided discussions with peers, cooperating teachers or supervisors that do not involve awarding of grades. This may involve one or more visits by the supervisors than at the moment but this would be a worthy investment. Such a “grace period” could last the first half of TP, later visits could involve assessment in the sense of awarding marks but based on the student teachers’ progress as learners of teaching and not necessarily on their expertise as teachers of English language. I would therefore suggest a change in the criteria of assessing student teachers on TP. For example, the student teachers would be awarded marks on the effort they make to plan their lessons in a manner that would facilitate effective involvement of learners and on their progress in clearly explaining the principles that informed their procedures.

What I have suggested above in turn has implications for preparation of the supervisors. I suggest that during the workshops for supervisors, which the teacher educators reported, it ought to be emphasised that the primary purpose of supervision is pedagogical support and not assessment. Since the workshop is attended by teacher educators of all subjects, it would be possible to effect such changes in assessment system in all subjects. The workshops would need to be facilitated by experts in the field and not necessarily by senior colleagues in the departments who usually perhaps just go over the same issues over the years. Such workshops would initially need to target the heads of department and heads of subjects who are usually responsible for provision of funds because then they would be able to understand and support the other teacher educators who are practically involved in supervision. In addition, very important is the need to have specialised supervision. There was evidence from the study that non-specialised supervision was not very beneficial to the STs compared to specialised supervision. In terms of practicalities, first, there is clearly need to employ more ELT specialists considering the high number of STs.

7.5.5. Enhancing coordination between the partners in ELTE

For any reasonable teacher learning during the practicum, there is also a need to strengthen the coordination between the university, the principals of schools (and by extension their cooperating teachers), the Ministry of Education (MoE), Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and even publishers of English language textbooks. As the study has shown, these partners have some influence on ELT practice in schools (see 6.3.4). I would suggest, from my knowledge of the context, that it would be more feasible for the university to initiate this kind of collaboration through concept papers to the relevant departments of MoE.

7.5.6. Timing of the practicum

Finally, I suggest the need to introduce more TP sessions during the TE programme. The study showed that the STs took a considerable time to settle down, and were under so much pressure as they took full responsibility for their classes while also generally trying to understand the school system from the teacher's point of view. During that time, they were also under intense assessment, without any reasonable support. I would propose three practicum sessions during the entire ELTE course. The first could come very early in the programme, say at the end of the first year at university. This could involve STs going to schools to observe the experienced teachers in all aspects of their work in ELT, taking note of what is happening. This could last just about two weeks and could be done at the nearest secondary school to the STs' homes to reduce the costs for both the university and the STs. It may not necessarily involve supervision but it would require a detailed guidance on aspects of ELT to observe and some time for discussion of what has been observed when they return to university.

The second TP session might come at the end of third year, after the STs have done the courses on pedagogy at university. The STs could start off by working with the CTs as teaching assistants then teach a few individual classes, still with support. Since the STs would be going back to university after such a session, there would be a need to spare some time to discuss their experiences with their teacher educators. In the process of such discussions, they could review the prior assumptions they held

about teaching. The second TP suggested here could be supervised with minimal assessment based on STs' commitment to the exercise and not necessarily on how well they are teaching. The final TP session could come at the end of the TE programme, just like the one I studied, and if preceded by some TP sessions as suggested above, it may be feasible to have the kind of full teaching responsibility as was the case in the study. In this session, there could be more focus on assessment, but with consideration of the other suggestions above such as specialised supervision and clearer parameters of practice.

Overall, I would argue that other than the last implication (on more sessions for TP), most of the suggestions are feasible in the short term without huge resource or structural implications for the university or the STs. Some of the suggestions, though, would necessitate some conceptual awareness raising to justify the proposals and regular workshops as I have explained above (see 7.5.5). Fortunately, during the study, there was evidence that all the participants recognised the need for some reform to align STs' experiences during the practicum with the desired goals of ELTE. Fortunately again, in Kenya, such proposals could be feasible considering that they come at a time when there is general policy support for reforms in line with the proposed restructuring of the education sector (MoE, 2005; Republic of Kenya, 2004). I must point out though, that such workshops would need to target the key decision makers in the universities, in particular the heads of department in the schools of Education so that there is a shared understanding of what needs to be changed, in which way and what is feasible in the short or long term.

7.6. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A number of issues have featured in my study that would require further empirical investigation. To begin with, I suggest a replication of this study in other contexts; that is, involving other universities, participants and perhaps in more countries in ESL/EFL contexts so as to enhance our understanding of teacher learning in TP in more contexts. Such studies could also be replicated involving other subjects in schools to check their consistency across different content areas in TE. I make this suggestion in line with the argument that the power of qualitative research,

especially a case study (and especially if the findings are to be considered for policy change) lies in multiplicity of findings (e.g. Braun and Clarke, 2005; Dörnyei, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Stake, 2006).

Secondly, I would suggest studies that focus solely on the preparation of ELT student teachers while at the university, especially on the relevance of the courses and mode of delivery in the entire ELTE programme to ELT in the schools. Such studies would also explore the perspectives of the teacher educators and STs on the impact of the courses and methodology on their pedagogical reasoning. I make this suggestion because my study only looked at preparation at university in as far as it related to TP; other aspects of the coursework were not within the scope of my study. It may also be desirable to carry out a similar study on other professional experiences of STs during the practicum other than pedagogy.

Thirdly, during my study, a number of interesting issues arose for which I did not have sufficient data to make any conclusions. For example, the effect of school ethos, working conditions and also style of leadership on student teacher learning. Another interesting issue was the influence of learners on student teacher learning. A lot of student teachers said that they were highly motivated by their learners, but I did not interview the learners, hence I could not explore this issue further. These are issues that were not within the scope of my study; they are certainly worth exploring further.

Finally, I would suggest a study on how aims of ELT, curriculum, syllabi and methods are interpreted and implemented by the key partners: the universities, learners, teachers, MoE, and the examinations councils in an ESL/EFL context. Such a study might reveal the extent to which the interpretations differ, the bases of such interpretations and their effects on ELT practice in such contexts. This is because the issue of lack of coordination features consistently in many studies, including mine, though not as the core issue; hence there is not much empirical evidence in the field that could be used as a basis of such coordination.

7.6. EPILOGUE

Looking back, I would say that the entire PhD project was a life-changing experience for me. I feel that I have been transformed (or at least I am in the process of being transformed) from almost an unquestioning consumer of academic information to a budding critical reader, researcher and creator of information. I come from a background where (with all the due respect to the system), robust reasoning was not very well facilitated (perhaps due to inadequacy of resources), but in retrospect, perhaps also due to a culture that predominantly inculcated loyalty to most forms of seniority (such as age, position at work or level of education). Also, I come from a highly positivist background where there was often, in terms of knowledge (e.g. in Education), one correct answer, one true explanation or right way to most questions. I now acknowledge more robustly (I believe) that in most cases, *it depends*.

Similarly in my context, research is mainly defined in terms of experiments and surveys involving probability samples and hypothesis testing using statistics. As such I am aware of previous efforts to force such parameters even into studies that (I now know) would benefit from qualitative approaches because they sought deeper understanding of socio-cultural, educational, professional or personal phenomena. This research project has enabled me to learn and appreciate the viability, principles and processes of qualitative research. By extension it has broadened my awareness and understanding of the existence of different ontological and epistemological paradigms, especially in the social sciences. Perhaps the greatest gift I take home is the ability to design and successfully carry out a qualitative study while also able to make sense of quantitative research.

Ultimately, I would conclude that my study has brought my attention to so many complex issues surrounding TE/ELTE in general, and the practicum in particular that it leaves me probably with more questions than answers. Such questions, I believe, I will continue to seek answers for through engaging in more research so as to make further contributions to knowledge.

