From official intentions to classroom practice: How do Cypriot primary school teachers respond to the new language curriculum

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Abstract

A new language curriculum for primary schools in Cyprus was implemented in 2012. This curriculum aimed to modernise not only the content of language subject matter, but also Cypriot society at large. Previous research in a range of contexts has shown that curriculum implementation is a complex process of negotiation between what is new and what is already there. This study investigates the enactment of the new language curriculum in Cyprus with a specific focus on personal factors (e.g. teacher cognitions), and context (e.g. school, professional development). The research adopted a sensemaking perspective on teachers' language curriculum enactment with an emphasis on meaning making and agency. Through a qualitative multiple case study over six months, meaning making and agency were elicited from ten teachers working in five primary schools in a large city in Cyprus. Data were collected through two classroom observations and three semi-structured interviews per teacher. Teacher interviews were used as the primary data source.

Whilst much previous research has focused on conceptualising agency as constrained or afforded by the context, this research demonstrates that agency is enacted by active agents who define what it is important to them during negotiations with their working contexts. Analysis suggests that teachers make meaning and enact agency in ways that show an active prioritisation work during which cognitions and contexts are contested and classroom priorities are manifested that direct teachers' agency either towards change or continuation of existing trajectories of action. Analysis regards teacher cognitions as the most influential element during this process. Yet, the effect of the context emerges as one that can help teachers to unfreeze from current ways of thinking and doing, or to favour continuation.

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List of Abbreviations

ALIAS	Academic Language Curriculum
CER	Committee of Educational Reform
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
CRQ	Central Research Question
e.g.	Exempli Gratia
ESL	English as Second Language
GPS	Georgia Performance Standards
i.e.	In Other Words
IN	Interview
MoEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
n.d.	No Date
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NLS	National Literacy Strategy
OBS	Observation
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
OISE	Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
par.	Paragraph
Q	Quote
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
RQ	Research Question
SFA	Success For All
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Organisation
UNESCO-IBE	United Nations Organisation- International Bureau Of Education

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Chapter: 1 Introduction

Curriculum innovations are being introduced with the intention to change the face of education or, in less radical terms, to replace outmoded content and ways of teaching. The 2010 educational reform in Cyprus (MoEC, 2010a, 2010b), as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, is undoubtedly an ambitious and far-reaching reform. It proposes fundamental changes, not merely in the teaching-learning process, but also in the underlying philosophy of what it means to teach language in the modern Cypriot society (MoEC, 2007). Founded upon the notion of critical literacy, and informed by genre-based pedagogy, the new language curriculum proposes a refocusing of what counts as good language teaching and learning, urging the teachers to engage their students with texts, activities, and classroom discourses that would encourage their development into critically literate individuals (MoEC, 2010a; 2010b). The change from the grammar-based and transmissive practices that permeated Cypriot classrooms for years (see Kyriakides, 1996), towards a more holistic, autonomous, and student-centred learning (MoEC, 2010a) signals the maturity of language curriculum policy in Cyprus. However, scholarship work suggests that the likely scenario for the new language curriculum is that it will inevitably be adjusted, stretched, and re-framed as it travels from the outside into the classroom arena (e.g. Ball et al., 2012; Fullan, 2007). This is one persisting issue; one that is part of the fabric of curriculum reform: that any new curriculum, despite its good intentions, depth, and intensity, cannot, and will not, regulate teachers' responses to it (Ball et al., 2012; Ben-Peretz, 1990; Cohen & Spillane, 1992).

What is it that influences, perhaps determines, teachers' responses to curriculum reforms? This question is not new to the field of curriculum implementation, as numerous reports on what has been referred to as "the paradox of change without difference" (Woodbury & Gess-Newsome, 2002, p. 771) have recognised teachers as central agents in determining the success of curriculum implementation (e.g.Gess-Newsome et al., 2003). To that end, scholarship work has shown that "teacher cognition – what teachers think, know, and believe" (Borg, 2003, p. 81) can pose hindrances to curriculum implementation. Research has also shown that sociocultural factors, those that can be categorised as arriving from the internal (e.g. school context) and external environment (e.g. accountability demands, professional development), can also influence the ways in which a new curriculum is noticed, understood, and enacted

(e.g. Ryder & Banner, 2013). From this point of view, whether or not a new curriculum will have an effect upon teachers' classroom practice and how they think about their subject matter, depends crucially on what is already there, and how teachers negotiate with a new curriculum *vis-à-vis* the affordances or limitations around them. These considerations were the driving force behind this study, which was formulated with the aim to investigate language curriculum enactment from the teachers' points of view. This study pursued this aim by adopting a sensemaking perspective on language curriculum enactment with a focus on meaning making and agency.

1.1 Conceptual Framework

The question of how Cypriot teachers enact the new language curriculum was framed by the understanding that change is a relational concept; signified in the relationship between teachers and their working contexts. This study viewed this relationship through the prism of a sensemaking perspective with a focus on meaning making and agency (see Chapter 5). In particular, this study conceptualised agency as being located within a sensemaking process consisting of three sensemaking elements in a state of negotiation: teachers' cognitions (e.g. beliefs about subject matter), school context, and official discourses of curriculum change; including both professional development, and the new language curriculum. The sensemaking framework for teacher agency, presented and discussed in Chapter 5, endeavours to re-position the teachers at the centre of a sensemaking process as active agents who define their responses to curriculum reforms on the basis of their cognitions, but also in consideration of their working contexts.

1.2 Research Questions and Research Design

The above conceptualisation of agency as being located within a sensemaking process of negotiation led to the central research question (CRQ) that is briefly discussed below. The CRQ helped to focus the research process on the teachers' meaning making and agency; the building blocks of the sensemaking process, as further discussed in Chapter 5.

CRQ: How do teachers make meaning and enact agency in the context of the new language curriculum?

The CRQ was framed by the understanding that agency is the outcome of a sensemaking process that involves both the teachers and their context in a state of negotiation. Locating agency within a sensemaking process – one that is both personal and context-sensitive – suggests the teachers' central role in defining their courses of action. Yet, it further underlines that teachers' decisions for action are not formed in isolation from their working contexts. The purpose of the CRQ was thus to investigate the factors, both personal and contextual, that are at play as the teachers make meaning and enact agency in the context of the new language curriculum.

The CRQ encouraged the adoption of an interpretivist/constructivist approach to the investigation of meaning making and agency. In short, the adopted interpretivist/constructivist point of view suggests that meaning making is resourced and agency is enacted as individuals interact with their world. This conceptualisation led to the acknowledgement that, to investigate something that is not yet given - i.e. teachers' meaning making and agency – requires starting from something that is manifested as a result: teachers' curriculum enactment. The rationale behind this understanding was, by exploring the teachers' curriculum enactment, as well as their reflections on their curriculum enactment, would lead to an understanding of how the teachers negotiate their meaning of the new language curriculum and enact their agency within their working contexts. Emerging from this way of thinking are the two research questions (RQ) that are presented below. RQ1 and RQ2 helped to address the fundamental intention of this study: to explore the teachers' sensemaking process in the context of curriculum change.

- RQ1: How do teachers enact the new language curriculum inside their classrooms?

- RQ2: How do the three sensemaking elements influence teachers' curriculum enactment?

Both RQ1 and RQ2 directed the research process towards the investigation of how the teachers' meaning making was resourced and agency was enacted, as they were negotiating with the new language curriculum within their working contexts. In short, the purpose of the RQs was to investigate curriculum enactment, teachers' reflections upon their curriculum

enactment, and connections between curriculum enactment and teachers' cognitions, their experiences with official discourses of curriculum change, and their experiences of belonging within their schools (i.e. the three sensemaking elements). The RQs, as well as the CRQ, are further discussed in Chapter 6.

Meaning making and agency were elicited from ten research participants working in five different schools in a large city in Cyprus. This study thus adopted a multiple case study to investigate the teachers' meaning making and agency in the context of the new language curriculum. Due to the intention to investigate curriculum enactment and the connections between curriculum enactment and the three sensemaking elements, this study used a combination of research instruments in order to promote deeper and fuller descriptions of meaning making and agency. In particular, classroom observations and one-to-one interviews with the participating teachers were employed for the purpose of addressing RQ1 and RQ2. The conduct of this study was longitudinal (six months).

1.3   Research Context

This study was centred on primary school teachers. This decision was influenced by the professional background of the researcher, and because primary education in Cyprus provides an interesting field of study. Being under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC), primary schools are responsible for carrying out the government's policies and legislations (UNESCO-IBE, 2012). Implementing the national curriculum is thus part of primary school teachers' contract which they accept once appointed by the government (Kyriakides, 1996). Investigating primary school teachers' responses to the new language curriculum was believed that it could elicit interesting findings in relation to how teachers make meaning and enact agency in the context of a highly centralised educational system.

This study is positioned amidst the broader national efforts to (re)professionalise Cypriot teachers. In particular, the fruition of the new language curriculum was thought to depend crucially upon the teachers and the expectation that they expand their professional repertoire so as to embrace a new role; that of "professional pedagogue" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3). This role was associated with teachers' increased autonomy in selecting their classroom materials, and making curriculum decisions that would serve their students' interests in the context of critical literacy. Being a "professional pedagogue" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3) was further interpreted as teachers who concern themselves with "self-education, education, and self-improvement"

(MoEC, 2007, p. 3). This study provides an interesting account on how the teachers participating in this study acted in response to the government's calls for increased autonomy inside their classrooms.

1.4 Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 discusses the 2010 educational reform and places emphasis on the social and political factors that culminated in the development of the new language curriculum. Chapter 2 also discusses the curriculum implementation process and provides a brief elaboration on the educational system in Cyprus. Chapter 3 discusses the two waves of language education in Cyprus, their pedagogical orientations and the differences between them. Chapter 3 further discusses some of the misgivings associated with critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy. Chapter 4 reviews the literature from the prism of what informs and influences teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. Chapter 5 introduces the sensemaking framework for teacher agency, and elaborates on the way teacher agency was conceptualised within this study. Chapter 6 discusses, among other topics, the process of data collection and analysis. Chapter 7 presents and interprets the results of the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) that was performed with the purpose to analyse the content of the new language curriculum. Chapter 8 presents and interprets the research data as they relate to RQ1 and RQ2. Chapter 9 discusses the research findings in terms of the CRQ. This study concludes with Chapter 10, which concentrates on discussing the implications of this study for policy planning and development, professional development, schools, and future research.

Chapter 2: The Context of Curriculum Change

2.1 Introduction

In 2004, a comprehensive report (i.e. MoEC, 2004) developed by a group of academics (Curriculum Reform Committee) appointed by the MoEC, culminated in the modernisation of the educational system in Cyprus: from decentralising governmental control to changing the curricula of all the levels of education. This report planted the seeds for what came to be regarded as the first educational reform ever to be pursued by the country (see MoEC, 2004; 2007; 2010a). Launched in 2010 as part of this major educational reform, the new language curriculum entailed – according to the government's declarations (e.g. MoEC, 2010b) – two great departures: one being the promotion of critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy, and the other being the transformation of decades old teaching practices that were thought to run counter to the vision for developing a "democratic and modern school" (MoEC, 2007, p. 15).

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, it serves to discuss the approaches to language education in Cyprus with a view on identifying the sociopolitical and pedagogical influences that permeated language curriculum policies, from the years following the country's Independence, until the major educational reform of 2010, where the need to revise all the curricula was communicated to the teachers and the public through a set of aspiring proposals and publications (e.g. MoEC, 2004; 2007, 2010a; 2010b). Secondly, it discusses the process of curriculum change, from the development of the new curricula to their implementation. Section 2.2. concentrates on discussing the sociopolitical and pedagogical influences that have permeated language curriculum policies over the years. Section 2.3. elaborates on the process of curriculum change, and section 2.4 discusses the educational system in Cyprus and the current measures taken by the government to facilitate the decentralisation and modernisation of the educational system.

2.2 Approaches to Language Curriculum Policies in Cyprus

It is widely accepted that educational policies are deeply social and political in their nature, and that they reflect the values and norms that, from time to time, are regarded to be important

for the wellbeing and continuation of a society (Cross et al., 2002; Hall & McGinty, 1997; House, 2000). This is particularly true for policies related to language education; a domain which is often shaped and re-shaped as a result of the constant socio-political pressures that are exercised upon it, particularly in countries where language is thought to be closely associated with the identity of a nation (see Ioannidou, 2012). The case of Cyprus represents an example of this sort, as language education is all too often being used as an arena in which political positions are contested (see Koutselini & Persianis, 2000; Persianis, 1981). The country's socio-political framework, characterised by a recent history of warfare and the persistent efforts to unify the nation ever since (MoEC, 2001), has given rise to unstable language policies, result of the different axioms that were pushed forward by the different political parties that were occasionally in the forefront (Philippou & Klerides, 2010). This is not to suggest that pedagogical influences were disregarded by the country. However, the case of Cyprus suggests that the pedagogical dimension is often being promoted to mainly serve socio-political objectives which, perhaps inevitably, set the tone for a new trend in language education (Persianis, 1981).

Attachment to the teaching of the Greek language has been the constant trend of the country ever since its establishment in 1960 (Ioannidou, 2012; Persianis, 1981). In the years that followed the country's Independence, nationalist voices strongly maintained their position that, by defending the Greek language, the country would also defend its Greek roots, history and values (Persianis, 1981). The events of 1974 had, perhaps, an expected impact upon the rhetoric of the language curriculum policy. The partition of the country strengthened and renewed the Greek-Christian ideals (Persianis, 1981) and, up until the early 1990s, the language curriculum policy made reference to the importance of the continuation of the Greek heritage through the teaching of grammar (Philippou & Klerides, 2010). This early curriculum policy – largely following Greece's paradigm – made explicit reference to the importance of acquiring technical reading and writing skills, and disregarded other linguistic skills, such as the enhancement of oral skills (Charalambopoulos, 1999). With the rise of the right-wing government in the 1990s, the tendency of Cyprus to identify itself with Greece would become even more overt with the adoption of the same pedagogy, teaching guides, and textbooks (Ioannidou, 2012). At the time, Greece's language policy was influenced by the communicative approach to language teaching (Charalambopoulos, 1999). The same approach was thus adopted by Cyprus within its 1994 language curriculum (Ioannidou, 2012). Communicative language teaching emphasised the study of language within its communicative context, while the mere focus on the acquisition of technical skills was

strongly criticised (Charalambopoulos, 1999). Yet, according to researchers (e.g. Kyriakides, 1996), the 1994 language curriculum never really served its purpose, as the teaching of grammar remained the central focus of the Cypriot teachers. A few years later, and with the aim of becoming a full member of the European Union, the government of Cyprus asked UNESCO to carry out an evaluation of its educational system. Published in 1997, the UNESCO Report (1997) represents the first steps of the country towards drafting its own educational policy without following the footsteps of Greece. The UNESCO Report (1997) concluded to the lack of a clear policy on child-centred activities. In responding to UNESCO recommendations, the government appointed a Committee of Educational Reform (CER) to examine the prospects of educational change. Soon after its appointment, the CER responded with its 2004 *Manifesto*, culminating in the "[d]emocratisation of the pedagogical-didactic process – of the pedagogical relationship between teachers and students, [and] the environment of teaching and learning" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3).

The 2004 socio-political context of Cyprus was thus quite different from that which prevailed until the mid-1990s. The accession of the country to the European Union in 2004 signalled the need for education in Cyprus to embark on detaching itself from the monolithic rhetoric that persisted for years (MoEC, 2004), and to direct its efforts towards serving the visions of Europe for educating its citizens for the knowledge-based society (Tessaring & Wannan, 2004). The aim to "[r]evise and update the content of education (school knowledge, national curricula, didactic/ learning process)" (MoEC, 2004, p. 8) came as a natural response from the then government, yet the prospect of revising the national curricula remained stagnant for years. It was not until 2008, and with the election of the left-wing government (see Table 1), that the cycle of curriculum change was re-initiated (Ioannidou, 2012). The left-wing government espoused the proposals of CER (MoEC, 2004) and further pronounced the need to modernise "the subject-matter content, the methods of teaching and learning [and] the learning environment" (CER, 2008, p. 9).

The new language curriculum, published in 2010 and implemented in 2012, was moulded upon the notion of critical literacy and informed genre-based pedagogy (MoEC, 2010a; 2010b). These notions were quite prominent at the time, particularly due to the increased attention of the academic community on critical inquiry (e.g. Behrman, 2006; Clark et al., 1990; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004; Morgan, 1997), and literacy education (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Freire & Macedo, 1987). Literacy was also gaining a momentum within the European Union as well, with the then official agendas (e.g. Commission of the European

Communities, 2008; The European Parliament and the Council of European Union, 2006) making explicit reference to literacy as being one of the key competences that European citizens should enhance for the sake of establishing Europe as "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (Tessaring & Wannan, 2004, p. 3). England was already in the midst of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS), characterised by Stannard and Huxford (2007, p. 1) as "the biggest educational reform programme of its kind in the world". The NLS, implemented in 1997, aimed to raise literacy standards with the introduction of the 'literacy hour' and the teaching of phonics, both of which targeted the enhancement of reading, writing, spelling and comprehension skills at the primary school level (Beard, 1998).

The term 'critical literacy' (see Chapter 3) refers to the education of learners who adopt a critical stance towards the texts that surround them (Ioannidou, 2015). Along with the introduction of the new language curriculum, a new era was thus beginning for the Cypriot society; one that sought to push education to new heights by proposing the development of *critically literate individuals* who:

> claim their rights in a democratic way and fight every form of
> social discrimination (due to nationality, different linguistic and
> cultural background, gender, sexuality, disability or any other
> form of 'difference', constructed by the power culture) (MoEC,
> 2010b, p. 10).

The above remark encapsulates the effort of the Cyprus government to re-educate the learners towards a profound awareness of self and of others, and to refabricate the nature of language teaching by adding a sense of moral and ethical connotation to it. In particular, the new language curriculum envisioned to replace the once myopic goggles through which language education was perceived, with skills and competences that bore a renewed sense of what it meant to be a learner in the modern Cypriot society. Aspirations such as educating students capable of exploring how texts "structure social relations, reproduce stereotypical and sexists positions, proclaim particular ways of viewing reality as 'given'" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 10), served to trigger an emotional awareness of how self should be positioned in relation to others, and to communicate social cohesion and tolerance as virtues to be adhered and demonstrated by students of all ages.

This profound social dimension – documented for the first time in Cyprus' years (Ioannidou, 2012) – cannot be discussed in isolation from the social forces that impinged upon the Cypriot society. Following the country's accession to the European Union, the Cypriot society was increasingly becoming multicultural and, as a result of that, the Cyprus educational system was increasingly becoming single-dimensional. The idea of Greek identity was not necessarily abandoned (see MoEC, 2004), yet it was promoted along with the necessary emancipation from the xenophobic rhetoric that carried itself around for years in fear that the Greek roots of the country would be tainted somehow (Hadjioannou et al., 2011; Persianis, 1981). Building the new language curriculum upon the notions of critical literacy and genre-base pedagogy; notions that urge for the development of learners who are tolerant towards any form of difference (see MoEC, 2010a; 2010b), was thus a decision that served the continuation of a society that was becoming more diverse than ever.

But apart from the social dimension and the callings for social inclusion, the new language curriculum also served political agendas. In 2004, the then right-wing government urged its people to exercise veto to the UN plan for union and, a few months later, a divided country entered the European Union, but with the expectation to resolve the Cyprus issue (Ioannidou, 2012). With the rise of the communist party in 2008, the then left-wing government took a firm stance on reviving the country's reunification efforts. Yet, in order for such efforts to be fruitful, a new mind-set was required. By December of the same year, a circular arrived to all the schools in Cyprus, urging the "Greek-Cypriot community to claim its right and opportunity to live peacefully and without restrictions in a free country" (CER, 2008, p. 2). The new government thus used education as a platform to nourish a new national standing. Within the new language curriculum, the notions of critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy became the vehicles for pursuing an eventual conceptual change in the minds of students of all ages, who were now encouraged to exhibit respect to others, namely the Turkish Cypriots, so they would grow into accepting their eventual co-existence (see MoEC, 2010a).

2.3   Curriculum Development and Implementation

Once the decision to pursue the educational reform was determined (i.e. MoEC, 2004), the CER – composed of nine specialists in the field of education and the three presidents of teachers' unions (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a) – began working on the development of the new curricula for all the levels of education (see Table 1). Participation in the development of

the new curricula, including the new language curriculum, involved twenty-one inter-departmental committees (MoEC, 2010a) appointed by the MoEC. The inter-departmental committees, composed of 53 academics and 360 volunteer teachers (MoEC, 2011), broke down their curriculum subjects into units which were then arranged sequentially by grade level (MoEC, 2010a). The MoEC further announced the appointment of Advisory Councils which helped to exercise professional judgment over the curricula developed by the inter-departmental committees. The Cyprus Educational Council, the Primary and Secondary Educational Council, and the Higher Educational Council (i.e. the Advisory Councils) (MoEC, 2007) were establish to facilitate the communication between the centre (i.e. governmental level) and the periphery (i.e. the inter-departmental committees) and thus to maintain the control of the MoEC over the developed curricula. The Advisory Councils also acted as intermediaries between the teachers and the inter-departmental committees (MoEC, 2010a). The new curricula, as the MoEC would later confirm, resulted out of the participation of "all the people who are part of the teaching process" (MoEC, 2010a, p. 10). Developed as a result of a "public endeavour" (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a, p. 9) that was initiated in March 2010 and concluded a month later (see Table 1), the new curricula were based on the premise that "within a democratic society, it is not permitted for any citizen to be excluded from discussions regarding the purpose and goals of education" (MoEC, 2010a, p. 10). Despite the government's declarations that all comments made during the public dialogue were addressed (see Pedagogical Institute, 2010a), no document exists to explain how the CER and the Councils acted on "correcting, completing and improving the curricula" (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a, p. 10). Table 1 below summarises the process of curriculum development and implementation.

Period	Activity
1997	UNESCO Report
2004	CER responding to UNESCO Report with its *Manifesto of Educational Reform*
2008	Change of the government: CER develops its *Proposal* echoing the necessity to revise the national curricula
2009	Set up of Inter-departmental committees
2009	Inter-departmental committees working on the curricula
July, 2009	Set up of Advisory Councils
October, 2009	The inter-departmental committees deliver their curricula to the Advisory Councils
March, 2010	Start of the public dialogue
April, 2010	End of public dialogue
2010-2011	Piloting of the new curricula
2011	In-service training
2011-2012	Implementation of the new curricula

Table 1 The process of curriculum development and implementation. Sources: MoEC (2004; 2007; 2010a; 2011), CER (2008), Pedagogical Institute (2010a; 2010b)

The school year 2010-2011 was planned for piloting the new curricula (Pedagogical Institute, 2010b). The implementation of the new curricula was planned for the school year 2011-2012 (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a). When the piloting of the new curricula was completed in 2011 (see Table 1), the Pedagogical Institute announced a series of professional development seminars for the teachers to attend to, participation in which was voluntary (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a). Despite being voluntary, professional development was explicitly linked to classroom innovation and encouraged teachers' fidelity to the new curricula. As the Pedagogical Institute (2010b, p. 21) remarked, the purpose of professional development was "for teachers to realise the new components of the new curricula […] to accept them and to immediately adopt them in their teaching". The Pedagogical Institute also proceeded with the development of an online depository bank to help the teachers align the new curricula with their existing teaching guides and textbooks (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a; 2010b). The online depository bank included suggestions for activities and classroom materials that the teachers could use during classroom teaching. The online depository, as well as the professional development opportunities that were arranged for the teachers, were largely considered as the mediums for bringing the change at the classroom level. As the Pedagogical Institute (2010a, p. 16) stated:

> The successful implementation of the new curricula is based on
> two pillars: (a) on the professional development […] of the in-

service teachers who will implement them, and (b) on the development of an online depository bank for every subject-matter with the purpose of making sure that the teaching material that is available at the moment inside the classrooms […] corresponds to the values and content of the new curricula.

2.4   The Educational System in Cyprus

2.4.1   Decentralisation of power and control

Cyprus educational system is currently aiming towards decentralising the power and control (see European Commission, 2018) that was held by the MoEC which, for years, was the sole determinant for enforcing educational policies, laws, and legislations as well as for the teachers' appointments and promotions (UNESCO-IBE, 2012). Cyprus educational system has been widely criticised for being highly conservative and bureaucratic (see Charalambous & Karagiorgi, 2002; Karagiorgi, 2005; 2012; Philippou et al., 2014). Centralisation was such that there was a constant flow of teaching instructions from the government to the schools (Kyriakides, 1996; 1997), stipulated mostly through the government's approved teaching guides and textbooks which the teachers were expected to use in their classrooms (UNESCO-IBE, 2012). With the MoEC remaining responsible for the enforcement of educational laws and legislations, it was thought possible to preserve the Greek-Cypriot identity of the country (Ioannidou, 2012) – as discussed in section 2.2. – to monitor the content of the teaching guides and textbooks, and to regulate the uniformity in the implementation of the country's curricula (Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2006; 2007).

The idea to decentralise the educational system in Cyprus gained prominence within the CER's *Manifesto* (MoEC, 2004) and *Strategic Planning* report (MoEC, 2007). Within both reform documents, CER made explicit reference to the need to devolve powers from the centre (i.e. MoEC) to the periphery (i.e. schools) by holding schools accountable for meeting performance targets, including the implementation of the national curricula. Although steps were taken towards school autonomy and decentralisation, the European Commission Report on Cyprus, published in 2018, suggests that there is yet a long way to go until efforts to decentralise control reach a satisfactory level:

> Overall, school autonomy remains limited, as school principals have no discretion over budgetary issues or appointment of

teachers, both of which are organised centrally (European Commission, 2018, p. 6).

2.4.2   Teacher appraisal scheme

Although the requirement to update the teacher appraisal scheme in Cyprus surfaced in 1997 through the UNESCO Report (1997), it remained unchanged for years and continued to function under the paradigm of inspectorate supervision, established as early as 1976 (MoEC, 2004). Specifically, ever since 1976, teacher appraisal was carried out by school inspectors, appointed by the MoEC with the duty to evaluate the teachers against their implementation of the national curricula (MoEC, 2004). For many years, academics and researchers were raising their concerns regarding the teacher appraisal scheme in Cyprus, suggesting that it deprives the teachers from their sense of professionalism, as it gives them no incentives to better their practice (see MoEC, 2004; 2007; Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012). Their commentaries would frequently make reference to an "outdated and counterproductive" teacher appraisal scheme, "an inseparable part of a centralised-bureaucratic system", which was mainly concerned with teacher promotions, instead of recognising and promoting teacher excellence (MoEC, 2004, p. 15). In 2007, and having already communicated to the government the need to embark on reforming the educational system (see MoEC, 2004), the CER repeated:

> […] a new teacher appraisal scheme should be established to serve the real benefits of education, make use of the teachers on the basis of their value, competences and seniority, and not to include them in a waiting list on the basis of their birth certificate (MoEC, 2007; p. 93).

Despite the official intentions, teacher appraisal scheme would remain unchanged for another 12 years, mainly due to the resistance of teacher unions (Karagiorgi, 2010). Yet the idea of reforming the teacher appraisal scheme was never really abolished, but it was apparent that it was put aside for a while, particularly during the troublesome years of the Cyprus financial crisis of 2013 (Ioannou & Charalambous, 2017). The discussion on teacher appraisal scheme was revived a few years later (see MoEC, 2019a). In January 2019, a comprehensive proposal entitled 'The development of the new appraisal scheme' was submitted for the review of the Minister of Education and Culture (see MoEC, 2019b). Developed as an effort to reverse the criticisms related to the lack of "ongoing support to the teachers" (MoEC, 2019b, p. 2), and "the lack of clear criteria that would satisfy the multifaceted work of teachers" (MoEC, 2019b,

p.11), the 2019 proposal departs from the notion of inspectorate, and proposes its replacement with internal evaluation procedures from teacher counselors (MoEC, 2019b). Teacher counselors, according to the proposal, will also be responsible to establish feedback mechanisms between them and the teachers that would enable the constant update of the criteria being used to evaluate the teachers. The new appraisal scheme also includes suggestions for the development of more career progression options (senior teacher) instead of one (i.e. promotion to head teacher role) (see MoEC, 2019b, p. 2). The goal, according to the committee responsible for the development of the 2019 proposal, is to "develop an appraisal scheme that would help to enhance the quality of the education that is provided" to teachers and from teachers (MoEC, 2019b, p. 14). Discussions on the new appraisal scheme commenced in July 2019 (MoEC, 2019a).

2.4.3 Teacher learning and development

Professional development in Cyprus is provided by the government's Pedagogical Institute which aims "for the continuous professional development of the teachers of all grade levels and for informing them of the occasional trends in education" (Pedagogical Institute, 2010-2019 par. 8). Professional development includes courses to the teachers in all the districts of Cyprus through a series of optional seminars and conferences (MoEC, 2017). The Pedagogical Institute has been largely criticised for failing to motivate the teachers to engage with on-going professional development (see Charalambous & Karagiorgi, 2002; Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2006). Some researchers (e.g. Charalambous & Karagiorgi, 2002) posit that the voluntary character of professional development, in conjunction with the fact that participation in the seminars is not rewarded (MoEC, 2004), deprives the teachers from their zeal to engage with on-going learning opportunities, as they see no benefit out of their participation. Other researchers attribute the teachers' unwillingness to engage with prolonged professional development to the content of the seminars being provided by the Pedagogical Institute, suggesting that the seminars do not meet the teachers' in-service training needs (e.g. Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2007).

2.5 Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 discussed the history of language curriculum policy in Cyprus, from the years of the country's Independence until the years that followed the 2010 major educational reform, which sought to redefine the purpose and content of language education. Chapter 2 paid

particular emphasis on the new language curriculum and discussed the ways in which its content, as well as its purpose, were informed by social factors and political agendas. The Chapter that follows delves deeper into the new language curriculum and the pedagogical underpinnings upon which it was founded.

Chapter 3: The New Language Curriculum

3.1   Introduction

The new language curriculum aspired to make real changes, not only in the teaching-learning process and the materials used inside the classroom, but also in the way language itself is viewed and studied (MoEC, 2010b). Moulded upon the notion of critical literacy and informed by genre-based pedagogy, the new language curriculum signaled the departure from the acquisition of technical reading and writing skills in a decontextualised manner, to the study of language as a social practice and an ideological construct (MoEC, 2010b). It was discussed in Chapter 2 that much of the curriculum change activity in Cyprus was triggered by political and pedagogical influences which, throughout the years, pushed language education in Cyprus to vastly different directions. On the one hand, the political dimension – particularly influential during the eighties and nineties – politicised education by promoting nationalistic ideas through the then language policies (e.g. the 1994 language curriculum). On the other hand, the pedagogical dimension, of which its influence became apparent in the years that followed the 2008 circular (CER, 2008), sought to push language education to higher grounds and, ultimately, to novel ideas about language teaching. In continuation of Chapter 2, this Chapter discusses two significant waves of language policy in Cyprus – the communicative approach to language teaching, and the 2010 new language curriculum – and elaborates on their main differences. Section 3.2 discusses the values and ideas promoted by the communicative approach to language teaching as well as the criticism it has attracted. Section 3.3 discusses the pedagogical underpinnings upon which the new language curriculum was based (i.e. critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy), and identifies its similarities with the Australian critical literacy theory (see Luke, 2000) and England's NLS (see Beard, 2000). Section 3.4 identifies and elaborates on the main differences between the communicative approach to language teaching and the new language curriculum. Section 3.5 discusses some of the misgivings associated with critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy.

3.2   The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching

In the 1990s, genre theory was already prominent in Australia's curriculum (see Derewianka, 2015; Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997) and England had already turned towards functional grammar in an effort to raise literacy standards in primary schools (see Beard, 2000). This shift to the practical functions of language, however, was not made evident in the language policy in Cyprus. In the late 1980s, and whilst following Greece's paradigm, language education in Cyprus brought about an attempt to encourage the departure from the teaching of grammar in an isolated manner in favour of more communicative models. This shift eventually led to the renewed 1994 language curriculum of Cyprus and its increased emphasis on the communicative approach to language teaching (Charalambopoulos, 1999). It can be asserted that the adoption of the communicative approach to language teaching in the 1994 language curriculum of Cyprus – which remained in effect for more than a decade, despite the changing trends in language teaching (Halliday, 2014) – mainly served the country's national agenda. Following closely the language curriculum of Greece, both in terms of its pedagogy and, importantly, its target language (i.e. standard modern Greek), amounted to suggesting the Greek roots of Cyprus (Ioannidou, 2012). It was not until a decade later that Cyprus would enter its second period of language policy; exhibiting its receptiveness to new theories of language education.

Despite the political agenda that the 1994 language curriculum was developed to serve, the decades of the eighties and nineties were characterised by an increased attention to the role performed by authentic communication and meaning giving in language learning. Following the era during which the writings of Chomsky on linguistic structures started to attract criticism for being too narrowly focused on the technicalities of language (see Hymes, 1972), the communicative approach was welcomed as an alternative paradigm that served to counter the limited attention that was payed – up until that point in time – to the communicative function of language (Hadjioannou et al., 2011; Tsiplakou et al., 2006). In contrast to the emphasis that was previously paid on the structure of language, the communicative approach proposed a re-focusing from traditional grammar to the teaching of language as a unified whole (see Hymes, 1972). The fundamental notion underpinning the communicative approach was that – in learning a target language – the mastery of structural elements is important; but equally important is the ability to use those structural elements in a variety of communicative situations, and in ways appropriate to social contexts. As Hymes (1972, p. 278) neatly stated: "There are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless". The

communicative approach was thus concerned with changing how language was viewed and learnt by proclaiming the interdependence of language and the social context in which it is produced and for which it is indented.

Having grown out of the writings of Hymes (1972) in which he advocated the social dimension of language, the communicative approach sought to move language education beyond the mere mastery of the technical reading and writing skills and, ultimately, to endowed students with communicative competences. Such competences, according to Tsiplakou et al. (2006, p. 381), related to students' "capacity to modify and adjust their language in difference to the audience and the social conventions and expectations regulating the interaction". Translated to classroom practice, the communicative approach viewed language as a semantic and social function, and aimed to enhance students' abilities to use language in a variety of communicative situations and social contexts. With its declared objective being the development of students into "capable users of the language" (Hadjioannou et al., 2011, p. 513), the communicative approach sought to transfer the emphasis from the teaching of grammatical structures to the development of students' communicative skills. In the context of Cyprus, the communicative approach was promoted through the country's 1994 language curriculum and its complementary teaching guides and textbooks (Ioannidou, 2012). The classroom materials that the Cypriot teachers were using during that period were promoting themes that revolved around children's daily lives. The then textbooks were permeated with stories that provided the teachers with the platform to teach language as a social and communicative construct (Hadjioannou et al., 2011). Language was, therefore, encouraged to be taught in its social context, while the sole emphasis on the teaching of grammar was regarded as an obsolete paradigm. Rather, the teachers were encouraged to teach grammar in a holistic way and insofar as it helped the students to realise its communicative function within texts (Charalambopoulos, 1999). In this context, language teaching was concerned with the development of the technical skills and their integration, so that students would be capable to adopt language to its communicative context and audience (Tsiplakou et al., 2018).

Teachers who were educated in the communicative approach were taught how to promote the teaching of language as a natural communicative process (Kossivaki, 1998; 2003b). Teacher education programmes emphasised on promoting the understanding that language is not merely a rule-governed system of technicalities. Rather, teacher preparation programmes were founded upon the idea that the basic technical skills (e.g. reading and writing) were to be

regarded as an integrated system, and that their cultivation was to be achieved through communicative models (Kossivaki, 2003a). For this reason, prospective teachers were encouraged to assume a student-centred approach to the teaching of language, in contrast to the long-standing teacher-centred approach which was now being criticised for neglecting the importance of students' active participation to the learning process (Kossivaki, 2003a). The prospective communicative teachers were educated on how to promote real communication during classroom teaching, and were encouraged to integrate teaching strategies and approaches (e.g. role-playing and story-telling) that would enable their students to assume a more active role inside the classroom (Kossivaki, 2003a). The argument, according to Kossivaki (2003a), was that students have varying learning needs as they relate to their specific characteristics, prior experiences, and knowledge base, and that not all students learn in the same manner. During the era of the communicative approach, teacher education programmes invested in equipping the prospective teachers with the teaching toolkit necessary for addressing their students' varying learning needs. The ultimate goal of the teacher education programmes was to prepare the teachers to establish communicative classrooms, in which both them and their students behave, and respond to each other, as equal participants to the communicative process (Kossivaki, 1998).

3.2.1   Critique on the communicative approach to language teaching

The decades of the eighties and nineties were characterised by an increased attention to the communicative function of language and the growing awareness of the importance of engaging students with authentic communication (see Ioannidou, 2012). Despite its prominence, however, the communicative approach was not universally accepted. In fact, it became a subject of critique, particularly from those who regarded the communicative approach as proposing a simplified way of learning a target language (see Swan, 1985). In his critique on the communicative approach to language teaching, Swan (1985) made broad claims about its usefulness – both as a language theory and a language practice – suggesting that its objectives were too broad and thus inevitably vacuum. His claim below is telling of his position in relation to the communicative approach:

> […] it [the communicative approach] over-generalizes valid but limited insights until they become virtually meaningless; it makes exaggerated claims for the power and novelty of its doctrines; it misrepresents the currents of thought it has replaced; it is often characterized by serious intellectual confusion; it is chocked with jargon (Swan, 1985, p. 2).

From Swan's (1985) point of view, the objective to enhance students' communicative skills oversimplified the way language is acquired and mastered, and led to the disregard of the technical aspects of language and the role of grammar in meaning making. A similar view was expressed by Cameron (2007) who asserted that the communicative approach to language teaching, by virtue of its goal to raise students' communicative competences, should primarily emphasise on the development of reading and writing skills. Cameron (2007) explained that, since grammar is an integral part of language, its teaching should be a prerequisite inside the communicative classrooms. At the classroom level, however, this dispute had few immediate consequences for the Cypriot teachers. Many studies that were carried out during that period suggest that the teachers' practice bore little resemblance to the communicative approach and that, despite the efforts to move the teaching of language to holistic and communicative models, classroom practice remained focused on more traditional approaches to language instruction (e.g. Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Kyriakides, 1996). As Karavas-Doukas (1996, p. 187) concluded:

> Broadly speaking, the communicative approach appears to have brought innovation more on the level of theory than on the level of teachers' actual classroom practice.

From the point of view of Karavas-Doukas (1996), the communicative approach was hard to follow and was accompanied by inadequate teacher training. Her critique was concentrated on the content of professional development, as it seemed to have been focused more on "transmitting information about the new approach and persuading teachers of its effectiveness" (Karavas-Doukas, 1996, p. 194) and less on supporting the teachers to change the core of their practice. The communicative approach, as a language policy introduced in a diglossic country such as Cyprus, was also criticised for excluding the fostering of Greek language varieties beyond the standard modern Greek (Tsiplakou et al., 2018). This disregard to nonstandard Greek dialects would later be tackled with the launch of the 2010 new language curriculum; of which its declared objective of developing critically literate individuals (see MoEC, 2010b) would serve to leverage the diglossic situation in Cyprus (e.g. standard modern Greek and Greek-Cypriot dialect).

3.3   The Change to Critical Literacy and Genre-Based Pedagogy

Critical literacy was initially proposed by critical pedagogues (e.g. Freire, 2005; Freire & Macedo, 1987; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Shor & Freire, 1987) who sought to emancipate the

learners from taken-for-granted views and ideologies by encouraging them to adopt a critical perspective towards language. Built on the premise that even "the most familiar and natural-seeming wordings incorporate implicit philosophies, or theories – or ideologies" (Clark et al., 1990, p. 256), critical literacy reminds the learners of their own power – as readers, listeners, and writers – to challenge and question what is being communicated to them through texts. Within this context, critical literacy's objective became the development of critical thinkers, able to deconstruct, interpret, and reconstruct the 'truth' that has been shaped by social groups in power (Fairclough, 1992; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Hagood, 2002). It is for this reason that critical literacy, throughout the efforts to be acknowledged as an integral part of language education (see Fairclough, 1992), has been widely regarded both as an ideology and an educational movement (Janks, 2010). As an ideology, critical literacy rejects the idea of language as a neutral construct that "comes from nowhere in particular and belongs to everyone" (Clark et al., 1990, p. 256). As an educational movement, it teaches the "different ways of wording the world" (Clark et al., 1990, p. 256), and encourages its learners to explore language in its social and ideological dimension, whereby wording decisions are not just given, but rather carry with them the intentions and attitudes of the composer (Luke & Freebody, 1997). Working from the same point of view is the new language curriculum. Its starting remark, as quoted below, sets the tone for how language is to be viewed and studied, and calls for a revolution in the minds of young learners.

> People are now called to familiarise themselves with new textual practices [and to] understand the ways in which texts (linguistic and multimodal) construct social relationships, reproduce xenophobic and sexist stances, proclaim particular worldviews as 'accepted' or deconstruct stereotypes and dominant ideologies (MoEC, 2010b, p. 10).

What appears to constitute the new language curriculum and its underpinning philosophical view about language, and indeed about literacy, moves beyond a mere shift in the pedagogical approaches to language teaching and learning. In fact, the aforementioned remark invests language education with such an ideological meaning that suggests that it might have less to do with the acquisition of technical reading and writing skills, and more with the development of cognitive skills relevant to the questioning of the underlying values of texts. For example, the above remark encourages the students to attend to the formalities of how texts work, and how they echo the social and cultural reality from which they have emerged. It also suggests the departure from the idea of language education as a domain that pays no attention to

purposeful language use and its role in shaping ideologies. Above all, it encourages the consideration of grammar as an integral part of language education.

At first sight, re-establishing the role of grammar within language education might sound outmoded. Yet, the idea behind it has, in fact, nothing to do with the nostalgia for the traditional curriculum and its devotion to the mere acquisition of grammatical competence. On the contrary, the introduction of critical literacy in the new language curriculum and, along with it, the renewed emphasis on grammar, represents a fundamentally new educational paradigm which promises access to the ideological propensities and sociological dimension of language (see MoEC, 2010b). As policymakers affirmed: "Our starting point is not the grammatical elements *per se* but the role they perform" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 11). Within the new language curriculum, critical literacy seeks to re-locate the teaching of grammar in language education as a worthy and relevant body of knowledge that relates less to the mere acquisition of grammatical competence, and more to the development of students who are aware of how grammar works to advance particular ways of conceiving the world. As Cope and Kalantzis (1993, p. 63) wrote, "grammar is a viable and efficient way of learning literacy and learning about literacy". It is on the basis of this affiliated relationship that genre-based pedagogy and critical literacy are thought of as two interrelated notions (Ioannidou, 2015), despite their different objectives. Whereas the first explores how language functions within different social contexts (Fairclough, 1992), critical literacy places a focus on questioning relationships of power (Freire, 2005; Freire & Macedo, 1987; Shor & Freire, 1987). Their joint consideration within the new language curriculum encourages the students to realise how linguistic elements structure the world through the use of language. Translated to classroom practice, critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy work towards equipping the students with the knowledge of how vocabulary, grammar, and syntax choices, establish relationships of power between the reader and the writer, the speaker and the addressee (Behrman, 2006).

3.3.1 Influences on the 2010 New Language Curriculum

It can be asserted that critical literacy serves to return us, as readers, writers and speakers, to the classical literacy questions: "how […] texts establish and use power over us, over others, on whose behalf, in whose interests"? (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004, p. 4). Responding to such questions requires an understanding of how sociocultural factors influence the production and interpretation of texts; a cognitive end that, as Freebody and Luke (1990) maintain, is achieved by equipping students with code-breaking, meaning-making, text-

participating, and text-analysing skills. These four roles have been Freebody and Luke's (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997) contribution to the development of Australia's critical literacy theory. According to their four-resource model (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997), students adopt the code-breaker role when dealing with the technology of texts. The code-breaker role encourages students to explore the relationship between spoken sounds and written symbols (phonemic awareness), and how linguistic structures (e.g. grammar, syntax, vocabulary) influence the message that is being transmitted through texts. As meaning-makers, students are encouraged to make connections with other texts, draw upon their social and cultural background, and reflect upon their world experiences in order to think beyond of what is explicitly stated within texts (Behrman, 2006). Text participants capitalise on their knowledge of text genres to explore how social and cultural contexts influence textual and linguistic structures (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993), and how the purpose and intended audience shape a text's genre and the multimodal elements (e.g. image and sound) being used (Freebody & Luke, 1990). As text analysts, students are encouraged to perceive a text through a lens of critique in order to uncover bias, intentions and points of views, as manifested within texts through the use of language (Freebody & Luke, 1990). These four roles – code-breaker, meaning-maker, text participant, and text analyst – are widely represented within the new language curriculum. Although the new language curriculum makes no reference to Freebody and Luke's writings (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997), it proposes a way for understanding and approaching texts that mirror Freebody and Luke's (1990) four-resource model for implementing critical literacy in the classroom[1]. In particular, the new language curriculum encourages students to explore texts as: a) linguistic and semantic structures, b) social practices, c) contextual structures, and d) objects of critique (MoEC, 2010b). This proposed way for approaching and exploring texts strongly resemble the four roles that "a successful reader in our society needs to develop and sustain" when dealing with texts (Freebody & Luke, 1990, p. 7): the role of code-breaker (i.e. texts as linguistic and sematic structures), meaning-maker (i.e. texts as social practices), text participant (i.e. texts as contextual structures), and text analyst (i.e. texts as objects of critique).The new language curriculum thus proposed a new pedagogical understanding, as well as a new way of teaching, a central objective of which became the fostering of critical awareness through the mastering of the social-semiotic function of genre and register of texts.

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[1] See also Chapter 7 which uses the four resource model to analyse the content of the new language curriculum.

The Australian model of critical literacy (see Luke, 2000) was thus particularly influential on the 2010 new language curriculum. Its influence was made evident not only in the way the new language curriculum viewed language, but also in the way critical literacy was advised to be implemented inside the classroom. In the first instance, the new language curriculum, in alignment with the Australian critical literacy theory (see Luke, 2000), emphasised on proclaiming the ideological and sociological function of language, and the consideration of critical awareness as a skill to be cultivated inside the classroom. In the second instance, the new language curriculum, following Australia's paradigm (see Luke, 2000), suggested a turn towards the field-tenor-mode framework (see Halliday, 2014) to study grammatical features via texts[2]. Similar to Australia's emphasis on the technical aspects and social functions of texts (see Luke, 2000), the new language curriculum proposed a turn to metalanguage and to the study of the ties between language and function, and texts with their context (see MoEC, 2010b).

The model of language and literacy learning, as proposed within the new language curriculum, is also closely associated with the NLS, as implemented in England in 1997 (see Beard, 2000). The similarity of the NLS and the 2010 new language curriculum is made evident in the emphasis that both documents payed on functional grammar and the linguistic structures of language. In the case of the new language curriculum, the increased emphasis on grammar served to cultivate students' linguistic and metalinguistic awareness, and to encourage the students to explore the field, mode and tenor of texts, as previously mentioned (MoEC, 2010b). In the case of the NLS, the emphasis on grammar and linguistic structures served to tackle England's "long 'tail' of under-achievement", as Beard (2000, p. 422) put it. Again influenced by the functional grammar literature (see Halliday, 2014) and the Australian paradigm (see Luke, 2000), the NLS proposed an understanding of texts as divided between 'word level', 'sentence level', and 'text level'. The NLS, in particular, targeted the enhancement of reading and writing skills through the recognition of language as a system of units; from words to sentences and whole clauses. As Beard (1998, p. 5) clarified in his report on the NLS:

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[2] According to the Australian critical literacy theory: "the lexical and grammatical operations of texts can be systematically traced to ideological representations (field), social relations (tenor) and textual formations (mode)" (Luke, 2000, p. 7).

> The objectives [of the NLS] focus on three broad dimensions of literacy: word level work (phonics, spelling and vocabulary and also including handwriting); sentence level work (grammar and punctuation); and text level work (comprehension and composition).