Reflecting on the entire journey in *Patience, Hope and Drama* (PhD), I say *yes*, it was worth the while; for me and, I hope, for the field of Education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Fieldwork timetable: August, 2007 to January, 2008.

MONTH	ACTIVITY
August	Arrival in Kenya Research permit Negotiation of access Pilot study Adjusting research instruments
September	<i>Week 1</i> 1 st interviews of 6 student teachers <i>Week 2</i> 1 st observation of 6 student teachers <i>Week 3</i> Transcription and reviews of initial data <i>Week 4</i> 2 nd observation of 6 student teachers
October	<i>Week 5</i> 2 nd interview of 6 student teachers <i>Week 6</i> 3 rd observations of 6 student teachers <i>Week 7</i> Interviews of 3 teacher educators <i>Week 8</i> 4 th observations of 6 student teachers
November	<i>Week 9</i> 3 rd interviews of 6 student teachers Interviews with 3 teacher educators <i>Week 10</i> Interviews with 5 cooperating teachers
December	Transcriptions of interviews
January	Transcriptions of interviews

Appendix 2: Research permit



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCE TEC", Nairobi
Telephone: 02-318581 E-
Mail:ps@scienceandtechnology.go.ke

JOGOO HOUSE "B"
HARAMBEE A VENUE,
P.O. Box 9583-00200
NAIROBI

When Replying please quote

Ref. MOST 13/001137C 95/2

11th September 2007

Charles Ochieng' Ong'ondo
University of Leeds
UNITED KINGDOM

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on, "*Analysis of pedagogical experiences of English Language student teachers during the practicum in Kenya*"

This is to inform you that you have been authorized to carry out Research in Public Universities in all Provinces for a period ending 30th October 2009.

You are advised to report to the Vice Chancellors of the respective Universities you will visit before embarking on your- research.

On completion of your research, you are expected to submit two copies of your research report to this office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. O. Ondiek'.

M. O. ONDIEK
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY

Copy to: The Vice Chancellors Public Universities

Appendix 3: Interview guide for student teachers

First interview.

1. Please tell me why you chose to do your TP in this school.
2. As you look forward to the rest of your TP, what are your expectations? Do you have any concerns, worries etc.?
3. What do you remember about your experience as a student of English language at secondary school level?
4. Please tell me what you consider to be the main aims of teaching English at secondary school level and why.
5. How ready do you feel as a teacher of English language – in terms of knowledge of subject matter, teaching skills, general confidence?
6. What do you intend to teach during this TP? Why?
7. What methods, techniques, strategies do you intend to use during TP? Why?
8. How do you consider the way you have been received in the school by the teachers, learners and the principal?
9. Please tell me what you have done during this one week.
10. Generally, what would you say you have learnt from your TP so far? How?
11. Generally, what do you expect to learn from this TP exercise? How?
12. Are there any issues about TP you want to mention that I have not asked you about?

Second interview

1. Please tell me what your experience has been in the last one month or so of your TP - teaching, interaction with fellow teachers, observations, assessments, etc?
2. How far are your plans in terms of what to teach and strategies for teaching it working? Why?
3. What has been very useful, not useful to you during the past three weeks? Why ?
4. What issues do you feel influenced your thoughts and actions as a teacher? Why? How?
5. What challenges have you faced during your TP and how did you deal with them?
6. How many times have you been assessed? What do you feel about the assessments?
7. Generally, what do you feel you have learnt from your TP in the last three weeks?
8. What is your comment on the support you have got from the school? Cooperating teachers?
9. What is your comment on the support you have got from the university?
10. Are there any things you feel could have made your experience as a TP student better? Why? How?
11. Are there any issues about TP you want to mention that I have not asked you about?

Third Interview:

1. When you look back at the TP experience as a whole, what would you say you have learnt from it, that we have not talked about before?
2. How would you evaluate the support you had from the university, School? Why?
3. Please tell me what issues were most influential of your activities during TP. Why?
4. Are there any suggestions you have on what could have been done to enable you learn better from TP? Why?
5. How confident do you feel now as a teacher of English language? Why?
6. Are there any issues about TP you want to mention that I have not asked you about?

Appendix 4: Interview guide for cooperating teachers

1. Please tell me about yourself, particularly in terms of teacher training and experience.
2. What you consider to be the main objective of TP?
3. Please tell me the induction you gave this English language student teacher for when s/he reported for TP.
4. What would you say about the support the university gave to the student teacher during TP?
5. In what ways does your school support this student teacher during TP?
6. Please tell me how you (as a cooperating teacher) supported this student teacher during the TP session.
7. When you look back at this student teacher, what would you say s/he has learnt from the TP?
8. In your view, are there any ways the school could have helped this student teacher's to learn better from this TP?
9. How confident do you feel about this student teacher's readiness to teach English language at secondary school level? Why?
10. How effective do you feel you were as a cooperating teacher?
11. Do you have any sessions with the educators when you talk about the progress of the student teachers?
12. Are there any issues about TP you want to mention that I have not asked you about?

Appendix 5: interview guide for educators

1. Please tell me briefly about your responsibilities and experience at the university.
2. Please tell me what you consider to be the main objective of TP.
3. Please tell me the preparation you give your English language student teachers for TP.
4. What did you expect the English language student teachers to learn during TP? Why? How?
5. What kind of support was available to student teachers on TP?
6. How would you rate the placement schools as a conducive place for teaching practice?
7. Please tell me how you supervised these student teachers, and what your main concerns were during supervision.
8. How competent did you feel assessing student teachers of English language, which you do not specialise?
9. How do you work with cooperating teachers in the TP schools? Your comment on this arrangement?
10. When you look back at these student teachers, and from what you know about their experiences, what would you say they learnt from the TP?
11. In your view, are there any ways the student teachers' learning from this TP could have been improved?
12. How confident do you feel about these student teachers readiness to teach English at secondary school level? Why?
13. Are there any issues about TP you want to mention that I have not asked you about?

Appendix 6: First phase coding of interview data

1. Reception /Induction/Allocation of classes by the school
2. Thoughts on aims of teaching English at sec. school
3. Planning for teaching
4. What student teachers expect to learn during TP
5. Readiness to teach/confidence
6. Choice of school/posting for TP
7. Experience as a student of English at secondary school
8. Experience as a student teacher of English at university
9. Preparation for TP at university/peer teaching
10. Assessments/Supervision during TP
11. Working with cooperating teachers and other regular teachers
12. Interaction with learners
13. Working with fellow student teachers
14. Support from the school
15. Support from the university
16. Challenges during TP
17. Motivation/issues influencing actions during TP
18. What student teacher says s/he learnt during TP
19. Teaching resources/reference materials
20. Understanding of ELT concepts
21. Views of student teachers on improvement of TP experience
22. Cooperating teachers' experience
23. Role of cooperative teacher in TP
24. Guidelines on English language teaching
25. Working with/ monitoring/guiding the student teacher
26. Views of cooperating teachers on what the student teacher has learnt
27. Suitability of school/support by the school for TP
28. Experience as a teacher/educator/ TP supervisor
29. Role of supervisor in Teaching Practice
30. Interaction between supervisors and student teachers
31. Coordination between supervisors and cooperating teachers
32. Allowance for student teachers during TP
33. Seminar for TP supervisors
34. Number of student teachers of English/Literature
35. Selection of student teachers of English at university
36. Administration of Teaching Practice
37. Views of supervisors on what student teachers learn from TP
38. Views of cooperating teachers and supervisors on how TP could be improved

Appendix 7: Second phase coding of interview data

English Language Teaching:

- Aims of teaching English at sec. school
- Subject matter/understanding of *ELT* concepts]
- Planning for *ELT*
- Classroom presentation
- Using teaching resources/reference materials
- Challenges of *ELT* during *TP*

Contexts of Teaching during *TP*:

- Induction of the student teachers
- Learner abilities
- Suitability of schools for *TP*
- Support from the school

Working with Others

- Working with cooperating teachers and other teachers
- Working with fellow student teachers
- Working with headteacher
- Working with members of the school community

Supervision During *TP*:

- Experience as a teacher/educator/ *TP* supervisor
- Interaction between supervisors and student teachers
- Coordination with cooperating teachers
- Role of assessor during *TP*
- Process of assessment during *TP*
- Assessment by non specialists
- Seminar for *TP* supervisors
- Number of student teachers of English/literature

Conceptualisation of Teaching/Teaching Practice:

- Objective of/Importance of *TP*
- Motivation/issues influencing actions during *TP*
- Concerns/expectations/challenges during *TP*
- Experience as learner of English at secondary school
- Views on improvement of *TP* experience
- Career plans; whether to be a teacher or not

Administration of *TP*:

- Selection of student teachers of English
- Support of student teachers during *TP*
- Teaching Practice Committee
- Centre for teacher education
- Choice of school/posting for *TP*
- Allowance for student teachers during *TP*

Preparation of Key Participants for *TP*:

- Preparation of student teachers
- Preparation of cooperating teachers
- Seminars for supervisors

Appendix 8: Third phase coding of interview data

1. PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENT TEACHERS DURING THE PRACTICUM

Planning for English language lessons

- Planning for a *new* Syllabus
- Planning for *unfamiliar* subject matter
- Making schemes of work and lesson plans

Teaching English language in the classroom

- Implementing the *integrated approach* in ELT
- Facilitating learner participation in ELT
- Teaching learners with different competencies in EL
- *Teaching learners with exceptional competence in EL:*
- *Teaching learners who are extremely weak in EL:*
- *Teaching learners with mixed-abilities in EL:*
- *Using resources in ELT*

Testing learners in ELT

- Setting, marking and revising exams
- Impact of learner test performance on student teachers

Self-evaluation in ELT

- Written self-evaluation
- Facilitation of self-evaluation by supervisors
- Self-evaluation of entire practicum

2. PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENT TEACHERS DURING THE PRACTICUM

Support by cooperating teachers

- Coordination between teacher educators and cooperating teachers
- Experiences of the cooperating teachers in ELT
- Induction of student teachers
- Guidance on ELT by cooperating teachers
- Classroom observation of/by cooperating teachers
- Not all cooperating teachers were supportive

Support by fellow student teachers

- Student teachers of English in the same school
- Student teachers of English in different schools living together
- Student teachers of English from different universities
- Student teachers of different subjects in the same school

Support by university supervisors

- Process of supervision
- Schedule of supervision
- Impact of supervision on student teachers
- *Supervision kept student teachers "on their toes":*
- *Student teachers were scared of supervision:*
- *Special preparations when supervisors were expected:*
- Comments by supervisors
- *Comments by supervisors mainly on general pedagogy*
- *Comments were mainly evaluative and directive:*

Appendix 9: Ben's lesson plan for the first observed lesson

SUBJECT ENGLISH TOPIC NOUN PHRASE
 WEEK 4 LESSON NO. 2 DATE 27-09-07 TIME 8:40-9:20
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to construct sentences with noun phrases as subject and as object of the sentence.

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
8:40 to 8:45	<u>INTRODUCTION</u> - Review of the previous lesson - Noun Phrase	- Discussion - Answering questions	EXPLORE ENG BK 1 Pg 128
8:45 to 9:15	<u>DEVELOPMENT</u> - Definition of noun phrase - Noun phrase premodifiers - Noun phrase post modifiers - Examples	- Reading the text book - Writing - Students asking and answering questions	EXPLORE ENG BK 1 Pg 130 - 131 Head start sec ENG BK 1 Pg 168 - 169 175 - 176
9:15 to 9:20	<u>CONCLUSION</u> - Summary of the lesson - Assignment	- Taking down the assignment	EXPLORE ENG BK 1 Page 131 Head start ENG BK 1 Page 169 175

Appendix 10: Ben's lesson plan for the second observed lesson

SUBJECT LITERATURE TOPIC POEM - A FREEDOM SONG
 WEEK 6 LESSON NO. 2 DATE 11-10-07 TIME 8:40-9:20
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson learners should be able to identify who the poet is and give stabs used in the poem.

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
8:40 to 8:45	<u>INTRODUCTION</u> - Preview of the previous lesson	- Discussion	EXPLORER BK One Page 134
8:45 to 9:15	<u>DEVELOPMENT</u> - Persona - styles used in the poem - Irony in the poem	- Reading - Asking and answering questions	Mid-term exams Form One page 67-7
9:15 to 9:20	<u>CONCLUSION</u> - Summary of the lesson	- Taking down the notes	Understanding Poetry By Alembi

Appendix 11: Ben's lesson plan for the third observed lesson

SUBJECT ENGLISH TOPIC LETTERS OF APOLOGY
 WEEK 9 LESSON NO. 8 DATE 22-10-2007 TIME 2:00-2:40
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson the learners should write an apology letter.

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
2:00 to 2:05	<u>INTRODUCTION</u> - Review of the previous lesson	- Discussion	Explore Eng BK two page 207
2:05 to 2:35	<u>DEVELOPMENT</u> - Format of apology letter - Language used	- Reading - Writing - Asking and answering questions	Explore Eng BK two page 210, 211
2:35 to 2:40	<u>CONCLUSION</u> - Summary of the lesson - Assignment	- Taking down the assignment	Explore Eng BK two page 210

Appendix 12: Ben's lesson plan for the fourth observed lesson

SUBJECT ENGLISH TOPIC DRUGS, YOUTH & DELINQUENCY
 WEEK 9 LESSON NO. 8 DATE 2-11-2007 TIME 2:00-2:40
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to construct sentences using the vocabulary given

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
2:00 to 2:05	<u>INTRODUCTION</u> - preview of the previous lesson	- Discussion	EXPLORE ENG BIC one page 154
2:05 to 2:35	<u>DEVELOPMENT</u> - Drugs - Youth - Delinquency - Vocabulary	- Reading - writing - Asking and answering questions	EXPLORE ENG BIC one page 161-162
2:35 to 2:40	<u>CONCLUSION</u> - Summary of the lesson - Assignment	- Taking down the assignment	EXPLORE ENG BIC one page 163

Appendix 13: Eve's lesson plan for the first observed lesson

SUBJECT ENGLISH TOPIC READING: COMPREHENSION
 WEEK FOUR LESSON NO. THREE DATE 26/09/01 TIME 12:05-12:45
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson the learners should be able to use the new words in sentences of their own and answer the comprehension questions.

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
5min	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask learners what was done in the previous lesson. - Pre-reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners shall respond to oral questions - Teacher shall explain what voluntary service is about 	<p>Headstart English book 1 Pg 111</p>
30min	<p><u>Lesson Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading silently - Reading aloud - Ask learners what the passage is about. - Show learners the new words on the flashcards - Ask learners to give contextual meaning of each word. - Help learners answer the exercise. 	<p>Learners shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read silently - Read aloud in turns - Respond orally to teacher's questions - Read the words aloud. - Try to give correct meanings contextually - Answer the exercise (write them in their books) as the teacher marks 	<p>Headstart English book 1 Pg 111-113</p> <p>Teachers notes</p>
5min	<p><u>CONCLUSION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Summarize by encouraging learners participate in voluntary services. → Give homework. 	<p>Learners shall write given homework in their books later during free time.</p> <p>→ Comprehension questions</p>	<p>Headstart English book 1 Pg 114</p>

Appendix 14: Eve's lesson plan for the second observed lesson

SUBJECT ENGLISH TOPIC Reading Poetry: Imagery
 WEEK Four LESSON NO. FIVE DATE 05/10/07 TIME 12:05-12:45
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to explain the use of Imagery in given poem.