This approach to reading and writing, a 'bottom-up' approach as characterised by Stannard and Huxford (2007, p. 10), was thought to deepen students' understanding of the spelling system, enrich their vocabulary, and enhance their reading skills and word comprehension. Within the NLS, the teaching of phonics thus became of critical importance and was regarded as a significant knowledge to be transmitted to students (Rose, 2006). Similarly, the new language curriculum promoted an understanding of texts as a system comprised of micro- and macro-level components (e.g. phonemes, words, and sentences), linked together under particular grammar conventions (see MoEC, 2010b). The statement below, as found in the new language curriculum, is reflective of the similarities between the new language curriculum and the NLS; both of which paid particular attention to the micro-levels of language for the sake of enhancing students' technical skills:

> The teaching of the structure of the modern Greek language aims at the comprehension and understanding of the way in which phonological, morphological and syntactic units work to perform particular functions, such as the construction of particular ways of presenting a subject (presentational function), the construction of particular relationships with the speaker (interpersonal function), and the connection of sentences (textual function). For this matter, emphasis is placed on the functional role performed by the elements of the micro-structure (sentence level), but also [of the elements of] the macro-structure (text) and their interrelationships (MoEC, 2010b, p. 66).

In the context of the new language curriculum, the renewed emphasis on the micro-levels of language was associated with the enhancement of students' vocabulary, their ability to comprehend unknown words by breaking them into morphemes and phonemes, and the development of their reading and writing skills (see MoEC, 2010b). Contrary to the NLS, the new language curriculum proposed a top-down approach to the learning of language (starting from the word-level instead of the level of morphemes or phonics)[3].

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[3] See Chapter 7 for a more detailed analysis of the new language curriculum.

3.3.2   The changing role of Cypriot teachers

Within the new language curriculum policy (see MoEC, 2004; 2007; 2010a; 2010b), there was an apparent effort to modernise the educational system in Cyprus, but also to re-define the role of the teachers. Cypriot teachers were called not only to accept a new approach to language teaching and learning, but also to pass onto their students a new form of epistemology that sought to educate them towards a reflective understanding of themselves within the world; to debunk existing ideologies, and develop competences and skills for negotiating with others (MoEC, 2010a). Caught in the midst of change, the teachers in Cyprus found themselves responsible for implementing a curriculum for language education that was infused with a profound sense of morality. It was perhaps inevitable, therefore, that the language curriculum policy would also draw upon conceptualisations of teacher professionalism. Such conceptualisations invited the Cypriot teachers "to take the initiative and [make the] pedagogical interventions needed for a quality and effective teaching" (MoEC, 2010a, p. 15). This rhetoric encouraged the teachers to move away from the use of a single teaching guide and was further interpreted as the teachers' autonomy in acting as curriculum developers inside their classrooms (Pedagogical Institute, 2010b). The role of the teachers, being now regarded as central in the success of the new language curriculum (MoEC, 2010a), was increasingly expanding from that of curriculum implementers (MoEC, 2004) to that of "professional pedagogue[s]" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3). Being a "professional pedagogue" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3) was interpreted as:

> […] the reflective-critical teacher who regards school knowledge as subject of constant investigation and exploration, the teacher who problematises over the educative and social role of the school, over the work that he is doing and the methods and the means he is using and selecting for his continuous self-education, education, and self-improvement (MoEC, 2007, p. 3).

In contrast to the communicative approach discussed in section 3.2, in the 2010 new language curriculum, it is apparent the effort to introduce a new way of acting on part of the Cypriot teachers. As Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) remarked, critical literacy is neither a teaching strategy nor an activity that the teachers can integrate in their language instruction. Rather, it is a philosophical and a pedagogical movement that requires the teachers to act as transformative leaders. As they stated:

> […] in order to be sustainable, any project targeted at enhancing equity, deep democracy, and social justice, needs to consider the principles underlying transformative leadership (Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012, p. 5).

Transformative leadership can be traced back to the writings of Freire (2005) on transformative learning. Freire (2005) considered literacy education as a platform for the emancipation of the oppressed from restrictive regimes and the demythologisation of reality through the development of critical consciousness. In his words:

> Acquiring literacy does not involve memorizing sentences, words, or syllables – lifeless objects unconnected to an existential universe – but rather an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self-transformation producing a stance of intervention in one's context (Freire, 2005, p. 43).

According to Freire (2005, p. 40), self-transformation is achieved on the basis of "an active, *dialogical*, critical and criticism-stimulating *method*" during which people "move from naïve to critical transitivity". It is on such theoretical foundations that the role of teachers was construe as fundamental in the transition of the learners from naivety to critical consciousness. "This teaching", as Freire (2005, p. 43) would conclude, "cannot be done from the top-down"; that is from the teacher to the learner, "but only from inside out"; from the learner himself, "with the collaboration of the educator". In other words, and in summarising Freire's (2005) point of view, teachers themselves must become consciously aware of their surrounding context and thus capable to establish classroom norms and standards that foster transformative learning. Using Freire's (2005) writings as a point of reference, Neophytou and Valiandes (2012, p. 9) asserted that, in order for critical literacy to achieve its purpose, it is imperative that the teachers are trained to become transformative leaders; thus to be empowered to:

> Identify what is wrong and what is right and must be led, through leading their peers and trainers, into envisaging a better future for their students.

Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) concluded to the importance of providing the teachers with authentic learning and development opportunities that would equip them with the skills and cognitive basis necessary for redressing societal ills, but also for leading their students towards the same end. Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) regarded transformative leadership as

an important quality not only of teachers, but also of teacher educators; further proposing – or rather urging – for a cultural change in teachers' professional development. In their words:

> Teacher trainers need to acknowledge themselves as the transformative leaders of other transformative leaders (teachers) who will again lead to other transformative leaders (the students) (Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012, p. 13).

3.4   The Communicative Approach Vis-a-Vis the New Language Curriculum

Comparing the two waves of language education in Cyprus, it can be argued that each proposed vastly different ways for conceptualising language teaching; as indeed language itself. Whereas the communicative approach was focused on an instrumental understanding of language – in other words, viewing language as a medium of communication (Hadjioannou et al., 2011; Tsiplakou et al., 2006) – critical literacy sought to push language education to new heights. It has done so in three ways: a) with the understanding of language as a semiotic mode influencing, and influenced by, social reality and ideologies, b) with the recognition of the linguistic varieties as an integral part of language education (Tsiplakou et al., 2018), and c) by encouraging the teachers to act as autonomous decision-makers of the materials brought inside the classroom. Table 2 summarises the main differences between the 2010 new language curriculum and its predecessor.

The first aspect (a) has to do with the continuous interaction between language and meaning. Texts, the new language curriculum maintained (MoEC, 2010b), are to be regarded as the product of the social and cultural context in which they have been produced. Text genres thus became an integral part of language teaching during this second wave of language policies in Cyprus. Capitalising on Halliday's (2014) systemic-functional grammar, which views language and linguistic structures as aggregates of sociocultural parameters, the new language curriculum encouraged the teachers to discuss texts critically and with added consideration to their ideological (field), relational (tenor) and contextual (mode) discourse (see MoEC, 2010b). The study of grammar was therefore put in the forefront and was no longer regarded as a secondary skill to be acquired in a holistic way, as the communicative approach was proclaiming (see Charalambopoulos, 1999). The new language curriculum promoted a classroom teaching that targeted not merely the enhancement of students' communicative skills – as with the case of the communicative approach (Tsiplakou et al., 2006) – but rather the cultivation of students' understanding of the multidimensionality of language; fostering, at

the same time, their critical metalinguistic awareness of how grammar and vocabulary are tied with ideology, social relationships and the social context of texts (Luke, 2000).

As far as the second aspect (b) is concerned, the launch of the 2010 new language curriculum signaled the maturity of language policies in Cyprus, which were now more open to embracing the diglossic situation of the country (Ioannidou, 2012). The teaching of language varieties, other than the standard modern Greek, was an aspect that was ignored – if not intentionally bypassed – during the years of the communicative wave and for political/ nationalistic reasons that mainly served the continuation of the country's Greek roots (Ioannidou, 2012). In contrast to the communicative approach to language teaching, the new language curriculum put an emphasis on the teaching of language varieties. As the new language curriculum stated: Students are called to:

> Gain knowledge over the basic structural similarities and differences between modern Greek and the Cypriot variety and to be capable to identify aspects of other linguistic varieties / languages in hybrid, multimodal or multilinguistic texts; to approach the Cypriot dialect as a linguistic variety with structure and consistency in its phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary [and] to be able to analyse a variety of hybrid texts produced through language and code switching in a multilingual and multicultural society such as Cyprus (MoEC, 2010b, p. 11).

The new language curriculum capitalised on the fundamental assumption that the fostering of a target language, in this case the standard modern Greek, does not occur "in a linguistic 'vacuum' ", as Tsiplakou et al. (2018, p. 64) remarked, but rather is achieved by taking into account students' "linguistic capital" (Tsiplakou et al., 2018, p. 64). The new language curriculum thus sought to educate students towards a higher level of linguistic and literacy competence; achieved through the systematic teaching of the linguistic varieties of the country. In actuality, the teaching and learning of language varieties ought to be at the centre of any critical literacy and genre awareness document. The argument is that, if the objective is to develop critically literate individuals – who are able to analyse the social and semiotic import of genres – then this objective can hardly be achieved without any reference to how linguistic varieties are associated with specific identities and ideologies, or how they influence the tenor, field and mode of texts. The emphasis on linguistic varieties proffered a basis for the enhancement of what has been declared as the core objective of the new language

curriculum: to cultivate the understanding that texts are both socio-linguistically and semiotically laden (see MoEC, 2010b).

Lastly, and with regard to the content being taught inside the classroom (c), the new language curriculum proposed a shift from the use of a single classroom material (i.e. teaching guide) to teachers' autonomy in selecting their own classroom materials and texts (Philippou et al., 2014). The overarching principle laid down within the new language curriculum was that, in matters of classroom materials and content, the teachers should engage their students with texts through which to study the sociocultural origin of language. This led to the suggestion on part of the government that the teachers must act as curriculum developers and decision makers, making sure to engage their students with texts that are, firstly, appealing to them, both cognitively and emotionally, and secondly, with texts that provide the platform for analysing language as "an ideological and socially semiotic structure" (MoEC, 2010b, pp. 10-11). Teacher autonomy was thus construe as an important parameter for the fruition of the new language curriculum (see MoEC, 2004). The call for teacher autonomy was based on the premise that teachers, as the professional pedagogues they are – or they will be trained to be (see MoEC, 2004) – ought to engage their students with texts that provide the platform for meaningful discussions about the role of grammar and lexis in the construction of social relationships and ideologies (Ioannidou, 2014). Contrary to the pseudo-texts that permeated the classroom teaching for years (i.e. short dialogues produced for pedagogical purposes by the MoEC during the communicative wave) (Ioannidou, 2012), the new language curriculum urged the teachers to find their own classroom materials with which to teach their students how tenor, field and mode is influenced by dominant ideologies, audience, and social context.

The communicative approach to language teaching	
Language	Standard modern Greek
Pedagogy	Communicative approach, student-centred classroom practice, grammar to be taught in a holistic way and insofar as it helps to study the communicative intend of texts. Emphasis on the enhancement of students' communicative skills.
Classroom materials	Government-approved teaching guides and textbooks. Texts with themes relevant to students' life experiences.
The 2010 new language curriculum	
Language	Standard modern Greek and the Greek-Cypriot dialect
Pedagogy	Critical literacy and genre-base pedagogy for the development of critically literate students. Grammar is emphasised as the medium for unlocking the ideological and sociocultural influences upon the texts. Genres are central.
Classroom materials	Teachers are encouraged to act as autonomous decision-makers of the materials brought inside the classroom. Texts that have field, tenor, and mode.

Table 2 The two waves of language education

3.5   The New Language Curriculum: Is there a Future?

Ever since Freire's (2005) writings on critical awareness, Cope and Kalantzis'(1993) writings on genres and Freebody and Luke's writings on literacy education (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997), critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy became prominent concepts, often times charged with the ultimate endeavour to emancipate the learners – and by extend the society – from societal ills. Yet, what constitutes those two notions is much more than a mere pedagogical shift in the teaching-learning process and the role of grammar and lexis within texts. The institutionalisation of critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy at the classroom level requires, as Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) argued, a conceptual shift like no other witnessed in the case of Cyprus education system. From their point of view, the fruition of critical literacy and genre awareness rests not only on the teachers but also on those in power. "The challenge", Neophytou and Valiandes (2012, p. 13) explained, "is how to develop dialogic and emancipatory practices in a field already crowded with anti-critical

monologue". In their single case study on how one Cypriot teacher responded to the new language curriculum, Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) concluded to the inconsistency between the proposed classroom practice and the nature of professional development provided to Cypriot teachers. From their point of view, whereas the official policy called for the recognition of teachers as autonomous professionals, the new language curriculum was introduced by those in power "through a carrot and stick approach" (Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012, p. 7). That is, instead of equipping the teachers with what it is essential in broadening their gaze to consider themselves as autonomous decision-makers and curriculum developers, professional development in Cyprus continued to regard the teachers as "empty vessels waiting to be filled with the knowledge of the wise" (Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012, p. 7). Neophytou and Valiandes' (2012, p. 7) concern was based on their critique that the Cypriot teachers have long been regarded as faithful implementers of the policy developed by others; the "bureaucrats become the oppressors and the teachers the oppressed", as they stated. In a similar vein, Philippou et al. (2014, p. 629) highlighted the importance of providing the Cypriot teachers with the necessary support in changing "their conceptualization", as they remarked "from people who are merely called upon to implement change to collaborators and partners" of curriculum development. Literature suggests that critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy have been successfully implemented in countries like Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong (see Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Whether critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy can be successfully implemented in countries like Cyprus, with its long tradition of viewing the teacher as a civil servant and mere implementer of a policy developed by others (Philippou et al., 2014), is still open to question.

In the context of the new language curriculum, concerns were also raised in relation to the novelty of the concepts of critical literacy and genre awareness. Ioannidou (2012), in particular, cautioned that literacy and language pedagogy were always on the backburner of the language policies that were launched in Cyprus before the 2010 new language curriculum. From her point of view, this shift to the pedagogical models of critical thinking and genre awareness represents a new pedagogical understanding which, for many Cypriot teachers, might be novel and perplexing, considering the education and training they received during the years of the communicative approach. A study conducted in the context of the new language curriculum came to validate those concerns. In particular, Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) found that their participating teacher had developed an inadequate understanding of the new language curriculum and was confused about its objectives. Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) highlighted the issue of teacher knowledge and professional support and

concluded to the importance of providing the teachers with the professional development opportunities that would support the change in the core of their practice and ways of thinking about language teaching. Recognising and addressing the issue of teacher knowledge and professional support might be of assistance to the implementation of the new language curriculum. Yet at the same time, the challenge of addressing the issue of teacher capacity and professional development is made evident in other parts of the world, even in countries where genre-based pedagogy has been well-established for years. In Australia, for instance, Jones and Derewianka (2016) explain that the issue of teacher knowledge on genres was never addressed, despite the increased attention of Australia's critical literacy theory (see Luke, 2000) on genre pedagogy. As they stated:

> […] more complex developments in language that realise shifts
> in field, tenor and mode are either ignored or addressed in ad
> hoc ways (Jones & Derewianka, 2016, p. 14).

From the point of view of Jones and Derewianka (2016), teachers' limited understanding and inadequate implementation of more novel concepts associated with genre theory reflect a period of neglect in teachers' professional development. Similar concerns were raised in the context of the NLS. Many evaluation reports were carried out that aimed to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the NLS, as well as teachers' reception of the Strategy and their capacity to carry it out in the long run (e.g. Ofsted, 1999; 2002). In its evaluation report on the NLS in 2003, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) presented evidence in support of the successful implementation of the NLS in schools across England, and underlined the teachers' good reception of the Strategy, as well as their familiarity with the curriculum targets (Earl et al., 2003). However, the report raised the issue of teacher capacity as one that might impair the implementation of the NLS in the long run. In particular, the report made clear that, despite the provision of professional development, more support was advised to be provided to the teachers in order to deepen their knowledge over the targets of the Strategy. As the report stated:

> Our data continue to show considerable disparity across teachers and
> schools in terms of knowledge, skill and understanding of the
> Strategies[4]. The data indicate that for many teachers, gaps or
> weaknesses in subject knowledge or pedagogical understanding limit
> the extent to which they can make full use of the frameworks and
> resources of the Strategies (Earl et al., 2003, p. 8).

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[4] Referring to both the NLS and the New Numeracy Strategy.

Teachers' knowledge of phonics teaching was a recurrent issue. In its first year evaluation review on the NLS, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted, 1999, p. 19) identified teachers' lack of capacity to teach phonics in the ways prescribed within the NLS; a problem that was then attributed to the limited professional support provided to the teachers and to "the reluctance of a minority of […] schools to recognise its importance". In its 2002 report on the NLS, Ofsted listed a number of positive outcomes and developments, including the "significant impact" that the NLS had "on the standards attained in English and on the quality of teaching over the last four years" (Ofsted, 2002, p. 2) and the "positive impact" of teacher training on "teachers' knowledge of grammar and awareness of the key teaching approaches" (Ofsted, 2002, p. 12). However, the report identified persisting issues that impaired the implementation of the NLS, including the teaching of phonics and the professional support that was in place for assisting the teachers to build their knowledge on phonics teaching. As the report stated:

> The guidance from the NLS on how to teach phonics was not
> helpful enough in enabling teachers to teach phonic knowledge
> and skills systematically and speedily from Year R onwards
> (Ofsted, 2002, p. 35).

The reports discussed above highlight the fundamental issues of professional development and teachers' subject matter knowledge. It was as early as 1998 that Beard (1998, p. 11) highlighted the issue of teachers' "capacity to successfully deliver a service", and their "ability or willingness […] to comply with the rules"; ultimately urging for the provision of adequate professional support to teachers. From the point of view of Beard (2011), such issues were the outcome of the limited attention payed to teachers' subject matter knowledge in the years that preceded the implementation of the NLS. Beard (2011, p. 76) traced this problem back to professional development and to "teachers 'not knowing what they do not know' ". His remark was well expressed in the work of Willows (2002). In his words:

> [t]raining teachers to implement instructional methods when
> they don't really truly understand the underlying rationale is
> futile. Without understanding, teachers do not have the
> knowledge to adapt an instructional strategy to address various
> student needs (Willows, 2002 par. 1).

From Webb and Vulliamy's point of view (2007, p. 568), however, the issue of professional development and, importantly, teacher capacity, reflects the then government's "lack of trust in the teaching profession", further suggesting that the negative portrayal of teachers on part

of the government served to mandate an immediate change at the classroom level and to hold teachers and schools accountable for the implementation of the NLS. Webb and Vulliamy (2007, p. 568) concluded that the constant "pressure for compliance […] exerted on schools through Ofsted", and the shift "from professional autonomy to contractual responsibility", had a subsequent impact on how teachers viewed themselves as professionals (Webb & Vulliamy, 2007, p. 562). But apart from the issue of teacher subject matter knowledge and professional development, it could be argued that such concerns were raised just about when the teaching of phonics became a pedagogical debate (see Rose, 2006). The controversy can be traced back to the dispute on whether phonics should be taught from a synthetic or analytic approach (see Wyse & Goswami, 2008). The synthetic approach promoted a letter-by-letter teaching of reading (phonology) and, on the other hand, the analytic approach emphasised on the sound-symbol relationship (Goswami, 2007). Expert reviews in England concluded that synthetic phonics is an effective teaching method and that its adoption had led to significant improvements in students' reading skills (Rose, 2006). In particular, the Rose Report (2006, p. 4) stressed the importance of adopting a synthetic approach to the teaching of phonics in early reading programmes, arguing that it "offers the vast majority of young children the best and most direct route to becoming skilled readers and writers". The Rose Report (2006, p. 29) also expected that systematic phonics should be taught "by the age of five, if not before for some children". In their response to the Rose Report, Wyse and Styles (2007) argued that no evidence can be found to support Rose's (2006) claims that a systematic programme of phonics teaching is of benefit to children of the age of five. In their critique, Wyse and Styles (2007, p. 37) cautioned that introducing systematic phonics to five year old children might be "an inappropriate curriculum". They further remarked that one way to address the teaching of phonics is to link the teaching of phonics with texts for meaning comprehension.

Genre theory was also becoming a terrain of extensive debate (Devitt, 1993). Both the NLS and the new language curriculum, which is the focus of this study, put particular emphasis on genre awareness. In the context of the new language curriculum, genre-based pedagogy was regarded as an integral part of critical literacy (Ioannidou, 2015). Its explicit reference within the new language curriculum meant the recognition of texts as sociocultural products (MoEC, 2010b). In the context of the NLS, the increased attention on genres served the honing of metalinguistic skills (Beard, 1998). Tackling genre was thus regarded as a valuable element of the NLS as it provided the platform for the targeted enhancement of students' literacy skills and lexical competence (Beard, 1998). This increased attention on genres, however, was accompanied by terminological and epistemological issues. American genre theory, for

instance, regarded genres as a dynamic product of language and context, thus paying particular emphasis on issues such as social context and social action (Kress, 2009; Miller, 1984), and limited attention to the semiotic and linguistic features of genres, which have been the building blocks of the Australian genre theory (Matsagouras & Tsiplakou, 2008). The primacy of the context versus the linguistic structure and vice versa confused the terrain of genre-based pedagogy, making it difficult to define what genre is and whether it should be regarded as a dynamic[5] or a fixed[6] construct (Matsagouras & Tsiplakou, 2008). From Kress' (2009, p. 208) point of view, for instance, this dichotomy in the understanding of genres "had become highly problematic as a means of describing social practices". He further argued that the attention should shift from the lexico-grammar features of texts to their social function. Contrary to the emphasis on grammar and lexis; as proposed by the Australian paradigm (Matsagouras & Tsiplakou, 2008), Kress (1993, p. 23) proposed a broader conception of genres; maintaining that their primary purpose should be the study of the dynamic tie between "meaning and function: what does this bit of language mean because of what it does". On the other hand, Matsagouras and Tsiplakou (2008) maintained that the confusion on whether genres are to be regarded as fixed or dynamic infused the terrain of language teaching with uncertainty. They further argued that the dimension of teaching responsible for the discovery of the role of grammar in the construction of genres – or else the enhancement of metalinguistic skills – has yet to reach a point of success, as a result of this dichotomous point of view.

In a similar vein, the turn to critical literacy was both welcomed as a necessary evolution to language theory and widely criticised for divorcing literacy from the pure pleasure of reading (Simpson & McMillan, 2008), and for disassociating language teaching from the enhancement of the basic reading and writing skills (Lau, 2013). The general critique has been that critical literacy, by virtue of its attention to the social nature of language, can only be practiced by students who have already mastered their basic language skills (Lau, 2013). This concern was reflected in a study that was conducted in the context of the new language curriculum. Ioannidou (2014) found that her participating teachers were reserved about integrating socially-oriented texts, believing their young students would not be able to engage themselves with discussions about the role of language and its social and cultural nature. Such

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[5] For example, the American genre theory regards genres as products of their social context. This leads to the understanding of genres as dynamic forms which, according to Miller (1984, p. 153) "create a particular effect in a given situation".
[6] From the point of view of the Australian genre theory and its emphasis on the systemic-functional approach to genres which suggests their fixed form (Matsagouras & Tsiplakou, 2008).

concerns, also evident in other studies as well (Lewison et al., 2002), gave rise to the debate on whether critical awareness is a useful and appropriate skill to be mastered at the primary school level; a debate summarised by Lau (2013, p. 25) into the following question: "At what age or grade level can students be introduced to CL [critical literacy]?". For Lau (2013), this question reflects the ways in which critical literacy has been misrepresented as a practice that requires higher order skills. From Lau's (2013, p. 25) point of view, however, critical literacy is a skill that is cultivated in time and with the provision of "classroom conditions and social structures as well as modeling practices that foster student learning".

"But large-scale educational reform invariably creates debate", as Beard (2011, p. 80) neatly stated. It was made apparent in the discussion herein that rarely there is one right way to introduce a change; and this is particularly true for the domain of language education. The question of whether the new language curriculum can stand the test of time is still open to question, as remarked earlier. This question is of course multidimensional. As it appears from the discussion thus far, this question is directly linked to considerations about teachers' subject matter knowledge and the constant demands placed upon them for updating, or better upgrading, their teaching repertoire as well as enhancing their pedagogical understanding in general. Yet, considerations about the continuation of the new language curriculum are also linked to the quality of professional development provided to teachers, and this is what the legacy of the NLS has left behind it.

3.6   Chapter Summary

This Chapter started with identifying and elaborating on the two waves of language policy in Cyprus; each regarded as having been launched to satisfy political or pedagogical concerns. These two waves; the communicative approach to language teaching and the 2010 new language curriculum, were brought together to identify their differences in terms of the language being promoted, the pedagogical values upon which they were founded, and the pedagogical content that each promoted to be taught inside the classroom. This Chapter also identified some of the misgivings associated with critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy. Building on the example of the NLS, this Chapter concluded to the importance of "giving priority to 'second order changes'", as Beard (1998, p. 11) remarked; that is, on equipping the teachers with the knowledge base needed so to take ownership of their profession and the constant changes around them.

Chapter 4: Literature Review

4.1 Introduction

The tendency for a more Europeanised education increased the demands for a new language curriculum in Cyprus. Using the notions of critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy as vehicles for shifting the ethnocentric curriculum (Philippou & Klerides, 2010), policymakers introduced a new philosophical understanding of what it means to teach language in the modern Cypriot society. Along with the new language curriculum came the realisation on part of the government that, ultimately, it is the teachers who will determine the success of the new language curriculum (see MoEC, 2004; 2007). Numerous studies on how teachers enact a new curriculum inside their classrooms showed that curriculum implementation is not a straightforward process, but rather a process of negotiation between what is new and what is already there (e.g. Ball et al., 2012; Bantwini, 2010; Kim et al., 2013; Ryder & Banner, 2013). The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on curriculum implementation and discuss what is known about what influences teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. The studies that are presented and discussed below adopt different methodological approaches to the investigation of how teachers experience curriculum reforms, as a result of their different ontological commitments. Many studies, for instance, focus their analysis on teacher cognitions and how these shape teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. These studies are presented and discussed in section 4.2. Other studies infuse curriculum implementation with the necessary contextual complexity by emphasising the role of social and cultural structures in influencing teachers' experiences with curriculum reforms. These studies are presented and discussed in section 4.3.

4.2 A Focus on Teachers' Cognitions

Since the late 1970s, teachers were seen to reconstruct and reshape curriculum reforms as they put them into effect inside their classrooms (see Berman & McLaughlin, 1978). Several studies of that period, influenced by the implementation view, and mostly focused on investigating the degree of teachers' fidelity to curriculum reforms, thought of such reconstructions as evidence of teachers' unwillingness to respond to innovations, or as the

result of their limited capacity to do so (see McLaughlin, 1987). As the efforts to 'teacher-proof' the curriculum failed to lead to the desired fidelity and uniformity at the classroom level (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Cohen & Ball, 1990a; 1990b; Cohen & Spillane, 1992; Freeman & Porter, 1989), and evidence of teachers working hard to implement curriculum innovations began to surface (see Lloyd & Wilson, 1998; Ritchie & Rigano, 2002; Sosniak & Stodolsky, 1993; Wood et al., 1991), the implementation view started to deteriorate, and research on teacher thinking started to take off (e.g. Borg, 2003; Spillane, 1998), as a result of the increased attention to teachers' cognitions (Ernest, 1989; Nespor, 1987). From there, the cognitive perspective started to flourish and numerous studies (e.g. Cotton, 2006; Cross, 2009; Spillane, 1998) signaled the strong correlation between "what one believes" and "what one does" (Leatham, 2006, p. 92). This was a turning point in the research on curriculum implementation, as it signalled the departure from the conventional idea of curriculum reforms as a stimulus of change (see Freeman & Porter, 1989) towards the conceptualisation of teachers' cognitions as an unpredictable element, and one that cannot be regulated by an externally driven curriculum. This body of research emancipated the teachers from the unfair portrayal of themselves as "empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills" (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 401), and underlined the influence of cognitions on how teachers respond to curriculum reforms.

The term 'cognitions' is often conceptualised as encompassing both knowledge and beliefs (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Van Driel et al., 2001; Verloop et al., 2001). Within the relevant literature, the term 'knowledge' refers to well-structured cognitions gained from formal education (Shulman, 1986), and the term 'beliefs' refers to less-structured opinions, values, and propensities developed through the teachers' personal and professional history (Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). Much has been argued about the relationship between cognitions and classroom practice. Pajares (1992, p. 307), for instance, explained that "the beliefs teachers hold influence their perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect their behavior in the classroom". Echoing Pajares' (1992) remark, contemporary studies on teacher cognitions of various subject matters; including science (Bantwini, 2010; Crawford, 2007; Roehrig & Kruse, 2005), mathematics (Lloyd & Wilson, 1998; Prawat, 1992), reading and literacy (Borg, 2003; Pease-Alvarez et al., 2010; Spillane, 2000a), portray teachers as "cognizing agent[s]" (Lloyd & Wilson, 1998, p. 249) who actively "notice, make sense of, interpret, and react to incoming stimuli" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 394). Within this curriculum-as-interpreted strand of research, the problem of curriculum implementation is thus regarded and approached as a problem of interpretation; one that is associated with

teachers' cognitions acting as a *personal interpretative framework* (Kelchtermans, 2009) or a *conceptual map* (Bantwini, 2010) through which a new curriculum is viewed, made sense of, interpreted, re-interpreted, and enacted inside the classroom (e.g. Firestone et al., 1999; Vesilind & Jones, 1998).

Spillane (1998) investigated how 40 policymakers understood novel ideas about reading instruction in the context of the 1980s reading reform in Michigan. Using interviews and classroom observations, Spillane (1998) found that the participants understood several reform ideas, for instance constructing meaning through texts, in ways that were found to misalign with the official intend. Spillane (1998) remarked that the reading policy was substantially altered, repurposed, and assimilated into existing cognitions; further suggesting that:

> To appreciate local policy makers' diverse understandings of the reforms, we must also consider their prior beliefs about reading instruction through which they made sense of the reforms" (Spillane, 1998, p. 51).

Two more recent studies of district policymakers' responses to mathematics (i.e. Spillane, 2000b) and science policies (i.e. Spillane & Callahan, 2000) served to affirm that novel curriculum reform ideas are more likely to be interpreted into familiar concepts. In particular, Spillane and Callahan (2000) found that, although their 46 district policymakers were aware of the efforts to reform science education in Michigan, only three districts were found to have implemented the science standards in a way consistent to the official policy. Spillane and Callahan (2000) noticed that the majority of policymakers understood the idea of hands-on science – a message that permeated much of the discussion about the science standards – in ways that differed substantially from the deep pedagogical meaning that was communicated to them through the reform initiative. Some, for instance, thought of hands-on science as proposing an escape from textbooks. Others thought of this message as a strategy for making science lessons more enjoyable to students. Spillane and Callahan (2000) also noticed that other science reform messages, such as constructivist learning, remained largely unnoticed. Similarly, Spillane (2000b) investigated how nine school districts responded to mathematics reform in Michigan. In his longitudinal study, Spillane (2000b) utilised interviews to investigate the ways in which the policymakers understood several reform messages, such as "mathematics as communication," "mathematics as reasoning," "mathematical connections," and "mathematics as problem solving" (Spillane, 2000b, p. 150). Spillane (2000b) found that the policymakers tended to gravitate towards popular and familiar reform messages (e.g.

hands-on mathematics), whilst other novel reform messages were bypassed or assimilated into existing cognitions. Spillane (2000b) ultimately concluded that existing cognitions can act as strong determinants of how a new idea is understood and enacted into practice. In his words:

> District leaders' schemes for understanding instruction and its improvement enable them to place new knowledge into some framework for interpretation, a critical component of sense making that involves filtering, constructing, framing, inventing, and interpreting new information (Spillane, 2000b, pp. 166-167).

This concluding remark features significantly in other studies as well. Within such studies, teacher cognitions are found to encourage acceptance or rejection, *false clarity* (Fullan, 2007) miss-interpretation (e.g. Hill, 2001) or assimilation of novel curriculum ideas into existing ways of thinking and doing. Advanced by this scholarship work is the idea that curriculum implementation is not a linear process that stipulates a fixed message to the teachers (Ball et al., 2012), but rather a process that is "inherently problematic" (Coburn, 2004, p. 214), as it seems to depend, to a large extent, on the possibilities or restrictions of what teachers believe to be important and worthwhile (Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Pease-Alvarez et al., 2010). Successful curriculum implementation, for instance, is often attributed to teachers' flexible and varied cognitions, which serve as foundations upon which a new knowledge can be built (Crawford, 2007). Lloyd and Wilson (1998), in particular, investigated the role of content conceptions of functions in enabling or obstructing Mr. Allen – an experienced high school teacher – to shift from traditional teaching to the Core-plus curriculum. Within their work, content conceptions were defined as the "general mental structures that encompass knowledge, beliefs, understandings, preferences and views" (Lloyd & Wilson, 1998, p. 249). Using interviews, classroom observations, and classroom artifacts, the researchers found that Mr. Allen had enacted the Core-plus mathematics curriculum in ways consistent with its constructivist approach to mathematics learning. The researchers remarked that Mr. Allen's traditional definition of functions did not impact his enactment of the Core-Plus curriculum and concluded:

> Because Mr. Allen was able to reconcile the Core-Plus approach to functions with the prominent features of his own conceptions of functions, the Core-Plus materials furnished a way for him to translate his understandings into new but comfortable pedagogical strategies (Lloyd & Wilson, 1998, p. 271).

Other studies, however, underline the mediating effect of teachers' cognitions and often conclude to their role in widening the gap between the proposed curriculum reform agendas and the curriculum enacted inside the classroom. Cohen and Ball (1990a; 1990b), for instance, explored teachers' responses to a new California policy on mathematics which sought to promote a "dramatic change in what students learn" (Cohen & Ball, 1990a, p. 235). Reflecting upon their findings, the researchers suggested that the teachers "reframed the policy in terms of what they already knew, believed, and did in classrooms" (Cohen & Ball, 1990b, p. 331) in ways that led to the enactment of "some remarkable mixtures of old and new mathematics instruction" (Cohen & Ball, 1990b, p. 335). Similarly, in their study on "how assessment policies were interpreted" (Firestone et al., 1999, p. 766), Firestone et al. (1999, p. 759) concluded that "assessment policy is useful for promoting easily observable changes but not deep modifications". Their study was carried out in the context of assessment policy implementation and involved embedded case studies of schools in England and Wales, Maine and Maryland. The researchers utilised interviews and classroom observations. Their emphasis on teachers' responses revealed significant variations from the assessment policy and uncovered teachers' tendency to gravitate towards a more traditional teaching, result of teachers' "conventional understandings about mathematics teaching", as the researchers remarked (Firestone et al., 1999, p. 784).

Similarly, Mayrowetz (2009) explored teachers' actions in the context of curriculum reform in special education policy. Positioning his study within the "literature that examines how frontline professionals, such as teachers, interpret converging policy", Mayrowetz (2009, p. 556) relied on classroom observations and interviews to investigate 12 teachers' instructional practices, and whether the new special education policy was being enacted inside the classroom. The new policy suggested individualised instruction within classrooms that included students with disabilities. Reflecting upon their practice, many teachers suggested changes in their instruction in the direction suggested by the new policy, however classroom observations revealed that little change actually occurred. In particular, Mayrowetz (2009) identified three ways in which the teachers enacted the new policy in their classrooms (i.e. skimming the surface, differentiation and overload), with the researcher observing that the teachers mainly responded with surface changes, as a result of their tendency to assimilate the new policy into existing practices that mainly reflected the general policy that was already in place. Similarly, Obara and Sloan (2009) found that the teachers in their study made minimal changes to their mathematics instruction despite their affirmations of larger instructional changes. Obara and Sloan (2009) offered the example of Nyanchoka, a teacher with 20 years

of experience. Nyanchoka suggested that her mathematics instruction had changed in response to the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) curriculum and its added attention to the use of manipulatives, yet classroom observations revealed that the teacher rarely used manipulatives in her teaching of mathematics. The researchers concluded that the teachers in their study (Nyanchoka, Moraa, and Kemuma), despite advocating "bid changes" in their instruction (Obara & Sloan, 2009, p. 368), struggled to achieve a balance between what felt to be important for their students and their efforts to incorporate GPS.

Golombek (1998) investigated how two English as Second Language (ESL) teachers' personal practical knowledge (Jenny and Sonia) influenced their language teaching. Her analysis went beyond teachers' instructional decisions and the factors motivating their actions. Instead, the researcher was focused on exploring the tensions that arose between teachers' knowledge of self, instruction, subject matter, and context. The researcher offered the example of Jenny who, although able to clearly articulate what the literacy curriculum was proposing in terms of language instruction, her classroom practice remained firmly grounded to the beliefs she held. In particular, Jenny understood simultaneous monitoring as hypercorrection instead of as a technique that serves to better students' pronunciations. The researcher ascribed such tensions to Jenny's own negative experiences of being hypercorrected as a learner. The researcher concluded with the following remark:

> The 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 (Golombek, 1998, p. 459).

Several researchers (e.g. Kirk & MacDonald, 2001; Ryder & Banner, 2013) have also explored teachers' cognitions through the lens of "who they are, their sense of self, and their habits of mind" (Spillane, 2000a, p. 308). Using the notion of teacher identity as an analytical framework, Spillane (2000a) investigated the impact of a teacher's identity (Ms. Adams) on her efforts to revise her mathematics and language instruction in response to the ambitious instructional reforms of the late 1980s in the United States. After analysing interview and observational data, Spillane (2000a) noticed that the teacher was more successful in transforming her language teaching when compared to her mathematics instruction; a variation Spillane (2000a) attributed to the subject-matter content and its role in shaping the teacher's identity. In the case of mathematics, Spillane (2000a) noticed that Ms. Adam's

views of mathematics instruction as memorising rules, influenced the ways the teacher interpreted and enacted the new curriculum in her classroom. On the other hand, the teacher's commitment to bringing "students' experience with language arts closer to what it means to read and write in the 'real' " (Spillane, 2000a, p. 313) propelled her to make deeper changes in her language instruction. In a study involving a series of classroom observations and interviews with two upper-secondary school teachers (Ms Clark and Ms Ross) working in two different schools in the United States, Collopy (2003, p. 289) focused on exploring the effect of teacher identity – "the constellation of interconnected beliefs and knowledge about subject matter, teaching, and learning" – on teachers' learning through their use of new mathematics materials. Her analysis revealed that the two teachers used the same mathematics materials in very different ways, with the most striking difference being the way they used illustrative dialogues. At one extreme, the teacher (Ms Clark) who eventually put the new materials "back on the shelf" (Collopy, 2003, p. 299), thought of the illustrative dialogues as scripts, and expected that students read the various parts aloud as part of a role-play activity. At the other extreme, the teacher whose mathematical instruction had progressed to reform-oriented (Ms Ross) used the illustrative dialogues before her instruction; to prepare herself for addressing common student errors, during instruction; as part of her efforts to encourage student participation, and after instruction; as a means of reflection. Collopy (2003) explained that teachers' subject matter knowledge, their beliefs about students, and mathematics instruction, shape how teachers interpret and enact the new policy inside their classrooms.

Working from a similar point of view is Datnow and Castellano's (2000) case study on how teachers in two elementary schools in California responded to Success For All (SFA) model for reading instruction. Datnow and Castellano (2000, p. 785) found that the teachers' responses to SFA ranged from strongly supporting the programme to standing "vehemently against" it. In particular, the teachers who positioned themselves as strong supporters of the SFA, or who were positioned in that category by the researchers as a result of their positive attitudes towards the programme, thought of it as being consistent with their existing beliefs about reading instruction. On the other hand, the teachers who were found to stand against the programme made several adaptations that, according to the researchers, departed to a great extent from the SFA model. Datnow and Castellano (2000, p. 795) concluded that the teachers "closed the doors to their classrooms and made adaptations to the program", suggesting this to be a natural response from teachers who were looking for an "ideological fit" between the SFA and their existing cognitions (Datnow & Castellano, 2000, p. 794). In a similar study, Cronin-Jones (1991) examined the experiences of two middle-level science

teachers in Northern Georgia with implementing a curriculum package on wildlife, specifically designed for the purposes of her study. Using common case study techniques, including field notes and interviews conducted before, during, and after instruction, Cronin-Jones (1991) identified four major categories of beliefs that influenced her participants' enactment of the wildlife curriculum: beliefs about how students learn, teachers' role inside the classroom, ability levels of students, and relative importance of the curriculum content. In particular, Marcy, although appeared to hold positive attitudes towards the curriculum, held beliefs that were competing with the discovery-oriented pedagogy upon which the curriculum was built. Believing in the importance of factual knowledge acquisition instead of content knowledge and problem solving, and thinking of her students as learning through repetition and practice, Cronin-Jones (1991, p. 247) found that Marcy's beliefs influenced the way the wildlife curriculum was enacted inside her classroom. Cronin-Jones (1991, p. 248) ultimately concluded that "teachers translated the intended curriculum into one which more closely matched their beliefs", further suggesting the importance of "congruence between intended and implemented curricula".

Cross' (2009) study involved a series of classroom observations and interviews with five high school mathematics teachers working in two different schools in the United States. After exploring the beliefs those teachers held about mathematics teaching and learning, the degree of their alignment with daily classroom instruction, and their influence in incorporating reform-based materials, Cross (2009) identified a mismatch between the new curriculum emphasis on promoting student thinking, and the beliefs the three teachers held (Ms Reid, Mr Brown, and Mr Henry) about mathematics learning as memorising information and demonstrating skills. Cross (2009) also noticed that the beliefs these three teachers held shaped their classroom teaching, the ways they interacted with their students, and the ways they used the new curriculum materials. Echoing Datnow and Castellano (2000) and Cronin-Jones (1991), the researcher concluded on the *pervasiveness* of cognitions, on their static and fixed nature, and on the importance of alignment between curriculum policies and teachers' cognitions. Similarly, Cotton (2006) carried out a two-year study to investigate the beliefs and practices of three secondary school geography teachers working in three different schools in the UK. Using interviews based on classroom observations, Cotton (2006) found that the beliefs her participating teachers held about teaching controversial environmental issues (e.g. the role of NGOs in governing Antarctica) were "at odds with much published discourse on environmental education" (Cotton, 2006, p. 77). The researcher ultimately concluded that the

success of curriculum innovations is "influenced to a large extent by the compatibility between their content and the practical demands of classroom teaching" (Cotton, 2006, p. 78).

Similarly, Burkhauser and Lesaux (2017) regard teachers' adaptations as a natural response to the enactment of a curriculum into classrooms with their own needs and particularities. Their study explored how six middle school English teachers enacted the academic language curriculum (ALIAS) in their classrooms. Using interviews, classroom observations, and meeting notes as collected from teachers' meetings with curriculum specialists, the researchers collected data that highlighted teachers' tendency to interpret "the curriculum through the lens of their students' needs and abilities" (Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017, p. 306). The researchers offered the example of Nancy, a novice teacher who insisted on doing more writing despite the directions of the ALIAS, believing this to be a more appropriate approach to teaching her low-achieving students. The researchers found that the teachers adjusted the curriculum to match their existing beliefs about the prominence of writing in ways that "compromised the cognitive rigour of the lesson" (Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017, p. 302).

"[P]olicy in and of itself is not enough to push teachers to make deep and lasting changes", Burkhauser and Lesaux (2017, p. 295) asserted, summarising what has been widely argued about the fate of curriculum reforms: it is the teachers who will ultimately decide how and whether a new policy will alter what they have come to believe. Based on the premise that teachers' actions are intentional and self-directed, this strand of research contributed to the field of curriculum implementation by underlining the unpredictable nature of teachers' cognitions and the failure of curriculum reforms to forge a change at the classroom level. With the most common conclusion being that "[t]eachers resist reforms when the rhetoric of the change does not match with the realities of their experiences" (Datnow & Castellano, 2000, p. 778), what appears to emerge as a contribution of these studies is the strong value of alignment between teachers' cognitions and curriculum innovations as a necessary factor for change. To say, however, that teachers use existing cognitions as cognitive maps directing them towards congruence and familiarity, does not necessarily imply that teachers are, by virtue of what they know, what they believe, or who they believe to be, resistant to change. Of course, subject matter expertise, and the extent to which it measures up to the demands of a particular curriculum reform, are central to how teachers respond to innovations. For instance, Crawford's (2007) comparative study revealed that her participants' responses to the National Science Education Standards reform varied substantially in terms of their subject matter knowledge. Katherine, for instance, had negative dispositions towards teaching science as

inquiry, result of her limited subject matter expertise, as Crawford (2007) observed. Yet, what these studies collectively tend to suggest is that curriculum reforms will not encounter a clean slate; rather they will meet with teachers' practical realities, past experiences, previous curriculum enactments, attitudes and dispositions towards their subject matter; all of which serve as a cognitive frame upon which a new curriculum is contested.

4.2.1 Teacher cognitions and the role of professional development

Developing and launching a new curriculum does not automatically guarantee that its proposals will be enacted in ways consistent with the official intend. Studies that were presented and discussed above serve to validate this assertion. Such studies also signalled that the failure of much curriculum change rests not so much on what teachers think, but rather on professional development, which rarely addresses this issue (see Cronin-Jones, 1991). Fullan (2007) nudged towards this acknowledgment when he remarked that, what often remains unnoticed and untouched in times of curriculum reforms, is the issue of teachers' *re-culturing*. By re-culturing, Fullan (2007), and others agreeing with his perspective (e.g. Feldman, 2000; Gess-Newsome et al., 2003), mean a change that goes beyond the materials used inside the classroom for instance; they mean a change in teachers' cognitions. The general consensus of research on teacher professional development has been that, although the notion of changing teachers' cognitions is central to the success of curriculum implementation, such a notion is not always made explicit in the professional development efforts (e.g. Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012).

In an early study, Appleton and Asoko (1996) explored the ways in which one elementary school teacher (Robert) implemented constructivist ideas about science in his teaching after participation in professional development. Their study drew upon classroom observations, samples of student work, and open-ended interviews conducted over a three week period. Analysis revealed the limited impact that professional development had on Robert's science teaching. For example, the researchers observed that Robert "assimilated […] those aspects of constructivist teaching which fitted fairly closely with existing beliefs and practices" (Appleton & Asoko, 1996, p. 178), and bypass constructivist principles (e.g. explicating conceptual goals for learning) that felt to require deeper modifications of classroom practice. The researchers ascribed this to the failure of professional development to introduce to the teacher to clearly defined conceptual ideas of what constructivist science teaching is and how it should be carried out inside the classroom. Using Robert's case as a point of reference, the

researchers concluded that "[c]hange is incremental" and it thus requires the provision of long-term support to the teachers (Appleton & Asoko, 1996, p. 178). Similarly, Neophytou and Valiandes (2012) explored one teacher's experiences (Sandra) with enacting critical literacy inside her classroom after participation in professional development. Neophytou and Valiandes (2012, p. 8) argued for "a passive acceptance of the CL [critical literacy] approach" on part of the teacher, explaining that the teacher incorporated the new philosophy without changing her underlying beliefs about language teaching and learning. The researchers ascribed this behaviour to professional development and its inadequacy to set up clear critical literacy principles.

In their study on how professional development supports teachers in changing their practice of reading comprehension, Hollenbeck and Kalchman (2013, p. 648) found little evidence of pedagogical change, attributable to professional development which, as they argued, was focused "on action rather than thought". Drawing on data collected from their two previous studies (on teachers' instructional decisions, and on the school contextual factors influencing such decisions), the researchers examined the impediments to change in their participants' teaching of reading comprehension after participating in professional development. The researchers provided the example of three teachers (Lisa, Beth and Natasha) who spoke favourably about their experiences with professional development, yet their classroom practice (e.g. focus on assessment) misaligned with the nature of reading comprehension. The researchers attributed this misalignment to professional development which was focused "on replacing existing practices with new practice" rather than changing teachers' cognitions (Hollenbeck & Kalchman, 2013, p. 650). Hollenbeck and Kalchman (2013, p. 650) also nudged towards the acknowledgement that professional development failed to create the desire for the teachers to innovate, as it focused more on replacing "existing practice with new practice", instead of promoting a "cognitive conflict" between existing teaching trajectories and new curricular recommendations.