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
5min	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask learners what they understand by Image and Imagery - Ask learners to read the poem on the chart silently. 	<p>Learners shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respond to oral questions from teacher. - Read the poem silently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher's notes - Chart
30Min	<p><u>Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading aloud - Ask learners what the poem is generally about - Help learners understand Similes & metaphors with examples - Ask learners to identify Similes & metaphors in the poem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read the poem aloud in turns - Respond to teachers questions orally - Make short notes on Similes and metaphors and examples - Identify Similes and metaphors in the poem while noting down. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chart - Teachers notes
5min	<p><u>CONCLUSION</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarize the lesson - Ask Give home work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask any questions if any. - Write a poem describing a loved one with Imagery. 	<p>Teachers notes.</p>

Appendix 15: Eve's lesson plan for the third observed lesson

SUBJECT English TOPIC Writing: Minutes
 WEEK Eight LESSON NO three DATE 23/10/07 TIME 8:50-9:30
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to write minutes as instructed.

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
5 Min	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>Quick overview of previous lesson</p> <p>- Write sentences on the board and ask learners to give their reported speech form.</p>	<p>Learners shall:</p> <p>Answer questions</p> <p>- Give reported speech forms of the sentences</p>	<p>Headstart Eng</p> <p>Students books</p> <p>- Black board</p> <p>Teacher's notes</p>
30 Min	<p>Talk about minute writing i.e. when and how to write in reported speech</p> <p>Explain why we write minutes</p> <p>- Explain layout using chart.</p> <p>i.e. - Heading</p> <p>- Attendance</p> <p>- Agenda</p> <p>- Actual minutes</p> <p>- A.O.B</p> <p>- Adjournment</p> <p>- Next meeting</p> <p>- Discuss language</p>	<p>- Listen and make notes.</p> <p>- Take down notes</p> <p>- Write notes on layout</p> <p>- Write notes on language.</p>	<p>- Headstart Eng</p> <p>Students book 3</p> <p>Pg 197</p> <p>- Chart</p> <p>- Teacher's notes</p> <p>Teacher's notes</p>
5 Min	<p><u>CONCLUSION</u></p> <p>Summarize</p> <p>- Important points</p> <p>Invite questions</p> <p>Give assignment</p>	<p>- Note down any important points</p> <p>- Ask questions if any</p> <p>- Note down assignment</p>	<p>Students book pg 200</p>

Appendix 16: Eve's lesson plan for the fourth observed lesson

SUBJECT English TOPIC Grammar
 WEEK Eight LESSON NO. Six DATE 07/11/07 TIME 11:35-13:05
 OBJECTIVE(S) By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to use compound, complex and compound-complex sentences

TIME	CONTENT	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE MATERIALS
5 Min	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>Ask if learners know about complex, compound and compound-complex sentences</p> <p>Ask one learner to form one Cpd sentence</p>	<p>Learners shall</p> <p>Answer questions</p>	<p>Teacher's notes</p>
30 min	<p><u>Lesson</u></p> <p><u>Development</u></p> <p>Define-Complex</p> <p>-Compound sentences</p> <p>Ask learners to refer to their books for examples</p> <p>Explain on a compound-complex sentence</p> <p>Read examples</p> <p>Exe 1 in groups</p>	<p>Write definitions</p> <p>Read examples aloud</p> <p>Write notes</p> <p>Read examples</p> <p>Answer exe 1</p>	<p>Teacher's notes</p> <p>Headstart King student's book 3</p> <p>Pg 128-129</p> <p>Blackboard</p> <p>Teacher's book</p>
5 min	<p><u>Conclusion</u></p> <p>Summarize lesson</p> <p>Assignment</p>	<p>Write important points</p> <p>Assignment</p>	<p>Teacher's book</p>

Appendix 17: Educator's comments during Caro's first supervision

DATE

20092007

SUBJECT

ENGLISH

COMMENTS AND ADVICE		PERFORMANCE PROFILE (TICK)		✓
1.	<p>PREPARATION (20) (Scheme of work; Lesson Plan, Objectives, Org. of TP-file)</p> <p>Adequate preparation, but include learning activities and resources for every part of your lesson.</p>	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
2.	<p>INTRODUCTION (10) (Exciting, Linking with prior knowledge, Voicing, Teacher-outlook etc)</p> <p>Good introduction, based on the skills that were being developed.</p>	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
3.	<p>LESSON DEVELOPMENT (50) (Learning activities, mastery of content, Class management, feedback; personality: use of a variety of skills e.g. Q-technique, reinforcement etc)</p> <p>Develop better ways of rewarding correct responses</p> <p>Adequate use of questioning skills.</p> <p>The teacher has adequately mastered her content. She is confident and relates well with her class.</p> <p>Avoid choruses, always pick one student to respond to your questions.</p> <p>Student was able to vary her voice very well.</p>	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
4.	<p>USE OF RESOURCES (10) (Ability to integrate relevant resources in activities; improvisation; use of a Writing Board (WB))</p> <p>Good use of the chalk board. Be more creative; develop other forms of teaching and learning resources e.g. charts.</p> <p>Avoid talking to the chalkboard.</p>	Excellent		
		Good		
		Average	✓	
		B. Average		
		Fail		
5.	<p>CONCLUSION (10) (Summary of the main parts; assignment; further reading.)</p> <p>The lesson was well concluded.</p> <p>Rec. clearly plan each of the activities in the lesson.</p>	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		

Appendix 18: Educator's comments during Eve's first supervision

DATE 25092007 SUBJECT English

<u>COMMENTS AND ADVICE</u>		PERFORMANCE PROFILE (TICK)		√
1.	PREPARATION (20) (Scheme of work; Lesson Plan, Objectives, Org. of TP-file) <i>The LP and SOW were awaited, worked to professional format. Objectives of LP and SOW are simple and well stated in behavioural terms. Is it possible that you need no resource materials in this lesson plan? All materials under file good</i>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	INTRODUCTION (10) (Exciting, Linking with prior knowledge, Voicing, Teacher-outlook etc) <i>Your introduction is good, a reflection of last lesson, through questions - answer approach. The session is well executed to bring learners back to class.</i>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	LESSON DEVELOPMENT (50) (Learning activities, mastery of content, Class management; feedback; personality; use of a variety of skills e.g. Q-technique, reinforcement etc) <i>Learners answer questions, read poem. Learners are adequately involved and have great input in determining the destiny of the learning process. Teacher has good command of the subject matter. Teacher makes coordinated movements in class. The variation of her voice to show stress of certain points is commendable. Learners adequately rewarded for correct responses.</i>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	USE OF RESOURCES (10) (Ability to integrate relevant resources in activities; improvisation; use of a Writing Board (WB)) <i>The chalkboard is systematically used. Charts on which the poems are legible and serve source of stimulus variation during the lesson.</i>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	CONCLUSION (10) (Summary of the main parts; assignment; further reading.) <i>Evaluative conclusion - makes the teacher measure the degree of achievement of initial efforts</i>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 19: Educator's comments during Dan's first supervision