4.3   A Focus on Teachers and their Contexts

A growing body of literature suggests that teachers' actions should be studied in a framework that acknowledges the influence of the social and structural factors of the contexts in which they belong. This strand of research regards teachers' responses to curriculum reforms not only, or primarily, as a reflection of what they believe, but rather as a process of meaning making and negotiation. The importance of studying the context is supported by many

scholars and researchers (e.g. Pardo, 2006; Ryder & Banner, 2013; Wedell, 2009), including Wedell and Malderez (2013, p. 15) who stated that teachers' "thinking is influenced by the meanings they have made of experiences they have had, which in turn are coloured by the norms of the culture(s) to which they belong". In contrast to the studies discussed earlier and their predominant emphasis on the individual teacher, this strand of research talks for a sociocultural genesis, whereby teachers' cognitions are not just a property that resides in the minds of teachers, but are also constructs that are influenced and developed "as ways of adjusting to the particular pressures, contingencies and expectations of their environment" (Hargreaves, 1991, p. 251). The imperative lying behind this conceptualisation is the desire to move away from the idea of cognitions as the feedstock of curriculum implementation, to the idea that teachers, as constituents of their working contexts, might also be socialised into conventional ways of thinking and doing (Coburn, 2001; 2004; Hargreaves, 1991; Wallace & Priestley, 2011). Borg (2003, p. 94) for example, suggested that teachers' responses to curriculum reforms are shaped by a variety of factors, including "parents, principals' requirements, the school, society, curriculum mandates, classroom and school layout, school policies, colleagues, standardised tests and availability of resources". Acker (1991, p. 312) also pondered: "How do the buildings, the resources, the external policies, the governing structure, the teacher-student ration and so forth relate to the values and beliefs dominant in the school?".

Researchers assumed a variety of methodological approaches to explore the "subtle interplay" (Acker, 1991, p. 312) between teachers and their contexts. Some researchers, for instance, focused predominantly on exploring the role of context, such as school features, (e.g. Johnson, 1996; Pardo, 2006) on shaping teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. Others emphasised on teachers' social interactions as a meaning making process (e.g. Coburn, 2001; 2004; 2005), and others provided considerations on how teachers' responses to curriculum reforms can evolve and change as part of teachers' ongoing negotiations with their contexts (e.g. Ryder et al., 2018). Such studies are presented and discussed below.

4.3.1   The role of school context

What is often remarked by studies exploring the effect of context is that organisations – such as schools – have the potential to influence action by delineating what is thought to be accepted and worthwhile, possible and necessary (Borg, 1998). Established traditions and norms, rules and regularities; often communicated to teachers through such means as school

visions, learning objectives, and school performance standards, are often found to give direction and order, and oftentimes, to constrain instructional improvement (Hargreaves, 1991). In his study focusing on how eight teachers experienced the implementation of a science curriculum project, Olson (1981) found that school features, such as attainment goals, can serve to constrain, define, and redefine, what teachers are pursuing inside their classrooms and how they respond to curriculum reforms. Olson (1981) elaborated on the dilemmas faced by the participating teachers when confronted with competing discourses about science teaching and learning. On the one hand, responding to the science curriculum was, for some teachers, a desirable course of action; as it was thought to stimulate their students' thinking. On the other hand, engaging with the curriculum was found to contradict with other teaching goals the teachers were also pursuing, including preparing their students for external examinations. Olson (1981) found that the teachers resolved those dilemmas by translating the science curriculum into concepts that were in alignment with the goals of their school. Pardo (2006, p. 380) followed three teachers' curriculum enactment in a study that was guided by the question: "What influences beginning teachers in an urban setting as they translate and implement a particular aspect of their writing curriculum into practice?" The researcher found that the teachers' enactment of the writing curriculum was influenced by various contextual factors, such as "mandates that create curricular and assessment expectations" (Pardo, 2006, p. 390). Pardo (2006) offered the example of Bethany, a fourth grade teacher who, being largely consumed by the pressure placed upon her to prepare her students for state assessment, found herself in the midst of a balancing act between her school's expectations to gain better results in writing, and her own beliefs about her students' writing needs. Pardo (2006) concluded that Bethany was not able to *finesse* her two competing priorities. Instead she kept *juggling* between her own beliefs and the policy expectations. In a similar study, Johnson (1996) noticed that tensions arose between his participant's visions and her school contextual reality in the context of TESOL. Using field notes, interviews, and classroom observations, Johnson (1996, p. 33) investigated Maja's experiences with TESOL and paid emphasis on the teacher's efforts to resolve the tensions between her visions of "starting with what her students already know", and the practical realities of her context (e.g. pressure of time). Johnson (1996) found that Maja's contextual realities inhibited the teacher from teaching in ways consistent with her visions. Maja, for instance said: "I don't like it when I see myself teaching in this way" (Johnson, 1996, p. 37), whilst reflecting upon how time constraints propelled her towards a more teacher-centre approach to TESOL. Johnson (1996, p. 45) concluded that contextual realities created

tensions that comprised the teacher's "understandings of how to create a classroom environment in which" her visions were satisfied.

In a more recent study, Morrison (2013) identified the importance of teachers' school contexts for the development of their identity. In examining the process of identity formation, Morrison (2013, p. 92) devoted his attention to the "beliefs, experiences and responses to teaching" of 14 early career teachers working in different South Australian schools. Using a series of classroom observations and interviews, the researcher collected longitudinal data which were analysed in terms of the teachers' "experiences, perceptions, interpretations and responses in relation to others" (Morrison, 2013, p. 92). Analysis of the data led to the identification of three types of identities: emergent, tenuous, and distressed. Attention to the contextual factors that led to the development of emergent and distress identity provides a useful elaboration on the findings of this study. In particular, Morrison (2013) offered the example of a teacher (Emily) who worked largely in isolation from her colleagues. Throughout the course of the study (one year), Morrison (2013) observed the teacher's confidence in her teaching being challenged as a result of her limited collaboration with her colleagues. On the other hand, teachers (e.g. Adele) who worked in close collaboration with colleagues and school leaders were found to have expressed an emergent teacher identity; framed by trajectories that included "looking optimistically towards their teaching futures", "confirming their sense of suitability and capacity", and "experiencing success in their teaching practice" (Morrison, 2013, p. 97). Morrison (2013) linked the development of emergent identity to such school features, including "collaborations, relationships", "shared understandings" (Morrison, 2013, p. 98), social structures that build on "feedback, guidance, direction, comfort, debriefing and care" (Morrison, 2013, p. 98), and to the ongoing support provided by the school leaders. Morrison (2013, p. 98) concluded that such school features can encourage teachers "to experience success and to be successful", and lead to the development of identities that are "malleable [in] nature" (Morrison, 2013, p. 98).

Related scholarship work (e.g. Pashiardis, 2000) focuses on exploring the "spirit of collegiality and collaboration among the staff and between the staff and the principal" (Pashiardis, 2000, pp. 224-225) and its effect on teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. Acker (1991), for instance, explained that teacher collegiality helps to share the new knowledge among teachers. Louden (1991) found that collegiality facilitates teachers' pursuits of educational improvement. Kyriakides et al. (2010) asserted that collaboration among teachers stimulates a commitment to change. Within such literature, the role of school

leaders is often highlighted as one that can encourage change and innovation. Roehrig et al. (2007) conducted a comparative study to investigate the ways in which 27 teachers, working in twelve different schools in California, implemented a new chemistry curriculum. Using a mixed method approach, the researchers focused their data collection and analysis processes on investigating the teachers' knowledge and beliefs and the degree of alignment between beliefs and the new curriculum. Information about each teacher's school context (e.g. science administrators) was collected during interviews with teachers. After data analysis, the researchers classified their participants into traditional, mechanist, and inquiry teachers. Attention to inquiry and traditional teachers provides a useful elaboration on the findings of this study. In their majority, the teachers who worked in close collaboration with their science administrators appeared to hold reform-based beliefs (e.g. student-centred beliefs) and were seen to embrace the new curriculum (e.g. Leslie and Mike). On the other hand, the teachers who worked rarely with their science administrators appeared to hold traditional beliefs (e.g. teacher as the holder of knowledge) and eventually bypassed (e.g. Milly and Carl) or altered the curriculum in substantial ways (e.g. Jon, Joy, and Fred). The researchers concluded that the support their participants received from science administrators, "played a big role in the implementation of the curriculum" (Roehrig et al., 2007, p. 904). In a more recent study investigating the experiences of 22 secondary school teachers with implementing the 2006 science curriculum reform in England, Ryder and Banner (2013) noticed that risk-taking Heads of Science, who were found to have incorporated elements of the new science curriculum in their departments, stimulated the development of an ethos of collegiality among their teachers, which in turn, resulted in teachers' personal development and encouraged the adoption of the new curriculum. In their study on how teachers responded to the prescriptive reading programmes being implemented in the schools of 32 teachers, Pease-Alvarez et al. (2010) also reaffirmed that the flexible and supportive leadership style adopted by school principals encouraged the teachers to take actions that were directed towards the implementation of the programmes.

What appears to emerge as a general consensus here is that, teachers' responses to curriculum reforms can be mediated, shaped, and influenced, not only by their cognitions; as previously discussed (see section 4.2), but also by their school context and the social or structural affordances and limitations therein. The studies that are presented and discuss below further suggest that teachers' experiences of curriculum reforms are constituted during a process of meaning making and negotiation. These studies underline the influence of both individual cognitions and context on how curriculum reforms are responded to.

4.3.2   Negotiations of meaning in the context of curriculum reforms

Ritchie and Rigano's (2002) study is an example of how personal (e.g. teachers motivation to support student learning), internal (e.g. the shared culture of improving student learning) and external factors (e.g. a new curriculum) negotiate in the context of curriculum change. In their study, Ritchie and Rigano (2002) focused particularly on the case of a deputy head teacher (Mr. Volker) who self-initiated a change in his classroom practice in response to the publication of a new syllabus in mathematics in Australia. Viewing teachers' responses to curriculum reforms as the "product of human action and interactions" (Ritchie & Rigano, 2002, p. 1081), the researchers explored Mr. Volker's meaning making process and the factors that triggered a change in his classroom practice. During interviews and classroom observations, the researchers noticed that a change in his teaching was triggered by his dissatisfaction with existing practices that failed to "provide sufficient breadth of cognitive demand" (Ritchie & Rigano, 2002, p. 1084) that Mr. Volker believed to be important to his students. The change in his teaching was also motivated by his commitment to his students, which propelled Mr. Volker to consider alternatives to his established classroom practice, and to experiment with new ways of teaching (e.g. flexible-testing schedules). This "caring storyline" (Ritchie & Rigano, 2002, p. 1085) was found to be part of the wider school culture in which Mr. Volker worked; one that encouraged teachers "to try out new ideas and continually strive to improve the learning opportunities for their students" (Ritchie & Rigano, 2002, p. 1091). For the researchers, a change in Mr. Volker's classroom practice was not solely the result of the teacher's personal commitment to his students. It was also the result of a supportive school culture that encouraged innovation, and provided the teacher with the necessary space for changing what was deemed important so that his "carrying storyline" (Ritchie & Rigano, 2002, p. 1085) was accommodated in the best way possible. Ritchie and Rigano's (2002) study is thus one that narrates curriculum implementation success. Yet, it is also one that underlines the importance of context alignment; where teachers' beliefs are in line with the new policy, and where the structures and cultures of their working contexts encourage innovation and experimentation.

Ryder and Banner (2013) conducted a research to explore the influence of teachers' cognitions on the ways the 2006 science curriculum reform in England was received and enacted. Citing Goodson's remark that large-scale innovations rarely account for the teachers' working contexts (2003 as cited in Ryder & Banner, 2013), Ryder and Banner (2013) urged for a well-rounded consideration of the factors that are at play as teachers respond to

curriculum reforms. Categorising those factors as belonging to the external (e.g. national policies), internal (e.g. school context), and personal (e.g. teacher beliefs) contexts of teachers' work, Ryder and Banner (2013) concluded that the teachers' dispositions towards curriculum change depend on the interaction of both the teachers' cognitions and the structural and cultural features of their work. In particular, they offered the case of a teacher (15A) who held a rather negative to neutral stance towards the science curriculum. Ryder and Banner (2013) noticed that the teacher's goals for science education stood in contrast to the flexibility advocated by the science curriculum, yet they were in alignment with the teacher's school goals. Evidence of alignment between teachers' personal goals and the external reform initiative was also made apparent, with Ryder and Banner (2013) suggesting that this alignment was enabled on the basis of a strong leadership that favoured risk-taking and innovation. Ryder and Banner (2013) ultimately concluded that there is no sole determinant to the success of curriculum reforms but rather multiple factors that might not be "static and unchanged" (Ryder & Banner, 2013, p. 508), but are nevertheless interwoven. Curriculum reforms, as Ryder and Banner (2013) further remarked, provide to teachers a site of negotiation during which "they negotiate the multiple personal, internal, and external contexts of their work" (Ryder & Banner, 2013, p. 507), underlining a process of meaning making that is not only cognitive, but also context-related.

Within this line of inquiry, researchers argue for the importance of attending to both macro (referring to contextual influences) and micro (referring to the influence of the individual teacher) elements, and thus frame meaning making as:

> [H]ow people notice or select information from the environment, make meaning of that information, and then act on those interpretations, developing culture, social structures and routines over time (Coburn, 2001, p. 147).

Adopting the perspective that meaning making is a process "rooted in social interaction and negotiation" which involves "placing new information into preexisting cognitive frameworks" (Coburn, 2001, p. 147), Coburn (2001) formulated a research to investigate how four teachers, working in one elementary school in California, made meaning of reading instruction as they negotiated the new policy within their school contexts. Using a case study design, Coburn (2001) noticed that the teachers often turned to their colleagues to understand new curricula messages about reading instruction. Coburn (2001, p. 163) found that such sensemaking events enabled some teachers to "question their assumptions, challenge their frames, and

continue to improve their practice over time"; in other words, to engage in a learning experience that extended beyond their own tacit ideas about reading instruction. In the case of other teachers, Coburn (2001, p. 160) found that sensemaking was "deeply situated in the larger school context", suggesting that school contexts shaped teachers' sensemaking process by obstructing collegial interaction, or favouring particular messages about reading instruction while bypassing and misrepresenting others (e.g. the purpose of reading comprehension).

In her 2004 cross-case study, and while suggesting the reconciliation between the institutional perspective and sensemaking theory, Coburn (2004) explored whether the new literacy policy of California influenced classroom teaching, and how the school context served to afford or inhibit teachers' responses to the curriculum reform. Given her adopted sensemaking approach, Coburn (2004, p. 217) proceeded to the collection of information regarding what she defined as "key 'messages' about reading instruction from the environment". Assuming both macro and micro processes, Coburn (2004) explored the teachers as individual sensemakers of the contextual cues around them, and the effect of the context on what the teachers think and do. Her investigation revealed that the teachers responded to the new reading policy with rejection, decoupling/symbolic response, parallel structures, assimilation, and accommodation. Coburn (2004) attributed teachers' varied responses to the degree of congruence between their cognitions and the new policy, which oftentimes led to new messages being assimilated into existing beliefs and practices. In particular, Coburn (2004) provided the example of Sharon who appeared to have embraced the new approaches to reading instruction. However, classroom observations and subsequent interviews with the teacher revealed that the new messages were assimilated into existing teaching trajectories and ways of thinking. Coburn (2004) suggested that school context played a key role on how the reading policy was represented and understood by the teachers. In particular, Coburn (2004) found that school contexts that have encouraged the teachers' participation in professional development and collaboration among colleagues, led to the teachers being more *intensively* connected with new messages. In other occasions, the teachers were seen to shift their response to the new policy – from accommodation to rejection and from accommodation to assimilation (i.e. Sharon and Deanna). Coburn (2004) attributed these shifting responses to the teachers' school contexts, which deprived them from engaging with, and learning about, the new policy.

A year later, and following the same perspective on sensemaking, Coburn (2005) investigated the role of school principals in what teachers learn about reading instruction. Using in-depth interviews and observations in a study that followed a cross-case design, Coburn (2005) noticed that the changing policy of reading instruction was filtered through the principals' existing cognitions. What the principals understood about the new policy was found to have been largely influenced by what they already knew, with Coburn (2005) concluding that principals tended to bring in curriculum messages that were consistent with their pre-existing cognitions, while ignoring other curriculum messages that did not align with what was already accepted by them. One such example was Ms. Moore who, largely influenced by the basic skills approach, viewed the guided reading instruction – an approach to reading that was thought to support students' constructions of textual meaning – as proposing an instructional strategy similar to her beliefs that students learn in homogeneous groups. Coburn (2005) reaffirmed the influence of existing cognitions on how new curriculum messages are understood. The researcher also reported on the ways in which the principals influenced teachers' meaning making process by bringing in materials that conflicted with the new reading policy, influencing their understandings during sensemaking activities with colleagues, and establishing governing structures that defined their power over the teachers' classroom instruction. As Coburn (2005, p. 497) noticed about Ms. Moore: "When she did talk about instruction, the conversation mostly took the form of her telling teachers what she wanted to see".

With his remark that "[i]nterpretation is not entirely a solo affair", Spillane (2000b, p. 167) made the case for a sensemaking process that starts from within, but it is also "influenced by the social, physical, and cultural contexts of the sense maker" (Spillane, 2000b, p. 146). Working from this point of view, Spillane (1999, p. 144) suggested that the failure or success of curriculum implementation rests on teachers' zones of enactment: the "space where reform initiatives are encountered by the world of practitioners and 'practice' ". In a study investigating the efforts of 25 teachers to change their mathematics instruction in response to a reform initiative, Spillane (1999) noticed that, despite having all of his participants supporting the reform, only a few teachers changed their classroom practice. Spillane (1999) noticed that the three teachers who were found to have changed their practice had zones of enactment that went beyond the confines of their classrooms. Supported by their ongoing deliberations with colleagues and experts, Spillane (1999) argued that these three teachers managed to make meaning of the new policy in ways that resonated with the reform. The majority of the teachers, however, responded to the reform in superficial ways, often

undermining important reform messages, with Spillane (1999) concluding that their zones of enactment – being largely individualistic – deprived them from the opportunities to engage in substantial meaning making activities. Spillane (1999) also acknowledged the role of other contextual factors in influencing teachers' negotiations with the new reading policy. In particular, Spillane (1999) observed that teachers who managed to respond to the reform in substantial ways had access to classroom materials that enabled a deeper understanding of the reform. Spillane (1999, p. 164) concluded that the teachers who were successful in changing their practice were part of "an environment that supported ongoing inquiry about the ideas represented by key reform themes".

a. Meaning making and agency

Associated with exploring teachers' actions in the context of curriculum reforms, this strand of research portrays teachers as "simultaneously free and constrained" (Archer, 1995, p. 2), and their actions as being shaped by sociocultural forces (e.g. Biesta et al., 2015; 2017; Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Priestley et al., 2015; Priestley et al., 2012a; Priestley et al., 2012b). Simply defined as the capacity for autonomous action (Archer, 1995; 2000; 2007; 2013), agency has been subject to extensive discussions and debates over the years by school of thoughts as diverse as philosophy, psychology, and sociology. From Dewey and Mead (see Biesta et al., 2015; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), to Bandura (1989; 2001), Giddens (see Buchanan, 2015; Sloan, 2006) and Archer (1995; 2000; 2007; 2013), being in a state of agency has been defined as individuals' ability to make choices, exercise judgement, and "critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 971). Within the educational scholarship, the discussion on agency focused on investigating how, and under what circumstances, teachers use their professional discretion over making deliberate pedagogical decisions in the context of curriculum reforms (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Katelaar et al., 2012; Ryder et al., 2018; Sloan, 2006). Having emerged, or fairly re-emerged, in response to new curricular models that explicitly regard teacher agency as an important parameter in the overall quality of education, contemporary writings have both welcomed the shift from prescriptive curricular mandates to flexibility and autonomy as potentially renewing teachers' sense of professionalism, but have also pondered upon teachers' ability to exercise agency (e.g. Day et al., 2007; Flores, 2005; Philippou et al., 2014; Priestley et al., 2015; Priestley et al., 2012a; Wallace & Priestley, 2011). Collectively, the studies and writings that are presented and discussed below put forth significant questions about teachers, their commitment in governing their classroom practices according to their cognitions, and their

abilities to *manoeuvre* among alternative courses of action in response to the contingencies of their environment (Priestley et al., 2012b) and the externally driven policies (Ryder et al., 2018). This section reviews a part of the curriculum change scholarship that has paid added attention to exploring teachers' agency in the context of curriculum reforms, and follows its conclusions about the factors that seem to inform and influence teachers' negotiations with change within their contexts.

i. Agency within an ecology

In their writings, Biesta, Tedder, Priestley and colleagues (e.g. Biesta et al., 2015; 2017; Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Priestley et al., 2015; Priestley et al., 2012b) offer an extensive critique on current theoretical approaches and empirical studies that seem to portray teachers as either utterly autonomous or overly compressed; a tendency attributed to teacher agency remaining an "under-theorised" and thus "misconstrued" phenomenon (Priestley et al., 2012b, p. 191). Beginning with declaring their understanding of agency as an achievement, the scholars push forward their view of agency as an ecological phenomenon, manifested within the constraints and possibilities of a particular *ecology*, being structural (e.g. social structures), cultural (e.g. values) and physical (e.g. resources) in nature (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). Biesta and Tedder (2007, p. 137) wrote:

> [T]he achievement of agency will always result from the interplay of individual efforts, available resources and contextual and structural 'factors' as they come together in particular and, in a sense, always unique situations.

In the light of the introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Priestly et al. (2012a) conducted a number of ethnographic case studies ('Teacher agency and curriculum change' project) that explored the factors that afforded or constrained the achievement of agency in relation to the curriculum enactment of teachers working in three schools in Scotland. Formulating a research that was based on Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) theoretical perspective on agency as temporally-embedded, and on Biesta and Tedder's (2007) ecological model, Priestly et al. (2012a) conducted interviews, observations, and relationship mapping, to account for both the personal and ecological factors that shaped the exercise of agency. Their data revealed a clear similarity among the teachers' beliefs about their students, and made apparent the consistency of those beliefs with the CfE. Despite this alignment, the researchers noticed that agency was achieved in different degrees, attributing this diversity to

the different ecological conditions within which the teachers worked. In particular, and while comparing and contrasting the cases of Hillview High school and Lakeside High school, the researchers noticed that the performative culture of the first school, and the weak lines of horizontal communications that had been established therein, created an ecology that *tempered* the teachers' aspirations as well as their sense of confidence in carrying out the CfE. With the teachers in Hillview being more concerned with their day-to-day teaching, and thus less concerned with the enactment of the new curriculum, the researchers finally concluded that some of the teachers' "strong aspirations" were "stymied" (Priestley et al., 2012a, p. 14) by such cultural (e.g. school's attainment agendas) and social factors (e.g. fragmented communication) that deprived them from engaging with meaning making opportunities and thinking beyond their classroom practice.

Reporting on their data collected in 2007-2008 as part of the project 'Cultures of curriculum making in Scottish schools and colleges', Priestley et al. (2012b) concluded, as they did in the study discussed above, that the teachers' beliefs, despite being congruent with the reform messages around them, were manifested inside the classroom in different ways. In particular, Priestley et al. (2012b) utilised classroom observations and interviews with teachers and students of one high school in Scotland, to explore the potential for teachers to achieve agency in the context of CfE. The ecology of the school, framed by a strong focus on attainment and getting students ready for exams, was again found to be of perennial influence upon teachers' projective dimension (intentionality), as their aspirations "to teach educationally" (Priestley et al., 2012b, p. 199) were constrained by having to respond to the school's attainment agenda. Yet, some teachers appeared more able than others "in manoeuvring between [their] projective and practical-evaluative approaches to curriculum making" (Priestley et al., 2012b, p. 209). Focusing on Gerald and Debbie, the researchers suggested that it might have been the *boldness* of Debbie's teaching (Priestley et al., 2012b, p. 209) and her rich repertoire of cognitions that allowed her to be more agentic with her curriculum enactment. They also argued that it might have been Gerald's decisions to "go for tried-and-tested methods" (Priestley et al., 2012b, p. 209) instead of adopting reform-based practices, that delineated the degree to which he achieved agency. In pondering upon their findings, the researchers concluded that "agency is a matter of personal capacity to act" (Priestley et al., 2012b, p. 196); a capacity shaped and defined as teachers negotiate with the contextual deficiencies and opportunities around them.

Biesta et al. (2015) returned with their 2015 article to account for the effect of teachers' beliefs on the achievement of agency. Drawing upon the data collected as part of a larger project ('Teacher agency and curriculum change project') and re-analysing them in terms of teachers' beliefs, the researchers identified three categories of beliefs that seemed to have shaped the teachers' achievement of agency in the context of CfE: a) beliefs about children and young people, b) beliefs about teaching, and c) beliefs about educational purpose. The researchers elaborated on how the aforementioned beliefs shaped the teachers' agency in ways that influenced the enactment of the new curriculum. In particular, the researchers collected evidence of teachers who thought of the new curriculum as proposing learning objectives that did not match their students' attainment level, who misinterpreted important curricular messages (e.g. interdisciplinary approach) in ways that fitted with existing beliefs, and whose longer-term objectives were suppressed by their short-term goal of covering the syllabus. The researchers finally concluded that the teachers' beliefs about CfE were framed and shaped by "the cultures of schooling within which these teachers worked" (Biesta et al., 2015, p. 636); cultures that deprived them from engaging with sensemaking opportunities that would have allowed a clearer understanding of the reform ideas.

ii. Agency as an individual expression within context

Eteläpelto's et al. (2013) subject-centred sociocultural perspective on teacher agency emerged as a critique to the idea of individuals being inseparable from their contexts. In particular, Eteläpelto et al. (2013) perceive agency as something that is *exercised* instead of as something that is *achieved* (see Priestley et al., 2012b); thus underlining the mediating effect of the context, but also highlighting the role of teachers as "feeling and willing subjects who actively prioritize, choose, and consider what is important and worth aspiring in their life and future" (Eteläpelto et al., 2013, p. 62). Studies that adopt this perspective on agency (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Milne et al., 2006; Ryder et al., 2018) do not necessarily depart from the arguments surfaced above (section i); that social and cultural structures have a mediating effect upon teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. However, they tend to conceptualise teacher agency rather differently, as they depart from questions regarding teachers' abilities to achieve agency (see Priestley et al., 2012b) to questions that concentrate on exploring the reciprocal interaction between agency and structure (e.g. Vähäsantanen, 2015). This departure goes much deeper than the ontological differences between the ecological (e.g. Biesta & Tedder, 2007) and the subject-centred perspective on agency; it suggests the centrality of teachers in deciding upon their courses of action during a process of constant negotiation

between their cognitions and their contexts. Biesta, Tedder, Priestly and colleagues (e.g. Biesta et al., 2015; Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Priestley et al., 2015) make clear in their writings that they move away from social determinism and acknowledge the capacity of teachers to make free choices that might run with, or even run counter to, their contexts. What is different here, however, is the centrality of individuals in being "strongly participative in choices and decisions" they make (Ryder et al., 2018, p. 539). In this regard, Eteläpelto's et al. (2013) subject-centred approach gives agency back to teachers, as a property that is part of who they are; manifested as conscious choices and deliberate decisions, but also encompassing broader structures of possibility and constraint. Within this line of inquiry, teacher agency is no longer seen as isomorphic to its context, but it is understood as the ability to "take stances" (Vähäsantanen, 2015, p. 1) in ways that could either enrich or protest against existing structures and cultures.

Buchanan (2015), for instance, identified two types of agency as they relate to the ways in which teachers negotiate with their contexts: 'pushing back'; expressed through actions that work to protest against the context, and 'stepping up'; defined as actions that go "above and beyond" teachers' expected role (Buchanan, 2015, p. 710). In her study, Buchanan (2015) talked about degrees of fit between the teachers' cognitions and the sociocultural factors around them, suggesting that agency was enabled when there was congruence between the two. In particular, Buchanan (2015, p. 710) elaborated on the case of one teacher, Lola, who experienced a "mission fit" between her identity and the accountability standards espoused by her school in response to a new policy. Buchanan (2015) argued that this alignment enabled the teacher to *step up* and assume responsibilities that went beyond her teaching role (e.g. to lead professional development sessions). Lola's case was contrary to the case of her colleague, Juliet, who experienced tensions between her identity and her school's commitment to assessment. Buchanan (2015) suggested that this misalignment propelled the teacher to express a pushing back agency, constantly searching for an alternative course of action that would better fit with her identity.

Agency is "identities in motion", Buchanan (2015, p. 714) remarked, with many scholars assuming the same perspective; that identity – as shaped by teachers' cognitions – mediates agency in ways that facilitate innovations or act against them (Hökkä et al., 2017; Katelaar et al., 2012; Sloan, 2006). Sloan (2006) defined this constant negotiation between identity and agency as a *self-authoring* process, whereby 'people tell others who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as though they are who they say they are'

(Holland et al., 1998, as cited in Sloan, 2006, p. 125). Adopting Buchanan's (2015) perspective on the importance of congruence between identity and the "figured world of school", Sloan (2006, p. 136) carried out a study that focused on investigating the effect of teachers' identity on their responses to the increased accountability demands. Utilising interviews and classroom observations, Sloan (2006) built on the cases of three teachers who responded differently to the new accountability policy. Sloan (2006) collected evidence of three teachers (Anne, Dean and Christine) who experienced tensions between their identity and the new accountability policies espoused by their schools. Anne for instance, exhibited an opposing stance towards the accountability policies – echoing Buchanan's (2015) 'pushing back' agency – in ways that enabled her to re-direct her focus on what she valued as important. Afforded by her strong identity and expertise, Anne achieved high levels of agency, as Sloan (2006) explained, that enabled her to construct her own responses to the accountability demands. Anne's experiences in relation to the accountability mandates mirror Katelaar's et al. (2012) descriptions of how teachers' responses to innovations are based on their judgements on whether they see their identities as being reinforced or threatened. Katelaar et al. (2012), in particular, posit that it is possible for teachers who do not identify with the existing policy to use their agency to protest against it.

Dean on the other hand, exhibited lower levels of agency. Self-authoring himself as an entertainer-teacher, Dean disassociated himself from both the accountability policy and the school within which he worked, assuming what Vähäsantanen (2015) termed a *reserved* teacher agency. In her research concerning a major educational reform in Finland, Vähäsantanen (2015) collected evidence of teachers who engaged rather passively with the reform and manifested a reserved agency that was characterised by their decisions to withdraw, or otherwise to distance themselves, from the reform and even from their organisations. Christine, on the other hand, was opposed to the accountability mandates, echoing Anne's concerns that the existing norms within her school prevented her from delivering the type of teaching she believed that fitted with her students' needs. Yet, unlike Anne, Christine appeared less able to select among alternative courses of action, with Sloan (2006) attributing this to the teacher's limited expertise. Milne et al. (2006) drew the same conclusion in their study reporting on the responses of two teachers to a professional chemistry education programme. Framed by the sociocultural understanding that "[a]gency and structure exist in a dialectical relationship that can constrain and promote" teachers' actions, Milne et al. (2006, p. 328) explored the efforts of Beth and Hugh in finding alternative courses of action within the restrictions of their school, as they endeavoured to

transfer the knowledge gained from the development programme to their classrooms. Despite facing the same contextual constraints (e.g. access to laboratory), Milne et al. (2006) noticed that Beth was more willing to experiment, thus demonstrating what the researchers termed an *expanded* agency. The researchers, in particular, found that the teacher managed to navigate beyond the contextual restrictions of her school in ways that aligned with her personal goals and the knowledge gained from the programme. Hugh, on the other hand, enacted the knowledge gained from the professional development programme in ways that reflected the constraints around him. Envisioning no alternatives to the didactic approach that he was capable to deliver within the constraints of his school, in conjunction with identifying less with the inquiry-based approach, Hugh struggled to enact his agency within his school. Milne et al. (2006) concluded that Hugh's limited repertoire constrained his courses of action, in the same way that Christine's expertise constrained her agency in the context of accountability demands (Sloan, 2006).

However, what is rather interesting about Christine is that the new accountability mandates (more specifically those focusing on writing) encouraged her to experiment with new approaches in ways that enhanced her repertoire and indeed her agency over time, as Sloan noticed (2006). Christine's experiences with the new curriculum mandates mirror Ryder's et al. (2018) descriptions of a teacher whose engagement with the reform was gradually seen to change (Teacher 6). The researchers documented the teacher's "shifting expressions of agency" (Ryder et al., 2018, p. 555) from viewing the reform as being in conflict with her personal goals to gradually being immersed into her practice. In particular, Ryder et al. (2018) suggest that teacher agency might be seen to relate to who teachers are and who they wish to be, but it is also relevant to the context within which agency is expressed. Conducted in the context of a major educational reform in Sweden, Ryder's et al. (2018) sociocultural study focused on exploring teachers' responses to the innovation as manifested through particular expressions of agency. Within their research, they documented teachers shifting from one expression of agency to the other, suggesting that personal goals, institutional realities, and policy structures, formed part of a complex negotiation process of meaning making that constrained possibilities for change, but also led to changes over time. They offered the case of Teacher 7 who was initially experiencing 'a loss of autonomy and trust' and a process of 'pushing back' from the innovation, as a result of the tensions that arose between the teacher's personal goals and the reform agenda. However, having positioned herself as a teacher who likes "to try new things" (Ryder et al., 2018, p. 552), and while being afforded by school structures that encouraged autonomy, Teacher 7 translated those tensions into new

possibilities for action. Similarly, Teacher 8 experienced tensions with the reform, suggesting that it was proposing a situation antagonistic to her cognitions. However, the researchers noticed that the teacher progressively moved from pushing back to an enhanced sense of agency. The researchers attributed Teacher's 8 shifting expressions of agency to the collaborative structures established within her school.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed studies and theoretical accounts with the purpose to illuminate what is known about how teachers respond to curriculum reforms and the factors that seem to enable, inhibit or prohibit, in other words influence the enactment, of a new curriculum inside the classroom. Reflecting upon such studies and theoretical accounts, there is one lesson learnt: Change always creates reactions. Although scholars mostly agree on what prompts those reactions – be it in light of "uncertainty and ambiguity" (Maitlis, 2005, p. 21) or in response to "unfamiliar and problematic situations" (Archer, 2007, p. 39) that require teachers to "retain control over their work" (Archer, 2007, p. 222) – they diverge on the components that seem to form them. Several studies, for instance, emphasise on the role of teachers and the effect of their cognitions on how a new curriculum is perceived, and enacted inside the classroom. Such studies, a small number of which was discussed in this Chapter, regard teacher cognitions as cognitive frameworks upon which new curriculum recommendations are contested. Other studies provide evidence of teachers' cognitions as being shaped and influenced by contextual factors. Lastly, several of the studies that were presented and discussed above focus on re-centralising teacher cognitions by proposing that teacher agency might be "constrained and supported by boarder social and institutional working contexts" (Ryder et al., 2018, p. 552), yet it is also, and necessarily, "framed by the individual's personal goals" (Ryder et al., 2018, p. 539). These competing points of view show the remnants of a greater debate, out of which the question of how teachers and context interact with each other, grew into a question of which of the two exert more influence and power on the other (see Archer, 1995; 2000; 2007; Eteläpelto et al., 2013; Weick et al., 2005). This debate, referred to as the structure-agency debate (see Priestley et al., 2012b; Vähäsantanen, 2015), concerns the relationship between purposeful behaviour (intentionality) and social structure, and the nature of their interaction (Archer, 2000). There is an apparent dilemma here; one that is part of the cognitive and sociocultural divide and the perennial question of whether cognitions are to be looked at as something that reside within the mind,

or as something that is constructed within and in response to contextual factors (see Archer, 2007).

Without delving deeper into the cognitive-sociocultural divide, it could be argued here that studies such as the ones presented and discussed in this chapter, should be considered, beyond their ontological and methodological differences, as having contributed to the understanding of how teachers' responses to curriculum reforms are resourced. Collectively, such studies suggest that, in responding to curriculum reforms, teachers are influenced by their cognitions; what they know, but most importantly, what they believe about aspects of their work (e.g. purpose of subject matter, students) (e.g. Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Collopy, 2003; Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009; Datnow & Castellano, 2000). Yet, such studies further suggest that contextual circumstances, relevant to the social structures and cultures of their working contexts, are also at play as teachers respond to curriculum reforms. In fact, such studies often provide a number of reasons why many teachers do not respond to curriculum reforms as intended, despite their congruence with the reform (e.g. Biesta et al., 2015; Pardo, 2006; Priestley et al., 2012b). Taken together, such studies counter the view that teachers are, by virtue of what they believe, a conservative group, or that curriculum innovations fail because of teachers' restrictive cognitive repertoire. They further suggest that the question of how teachers respond to curriculum reforms will not be adequately studied, unless both teachers and their contexts are thought of, and investigated, as interrelated elements that exert influence on each other (e.g. Ryder et al., 2018; Vähäsantanen, 2015). Such understandings promote the idea that teachers are not just mere implementers of an externally driven curriculum, but rather they engage with the reforms in a process that involves ongoing negotiations, meaning making, and deliberations (Ball et al., 2012). This work adopts what can be regarded as a holistic perspective on teachers' responses to curriculum reforms. Yet it further proclaims the central role of teachers in navigating their actions towards what they believe to be important and worthwhile (Archer, 1995; 2007; 2013). With that being said, the question of how context influences action is important; yet of equal importance is the question of how cognitions influence what teachers become aware of, how they think and reflect upon their surroundings; in other words make meaning of their world (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005), before enacting trajectories of action. What it is implied here is that, in order to make valid propositions about how teachers act in times of change, research must take the realm of cognition, as well as the realm of socioculturalism, into account. In other words, it is important to explore teachers' actions in the context of curriculum change; yet it is also

important to investigate the process by which teachers make meaning and negotiate with their contexts as they respond to curriculum reforms.

Chapter 5: Conceptual Framework

5.1   Introduction

Driven by the research purpose – to investigate meaning making and agency in the context of the new language curriculum – this work suggests that, in order to understand how teachers respond to curriculum reforms, entails a reconciliation between such perspectives that tend to divide action as either referring inwards to cognitions or outwards to the context. This work endeavours to further such reconciliation by conceptualising agency as being located within a sensemaking process that involves both teachers and their contexts in a state of negotiation. This conceptualisation emanates from writings on sensemaking (e.g. Maitlis, 2005; Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005) and teacher agency (e.g. Archer, 1995; 2000; 2007; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). The sensemaking framework for teacher agency, developed for the purpose of this study (see Figure 1), outlines how teacher agency is conceptualised within this study; as the outcome of teachers' negotiation of meaning within their working contexts. Section 5.2. justifies the importance for investigating teacher agency from a sensemaking perspective. Section 5.3. discusses what is known about sensemaking and agency, and section 5.4. discusses the sensemaking framework for teacher agency, and defines the elements that this study regards as being part of teachers' sensemaking process. In short, such elements, as discussed in section 5.4., are thought to influence and shape the ways in which teachers make meaning and enact their agency within and in response to their surroundings.

5.2   Why Explore Agency Through Sensemaking?

Chapter 4 concluded with identifying a discontinued dialogue, which complicated the nature of teacher action by either proclaiming its cognitive or its sociocultural genesis. The perspective adopted within this study is one that seeks to move beyond such dichotomy that favours the one side of the structure-agency binary over the other, and to assume a position similar to many contemporary studies (e.g. Ryder et al., 2018; Vähäsantanen, 2015): that it is both agency and structure that matters. From this point of view, teachers do not just put "stimuli into frameworks" (Weick, 1995, p. 5) but rather, as constituents of their working contexts, they inevitably act within and in response to their surroundings. Such

conceptualisation does not necessarily debunk teachers from their central role as decision-makers, nor does it suggest a social determinism point of view, whereby teachers cannot but conform themselves to established structures. On the contrary, by positioning teachers at the centre, this conceptualisation proclaims a "mutually constitutive interaction" (Eteläpelto et al., 2013, p. 50) between structure and agency, whereby context and teachers exist as a duality rather than a dualism, and thus each exercise a transformative or reproductive power on the other. When considering the structure-agency binary from this perspective, the work of Archer (1995; 2000; 2007) becomes particularly relevant. Archer (2007) maintains that independent elements of the world exist, but the way agents act is the result of their *reflexive thinking* – intrinsic to all agents – during which they evaluate their environment and their possible trajectories of action, largely driven by their desire to deliberate on their personal 'concerns'. Here, Archer (1995; 2000; 2007) suggests that agency is driven by agents' deliberate actions to actualise their personal 'concerns', but this deliberation is not independent from what the actors think of their environment, and what they perceive to be possible, permitted, and allowed therein. "Deliberation consists in people evaluating their situations in the light of their concerns", Archer (2013, p. 6) explained, suggesting that agency:

> […] depends upon a subject who has sufficient personal identity to know what he or she cares about and to design the 'projects' that they hope (fallibly) will realize their concerns within society. Equally, it depends upon the objectivity of their social circumstances, which, under their own (fallible) descriptions, will encourage them to follow one course of action rather than another (Archer, 2013, p. 6).

It follows from the above discussion that, to understand teacher agency in the context of curriculum reforms, suggests the need to investigate the ways in which teachers make meaning and define trajectories of action as they negotiate with their surroundings. It is suggested here that agency is not just a mere exchange between personal 'concerns' (Archer, 2013) and contextual factors. Rather, it is an active sensemaking process, whereby teachers define their 'concerns' (Archer, 2013), collect information from their contexts, and then act in ways that may transform or reproduce the status quo. In other words, within the structure-agency binary, there is a sensemaking process that occurs in between; one that emerges, or is triggered, by the interaction of teachers with their working contexts. Within this study, agency is thus conceptualised as an outward expression of cognitions, which may emanate from the inside, but are also extended towards the context, as teachers negotiate with the contingencies

around them and make meaning of curriculum reforms. What this conceptualisation implies for teachers within their working contexts, is that agency talks of active agents who partake in a purposeful interaction with their surroundings. Although part of their contexts, teachers are not at their mercy, but keep themselves in existence by acting in ways that might be contextualised but are also value-laden. To conceptualise agency as something that is expressed, or enacted, within particular contextual contingencies, implies the occurrence of a sensemaking process, through which teachers establish their place within their contexts and bring forth a world that transforms the status quo or preserves it.

With sensemaking and agency being the two concepts informing this study, it is deemed important to elaborate on both. The section below builds upon the seminal work of Weick (see Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005) with the aim to provide an understanding of how individuals act in (re)structuring their world in the context of change. It also adds to Weick's writings in an effort to address some of the criticisms raised against the macro perspective that Weick has assumed within his writings on sensemaking (see Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005).

5.3   Meaning Making and Agency: From the Macro to the Holistic Perspective

With the publication of his classic text, *Sensemaking in organisations*, Weick (1995, p. 17) proposes a way for understanding action as a sensemaking process "that is (1) grounded in identity construction, (2) retrospective, (3) enactive of sensible environments, (4) social, (5) ongoing, (6) focused on and by extracted cues, [and] (7) driven by plausibility rather than accuracy". Located within the organisational change literature, sensemaking is the process whereby individuals make meaning of the messages that create tensions and ambiguities, and which are inconsistent with existing cognitions (Maitlis, 2005). In short, Weick (1995) suggests that change is identified by extracting cues from the environment matched against the individual's identity. This kind of thinking, retrospective according to Weick (1995), is social; as it is influenced by shared experiences with others, but also contextual, as experience is shaped by acting within a given context. These seven properties, as briefly elaborated here, are Weick's (1995) most notable contribution to how individuals structure the unknown. What Weick (1995) recognises with the identification of these seven properties, is that individual sensemakers are not only concerned with making meaning of the world around them, but also of themselves. As Weick (1995, p. 20) lucidly remarked:

> Once I know who I am then I know what is out there. But the direction of causality flows just as often from the situation to a definition of self as it does the other way.

Weick's (1995) seven properties suggest that, as individuals make meaning and enact their agency in response to the changes around them, both identity (cognitions) and context are represented in their agency. Within his writings, Weick (1995, p. 23) suggests a relationship of tensions between the aforementioned elements; tensions that are "triggered by a failure to confirm one's self" and which individuals respond to in ways consensual to their environment. In particular, and while building on Dutton and Dukerich's argument (1991, as cited in Weick, 1995, p. 21) 'that individuals are personally motivated to preserve a positive organizational image', Weick (1995) regards sensemaking as an individual action, but also that the individuals are constituted by the perception of self they adopt within a given context. What Weick (1995) seems to imply here is that there is a right or ideal way of doing things, and this ideal or right way eventually becomes part of who individuals are within their context. In other words, as individuals search for contextual cues in making meaning of the changes around them, the meaning they enact back to their context (i.e. agency) is the meaning that is already available to them.

There is, of course, a subtlety to the concept of *enactment* described by Weick (1995, p. 6), who states that sensemaking is not simply about scanning the environment for cues, but rather it also involves "such things as placement of items into frameworks". What this means is what is often explicitly stated within contemporary studies, a small part of which were presented and discussed in Chapter 4: that sensemaking involves placing new curriculum messages into existing cognitive frameworks (e.g. Ball et al., 2012; Coburn, 2001; 2005; Spillane & Callahan, 2000). Weick's remark that sensemaking is "a frame of minds about frames of mind" (1995, p. xii) has been taken to suggest exactly this; that individuals use their cognitions to make assumptions about unfamiliar ideas. In other words, sensemaking is a process of organising, as Weick (1995) remarks, during which individuals make meaning and enact their meaning back to their contexts; thus constructing their world. Yet, despite positioning sensemaking as "grounded in both individual and social activity", Weick (1995, p. 6) continues to maintain that social is the perennial influence upon meaning making and agency. As Weick et al. (2005, p. 413) explain, the answer to the question "what's the story?" is to be found in the "dialogue among people who act on behalf of larger social units".

Weick (1995, p. 79), can be said, proposes a 'simple' way for understanding sensemaking; one that involves individuals interacting with each other to interpret the cues around them, and "[o]ver time [their] interpretations become objectified, diffused, and widely internalized into what comes to be called a consensus on what is 'out there' ". From the individual-oriented perspective, this is where Weick's (1995) macro-oriented perspective runs the risk of not doing what it was supposed to do: to account for how individual sensemakers "make sense of, and shape their situations" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 405). Whereas Weick's (1995) macro-organisational point of view is mainly concerned with how the context shapes meaning making and agency, the individual-oriented perspective, and its emphasis on the micro-processes of "how individuals notice and interpret stimuli" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 388), adds the much needed "contextual complexity" (Kurtz & Snowden, 2003, p. 464) to the process during which individuals make meaning as they actively negotiate with their contexts. For Kurtz and Snowden (2003, p. 462), this complexity comes with the acknowledgement that individuals "faced with a choice between one or more alternatives" will not necessarily decide to act "in accordance with predetermined rules" (Kurtz & Snowden, 2003, p. 465).

Extending from the above is the critique on Weick's (1995) notion of retrospective thinking. In short, Weick (1995) maintains that meaning is constructed through referencing the past and, in that creation, the past manifests itself in the present in such a way that can influence future actions (prospective thinking). Supporting Weick (1995), Gioia et al. (2002, p. 622) write of a "future perfect thinking", such that enables a retrospective interpretation of an event that has yet to occur. There is a cause-effect relationship between past experiences and future actions implied here; one that suggests that individual sensemakers act in consensus with the environment and without much deliberate thinking. It is here where the critique on retrospective sensemaking concentrates. Recent writings, for instance, maintain that, if it is to accept that agency is formed in retrospect, then individuals are to be denied their power to act otherwise (Archer, 1995; 2000; 2007). Within Weick's (1995) writings, this depletion of individual power derives from his conceptualisation of agency as socially bounded and restricted. In his words: "Sense may be in the eye of the beholder, but beholders vote and the majority rules" (Weick, 1995, p. 6). What individuals think is thus thought to reside outside of them, because agency, within Weick's (1995) writings, has to refer backwards to the past and outwards to the "sensible environments" within which it is manifested (Weick, 1995, p. 17). Yet there is the experiential truth, as Archer (2007, p. 7) maintains; that individuals may often act in reference to their past and in compliance with their environment but, all too often, they may also act in reference to "those internal goods that they care about the most". Departing

from retrospective thinking, recent writings thus understand individual action as a phenomenon that encompasses the interplay between the past, the present and the future. Emirbayer and Mische (1998), for instance, understand agency as the capacity of individuals to "make practical and normative judgements among alternative possible trajectories of action", as they draw from past experience (iterational dimension), and make projections for future actions (projective dimension), within "presently evolving situations" (practical-evaluative dimension) (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 971). Referring to this dynamic interplay as the "chordal triad of agency", Emirbayer and Mische (1998, p. 972) talk about different *tones* of agency that might be "more (or less) engaged with the past, more (or less) directed toward the future, and more (or less) responsive to the present".

Despite their overt distinction, what both perspectives appear to accept is that change has no existence on its own, but rather it is signified in the relationship between individuals and their contexts. As Spillane et al. (2002, p. 388) posit: "What a policy means for implementing agents is constituted in the interaction of their existing cognitive structures (including knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes) [and] their situation". In studying these different orientations, it now becomes possible to conceptualise a way of how the one may be complementary of the other. Here, the question of whether the causal arrows should be more directed towards the context or more towards the individual is addressed in a holistic way; one that supports the notion that both the individual and the context exert causal powers on each other. Framing the individuals as "social products *and* social producers" (Sloan, 2006, p. 126), this holistic perspective accepts the influence of the context in setting bounds for what is thought to be permitted, possible and accepted, but at the same time highlights the role of cognitions in guiding individual action. In particular, the conceptualisation of individuals as "social products" (Sloan, 2006, p. 126) encourages the consideration of how structure, and taken-for-granted norms and regularities, passed from the context to the individuals, resource individuals' meaning making and the ways they enact their agency. Yet, at the same time, the conceptualisation of individuals as "social producers" (Sloan, 2006, p. 126), encourages the understanding that individuals are not merely " 'passive agents' to whom things simply happen", but rather " 'active agents', […] who can exercise some governance in their own lives" (Archer, 2007, p. 6). This conceptualisation positions the individuals at the core of a sensemaking process, progressing from looking inwards to their cognitions, outwards to their contexts, and acting within "sensible environments" (Weick, 1995, p. 17) in ways that either reinforce the status quo or transform it. From here comes the acknowledgement that agency is shaped and resourced, in other words expressed or enacted, within a network of influences

which provide for the individuals "a site of negotiation and contestation" (Milne et al., 2006, p. 327). This is unpacked below.

5.3.1   The sensemaking framework for teacher agency

Following Ryder and Banner (2013), and as emerging from the discussion above, the conceptual framework discussed herein understands teacher agency as being informed, and influenced by macro and micro factors. Ryder and Banner (2013) categorise those factors as belonging to external, internal and personal contexts. As Ryder and Banner put it (2013, p. 490): "external and internal structures within which teachers work interact with the personal characteristics of teachers to condition their experiences of curriculum reform". Scholarship work, a small part of which was presented and discussed in Chapter 4, suggests that the degree to which these contexts align with each other or not influences how teachers express their agency in the context of curriculum reform (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Ritchie & Rigano, 2002; Ryder et al., 2018; Sloan, 2006). Ryder and Banner's (2013) three contexts of influence provided a useful conceptual tool to this study, since it helped to identify the micro and macro elements (i.e. personal, internal and external) that form part of teachers' sensemaking process.

Within this study, the term 'personal' refers to teachers' cognitions about language teaching and learning – their beliefs, past experiences, ultimate 'concerns' (Archer, 2007), goals and aspirations, or what is often referred to as their identity (Collopy, 2003; Ryder & Banner, 2013; Spillane, 2000a) – which, according to the literature, shape what is thought to be acceptable, appropriate or relevant (e.g. Cotton, 2006; Datnow & Castellano, 2000). To say that teachers' cognitions are useful in understanding what resources their agency is to embrace the position adopted by several researchers (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Coburn, 2004; Ryder et al., 2018): that teachers' cognitions are "important resources for action".(Eteläpelto et al., 2013, p. 60). In particular, studies that assumed an individual-oriented perspective on teacher agency (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Milne et al., 2006; Ryder et al., 2018), as well as studies that adopted a cognitive perspective (Coburn, 2001; 2004; 2005), showed that the ways in which teachers respond to curriculum reforms depends greatly on their repertoire of existing cognitions, and the more varied their cognitions are, the greater the ability of teachers to recognise a match (Coburn, 2004; Lloyd & Wilson, 1998). The term 'internal' refers to such features within the school context that might be concrete and visible (e.g. levels of communication, materials, infrastructure etc.) or intangible and invisible, such as norms, and ways of doing that seem to guide how teachers behave (Hargreaves, 1991; Wedell, 2009;

Wedell & Malderez, 2013). Such features were found to influence the ways in which teachers make meaning and respond to curriculum reforms (Coburn, 2001; 2004; 2005; Ryder & Banner, 2013; Spillane, 1999). The term 'external', within this study, refers to the official discourses of curriculum change, including professional development, and the new language curriculum.
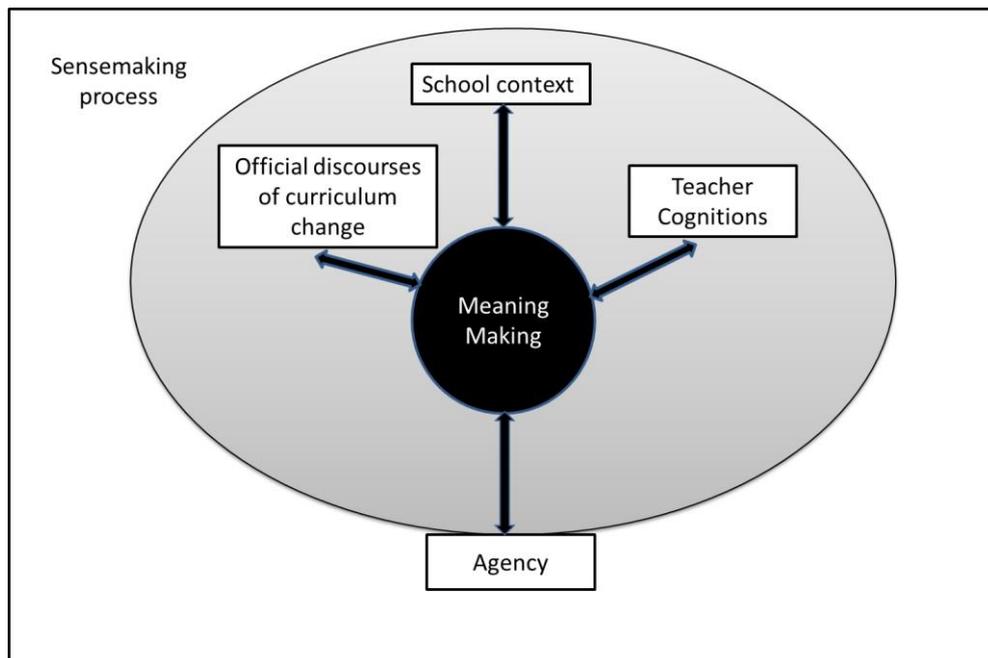
Figure 1 The sensemaking framework for teacher agency

The conceptual framework for teacher agency discussed herein was founded upon Weick et al.'s (2005, p. 409) understanding that "[s]ensemaking [...] serves as a springboard into action". This work thus positions curriculum enactment within the sensemaking literature and brings to the fore the need to address both structure and agency. Whilst researchers adopt different perspectives to investigate agency and structure, as discussed in Chapter 4, this work suggests that, to understand how teachers respond to curriculum reforms involves an investigation of how they make meaning and enact agency as they negotiate with the contextual affordances or limitations around them. Figure 1 reflects this conceptualisation by locating agency within a sensemaking process that consists of three sensemaking elements, as discussed above: teachers' cognitions, school context, and official discourses of curriculum change. Figure 1 suggests that teachers' actions are coloured by their cognitions, further suggesting that cognitions can act as interpretative templates, "responsible for the delineation of our concerns, the definition of our projects and, ultimately, the determination of our

practices" (Archer, 2007, p. 16). Figure 1 also suggests that teachers' actions are resourced by forces that reside outside of their mind. It thus accepts that "context is not simply a backdrop for the implementing agent's sense-making but a constituting element in that process" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 389). This does not suggest that teachers will *always* act by means of their surroundings. Rather it projects the understanding that teachers, by virtue of being part of their surroundings, tend to *also* "consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts" (Archer, 2007, p. 4). In other words, Figure 1 suggests that agency starts from within – as teachers define their cognitions – and is expressed through "interactions with its contexts" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 973). From this point of view, sensemaking serves as a way to define cognitions, evaluate contextual affordances or limitations, and ultimately to encourage action. For instance, the new language curriculum – as presented and discussed in Chapter 3 – can be seen as a mediating factor, influencing teachers to enact their agency, for example, in terms of negotiating their cognitions of what language teaching is and how it should be carried out. At the same time, teachers can promote or retard change. Whether it is the first or the second scenario, the framework suggests, depends on the ways teachers negotiate with their surroundings and what they bring to bear as they form decisions for action. Agency, in other words, is what teachers enact as they turn inwards and outwards in order to make meaning and decide upon their course of action; a decision vested in the ways teachers negotiate with their surroundings. It can be said, therefore, that sensemaking involves "a constructive trade-off […] between ideal purposes and practical realities", in using Hargreaves' words (1991, p. 251). Out of this transaction emerges a decision of how best to act, and whether it involves the decision to persevere or the decision to act by transforming the status quo, depends on the relative power of the one over the other. With regards to the relationship between agency and structure, the discussion herein adopts the same perspective with many contemporary studies: it argues for a reciprocal relationship whereby agency and structure are mediated by and mediating each other (e.g. Ryder et al., 2018; Vähäsantanen, 2015). The bidirectional arrows used in Figure 1 accommodate this understanding.

5.4   Chapter Summary

Following Weick's perspective (see Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005) but also diverging from it, this chapter conceptualised sensemaking as a process concerning those who, within the midst of change, seek to regain a sense of equilibrium by drawing on their cognitions, evaluating the opportunities or restrictions around them, and then enacting trajectories of action that aim to keep them in existence. Out of this conceptualisation, a sensemaking

framework for teacher agency (see Figure 1) emerged to proclaim that meaning making is resourced and agency is enacted in ways that involve both teachers and their contexts in a state of negotiation. The sensemaking framework for teacher agency endeavours to re-position teachers at the centre of a sensemaking process, as active agents who seek to define their cognitions within and in response to their surroundings. This work thus positions curriculum change within the sensemaking literature and brings to the fore the need to address both agency and structure; constructs that are conceptualised as being in a reciprocal relationship, whereby the one exerts influence on the other.

Chapter 6: Methodology and Design

6.1 Introduction

Change is a relational concept, as it was argued in Chapter 5; signified in the relationship between teachers and their surroundings. This understanding influenced the adoption of a sensemaking approach to teacher agency, whereby teachers make meaning and enact agency in negotiations with their working contexts (see Chapter 5). In the sections that follow, the composition of the research design is discussed. Section 6.2 discusses the methodology that informed the design of this study. Section 6.3 discusses the CRQ and the RQs that guided this study, and section 6.4 elaborates on the decision to proceed with a multiple case study design and how this methodology ensured commitment to the sensemaking perspective from which curriculum enactment was investigated. Section 6.5 presents the research design: the recruitment and sampling techniques, methods of data collection, the analysis process, the ethical considerations, and the methods employed to ensure the rigour of this study. Section 6.5 also discusses content analysis; performed for the purpose of Chapter 7, and concludes with considerations about the limitations of this study.

6.2 Interpretivist/Constructivist Approach

It is widely accepted among the research community (e.g. Cohen et al., 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Robson, 2002) that any research endeavour, either originating from the positivistic paradigm of quantitative inquiry, or the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm of the qualitative tradition, approaches the research problem from different epistemological and ontological perspectives. Proclaiming the existence of a single, universal truth, quantitative tradition strives for objectivity (Slavin, 2002). On the other hand, and while operating from a different ontological stance, qualitative inquiry states that 'truth' is not to be found 'out there', but rather it is enacted as part of people interacting with the world (Patton, 2002), thus proclaiming the existence of multiple realities (Creswell, 2014). It is this kind of philosophical mindset that has given rise to the longstanding critique that qualitative inquiry is less rigorous than the quantitative one (see Bryman, 1984). Yet, this will not be an attempt to rekindle such

a debate, or to discuss the relative utility of the qualitative tradition over the quantitative one, but rather to justify its appropriateness in the context of this study.

Chapter 5 presented arguments in support of the adoption of a sensemaking perspective to the investigation of how teachers make meaning and enact agency in the context of the new language curriculum. Briefly stated, this study conceptualised agency as being located within a sensemaking process consisting of teachers and their working contexts in a state of negotiation. In this conceptualisation, the need to adopt an epistemological perspective that speaks to the complexity of sensemaking became apparent; one that regards meaning as socially constructed, but at the same time positions teachers at the centre of the process used to generate meaning. The interpretivist/constructivist approach surfaced as the most appropriate epistemological foundation for this study, both in terms of its understanding of social reality, and the role of the social actor therein. In particular, concerned with interpretation, multiplicity, and context (Cohen et al., 2007), the interpretivist/constructivist approach understands social reality to be both mentally and socially constructed, rather than existing in a state of awaiting discovery (Robson, 2002). Like sensemaking, the adopted interpretivist/constructivist approach seeks to find meaning as deriving from individuals who interact with the world. "[W]e can only understand concepts such as reality and truth within a broader framework, which is contextually positioned within a certain time, place, and culture", as Gardner et al. (2012, p. 67) argued. Proclaiming that there exists no single reality but multiple interpretations of it; as experienced by different people interacting with their surroundings (Robson, 2002), the interpretivist/constructivist approach aims to explore the "multifaceted images of humane behaviour as varied as the situation and contexts supporting them" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 22). As such, reality is not something that is simply 'given' but something that is constructed through individuals' purposive interaction with the social (Cohen et al., 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

6.3   Establishing the Central Research Question and the Research Questions

This study investigated teachers' meaning making and agency from a sensemaking perspective. Located within a sensemaking process, teacher agency was thus thought to be shaped, informed and influenced, or else enacted, on the basis of the teachers' negotiations with their cognitions, school context, and official discourses of curriculum change (see Chapter 5). Influenced by the adopted interpretivist/constructivist approach, and informed by the sensemaking framework for teacher agency (see Figure 1), is the CRQ discussed below:

CRQ: How do teachers make meaning and enact agency in the context of the new language curriculum?

The CRQ investigates teachers' sensemaking process with an emphasis on meaning making and agency. Conceptualising teacher agency as being located within a sensemaking process of meaning negotiation, this study uses the CRQ to direct attention to the ways in which the teachers negotiated with the affordances or constraints around them and enacted their agency in the context of the new language curriculum. The adopted interpretivist/constructivist perspective, as discussed above, suggests that reality – or else the phenomenon being studied – is not waiting to be found, but rather emerges out of the meaning that individuals develop as they act within their world. This point of view implicated the way in which the CRQ was actualised. In particular, it suggests that, to investigate something that is not yet given; i.e. teachers' meaning making and agency, requires starting from something that is manifested as a result; i.e. teachers' enactment of the new language curriculum. This rationale made clear that attention should be directed towards the teachers' curriculum enactment and the factors, both personal and contextual, that influence curriculum enactment. This study made use of Stake's (1995) suggestion when planning for a case study. In short, Stake (1995) suggests that, in addition to a broad central question, more focused research questions should be established to "help structure observation, [and] interviews" (Stake 1995, p. 20). This suggestion encouraged the development of the RQs that are discussed below. The RQs presented below are concerned with investigating curriculum enactment, teachers' reflections upon their curriculum enactment, and connections between the teachers' curriculum enactment and their cognitions, their experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change, and their experiences of belonging within their schools (i.e. the three sensemaking elements). The RQs discussed below enabled this study to address the CRQ by directing the research process towards the investigation of the participants' sensemaking process and the factors that influenced their sensemaking process. Table 3 below summarises the purpose of RQ1 and RQ2 and the methods that were used to address each RQ.

RQ1: How do teachers enact the new language curriculum inside their classrooms?

RQ1 was focused on investigating curriculum enactment and the participants' reflections upon their curriculum enactment. To address RQ1, this study relied upon classroom observations and post-observation interviews with the participating teachers (see Table 3). Classroom observations were used to collect incidences of language teaching, and post-

observation interviews helped to unravel the participants' rationale behind their classroom decisions. Both classroom observations and post-observation interviews helped to conceptualise how the participating teachers enacted the new language curriculum inside their classrooms. The process of linking classroom observations with post-observation interviews ensured that biased interpretations of curriculum enactment were avoided, as discussed in section 6.5.6. It is also discussed in section 6.5.5.d, that RQ1 helped to group the participating teachers according to their curriculum enactment. Grouping the participating teachers according to their curriculum enactment enabled this study to explore the connections between curriculum enactment and the three sensemaking elements, as discussed below.

RQ2: How do the three sensemaking elements influence teachers' curriculum enactment?

RQ2 was focused on investigating how the participants' cognitions, experiences with official discourses of curriculum change, and experiences within their school, influenced the ways they responded to the new language curriculum. RQ2 helped to add the necessary complexity to RQ1 by focusing on the factors, both personal and contextual, that were at play as the participating teachers were responding to the new language curriculum inside their classrooms. RQ2 was concerned with investigating how the participating teachers negotiated with the affordances or limitations around them, bringing forth trajectories of action that favoured change or continuation of existing practices. To address RQ2, this study employed one-to-one interviews with the participating teachers (see Table 3). Teacher interviews were directed towards exploring how meaning making was resourced and agency was enacted as the participating teachers were negotiating with the new language curriculum within their context of implementation.

RQ1: How do teachers enact the new language curriculum inside their classrooms?	
Method of Data Collection	Classroom observations and post-observation interviews
Purpose	• To collect data about curriculum enactment and teachers' reflections upon their curriculum enactment • To identify categories of curriculum enactment

RQ2: How do the three sensemaking elements influence teachers' curriculum enactment?	
Method of Data Collection	Interviews
Purpose	• To collect data about teachers' cognitions, experiences of belonging within their schools and experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change • To draw connections between the three sensemaking elements and teachers' curriculum enactment.

Table 3 Research Questions, Methods, and Purposes

6.4 Research Methodology

The adopted sensemaking perspective provided a strong guide for structuring this study. Section 6.2. discussed the ways the sensemaking perspective informed the adoption of an interpretivist/constructivist approach which, as briefly discussed above (see section 6.3), implicated the nature of the CRQ and the RQs that guided this study. It is discussed herein that the sensemaking perspective further implicated the decision to adopt a case study design, which was found to be the best suited methodology to help establish the relationship between the participating teachers and their contexts.

Yin (2014, p. 16) defined case study as the "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') in depth and within its real-world context". In general, case study methodology is commonly used among many researchers in studying sensemaking as it unfolds within context (e.g. Coburn, 2001; 2004; 2005; Kırkgöz, 2008). Among the most commonly cited justifications for the adoption of case study methodology when dealing with sensemaking questions, is that it allows "to develop rich, detailed and contextual descriptions and understandings of the specific case and its complexities" (März & Kelchtermans, 2013, p. 17). Within the context of this study, the case study methodology (Stake, 1995; 2006) allowed

to position teachers at the centre of a sensemaking process, and to investigate the role of context in the ways they responded to the new language curriculum.

To promote the adopted interpretivist/constructivist approach, this study elected to draw predominantly from Stake's (1995; 2006) writings on case study methodology. Stake (1995; 2006), in particular, is explicit in his constructivist perspective on how reality is constructed. Regarding case study methodology as the inquiry through which the researcher can seek out the multiple meanings of the social actors, Stake (1995; 2006) accepts that reality is relative and the result of different people interacting with their contexts in different ways. From this point of view, case study methodology, as proposed by Stake (1995; 2006), becomes the inquiry that researchers can adopt when there is an interest in investigating the different ways in which a phenomenon is perceived and acted upon; a conceptualisation which fits well with the sensemaking perspective on teacher meaning making and agency that was adopted in this study.

Given the focus of this study on investigating teachers' meaning making and agency within their working contexts, it was decided to proceed with the selection of multiple cases of teachers in an effort to promote the richness and complexity that is drawn from different teachers working in different schools (Creswell, 2007; 2014; Merriam, 1998). Multiple case study is defined as the selection and examination of several cases in the effort to understand the differences and similarities within and across the cases (Stake, 2006). Within the context of this study, multiple case study design provided the means to compare and contrast different cases of meaning making and agency across teachers working in different schools. In contrast to the holistic case study design and the exploration of multiple units embedded in a single case (see Baxter & Jack, 2008), multiple case study design enabled the participation of multiple cases of teachers working in different schools, and thus allowed to investigate the mediating effect of different schools on the teachers' meaning making and agency. This multiple case study enabled this study to delve deeper into the ways in which the different cases of teachers negotiated with their school when making meaning and enacting agency during a within-case analysis. It further enabled the identification of similarities or differences across the different cases of teachers during a cross-case analysis (Stake, 2006).

Given the intention of this study to compare and contrast different cases of participating teachers with the purpose to arrive at a deeper understanding of the participants' sensemaking process, the emphasis of this study was placed not on the case itself (i.e. the individual

teachers) but rather on the collective understanding of the different cases of teachers. This, in other words, was an instrumental case study (Stake, 2006). In particular, Stake (2006) gives an important advice about the two types of case studies discussed within his writings. For intrinsic case studies, the focus, he remarks, "is in the case itself" (Stake, 2006, p. 8). For instrumental case studies, the focus goes "beyond the case" (Stake, 2006, p. 8). Stake (2006) further maintains that multiple case study designs are primarily instrumental, given their intention to compare and contrast different cases. Following Stake's accounts (2006; 2008), this was thus identified as being an instrumental case study of which its purpose went beyond the mere examination of the individual cases of teachers and towards the collective examination of the different cases of teachers with the aim "to provide insights into an issue" (Stake, 2008, p. 123).

The section that follows elaborates on the process of selecting ten cases of primary school teachers, each of which provided this study with the opportunity to study ten stories of curriculum enactment. This section also discusses how the decision to employ a multiple case study design informed the process of data collection and analysis, and the tactics that were adopted to ensure the development of a collective conclusion about the teachers' meaning making and agency.

6.5   Research Design

Overview: The study described herein was conducted in two phases. Phase one comprised secondary document analysis that helped to construct a better understanding of what the new language curriculum was proposing, by means of QCA (Schreier, 2012). Phase two comprised a qualitative multiple case study research, which aimed to investigate the teachers' meaning making and agency in the context of the new language curriculum. Data collection was facilitated with the adoption of qualitative research methods, and followed a longitudinal design (six months). The purpose of the longitudinal design was to allow for the participants' meaning making and agency to evolve and potentially change over time. Simultaneous involvement of data collection and analysis processes characterise the conduct of this research. This integration ensured that the data collected during classroom observations were addressed during subsequent interviews with the participating teachers; thus allowing for a better understanding of the teachers' curriculum enactment through searching for further clarification, confirmation and disconfirmation (Charmaz, 1995). Within-case analysis helped

to understand each teacher's meaning making and agency, and cross-case analysis allowed to identify regularities and differences across the various cases of teachers (Stake, 2006).

Phase One: Document Analysis

6.5.1 Document analysis

Document analysis involved the interpretation of the new language curriculum (i.e. MoEC 2010b) by means of QCA (Schreier, 2012). Document analysis also helped to analyse observational data, as discussed in section 6.5.5.b below. Following Schreier's (2012) steps for undertaking QCA, document analysis involved: (a) thorough reading of the new language curriculum, (b) division of the document into themes, and (c) development of codes which reflected the content of each theme. Given the similarities between the new language curriculum and the four resource model[7], Freebody and Luke's writings (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997) were used as a compass that helped to analyse the content of the new language curriculum. Freebody and Luke's (1990) four resource model provided the four themes – 'code-breaker', 'meaning-maker', 'text participant' and 'text analyst' – under which the relevant document data were grouped. The codes that were developed during QCA, referred to herein as *critical literacy discourses*, represent the researcher's conceptualisations of the document data. The codes are listed in Table 9, Chapter 7. Literature on critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy supported the researcher during the code development process (e.g. Behrman, 2006; Clark et al., 1990; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Hagood, 2002; Ioannidou, 2015; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004; Morgan, 1997). The results of the content analysis are presented and discussed in Chapter 7.

Phase Two: Fieldwork

6.5.2 Recruitment and sampling techniques

Given the multiple case study design of this study, it was decided to recruit research participants working in different schools. The number of schools, as well as the number of the research participants, was decided on the basis of conducting a manageable research whilst retaining its purpose to investigate the effect of school contextual factors on the participants'

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[7] Refer to Chapter 3, section 3.3.1.

meaning making and agency. Three criteria were applied during purposive sampling (Sarantakos, 2012) in order to identify the schools most relevant to the purpose of this study. These criteria included:

1.   *Selection of schools of the public primary school sector*

In Cyprus, primary education is both public and private (European Commission, 2018). Although both public and private sectors are responsible to carry out the national curriculum, public schools are officially under the authority of the MoEC and thus responsible to implement the official policies and legislations (UNESCO-IBE, 2012).

2.   *Setting location boundaries*

This criterion was applied in order to place location boundaries (Merriam, 1998). As a single researcher, it was deemed necessary to identify schools that were located in the urban area of the researcher's city of residence, so that the distance from one school to the other would not be a challenge.

3.   *Selection of schools staffed with more than three teachers*

This criterion was applied in order to distinguish between the multi-grade schools (with less than three teachers responsible for teaching multi-grade classrooms) and the large schools (employing teachers for each grade level) (MoEC, n.d.). The purpose here was to set research boundaries in order to avoid dealing with factors that were not relevant to the purpose of this study (e.g. factors relevant to teaching multi-grade classrooms).

Once the schools were identified, the researcher contacted the head teachers informing them of the intention to proceed with a study concerning the enactment of the new language curriculum. Five head teachers agreed to allow the researcher to carry out the study in their schools. The access date was indicated by the head teachers. During the first meeting with the teachers of each of the five schools, the researcher informed the teachers of the purpose of this study and provided them with an information document (see Appendix A), and with an informed consent sheet (see Appendix B). Teachers were allowed one week period in order to decide on their participation. During the second visit to the schools, purposive sampling (Sarantakos, 2012) was employed to select the research participants most relevant to the purpose of this study. Purposive sampling was applied to identify: (a) primary school teachers, both male and female, who taught language lessons, (b) whose years of experience varied from newly qualified to experienced, (c) who had participated in professional development about language teaching, and (d) who had full-time teaching positions for the duration of the fieldwork (January-June 2015). Ten teachers working in five schools were finally selected to

participate in this study and none of them withdrawn from it. The ten teachers participating to this study are presented in Table 4. For matters of anonymity, the participants' names along with the names of their schools were replaced with pseudonyms. As shown in Table 4, the majority of the research participants were female teachers. In Cyprus, the teaching profession, particularly at the primary level, tends to be dominated by women (Rentzou, 2017).

Details	School A		School B			School C		School D		School E
	Sylvia	Helen	Laura	Beth	Victoria	Anna	Mario	Paul	Michael	Maria
Degree	PhD	Master's	Master's	Master's	Master's	Bachelor's	Bachelor's	Diploma	Diploma	Master's
Position	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Assistant head teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Years in profession	12	8	9	18	11	23	16	25	22	14
Years in school	5	4	5	6	5	2	6	1	2	5
Grade level	2nd grade	1st grade	1st grade	2nd grade	1st grade	3rd grade	3rd grade	4th grade	6th grade	5th grade

Table 4 General characteristics of the ten research participants

6.5.3   Ethical considerations

The study described herein was ethically approved by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee in May 2014. The ethical considerations that were relevant to this study were that of *consent*, *anonymity*, *confidentiality*, and the *right of withdrawal*. An information document (see Appendix A) and informed consent sheet (see Appendix B) were provided to the participants with the purpose to inform them of their rights to consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and withdrawal. The collected data were anonymised with the use of pseudonyms. To protect participants' right to confidentiality, the collected data were uploaded to the 'desktop anywhere' platform, where appropriate access control was in place.

6.5.4   Data collection

Teacher interviews and classroom observations were utilised to address RQ1: *How do teachers enact the new language curriculum inside their classrooms? –* and RQ2*: How do the three sensemaking elements influence teachers' curriculum enactment?* Semi-structured interviews served to direct the discussion with the participating teachers towards their cognitions, experiences of belonging within their schools, and experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change (i.e. the three sensemaking elements), and to encourage the participating teachers to reflect upon their curriculum enactment during post-observation interviews. Classroom observations were employed to provide first-hand accounts of how the participating teachers enacted the new language curriculum (Flick, 2002). Classroom observations also provided context for delving deeper into the participants' curriculum enactment during subsequent interviews. Employing multiple sources of data collection enabled this study to gather the data necessary for a rigorous and in-depth analysis, and allowed to develop a comprehensive understanding about the participants' meaning making and agency. The use of multiple data sources was also of service during validation strategies (Creswell, 2007). Validation strategies are discussed in section 6.5.6.

a. One-to-One Interviews

Teacher interviews helped to address RQ1 and RQ2. Research interviews are defined as the instrument to facilitate the investigation of social reality (Klave, 1996). The interview is considered a flexible, or as Hobson and Townsend (2010, p. 227) maintain, a "versatile method", as it "can help researchers to address a wide range of goals and purposes". Within

the context of this study, interviews served to capture the participating teachers' meaning making and agency as unfolded during this six-month study. Semi-structured interviews in the form of "guided conversation" (Yin, 2014, p. 110) were elected to be the most appropriate format for this study, due to the intention to discuss specific issues with the participating teachers (i.e. cognitions, experiences of belonging within their schools, and experiences with official discourses of curriculum change), yet without restricting their responses. One-to-one interviews with the ten participating teachers were conducted from January to June 2015; that is three years after the implementation of the new language curriculum (see Chapter 2). Each of the ten participating teachers was interviewed three times during the course of this six-month study. Each interview lasted 20-25 minutes and was audio-recorded using a digital audio-recording device. Permission to use an audio-recording device was sought from all the participating teachers. The audio recordings were translated from Greek to English and transcribed by the researcher. Table 5 below shows the timeline of data collection.

Month \ Activity	2015					
	Jan.	Feb.	March	April Easter Holidays	May	June
Baseline Interview	▓	▓				
1st Round of classroom observations		▓	▓			
1st post-observation interview		▓	▓			
2nd Round of classroom observations			▓		▓	▓
2nd post-observation interview			▓		▓	▓

Table 5 Timeline of Data Collection

The baseline interview occurred before the first round of classroom observations and served to address RQ2. It made use of a common teacher interview guide (see Appendix C) which was directed towards investigating the three sensemaking elements: teachers' cognitions, experiences of belonging within their schools, and experiences with official discourses of curriculum change. For each of the aforementioned sensemaking elements, several indicators were extrapolated from the literature to help with the construction of interview questions. The

indicators were also used during the interview data analysis process to help to categorise the data (see section 6.5.5.c). These indicators were as follows:

- Teacher cognitions about language teaching and learning: Teachers' cognitions about the identity of their subject matter (e.g. what they regarded to be the purpose of their subject matter), and teachers' goals and concerns (e.g. teachers' goals and role inside the classroom, believes about student learning);
- School context: Availability of resources (e.g. classroom materials), school collegiality, school leadership, school goals);
- Professional development: Experiences with professional development, experiences with learning about the new language curriculum through professional development;
- The new language curriculum: Teachers' reflections about their experiences with curriculum enactment, teachers' dispositions towards the new language curriculum.
-

Table 6 presents some of the indicators that were used and their corresponding interview question. Several general questions about the participating teachers' years of teaching experience, previous working experience, and academic qualifications, were also asked during the baseline interview.

Sensemaking elements	Indicators	Sample Question
Professional development	Experiences with professional development	What is your experience with participating to professional development?
The new language curriculum	Dispositions towards the new language curriculum	What is your opinion about the new language curriculum?
School context	School collegiality	How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues?
Teacher cognitions about language teaching and learning	Beliefs about the identity of language teaching	What do you believe to be the purpose of language teaching?
	Beliefs about teaching role	How would you describe your role inside the classroom?
	Beliefs about students	How do you think your students learn best?

Table 6 Sample questions from the first baseline interview linked to indicators and sensemaking elements

The first and second post-observation interviews were held after the first and second round of classroom observations with each participant, and their purpose was to address both RQ1 and

RQ2. To address RQ1, interview guides were designed specifically for each of the participating teachers (see Appendix D), and were informed by classroom observations (see section 6.5.4.b below). Continually considering the interaction between data collection with data analysis helped to clarify and strengthen participants' reflections through searching for confirmation or disconfirmation (Charmaz, 1995). Given that classroom observations focused on investigating teaching and learning practices, the participating teachers were asked to reflect upon their various teaching decisions during interviews, including adopted instructional strategies, selection of activities and tasks, and use of classroom materials. To address RQ2, the two post-observation interviews contained guiding prompts that helped to elicit the participants' sensemaking process as it relates to their cognitions, experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change and experiences of belonging within their schools. The twofold role of the first and second post-observation interviews enabled this study to identify changes in the participants' sensemaking process in relation to the new language curriculum.

b. Classroom Observations

Classroom observations helped to address the RQ1 which, in combination with post-observation interviews, enabled this study to conceptualise curriculum enactment. Non-participant classroom observations were arranged with each participant in order to observe "the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others" (Shulman, 1986, p. 9). Non-participant classroom observation is a research technique whereby the researcher observes the phenomenon of interest without engaging in it (Sarantakos, 2012). The purpose of classroom observations was not to judge the participants' classroom practice as being 'good' or 'bad' but rather to collect information relevant to the participants' instructional decisions (see Table 7). This information was later used to develop the interview guides for the first and second post-observation interviews. This tactic enabled this study to delve deeper into the participants' instructional decisions and the factors that informed and influenced those decisions.

Classroom observations were carried out in two rounds (see Table 5). The first round of classroom observations was carried out after the baseline interviews and included observing one language teaching with each participant. The second round was carried out after the first post-observation interviews and included observing another language teaching with each participant. Classroom observations were arranged for a full class period (45 minutes). Table

7 summarises the areas that were observed into four observational aspects. These observational aspects were later explained and justified by the participants during subsequent interviews with them (see section 6.5.4.a). Language teaching was captured using notes and audio-recordings. Audio-recordings helped to capture teaching and learning practices, as well as dialogues between the teachers and their students[8]. Permission to use an audio-recording device was sought from all the research participants. The audio recordings were translated from Greek to English and transcribed by the researcher. Notes were written down on a classroom observation sheet (see Appendix E) to help capture incidents of language teaching and learning that could not be captured with audio-recordings (see Table 7).

Focus of classroom observations	Observational aspects	Instrument
"the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others" (Shulman, 1986, p. 9)	Instructional strategies	Audio-recordings
	Classroom activities and tasks that students engage with	Field notes / audio-recordings
	Teacher-student interaction to facilitate learning of the content to be taught	Audio-recordings
	Use of classroom materials	Field notes

Table 7 Focus of attention during classroom observations

6.5.5 Process of data analysis

Preliminary data analysis of classroom observations occurred simultaneously with data collection. This process facilitated the development of targeted interview questions for each of the ten research participants. Figure 3 below summarises the various levels of data analysis.

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[8] No individual student information was collected
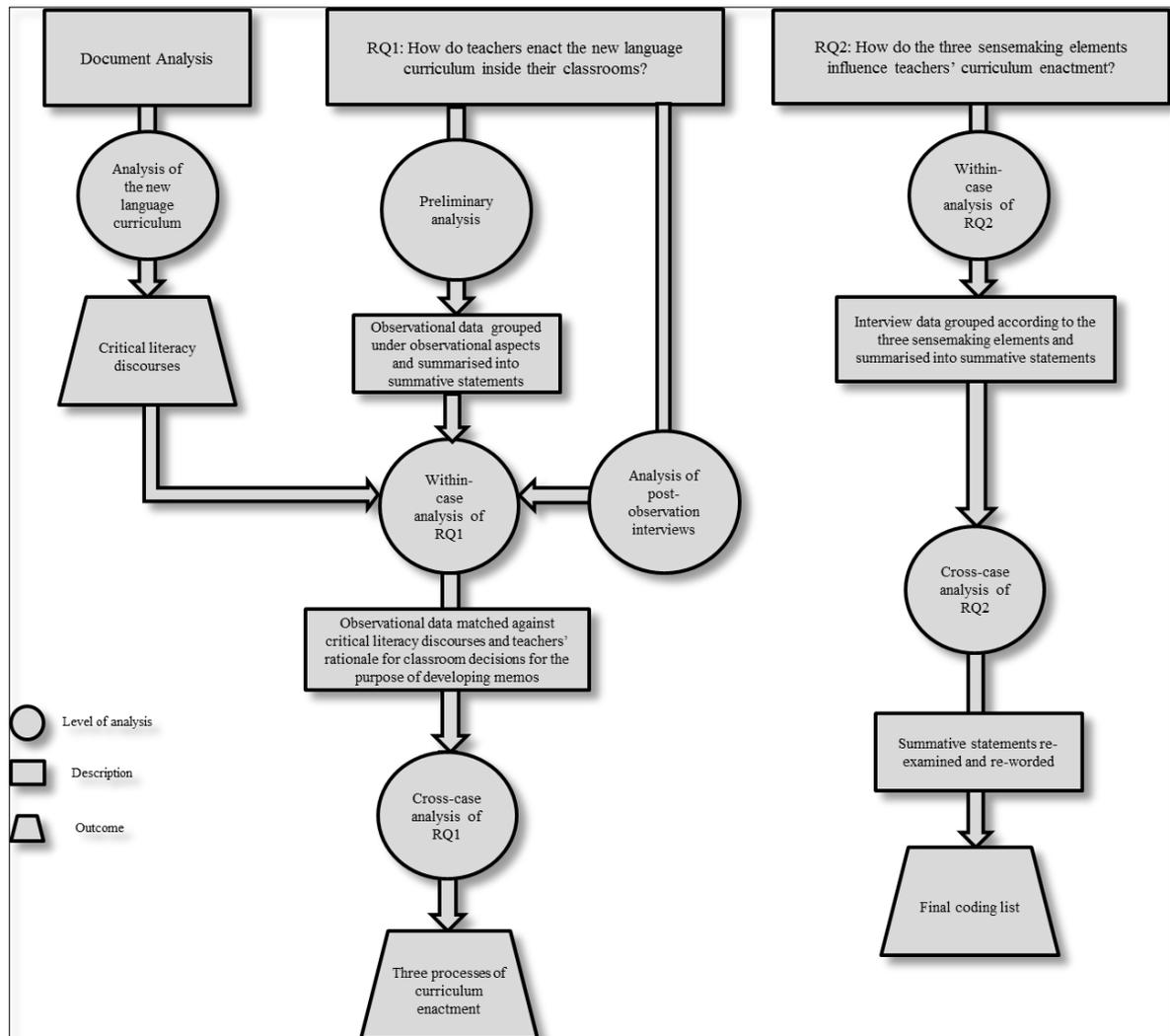
Figure 2 Levels of data analysis

a. Preliminary analysis of observational data

Observational data (audio-recordings and field notes) were analysed by means of QCA (Schreier, 2012) to help to reduce the amount of data. Figure 3 below summarises the three steps that were followed during QCA. In particular, once transcribed by the researcher, the observational transcripts, along with the field notes (together observational data), were interrogated in terms of the observational aspects listed in Table 7 and then grouped accordingly. Once grouped, the observational data were summarised into summative statements that served to capture the essence of what was observed during classroom observations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The process of grouping the relevant observational data under their corresponding observational aspects helped to advance new interview questions that were later elaborated on by the participants during subsequent interviews with

them. This process occurred twice; during the first and second round of classroom observations. This process of analysis led to the development of two observation matrices, one for each round of classroom observations. Appendix F presents one of the two matrices that were developed during this process. The observation matrix presented in Appendix F includes observation data collected during the first round of classroom observations with the ten participating teachers, after having been grouped under their corresponding observational aspect and summarised into summative statements. Appendix F also includes a sample question that was generated in order to be addressed by the participating teachers during their first post-observation interview.
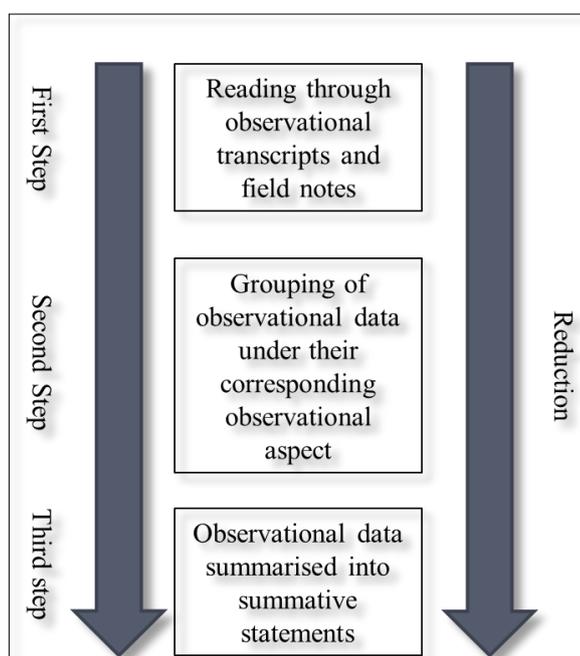
Figure 3 Process of QCA during the preliminary analysis of classroom observations

b. Within-case analysis of RQ1

Figure 4 summarises the process followed during the within-case analysis of RQ1, of which its purpose was to develop memos that would help to conceptualise each of the participating teachers' curriculum enactment (Miles & Huberman, 1994).
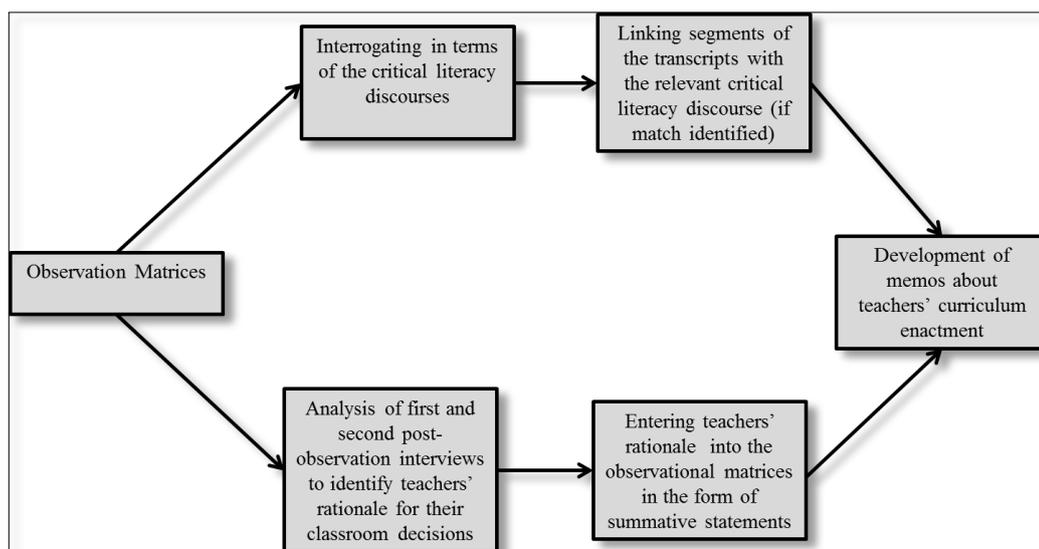
Figure 4 Within-case analysis of RQ1

Within-case analysis of RQ1 started with reading through the observation matrices developed during the preliminary analysis of RQ1 (see section 6.5.5.a) to recall classroom teaching. The observation matrices were then interrogated in terms of the critical literacy discourses summarised in Table 9 (see Chapter 7). The critical literacy discourses – product of the QCA of the new language curriculum (see section 6.5.1.) – were used to interrogate the observational data in terms of whether and how particular critical literacy discourses were enacted during classroom teaching. The observational data were marked against their matching critical literacy discourse, if a match was identified. During this process, it became apparent that many participating teachers had invested much of their teaching time – if not their whole lesson, in some occasions – in pursuing other classroom discourses (e.g. phonological awareness, grammar teaching). These other classroom discourses were identified and colour-coded. Observation matrices were further updated with the participants' reflections upon their curriculum enactment, as collected during the first and second post-observation interviews. During this process, the first and second post-observation interviews were read and bits of interview data relevant to the participants' reflections upon their classroom teaching were identified, summarised into summative statements (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and then entered the observation matrices. Memos were then developed that worked to conceptualise the participants' curriculum enactment. Memo writing helped to draw inferences between the observed classroom teaching and the participants' reflections; thus to build a comprehensive understanding of how each of the participating teachers enacted

the new language curriculum inside their classrooms. Memos were of help during the cross-case analysis of RQ1, as discussed in section 6.5.5.d.

Appendix G demonstrates how the observational data were matched against identified critical literacy discourses and the participants' rationale for classroom decisions, and how memos were generated. Appendix G uses data from the first classroom observations and the first post-observation interviews with the participating teachers. Appendix G further demonstrates how other classroom discourses were identified and colour-coded.

c. Within-Case analysis of RQ2

Within-case analysis of RQ2 started with identifying each of the participants' reflections as they related to their cognitions, their experiences with official discourses of curriculum change, and their experiences of belonging within their schools. In particular, to address RQ2 during a within case analysis, interview data from the baseline interview and the two post-observation interviews (together interview data) were analysed in an inductive manner so that themes could be developed (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 1998). These themes were predetermined and related to the three sensemaking elements (i.e. teachers' cognitions, experiences with official discourses of curriculum change, and experiences of belonging within their schools). This inductive process included reading through the interview data to gain "a general sense of the information and […] to reflect on its overall meaning" (Creswell, 2014, p. 197). During this process, interview data were interrogated in terms of the three sensemaking elements, and were grouped accordingly. The group data were further categorised according to the indicators extrapolated from the literature review (see section 6.5.4.a). The grouped data were then interpreted to discover meaning through summative statements (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This process was done by labelling segments of data to develop summative statements that would support a deeper understanding of how each of the participants responded to the new language curriculum and how their sensemaking process was resourced. During this process, an initial understanding started to emerge in relation to how each of the participating teachers negotiated their meaning of the new language curriculum within their contexts and how they enacted their agency. Within-case analysis of RQ2 was completed once ten matrices were developed, one for each of the participating teachers, which included summative statements that were meant to help to conceptualise how the participating teachers reflected upon the three sensemaking elements. Appendix H shows matrix 10, which includes interview data collected during the three

interviews with one of the participants (Maria, T10). It shows how interview data arriving from the three interviews with the participant were categorised under their corresponding theme (i.e. the three sensemaking elements) and indicator (see section 6.5.4.a) and then assigned a summative statement. As shown in Appendix H, the participant's quotes were assigned a quotation number (e.g. Q1, Q2) and were further linked to the relevant interview (e.g. IN1, IN2, IN3[9]). This tactic was performed for all the participating teachers.

d. Cross-Case analysis of RQ1

Cross-case analysis of RQ1 served to conclude on how the participating teachers enacted the new language curriculum inside their classrooms. Observation matrices that were developed during the within-case analysis of RQ1 (see section 6.5.5.b) were re-read and a comparison process was initiated that aimed to address RQ1 (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This comparison process started with the participating teachers who were observed enacting critical literacy discourses in a consistent way and in a way that matched the new language curriculum. Their memos, as developed during the within-case analysis of RQ1, were extrapolated from the matrices, brought together and re-summarised into a more concrete statement regarding their curriculum enactment. This statement was later advanced into the first process of curriculum enactment: *accommodation*. Literature helped during this process[10] by providing insights into how to conceptualise the participants' curriculum enactment. The process continued with those participating teachers who were observed enacting some of the most prevailing critical literacy discourses, yet in a less consistent manner. Given the two separate goals that this group of participants was pursuing – one being more consistent with the official intend, and the other being more teacher-centred and concerned with grammar acquisition in a decontextualised way – the new language curriculum was conceptualised as having been enacted through *parallel structures*. Lastly, the participating teachers who talked about particular critical literacy discourses during their subsequent interviews but were not observed enacting any of such discourses inside their classrooms, were classified as having enacted the new language curriculum through *assimilation*.