DATE 25.09.2007 SUBJECT ENGLISH

COMMENTS AND ADVICE		PERFORMANCE PROFILE (TICK)		✓
1.	<p>PREPARATION (20) (Scheme of work, Lesson Plan, Objectives, Org. of TP-file)</p> <p>Adequate preparation. Break down the objective and create more than one for each lesson.</p>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Average	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	<p>INTRODUCTION (10) (Exciting, Linking with prior knowledge, Voicing, Teacher-outlook etc)</p> <p>- Avoid pocketing when teaching. Teacher went through the previous lesson as a way of introducing the lesson.</p>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	<p>LESSON DEVELOPMENT (50) (Learning activities, mastery of content, Class management, feedback; personality; use of a variety of skills e.g. Q-technique, reinforcement etc)</p> <p>Effective teaching was demonstrated. Teacher is confident and related well with his class. Pupils' responses were adequately rewarded. You needed to emphasize the impact of stress positioning on meaning too. Discourage choral answers.</p>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	<p>USE OF RESOURCES (10) (Ability to integrate relevant resources in activities; improvisation; use of a Writing Board (WB))</p> <p>Good use of the chalkboard. Question: Are there other resources you can utilize in teaching?</p>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Good	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Average	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	<p>CONCLUSION (10) (Summary of the main parts; assignment; further reading.)</p> <p>Adequate.</p>	Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		B. Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		Fail	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix 20: Educator's comments during Dan's third supervision

DATE

29 10 20 07

SUBJECT

LITERATURE

COMMENTS AND ADVICE		PERFORMANCE PROFILE (TICK)	✓
1.	<p>PREPARATION (20) (Scheme of work; Lesson Plan, Objectives, Org. of TP-file)</p> <p>✓ There was a well organized T.P file.</p> <p>✓ The scheme of work was complete as the requisite details had been entered in accordance with the format</p> <p>✓ The L.P had all the details properly outline except for content</p>	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Average</p> <p>B. Average</p> <p>Fail</p>	<p>✓</p>
2.	<p>INTRODUCTION (10) (Exciting, Linking with prior knowledge, Voicing, Teacher-outlook etc)</p> <p>✓ A fairly good introduction of the lesson was made by way of a review of the previous lesson, through the questioning technique.</p>	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Average</p> <p>B. Average</p> <p>Fail</p>	<p>✓</p>
3.	<p>LESSON DEVELOPMENT (50) (Learning activities, mastery of content, Class management, feedback; personality, use of a variety of skills e.g Q-technique, reinforcement etc)</p> <p>✓ It was commendable to note that the teacher developed the lesson with full participation of the learners this was in a way facilitated by good use of the questioning technique. The pace of lesson delivery was also appropriate</p> <p>✓ The teacher, exhibited good knowledge of the topic content, exuded confidence and had a pleasant personality</p> <p>✓ The teacher should always seek to get individual learners to answer questions in order to avoid the class answering together</p>	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Average</p> <p>B. Average</p> <p>Fail</p>	<p>✓</p>
4.	<p>USE OF RESOURCES (10) (Ability to integrate relevant resources in activities; improvisation; use of a Writing Board (WB))</p> <p>✓ The teacher made good use of the W.B. However, the work should have been better organized.</p> <p>✓ It would have been good to summarize the salient parts of the lesson on the board to enable the learner to take them down as their notes.</p>	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Average</p> <p>B. Average</p> <p>Fail</p>	<p>✓</p>
5.	<p>CONCLUSION (10) (Summary of the main parts; assignment; further reading.)</p> <p>To conclude the lesson, a good recap of the lesson was made. On the whole, it was an effective lesson. Keep it up.</p>	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Good</p> <p>Average</p> <p>B. Average</p> <p>Fail</p>	<p>✓</p>

Appendix 21: Educator's comments during Caro's fourth supervision

DATE

31 | 10 | 2007

SUBJECT

LITERATURE

COMMENTS AND ADVICE		PERFORMANCE PROFILE (TICK)		✓
1.	<p>PREPARATION (20) (Scheme of work; Lesson Plan, Objectives, Org. of TP-file)</p> <p>✓ Adequate preparation had been made for the subject as corroborated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a well compiled and organized T.P. file - a complete scheme of work - a well outlined lesson plan. 	Excellent		
		Good		✓
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
2.	<p>INTRODUCTION (10) (Exciting, Linking with prior knowledge, Voicing, Teacher-outlook etc)</p> <p>✓ The introduction of the lesson was apt and germane to the topic as it evoked the learners prior knowledge of the topic. It also aroused learners interest.</p>	Excellent		✓
		Good		
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
3.	<p>LESSON DEVELOPMENT (50) (Learning activities, mastery of content, Class management; feedback; personality; use of a variety of skills e.g. Q-technique, reinforcement etc)</p> <p>✓ The enthusiasm and verve with which the teacher delivered the lesson, made the teaching interesting and exciting. This inevitably encouraged active learner participation.</p> <p>✓ The learners were appropriately reinforced.</p> <p>✓ Cut down on incessant use of 'OK', 'Are we together?' 'Finishes' and 'retreats' to classroom learners though, for example the questioning technique.</p>	Excellent		✓
		Good		
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
4.	<p>USE OF RESOURCES (10) (Ability to integrate relevant resources in activities; improvisation; use of a Writing Board (WB))</p> <p>✓ The WB was effectively used in highlighting the salient points of the lesson.</p> <p>✓ Relevant resources were integrated in the teaching of the lesson.</p>	Excellent		✓
		Good		
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
5.	<p>CONCLUSION (10) (Summary of the main parts; assignment; further reading.)</p> <p>✓ On the whole, it was an effective lesson. Keep it up.</p>	Excellent		
		Good		✓
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		

Appendix 22: Educator's comments during Ben's fourth supervision

DATE

15 11 2007

SUBJECT

ENGLISH

COMMENTS AND ADVICE		PERFORMANCE PROFILE (TICK)		✓
1.	<p>PREPARATION (20) (Scheme of work; Lesson Plan, Objectives, Org. of TP-file)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - S/W and L/P are available and reflect well what is to be covered. Remarks column in the S/W should be updated and to reflect a variety of learning achievements. - The L/P for the day clearly defines the objective and content. 	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
2.	<p>INTRODUCTION (10) (Exciting, Linking with prior knowledge, Voicing, Teacher-outlook etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction was characterized by examinees settling in their seats and each received a question paper from S/T. The date and duration of the examination was written on Bb. - Learners were reminded of the instructions in the rubrics and asked to write their admission numbers correctly. 	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
3.	<p>LESSON DEVELOPMENT (50) (Learning activities, mastery of content, Class management, feedback; personality, use of a variety of skills e.g Q-technique, reinforcement etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examination required examinees to give their answers in the spaces provided on the question paper. - S/T teacher invigilated the examination by walking between the Bles! - Corrections were rectified orally by S/T and writing on Bb. - The questions encompassed grammar, poetry, oral literature and comprehension - Examinees were periodically reminded about the time remaining 	Excellent		
		Good	✓	
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
4.	<p>USE OF RESOURCES (10) (Ability to integrate relevant resources in activities; improvisation; use of a Writing Board (WB))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bb was utilized to write the date and duration of the examination. - The question paper as a principal resource material had clear instructions in the rubrics. These were re-inforced by the writing on Bb. 	Excellent	✓	
		Good		
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		
5.	<p>CONCLUSION (10) (Summary of the main parts; assignment; further reading.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examination concluded by S/T reminding examinees to ensure answering the entire paper and projecting admission numbers on the booklets. - Collecting and counting of answer booklets was accomplished smoothly. 	Excellent	✓	
		Good		
		Average		
		B. Average		
		Fail		