Appendix I demonstrates the process followed during the cross-case analysis of RQ1. Appendix I shows how the participants' memos, after having been extrapolated from the

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[9] The numbers next to IN (interview) indicate whether the Q (quotes) where extrapolated from the baseline interview (IN1), the first (IN2), or the second (IN3) post-observation interview.
[10] See for instance the term 'parallel structures', as informed by Coburn (2004).

observation matrices, were brought together, re-examined and re-worded into more concrete statements that helped to conceptualise curriculum enactment. In total, three processes of curriculum enactment were identified as best capturing the ways in which the ten research participants responded to the new language curriculum: *accommodation*, *assimilation* and *parallel structures*. Table 8 below includes the three more concrete statements that were developed during this process.

Accommodation
Classroom observations revealed that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted inside the classroom in ways that resonated with the official intend. Teacher interviews revealed that the goals the teachers were pursuing matched the official intend of the new language curriculum. Teachers' rationale for classroom instruction indicates that the teachers had a clear direction in mind which served the development of their students' critical thinking and critical awareness of how texts are tied with tenor, mode and field.
Assimilation
Classroom observations revealed that particular critical literacy discourses, if and when enacted inside the classroom, were assimilated into existing teaching trajectories. Teacher interviews revealed that the participants were mostly focused on the acquisition of reading and writing skills.
Parallel Structures
Classroom observations revealed that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted in parallel to the participants' other teaching goals, namely the enhancement of technical reading and writing skills. The critical literacy discourses were enacted in a reduced form. Teacher interviews revealed that the participants were mostly focused on the acquisition of reading and writing skills, which they believed required a teacher-centred approach.

Table 8 Teachers' responses to the new language curriculum

e. Cross-Case Analysis of RQ2

To address RQ2, cross-case analysis started with bringing together the ten matrices developed for the ten participants during the within-case analysis of RQ2 (see section 6.5.5.c), and grouping them according to curriculum enactment. The goal of this process was to arrive to a final coding list that would help to account for how each of the three sensemaking elements influenced the ways in which the participating teachers made meaning and enacted their agency in the context of curriculum change. For this reason, and in order to examine the influence of the school context, the initial summative statements developed during the within-case analysis of RQ2 relevant to the school context were extrapolated from the matrices and

were categorised according to school in a separate matrix (see Matrix 4, Appendix J). This decision allowed for similar responses to be linked together under the same code. The remaining summative statements, again developed during the within-case analysis of RQ2, relevant to the other two sensemaking elements (i.e. teachers' cognitions, and official discourses of curriculum change) were entered into the three new matrices that were developed for the purposes of the cross-case analysis of RQ2 (see Matrix 1-3, Appendix J).

After being grouped together into the four new matrices (see Matrix 1-4, Appendix J), the initial summative statements were re-read and memos were written that helped to conceptualise the various bits of data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). After the memos were developed, initial codes started to emerge. Similar initial summative statements were brought under the same initial code. The initial codes were then examined several times during a comparison process in order to achieve a level of applicability and relevance across the different cases of participating teachers (Miles & Huberman, 1994). New sets of codes also emerged during this comparison process. The new codes were developed to account for similar statements across the different participants. For example, during the comparison process, it became apparent that the majority of the participating teachers made reference to their reliance upon their teaching guides to compensate for the inadequate professional support they had been offered. It was later deemed necessary that such statements should be assigned their own code in order to account for this sensemaking event.

Part 1 of Appendix J presents the four matrices that were developed for the purposes of the cross-case analysis of RQ2 and demonstrates how the initial summative statements, developed during the within-case analysis of RQ2 (see section 6.5.5.c) were assigned their initial code once the memos were developed. Part 2 of Appendix J includes all the initial codes that were developed during this process and demonstrates how these initial codes were brought together, compared and contrasted and then re-worded into the final coding list that is summarised in Table 10 (see Chapter 8).

6.5.6   Issues of internal validity, reliability and external validity

The rigour of empirical studies is often adhered to three criteria: internal validity, reliability, and external validity (Yin, 2014). Internal validity is a criterion constituted by the extent to which a research instrument minimises subjectivity and researcher bias (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992). This study made use of method triangulation to ensure the internal validity of the

findings, as well as to reduce researcher bias. Method triangulation is considered to be one of the most effective tactics to safeguard the internal validity of a research (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). This study understood and made use of method triangulation in ways congruent with Kopinak's (1999, p. 171) definition of triangulation as involving the:

> gathering [of] information pertaining to the same phenomenon through more than one method, primarily in order to determine if there is a convergence and hence, increased validity in research findings.

The design of this study also helped to ensure the validity of the findings. In particular, the design of this study, which involved the participants reflecting upon their classroom practice, helped to reduce the researcher's subjective interpretations. Furthermore, the longitudinal conduct of this study allowed the researcher to develop a clear understanding of how the participants negotiated their responses to the new language curriculum. In general, prolonged engagement in the field is often proposed as one of the tactics that help to reduce subjective interpretations (Creswell, 2007).

Reliability raises the issue of replicability: that is, a research instrument is reliable when it produces the same results each time it is repeated (Bryman, 2012). When dealing with events of the social reality, however, it is expected that these events will change over time. It becomes apparent here that reliability, in the way it is used by the positivistic paradigm (Slavin, 2002), does not fit with the epistemological understandings of the interpretivist/constructivist approach that was adopted in this study. In this sense, the notion of reliability, as used by the positivistic paradigm, became problematic within this study. Following Merriam (1998, p. 206), reliability was instead regarded as a criterion for demonstrating that "the results make sense – they are consistent and dependable". This study made use of different research instruments (i.e. interviews and classroom observations) to investigate language curriculum enactment. The use of different research instruments, along with the ongoing and exhaustive analysis of the data – which occurred simultaneously with data collection – enabled this study to develop "qualitative, molar descriptions" (Kagan, 1990, p. 459), which enhanced the reliability of the data and the conclusions drawn from them (Merriam, 1998).

Reliability was also regarded as a warrant that is constituted by the extent to which the findings are transferrable (Yin, 2014) and generalisable beyond the setting in which they are

studied (Bryman, 2012). This study identified a number of factors, both personal and contextual, as having influenced the participants' meaning making and agency in the context of curriculum change. The ways the participants negotiated with these factors in the context of curriculum change provide information that might be transferred to similar contextual situations. In addition to that, the findings might add to the understanding of how teachers, within historically centralised educational systems, such as the educational system in Cyprus, make meaning and enact agency in the context of externally driven reforms that were accompanied by limited incentives for change. These findings are discussed in Chapter 8 and their implications are discussed in Chapter 9.

6.5.7   Limitations

One limitation that relates to the methods being used is that the presence of the researcher inside the classroom might have influenced the participants' classroom practice. For instance, the presence of the researcher might have influenced the participants' decisions of what and how to teach, believing that the researcher came to observe a particular way of teaching. However, subsequent interviews with the participants suggest that the participants' choice of instruction was conscious and that it was informed by what the participants themselves have planned for instruction. Another limitation that should be acknowledged here is that the predetermined emphasis on the three sensemaking elements might have caused the researcher to miss out on investigating how other factors might have influenced the participants meaning making and agency. For instance, one participant elaborated on how parents' expectations influence her classroom instruction. Such factors, which were not identified as being relevant to the three sensemaking elements, were not further discussed with the teachers nor were they considered during data analysis. Lastly, this study identified the teacher as the case study. Although this decision was consistent with the purpose of this research – to investigate curriculum enactment from teachers' point of view – it inhibited the investigation of working practices within the schools in detail (for instance the content of school staff meetings). Yet, such practices featured strongly in the participants' reflections and this enabled this study to draw conclusions regarding the role of the schools.

Chapter 7: Analysis of the New Language Curriculum

7.1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the results of the QCA that was performed with the purpose to analyse the content of the new language curriculum (see Chapter 6, section 6.5.1). The analysis of the content of the new language curriculum was performed in order to identify the classroom discourses – referred to herein as *critical literacy discourses* – associated with the enactment of critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy inside the classroom. The QCA involved the development of conceptual codes that served to summarise the critical literacy discourses proposed within the new language curriculum. In total, 16 critical literacy discourses were identified during the QCA as they relate to the enactment of critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy inside the classroom (see Table 9). Identifying these critical literacy discourses enabled this study to draw conclusions in relation to whether the participating teachers enacted the new language curriculum in ways that satisfied the official intend. This discussion takes place in Chapter 8. The critical literacy discourses are discussed in four different sections, as they relate to the four roles that students should be encouraged to adopt when dealing with critical literacy questions: code-breaker, meaning-maker, text participant and text analyst roles (see Freebody & Luke, 1990).

7.2 Presenting the Critical Literacy Discourses

It was discussed in Chapter 3 (see section 3.3.1) that the new language curriculum was built on pedagogical foundations that strongly resemble the Australian critical literacy theory and its emphasis on encouraging the learners to realise the ties between language and function, and texts with their mode, tenor and field (see Luke, 2000). Particularly influential to the Australian paradigm have been the writings of Freebody and Luke (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997). In their writings, Freebody and Luke (see Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1997) suggest a way for implementing critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy inside the classroom that involves the adoption, on part of the students, of four roles: code-breaker, meaning-maker, text participant and text analyst roles. These four roles are widely represented within the new language curriculum. In particular, and as also

discussed in Chapter 3, the new language curriculum proposed a way for approaching and exploring texts as: a) linguistic and semantic structures, b) social practices, c) contextual structures, and d) objects of critique. This proposed way for approaching and exploring texts encourage the realisation on part of the students of how language is influenced by the field, tenor and mode of texts. It is for this reason, as also discussed in Chapter 6 (see section 6.5.1.), that Freebody and Luke's (1990) four resource model was used as an analytic frame that helped to navigate the QCA as well as to arrange the critical literacy discourses in the manner presented below. Several other writings (e.g.Behrman, 2006; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Fairclough, 1992; Ioannidou, 2015) were also consulted during QCA. Table 9 includes all the codes that were developed during QCA.

Themes	Codes
The code-breaker role within the new language curriculum	a. Attending to the tenor of discourse b. Exploring text organisation at a micro level c. Exploring text organisation at a macro level d. Breaking words into morphemes e. Attending to the field of discourse f. Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre
The meaning-maker role within the new language curriculum	a. Making connections and comparisons b. Developing and testing initial hypotheses c. Endorsing positions d. Changing a text's discourse
The text participant role within the new language curriculum	a. Understanding the register of texts as it relates to social context and purpose b. Understanding how the use of image and sound within multimodal texts is implicated by social setting and purpose c. Text production
The role of text analyst within the new language curriculum	a. Attending to functional grammar when analysing texts b. Comparing and contrasting texts c. Adopting an alternative point of view

Table 9 Critical Literacy Discourses

7.2.1 The code-breaker role within the new language curriculum

Intrinsically related to the acquisition of functional literacy skills (Fairclough, 1992), the code-breaker role invites the students to explore the function of grammatical forms and linguistic elements within texts (Freebody & Luke, 1990). Within the new language curriculum, the code-breaker role was found to be associated with six critical literacy discourses, which encourage the students to approach and analyse texts as linguistic and semantic structures.

i. Attending to the tenor of discourse

Attending to the tenor of discourse, or else understanding power relationships, involves students analysing the social role of language within texts (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993). One example of critical literacy discourses proposed within the new language curriculum is the following: "investigation of subjunctive voice […] as a mechanism for constructing formal speech/ social standing. Vice versa, imperative voice […] as a mechanism for constructing informal/personal language" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 39). Such critical literacy discourses encourage students to generate questions about the kind of person the writer/speaker is, the kind of person the reader/listener is, and the nature of their relationship; questions which require the students to explore the ways in which grammatical elements are being used within a given text. These discourses highlight the role of plural voice, subjunctive and imperative voice, pronouns, and formal or informal language, in "constructing the identity of the writer" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 44), and in suggesting equality or inequality, familiarity or social distance between the reader and the writer, the speaker and the listener (see MoEC, p. 36).

ii. Exploring text organisation at a micro level

Attending to micro-level analysis, or else analysing short clauses within texts, is the second occasion where the students are encouraged to explore texts as linguistic and semantic structures. Critical literacy discourses associated with micro level analysis invite the students "to recognise and utilise linguistic and grammatical elements in order to discover the relationship between the information presented within a text (temporal, causal relationships, contrasts and comparisons)", and "to identify and understand the vocabulary being used by the writer to elaborate on an issue" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 19). These critical literacy discourses encourage a first-level of understanding of how particular grammatical decisions can shape social positions and define ideologies.

iii. Exploring text organisation at a macro level

Exploring text organisation at a macro level involves the understanding of how lexico-grammar elements are used to construct organic 'wholes'. These critical literacy discourses invite the students to capitalise on their knowledge on how short clauses are formed, and how grammatical rules determine the ways in which short clauses are linked together into larger

units. As they move from short clauses to larger units, the students are encouraged to explore a text's "grammatical cohesive devices" (e.g. personal pronouns, possessive pronouns, and demonstrative pronouns) whilst addressing 'who, what, where, and how' questions (MoEC, 2010b, p. 31). Within the new language curriculum, responding to such questions is interpreted into the students being able to "recognise [...] the basic syntactic units (subject, verb, object), their semantic role (participants, process, objective of process) and function" (MoEC, 2010b, pp. 24-25).

iv. Breaking words into morphemes/ phonemes

Breaking words into morphemes/ phonemes (i.e. the smallest grammatical unit) is a cognitive skill that, when mastered, can help the students to unlock the meaning of unknown words, enhance their vocabulary, and excel in their reading skills. To enhance the development of such skills, the new language curriculum proposes critical literacy discourses that invite the students to "determine the meaning of unknown words based on their grammatical or/and etymological properties, including the grammatical morpheme" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 39), and "analyse [words] into morphemes […] for reading purposes and first-level comprehension" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 24).

v. Attending to the field of discourse

Attending to the field of discourse, or else identifying the domain within which a given text is positioned (Fairclough, 1992), is the fifth occasion where the students are called to approach texts as linguistic and semantic structures, and thus to adopt a code-breaker role. Built on the premise that language decisions are "determined by textual communities or institutional fields (court, schools, universities)" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 12), the new language curriculum proposes critical literacy discourses that invite the students to identify subject-specific vocabulary with the purpose to situate a text within its field, either being a specialised field; such as law, medicine, and physics, or non-specialised field; such as texts referring to everyday matters (see MoEC, 2010b, p. 39).

vi. Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre

Driven by the understanding that "each text genre has its own structural status, indicative of the way texts organise and represent social reality" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 12), the new language

curriculum encourages the students to explore how different text genres influence the use of structural (e.g. paragraphs), typographical (e.g. font types), multimodal (e.g. image and sound), and linguistic elements (e.g. vocabulary). In particular, the new language curriculum proposes critical literacy discourses that invite the students to explore "the role that textual features, such as headings [and] paragraphs perform in organising a text" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 40), "recognise how information is organised in accordance to text genre" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 27) and "realise the function of image and sound in multimodal texts and the reasons behind their varied presence within different text genres" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 44).

7.2.2   The meaning-maker role within the new language curriculum

Meaning-makers think beyond what is explicitly stated within texts and look for clues and information that lead to a deeper level of text comprehension (Freebody & Luke, 1990). Within the new language curriculum, the role of meaning-makers was found to be associated with four critical literacy discourses that encourage the students to approach and analyse texts as social practices.

i.   Making connections and comparisons

The new language curriculum proposes critical literacy discourses that encourage the students to make text-to-text and text-to-self comparisons when constructing meaning from texts. In particular, based on the premise that text comprehension involves "not only finding information that is explicitly stated […] but also information that is kept implicit" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 12), the new language curriculum invites the students to use their "experience within their local community" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 19), and "utilise intertextual connections (connections with previous texts/text genres)" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 12) in order to arrive to a deeper understanding of the texts that surround them. Critical literacy discourses associated with the role of meaning-maker further encourage the students to "compare/contrast the information within single modal and multimodal […] texts" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 19), in order to explore how the presence of image and sound implicates textual meaning, and "compare […] texts […] with or without the presence of paralinguistic and non-linguistic elements" (e.g. voice pauses) (MoEC, 2010b, p. 21), in order to explore emotions when dealing with oral texts.

ii. Developing and testing initial hypotheses

Being able to hypothesise about the theme/purpose of texts requires a deeper level of comprehension that goes beyond the task of skimming for information (Behrman, 2006). In particular, the new language curriculum invites the students to "utilise the sociocultural frame [of a text] in developing initial hypotheses about [its] theme and purpose" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 18). As students approach and analyse texts as social practices, they are further encouraged to engage with "discussions concerning [their] hypotheses about a text's genre and register as manifested within the communicative intent and the social setting [of a text]" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 30).

iii. Endorsing positions

The new language curriculum encourages the students to engage with group discussions regarding their "thoughts, dispositions, beliefs, feelings" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 33) on the text being studied. Built on the premise that text comprehension is not only an individual activity but also a "collaborative process of meaning negotiation" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 12), the new language curriculum proposes critical literacy discourses that serve to encourage the students to position themselves in relation to a given text, whilst at the same time are invited to realise the different perspectives adopted by their classmates. As a way of introducing the concept of subjectivity (Behrman, 2006), such critical literacy discourses encourage the students to "endorse positions in relation a text's meaning/message and structure" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 20), and also to "accept the different meanings of their classmates" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 13).

iv. Changing a text's discourse

According to the new language curriculum, being able to change the discourse of a given text is associated with the students' abilities to participate in meaning making tasks in a more complex way. Summarising "written and oral texts and their messages" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 19), participating in role play activities that encourage "a different semiotic output" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 19), and making the necessary alterations when removing multimodal elements from texts (see MoEC, 2010b, pp. 19-20), are critical literacy discourses proposed within the new language curriculum that encourage the students to understand how a text's discourse

implicates the kind of vocabulary being used, the syntax choices of the composer, and the presence of multimodal elements.

7.2.3 The text participant role within the new language curriculum

The role of the text participant requires a different level of engagement with texts; an engagement that focuses on texts as products of their social context (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993). Within the new language curriculum, the role of text participant was found to be associated with three critical literacy discourses that serve to encourage the students to approach and analyse texts as contextual practices.

i. Understanding the register of texts as it relates to social context and purpose

The new language curriculum encourages the students to explore "relationships of power, social standing and equality" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 22), "recognise the parameters that constitute the communicative field (relationship between discussers […] purpose etc.)" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 18), "attempt initial distinctions between […] formal and informal 'voices' and their social role" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 20), and "comment upon the social and cultural dimension of language use" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 22). These activities aim to teach the students how a text's register − as it relates to the use of formal or informal language, and the use of linguistic and/or paralinguistic elements (e.g. overlaps, pauses, and hesitations) − can establish relationships of power between the reader and the writer, the speaker and the listener; or to signal the participants' social standing (MoEC, 2010b). The new language curriculum also encourages the students to "compare/contrast […] information that refers to different audiences" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 20), and compare texts produced inside and outside of the classroom. The intention here is for the students to realise that language use is tied up not only to the purpose a text is serving (e.g. to inform), but also to the social context in which it is produced, read, and interpreted.

ii. Understanding how the use of image and sound within multimodal texts is implicated by social setting and purpose

The new language curriculum encourages the students to explore how a text's genre, social context, audience, and purpose, implicate the role of multimodal elements within texts. To explore this relationship, the students are encouraged to discuss "the semiotic function of

image and sound within multimodal texts" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 20), "understand the connection between a text's communicative frame and the various multimodal elements being used" (MoEC, 2010, p. 23), and engage with text production activities that require a decision on which "multimodal elements could be used to support the message they [students] wish to convey" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 35).

iii. Text production

During text production activities, the students are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding of how purpose and intended audience influence the form of the text to be produced and the language to be used. In particular, the students are encouraged to "approach text production not as a set of isolated sentences but rather as a meaningful unit that refers to a particular audience" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 21) and to "particular communicative/sociocultural conditions" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 35). The new language curriculum further encourages the students to select "the way in which a text will be organised" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 27), "the way in which information will be linked together" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 27), and "the linguistic and paralinguistic elements that are considered necessary to the construction of constructing meaning" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 28).

7.2.4   The role of text analyst within the new language curriculum

Text analysts, according to Freebody and Luke (1990, p. 13), approach texts as "crafted objects, written by a person with particular dispositions or orientations". Within the new language curriculum, three critical literacy discourses were identified as being relevant to the text analyst role. These discourses encourage the students to approach and analyse texts as objects of critique.

i.   Attending to functional grammar when analysing texts

Analysing texts using functional grammar brings together critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy, in an effort to explore language in its ideological dimension (Ioannidou, 2015). For instance, the new language curriculum proposes critical literacy discourses that invite the students to "identify the […] phonological, morphological and syntactic decisions […] that signal the writer's point of view/position/identity" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 41), and explore how

"word order and sentence structure encourage particular ways of viewing the world" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 39).

ii. Comparing and contrasting texts

The new language curriculum encourages the students to examine "the various points of view they encounter" as they compare and contrast texts (MoEC, 2010b, p. 40). Critical literacy discourses such as "contrasting texts on the same issue but differ in the way the issue is presented" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 19), aim to help the students understand bias, points of view, and intent (Behrman, 2006), and encourage the understanding that texts do not represent the reality, but rather a subjective interpretation of it (Clark et al., 1990).

iii. Adopting an alternative point of view

The students are encouraged to "assume [...] more than one points of view" when approaching texts as objects of critique (MoEC, 2010b, p. 28). For instance, the new language curriculum encourages the students to explore how different characters within a story plot react to the same event, and evaluate how "different worlds are constructed (heroes-heroine, good-bad) through particular linguistic decisions" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 33). Such discourses, mainly associated with encouraging the students to "realise and evaluate the different interpretations of the same message or event" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 33), serve to remind to the students of the multifaceted nature of reality, and the role of language in constructing identities and proclaiming particular ways of viewing the world.

7.3   Chapter Summary

The purpose of this Chapter was to present the results of the QCA that was performed in order to analyse the content of the new language curriculum. Using Freebody and Luke's (1990) four resource model as an analytical framework, this Chapter proceeded with analysing the content of the new language curriculum in terms of the critical literacy discourses that the students are encouraged to engage with during language teaching. These critical literacy discourses will be an integral part of Chapter 8 that follows. The identification of the critical literacy discourses enabled this study to identify similarities or differences between the participants' classroom teaching and the new language curriculum.

Chapter 8: Analysis of teachers' meaning making and agency

8.1. Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to address RQ1 – *How do teachers enact the new language curriculum inside their classrooms* – and RQ2 – *How do the three sensemaking elements influence teachers' curriculum enactment?* This study was framed by the understanding that change is a relational concept; signified in the relationship between teachers and their contexts. This study viewed this relationship through the prism of a sensemaking perspective. In particular, it was discussed in Chapter 5 that this study conceptualised agency as being located within a sensemaking process consisting of three sensemaking elements in a state of negotiation: teachers' cognitions, school context, and official discourses of curriculum change; including both professional development, and the new language curriculum. This Chapter presents and interprets the findings of this study as they relate to the ways in which the teachers enacted the new language curriculum inside their classrooms, and the ways in which the three sensemaking elements influenced the teachers' responses to the new language curriculum.

Section 8.2 summarises the way in which teacher interviews and classroom observations were analysed. Section 8.3 presents the teachers that participated to this study. Section 8.4 proceeds with analytically separating the three sensemaking elements, at least to the extent permitted, with the purpose to establish their influence on the teachers' meaning making and agency. In particular, section 8.4.1 interprets the ways in which the teachers made meaning and enacted their agency as they were negotiating with the official discourses of curriculum change. This section is divided into three sub-sections, as they relate to the ways in which the teachers responded to the new language curriculum: a) Teachers' talking from a place of accommodation, b) Teachers talking from a place of assimilation, c) Teachers talking from a place of parallel structures. Section 8.4.2 interprets the ways in which the teachers talked about their schools as influencing their meaning making and agency in the context of the new language curriculum. The teachers' reflections upon their schools are presented in a separate section for the purpose of discussing the role of each school in a collective manner.

8.2. Analysis and Interpretation: Overview

To address RQ1 and RQ2, this study relied on interviews and classroom observations. Each of the ten research participants was interviewed three times during the course of this six-month study with the purpose to explore how they negotiated their meaning of the new language curriculum and enacted their agency in the context of curriculum change. Teacher interviews were focused on investigating teachers' reflections upon their curriculum enactment, and connections between curriculum enactment and the three sensemaking elements (i.e. teachers' cognitions, experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change, and experiences of belonging within their schools). As discussed in section 6.5.5.c of Chapter 6, interview data were analysed in an inductive manner, which involved gathering the data under their corresponding sensemaking element and indicator. Cross-case analysis of the interview data, as discussed in section 6.5.5.e, yielded the final coding list, as found in Table 10. The indicators 'identity of subject matter' and 'teaching goals and concerns', as presented in section 6.5.4.a., are also included in Table 10. The purpose was to demonstrate how the participants' cognitions about the identity of their subject matter – for instance how they viewed language teaching, and what they believed to be its purpose – oftentimes contradicted to their immediate classroom concerns and goals. These two indicators were thus evolved into categories of cognitions, as illustrated in Table 10, and form part of the analysis of the data that follows (see section 8.4.1.)

Sensemaking Elements		Codes	Identity of subject matter	Teaching goals and concerns
Teacher Cognitions		Language teaching as a platform for critical thinking		
		Language teaching as a platform for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner		
		Language teaching as a platform for basic comprehension and technical skills		
		Development of critical thinkers and writers as a teaching goal		
		Reading and writing as teachers' goal and concern		
		Critical literacy goals within boundaries		
Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	*The new language curriculum*	The new language curriculum legitimises classroom practice		
		The new language curriculum as a transformative event		
		The new language curriculum encourages experimentation and learning		
		The new language curriculum is irrelevant to my students		
		Critical literacy has always been around		
		Curricula do not concern me		
	Professional Development	Professional development encourages self-education		
		Professional development inhibiting meaning making		
		Increased autonomy is resisted		
School Context		Our school has other learning goals		
		I am given space to pursue my own goals		
		Our school encourages risk-taking and innovation		
		I am just doing my job		
		Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation		

Table 10 Final Coding List

Observational data, as discussed in sections 6.5.5.a and 6.5.5.b, were analysed by means of QCA. Cross-case analysis, as discussed in section 6.5.5.d, yielded three processes of curriculum enactment, which reflect the three ways in which the ten participating teachers responded to the new language curriculum: accommodation, assimilation and parallel structures. Table 11 below shows how the research participants were categorised across accommodation, assimilation and parallel structures.

Accommodation	Assimilation	Parallel structures
Mario (T6)	Helen (T1)	Laura (T4)
Anna (T7)	Sylvia (T2)	Beth (T5)
Michael (T9)	Victoria (T3)	Paul (T8)
		Maria (T10)

Table 11 Teachers' categorisation according to their response to the new language curriculum

8.3. The Research Participants

In total, ten research participants, working in five different primary schools, agreed to participate to this study which started January 2015 and was completed June 2015. The ten teachers participating to this study are presented below and also listed in Table 12. Pseudonyms are used to ensure anonymity. Information about the teachers' years of experience, certification, years of experience within school, grade level, and position within school, are discussed herein.

a. Helen (T1)

Helen was a first grade teacher with eight years of teaching experience and a Master's degree in Education Technology. Helen regarded School A as a very challenging school due to its student population. Having been working in School A for four years, Helen had managed to craft a variety of roles for herself, quite often shifting from one role to the other to accommodate the needs of her Turkish-Cypriot, Roma and non-Greek students arriving from socio-economically deprived families. As Helen said characteristically:

> I am everything, from teacher to psychologist and above all I
> feel like their [students'] mum. My students are not the spoiled
> students you often encounter; they are not offered the world by
> their parents so sometimes the most important thing for them is
> just to show them love.

When this study commenced, Helen found herself having to deal with the same issue she has had ever since she started working in School A: her students' large amount of absences from school and low attainment level. Yet, being accustomed to this issue, the teacher managed to build a repertoire of strategies in her attempt to revitalise her students' interest in schooling

and learning. For Helen, this meant sacrificing valuable teaching time to help her students "to build their confidence, realise what the school can offer to them and what they can achieve if only they educate themselves".

b. Sylvia (T2)

Sylvia was a second grade teacher with 12 years of teaching experience. At the time of the study, Sylvia was pursuing her PhD in Special Education which provided her with a lot of practical ideas on how to enhance her language teaching in ways relevant to her low achieving students. Just like Helen, Sylvia regarded School A, the school she had been teaching at for the last five years, as a challenging school. Sylvia explained that, ever since she entered School A, she felt that it was her duty to adapt her lesson to the learning needs and particularities of her students in order to help them to develop their basic technical skills (e.g. reading and writing). For Sylvia, the challenge was that her students, arriving from socio-economically deprived families, were not interested in learning. Their large amount of school absences, in conjunction with their parents' disregard for schooling, made it rather challenging for Sylvia to teach in a way that matched her teaching intentions. She said characteristically:

> There are many things that I would like to do […] but unfortunately my teaching is more teacher-centred and I believe this is because of my students.

c. Victoria (T3)

Victoria was an experienced teacher of 11 years and had been teaching in School B for five years. When this study commenced, Victoria was assigned the first grade for the first time in her teaching career. Despite her 11 years of teaching experience, being assigned the first grade caused her a lot of stress and anxiety. As the teacher explained:

> At the beginning, it was so difficult, so challenging, because students of that age do not communicate properly, they are still developing their oral skills and their motor skills and they need constant support and guidance and I believed that this would require a lot of work on my part. Generally, I thought that it [teaching the first grade] would be very exhausting for me because it was my first time [teaching the first grade] and I didn't know what to expect. I spent my summer preparing

myself […] and then I was feeling the pressure of having to move on with my subject matter. It worried me a lot […].

d. Laura (T4)

Laura, a teacher with nine years of teaching experience, arrived in School B in 2010 after having worked in a two-teacher school for four years. Having to cope with her twin duties of teaching a composite class and managing the school, put an extreme pressure on Laura who, as a newly qualified teacher at the time, started losing faith in the role of the curriculum: "When you experience such a pressure, curriculum goals become less important and more irrelevant to what you are dealing with", as Laura explained. When this study commenced, Laura was assigned the first grade for the first time in her teaching career. Unlike her colleague Victoria, however, Laura was able to tame her anxiety. It was her prior teaching experience, as it appeared from her sayings, that helped Laura to navigate out of her initial feelings of anxiety. Her prior teaching experience strengthened her authority inside her classroom and enhanced her discretion over how best to teach her students. As she said:

> When I was informed that I was being assigned the first grade I got a bit worried but now I feel a lot better […] I believe that each teacher decides on his own goals […] I don't really pay attention to what is out there.

e. Beth (T5)

Beth had been teaching in School B for six years. Having been teaching the second grade three years in a row, Beth, an experienced teacher of 18 years, seemed confident in her language teaching. Her confidence in her subject matter knowledge enabled Beth to follow her own direction when it came to the teaching of language. "My beliefs are stable. This is language, this is how it is supposed to be taught and learnt", Beth said. Her extensive teaching experience, in combination to her newly obtained Master's degree, made the teacher feel at ease with her instructional strategies. She said: " It [master's degree] helped me to become a better analyst of students' needs and difficulties and to respond to those [needs and difficulties] in a better way".

f. Mario (T6)

Mario was a third grade teacher. He had 16 years of teaching experience and had been teaching in School C for six years. Having spent his first four years of his teaching career in the strict environment of Greek schools operating in the UK under the authority of the Orthodox Church, Mario soon realised his need for autonomy. "My experience there", Mario explained "was horrible. You need to be careful of what you do inside the classroom and if you do something that is outside of the ordinary, you immediately become a target for bullying". School C, just as the other three schools that Mario had taught ever since he returned to Cyprus, provided him with the freedom he needed to express who he was as a teacher. In Mario's case, being a teacher involved much more than simply preparing himself for the next-day's lesson. Mario described himself in ways which construed his role as a professional with the inherent responsibility of broadening his teaching repertoire beyond the strict boundaries of his school books. As Mario explained: "I am interested in what we call 'open schools'. I mean, I see school not as an institution through which you get to learn stuff but rather as an institution through which you become educated".

g. Anna (T7)

Anna had 23 years of teaching experience and had been teaching in School C for two years. Anna explained that becoming an assistant head teacher was her goal ever since she returned from her undergraduate studies in the UK. After completing her studies in the UK – "a system much more updated than the Cypriot one" – Anna returned to her home-country only to find out that, if she wanted to eventually become an assistant head-teacher, she had to comply with the conservative teaching culture of Cyprus[11]. When this study commenced, Anna was on her second year as an assistant head-teacher of School C. Having reached her goal for becoming an assistant head-teacher, Anna started to reinvent her language teaching. Anna explained that her motivation to change her teaching stemmed from the new language curriculum, which was welcomed as a necessary evolution to language theory, but also from her school's innovative culture, which encouraged a change in her language instruction.

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[11] In Cyprus, teachers' promotions to head-teachers and assistant head-teachers depends on their evaluation by the inspectors and implementing the teaching materials accredited by MoEC is the decisive factor in the promotion system (Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2006).

h. Paul (T8)

Paul was a fourth grade teacher with 25 years of teaching experience. He jointed School D the year when this study commenced. Paul presented himself as an "unconventional" teacher who was not interested in pursuing curriculum goals or participating to professional development. For Paul, the most important quality of teachers is love for their profession. He said: "If you love your profession, you are up to great things. It doesn't require a lot. Only love for teaching".

i. Michael (T9)

Michael was a sixth grade teacher and had been teaching in School D for two years. In contrast to his colleague Paul and the faith he had in his abilities as a teacher, Michael believed that "there is always room for improvement". Updating his teaching repertoire meant much more than simply adding new activities to his lesson. For Michael, becoming informed about language teaching was construed as an inherent element of his role as a language teacher. Michael − unlike Paul − did not think of himself as an expert of his subject matter, despite his 22 years of teaching experience. Rather, he saw himself as a teacher in pursue of exciting changes that would satisfy his need for learning and development.

j. Maria

Maria was an experienced primary school teacher with 14 years of teaching experience. When this study commence, Maria was in the middle of obtaining her Master's degree on School Leadership and was teaching the fifth grade. Before entering School E five years prior to this study, Maria was part of a supportive school that encouraged its teachers to participate to national competitions. Maria was proud of having won a science competition with her then students, and believed that it was the support of her colleagues and her then head-teacher that helped her to win the competition. Maria explained that after joining School E, her motivation started to slowly disappear. According to the teacher, the five years she spent teaching in School E were characterised by a high degree of teacher isolation.

School	Teachers (T)	Grade Level	Years of experience	Years in School	Certification	Position
School A	Helen (T1)	First	8	4	Master's	Teacher
	Sylvia (T2)	Second	12	5	PhD candidate	Teacher
School B	Victoria (T3)	First	11	5	Master's	Teacher
	Laura (T4)	First	9	5	Master's	Teacher
	Beth (T5)	Second	18	6	Master's	Teacher
School C	Mario (T6)	Third	16	6	Bachelor's	Teacher
	Anna (T7)	Third	23	2	Bachelor's	Assistant head-teacher
School D	Paul (T8)	Fourth	25	1	Diploma	Teacher
	Michael (T9)	Sixth	22	2	Diploma	Teacher
School E	Maria (T10)	Fifth	14	5	Master's	Teacher

Table 12 Demographics of the research participants

8.4. Research Findings

Analysis below occurs in two sections. Section 8.4.1 presents and interprets the three ways in which the teachers responded to the new language curriculum: accommodation, assimilation, and parallel structures. Section 8.4.2 presents and interprets how the teachers' reflected upon their experiences of belonging within their schools. The discussion that follows suggests that the new language curriculum served as a sensemaking event for the teachers. In particular, as the teachers were negotiating their meaning of the new language curriculum, they utilised what they believed about their subject matter, what they thought to be important for language instruction, and drew upon their experiences with professional development, and their experiences of belonging within their schools. The ways in which the teachers negotiated their meaning and enacted agency showed their active role in shaping their responses to the new language curriculum. Yet, such responses – accommodation, assimilation, and parallel structures – also showed the mediating role of the teachers' working contexts.

8.4.1. Teachers' responses to the new language curriculum

This section presents and interprets how the teachers utilised their cognitions and their experiences with professional development in negotiating their meaning and enacting agency

in the context of the new language curriculum. The analysis occurs in three sub-sections: a) Teachers talking from a place of accommodation, b) Teachers talking from a place of assimilation, and c) Teachers talking from a place of parallel structures.

a. Talking from a place of accommodation: Mario, Anna, and Michael

These participating teachers responded to the new language curriculum with accommodation. This was made apparent through the teachers' various classroom decisions (for instance the activities they selected for instruction, the ways they conversed with their students) and the ways they reflected upon the new language curriculum as being congruent with their cognitions about language teaching and learning. Illustrative examples of curriculum enactment are presented herein. Table 13 below includes the codes that are presented and interpreted herein, and connects those codes with their sensemaking element and the teachers.

SENSEMAKING ELEMENTS		CODES	TEACHERS
Teacher Cognitions	Identity of subject matter	Language teaching as a platform for critical thinking	T6, T7, T9
	Teaching goals and concerns	Development of critical thinkers and writers as a teaching goal	T6, T7, T9
Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	The new language curriculum	The new language curriculum legitimises classroom practice	T6, T9
		The new language curriculum as a transformative event	T7
		The new language curriculum encourages experimentation and learning	T6, T7, T9
	Professional Development	Professional development encourages self-education	T6, T7, T9

Table 13 Codes in the accommodation response

i. Language teaching as a platform for critical thinking

The new language curriculum was built upon the idea of critical comprehension, through which language is understood and studied, not solely as a technical tool but also, and most importantly, as a tool through which people reveal their subjective positions from which the world is understood (MoEC, 2010b). Both Mario and Michael saw their subject matter through the same lens. Their belief that language in general and language teaching in particular is about *expression* makes it rather apparent:

> Language [referring to the subject matter] is about communication, both oral and written, and when I say communication I mean the ability to decode a message as well as being able to express ourselves (T9_IN1_Q3).

> It [language as a subject matter] allows students to express themselves and I really enjoy it as a subject matter […] it is about expression because language is the medium through which people express themselves and thus it gives you the opportunity to understand reality through others (T6_IN1_Q3).

Similarly, Anna viewed language teaching as an "interactive process during which students are given the opportunity to communicate their ideas, create their world" (T7_IN1_Q3) and through which students learn how to "justify and elaborate on their points of view and communicate with each other properly" (T7_IN1_Q3).

Mario, Michael, and Anna viewed their subject matter as a platform for "promoting critical thinking" (T7_IN2_Q3), "students' imagination" (T6_IN2_Q8), "helping students become critical people" (T6_IN1_Q9), "becoming accustomed to thinking critically" (T9_IN1_Q6) and "enhancing their [students'] critical thinking while reflecting upon their experiences" (T7_IN2_Q4). In the case of these teachers, their beliefs about their subject matter extended well beyond the concessional acquisition of learning objectives that are thought to be beneficial to students in the short run (e.g. reading skills). From their perspective, their subject matter was about building access to literacy practices, and setting the pedagogical foundations for the development of critical readers and thinkers who are able to read beyond texts and recognise them as products and processes of particular social forces.

> We all take things for granted, meaning that we believe that certain things are just what they are and that they will never change. So students should become aware of how things are constructed, and this is made possible through reading, comparing texts, questioning motives […]. Knowledge is the outcome of some sort of construction and I think that literacy helps them [students] to realise that this has to do with what we call a 'power game' (T6_IN2_Q1).

From the perspective of these teachers, the students are never too young to engage with critical thinking. As Anna lucidly remarked: "I think these skills will provide them [students] with the core competences needed to function in today's world" (T7_IN1_Q5), and explained:

> I don't want my students to just sit there and repeat the things they have learnt […]. Yeah, grammar is good, knowing how to write is important, but language [as a subject matter] is more

than that […]. They should not accept things without judging them first, they should realise the motives behind each situation, each person, they should be able to project their imagination and keep an open mind […]. Through language they learn to justify their positions, they learn the importance of backing up their thought process with valid evidence, they become capable of thinking and acting contrary to the status quo (T7_IN1_Q5).

The belief that it is never too soon to talk about literacy, as expressed by these teachers, stood in contrast to the position adopted by the rest of the participants (sections b and c below), yet it was congruent with the philosophical mind-set that the new language curriculum was proposing: that critical literacy should be regarded not as a skill to be acquired but rather as a new way of thinking about language, literacy, and the world (MoEC, 2010b). These teachers, in particular, thought of critical literacy as an integral part of their subject matter; as an element inseparable from what they believed their subject matter was for, and perceived critical literacy not as a developmental attainment, but rather as a social practice; a skill for life.

Language [as a subject matter] is not teaching, language is education […] Through literacy, students become aware of the power that exists within texts and realise how stereotypes are constructed and how they can be deconstructed […]. For example, I brought them [students] about 50 books on the history of Greece from 1815 until recent history, and we read those books and I kept asking them, 'what is the role of women, men and children [in each time period]?' 'The early books don't mention the role of the children nor women, why?' All of the sudden, in the 1930s, the books started to change, the material was cheaper. 'Why', I asked them, 'because we had war and dictatorship'. In the 1980s, the concept of family emerges, 'why? Because the war was over, men and women are equal all of the sudden because women need to work' […] this kind of thinking is what I value the most (T6_IN3_Q1).

The new language curriculum aimed to shift the direction of language teaching from notions that related to the mere decoding of texts and the acquisition of technical skills in a decontextualised manner, to notions that related to how social reality influences, and is influenced by, the use of language (see Chapter 3). The three teachers discussed herein adopted the same perspective in relation to the identity of their subject matter. Their comments suggested their tendency to view their subject matter not as a field for the mere

acquisition of technical skills, but rather as a platform for students' development into critically literate individuals, and thought of this aim as their own responsibility:

> Motives are everywhere, in the news, in the newspapers we are reading, the magazines, everywhere, and it is clear that such texts hide an ideological meaning. Of course the school texts don't do that in their majority, so I consider it to be my own responsibility to find such texts […] they are not going to be politically-charged, don't get me wrong. But, in addition to grammatical phenomena, students need to realise how their life is implicated by what they read and how grammar serves to do that (T9_IN2_Q13).

ii. Development of critical thinkers and writers as a teaching goal

Describing himself as a "professional educator" (T6_IN2_Q3), Mario set himself the goal to educate his students beyond the conventional knowledge found in school books. From Mario's point of view, being a teacher involved much more than simply preparing himself for the next-day's lesson:

> I don't really concern myself with school books […] I strongly believe that teachers should search the literature, study, get informed and understand that school books are just a synopsis of what they need to teach and what they need to know about language [as a subject matter] (T6_IN1_Q7).

Being a "professional educator" (T6_IN2_Q3) meant that Mario was responsible to create intrigue to the minds of his students with activities and materials that were appealing to them, both at a cognitive and an emotional level. "I don't want them [students] to think 'oh just another boring text' […] so I bring my own texts […] because I want to keep them satisfied and interested in my teaching" (T6_IN1_Q6). Mario's image of himself as a "professional educator" entailed a commitment to his students and the way they experience schooling. Being a "professional educator" also meant empowering his students to become "critical people, [who] take nothing for granted, always look for motives in people's actions and behaviours […] and respect each other" (T6_IN1_Q10). Similarly, Michael described his role as a "catalyst for how everything is carried out" (T9_IN1_Q4) and framed his teaching goals around this role. Like Mario, Michael's role encouraged him to look "beyond the restrictions of the school books" (T9_IN2_Q2), believing that, by doing so, would lead to desired

learning outcomes. He said: "Ultimately, it is the teacher who is responsible for the lesson and to work beyond the restrictions of the school books, to bring texts to students that will inspire them and encourage them to express their opinions […] and to become critical thinkers" (T9_IN2_Q2).

During interviews, one reoccurring comment was that critical thinking was important in Anna's classroom, with the teacher explicitly regarding students' development into critically literate individuals as her teaching goal. Anna's reflections made apparent the congruence between her goals for language instruction and the new language curriculum. In particular, the teacher elaborated on the importance of teaching her students to justify their claims (see Table 9 'Developing and testing initial hypotheses'), and understand connections within texts (see Table 9 'Exploring text organisation at a macro level').

> I would like my students to develop their critical thinking and to build on what they already know or what they have experienced so to construct strong arguments about something, and we do try that during our activities inside the classroom. I mean, it's important for them to realise that what we claim needs a justification and I constantly ask them 'where did you find that answer' or 'how do you know that' […]. Students need to learn to justify their answers because then they learn to write correctly. For instance, when they respond to my questions, I push them to further explain their opinion and to draw from the text to justify their answers. This way they learn that when we construct a written text there is important information that needs to be included, like 'who said what, why, what was the outcome?' (T7_IN1_Q10).

Influenced by the idea she had of herself as a teacher who "know[s] how to evolve and change" (T7_IN1_Q6), Anna sought to educate her students beyond the conventional knowledge found in school books, echoing Mario and Michael's point of view. In her words:

> We [teachers] shall not be teaching within the confines of the book [teaching guides] because students are in need of experiences […] they have limited experiences [and] reading and writing are only two of the many ways they can express themselves (T7_IN1_Q11).

iii.   The new language curriculum legitimises classroom practice

Mario and Michael elaborated on the ways the new language curriculum informed their classroom practice (see quotes below). It can be argued here that the new language curriculum acted as a learning experience for these teachers as it had propelled them to learn more about critical literacy, and how it could be carried out inside their classrooms in ways that would enhance their teaching. Yet, the teachers would strongly maintain that the new language curriculum came to substantiate what they had already been doing. Reflecting upon the new language curriculum, Mario and Michael explained that its pedagogical orientations, as well as the critical literacy discourses proposed therein (see Table 9), were already part of their classroom practice. In particular, Mario welcomed the change in the language curriculum and considered it as an opportunity to exercise his profession in the way he thought he should anyway. "I don't want to sound too cocky but this is what I was doing ever since I got into the teaching profession" (T6_IN1_Q2). From his perspective, this approach to language teaching and learning was not seen as changing, but rather that the new language curriculum legitimised what he had already been doing inside his classroom:

> I think that things have changed for those who didn't teach that way, let's say if you were a traditional teacher who teaches the teaching guide then yes things have changed for you but I was always doing that […]. Surely I have it [critical literacy] in mind while teaching, critical literacy is everywhere nowadays. I can't say that it hasn't affected me. It might have helped me to realise that critical literacy is also something else that I was not aware of but stuff like motives, stereotypes and power relationships were always the basic pillars of my teaching (T6_IN1_Q5).

Similarly, Michael's encounters with the new language curriculum encouraged the belief that the practices and ways of thinking advocated therein matched what he would do if left to his own devices. Michael said:

> Teachers are free to do whatever they want inside their classrooms, but it definitely gave me some peace of mind knowing that what I do corresponds to the official policy (T9_IN1_Q2).

Michael further elaborated on how the new language curriculum was thought to match his classroom practice. Below, Michael makes reference to such classroom decisions that were

found to be congruent with the classroom activities proposed within the new language curriculum (see Table 9 'Making connections and comparisons').

> What has changed – well I was doing that in the past as well but not that extensively – I really enjoy the idea of text comparisons and I can say it is quite prominent in my classroom. For instance, we have our text in front of us [meaning the text from the textbook] and I try to find related texts from my own collection (T9_IN1_Q5).

Michael further explained how genre-based pedagogy influenced his classroom decisions. Emphasising on the fact that genre-based pedagogy was already part of his classroom instruction, Michael explained how the renewed emphasis on genres within the new language curriculum encouraged him to invest more time in such critical literacy discourses relevant to genre awareness (see Table 9 'Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre').