Appendix 23: Page 1 scheme of work by Ben's cooperating teacher

WK	LES	TOPIC SUB-TOTAL	OBJECTIVES	CONTENT /ACTIVITIES	REFERENCE
1	1	Patriotism	Learners should be able to sing the song	Reading and discussing	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 144
	2	Reading	Learners should be able to read the passage on the National Anthem.	"	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 145
	3 & 4	Reading set book	Learners should be able to read the text.	Reading and discussion	Coming to Birth
	5	Language verb phrase	Learners should be able to identify the verb phrase.	Writing/chalk board demonstration	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 148 - 149
	6	Language finite and non-finite verb	Students should be able to identify the non-finite verb and finite verb.	Writing & discussion	Explore English Bk 2 pg 149
2	1	Combination of verbs – modal auxiliary	Students should be able to identify the verbs.	Writing and reading.	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 150
	2	Study skills - Identify themes in a piece of writing	Students should be able to identify themes in a piece of writing	Reading and discussion	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 154
	3 & 4	Reading the set texts	Be able to read and discuss the novel.	Reading and discussion	Coming to Birth by M Oludhe
	5	Writing	Students should be able to write advertisements	Writing and reading	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 155
	6	Discussion	Students should be able to discuss a given topic	Reading and discussion	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 157
3	1	Listening and speaking - Negotiations	Students should be able to discuss negotiation skills	Reading and discussion	Explore Eng. Bk 2 pg 159
	2	Reading	Students should be able to read		
	3 & 4	Reading the text	Students should be able to read the text	Reading and discussion	Coming to birth by M Oludhe

Appendix 24: Two pages of Ben's Form 1 scheme of work, week 3 and 8

WEEK	LESSON	TOPIC/SUBTOPIC	OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	REMARKS
3	1 & 2	Disciplined man Prepositions	-By the end of the lesson the learners should be able to pronounce sound /k/ and /g/ well and state prepositions they know	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK one page 119-123	Taught
3	3 and 4	Personal diaries -Addresses	-By the end of the lesson the learners should be able to write personal diaries, with their physical and postal addresses.	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK one page 124-125	done
	5	Library	-Visit library	-Reading	School library	Attended
	6	Time management	-By the end of the lesson the learners should be able to pronounce sounds /r/ and /l/ well and without confusing them	-Reading	EXPLORE Eng BK one page 127	covered
	7	Using ^{our} time	-By the end of the lesson, the learners should state how to use time wisely	-Reading -discussing -writing	EXPLORE Eng BK 2 page 128-129	Covered
4 27/09/08 *1	1 & 2	The noun phrase	-By the end of the lesson the learners should be able to construct sentences and underline noun phrases on them	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK-2 page 130-132	Covered
	3 & 4	writing notes -informal letters	-By the end of the lesson learners should be able to write notes and write informal letter to a friend	-Reading -writing	EXPLORE Eng BK one pg 130-136	Covered

Appendix 25: English Curriculum

WEEK	LESSON	TOPIC/SUB TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	REMARKS
8	182	-Pastoralism and environment Affirmative sentences	-By the end of the lesson, the learners should be able to state what pastoralists do and construct write affirmative sentences	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK 1 Pg 154 - 156	Taught. Well understood
	397	Negative sentences - Notices	-By the end of the lesson the learners should be able to construct negative sentences and write a notice	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK 1 Pg 157-159	Covered
	5	Library	-visit library	-Reading	School library	attended
	6	Preparation for examinations	-By the end of the lesson learners should be able to state the ^{preparations} guidelines when preparing for an examination	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK 1 Pg 160	Covered
11/10/20	7	Drug and drug abuse	-By the end of the lesson learners should be able to pronounce sounds /B/ Well	-Reading -discussing	EXPLORE Eng BK 1 Pg 161	Taught. Well understood
9	182	Drugs, youth and delinquency	-By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to state the causes of engagement into drugs	-Reading -Discussing -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK 1 Pg 161-163.	Covered
	397	Positive and negative sentences	-By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to construct positive and negative sentences and give them question tags	-Reading -Writing	EXPLORE Eng BK 1 Pg 164 - 165	Covered

Appendix 25: Eve's Form 1 scheme of work for week 8

SCHEME OF WORK

TEACHER.....

FORM..... TERM..... YEAR..... SUBJECT.....

WEEK	LESSON	CONTENT	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	REFS	REMARKS
8	1	TOPIC: Oral Literature SUB-TOPIC: Dilemma Narratives	By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to state the characteristics of dilemma narratives and their uses.	- Narration - Listening - Discussion	- Blackboard	Oral Literature by Odaga Akinyi	Well Taught ✓
	2	TOPIC: Listening and Speaking SUB-TOPIC Diphthong /ei/	By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to pronounce words with /ei/ sound correctly	- Reading - Listening - Explanations	Blackboard	Headstart students bk1 pg 114 Fos bk1 Pg 62	Well Covered ✓

SCHEME OF WORK

TEACHER.....

FORM.....TERM.....YEAR.....SUBJECT.....

WEEK	LESSON	CONTENT	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	REFS	REMARKS
	3	Topic: Reading SUB-TOPIC: Comprehension	- By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to answer questions on the passage.	- Silent reading - Listening - Writing		Headstart Students bkl Pg 145-146 Txs bkl Pg 63	Well Covered
	4	Topic Reading Sub-Topic Word power	By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to use new words correctly.	- Discussion - Listening - Reading	- Dictionary - Blackboard	Headstart - Students bkl Pg 147 Txs bkl Pg 63	Already Taught by the previous teacher
	5	Topic: Grammar SUB-TOPIC: Coordinating Conjunctions	By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to identify & use Coordinating Conjunctions correctly	- Speaking - Reading - Listening	- Blackboard - Chart	Headstart Students bkl Pg 148-149 Txs bkl Pg 63-64	Already Taught Successfully
	6	Topic: Reading SUB-TOPIC Metaphor in Poetry	By the end of the lesson the learner should be able to identify and explain the use of metaphors in Poetry	Expressive reading - Discussion	Understanding Poetry by E. A. Adebisi	B/B	Will be taught. Well taught as planned.

Appendix 26: Caro's scheme of work for Form 3 week 3

W K	LNS	TOPIC	CONTENT	OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	TEACHING AIDS	REFERENCE	REMARKS
III	1	Comprehension	Chief Messenger - Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the lesson, students should be able to; Explain the meaning of Vocabulary words in relation to their context. Use the Vocabulary words to construct correct sentences of their own. Identify character traits and compare the main characters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Discussion 	Chalkboard	Head Start Book 2 page 147.	- The lesson was successful.
	2	Grammar	Phrases: Adverbial Phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to; Identify Adverbial Phrases in a sentence. Explain features of an Adverbial phrase. Use Adverbial phrases to construct sentences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Sentence Construction Note taking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise books Chalkboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher's notes Head Start Book 2 page 150-151. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lesson was successful. The learners were very quick in grasping the main ideas and points.

WKS	TOPIC	CONTENT/ SUB TOPIC	OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	TEACHING AIDS	REFERENCE	REMARKS
3	Writing	Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to; Outline the Structure of an Imaginative Composition. Write an Imaginative Composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise books Chalkboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Book 2 Page 158 Teacher's notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I achieved my objectives
4	Poetry	Aspect of Style:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners should be able to; Identify the various aspect of style in the poem. State the functions of the sound devices in the poem. Dramatise the poem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Dramatisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise books Chalkboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Bullets begin to Flowers pg. 97 'We Must Plant' Teacher's notes KCSE Writing skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning was okay but time provided short so I was not able to tackle the functions of the sound devices
5	Listening / Speaking	Onomatopoeia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners should be able to; Give examples of Onomatopoeic words. Use Onomatopoeic words to construct own sentences. State functions of Onomatopoeic words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sentence construction Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chalkboard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Book 2 Page 174 Teacher's notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I managed to differentiate note between Onomatopoeia and Idioms. It was generally successful.