> I have paid more attention to it [genre awareness], I mean I was always doing so but I now emphasise more on it because I believe it is very important for students to recognise the various text genres and how they differ from each other, both in terms of structure and language (T9_IN1_Q11).

iv. The new language curriculum as a transformative event

Unlike Mario and Michael, who thought of the new language curriculum as having been introduced to substantiate their classroom practice and ways of thinking about language teaching and learning, Anna experienced the introduction of the new language curriculum as a transformative event. The teacher explained that the new language curriculum and the flexibility it had proposed to teachers, encouraged her to reconsider the core of her language instruction. She said:

> It [the new language curriculum] has changed me. I am now more flexible in terms of how I think about my classroom teaching. I integrate not only new methods but also activities that I could not integrate in the past, because I was worried what my head teacher would think of me (T7_IN1_Q4).

Anna's dissatisfaction with previous practices led her to tensions between her beliefs about her subject matter and the ways she was behaving inside her classroom.

> When I came back from my studies I encountered a very different reality […] and so I had to cope with it […]. Teaching language meant teaching what was in the teaching guide, end of story (T7_IN1_Q7).

The new language curriculum, according to Anna, was able to resolve those tensions. As the teacher said: "Once the curriculum changed, I was able to do all those things that I have learnt while studying" (T7_IN1_Q8). The congruence that Anna experienced provided the stimulus the teacher needed in order to consider changing her classroom practice. This congruence further encouraged Anna to persevere in the face of challenge. As Anna admitted: "I understand that all these years I have suppressed myself so much and changing my course of action really got me scared" (T7_IN1_Q1). Anna strongly believed that working towards the new language curriculum instead of against it, would enabled her to achieve her desired equilibrium where it was not improper to introduce classroom materials other than the ones prescribed by the government. The introduction of the new language curriculum had empowered Anna to make the necessary changes in her teaching, with the teacher feeling that her expertise was finally being unlocked. This empowering state had encouraged Anna to devise new ways of teaching. She explained:

> I have opened myself up to new methods of teaching and to new activities, something that was unacceptable in the past […]. When I first got into the profession it was forbidden to teach something that was not in the book [teaching guide] or to teach grammar through literacy […] (T7_IN1_Q9).

v.   The new language curriculum encourages experimentation and learning

These teachers positioned themselves as strong advocates of the new language curriculum. Mario described it as "an exceptional work" (T6_IN1_Q1), Anna as "better than the previous one" (T7_IN1_Q2) and Michael believed that it had introduced "practices that we [teachers] need to inject our teaching with" (T9_IN1_Q1). The congruence that these teachers experienced was their reassurance that the enactment of the new language curriculum would not work against what they had been pursuing inside their classrooms. In fact, they viewed the new language curriculum not only as being of benefit to their students, but also as being of

benefit to themselves, as it encouraged them to experiment with new ideas and ways of teaching. "Now, with critical literacy, I feel free to search and find materials that I consider would add to my teaching" (T7_IN1_Q12). Michael explained:

> You know, the many years of teaching might cause some, shall I say, boredom? Thank God I still like challenges and I want to get informed as a teacher and not stay focused on what I have been doing for the past 15-20 years, and critical literacy was an opportunity for me to filter some of my old ideas and adopt others and to sort of upgrade the way I teach (T9_IN1_Q15).

Mario and Michael experienced the introduction of critical literacy as a necessary evolution to language teaching and learning. From their perspective, investing time to accommodate the new language curriculum, including finding classroom materials that encourage critical literacy questions, was thought to be a natural part of their role as language teachers. In other words, the teachers' congruence with the new language curriculum led to a renewed confidence in their expertise; an expertise that was made apparent through their persistence in remaining task-oriented. Mario said: "Whenever I feel that I need more classroom materials or ideas, I search the literature and get informed […]. I have also studied the online depository and I have found some really good ideas and I have integrated them in my teaching" (T6_IN1_Q14). Michael encapsulated this assertion the following way:

> Basically the new language curriculum expects teachers to develop their own classroom curriculum and find their own texts and this was rather challenging for me despite my 20 years of experience […]. So I often find it important to study my collection and update it with more texts that I find to be relevant to the texts in the textbook (T9_IN3_Q3).

Commitment and resilience thus characterise these teachers who, in the midst of negotiating with the new language curriculum, thought of it as being consistent with the image they had of themselves as teachers who were open to changes, but also challenges. As a result of that, the teachers talked about the new language curriculum in ways that made apparent their willingness to consider its enactment in the long run:

> The goals [referring to those of the new language curriculum] are continuous and we [teachers] cannot say that there are certain goals for each unit and once the unit is over we move on to the next goal. It's something that we need to carry over. I

mean, it is part of language [as a subject matter] not part of the textbook (T6_IN1_Q4).

Even in the instances where Anna had admitted her feelings of anxiety over government's expectations to leave her teaching guides aside, the way she manoeuvred out of this situation was indicative of a teacher who, through the lens of her congruent cognitions, saw no failure but rather ways of moving forward. As she remarked:

> All the flexibility that the new language curriculum provides us [teachers] with is rather tricky because there is no longer a base upon which we can build. This was my biggest concern because we will get new students next year and we cannot be sure whether they have learnt what they needed to learn the year before […]. Because it gives you the freedom to omit parts of the subject matter, but yet again this is a major issue because you might have omitted something that is important and so the next teacher would not know about it and then we have discontinuity issues […] But I did my research, I have checked the online depository and I have managed to balance things out (T7_IN1_Q14).

vi.   Professional development encourages self-education

Whilst reflecting upon their experiences with professional development, the teachers were particularly vocal about their decision to distance themselves from the seminars provided by the Pedagogical Institute. Their critique was mostly focused on positioning themselves against the banking model[12] under which the Pedagogical Institute functioned. "I am bored of all that theory […] I went to a few seminars and that was it" (T6_IN1_Q13), Mario said. Michael agreed: "They [teacher trainers] should concentrate more on teachers' issues and concerns and avoid the constant lecturing on theory that has been happening for three years" (T9_IN1_Q12). Caught in the midst of "too much information" (T7_IN1_Q15) Anna said: "We [the teachers] have been bombarded with too much information about critical literacy and I felt tired and I was like 'ok just let me do my job' " (T7_IN3_Q1).

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[12] Borrowed from the work of Paulo Freire, the term *banking model* is used to characterise professional development in Cyprus which tends to focus on knowledge transition from " those who consider themselves knowledgeable" to "those whom they consider to know nothing" (Freire, 2005, p. 72).

Although Mario, Anna, and Michael's critique was no different from the position adopted by the rest of the teachers (see sections b and c) these teachers' claims were combined with arguments supporting their expertise.

> Their [trainers] approach was wrong I think […] and that's why they found a lot of resistance from teachers. They could have said, for instance, 'ok these are things you already know but we have managed to provide a few suggestions for you', but instead they were like 'ok listen to us because you don't know anything about it [critical literacy]' (T7_IN3_Q2).

> In general the seminar was good but I don't think teachers should rely on the Pedagogical Institute for lesson plans. I think that their [trainers'] role should be to provide teachers with some general guidelines. Now, going there and listening to them about how I should teach […] I do not believe that there is only one best way to teach (T6_IN3_Q3).

Mario, Anna and Michael remained critical of the top-down process of curriculum implementation. This critique, voiced by these teachers, was accompanied by their desire to be regarded as professional teachers with their own concerns and experiences.

> I believe they could have provided teachers with the opportunity to express their worries about it [critical literacy], to ask questions, and to test things and say 'yes this works and this doesn't work' (T7_IN3_Q4).

> If the seminars were more targeted, let's say if they invite for training the teachers of the fifth and sixth grade then it would be much more fruitful for teachers because we would discuss with each other and share our concerns about issues that might relate to all. Now that the seminars are more generic, it is very difficult to satisfy teachers' needs (T9_IN1_Q21).

Responding to the top-down curriculum implementation process, these teachers refused to position themselves as teachers who "just sit around and wait for seminars" (T6_IN3_Q4). Becoming familiar with the new language curriculum was regarded as their own responsibility. In particular, Mario described himself in ways which construed his role as a "professional educator" (T6_IN2_Q3) with the inherent responsibility of broadening his teaching repertoire beyond the strict boundaries set by the Pedagogical Institute. Mario said:

> I believe that if I wanted to learn something more I would have done it myself. It is best if *we* [teachers] do something about it

as well. Like search the literature about it [critical literacy], why rely on someone else? (T6_IN3_Q5)

As a teacher deeply interested in "Marx's critique, the philosophy behind it" and how such philosophical appreciations can be "translated into classroom practice" (T6_IN2_Q4), Mario embarked on a process of self-educating himself in the direction thought most appropriate for his expertise.

> I have studied the concept [critical literacy], read about it not only because I wanted to develop a better understanding of what happens in the classroom but also because I am interested in its philosophy and how it relates to the philosophy of education (T6_IN1_Q12).

For Michael, becoming informed about language teaching was construed as an inherent element of his role as a teacher of a subject matter that constantly changes. He explained: "Language [as subject matter] is not static. There is always this challenge with the new methods, the curriculum, the textbooks; it constantly changes and you need to keep up with it" (T9_IN1_Q22). Michael's constant pursuit for ideas and materials, result of his belief of language teaching as ever-changing, and his need to keep updating his teaching repertoire, positioned him as a teacher who, like Mario, thought to be responsible for his own learning and development.

> I feel that, with regards to language [subject matter], I need to always study about it. You cannot just close your eyes and ignore what is out there. It is the subject matter upon which everything else is built. Even maths requires some decoding skills and comprehension (T9_IN1_Q14).

Similarly, Anna refused to position herself as dependent upon "others" (T7_IN3_Q5) for her learning and development, particularly when those 'others' had failed in their role to support her the ways Anna deemed necessary. The way Anna responded back to the limited support she had been offered was indicative of a teacher who was committed to her own learning and development.

> They [teacher trainers] were like 'forget what you have been doing' but they did not support us in, let's say, understanding how critical literacy differs from what was happening in the past

> [meaning the communicative approach] […]. So I gathered all
> my units [in the teaching guide], reviewed them, found my
> materials, my activities, studied the online depository […] this
> was more helpful than listening to *others* (T7_IN3_Q5).

However, the end of the school year found Anna doubting her classroom practice. Despite the pervasiveness that Anna was exhibiting throughout the course of this study, the teacher reflected upon her worries as they related to whether she actually taught her students what they needed to learn before switching to the fourth grade. Anna attributed those concerns to her lack of professional support. "It is here where you need more seminars and workshops because they [policymakers] expect us to be curriculum developers but nobody showed as how to do that" (T7_IN3_Q7). This response was found to echo the teachers discussed in the following sections, and their resistance to adopt a more flexible role inside their classrooms (Table 15 & Table 16 'Increased teacher autonomy is resisted'). Anna elaborated on her worries in the following way:

> Ok I know it [the new language curriculum] wishes to give
> teachers more autonomy and flexibility and I have enjoyed that,
> but I am concerned because I wonder, have I omitted things that
> I was supposed to teach? (T7_IN3_Q8).

vii.   Classroom practice and reflections

Mario, Anna and Michael acted in ways that pertained to helping their students to develop into critically literate individuals. These three teachers responded to the new language curriculum with a set of didactic approaches that were found to be congruent with particular critical literacy discourses. The enactment of such critical literacy discourses inside their classrooms encouraged their students to explore the social and ideological nature of language, as well as the role of grammar in constructing meaning. Extract 1 presented below refers to Mario's first classroom observation during which the class was engaged in understanding how language is often used to construct relationships of power. Reflecting upon his lesson observed, Mario explained that his teaching goal was to make his students aware of "how stereotypes are constructed" (T6_IN2_Q5). In his words:

> What critical literacy teaches us is that nothing should be taken
> for granted and so my goal in general is to show my students
> how stereotypes are constructed […]. I mean it is very important

to be able to look beyond the words and understand the intentions behind something (T6_IN2_Q5).

Mario also explained how he proceeded with adapting some of the most prevailing critical literacy discourses (see Table 9 'Attending to the tenor of discourse', and 'Changing a text's discourse') with the purpose of making his lesson more accessible to his young students. From his point of view, the new language curriculum was proposing a way to approach critical literacy that ought to be adapted by the teachers so that the end result was academically and emotionally relevant to their students. In his words:

> I think that the best way to approach it [critical literacy] is more epistemologically. I mean you see a text and change your approach according to its goal and the reactions of your students. You know, you have to go through a process of diagnosis when it comes to introducing a text. For instance, I am all about stereotypes, right? So yesterday we were on the folktales and we were doing the Little Red Riding hood and I asked them to re-write the story from the wolf's perspective and they really enjoyed it […] they enjoyed bringing the stereotypes down. (T6_IN2_Q6).

(p): pause
[Letters in brackets]: English translation
<Letters in angle brackets>: Comments made by the researcher to facilitate understanding of the transcription
T: Teacher
S1, S2…: Unidentified individual students
[…] Indicating omitted quotations
Class: Students talking all together

Table 14 Transcription keys

Extract 1 (T6_OBS1[13])

<The teacher asks his students to reflect upon their engagements with folktales>

1. S1: From our research we came to the conclusion that the wolf <talking about the Big Bad Wolf in The little Red Riding Hood> is depicted as a wolf and not as another animal so to appear scary and dangerous.
2. T: That is interesting. How would you characterise this?
3. S1: You mean the wolf sir?

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[13] OBS is short for observation. Numbers next to OBS indicate whether the extract was extrapolated from the first (1) or second (2) classroom observation.

4. T: In general about this kind of folktales. (p)Yes S2?
5. S2: You mean when women are either depicted as strong and mean or helpless and naive?
6. T: And what is this in one word?
7. S2: Stereotypes
8. T: That's it. So how are women depicted within folktales?
9. S3: They are presented as powerless
10. T: And when we say powerless we do not mean that they don't have strength, right? But that they cannot defend themselves. (p) I am waiting for examples. (p) S4?
11. S4: When they are in danger there is always a man coming to their rescue
12. T: Like?
13. S4: The hunter <The Little Red Riding Hood>
14. S5: The prince <Cinderella>
15. T: Good. And what about Snow White?
16. Class: The woodcutter!
17. T: And what about the second category of women?
18. S6: The strong and clever ones are always mean.
19. T: Examples?

Extract 2 below presents Michael and his students engaging with questions relevant to the purpose that verb tense performs within texts (see Table 9 'Attending to functional grammar when analysing texts'), while paying attention to the genre-related characteristics of the text of the day. Extract 2 below also shows Michael encouraging his students to make text-to-text comparisons (see Table 9 'Making connections and comparisons'). These instructional decisions, as the Extract 2 suggests, created the situations in which Michael's students had the opportunity to engage with critical thinking, in terms of the structure and genre-related characteristics of texts and the role of grammar therein. Michael reflected upon his teaching:

> We do that quite often [attending to genre-related characteristics of texts] because it is important to be given [students] the chance to utilise particular clues, like the title and the images, in understanding what genre the text is, and develop their critical thinking about the role of language in different genres […]. I think this triggers their interest and they become more conscious of the purpose that a text is serving (T9_IN3_Q1).

Extract 2 (T9_OBS2)

<Michael directs his students to open their textbooks at a particular page>

1. T: Title? S1?
2. S1: My name is Sonia
3. T: What is my next question: S2?
4. S2: Text genre?

5.   T: Good. Have a look (p). What type of genre is it? I think it is obvious. S3?
6.   S3: It's a narrative
7.   T: That's right. Explain your answer. S4?
8.   S4: It has a protagonist
     […]
9.   T: What else? (p) What characterises a narrative?
10. S5: The dialogues.
11. T: Good. So do we have a lot of dialogues here?
12. S5: No. It is mostly a recount
13. T: That's right. And who tells the story?
14. S5: Sonia
15. T: And what else? When we talk about the narrator what else comes in mind?
16. S6: Past tenses because you narrate something that has happened
17. T: That's good. But is that the rule?
18. S6: No there are narratives written in present tense
19. T: Remember one? (p). Let me help you. <the teacher reaches the classroom shelf, finds a book and shows it to students>
20. Class: Thirty nine coffee shops and a barber shop!
21. T: And why did the narrator choose present tense?
22. S7: Her memories were still vivid
23. T: Excellent!

Extract 3 below describes Anna's aim to introduce a new genre to her students (i.e. form-poems). Anna selected the activity from her teaching guide, but instead of focusing solely on reading the form-poem, as suggested therein (Extract 3, episode 7), Anna decided to have her students draw and write their own form-poems. Reflecting upon her classroom decision, Anna explained that, apart from familiarising her students with poems as a genre, her goal mainly concerned with encouraging her students to write their own poems. This decision was found to be congruent with text production activities; where students are encouraged to practise on how to organise the information within a given text (see Table 9 'Text Production'), and with activities relevant to the code-breaker role; where students are encouraged to realise the semantic role of grammar and how it is used within texts to achieve coherence (see Table 9 'Exploring text organisation at a macro level'). Anna reflected upon her classroom decisions:

> Writing is a series of events, right? So this was the opportunity
> to have them engaged with a genre they do not get to see often
> nowadays [poems], but also to exercise on the logical sequence
> of events. […]. I wanted them to practise on that (T7_IN3_Q6).

Extract 3 (T7_OBS2)

1.   T: So I want you to go to page 45 of your textbook. There is a new word there. Which word is that?

2. S1: Form-poem
3. T: And children this is what we are doing today. What does it mean I wonder?
4. S2: Poems in a shape
5. T: Well yes. So, the form-poem is a type of poem that differs from the rest. Well we have seen many kinds of poems right? And some of them were really strange, would you agree? Do you remember one of those strange poems? (p). Tell me S3
6. S3: The solar bus
   […]
7. T: Let's play with exercise 2 a little bit. Instead of practising with reading the form-poem, I want you to make your own form-poem.
8. S4: What shall we write about?
9. T: Well you are the poets today. You can write about anything. (p) First decide what you want to write about. For instance, I am going to write about a star, so I am going to start my poem by drawing a star <teacher draws a star on the board>. What are you going to write about S5?
10. S5: About a flower
11. T: Great idea. So you will start by drawing your flower. And once you are done drawing, you can start writing your poem following the lines of your drawing
12. S5: Teacher, mine is going to be a boat
13. T: Oh so what are you going to write about?
14. S5: A sailor
15. T: What sailor?
16. S5: A sailor lost in the sea.
17. T: And what's the story going to be?
18. S5: He got lost following a star and faced many challenges until he found land
19. T: That's a great story. Yours S6? (p) What shape will your form-poem have?
20. S6:A girl
21. Who is that girl?
    […]

b. Talking from a place of assimilation: Sylvia, Helen and Victoria

These participating teachers responded to the new language curriculum with assimilation. This was made apparent through the teachers' various classroom decisions, which indicated that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted to fit with the teachers' existing teaching trajectories. During subsequent interviews with the teachers, their curriculum enactment through assimilation was validated through their tendency to interpret particular critical literacy discourses through the prism of their existing cognitions. Table 15 below includes the codes that are presented and interpreted herein, and connects those codes with their sensemaking element and the teachers.

SENSEMAKING ELEMENTS		CODES	TEACHERS
Teacher Cognitions	Identity of subject matter	Language teaching as a platform for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner	T1, T2, T3
	Teaching goals and concerns	Reading and writing as teachers' goal and concern	T1, T2, T3
Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	The new language curriculum	The new language curriculum is irrelevant to my students	T2, T3
		Critical literacy has always been around	T1, T3
	Professional Development	Professional development inhibiting meaning making	T1, T2, T3
		Increased teacher autonomy is resisted	T1, T2, T3

Table 15 Codes in the assimilation response

i. Language teaching as a platform for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner

Victoria believed that text comprehension is important for language teaching. She also believed that text comprehension is a skill that is acquired in a hierarchical manner. The teacher explained: "It is important [for students] to speak and write correctly, and with it comes the ability to comprehend what they are reading about" (T3_IN1_Q19). Similarly, Helen thought of her subject matter as aiming towards the enhancement of "students' abilities to learn how to speak correctly and clearly articulate their point of view" (T1_IN1_Q3). For these teachers, speech was seen as the basis upon which further competences could be built. This belief was so strong for Helen that had become part of her classroom rules. As the teacher explained:

> They [students] would often start talking without using any verb
> or any antonym […] or they would give me a monolithic answer
> […] so I have decided to establish a rule during language
> teaching […] that we need to talk correctly and I said to them
> [students] that every time they talk I expect them to talk
> correctly […] because with it [talking correctly] comes the
> enhancement of their writing skills (T1_IN1_Q4).

A closer look at the new language curriculum reveals a misalignment between Victoria and Helen's beliefs about their subject-matter and the new language curriculum. The intersection between reading, speaking, and writing is a focal point within the new language curriculum, and one that aims at melding grammar with literacy (MoEC, 2010b). In drawing the portrait of critically literate students, the new language curriculum makes reference not only to the competences that students are encouraged to acquire and exhibit but also to the ways in which such competences shall be regarded by teachers. With statements such as "competences are not cultivated in isolation from other competences" and "morphological, phonological, and syntactic awareness are interwoven and interrelated" (MoEC, 2010b, p. 17), the new language curriculum calls for an understanding of knowledge not so much as a taxonomy of hierarchical skills but rather as a spherical structure. Such statements, rooted deeply in the spirit of critical literacy, suggest the reciprocal relationship between oral, writing, and reading competences and the role of grammar which it is echoed therein (see Chapter 3). This perspective on knowledge acquisition does not fit with the teachers' beliefs about their subject matter as a platform for the acquisition of technical skills in a hierarchical manner.

The teachers did not elaborate on their beliefs about their subject matter any further. What was rather revealing for these teachers was that their beliefs about their subject matter were implicated by their current teaching goals and concerns (see section that follows). Unlike Mario, Anna and Michael, these teachers, can be said, held limited projective goals in relation to their subject-matter and were consumed by their present pursuits. That is to say, in other words, that Helen and Victoria, and indeed Sylvia, thought of their subject matter in a restrictive way, focusing particularly and mainly on elaborating on their subject matter from a technical point of view; that is in terms of the skills they endeavoured to help their students acquire, instead of accounting for the long-term objectives of their subject matter. The difference between Sylvia, Helen and Victoria, and the teachers discussed above, becomes rather noticeable here. Sylvia's response strengthens this assertion. When asked to elaborate on what she believed the purpose of language teaching to be, Sylvia explained:

Well, ideally the purpose of language teaching is much more than what I do inside the classroom. If it is to explain what I do in the classroom then, well, games, anything that I think will motivate students to learn in a way that is not boring to them (T2_IN1_Q2).

ii. Reading and writing as teachers' goal and concern

"I am currently trying to help them learn their letters and to excel in their reading and writing skills" (T3_IN1_Q7), Victoria said, who was particularly concerned with helping her students to acquire their basic reading and writing skills. In particular, the teacher explained how her students' young age and attainment level did not support them in text comprehension activities. Helping them to excel in their technical reading and writing skills was regarded as her goal. In her words:

My students are first graders and our options are limited, we are still working on reading […]. Yesterday we had a short text of four lines and I asked them about the text [its content] and they would give random answers […] I think they don't have the patience needed to understand a text and they are easily bored. They get bored of having to read the same thing twice to find the right answer (T3_IN1_Q8).

Victoria's teaching goals and concerns, reinforced by her students' low attainment level, influenced the teacher into believing that first grade teaching is about the technical part of language education.

They have problems with writing […]. Even when they are engaged with something very simple, like writing about themselves, or something they love, they always give a short answer without elaborating on the theme any further. They need so much help in order to write complete sentences, or even to begin the sentence with a capital letter. That's why I insist on writing and reading as well. They have problems with reading and I expect them to read correctly and fluently and they are far away from that (T3_IN2_Q9).

Victoria's intimate knowledge of her students encouraged her to believe that her students learn better through repetition and direction. Anything that went beyond this format of teaching was regarded by the teacher as something "surreal" and further explained that

teacher-led discussions, table activities, and games are "something that the kids are more used to" (T3_IN1_Q2).

> First graders need repetition so they can learn and remember what they have learnt, and they need constant direction and guidance so that they remain focused on what they are doing. Students of this age are easily bored, they need breaks and games […] and I need to constantly direct them and trigger them and remind them of what we are doing (T3_IN2_Q2).

Just like Victoria, Helen defended her teaching goals and concerns inside the classroom by describing her present situation. In particular, Helen explained how her students' young age encouraged the adoption of more short-term learning objectives that mainly served the development and enhancement of technical reading skills. She said, whilst underlining how her students informed her choice of instruction:

> I am aiming towards the development of speech which I consider their main challenge because if they can't speak correctly then they can't write, they can't elaborate on their thinking nor express themselves […] I think that these are the basic skills that my students lack of (T1_IN1_Q2).

Despite her strong beliefs in the importance of the acquisition of technical reading and writing skills, Helen suggested the congruence of her classroom instruction with particular critical literacy discourses (Table 9 'Adopting an alternative point of view') as proposed within the new language curriculum She said: "Analysing texts and considering them from multiple perspectives is what we do inside the classroom" (T1_IN1_Q10). Yet, despite this cohesion, Helen remained concentrated on the fact that it was "utopic" (T1_IN1_Q5) to pursue more advanced learning objectives inside her classroom. Her experiences with her students encouraged the teacher to believe that her students need direction, monitoring and guidance, explaining that her "students cannot work on their own". She said: "I wish I could duplicate myself and be in two places at the same time. First grade students cannot work independently and they constantly ask for my help" (T1_IN2_Q4). Helen's experiences with her students encouraged the teacher to pursue short-term goals and to consider the acquisition of technical reading and writing skills as the most important skill to be pursued inside her classroom:

> To me, the most important thing is for my students to just acquire something. To leave the classroom each day and to have learnt something new, a new letter, or a new word […] I would love for them to work on their own, be fast and proactive, but this is utopic (T1_IN2_Q6).

In a similar vein, Sylvia remarked about her teaching goals: "I think that my basic concern is to help them [students] acquire the basic skills […], to at least help them learn how to read and write" (T2_IN1_Q3). The young age of her students, and their low attainment level, encouraged Sylvia to device ways of teaching that were thought to be appealing to them. For Sylvia, a strong believer in active pedagogy, this meant the integration of outdoor and indoor activities that aimed to help her students learn through games while interacting and collaborating with one another. Sylvia explained: "Most of my students are illiterate so I try integrating experiential learning […] I take them outside so that they can learn in authentic contexts" (T2_IN1_Q5). Sylvia's experiences with her students encouraged her to look for "creative activities" (T2_IN1_Q13) that could be added to her lesson. According to the teacher, this goal encouraged her to integrate various text genres in her lesson. Talking about how particular critical literacy discourses, as proposed within the new language curriculum, had influenced her language instruction, Sylvia explained:

> I think they [students] are not familiar with genres and they don't know how to distinguish one genre from the other, and I know this is something they will encounter in real life, so my job is to familiarise them with as many text genres as possible (T2_IN2_Q2).

ii. The new language curriculum is irrelevant to my students

These teachers' beliefs about their teaching goals could not be reconciled with the new language curriculum. They might have thought of the new language curriculum as proposing desirable learning objectives in general, but not desirable, and reasonable, for their students. For instance, Victoria said about critical literacy:

> I like the idea of students comprehending what they are reading about, sharing their opinions about it and criticising it. I think these are the competences that should characterise today's citizens (T3_IN1_Q6).

Yet, despite her positive stance on the new language curriculum, Victoria kept viewing critical literacy as referring to a reality different from hers. As she explained: "I don't know what happens in other classrooms or schools, but it [the new language curriculum] can never work in my classroom" (T3_IN1_Q4). The attainment level of her students acted as a rather powerful lens through which critical literacy was perceived as a "pointless" pursuit (T3_IN1_Q8).

> [about critical literacy] I think it's pointless, everybody was going crazy with critical literacy and all they wanted to do was to implement it. I think it is a total waste of time and […] it cannot be implemented (T3_IN1_Q8).

Sylvia said: "There are many positive things about it [new language curriculum] including the idea of students' active participation in the classroom and having them share their opinions about things" (T2_IN1_Q6). However, like Victoria, Sylvia's perceived importance of the new language curriculum was tempered by her students' attainment level. Whilst elaborating on her beliefs that language curriculum cannot be enacted inside her classroom, Sylvia said:

> I believe that, no matter how hard I try, it [critical literacy] can never work with my students. I mean, even if we spend a whole lesson analysing a text I think that their language competence is not going to help them approach it more critically […] writers' bias and underlying messages are concepts too difficult for my students to comprehend (T2_IN1_Q9).

iii. Critical literacy has always been around

According to Helen, the new language curriculum was an updated version of its predecessor: "Critical literacy was always being implemented […]. To me, critical literacy is the communicative approach" (T1_IN1_Q14). Helen was trained in the communicative teaching approach; an approach to language teaching that was meant to become an integral part of her classroom practice, and a powerful frame through which she viewed and understood the new language curriculum. Although critical literacy was premised upon different epistemological assumptions about language teaching and learning, Helen saw no significant pedagogical or methodological differences between the new language curriculum and its 17-year-old predecessor. "I mean I am trying to see their difference and I am like ok it's the communicative approach" (T1_IN1_Q7), as Helen said, and continued:

> I was trained in the communicative approach during my undergraduate years, and I know that working the students on aspects like tenor and mode in order to understand a text is beneficial to them (T1_IN1_Q7).

Similarly, Victoria suggested that critical literacy "has always been around, but now they [policymakers] gave it a new name" (T3_IN1_Q11). From her point of view, teachers were always concerned with "helping their students to develop their critical thinking, realise why a text has been developed, and understand the purpose of a text" (T3_IN1_Q12). The introduction of the new language curriculum came to "confuse things", as Victoria remarked, by proposing learning objectives that were already part of her classroom practice. (T3_IN1_Q13).

iv. Professional development inhibiting meaning making

Echoing the teachers in section a, Sylvia, Helen, and Victoria expressed their disappointment with professional development, and suggested its failure to provide them with the practical support they needed. While reflecting upon their experiences with professional development, the teachers requested a more active role during the seminars, and less lecturing on theory which, as the teachers remarked, was not helpful to them.

> I mean I need workshops. What? Do you expect me to go there and listen to you [referring to trainers]? I need workshops and guidance (T1_IN3_Q4).

Statements such as the above were often accompanied by the teachers' decision to distance themselves from professional development. "I do not intend to do that again unless they [teacher trainers] change something" (T1_IN3_Q9). For them, the decision to disengage with professional development was a conscious one, as the more they learnt about the new language curriculum – through their participation in professional development – the more they lacked of a clear understanding of what they were supposed to do inside the classroom: "If they [trainers] don't conclude to something, if they don't come up with something specific that would help the teacher, I am not going back there again" (T3_IN1_Q16). From their perspective, the professional development opportunities available to them failed in providing them with the "something more specific" (T3_IN_Q16) that the teachers were requesting; with "practical examples of classroom instruction" (T3_IN1_Q30), and with interactive-

experiential seminars that could have encouraged them to share their opinions and understandings about the new language curriculum. Helen said, for example:

> [professional development could have helped more] by engaging the teachers with what is going on during the seminar. Having let's say 30 teachers interacting with each other and sharing their ideas would be really good. Sharing of opinions, I think, would be really beneficial to teachers. Just going there to listen only to theory is a waste of time (T1_IN1_Q16).

Ultimately, the teachers talked about their lack of preparedness to deal with the new language curriculum. This lack of preparedness encouraged the view that professional development and curriculum implementation should concern those involved and not themselves. Victoria encapsulated this assertion in the following way:

> I can't implement it [the new language curriculum] given that I was not properly trained and nobody told me what it was expected to do [...]. They [policymakers] need to train the teachers if they wish to see any changes (T3_IN1_Q29).

"Perhaps if I have tried it out [referring to critical literacy] I might have seen results [...] but I didn't know how to do it" (T2_IN3_Q4), Sylvia said, while reflecting upon her experiences with participating in professional development. Sylvia also explained how her most recent encounter with the language curriculum reform, during a professional development seminar three years prior to the formulation of this study, encouraged the belief that the new language curriculum had proposed learning goals that could not be implemented inside her classroom.

> Well, I cannot say it was helpful although there were some activities that I enjoyed and thought to myself I should try them out, but in order for me to do so I would need another school year with the same students [...]. I mean, they [trainers] were referring to an ideal classroom environment and you can't compare it with my own [classroom environment] (T2_IN3_Q8).

For Helen, on the other hand, the inadequate support she had been offered implicated her understanding of the new language curriculum. During her first interview, Helen made this explicit through such statements that made apparent her tendency to keep viewing the new language curriculum as an updated version of the policy that was previously in place (see T1_IN1_Q7). Helen attributed her lack of clarity to the expertise of those conducting the

seminars. She said: "I would ask them [trainers] what is the difference between the two [new and previous curriculum] and nobody would give me a straight answer" (T1_IN1_Q8).

v. Increased teacher autonomy is resisted

The inadequate support that the teachers had been offered was translated into their tendency to rely heavily on their teaching guides for the support and guidance that professional development had not provided them with.

> I haven't really studied the new curriculum because we [teachers] had no support, no materials to use. They [trainers] haven't even directed us towards specific goals […].So I thought to myself, I am going to use the materials that I have in front of me [referring to her teaching guide] (T3_IN1_Q18).

Victoria was particularly vocal about the government's expectation to teach beyond her teaching guide. The teacher said: "I am opposed to the idea of having the teachers developing their own materials" (T3_IN1_Q5). This new requirement was thought to exceed her capabilities. Given the limited support she had been offered, Victoria viewed rather negatively the autonomy that the government had introduced through the new language curriculum:

> Teachers can't! […] I mean I am opposed to the idea of letting teachers free to do whatever they want inside the classroom […] OK I am not saying to control the teachers. But it's absurd to search the internet and bring into the classroom whatever comes to their minds (T3_IN1_Q24).

Relying on their teaching guides and bypassing the government's expectation to teach beyond them, appeared to be an affective decision, and one that rested heavily on their efforts to be proactive inside their classrooms. In particular, Victoria suggested that her strong reliance on her teaching guide emerged in response to the limited support she had been offered, not only in relation to implementing the new language curriculum, but also in relation to her day-to-day practice as well. While talking from a place of limited first-grade subject matter expertise, Victoria elaborated on her strong and unshakable reliance on her teaching guide, which was thought to provide her with the support and guidance she needed in order to become acquainted with her subject matter. "I am still studying my book [teaching guide] […] I don't have time to experiment" (T3_IN1_Q22). Having to teach the first grade for the first time in her teaching career provided the teacher with stress and anxiety. In her words:

> It worried me a lot, that I had to help them learn how to read and write [students] by the end of December and because I didn't know the procedure, I didn't know the strategies to help them do that, I felt so frustrated, especially up until December I was really nervous (T3_IN3_Q1).

Victoria was in quest for something that would make her "feel safe" (T3_IN3_Q15) inside her classroom. Her strong reliance on her teaching guide and her disinclination to diverge from it, was her response to the inadequate support she had been offered: "I got into the classroom without any training and without any support […] I wouldn't dare to do anything different other than teaching through the book [teaching guide]" (T3_IN3_Q16). During her third interview, with all the stress and anxiety finally behind her, the teacher suggested that the new language curriculum was "good after all" (T3_IN3_Q9). Victoria's reflections on her experiences with the new language curriculum suggested that the teacher, perhaps potentially and eventually, could engage with the new language curriculum in more substantial ways. She remarked:

> If I am assigned the first grade again next year, I think my teaching would be different […] I think that I will have the courage to change the activities or to add activities to the lesson, because when you learn your subject matter there is no anxiety, you know what you need to teach, and how to teach it […]. I think that, when this anxiety eventually goes away, you [as a teacher] can emphasise more on what your students like, you can focus more on accomplishing the goals of the curriculum (T3_IN3_Q11).

Helen viewed the government's suggestion to leave her teaching guide aside as "a crazy thing to propose" (T1_IN1_Q11) and one that required a lot of work on part of the teachers:

> Give me, for instance, five goals and I will design my lesson. I mean do they [policymakers] really expect me to develop my own curriculum? This is a crazy thing to propose to teachers (T1_IN1_Q11).

Talking from a place of limited support and guidance, the teachers ultimately positioned themselves as less capable of being the judges of the kind of materials that should be allowed in their classroom, and what gets to be omitted or added to their teaching guides. From their point of view, the new language curriculum not only had proposed a change in the way teaching was to be carried out; it had also proposed putting aside something that served as

their primary source for instruction and, without it, they felt exposed to uncertainty. Sylvia wondered: "Work without teaching guides? Is that ever safe?" (T2_IN1_Q29).

> I believe that not all of us are fully equipped to judge the texts that we bring to the students. I mean why alienate the teaching guide? […] this would be a disaster. Not all of us are trained enough to decide on the best materials to engage our students with (T1_IN1_Q13).

> Surely the new curriculum came with a lot of disadvantages. […] It depends on the teachers and their skills. Are teachers ready to judge the suitability of the materials before they bring them into the classroom? I am not so sure that they can (T2_IN1_Q16).

vi. Classroom practice and reflections

Victoria's language teaching – closely linked to her teaching goals (see T3_IN1_Q9) – consisted of teacher-led discussions posed in a whole-class setting, during which no connections were made between meaning and texts, and no reference was made to the social or ideological propensities of language, as proposed within the new language curriculum. Rather, Victoria focused her instruction on helping her first grade students to acquire the mechanisms of reading and writing, using texts found in her teaching guide as platforms for phonological awareness. For example, during her first classroom observation, Victoria started her lesson by introducing the targeted phoneme (ai / e) to her students. The teacher then introduce the text of the day to her students, and once her students have read it out loud, she engaged them with a series of reading and writing activities, which were aimed to the mastery of the phoneme of the day. Reflecting upon her classroom practice, Victoria suggested that her teaching goal was to help her students "realise how words break into phonemes which will allow them [students] to apply this knowledge when dealing with new words" (T3_IN2_Q3). This goal was found to be congruent with particular critical literacy discourses relevant to the code-breaker role, whereby students engage with the technical part of texts (see Table 9 'Breaking words into morphemes'). However, Victoria's classroom practice involved activities that aimed to enhance her students' phonological awareness, and no emphasis was observed to have been placed on helping her students to break words into morphemes, as the teacher suggested. Rather, teacher remained focused on introducing the phoneme of the day as an isolated entity and in a decontextualised manner.

Extract 4 below presents Helen's efforts to help her students "to critically analyse" (T1_IN2_Q1) the text of the day, which was declared to be Helen's rationale behind her choice of instruction. However, textual analysis was manifested in her classroom as a series of questions that aimed to analyse a text from a metalanguage perspective using texts not as a platform for critical reading comprehension, but rather for phonological awareness. In particular, during both her lessons observed, Helen was seen to deliberate on textual analysis in ways that defeated its purpose. The teacher was indeed engaging her students with a series of questions about the texts of the day, yet such questions were focused on understanding the story plot, and introducing the phoneme of the day, instead of delving into textual analysis in the manner proposed within the new language curriculum (see Table 9 'Attending to functional grammar when analysing texts', for instance).

Extract 4 (T1_OBS1)

1. T: So, children, what was the text about?
2. S1: A snowman
3. T: And what is so strange about this snowman? (p) Come on, tell me. (p) He was able to…
4. S3: To speak!
5. T: Yes! And what did he want?
6. S4: Someone to fix his slide
7. T: So, which phoneme do you think we are learning today?
8. S5:Ts
9. T: Yes ts. Now I want you to look at your text and identify all the words that have ts in them. S6?
10. S6: Bag [Tsanta]
11. T: Good. Now circle the word bag [tsanta]. Next? S7?
12. S7: Slide [tsoulithra]
13. T: Very good. What else? (p) What is this? <Showing the image of an axe>. S8?
14. S8: Axe [tsekuri]
15. T: Right. Now find it in your text. (p) Where is the word axe [tsekuri] in your text?
    […]

The subsequent interview with the teacher revealed that language instruction was influenced by what Helen believed to be important for her students. Helen reflected upon her instructional decisions in the following way:

> Students have a limited vocabulary […] this is why they would often give a monolithic answer. So I was basically trying to help them to enhance their vocabulary with new words, and to

critically analyse what the text was about and then we tried to
'extract' the phoneme of the day (T1_IN2_Q2).

Talking from a place of assimilation, Helen re-framed textual analysis in ways that were pertinent to her teaching goals, and to her beliefs about what was important for her students to learn. Helen's classroom observations provided further evidence that, although the teacher claimed to have been accommodating textual analysis in her teaching, such critical literacy discourses were assimilated to fit with her existing teaching trajectories and ways of thinking about language instruction. Her students' learning needs (see T1_IN1_Q2), and her belief that nothing had changed with regards to language teaching (see T1_IN1_Q7), blurred her understanding of what was meant by textual analysis, and how it differed from the basic comprehension and phonological awareness instructions she was enacting in her classroom.

Like Helen, Sylvia assimilated the critical literacy discourses she encountered about genre awareness to fit with her teaching goals. Extract 5 below shows Sylvia guiding her students to study the phonological and structural elements of the different text genres, yet without attending to their meaning-making role (see Table 9 'Understanding the register of texts as it relates to social context and purpose'), or to the functional role of grammar (see Table 9 'Attending to functional grammar when analysing texts').

Extract 5 (T2_OBS1)

<Sylvia entered the classroom holding newspapers. The teacher handed them out to her students asking them to comment upon their structure and content>

1. T: So, tell me a few things about the newspaper. About the colour, the letters, the pages. (p). Imagine that we are describing the newspaper to someone who has never seen one before. S1?
2. S1: It's (p) the colour is grey
3. T: Black and white. And the letters?
4. S1: Black
5. T: Is everything black and white or do we have colour in some occasions?
6. S2: Yes
7. T: And what is the newspaper about? (p). Is it about one issue in specific?
8. S3: No
9. T: OK so let's see. Let's find something to read. <Shows the sports section to students>. What does it say here?
10. S4: Sports
11. T: And is it one story about sports?
12. S5: No

13. T: So we have a lot of articles, we call them articles. Let's read one <and the teacher asks her students to read the article >
     […]

Sylvia's pursuit for "creative activities" (T2_IN1_Q13) might have encouraged the teacher to enrich her classroom instruction with a variety of text genres, including newspapers, recipe books, and dictionaries. Yet, as the above extract illustrates, the way in which Sylvia was observed to engage her students with the various text genres altered almost entirely the purpose of genre-awareness as defined within the new language curriculum. For instance, the new language curriculum proposes such critical literacy discourses that encourage students to explore the relationship between textual features and text genre, and how purpose influences structure and language (see Table 9 'Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre', for instance). Sylvia, however, was observed using the various text genres brought into her classroom as platforms for enhancing her students' reading skills. The teacher, therefore, re-purposed genre awareness to fit with her students' learning needs and attainment level. As the teacher said, whilst reflecting upon her teaching: "We are still learning letter 'o' […] some students have not even engaged with the activity [the genre-based activity] inside the classroom […]. These difficulties do not allow critical literacy to be implemented as it is supposed to be implemented" (T2_IN2_Q2).

c. Talking from a place of parallel structures: Laura, Beth, Paul, and Maria

Borrowed from Coburn's work (2004), the term 'parallel structures' is used herein to describe the ways in which these four teachers enacted the new language curriculum. These teachers, in particular, were observed to have adopted different approaches to language instruction in their attempt to respond to, or balance out their varied, oftentimes conflicting, teaching goals. During subsequent interviews with the teachers, this process of curriculum enactment was validated through the teachers' reflections that suggested their emphasis on instruction that favoured the acquisition of technical reading and writing skills. Illustrative examples of parallel structures are presented herein. Table 16 below includes the codes that are presented and interpreted herein, and connects those codes with their sensemaking element and the teachers.

SENSEMAKING ELEMENTS		CODES	TEACHERS
Teacher Cognitions	Identity of subject matter	Language teaching as a platform for basic comprehension and technical skills	T4, T5, T8, T10
	Teaching goals and concerns	Critical literacy goals within boundaries	T4, T5, T8, T10
Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	The new language curriculum	The new language curriculum is irrelevant to my students	T4, T5, T10
		Curricula do not concern me	T8
	Professional Development	Professional development inhibiting meaning making	T4, T5, T10
		Increased teacher autonomy is resisted	T4, T5, T10

Table 16 Codes in the parallel response

i. Language teaching as a platform for basic comprehension and technical skills

Maria's cognitions about the identity of her subject matter echo the teachers in section b. For example, the teacher thought of her subject matter as a platform through which students excel in "their writing skills and learn how to speak correctly" (T10_IN3_Q1). Maria also believed that language teaching served as a platform through which students learn how to express themselves through writing. However, this belief appeared to be short-sighted, influenced by what the teacher was pursuing in the here-and-now, and tempered by her strong emphasis on the *basics* of language teaching and learning. When asked to elaborate on the identity of her subject matter, Maria said:

> Text production! I think that language [as a subject matter] should aim to help students to express themselves clearly […] and I think that text production can really serve as an assessment tool for how students express themselves, whether they have a

rich vocabulary, whether they use grammar correctly, whether they spell correctly, you know the *basics* let's say (T10_IN1_Q2).

Like Helen, Beth had also established classroom rules during her language teaching that served to enhance her students' oral and writing abilities, which were thought to be acquired in a hierarchical manner. Beth explained: "If students are able to speak correctly it means that they will write correctly" (T5_IN2_Q2). Beth also viewed her subject matter as a platform through which students engage with literacy. Beth explained:

> Language [as a subject matter] should encourage students to engage with reading, develop into conscious readers, to know what they read about, and to grow into loving literacy. I think of reading books as a door that opens your mind to new ways of thinking (T5_IN1_Q2).

Beth's cognitions about the identity of her subject matter were found to be congruent with particular critical literacy discourses. For instance, the quote below serves to indicate Beth's alignment with such critical literacy discourses that encourage students to explore a text's cohesive devices (see Table 9 'Exploring text organisation at a macro level').

> I believe that reading texts can really enhance students' attainment level. For instance, I allow my students ten minutes every Monday to read a book of their liking. This, I have noticed, helps them to structure clearer sentences, to put verbs, nouns, in the correct order (T5_IN1_Q4).

Echoing Mario, Anna and Michael's perspectives on their subject matter, Paul thought of his subject matter as a platform through which students learn how "to read beyond what it is stated within a text" (T8_IN1_Q5). Paul said: "Language [as a subject matter] is about being able to comprehend a text and being able to narrate a story […], to express their own understandings [students] and positions to an issue" (T8_IN1_Q2). However, Paul did not elaborate any further on his beliefs about the identity of his subject matter nor did he suggest his congruence with the new language curriculum, unlike Mario, Anna and Michael, who were keen on doing so. Instead, when asked to further elaborate on his beliefs about the identity of his subject matter, the teacher replied: "When I think of my subject matter I think of spelling, grammar, writing, text comprehension, communicating love for reading"

(T8_IN1_Q3), cognitions which suggest that Paul was more focused on the short-term benefits of language teaching.

Laura, on the other hand, appeared quite determined in relation to her cognitions about the identity of her subject matter. As the teacher said:

> Comprehending a text is an important part of language teaching as well as classroom discussions that promote meaning-making, but the most important thing for the first grade is to learn how to read and write, period! (T4_IN3_Q1).

ii. Critical literacy goals within boundaries

Like the teachers discussed in section b, these teachers were deeply influenced by their beliefs about their students. These beliefs exerted a powerful influence on the kind of teaching goals that the teachers were pursuing. Whilst elaborating on her teaching goals, for instance, Maria emphasised on the importance of text comprehension inside her classroom. According to the teacher, being able to comprehend a text was related to such skills that included students realising the logical connections within texts, and exploring the semantic role of grammar (see Table 9 'Exploring text organisation at a macro level'). As Maria explained:

> I often engage them [students] with unfamiliar texts [meaning texts that are not to be found in the teaching guide] and I allow them time to discover information like who the key people are, how they feel and what the text is about […] To me this is very important because it comes down to how they unlock a text and how they make meaning (T10_IN1_Q3).

The teacher believed that text comprehension was best learnt through a process of discovery, which was believed to be more effective than learning by being told. In her words:

> When it comes to reading texts I believe it is important that they [students] do all the work and search for clues and information [...] they should be able to work on their own. I don't want to sit there and do all the talking and have my students listening to me instead of trying on their own (T10_IN1_Q21).