W K	LNS	TOPIC	CONTENT	OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	TEACHING AIDS	REFERENCE	REMARKS
	6.	Literature	The Novel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify relevance of title to the novel. - Summarize chapter 1 of the novel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading - Discussion in groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The novel 'Coming to Birth' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Guide to 'Coming to Birth' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I achieved my objectives - I extended to the next lesson because the teacher told me to.
IV	1	Comprehension	Passage 'Dolly is dead, will she live'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain the meaning of the vocabulary words in relation to their context in the passage - Answer the comprehension questions correctly on their books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading - Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passage - Chalkboard - Exercise books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headstart Book 2 page 154 and 156. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lesson was successful.
	2.	Grammar	Verbs; Auxilliary Verbs. (Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify verbs in their own sentence constructions. - Construct sentences with various types of auxilliary verbs. (Primary). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion - Writing notes - Constructing sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chalkboard - Exercise books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher's notes - Headstart Book 2 page 144. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managed to complete within time and introduce 'Model Verbs'

Appendix 27: Summary of Kenyan secondary English syllabus

FORM ONE

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

- a) **Pronunciation:** English sounds
- b) **Listening Comprehension** Listening and responding to oral narratives and riddles. Listening and responding to topical information on children's rights. c) **Mastery of Content:** Debate
- d) **Etiquette: Non-verbal cues:** Importance of respecting personal space.

GRAMMAR

1. Parts of speech: a) *Nouns:* Common nouns ii) Proper nouns iii) Concrete nouns – count - non-count iv) Abstract nouns v) Number - regular and irregular nouns vi) Articles b) *Pronouns:* i) Personal pronouns, ii) Possessive pronouns iii) Reflexive pronouns iv) Functions c) *Verbs:* Lexical – regular – irregular ; ii) Tenses - simple present tense, simple past tense d) *Adjectives:* Comparative and superlative forms, ii) Regular and irregular iii) Gradable and non-gradable e) *Adverbs:* Adverbs of manner, time and frequency f) *Prepositions:* Simple prepositions e.g. in, of, at g) *Conjunctions:* Co-ordinating (and, but, or) 2. **Phrases:** Constituents and examples of the noun phrase 3. **Simple sentences:** Sentence structure (subject, predicate); Types of sentences.

READING

- a) **Reading Skills:** i) Identification of the learner's reading problems in silent reading ii) Development of good reading habits. iii) Using a dictionary iv) Using the library b) **Extensive Reading:** Study of poems, plays and short stories. ii) Focus on plot and literary language. c) **Extensive Reading:** i) Literary and non-literary materials on contemporary issues ii) Adventure stories iii) Fairy tales iv) Poems v) Plays vi) Novels vii) Short stories viii) Newspapers/Magazines. d) **Comprehension Skills:** Recall, comprehension and application ii) Summary and note-making.

WRITING

- a) **Handwriting:** Legibility and tidiness b) **Spelling rules;** c) **Building sentence skills and paragraphing:** i) Writing clear and correct sentences. ii) Structure of the paragraph. c) **Personal writing:** i) Diaries ii) Addresses iii) Packing lists d) **Social Writing:** Informal letters e) **Study Writing:** i) Making notes ii) Taking notes f) **Creative Writing:** Imaginative compositions ii) Poems i) **Institutional Writing:** j) **Public writing;** i) notices ii) Inventories.

FORM TWO

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

- a) **Pronunciation:** Problematic sounds ii) Stress and intonation. iii) Rhyme in poetry iv) Word play b) **Listening Comprehension and Note-taking** i) Listening and responding to myths, legends and songs. iii) Listening and responding to topical information on issues of social responsibility. iii) Skills of attention and turn taking through use of dialogues. **Mastery of content – Interviews. Etiquette - Telephone etiquette Non-verbal skills:** i) Facial expressions, gestures and eye contact. ii) Bowing/curtsying.

GRAMMAR

1. Parts of speech a) *Nouns:* i) Collective nouns ii) Compound nouns iii) Use of phrasal quantifiers e.g. a piece of advice iv) Possessives b) *Pronouns:* i) Number and person in pronouns. ii) Indefinite pronouns. c) *Verbs:* Auxiliary verbs - primary and modal ii) Aspect - perfective and progressive iii) Future time d) *Adjectives:* Order of adjectives e) *Adverbs:* i) Adverbs of place and degree ii) Comparative and superlative forms of adverbs f) *Prepositions:* Complex prepositions e.g. in spite of g) *Conjunctions:* Subordinating conjunctions e.g. because, when, that, which h) *Interjections:* Identification and usage in sentences 2 **Phrases:** Constituents of verb and adverb phrases and examples 3. **Clauses:** a) Independent and subordinate clauses b) Compound sentences. c) Complex sentences. d) Active and passive voice.

READING

- a) **Reading Skills:** i) Scanning and skimming, ii) Using reference materials (library, encyclopaedia and the internet).iii) Interpretive reading. b) **Intensive reading:** i) Study of novels, plays and poems. ii) Focus on characterization and themes. iii) Aspects of style. c) **Extensive reading** Literary and non-literary materials on contemporary issues ii) Biographies iii) Novels iv) Plays v) Poems d) **Comprehension Skills** i) Recall, comprehension, application and analysis. ii) Summary and note-making.

WRITING

- a) **Spelling:** Commonly misspelt words; b) **Building sentence skills and paragraphing** Sentence variety; using simple, compound and complex sentences ii) Devices of developing paragraphs ; c) **Punctuation:** i) Quotation marks ii) Apostrophe iii) Hyphen d) **Study Writing:** i) Summaries ii) Descriptive essays e) **Creative Writing:** i) Poems ii) Imaginative compositions iii) Dialogues f) **Institutional Writing:** i) Business letters ii) Posters iii) Advertisements g) **Personal Writing:** i) Personal journals ii) Shopping lists h) **Social Writing:** Invitations i) **Public Writing:** i) Telephone messages ii) Filling forms iii) Letters of apology.

FORM THREE

LISTENING AND SPEAKING:

a) Pronunciation : i) Stress and intonation in sentences ii) Rhythm in poetry iii) Alliteration and assonance in poetry **b) Listening Comprehension and Note-taking** Listening and responding to information on : - HIV/AIDS - Rights and responsibilities of citizens; ii) Listening and responding to dilemma and aetiological oral narratives. Giving directions **c) Mastery of Content:** i) Discussion ii) Speeches **d) Etiquette:** Appropriate choice of register **Non-verbal cues that enhance listening and speaking, Appearance and grooming .**

GRAMMAR

1. Parts of speech **a) Nouns:** i) Typical noun derivations e.g. teach ... *er ee -ness -ship -ism* ii) Gender - sensitive language **b) Pronouns:** i) Pronoun case - subjective and objective ii) Demonstrative pronouns **c) Verbs** i) Transitive and intransitive verbs; Infinitives; Phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions; Participles. **d) Adjectives:** i) Quantifiers - few, a few, little, a little ii) Predicative and attributive adjectives i.e. position of adjectives **e) Adverbs:** i) Formation of adverbs ii) Functions of adverbs (modifiers) **f) Prepositions:** Distinguishing prepositions from connectors and adverb particles. **g) Conjunctions:** Correlative conjunctions, e.g. both-and; not only-but also neither-nor ; either -or **2. Phrases:** Prepositional and adjectival phrases **3. Clauses:** i) Conditional and adjectival clauses ii) Noun clauses iii) Compound-complex sentences iv) Direct and indirect speech - Form and usage.

READING

a) Reading skills: i) Study reading ii) Note-making iii) Critical reading iv) Recognising attitude and tone v) Distinguishing facts from opinions vi) Interpretive reading vii) Close reading **b) Intensive reading:** Study of novels, plays, poems and short stories; Focus on critical analysis of three prescribed texts: iii) Focus on oral literature **c) Extensive reading:** Literary and non-literary materials on contemporary issues such as: good governance - integrity , ii) Newspapers, Journals and magazines on a variety of subjects iii) Reports iv) Novels Plays vi) Poems v) Short stories. **d) Comprehension Skills:** Recall, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation ii) Summary and note-making.