Maria's reflections upon her teaching goals and role inside the classroom suggested an attitude towards language teaching and learning that was congruent with the new language curriculum, and its inquiry-based orientation towards language teaching and learning (see MoEC, 2010b). Her idea of encouraging her students to adopt a more active role inside the classroom suggests the teacher's alignment with the view proposed within the new language curriculum: that teachers should adopt "more modern and more effective teaching methods […] that will allow students not merely to listen or copy what their teacher is transmitting to them but rather to actively participate to the learning process" (MoEC, 2011, p. 3). Critical literacy, as presented within the new language curriculum, proposes the establishment of critical literacy discourses that nurture and value students' independent thinking (MoEC, 2010b). Maria's understanding of how text comprehension should be delivered represents much more than simply the teacher's didactic orientation; it implies her efforts, or at least her intentions, to encourage her students to become independent and autonomous thinkers; a notion upon which the fruition of critical literacy was based (MoEC, 2010b).

However, competing cognitions started to surface as the teacher started to emphasise more on what she regarded to be her "ultimate goal" inside her classroom.

> I also invest time in writing activities [text construction] which I consider to be the ultimate goal of language teaching, because if you know how to write it means you have mastered your grammar skills, for instance starting with capital letters, spelling correctly, learning when to start a paragraph (T10_IN2_Q1).

With competing cognitions emerged competing roles. Maria might have believed that text comprehension was achieved through a process of discovery; yet she also believed that the mastery of technical skills required constant practice, repetition, and teacher guidance:

> When students are working on text production, I can see that they need constant reminders 'start with capital letter', 'change paragraph', 'check your spelling'. […] Out of my 20 students, only seven can work independently, the others have difficulties with writing […]. For instance, we were on the passive voice and the next day they forgot about it. They need to constantly practice their grammar so they don't forget the [grammatical] rules (T10_IN1_Q7).

Laura suggested that particular critical literacy discourses were congruent with her teaching goals. In particular, the teacher explained how she had always invested her teaching time on

exploring the role of image in multimodal texts (see Table 9 'Understanding how the use of image and sound within multimodal texts is implicated by social setting and purpose'), and encouraging her students to hypothesise about the content of texts (see Table 9 'Developing and testing initial hypotheses'). Yet, in addition to such critical literacy discourses, Laura also believed that it was important to help her students learn how to read and write: "I want them to learn how to read and write. This is my goal for this year" (T4_IN1_Q10). Her role, therefore, became to help her students acquire the basic language skills. "My role is to help them learn how to read. So I need to direct them and lead them, I cannot give them a lot of freedom" (T4_IN1_Q11). This role, according to the teacher, left her with little time to integrate the 'other activities' that required more student-centred and inquiry-led teaching practices. In her words:

> We always invest time in hypothesising because […] it helps them [students] to build on their knowledge while trying to predict what the text is about and how the images and the title might add to that […] but we do not have a lot of time for that kind of discussion, time flies and we need to cover the subject matter (T4_IN1_Q9).

There were a few instances during this study were Paul's teaching goals about language instruction appeared to fit with what the new language curriculum had proposed. For instance, Paul envisioned his students becoming critical thinkers and strongly believed in the importance of educating them towards reading beyond what it is stated within a given text (see T8_IN1_Q5). Paul, however, also believed in maintaining the role of the administrator inside the classroom, and further defined himself as a teacher in the following way: "I am not traditional *per se* but I like structure, I like the role of the teacher to be the predominant one, I like the lesson to start and to be directed by the teacher" (T8_IN1_Q12). In particular, Paul believed that it was necessary to direct his students during classroom activities because most of his students were not native Greeks. Although Paul described his students as having had "adapted tremendously well [to the Greek language] and they have a spectacular drive to learn" (T8_IN2_Q6), the teacher nevertheless believed that his students required his direction and guidance when it came to the acquisition of technical skills. As he remarked: "I want them [students] to be able to comprehend a text, recall what they have read about, expand it, and learn their language, their letters, the grammar […] so my role is important and I need to show them how to do that" (T8_IN1_Q4).

Like the teachers discussed above, Beth held rather competing beliefs about her teaching goals and role inside the classroom. On the one hand, Beth portrayed herself as a "qualified and responsible" (T5_IN1_Q10) teacher, who gets informed, evolves, and is able to add to her teaching guide in order to make her lesson more 'meaningful' to her students:

> To tell you the truth, I don't like the teaching guide […] it's all about grammar and morphemes and it just simply does not make sense to a child, so I constantly search for materials, texts, working papers […] power point presentations, videos that can be integrated in my lesson […] I look online at other school's web pages, particularly Greek schools so to get informed about what they are up to and what they are doing" (T5_IN1_Q30).

On the other hand, Beth's experiences with her students encouraged the belief that language teaching and learning should focus more on the acquisition of technical skills.

> Well writing and reading, this is what I want to do in the classroom and this is where I am aiming towards because I can tell that they [students] have difficulties with reading and writing (T5_IN1_Q14).

Her intimate knowledge of her students encouraged Beth to prioritise the learning of technical skills. This priority propelled the teacher away from the image of herself as "qualified and responsible" (T5_IN1_Q10) and towards a more "traditional" role (T5_IN1_Q13). In her words:

> Students enter the school without having acquired the basics of their language, they don't speak correctly, they can't even talk in a sentence […] but school books start with the assumption that children are ready to read and write […]. In my case, particularly the last a few years, my second graders enter the classroom with many learning gaps […] and so I have to start from ground zero and my role *becomes* rather traditional [which is] to help them speak correctly, as simple as that (T5_IN1_Q13).

iii. The new language curriculum is irrelevant to my students

With a clear direction in mind, mainly influenced by their intimate knowledge of their students and their learning needs, the teachers could not envision how the new language curriculum might be of benefit inside their classrooms. Beth, for example, admitted: "I like

the idea of it [critical literacy] and I think it is good to wonder who wrote a text and why" (T5_IN1_Q12). Yet, despite her positive stance towards the new language curriculum, Beth believed that the new language curriculum was more relevant to older students, explaining that her young students were "immature for critical literacy" (T5_IN1_Q9). In her words:

> I believe that students are still quite immature for critical literacy. […] I believe it is more appropriate to secondary school students. Primary school students have other interests and they have to learn how to speak correctly (T5_IN1_Q9).

Beth could not see how the new language curriculum could be reconciled with her students' attainment level: "Its goals are ok I guess but it requires students who are ready academically. I teach grammar and reading, but the new language curriculum requires students who have already mastered those skills" (T5_IN1_Q6). The teacher ultimately regarded the new language curriculum as "a waste of time" and as a concept that had proposed the development of skills that were incongruent with the skills that Beth's students needed to acquire. As the teacher explained:

> It is a waste of time because I want to teach grammar. Engaging my students with questions like 'what is meant by this and that' would have forced me to leave other important things behind (T5_IN1_Q7).

Although Maria's cognitions appeared to be congruent with particular critical literacy discourses, as proposed within the new language curriculum (see T10_IN1_Q3), the teacher was more concerned with basic skills acquisition. This goal provided Maria with a powerful frame through which she perceived the new language curriculum as proposing a situation antagonistic to what she regarded to be the "essence" of primary school teaching. Her tradition of viewing language teaching as a basic skills acquisition, influenced by her experiences with her students, encouraged the pursuit of more short-term objectives. Echoing Beth, the teacher believed that the new language curriculum was more relevant to older students, and transferred the development of critical readers and thinkers to the secondary level.

> I think we [primary school teachers] need to emphasise more on the essence and prepare them [students] for secondary school and once they are there, they can engage with critical literacy.

> […] If I devote my time to critical literacy and skip other skills,
> like helping them with their reading and writing skills […] then
> my students will enter the secondary school knowing absolutely
> nothing about grammar (T10_IN1_Q11).

Maria's beliefs regarding the new language curriculum, as well as her beliefs about what was regarded to be the "essence" of primary school teaching, appeared to had emerged as a result of her failure to 'trial' the new language curriculum in her classroom. Maria's early involvement with the new language curriculum during the piloting phase in 2011 was enough to convince the teacher of the difficulty involved with enacting critical literacy in her classroom. Describing this experience as "disappointing" (T10_IN3_Q10), Maria ultimately attributed her failure to enact critical literacy in her classroom to her students' young age.

> We had to plan a unit about dinosaurs and so I asked them
> [students] to bring in their own materials and they did but the
> materials were not grade-appropriate […] and this was tiring me
> out because they had questions and they would constantly ask
> for my support and I didn't know how to manage my lesson and
> what to do with the different materials (T10_IN3_Q11).

Laura believed that the new language curriculum had proposed unrealistic learning outcomes and that it had been developed without taking into consideration the low achieving students. Laura defended her point of view about the new language curriculum by describing her experiences in the present situation. Viewing the new language curriculum as proposing something irrelevant to her classroom situation was based on her acute awareness of her limited space to manoeuvre inside the classroom, given her students' young age which, according to her sayings, rendered them less capable of – and less interested in – critical thinking. Like the teachers discussed above, Laura also believed that the new language curriculum was more appropriate to older students.

> I mean, they [students] are still struggling to read correctly,
> except from those who are really good. Now as far as text
> comprehension is concerned, I approach the text by providing
> my students with open-ended questions. They do respond [to the
> questions] but still they have difficulties when it comes to
> expressing themselves or even understanding something
> correctly. […] I do not agree [with the new language
> curriculum], especially when it comes to the first graders.
> Perhaps it is more appropriate to older students who have the
> skills needed in thinking critically (T4_IN1_Q11).

Laura drew upon her experiences with piloting the new language curriculum in 2011 to justify her disinclination to engage her students with critical literacy. Whilst recounting the ways the piloting had strengthened her beliefs on how critical literacy is irrelevant to the primary school level, the teacher lucidly remarked:

> The inspector told me to design a unit based on critical literacy
> questions but I experienced it as a very confusing situation. How
> can you plan for something you know your students cannot keep
> up with? It was not possible for me to enter the classroom and
> say to them 'ok let's start analysing' (T4_IN1_Q13).

Laura's experiences with curriculum implementation worked to strengthen her authority inside her classroom and had enhanced her discretion over how best to teach her students. For example, reflecting upon the new language curriculum, Laura said:

> It is the teacher who decides what to teach. So, because of my
> students, I conclude that the most important thing is for them to
> learn how to read. Now, there are many ways that you can
> achieve that, it is not only through the implementation of the
> new language curriculum (T4_IN1_Q5).

iv.   Curricula do not concern me

Paul was once told that "good teachers are thieves of good ideas" (T8_IN1_Q1) and this was meant to define Paul and his teaching path in many ways. Using these words as a compass, Paul started navigating himself away from external influences as early as his novice years. He said:

> I entered the classroom with the knowledge I've gained from the
> academy and I was lucky enough to make friends with good
> teachers and share ideas with them. So I would listen to them
> and that's how I moved on with my teaching (T8_IN1_Q7).

In a way, 'stealing' good ideas worked as a learning experience for Paul, who kept enriching his teaching repertoire with activities and strategies that were appealing to him. He explained: "I have these basic teaching pillars but I also add to them. Every year I try to do something new based on what I have heard and seen" (T8_IN1_Q9). Paul managed to reach the 25th year of his teaching career feeling satisfied with himself as a teacher, and with what his students

had been gaining from his teaching. "I am sure of myself […] I am standing firmly on the ground […] it is a matter of experience" (T8_IN1_Q11). Paul was thus not feeling the urge to invest time and energy in actualising the new language curriculum. After all, "teachers get lost within the curricula […] it's like a vicious cycle and I don't want to be caught in the middle of it" (T8_IN1_Q13), Paul said, while describing himself as an "unconventional teacher"; one who cannot "be pushed to fit into certain expectations and stereotypes" (T8_IN1_Q14). This image of himself acted as a vehicle whereby his disinclination to engage with the new language curriculum and to participate in professional development, were fairly justified:

> Curricula and goals do not concern me. Honestly, I really don't know it [the new language curriculum] I have never participated in professional development […] and it seems to me that they [policymakers] constantly change things and then come back to other things and then we get lost in translation. I only went to a few compulsory ones [seminars]. I don't know what to tell you, perhaps it is a matter of character (T8_IN1_Q10).

Paul's disinclination to engage with the official discourses of curriculum change was further justified in the following way:

> I don't want to put myself in the position where I have to implement it [the new language curriculum] and read about it […] I am very satisfied with how things are now (T8_IN2_Q12).

v. Professional development inhibiting meaning making

The teachers' critique on professional development was again centred on the content of the seminars, as they seemed to include "too much lecturing on theory" (T5_IN1_Q19) that was neither desired nor helpful. Maria said:

> I've talked to a few teachers after the seminar and all of them felt that it was not helpful […] because they [trainers] were only talking about its [the new language curriculum] philosophy and why it's good for students (T10_IN1_Q30).

The teachers ultimately talked about their disinclination to engage with prolonged professional development, attributing their disinclination to the expertise of those conducting

the seminars. Whilst reflecting upon their experiences with professional development, Laura and Beth explained:

> The school inspectors would say one thing and the academics would say the opposite and teachers were caught in the middle of this discussion, trying to understand what it [critical literacy] was (T4_IN1_Q17).

> Everybody had their own opinion about what critical literacy was […] even they [trainers] were confused about it" (T5_IN2_Q9).

These statements were often accompanied by the teachers' beliefs that professional development was not their responsibility, echoing the teachers in section b:

> But to tell you the truth nobody trained us [the teachers]. I remember going to a few seminars at the start of the year [2011] but they were overly theoretical and nobody came here [at the school] to help (T10_IN1_Q4).

> This year they [trainers] did not informed us of any training nor have they come here [at the school] (T5_IN1_Q21).

> I believe that the most important thing is for the experts to conclude on what they expect us to do with regards to the new curriculum (T4_IN1_Q18).

In other occasions, their statements regarding their disinclination to engage with professional development were accompanied by remarks that highlighted the inadequate training they had been offered; one that left them thinking of the new language curriculum as a concept of mystery they have yet to unravel.

> Three years ago they [policymakers] introduced critical literacy and I got really confused and I started wondering what to do with it […]. Everything was so unclear, even today that you are asking me about it [the new language curriculum]. The goals are unclear, the activities are unclear. All these years, the teachers were teaching a certain way and then they [policymakers] introduced critical literacy and we [teachers] got confused (T4_IN1_Q3).

Similarly, Beth suggested that the inadequate training she had been offered, characterised by the teacher as sporadic, opportunistic, and largely theory-driven, had not support her pursuit

for practical examples that could be used inside her classroom to enhance her language teaching:

> I would love to see more seminars on language teaching, more intensive seminars where they [teacher trainers] show us how to carry out the lesson and how to adapt the materials to our lesson because you know, we [teachers] might all have the same materials but it is the way you [as a teacher] teach them that matters […] I would love for more ideas, for more materials that could be used during teaching […] I would love to have been given this opportunity (T5_IN3_Q12).

The end of the school year found Beth doubting her didactic approach. "I want to better my teaching" (T5_IN3_Q5), Beth said during her last interview, suggesting that the inadequate support she had been offered did not provide her with "new ideas and ways of moving forward with it [new language curriculum]" (T5_IN3_Q6).

vi.   Increased teacher autonomy is resisted

Assuming the same position with the teachers discussed in section b, Laura's reliance on her teaching guide was thought to provide her with the support and guidance that professional development had failed to offer to her. As the teacher explained: "I follow my book [teaching guide] because I want to have a clear sense of direction […] I choose my activities from there […] I follow it faithfully […] it's my safety net" (T4_IN1_Q6). The idea of leaving her teaching guide aside; an idea that was promoted by the government with the intention to facilitate the fruition of critical literacy, ignited Laura's resistance, who felt exposed to uncertainty without the instructional support she was gaining from consulting her teaching guide. Maria also commented: "I am opposed to isolating the book [teaching guide] […] I support its use" (T10_IN1_Q17). Beth also commented: "I follow the book [teaching guide], I mean we need to follow something, right?" (T5_IN1_Q33)

vii.   Classroom practice and reflections

The teaching routines in the classrooms of these teachers were extremely similar. These teachers were observed to start their language lessons by introducing the text of the day to their students, urging them to hypothesise about its content while using its features, including text title and multimodal elements, as clues (see Table 9 'Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre'). Then, the students, guided by their teachers, would engage

with critical literacy discourses relevant to text comprehension and, at the end of the lesson, the students were directed to do written works from their language textbooks. Yet, the extracts below and the teacher-students discussions as presented therein, make evident that Laura, Beth, Maria and Paul had invested some of their teaching time in enacting particular critical literacy discourses. The extracts also make evident, however, that these teachers kept viewing grammar as a skill that could be acquired in isolation from texts. As a result of that, the teachers were seen to create two different approaches to language teaching, with the one being more congruent with what the new language curriculum advocated, and the other being more structured, as it focused on the acquisition of grammatical competence; a competence which, as the teachers remarked, was thought to be acquired under their direction (see T4_IN1_Q11; T10_IN1_Q7). It might be argued here that Laura, Maria, Beth and Paul have managed to accommodate, at least to some extent, some of the most prevailing critical literacy discourses inside their classrooms. Yet, the issue that arises here is whether such accommodation constitutes an adequate response to critical literacy. In reality, what Laura, Beth, Maria and Paul have achieved was to enrich their lesson with reform-based discussions without delving deeper into examining multiple perspectives, challenging existing discourses, studying conflicting texts, and investigating the social nature of language; strategies that are associated with the development of critically literate learners (MoEC, 2010b).

During her first classroom observation, Beth was observed to engage her students with questions about the register of texts, and how language is influenced by the purpose and intended audience (see Table 9 'Understanding the register of texts as it relates to social context and purpose'). Extract 6 below presents a part of Beth's first classroom observation, during which the teacher was investing time in discussions about the textual structure and features of letters (text genre). During those discussions, Beth allowed her students to assume the primary role inside the classroom. However, Beth soon realised that it was not possible for her students to unlock the text the way she had planned, and ultimately decided to shift to a more teacher-centred approach (Extract 6, episodes 19-31).

Extract 6 (T5_OBS1)

1. T: So students let's read exercise 1. Eyes in the book please. <Teacher starts reading the instructions> "The children series 'Red Balloon' organises a drawing competition. Write a letter to introduce yourself, your name, age, where you live, your grade level, and explain that you are sending them your drawing". So how do we greet in a letter? S1?
2. S1: Dear someone

3.   T: And when you are writing to your friend Georgia?
4.   S1: Dear friend Georgia
5.   T: So if I want to write a letter to my uncle Nicolas, how do I start?
   <No one replies>
6.   T: Come on it's not difficult. S2?
7.   S2: Dear uncle Nicolas
8.   T: And how do we end a letter?
9.   S3: With our name
10.   T: Alright. So children, our friend <refers to the composer of the letter> ended the letter saying: "Many kisses". Do you think the receiver was her teacher or a friend?
11.   S4: A friend
    […]
12.   T: OK students. Let's go do our exercise.
<The teacher allows five minutes before noticing that her students face difficulties>
13.   T: Children, how are we going to greet here? S5?
14.   S5: The Red Balloon?
15.   T: Well not exactly. Tell me S6?
16.   S6: Dear Red Balloon
17.   T: And how do we continue? (p) Come on children.
    <Allows a few seconds>
18.   T: Children? Read the instructions again
    <Allows a few minutes>
19.   T: Ready, S7? Start by answering these <shows the points mentioned in the instruction, i.e. name, grade level etc.> (p) My name is…
20.   S7: Mark <pseudonym>
21.   T: I am…
22.   S7: 7 years old
23.   T: I live…
24.   S7: In Cyprus
25.   T: And I want…
26.   S7: I want to send you my drawing
27.   T: For what reason?
28.   S7: For the competition
29.   T: And how will you end your letter?
30.   S7: Love Mark
31.   T: So children we are going to say who we are, how old we are, where we live and why we are sending this letter. Ok?
    […]

Reflecting upon her classroom practice, Beth said: "It took them a lot of time to even understand the instructions and I was somehow forced to direct them because we had to move on with our lesson" (T5_IN2_Q3). This statement, reflective of the other priorities that Beth was also pursuing, was used by the teacher to justify her decision to closely direct her students so that she could proceed with the grammatical goal of the day: "You saw how difficult it was for them […] it took us 30 minutes to discuss the letter and understand what they had to do and I had to proceed with writing, this is where I aim the most, it's challenging for them" (T5_IN2_Q5). However, the teacher was not satisfied with her classroom decision:

"I believe that it is my fault [referring to the comprehension difficulties faced by her students during the activity presented above]. Perhaps I should have given them more time to work on it instead of pushing them to find the answer right away" (T5_IN2_Q4).

Extract 7 below provides a glimpse into Maria's language teaching and to the way in which the teacher endeavour to balance out her competing teaching goals. On the one hand, Maria was seen to engage her students with discussions that aimed to enhance their understanding of the role of grammar in the text of the day. Reflecting upon her classroom decision, Maria suggested that the purpose of the activity was to help her students "unlock the text by attending to the role of grammar" (T10_IN2_Q11). This was found to be congruent with particular critical literacy discourses that encourage students to explore the use of grammar and their meaning making role within texts (see Table 9 'Attending to the tenor of discourse'). On the other hand, Maria was observed investing the majority of her teaching time on the acquisition of grammatical skills in a decontextualised manner; thus having her students engage with a variety of table activities that aimed to enhance grammar skills, without any further reference to the text of the day. In alignment with her belief about the importance of grammar acquisition (see T10_IN2_Q1), and her belief that students learn through repetition (see T0_IN1_Q7), Maria enacted the new language curriculum by devoting less time to helping her students to explore the function of grammatical forms and linguistic elements within the text of the day, and more time to the teaching of grammar as an element that is acquired in isolation from texts.

Extract 7 (T10_OBS1)

1. T: Now listen what we are going to do. I want you to read the text and underline all the verbs. Ok?
    <After 5 minutes>
2. T: Are you ready? (p) Ok let's start. S1?
3. S1: They will study
4. T: Good. Next? S2?
5. S2: The will have been executing
6. T: Great. So how is the verb to execute in future simple? S3?
7. S3: They will execute
8. *T: And why do you think the writer has chosen future perfect continuous? (p). How do they differ? < future simple and future continuous>*
9. S4: Something will happen
10. T: Yes but what is their difference?
11. S5: That something will be happening up until a point in time.
12. T: And who can tell me what its use was here in the text?
13. S6: Miss, are you talking about the ship?

14. T: Well, what about it?
15. S6: I think he <the writer> suggests that this will be a reoccurring thing until the ship reaches its destination.
16. T: Well I agree. Now open your books. Let's do exercise 4. <Teacher allows a few minutes for students to read the instructions>. Ready? Ok S6? What is the verb 'to dance' in future simple?
17. S6: Will dance
18. T: Good. In future perfect continuous?
19. S7: Will have been dancing

Laura believed it was important for her students to understand the role of image in multimodal texts, and further suggested that hypothesising about the content of texts was an integral part of her language instruction (see T4_IN1_Q9). Laura also believed that the most important student outcome was the acquisition of technical skills (see T4_IN1_Q10). During classroom instruction, Laura was observed engaging with the new language curriculum to the minimum (Extract 7) and in ways that aligned with her beliefs about the importance of helping her students to acquire the basic reading and writing skills. In particular Laura was observed devoting less time to activities that served to encourage her students to hypothesise about the content of the text of the day (Extract 7), and more time to the teaching of grammar; thus creating two parallel structures in her attempt to balance out her two different teaching goals which, at times, felt competing to Laura. Reflecting upon her classroom teaching, Laura verified this assertion the following way: "There is always the grammatical goal, actually this is our daily goal and there is text comprehension as well […] but how can I invest in it if they [students] haven't excelled in their reading skills?" (T4_IN3_Q4). Extract 8 that follows presents an episode in which Laura encouraged her students to hypothesise about the content of the text of the day while collecting clues from multimodal elements (see Table 9: 'Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre' and 'Developing and testing initial hypotheses'). However, Laura invested little time in such activities and more time in teaching the grammatical phenomenon of the day (i.e. alternative questions / 'or').

Extract 8 (T4_OBS2)

1. T: Let's see our new text. There is an image on page 34. I want you to spend 1-2 minutes and tell me what you see there. (p). Who is that on the picture? (p) It's a rather familiar face. S1?
2. S1: It's Ioanna[14]
3. T: And what is she wearing on her head?

---

[14] The textbook 'Letters, words, stories' follows the stories and adventures of five friends

4.   S1: A hat

     […]

5.   T: What else is Ioanna doing? What is she holding?
6.   S2: She is holding a tambourine and a doll with a big nose
7.   T: It's Pinocchio. And what is that next to her? S3?
8.   S3: A green box
9.   T: And what was in that green box?
10.   S4: The hat
11.   S5: Teacher I think it was Pinocchio and the tambourine
12.   T: And who do think bought those presents to her?
13.   S5: I think it was uncle Paul who sent her those presents
14.   T: Listen to your classmate. She *hypothesised* <with emphasis> that uncle Paul sent Ioanna those presents.
15.   S6: Teacher I think it was uncle Paul because he lives in Kenya and can't visit her
16.   T: Oh so you *hypothesise* <with emphasis> that it was uncle Paul? Ok let's read the title.
17.   S7: Presents for Ioanna
18.   T: Can somebody tell me why the name Ioanna is written with a capital I?
19.   S8: Because it is a name
20.   T: And what other words are written with a capital?
21.   S9: The days and the months

     […]

22. So children, do you know what we are going to learn today? (p). There is something strange in your text (p).
23. S11: Teacher I know! Letter i
24. No, this is not a letter! Look <Teacher writes on the board>. Read S10
25. S10: Which box do you want? The red one or the blue one? [Pio kouti thelis, to kokkino *i* to mple?]
26. T: So children, the 'i' here serves as a question, correct?

     […]

Paul was observed deliberating on his teaching goals in ways that made apparent the existence of two different sets of instruction which mainly served to address two different goals. These different goals, reflective of Paul's beliefs that language teaching and learning involves the development of critical thinkers (see T8_IN1_Q5), but also the enhancement of grammatical skills (see T8_IN1_Q3), led to the enactment of the new language curriculum through parallel structures. In particular, during his second classroom observation, Paul was focused on such critical literacy discourses that were found to be congruent with particular critical literacy discourses that related to the role of grammar as a meaning mechanism within texts (see Table 9 'Exploring text organisation at a micro level'). During such critical literacy discourses (Extract 8), Paul would encourage his students to engage with vigorous debates over the content of the text of the day, the feelings and intentions of the heroes, and how the students might relate to them. Reflecting upon his teaching, Paul said: "It is very important, after having read a text, to be able to demonstrate that they [students] have comprehended it and so I think all those questions helped them to reach a deeper understanding" (T8_IN3_Q1). Paul

was also observed embracing a more traditional didactic approach once his attention shifted from the code-breaking discourses to grammatical activities. Although the new language curriculum encouraged the study of grammar as an element socially and ideologically charged, Paul was observed engaging his students with a series of activities that required them to demonstrate their understanding of grammatical structures and rules in a decontextualised manner (Extract 8, episodes 11-13). It can be argued here that Paul, like Laura and Maria, could not conceptualise how critical literacy discourses – such as the one mentioned above – could fit with grammar activities. Paul encapsulated this assertion the following way:

> The goal [of the lesson] was for students to comprehend the text,
> to be able to express their opinions, I think they did a good job
> on that, right? […] and the *technical part* of the lesson was to
> practise first conditional (T8_IN3_Q13).

Extract 8 (T8_OBS2)

1. T: The ballet teacher said that dancing is the language of the body. How do you understand this?
2. S1: When we dance it's like sharing a story. For instance the Russian Ballet.
3. T: Yes…
4. S1: They don't speak but while dancing we understand the story
5. T: Good. What do you think? <talking to another student>
6. S2: That while dancing you convey a message for the others to decipher
7. T: We express our feelings you mean?
8. S2: Yes
9. T: We saw that Alexandra <the protagonist of the text> had her father's support. Can you find his words that would suggest that? S3?
10. S3: "Nothing is given to us. Everything is achieved with courage and effort, her father said"
11. T: Correct. Do exercise 1 <from textbook>
    <Students are doing exercise 1>
12. T: […] Do exercise 3 as well
    <Students have finished their exercises>
13. T: Alright students are we ready? Ok, S4 start with exercise 1 <giving answers to the questions of exercise 1>

8.4.2. The Role of School Context

The purpose of this section is to discuss the role of school context on how teachers negotiate their meaning of the new language curriculum and how it influenced the enactment of their

agency in the context of curriculum change. Table 17 summarises the codes that are presented and interpreted herein, and links those codes to the teachers and their schools.

SCHOOL	CODES	TEACHERS
School A	Our school has other learning goals	T1, T2
School B	Our school has other learning goals	T3, T4, T5
	Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation	T3, T4
School C	I am given space to pursue my own goals	T6
	Our school encourages risk-taking and innovation	T7
School D	I am given space to pursue my own goals	T8, T9
School E	I am just doing my job	T10

Table 17 School contexts codes linked to teachers and schools

a. Schools A and B

i. Our school has other learning goals

Sylvia admitted to have been teaching in a way that does not match her aspirations or her academic background, because she believed it was important to adapt herself to her surroundings. In her words:

> There are teachers in this school who are highly trained and educated, they have their master's, their PhDs […] and I think that my teaching would be so much different if I was teaching at another school (T2_IN1_Q7).

This statement featured significantly in Helen's comments as well: "In this school you cannot work miracles" (T1_IN1_Q22). Such statements were not used by the teachers with the intention to criticise their school's social structures. In fact, both teachers were satisfied with their head teacher who "rushes in to save the day" (T1_IN1_19) and the "healthy" (T2_IN1_Q27) – in Sylvia's words – interaction they had with their colleagues. Rather, such

statements were used by the teachers to highlight their concerns regarding their school population; concerns that were regarded as a shared responsibility among the teachers in their school. In particular, when Sylvia was asked to reflect upon the goals of her school, she replied: "To help them [students] develop the basic skills, either in language, maths, or even social skills. I think this is the biggest concern of all the teachers in this school" (T2_IN1_Q11). Helen affirmed: "Our head teacher expects us to help our students reach their potentials, whatever their potentials are, and this has always been our [teachers'] goal" (T1_IN1_Q20). What the teachers brought to their interaction with the new language curriculum was the *storyline* (Ritchie & Rigano, 2002) of helping their students to "develop the basic skills" (see T2_IN1_Q3). The ways in which they enacted the new language curriculum was thus particularly influenced by what these teachers, both individually and collectively, believed to be reasonable within their surroundings and suitable to their shared responsibility. As Sylvia remarked, whilst reflecting on how her school had influenced her classroom teaching: "I think here you [talking to the researcher] will see how differently critical literacy is carried out" (T2_IN1_Q19). Sylvia further explained:

> The culture of this school [talking about school population] cannot be compared to any other school. The student population, their [students] needs, their abilities, all these influence what the teachers [her colleagues] are pursuing inside their classrooms. For instance, I have students who are still learning the letters. I cannot enact critical literacy when my students are still learning the letters 'o' and 'a' (T2_IN1_Q20).

Beth, Victoria and Laura shared the same story. Their "flexible" (T5_IN1_Q23) head teacher and the kind of collegiality and support they were enjoying as being part of School B, granted their autonomy inside their classrooms. Beth's comments on her school's social structure are reflective of what Laura and Victoria had also remarked:

> It's good to know that you have colleagues with whom you can communicate about anything. For instance, my colleague [means the other second grade teacher] and I are constantly getting materials from each other […] and our head teacher is quite flexible and open to all of that […] she is not going to interfere at all, she will not try to have it her way. I will of course ask for her feedback during inspections but she will not try to impose her opinion on me (T5_IN1_Q23).

Like Sylvia and Helen, these teachers had a common goal in mind; a goal that was communicated to them by their head teacher and which was ultimately accepted as a "main goal" among their colleagues in School B. As both Victoria and Laura remarked:

> We [the teachers and the head teacher] have realised that there are major learning issues and we have agreed to dedicate ourselves to helping our students to achieve better results in language […] because they [students] come here [school] with a lot of learning gaps […] they have difficulties with writing, comprehending a text, comprehending instructions […]. We were discussing this issue during our meeting and all the teachers agreed that this should be our main goal (T3_IN1_Q23).

> One of the main goals of our school is to raise the standards in language, it is always the same goal really, because there are many foreign students here and surely this affects the school's mission (T4_IN1_Q29).

This shared responsibility appeared to be important for these teachers, as it provided them with a sense of direction.

> We have established an action plan relevant to the enhancement of text comprehension […] because the teachers have observed that students have difficulties with reading and also text comprehension and we have set this goal so that the teachers could work on it. Surely this influences my goals as well, given that I face the same challenges in my classroom (T3_IN1_Q21).

This shared responsibility positioned Laura, Victoria and Beth in a path that was perceived to be quite different from what the new language curriculum had advocated. Although the teachers agreed that "achieving the goals of the national curriculum" was one of the goals of the school" (T3_IN1_Q25), they appeared less concerned with achieving this goal, claiming that "this year our emphasis is on something else" (T5_IN1_Q22); thus vocalising their belief that the new language curriculum was something less relevant to what they were collectively aiming for. As Beth explained:

> This year we have the development of oral and written skills as a school goal […] our head teacher is deeply interested in achieving this goal, particularly in language [as a subject matter] (T5_IN1_Q26).

ii. Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation (School B)

Built upon the idea of language teaching as inquiry, the new language curriculum not only questioned the role of teaching guides inside the classroom, but also encouraged teachers to search and find their own classroom materials that would add to their teaching and help the fruition of critical literacy (MoEC, 2010a; 2011). This suggestion ignited the resistance of the teachers working in School B. As Laura remarked: "Well, alright, how am I supposed to do that, I mean, what do they [policymakers] expect us to do? Am I supposed to buy materials for all the students? " (T4_IN2_Q22). The teachers' frustration was made apparent here, yet instead of considering ways to overcome this limitation, they attributed this responsibility to their students or to their school's infrastructure. As Laura said: "It says [the new language curriculum] leave the book [teaching guide] aside and bring in your own texts, your own books but how am I supposed to copy them and give them to my students" (T4_IN1_Q6). Victoria also explained: "For example, you [as a teacher] tell your students to bring their own texts, bring something that interests them, but nobody would do that […] critical literacy cannot work under these circumstances" (T3_IN1_Q5).

b. Schools C and D

i. I am given space to pursue my own goals

> Look, school goals do influence me in some degree […] but it comes down to the freedom of the teachers in this school […]. I mean, within the four walls of my classroom, I have the freedom to do what I believe is best for my students (T9_IN1_Q28).

The autonomy that Michael was enjoying in his school provided him with the legitimacy to pursue his own goals in relation to language teaching. He said:

> We [Michael and the head teacher] do not really talk about classroom teaching, our interaction is mostly on a friendship level […] it might be that she has trust in me, given the years of experience that I have, that I am doing a good job inside the classroom. […] In the past, I felt that head teachers wanted to impose their beliefs on me and to direct me. But with Mrs Nicky [pseudonym for the head teacher] we have a really good friendship and to me this is enough (T9_IN1_Q29).

In a similar vein, Mario said:

> The head teacher encourages us to think more collectively, like, to think like a community, and to pursue the goals of the school and not the goals of the classroom, but to be honest I have problems doing that […]. Surely something enters the classroom [referring to school goals] but I have the freedom to do whatever I want and to teach however I wish (T6_IN1_Q32).

Although both Mario and Michael presented themselves as relatively autonomous inside their classrooms, and as teachers with high discretion over how to respond to the new language curriculum (see T9_IN2_Q13; T6_IN2_Q6), their schools afforded or informed, in one way or another, the ways they responded to the new language curriculum. In particular, the teachers talked about how their schools' goals felt to be in alignment with the new language curriculum:

> We are aiming towards better literacy results […] and so we have implemented the 'Two weeks literacy' goal to encourage our students to read more books, become better readers, enhance their vocabulary […], to comprehend texts […] in general I would say that, yeah these goals sound as though they are in line with it [new language curriculum] well as I told you before the teachers are free to do whatever they wish in their classroom but I guess the ultimate goal [of the new language curriculum, meaning critical learners] is what she [the head teacher] is pursuing (T9_IN3_Q12).

> As a teacher, I was always following my own curriculum but I must say I feel blessed of having a head teacher who is not traditional and narrow-minded and that her goals are also my goals (T6_IN1_Q5).

In addition to their school's matching agenda, both Michael and Mario considered that there was a supportive school culture around them, and management resources that provided them with autonomy in their responses to the new language curriculum. For instance, Michael's close interaction with his colleagues provided for the teacher a significant support mechanism in trying out new ideas and practices. As he explained: "I really enjoy meeting up with colleagues and exchanging ideas, asking them how they have carried out a specific activity or book unit, what problems they have encountered and so on" (T9_IN1_Q17). Interaction with colleagues was also important for Mario and was suggested as a key feature of the teacher's professional development:

> I am influenced by them [colleagues] each and every day. I get ideas from them, particularly the ones who teach the third grade. They are excellent teachers and I constantly get inspired by them […] (T6_IN1_Q20).

Schools C and D appeared to had created an environment which was viewed by Mario and Michael as having resilience in change. The autonomy and flexibility encouraged by their head teachers provided Mario and Michael with the legitimacy they desired to pursue the new language curriculum on their own terms. As Michael explained:

> I am a fan of her [head teacher] approach [T9_IN3_Q12, p. 149] […] she does not push teachers to engage with something that is too peculiar for primary school students. […] These 'conspiracy theories' that texts always hide power relationships do not necessarily have to permeate the primary school level. Do you agree? I mean, for my students, I think what is important is to understand intentions, motives, yeah, to see how a text shapes reality, for instance the advertisements, the ones referring to women are so different to those referring to men. You know, critical literacy does not have to be about conspiracies (T9_IN3_Q13).

As an "unconventional teacher" (see T8_IN1_Q14) who is not concerned with curriculum goals, Paul made use of the autonomy provided to him by his head teacher, and instead of moving towards the new language curriculum like his colleague Michael, he moved away from it. In particular, Paul elaborated on his "personal initiative" (T8_IN1_Q17) to enact the Daphne programme[15] in his classroom. He explained how he convinced his head teacher that enacting the programme inside his classroom would be of benefit to his students as they would learn how to spot and stop bullying behaviours. Paul explained:

> We have bullying issues in this school […]. So I went to her [the head teacher] and said that it is important to integrate the Daphne programme […] there are few other teachers on other programmes as well […]. It is important for students to learn about bullying, how to spot it and what to do about it" (T8_IN1_Q8).

The autonomy that Paul was provided with encouraged him to pursue his own goals in relation to his students. In his words:

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[15] National programme funded by the European Union to raise awareness about school bullying.

I have one student who has behaviour issues and this brought me in close collaboration with her [head teacher]. I think that, at the end of the day, she is more interested in educating good people instead of good students […]. Well I have good students and, through Daphne, I am trying to help them develop into good people, I mean, do you get my point? (T8_IN3_Q12).

ii. Our school encourages risk-taking and innovation

The externally driven curriculum acted as learning mechanism and a significant catalyst in encouraging a change in Anna's classroom practice (see T7_IN1_Q4). In particular, it had empowered Anna to make the necessary changes in her teaching, with the teacher feeling that her expertise was finally being unlocked (see T7_IN1_Q9). It was accompanied, however, with a number of challenges, mainly associated with its request that teachers should act as flexible professionals and informed decision makers of their classroom curriculum. For Anna, this requirement resulted in tensions (see T7_IN1_Q14): the teacher was not sure how to 'become' the professional that the new language curriculum had proposed. Being part of School C; a school that was described by Anna as "supportive" (T7_IN1_Q27), provided the teacher with the opportunity she needed to remember who she was as a teacher before having to suppress herself (see T7_IN1_Q1). Anna's determination to push forward with changing her practice might have been the result of the congruence she experienced between her cognitions about language teaching and the new language curriculum, but it was afforded, and further sustained, by the culture of the school the teacher was part of. The "supportive" (T7_IN1_Q27) school culture that Anna talked about provided her with the much needed collegial support, but also with strong lines of communication between her and her head teacher. Such circumstances provided for Anna the affective and cognitive backup she needed in learning about the new language curriculum and enacting it inside her classroom.

When it first came out [the new language curriculum], she [the head teacher] was very supportive and so we were given the opportunity to ask about it, to try things out to be flexible and express our opinions […] I had the chance to let's say express what I was thinking without feeling that people will mock me […] they [school staff] were willing to support me in my quest and this motivated me to try it out (T7_IN1_Q28).

c. School E

i. I Am Just Doing My Job

During her first interview, Maria explained that she was trying to maintain a momentum ever since she entered her school: "I am not sure if this has to do with this school but ever since I came here those feelings of frustration got stronger" (T10_IN1_Q27). According to the teacher, the five years she spent teaching in School E were characterised by a high degree of teacher isolation. "Everybody is so isolated here. The culture of 'let's help each other and push each other for more' is absent here" (T10_IN1_18). The teacher admitted that she once was "an enthusiastic and highly motivated teacher" (T10_IN3_Q1). "In the past", Maria said, "I would organise activities for my students and encourage them to participate to competitions as a classroom" (T10_IN3_Q1), but ever since she entered School E, Maria started to lose her drive: "Now I'm doing nothing. Well, I mean, I am just doing my job, I am not getting into the trouble of doing something more than that" (T10_IN1_Q21). By the end of the school year, Maria's feelings of not belonging in her school were interpreted as a lack of alignment with others. "I would like more support from him [the head teacher] but you know, I am not one of those [teachers] to whom the support is given" (T10_IN3_Q12). These experiences, reinforced by a culture of isolation, served as a reminded for Maria that:

> As long as I am in this school I will keep doing what I have to do and that's it. I mean why should I push myself for more and spend my free time studying when people will never appreciate my job? (T10_IN1_Q22).

8.5. Conclusion

This study followed the stories of ten teachers who, at the time of the fieldwork, found themselves traversing their own path to the enactment of the new language curriculum. They shared their cognitions about their subject matter, reflected upon their teaching goals and concerns, elaborated on how they enacted the new language curriculum, and talked about the contextual affordances or limitations they found along the way. As the teachers were reflecting on their curriculum enactment, they appeared to have constructed a meaning for the new language curriculum that propelled them either towards it or away from it. Whether it was the first or the second scenario was the outcome of a sensemaking process, as the data suggest, which mediated how the teachers, under their own decisions, negotiated with the

affordances or constraints around them, giving rise to trajectories of action that favoured change or continuation of existing practices. This eventually led to the enactment of the new language curriculum either in substantial or superficial ways, or in ways that resulted in a blend between existing classroom practices and new critical literacy discourses. For example, some teachers responded to the new language curriculum with accommodating some of the most prevailing critical literacy discourses in ways that were found to be consistent with the official intend. These teachers saw no impediments to curriculum enactment, despite the limitations and restrictions around them (e.g. limited professional support). Others brought to their negotiations with the new language curriculum a set of cognitions and a set of instructional decisions that acted counter to curriculum implementation. These teachers would often provide reasons for not responding adequately to critical literacy discourses, often highlighting the existence of other classroom discourses that were regarded to be more relevant to their practical realities. The way these teachers negotiated their meaning of the new language curriculum within their working contexts suggested that particular contextual factors acted in ways that propelled them away from the new language curriculum, and more towards existing teaching trajectories. What the findings thus suggest, and as it is elaborated in more detail in Chapter 9, is that the new language curriculum served as a sensemaking event for the teachers, during which cognitions and contexts were negotiated. These negotiations resulted in a prioritisation work of particular classroom discourses (e.g. teaching of grammar) over others (e.g. critical literacy discourses); a prioritisation work that defined the teachers as agents of their own instructional decisions. Yet, such prioritisation work also suggests the influence of the teachers' working contexts on what classroom discourses the teachers prioritised over others, and whether they were afforded or encouraged, to forge a change in their ways of thinking and doing. This prioritisation work also appeared to be an ongoing negotiation during which some of the teachers (T3 and T7) were noticed to define and redefine their meaning of the new language curriculum as the situations around them were shifting and changing.

Chapter 9: Discussion on the Findings

9.1   Introduction

The findings of this study, as presented and interpreted in Chapter 8, demonstrate the importance of investigating teacher agency from a sensemaking perspective; one that involves both the teachers and their context in a state of negotiation. The ways in which the teachers negotiated with the new language curriculum, as the findings suggest, ultimately led to the manifestation of priorities which favoured particular classroom discourses (e.g. the teaching of grammar) over others (e.g. critical literacy discourses). This prioritisation showed the effect of the teachers' cognitions on what was selected for instruction; it also showed the influence of their surrounding structures, on whether change was preferred over continuation of existing practices. Whether agency was more directed towards the new language curriculum or away from it, was the result of a sensemaking process, during which cognitions and contexts were contested, and classroom priorities were manifested. These findings thus encourage the conceptualisation of agency not merely as a notion that is either constrained or afforded during its negotiations with the context (see Priestley et al., 2012b). In short, these conceptualisations cannot fully capture the role of teachers in defining what is important to them as they negotiate with the affordances or limitations around them. The findings of this study suggest that agency could also be looked at as a prioritisation work; one that highlights the never-ending interaction between agency and structure, their reciprocal relationship, and teachers' active role in shaping their responses to the contingencies around them by defining their priorities in response to what is available to them. These priorities, as outlined below, served as a way for the participating teachers to "exercise some governance in their own lives" (Archer, 2007, p. 6).

The purpose of Chapter 9 is to provide a detailed account of the findings of this study, as they relate to the CRQ: How do teachers make meaning and enact agency in the context of the new language curriculum? It was briefly discussed above, and it is further elaborated on below, that the teachers' sensemaking process, as it relates to their negotiation of meaning and their enactment of agency within their working contexts, encouraged the prioritisation of particular classroom discourses over others, which influenced the teachers' agentic orientations as being

either directed towards the new language curriculum or away from it. This conceptualisation is unpacked below in five sections. Section 9.2 discusses how the sensemaking framework for teacher agency, as presented and discussed in Chapter 5, aids in the analysis of the findings of this study. Section 9.3 discusses how teachers, during negotiations with the new language curriculum, defined their classroom priorities and resourced their agentic orientations as being more directed towards the new language curriculum or away from it. Section 9.4 and 9.5 discuss the role of professional development and school context in encouraging the teachers to either unfreeze from current ways of thinking and doing or to persevere. Section 9.6 reflects on the findings of this study.

9.2   Meaning Making, Agency, and Context: A Prioritisation

Agency, Archer (2007, p. 17) maintains, is what it is "produced through the *reflexive deliberations* of subjects who *subjectively* determine their practical projects in relation to their *objective* circumstances". Fundamental in the discussion of agency is, therefore, the understanding of how 'projects' are defined in conjunction with the context that one confronts when deliberating on his/her 'projects'. Consonant with Archer's (2007) perspective on how agency and context interact and shape each other, the findings of this study revealed the mediating effect of the context on what the teachers utilised in their negotiations with the new language curriculum; yet they also underlined the influence of the teachers' cognitions in defining their courses of action.

The sensemaking framework for teacher agency, as presented and discussed in Chapter 5, adopted an approach to teachers' responses to curriculum reforms that aimed to account for both agency and structure and their never-ending interaction. In the context of this study, this interaction between agency and structure pertained to the new language curriculum, which sought to re-define ways of thinking and doing at the classroom level. The findings of this study suggest that the new language curriculum served as a sensemaking event for the teachers, during which contexts and cognitions were contested, and classroom priorities emerged that served to define where the teachers stood in relation to the new language curriculum. In particular, the teachers participating in this study responded to the new language curriculum by enacting their agency either away from it or towards it. They have done so, the findings suggest, on the basis of a sensemaking process during which the teachers negotiated the new language curriculum within their contexts, and defined their classroom priorities by acting, not as mere implementers, but rather as agents of their own

instructional decisions. The discussion below, as informed by the findings of this study, regards cognitions as the most influential factor on the ways the teachers negotiated with the new language curriculum and the ways they enacted their agency in response to it. The findings also suggest that the teachers' agentic orientation (Priestley et al., 2015) – as being more directed towards the new language curriculum or away from it, was significantly, albeit not entirely, influenced by contextual factors.