WRITING

a) Building Sentence Skills and Paragraphing i) Cohesion in paragraphs ii) Using transitional words and phrases iii) Choice of words iv) Recurrent words **b) Punctuation:** i) Colon ii) Semi-colon iii) Dash iv) Parenthesis. **c) Personal writing** i) Reminders ii) Personal journals **d) Social writing:** i) Notes of thanks, congratulations and condolences ii) Telegrams **e) Public Writing:** Letters of application **f) Study Writing** i) Synopsis ii) Reports iii) Argumentative essays **g) Creative Writing:** i) Imaginative compositions ii) Plays iii) Short stories. **h) Institutional Writing:** i) Notification of meetings ii) Agenda and minute writing iii) Memoranda.

FORM FOUR

LISTENING AND SPEAKING:

a) Pronunciation: i) Distinguish word class on the basis of stress, ii) Use of tone to reveal attitude **b) Listening Comprehension and Note-taking:** Listen and respond to: i) Oral poetry ii) Proverbs **c)Mastery of content:** Oral reports **d) Etiquette:** Interrupting and disagreeing politely ii) Negotiation skills iii) Turn-taking iv) Paying attention (listening)

GRAMMAR

1. Parts of speech **a) Nouns:** Functions of nouns in sentences e.g. subject, object, complement **Pronouns:** i) Interrogative pronouns ii) Relative pronouns **c) Adverbs:** Position of adverbs in sentences ii) Typical endings of adverbs (e.g. *-ly, -wards, -wise*) **d) Prepositions:** Functions of prepositions in sentences **e) Conjunctions:** Functions of conjunctions in sentences **f) Clauses:** i) inversions ii) sentence connectors iii) substitution and ellipsis

READING

a) Reading Skills: i) Note-making ii) Study reading iii) Critical reading iv) Interpretive reading v) Responsive reading .vi) Recognising attitude and tone vii) Distinguishing facts from opinions **b) Intensive Reading:** Study of novels, plays, poems and short stories ii) Focus on critical analysis of prescribed texts: - I novel - I play - I play/novel/anthology of short stories iii) Focus on oral literature. **c)Extensive Reading:** i) Literary and non-literary materials on contemporary issues such as poverty eradication - drug and substance abuse ii) Journals and magazines on different subjects iii) Novels iv) Plays v) Poems vi) Short stories vii) Reports **d) Comprehension Skills:** i) Recall, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation.' ii) Summarising and note-making

WRITING:

a) Building sentence skills and paragraphing :Paraphrasing **b) Punctuation:** Devices for presenting titles of publications, quotations and headings **Personal writing, Recipes, Social writing:** i) E-mails ii) Fax . iii) Instructions to family friends **Public writing:** i) Letters of inquiry ii) Letters of request **Study writing:** i) Reviews ii) Expository writing iii) Questionnaires **Creative writing:** i) Imaginative compositions ii) Autobiographies , iii) Biographies, **Institutional writing** i) Curriculum vitae ii) Speeches.

Appendix 28: An example of observation notes (Ann's 1st observation)

Ann: first observation: date: 20/09/07; time: 2.00 - 2.40; form 1; wk 3, lesson 3. Topic: writing: addresses and diaries. Reference text: Headstart secondary English.

Objective: learner should be able to write diaries and address envelopes correctly.

Observation notes:

- Eleven learners present in class, seated in about four columns and three rows, all of them facing the front. It is a mixed class, six boys and five girls.
- Teacher erases previous writings on the Chalk Board (CB), a black painting on the wall in front of the class, writes topic on the CB (ADDRESSES AND DIARIES) before uttering a word to students.
- Thereafter, she greets the class (*good afternoon*), learners respond (*good afternoon madam*). She asks how they are – introduces me to class - we have a visitor – Mr. Ochieng' Ong'ondo. Students just smile. I greet the learners then sit at the back of the class, on an empty chair and desk.
- Teacher (TR) introduces topic – says the class would be learning how to write addresses and diaries during this lesson; she asks learners - “what’s a diary?”
- One learner volunteers an answer but stutters in the process- is not able to clearly explain because the learner does not seem to be fluent in English language. Teacher offers a definition, which she reads from her notes written on a book different from the lesson plan. i.e. *A diary is personal record of daily events*
- TR then reads aloud what she calls “further explanations” about diaries that students passively record in their notebooks.
 - E.g. a diary is a book – a personal record of daily events, appointments or observations.*
 - In a diary we also make notes of events or engagements before they take place.*
- TR calls students by name to answer certain questions which she asks about diaries but two students dominate.
- Teacher mixes a bit of English and Kiswahili e.g. ‘important to write notes so that you do not forget – *sawa* (meaning alright)?’
- TR uses CB randomly - no particular order and some items erased as soon as they are written, while others remain while they are not being used any more.
- Some learners are opening pages of books/ chewing their nails without regard to what’s happening.
- Asks students to write a diary over the weekend and hand in their books for checking on Monday. She says now let’s talk about addresses.

Addresses

- TR asks - “What are addresses?” One girl volunteers –“*details about a place*”
- Teacher then gives definitions – reads from her notes and asks students to copy in their note books.
- *E.g. Addresses give where a company or person can be found; i.e. name, building no street name, town or village.*
- TR then writes same information dictated to learners on CB; She adds:
Two types of addresses: Physical and Postal address.
- Learners remain passively seated, writing notes dictated by TR.
- TR shows a sample of a physical address - newspaper section that she had carried. She copies it - writes it on the CB and students copy.
 - State House Road Branch; 4 houses from main gate.*
- TR passes the newspaper with the example address around for learners to have a look - they glance at it others seem to look at other pictures on the newspaper; not

sure the learners knew what they were looking at while, teacher seemed to be reading something from her notes.

- When the learners pass the newspaper back to the teacher, she passes around another example this time, a tiny newspaper cutting that goes around the class, as teacher looks on tossing a piece of chalk from left to right hand.
- She asks the learners “*have you understood*”? Erases the information on the CB
- TR now requests learners to volunteer to write an example of a diary on chalkboard.
- When no learner offers, teacher nominates two of them to write diaries on CB; she calls them by name. These are the same students who had dominated the sessions in the class by answering most of the questions. It is noticeable that for all the answers the students give, the teacher says “*good*”.
- The two learners take pieces of chalk and write on different parts of the CB. Rest of the learners just look on.
- TR sits on one of the chairs left by learners who are writing and looks on.
- **First learner writes as follows:**

Diare [sic]

<i>Date:</i>	<i>21st jan (after thought)</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>Morning 8.00</i>
<i>Class teacher</i>	<i>Mr, Tanui</i>
<i>Place</i>	<i>staff room</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>after 4.00</i>
<i>Chairman</i>	<i>science club – Denis Muranga</i>
<i>Place</i>	<i>Chapel</i>
<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Basennath Vuyanzi</i>

- **Second student writes as follows:**

Mon-Friday

<i>4-5 am</i>	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
<i>5-6</i>	<i>Reading Biology</i>
<i>6-6.30</i>	<i>Preparation and taking breakfast</i>
<i>6.30-7.00</i>	<i>Coming to school</i>
<i>7-8</i>	<i>Morning preps</i>
<i>8-8.20</i>	<i>Assembly</i>
<i>8.20-10.00</i>	<i>Class</i>
<i>10.00-10.30</i>	<i>Break</i>
<i>10.30-11.00</i>	<i>Class</i>
<i>1.00-2.00</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
<i>2.00-4.00</i>	<i>Class</i>
<i>4.00-5.00</i>	<i>Games</i>
<i>5.00pm</i>	<i>Going home</i>

- The writing of diaries by learners on the CB takes fifteen minutes (2:20-2:35 as rest of class simply looked on - doing nothing and teacher also looked on quietly. Teacher then draws students’ attention to the diaries on the CB. She says: “*Second writer, include date; first writer, it is a good one*”
- Asks students to write their own diaries over the weekend.

End of lesson.