These findings demonstrate the temporal nature of agency. As briefly discussed in Chapter 5, the temporality of agency has concerned many researchers and scholars. Biesta and Tedder (2007, p. 146), for instance, underline the importance of investigating agency within its "temporal-relational contexts-for-action" so to understand not only "the particular 'composition' " of agency but also the "agentic orientations of individuals" (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 137). Emirbayer and Mische (1998, p. 972) understand agency as a "temporally embedded" process that occurs in the present but also encompasses the past and the future. In the findings, the temporality of agency was made apparent as the teachers were prioritising particular classroom discourses over others, which signified an agentic orientation that was more directed towards change or more directed towards continuation of existing practices. Consonant with Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) perspective, and in line with Biesta and Tedder's (2007) point of view, the findings of this study suggest the existence of a "dominant tone" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 972) of temporal orientation. Whether the teachers enacted their agency more towards the future (the new language curriculum) or more towards continuation of existing practices, was the outcome of their sensemaking process during which they made decisions of how best to act. What the teachers have prioritised for instruction, in other words, emerged from a complex process of negotiation between their cognitions and their surroundings; negotiations that encouraged particular courses of action over others. This understanding indicates the complex process of sensemaking that is not only personal – in the way that it is directed and defined by teachers' cognitions – but also context-sensitive. Yet, such courses of action were not necessarily static, but rather signified a context-sensitive response on part of the teachers, and the responsiveness of their agency to the changing circumstances.

9.3   The Role of Teacher Cognitions in Meaning Making and Agency

It is widely acknowledged among many researchers and scholars that there is an apparent divergence from official intentions as a new curriculum is enacted inside the classroom (e.g.

Ball et al., 2012; Cohen & Ball, 1990b; 1990a; Fullan, 2007). Studies that dealt with the question of how teachers respond to curriculum reforms, a small part of which was presented and discussed in Chapter 4, often attribute the mismatch between official intentions and classroom practice to the influence of teachers' cognitions (e.g. Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Collopy, 2003; Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009; Datnow & Castellano, 2000). As Ball et al. (2012, p. 3) remarked, curriculum reforms do not communicate fixed and static ideas to teachers, but rather "are made sense of, mediated and struggled over, and sometime ignored, or, in another word, *enacted*" as they pass through the filter of existing cognitions. The findings of this study strongly suggest that the teachers' cognitions served as strong determinants of how the teachers negotiated their meaning of the new language curriculum, and that they worked in ways that encouraged the teachers to enact their agency in ways that were either more directed towards change or away from it. Yet, the teachers' sensemaking process was not as straightforward as it might sound here; rather it involved a complex process of negotiation and prioritisation, as suggested above, which showed that the teachers actively positioned themselves as agents of their own instructional decisions. Whether the new language curriculum had a place in the teachers' instructional decisions or not, was vested on how the new language curriculum interacted with their cognitions.

9.3.1 Prioritising change

The teachers who talked from a place of accommodation had in common that they experienced a strong congruence between the new language curriculum and their cognitions. Such a remark is not new to the field of curriculum implementation. Studies that focused on the role of teachers' cognitions, a small part of which was discussed in Chapter 4, often conclude with the same remark: that congruence between teachers' cognitions and curriculum reforms is significant (e.g. Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009; Datnow & Castellano, 2000). In the context of this study, the strong congruence that these teachers experienced acted as a cognitive map that directed their agency towards a trajectory that favoured the enactment of the new language curriculum. Table 18 demonstrates the influence of these teachers' cognitions on the ways they negotiated with the new language curriculum. In particular, it was discussed in Chapter 8 that these teachers thought of the new language curriculum as an important step towards the empowerment of their students, and that its normative goals constituted an improvement in language teaching and learning. Their endorsement of change emerged from a complex mix of thought that worked to reference the new language curriculum as being relevant to their teaching goals and concerns, their subject

matter identity, and as being in alignment with the way they viewed themselves; as teachers who learn, evolve, and change. During their transactions with the new language curriculum, the teachers' cognitions were reaffirmed, and validated, and priorities were manifested that encouraged the enactment of agency that went "above and beyond" (Buchanan, 2015, p. 710). What the findings suggest here, counter to the view widely projected by contemporary studies (e.g. Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Cohen & Ball, 1990b; 1990a; Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009; Datnow & Castellano, 2000; Mayrowetz, 2009), is that externally driven reforms can reach the classroom level, and empower teachers to respond with changes in their classroom, but also with changes to their surroundings. Congruence, however, between cognitions and the curriculum reform appears to be a precondition, as Ryder and Banner (2013) also highlight.

The findings demonstrate, in particular, that these teachers regarded the development of critically literate individuals as their priority, and created working contexts for themselves that served to facilitate this priority. Within this study, this "above and beyond" (Buchanan, 2015, p. 710) trajectory of action was apparent by the way the teachers interacted with the contingencies around them; by putting time in finding their own materials, regarding themselves as responsible for their own learning and development, and responding to change with changes in their classrooms. These decisions suggest an active prioritisation work, as the findings suggest, whereby the teachers defined their courses of action, seized the affordances, deliberated on the deficiencies and brought forth new structures that enabled the enactment of their priorities into practice. Within the literature, contextual deficiencies, for instance the relative absence of professional discourses, are often highlighted as important impediments to the enactment of agency. What it is often proclaimed in the light of such contextual deficiencies is that teachers' "agency (or lack of) is heavily influenced by factors which are often beyond their immediate control" (Biesta et al., 2015, p. 629). Contrary to such views, the findings of this study suggest that there is an active process of prioritisation involved in the transactions between the teachers and their context. The ways in which the participating teachers negotiated with the contextual deficiencies (e.g. lack of professional support), as mentioned above, showed their contribution to developing new structures in which they felt in control. Similar findings were reported by Milne et al. (2006) in a study which reported on how one of the participating teachers (Beth) was seen to navigate beyond the contextual restrictions around her in ways that afforded a change in her classroom practice. Echoing Milne et al. (2006), Buchanan (2015) identified a 'stepping up' expression of agency, afforded on the basis of alignment between a teacher's identity and the externally-driven

policies, further suggesting that this alignment resulted in personal development. Taken together, these and related studies (e.g. Ryder et al., 2018; Vähäsantanen, 2015), in corroboration with the findings of this study, suggest that teachers are not at the mercy of the contextual deficiencies around them. Rather, as active agents, they make meaning and enact trajectories of action that serve to influence the structure.

	MEANING MAKING AND AGENCY	TEACHERS
Identity of subject matter	Language teaching as a platform for critical thinking	T6, T7, T9
Teaching goals and concerns	Development of critical thinkers and writers as a teaching goal	T6, T7, T9
The new language curriculum	The new language curriculum legitimises classroom practice	T6, T9
	The new language curriculum as a transformative event	T7
	The new language curriculum encourages experimentation and learning	T6, T7, T9

Table 18 The influence of cognitions on teachers' meaning making and agency: Prioritisation on part of the accommodation group of teachers

9.3.2 Prioritising other classroom discourses

The majority of the teachers participating in this study experienced a strong sense of dissatisfaction towards the new language curriculum. The replacement of particular language content, most prominently of grammar teaching, in favour of an integrated approach, was equivocally seen as an educational loss. Table 19 summarises how the teachers' cognitions worked to prioritise classroom discourses other than the discourses proposed within the new language curriculum. These teachers, for instance, viewed their subject matter from an instrumental point of view; as a platform for the development of technical skills that can be acquired through a single lesson, rather than articulating what language teaching and learning

is for in the long run. Yet, at a surface level at least, some teachers bought into the new language curriculum. In the findings, there is the sense that the new language curriculum was in the minds of these teachers who, oftentimes, would reference particular critical literacy discourses (e.g. text genre, text production, text analysis) as being relevant to their classroom teaching. Such varied, oftentimes conflicting, responses to the new language curriculum can be regarded as the result of a sensemaking process that is ongoing and one that evolves and changes over time. However, what these teachers brought to their negotiations with the new language curriculum, at the time of the fieldwork, was a set of incongruent cognitions that served to reference the new language curriculum as a concept irrelevant to their teaching goals. These findings feature significantly in studies discussed in Chapter 4, whereby existing cognitions were found to exert a mediating effect on what teachers select for instruction (e.g. Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009), how they adapt the new curriculum to fit with their existing ways of thinking and doing (e.g. Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Datnow & Castellano, 2000; Mayrowetz, 2009), or re-interpret the curriculum into familiar classroom trajectories (e.g. Cohen & Ball, 1990b; 1990a; Firestone et al., 1999). Yet, what emerges from the findings is not so much a form of tradition on part of these teachers, but more like a form of *principle resistance* (Archistein & Ogawa, 2006) that was enacted in response to a curriculum that was believed to have requested a form of language teaching and learning that was foreign to the teachers' practical realities. Similarly, Biesta et al. (2015, p. 629) found that the teachers in their study expressed a "strong sense of […] professional responsibility towards their students", which influence those teachers to be less responsive to CfE. These findings can serve to counter the deficit view of teachers, whereby the failure of curriculum implementation is to be ascribed to their capacity to change. The findings of this study suggest that the meaning that these teachers brought to their negotiations with the new language curriculum, is an integral part of the act of teaching; whereby classroom instructional decisions are not formed in a vacuum, but rather are mediated over, defined and re-defined, as the teachers interact with their students.

Overall, the teachers discussed herein drew upon their existing cognitions to offer resistance to the new language curriculum. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that these teachers had other teaching priorities, which evolved as cognitive frameworks that worked to encourage the adoption of a 'pushing back' (Buchanan, 2015; Ryder et al., 2018) and a 'reserved' (Vähäsantanen, 2015) response to the new language curriculum. Such cognitive frameworks emerged out of a complex sensemaking process, as the findings suggest, which showed the remnants of previous classroom practice, the influence of other curriculum

policies, the influence of their past experiences with curriculum implementation, and their intimate knowledge of their students. What resourced these teachers' meaning making and motivated their agency was, therefore, a complex mix of experiences which encouraged the prioritisation of particular classroom discourses (e.g. teaching of grammar) over others (e.g. critical literacy discourses). This prioritisation work encouraged these teachers to re-interpret, refocus, and re-purpose the new language curriculum in ways that matched existing trajectories of action and ways of thinking about language instruction. Golombek (1998) validates the findings of this study, suggesting that past experiences and present judgements come together in complex ways, forming interpretative frameworks through which a new policy is understood. The findings of this study suggest that previous experiences and present judgements can strongly shape how teachers enact their agency in response to the changes around them. Ball et al. (2012, p. 6) nudged towards this acknowledgement when they argued that curriculum reforms are often met with "other policies, other languages and other subjectivities". Curriculum reforms do not encourage a tabula rasa in teachers' classroom practice, but rather they trigger a sensemaking process of negotiation during which classroom priorities emerge as a result. The findings of this study suggest that these teachers' cognitions evolved into priorities which served to re-interpret, oftentimes miss-interpret, the new language curriculum in ways that kept these teachers in alignment with the experiences they have accumulated throughout their teaching careers, and what was important to them in the here-and-now. This complex mixture encouraged an agentic orientation that was thus short-sighted; less concerned with responding to the new language curriculum, and more concerned with acting out in the present; findings which echo Priestley et al. (2012a) and Priestley et al. (2012b), and several other studies (e.g. Biesta et al., 2015; Ryder et al., 2018).

Yet, what this prioritisation work also appears to suggests is the teachers' limited repertoire of alternative courses of action, which influenced their agency as being more directed towards continuation of existing teaching trajectories – where their classroom teaching was familiar and – and less oriented towards the future (the new language curriculum). In other words, what motivated the teachers' prioritisation might have been the result of their negotiations that rendered the new language curriculum as a concept irrelevant to their cognitions; yet, it might have also been their restrained and constrained deliberations with the new language curriculum that anchored those teachers on such priorities. It is discussed in sections 9.4 and 9.5 below that part of the problem of teachers prioritising other classroom discourses instead of the enactment of the new language curriculum lie in the structural features of their work. In other words, as the teachers were negotiating with the new language curriculum and forming

trajectories of action, they were doing so not only in relation to what they believed to be important for language instruction, but also in relation what was thought to be possible and reasonable within their surrounding structures.

	MEANING MAKING AND AGENCY	TEACHERS
Identity of subject matter	Language teaching as a platform for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner	T1, T2, T3
	Language teaching as a platform for basic comprehension and technical skills	T4, T5, T8, T10
Teaching goals and concerns	Reading and writing as teachers' goal and concern	T1, T2, T3
	Critical literacy within boundaries	T4, T5, T8, T10
The new language curriculum	The new language curriculum is irrelevant to my students	T2, T3, T4, T5, T10
	Critical literacy has always been around	T1, T3
	Curricula do not concern me	T8

Table 19 The influence of cognitions on teachers' meaning making and agency: Prioritisation on part of the parallel structures and assimilation group of teachers

9.4   The Role of Professional Development in Meaning Making and Agency

Researchers following a sociocultural path to the understanding of teacher agency often pay attention to a variety of external factors, including measures of teachers' accountability (e.g. Poulson, 1998; Sloan, 2006) and student assessment practices at a national or school level (e.g. Ryder et al., 2018). This research focused specifically on professional development because of its importance to the curriculum implementation process. In particular, it was discussed in Chapter 2 that professional development opportunities were directly linked to classroom innovation and, thus, to the success of the new language curriculum in forging a change at the classroom level. The findings of this study, as discussed above, suggest the central role of teachers in defining their courses of action, on the basis of the priorities they

bring forth in their negotiations with change. Yet, what the findings also suggest is that teachers' agentic orientation – as being more directed towards change or continuation – was significantly linked to the messages they utilised in their transactions with professional development. What emerges from the findings is the strong correlation between the priorities the teachers brought forth and the professional opportunities available to them. These findings, as discussed below, suggest the mediating role of professional development in providing the teachers with the affordances they needed in order to unfreeze from existing teaching trajectories and ways of thinking.

9.4.1   Meaning making and professional support

The question of how policymakers mobilised the new language curriculum yields an ambivalent answer. Uncertainty looms larger when considering the content of guidance that the reformers had offered to Cypriot teachers to facilitate classroom innovation. In particular, participation in professional development was portrayed as the main solution for steering change at the classroom level. Although there was the acknowledgement of the need to help teachers to make conscious and ongoing decisions that would benefit the curriculum implementation in the long run (see MoEC, 2004; 2007), policymakers remained particularly attentive to the initial level of professional development (see Pedagogical Institute, 2010a; 2010b), providing Cypriot teachers with informative seminars to attend to, which were not compulsory. The development programmes available to Cypriot teachers were thus focused on the assumption that the new language curriculum would simultaneously elicit the behaviours and practices envisioned by the policymakers. For example, professional development, according to the Pedagogical Institute's official announcement, was aimed at teachers' "familiarisation with the basic principles, the goals and content of the new curricula" (Pedagogical Institute, 2010a, p. 21). After a short while, and in response to the implementation of the new language curriculum (period 2011-2012), research evidence started to emerge, highlighting teachers' dissatisfaction with professional development (e.g. Karagiorgi, 2012; Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012). This study substantiates those findings.

Professional development did not create the affordances that the majority of the participating teachers needed in order to embark on a process of re-examining the beliefs and classroom patterns that formed part of their classroom teaching for years. Chapter 4 presented and discussed studies that have arrived to similar conclusions. Hollenbeck and Kalchman (2013), for instance, attributed the failure of professional development to its inadequacy to encourage

their participants to question their beliefs and existing classroom practice. In corroboration with those studies, the findings of this study suggested that teachers did not encounter the professional discourses that would encourage a disconnection from previous classroom teaching and ways of thinking. The guidance created for the new language curriculum was hasty and superficial, as the findings suggest. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that professional development failed its purpose to educate the teachers in relation to the new language curriculum, but most importantly, it triggered the teachers' disregard for both the professional development scheme and the new language curriculum. The teachers' disregard appeared to be related to the assumed failure of professional development to offer the kind of support and guidance that the teachers needed in order to unlock the new language curriculum in their classrooms; findings which echo other studies as well (e.g. Charalambous & Karagiorgi, 2002; Karagiorgi & Symeou, 2007; Neophytou & Valiandes, 2012). According to the findings of this study, the teachers thought of the new language curriculum as having been represented too abstractly, and in ways that obstructed them from developing a clearer understanding of what the new language curriculum was about, and what it was requesting of them. Such limited affordances encouraged some of the teachers to re-interpret critical literacy discourses into classroom instruction that felt to be familiar and safe, while other critical literacy discourses remained largely unnoticed. Most profoundly, professional development did not support those teachers who wished to better their practice, and discouraged others from engaging with the new language curriculum in the thought that they will fail. The eventual reliance of these teachers on their teacher-proof materials emerged in response to the limited professional support they had been offered. Prioritising other classroom discourses over the enactment of the new language curriculum was thus manifested as a conscious response on part of these teachers who, in the midst of making sense of the new language curriculum, they were not given the incentives to unfreeze from their current ways of thinking and doing, nor the support they needed in pursuing curriculum implementation. Such prioritisation also served to anchor their agency on their existing teaching trajectories, where their role was clearly defined, and where relying upon their teaching guides was the only way forward. Protesting against the government's calls for increased autonomy came, perhaps, as an expected response on part of these teachers who, having been offered limited professional support, experienced this requirement as a threat to their effectiveness inside the classroom. Table 20 summarises the influence of professional development on these teachers' meaning making and agency.

MEANING MAKING AND AGENCY		TEACHERS
Professional Development	Professional development was too much theory it actually confused me	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T10
	Increased teacher autonomy is resisted	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T10

Table 20 The influence of professional development on teachers' meaning making and agency: Prioritisation on part of the parallel structures and assimilation group of teachers

9.4.2 Framing discourses of professional pedagogues

The development of the new language curriculum sought to communicate the necessity for change in education. Driven by the purpose to outcast ways of language teaching and learning that were deemed outmoded, the fruition of the new language curriculum, as elaborated in Chapter 2, rested heavily upon teachers who make informed judgements, and act as "professional pedagogue[s]" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3), not only in relation to what is taught inside the classroom, but also in relation to their role as agents of change. However, messages regarding teachers' professionalism, as the findings suggest, were not communicated to the teachers in a coherent manner. Although official discourses of curriculum change made reference to autonomous professionals (see MoEC, 2004; 2011), the picture that was pushed forward was that of teachers as passive recipients of the knowledge held by others. Instead of challenging the existing hierarchies of power and control, professional development continued lecturing the teachers and treating them as mere implementers of a curriculum developed by others. This incoherence was found to be a shaping contextual factor for the majority of the participating teachers; encouraging some to 'step up' (Buchanan, 2015), and others to enact their agency in ways that resembled Vähäsantanen's (2015) 'reserved' position.

Emerging from the findings is thus an apparent distinction between the participating teachers; one that could be attributed to the level of the teachers' discretion over the new language curriculum. It can be argued, for instance, that whereas the teachers who talked from a place of accommodation exercised a high discretion over the new language curriculum– that is, they understood what the new language curriculum was about and what it required from them – others were unclear about how to carry it out (see Table 20). From the perspective of these teachers, their work was becoming significantly re-professionalised in ways that involved

greater complexity, more subject matter expertise, more sophisticated judgements over what gets to be taught or not. Yet at the same time, other aspects of their work were becoming, or better remaining, de-professionalised in terms of reduced discretion over curriculum goals, and a professional development scheme which appeared to have inhibited them from envisioning the new language curriculum as a possible, and a desirable, course of action. Notably, these different levels of discretion across the teachers; suggestive of the strong cognitions of few, and the incongruent cognitions that others drew upon in their dealings with the new language curriculum, encouraged a different enactment of agency in response to professional development. On the one hand, for instance, some of the teachers enacted their agency by developing structures that responded back to the incoherent messages around them (e.g. self-education). Table 21 summarises how these teachers enacted their agency to compensate for the inadequate professional development they received. On the other hand, other teachers internalised such incoherent messages by positioning themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy (see Table 20). The majority of teachers, in particular, presented themselves as being dependent upon others for becoming acquainted with the new language curriculum; often suggesting that curriculum enactment should concern others – the experts – and not themselves. Similar responses were reported by other studies as well. Ryder et al. (2018), for instance, identified a 'transfer of authority' expression of agency, whereby teachers abdicated their control over their teaching to policymakers, and Biesta et al. (2015) ascribed such tendencies to the teachers' reluctance to assume responsibility for their work. The findings herein support these studies, they further suggest that the tendency to *transfer* (see Ryder et al. 2018) curriculum implementation to others emerged as a response from teachers who, caught in the midst of change, were refused the incentives that would enable them to adopt a more autonomous and flexible role inside their classrooms. What the findings of this study suggest is that, in agreeing with Flores (2005, p. 411), imposed changes in teacher professionalism "do not work, in a straightforward way", but rather are internalised in different ways; from teachers positioning themselves as agents of their own learning and development to teachers who ascribe themselves to "the authority of external policy structures" (Ryder et al., 2018, p. 552).

MEANING MAKING AND AGENCY		TEACHERS
Professional Development	Professional development encourages self-education	T6, T7, T9

Table 21 The influence of professional development on teachers' meaning making and agency: Prioritisation on part of the accommodation group of teachers

9.5 The Role of the School Context in Meaning Making and Agency

Studies that adopted a sociocultural perspective on curriculum implementation recognise the mediating effect of the school context on the ways teachers enact their agency in the contexts of curriculum reforms (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Milne et al., 2006; Priestley & Drew, 2016; Priestley et al., 2012b; Ryder et al., 2018; Sloan, 2006). The findings of this study support such studies and further proclaim the mediating role of schools on the temporality of agency. The findings of this study make clear that that cognitions acted as a catalyst on how the teachers negotiated their meaning making and enacted agency in the context of the new language curriculum. Yet the findings further indicate that the role that cognitions performed – whether they served to navigate the teachers more towards the new language curriculum or away from it – appeared to be strongly related to whether schools enabled the teachers to unfreeze from current ways of thinking and doing. The findings, as discussed above, do indicate that teachers are agents of their own instructional decisions and that they exercise their professional judgement on the basis of what they believe to be important and worthwhile for language instruction. Yet the findings also suggest that what the teachers believed and what they defined as their teaching priorities were linked to the discourses and resources available in their schools. Consonant with Priestly and Drew's (2016, p. 9) conclusion that the achievement of agency relates to "the availability of resources – material, cultural and relational – or the lack of", this study suggests that the absence of such resources ties teachers to particular ways of thinking and doing and prevents them from considering change as a plausible scenario of action. On the other hand, the findings also suggest that availability of such resources can steer teachers' agency towards change.

9.5.1   School features that favoured change

The findings of this study show that schools do not always create tensions that serve to delineate what teachers are pursuing inside their classrooms, but can also become arenas that are resilient in the face of change. Whilst reflecting upon their experiences of belonging within their schools, some teachers talked about the managerial resources that afforded them to use their legitimacy inside their classrooms, and made reference to such school priorities that aligned with the new language curriculum. This openness and alignment encouraged a sense of equilibrium that motivated these teachers to pursue curriculum enactment on their own terms.. In the findings, there is the sense that the openness that these teachers had experienced, combined with the managerial resources that sought to communicate trust and professional responsibility, were significantly associated with the implementation of the new language curriculum and worked, not so much to influence what these teachers have prioritised for instruction, but rather to confirm that what they were pursuing inside their classrooms was in line with their schools' agenda. These findings corroborate with the results of several other studies. Both Sloan (2006) and Buchanan (2015) for instance, talked about the important link between school context and identity, with Buchanan (2015, p. 704) describing such a link as "self-creation process within the context of their [teachers'] local school" and Sloan (2006, p. 141) as the "ways he or she identifies with a given figured world". They both found that the ways in which teachers decide or are afforded to exhibit their agency is related to who they are within a given context and how much this context seems to fit with their identity. Table 22 summarises the influence of the school context on these teachers' meaning making and agency.

Contemporary studies also continue to affirm the importance of a risk-taking and innovative school culture in encouraging the change at the classroom level (Priestley et al., 2015; Wallace & Priestley, 2011). In general, social interaction and collegiality is often found to encourage risk-taking orientations. Coburn (2004), in particular, suggests that such risk-taking orientations are afforded on the basis of a collaborative sensemaking process, during which teachers learn from each other and examine taken-for-granted assumptions. The findings of this study suggest that such school features, including strong lines of communication and feedback, risk-taking orientations and support, led to a high discretion over the new language curriculum and afforded a clear sense of direction. The findings further suggest that such school features can serve to motivate teachers to respond to curriculum reforms with changes in their classrooms. For instance, Anna's (T7) determination to change her classroom teaching

in response to the new language curriculum might have been triggered by her congruent cognitions; yet it was sustained by the strong channels of communication and feedback that were established within her school (see Table 22). These school features provided the teacher with the cognitive backup she needed to make sense of the new language curriculum. Structures within her school worked to encourage the teacher to unfreeze from previous ways of doing and to pursue a change in her classroom teaching. Similar findings were reported by other studies as well. In their study, Ryder and Banner (2013) found evidence of collegial support that encouraged deep changes in their classroom practice.

	MEANING MAKING AND AGENCY	TEACHERS
School context	I am given space to pursue my own goals (School C and D)	T6, T9
	Our school encourages risk-taking and innovation (School C)	T7

Table 22 The influence of the school context on teachers' meaning making and agency: Prioritisation on part of the accommodation group of teachers

9.5.2 School features that favoured continuation

In contrast to the above discussion, the findings of this study mainly suggest the prevalence of cognitions that favoured continuation over change. Such cognitions, manifested inside the classroom as a set of priorities that led to assimilation or parallel structures responses on part of the teachers, appeared to be strongly related to the schools in which these teachers worked (see Table 23). Few teachers, for instance, talked about the paucity of classroom materials as limiting their ability to skilfully enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms. Similar remarks were made by teachers in other studies as well (e.g. Kırkgöz, 2008; Valencia et al., 2006). The most common remark among the teachers was that their schools were pursuing learning objectives which were highlighted as being irrelevant to what the new language curriculum proposed. This is a recurrent issue within the curriculum implementation literature. Studies, a small part of which was discussed in Chapter 4, often talk about a "complex web of […] traditions" (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 404) that circulate in teachers' classroom practice, and delineate what is thought to be good and worthwhile within a school (e.g. Coburn, 2001; Ryder & Banner, 2013). This study collected evidence of this sort,

whereby the teachers perceived the new language curriculum through the prism of such worldviews that rendered it as a concept irrelevant to their schools' agreed-upon priorities. In making meaning of the new language curriculum, these teachers utilised their experiences of belonging within their schools which, as the findings suggest, served to direct their agency more towards preserving current ways of thinking and doing. The influence of the school context on the teachers' meaning making and agency is summarised in Table 23.

School culture, as the constellation of shared priorities and regularities (Hargreaves, 1994), thus appeared to have exerted a significant influence on the teachers' meaning making and agency, since it served to confirm – or better not to challenge – their existing cognitions. What is strongly represented here is that schools did not provide the teachers with the incentives to unfreeze from existing ways of thinking and doing and to consider change as a plausible scenario. Instead, as the findings suggest, the way the teachers enacted their agency indicates the prevalence of an agentic orientation that favoured continuation over change and, to a certain degree, such orientation was constructed by the school context which prioritised the acquisition of skills other than the ones proposed by the new language curriculum. As the findings indicate, these teachers' responses to the new language curriculum can be summarised as "Our school has other learning goals", often explicitly regarding the acquisition of other skills, mainly the mastering of technical reading and writings skills, as a shared priority. It could be said here, in other words, that these teachers established a sense of "what is out there" (Weick, 1995, p. 79) as they were negotiating with what their schools have prioritised for instruction. Such tendencies were reported by other studies as well (e.g. Ryder & Banner, 2013). In her studies following a sensemaking perspective on curriculum implementation, Coburn (2001; 2004) provided evidence of teachers who responded to a curriculum reform in ways that pertained to the discourses available in their schools. Within the context of this study, the meaning that the teachers constructed for the new language curriculum was the one that was already available to them through interactions with their schools. The ways they negotiated with the new language curriculum through interactions with their schools served to "deny the legitimacy of the new arrangements", as Burnes and Hakeen (1994, p. 15) pointly remarked, but also to strengthen the teachers' existing priorities and to advance those into a shared responsibility that acted as a shield against external influences.

MEANING MAKING AND AGENCY	TEACHERS
School context Our school has other learning goals (School A and B)	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5
I am given space to pursue my own goals (School D)	T8
I am just doing my job (School E)	T10
Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation (School B)	T3, T4

Table 23 The influence of the school context on teachers' meaning making and agency: Prioritisation on part of the parallel structures and assimilation group of teachers

Spillane (1999), as discussed in Chapter 4, talked about zones of enactment and whether they 'extend' beyond the classroom level or whether they are 'individualistic can have a significant effect on curriculum implementation. This features significantly in this study. Whereas the teachers who talked from a place of accommodation had zones of enactment that extended beyond their individual classrooms (see Table 22), Maria's (T10) private zone deprived the teacher from a much needed collegial interaction. Maria's school context did not provide her with the incentives to unfreeze from existing teaching trajectories and ways of thinking. The lack of supportive environment and collegiality that Maria talked about influenced the ways she enacted her agency, not only in relation to the new language curriculum but also, perhaps most importantly, in relation to the teaching profession. For instance, Maria's reflections on her experiences of belonging within her school can be summarised as "I am just doing my job" (see Table 23). In Pierce et al. (2001, p. 300) words, Maria was losing "her desire to experience causal efficacy in altering the environment". These weak negotiations between Maria and her surrounding culture and structure influenced an enactment of agency that was more directed towards preserving the present; or even directed towards surviving her imposed isolation, which was translated into her inability to consider herself as part of the group. In transactions with her school context, Maria made meaning and enacted agency in ways that directed her away from the new language curriculum and towards a more 'reserved' response to the new language curriculum. The teacher thus remained particularly focused on priorities that reflected her persistence of viewing language teaching as the acquisition of technical reading and writings skills. By closing the doors of her classroom to the new language curriculum, Maria was able to maintain a momentum within her school. Her lack of alignment with her school context, encouraged by a culture of isolation, tied Maria to classroom

priorities that would not expose her to uncertainty. Her school context had an effect on her decision, as it provided her with no alternative course of action. Chapter 4 presented and discussed studies that arrived to similar conclusions regarding the role of social structures within schools. Roehrig et al. (2007), for instance, collected evidence which linked teachers' traditional beliefs to their isolated school structures. In this and similar studies, the conclusion that is usually drawn is that, in the absence of collective sensemaking and in the presence of a culture of isolation, teachers' capacity and will to innovate is compromised; often replaced with their reserved orientation towards change. The findings of this study also agree with a study conducted by Biesta et al (2015) in which school cultures were found to have deprived teachers from sensemaking opportunities.

9.5.3   Gap between identity and school context

It was discussed above, that alignment between the teachers and their school context resulted in a situation that favoured change. Oftentimes, however, school contexts can become arenas where teacher identities are met with competing set of discourses. Paul's (T8) cognitive framework, a result of his extensive experience of successful classroom teaching, provided him with a strong sense of satisfaction and, as an extension of that, with a resistant position towards the new language curriculum. Paul, however, was met with his school innovative agenda, which promoted the new language curriculum as a school goal. Although his colleague Michael (T9) was already in alignment with this agenda, Paul adopted an alternative course of action, suggestive of a gap between the teacher's identity and his school. The way in which Paul enacted his agency, favouring the enactment of Daphne project instead of the enactment of the new language curriculum, can be regarded as his way to create an environment where such tensions could be addressed, and where the teacher was in control. This alternative course of action emerged as Paul's priority and helped me to establish his place within his school; to shield himself from the changes around them.

The findings point towards Bandura's idea of satisfaction (1989; 2001). Agency is enacted, Bandura remarked, on the basis of personal goals, echoing Archer's conceptualisation of agency as concerns that evolve into projects. Bandura (2001, p. 8) further explained that such goals give people "self-satisfaction and a sense of pride and self-worth" and work to direct them away from activities that might lead to *self-devaluation*. What motivates action is therefore a cognitive framework – as previously discussed – which encompasses past experiences and present judgements and which evolve as part of who teachers are; as part of

their identity. What influences satisfaction is when this cognitive framework is challenged by a curriculum policy, the findings suggest, that works to replace particular components of such cognitive frameworks. However, the way Paul enacted his agency in the context of the new language curriculum also suggests his low discretion over the new language curriculum. For instance, Paul explained that being held accountable to implement the new language curriculum is a threat to his agency. His negotiation with the new language curriculum was restrained by the lack of in-depth information on the purposes and goals of the new language curriculum. Paul's law discretion over the new language curriculum anchored the teacher on practices and beliefs that were familiar and brought forth a form of resistance to such school discourses that felt to be a threat to his identity. Fullan nudged towards this acknowledgement when he argued that change is emotional. Similarly, Spillane et al. (2002, p. 402) contested that "whatever threat is challenging self-esteem can be discounted". As teachers shift between their past, present and future in deciding how to act, they are seen to be constrained or afforded by their self-judgement of how well they can execute the course of action required to deal with change. "Such beliefs" Bandura (2001, p. 10) writes, "influence whether people think pessimistically or optimistically" about themselves. Because acting outside of their capabilities can really produce negative consequences for teachers, self-efficacy judgement, whether based on accuracy or perception, influences the kind of decisions teachers make.

9.6   Sensemaking: Reflections on Teacher Meaning Making and Agency

Sensemaking happened differently for different teachers. In fact, the ways in which the participating teachers prioritised particular classroom discourses over others, and the ways they enacted their agency in response to the affordances or limitations around them, suggest the complicated nature of conflicting or aligned personal and contextual factors, as also observed by Ryder and Banner (2013) and other studies as well (e.g. Ritchie & Rigano, 2002). In case of alignment, the teachers were encouraged to look beyond the contextual deficiencies (e.g. limited professional support) around them and to bring forth a world that facilitated change. Congruency between the teachers' cognitions and the new language curriculum was indeed a motivating factor, as it is widely remarked by several other studies as well (e.g. Coburn, 2004). Yet, these teachers experienced such congruence within supportive and innovative schools; where agreed-upon priorities and taken-for-granted ways of doing and thinking had flexibility and innovation built in them, and where strong channels of communication enabled an agentic orientation that favoured change. The teachers discussed herein responded to the new language curriculum with a set of instructional decisions that

worked to accommodate change. What they prioritised for instruction was partly constituted by what they believed to be important for language instruction, but it was also partly constituted by their schools. The findings suggest that these teachers not only utilised their cognitions in their dealings with the new language curriculum. They have also utilised the discourses within their schools which called for innovation and encouraged organisational legitimacy in pursuing the new language curriculum in ways relevant to their students. These school features created the situations whereby the new language curriculum was not regarded as a concept foreign to their surroundings, but rather as a concept that formed part of their experiences within their schools. In case of misalignment, the teachers tended to 'push back' (Buchanan, 2015) by prioritising classroom discourses that served the continuation of existing ways of thinking and doing. Yet, teachers' classroom priorities also reflected the contextual impediments around them. Unlike the aforementioned teachers, these teachers were not given the incentives they needed to unfreeze from their current ways of thinking and doing. Their experiences of belonging within their schools, and their low discretion over the new language curriculum – being the result of the inadequate professional support they had been offered – anchored their agency on classroom practices that were familiar.

This approach to the analysis of the findings highlights the never-ending interaction between agency and structure, and the teachers' active role in shaping their responses to the contingencies around them by defining their priorities. This is not to suggest that the teachers participating in this study have not compromised. In fact, the findings suggest that some teachers formed priorities on the basis of what they believed about their students, and also what they believed about themselves as being capable to deliver. Rather, this analysis suggests that the new language curriculum presented the teachers with a choice of how best to act in response to it. The priorities they defined brought forth a world in which they were in control.

These findings reveal nuanced notions of sensemaking that contributes to prior research. Sensemaking is necessarily cognitive (Coburn; 2004; 2005). The participating teachers, for instance, looked inwards to make meaning of the new language curriculum and defined desirable courses of action. The teachers' sensemaking process, therefore, served to mediate the impact of their surroundings on their agency, oftentimes conditioning individual responses to change. Paul (T8) saw the new language curriculum and professional development as proposing a threat to his identity. The way he protested against these official discourses of curriculum change, by favouring the enactment of a project other than the new language

curriculum, suggests a sensemaking process that triggered an individual response to change. Yet, sensemaking is also context-sensitive; in the way meaning making is not only an internal activity but also extends towards the context. From this point of view, sensemaking is a reflexive process of reasoning, in line with Archer's point of view (2013). Whether the teachers decided to enact their agency towards the new language curriculum or away from it was a complex decision; one that was formed in a reflexive manner (Archer, 2013) as the teachers were defining their priorities on the basis of what they believed, but also in response to what was thought to be reasonable and possible within their surroundings. It is possible to argue, therefore, in line with many contemporary writings and studies (Archer, 2000; 2007; 2013; Vähäsantanen, 2015), that the relationship between structure and agency is reciprocal. Structures do encourage teachers to direct their agency either towards change or maintenance, the findings suggest, but teachers' agency can also serve to create structures that could facilitate change or work against it, as also remarked by Vähäsantanen (2015), Ryder et al. (2018), Buchanan (2015) and others (e.g., Katelaar et al., 2012).

However, what needs to be acknowledged here is that sensemaking appeared to be an ongoing process of negotiation, triggered in response to particular situations at a particular point in time, which encouraged the prioritisation of particular classroom discourses over others. The participating teachers might have actively prioritised change over continuation and vice versa and, although many preserved their initial orientation, others re-negotiated their experiences with the new language curriculum; not necessarily in substantial and defining ways, yet, in ways that suggested the ongoing process of sensemaking. These incidents of re-negotiation signify the retrospective nature of the teachers' sensemaking process whereby, with the school year arriving to its end, the teachers were afforded the time they needed to reflect upon their classroom teaching and to re-examine their priorities (T3 & T7). From this point of view, cognitions are not necessarily static and unchanging, as widely suggested by other studies (e.g. Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009; Datnow & Castellano, 2000). Rather, cognitions can evolve in ways that can re-fashion meaning making and re-direct the temporality of agency, as the situations shift and change. Even such cognitions that appear to be 'set' – for instance those that are associated with a teacher's identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009), are continuously influenced and re-interpreted as situation changes.

The findings of this study suggest the importance of investigating teacher agency from a sensemaking perspective, as it enables an insight into how teachers make decisions for action – and oftentimes reevaluate their decisions for action – on the basis of a sensemaking process

that is both reflexive and retrospective. What this conceptualisation implies for teachers within the working contexts is that agency talks of active agents who partake in a purposeful interaction with their surroundings. To conceptualise agency as something that is enacted as part of a prioritisation process shows the influence of cognitions, but also the effect of the context. Most significantly, it shows that, as teachers prioritise, they establish their place within their contexts, and keep themselves in existence by defining what is important to them and what it is reasonable and possible within their surrounding structures.

9.7   Conclusion

In investigating meaning making and agency in the context of the new language curriculum, this study revealed the ways in which the ten participating teachers negotiated with their contexts in governing the changes around them. Their negotiations revealed a prioritisation work that reference particular classroom discourses as more favourable than others. This prioritisation work, as discussed within this Chapter, outlines the never-ending interaction between agency and structure, and the multiple factors that are at play as teachers respond to curriculum reforms. This study identified a number of personal and contextual factors that featured in the teachers' reflections upon their curriculum enactment. These findings can be contrasted with many studies that tend to over-emphasise on the cognitive origin of action, as presented and discussed in Chapter 4 (e.g. Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2017; Collopy, 2003; Cronin-Jones, 1991; Cross, 2009; Datnow & Castellano, 2000). Unlike such studies which tend to depict teachers as relatively autonomous in their responses to curriculum reforms, the findings of this study suggest the existence of several factors in a state of constant negotiation of meaning. Within the schools, this study identified contextual features that can motivate teachers to enact their agency in the direction of change. Such features, including collegial support, managerial resources that encourage openness, and matching agendas, were found to have created schools that were resilient in the face of change. The absence of such discourses (e.g. culture of isolation), as well as school priorities that clash with the curriculum reform agenda, were found to influence teachers' willingness, and often capacity, to unfreeze from existing ways of thinking and doing. Within the external contexts of teachers' work (i.e. official discourses of curriculum change), an apparent lack of systemic and effective sensemaking opportunities were observed that deprived some teachers from developing a clearer understanding of the new language curriculum. The external context further implicated curriculum implementation by communicating messages to the teachers that were incoherent

with each other. This lack of coherence encouraged some of the teachers to 'step up'(Buchanan, 2015), yet the majority was encouraged to persevere.

The case of Cyprus offered an interesting field of study as it served to position meaning making and agency within a historically centralised system which, as it appears from the findings, has offered to the participating teachers little to contemplate about the new language curriculum and minimum opportunities to reconfigure their role as language teachers. A distinctive feature of this study is that it was positioned within the highly centralised educational system of Cyprus which, as part of the major educational reform of 2010, sought to delegate more autonomy to teachers (see Chapter 2). This autonomy was resisted by the majority of teachers. These teachers articulated well-reasoned challenges to the goal for increased teacher autonomy, including the limited support they had been offered, and talked about the culture of professional development which continued positioning teachers at the bottom of the hierarchy. Another distinctive feature of this study is that it was situated within a language curriculum reform that sought to redefine the purpose of language teaching. The majority of teachers suggested that critical literacy is a distraction from the teaching of grammar which was regarded by many teachers to be an inseparable element of their language instruction.

Chapter 10: Implications

10.1 Introduction

This study was formulated with the intention to investigate language curriculum enactment. It was discussed in Chapter 2 that a lot of hope was attributed to the new language curriculum for changing the identity of young learners by changing the way language is taught and learnt. Evidence of teachers enacting the new language curriculum in substantial ways was made apparent within this study. On such occasions, the teachers would prioritise classroom instruction that was found to be in alignment with critical literacy discourses proposed within the new language curriculum. Yet evidence that little pedagogical change occurred is the most prevalent. The findings of this study suggest that the majority of the participating teachers remained concentrated on pursuing other teaching priorities instead of, or in parallel to, the classroom discourses proposed within the new language curriculum. This prioritisation work, as discussed in Chapter 9, not only showed the influence of the participants' cognitions on what is selected for instruction, but also the influence of their working contexts on whether they were motivated or afforded to enact their agency more towards the new language curriculum or away from it. These findings point towards the important role of professional development and school context in motivating the teachers to unfreeze from existing ways of thinking and doing or to persevere. Yet, they further imply that the new language curriculum was not accompanied by the means that would allow or encourage the change at the classroom level. It is suggested in this Chapter that, if it is to direct teachers' agency more towards the new language curriculum, systems need to evolve and change. This remark brings forth several implications. Section 10.2 discusses the implications of this study in relation to policy planning and development, section 10.3 discusses the implications for professional development, and section 10.4 discusses the implications for future research.

10.2 Implications for Policy Planning and Development

As an endeavour that sought to refabricate the educational system in Cyprus, the success of the new language curriculum, as also discussed in Chapter 2, rested upon the teachers and

their willingness – and ability – to assume a new role; that of professional pedagogues. This role was associated with teachers' increased autonomy in selecting their classroom materials, and making curriculum decisions that would benefit the development of critically literate students. Being a professional pedagogue was further interpreted as teachers who concern themselves with "self-education, education, and self-improvement" (MoEC, 2007, p. 3). The findings of this study suggest that such framing discourses encouraged different responses on part of the teachers. These findings were positioned within the context of a historically centralised professional development scheme which, despite government's announcement that the Cypriot teacher "should be regarded as professional pedagogue" (MoEC, 2004, p. 3), acted in ways that defeated this official declaration. These findings corroborate with other studies as well, in which a similar misalignment was observed between framing discourses of teacher professionalism and the picture that was put forth by professional development (e.g. Day et al., 2007; Flores, 2005). The misalignment between professional development and government's calls for autonomy had significant implications upon the ways in which the teachers responded to the new language curriculum. In particular, whereas some of the participating teachers responded to such calls by assuming responsibility for their own learning and development, others expressed a strong resistance and continued to position themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy, oftentimes ascribing the responsibility for curriculum enactment to the experts. These implications add to the literature of curriculum implementation as they suggest that, part of the problem of curriculum implementation might lie in the confused discourses that teachers encounter as they engage with change.

The findings of this study thus suggest stronger cohesion (Schmidt & Prawat, 2006) between the new language curriculum and the professional development opportunities available to teachers. This has implications for the role of the Pedagogical Institute in influencing how teachers view themselves as professionals. If it is for teachers to act as professional pedagogues, then it is a precondition that the professional development scheme, responsible for their learning and development, regards them, and responds to them, in a cohesive manner. This understanding calls for systemic changes as necessary for a shift in how teachers conceptualise themselves. Stronger cohesion between professional development and the new language curriculum can potentially afford teachers to shift their conceptualisations from teachers who rely upon others for guidance and directions, to teachers who act as informed professionals and curriculum developers.

Considerations of how curriculum materials are developed to match the rhetoric of the new language curriculum should also be noted here. It was discussed in Chapter 2 that the new language curriculum was not accompanied by new classroom materials, but rather by an online depository bank that worked to align the existing teaching guides with the new language curriculum. Teachers, in other words, were expected to innovate while using teaching guides that were linked to previous policies. This study did not investigate the role of teaching guides in whether the participating teachers were afforded to enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms. However, as the participating teachers were reflecting upon their classroom practice, a strong correlation was observed between the classroom materials that they used and the ways they responded to the new language curriculum. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that the majority of the participating teachers relied heavily on their existing teaching guides, which encourage classroom instruction that was focused on decoding and basic text comprehension. Such classroom instruction, however, did not align with the new language curriculum and its orientation towards critical literacy and genre-based pedagogy. These findings add to the field of curriculum implementation and suggest that, part of the problem of curriculum enactment, might lie in the classroom materials being used. Similar findings were reported by Ioannidou (2015). The researcher found that the teachers in her study enacted textual analysis in a manner that did not resemble the new language curriculum. She concluded that the teaching guides that were used by the teachers generated "an obstacle to the teaching of critical and genre-based literacy" (Ioannidou, 2015, p. 20). These findings suggest implications for the role of policymakers. Instead of focusing solely on the development of a new curriculum, policymakers should also focus on developing classroom materials that would support new ways of teaching.

10.3   Implications for Professional Development

What the findings of this study suggest is that, curriculum implementation might rely upon teachers, yet it is also rested upon professional learning and development. The teachers participating to this study suggested that professional development opportunities available to them did not provide them with the support and guidance they needed in order to enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms. In fact, the majority of the teachers explained that they could not reconcile the new language curriculum to what they believed to be important for their students. A starting point is for professional development to acknowledge that teachers have multiple goals and concerns and that, as the findings of this study largely suggest, such goals and concerns can pose hindrances to the enactment of a new curriculum.

Thus, one of the reasons that the new language curriculum was either assimilated into existing classroom trajectories or enacted through parallel structures, was because the teachers prioritised the teaching of other skills that were found to be more relevant to the learning needs of their students. Professional development opportunities related to the teaching of language should focus on helping teachers to pursue their classroom goals in the context of critical literacy. The aim should be to educate teachers not merely on what critical literacy is or is not, nor to convince teachers that existing ways of teaching and doing are not relevant in the context of critical literacy. In fact, one of the critiques arriving from the teachers concerned the content of professional development. In particular, the teachers actively positioned themselves against the *banking model* (Freire, 2005) under which the Pedagogical Institute functioned and further suggested that the more they learnt about critical literacy through their participation in professional development, the more confused they felt . Rather, the aim should be to educate teachers toward a better understanding of how critical literacy can serve to enhance their classroom pursuits, and to invite teachers to enact critical literacy in ways that correspond to their students' learning needs.

Several teachers in this study suggested that practical examples on how to enact critical literacy in their classrooms could have helped them with their enactment of the new language curriculum. Professional development can greatly enhance teachers' meaning making by providing teachers with practical examples (for instance activities and classroom materials) that are of use to them inside their classrooms. The findings further encourage the suggestion that professional development can also encourage time for reflection. Practical examples and structured time for reflection can potentially provide teachers with the opportunity to identify, clarify, and express their own beliefs about teaching and learning, but also to share their concerns regarding the particularities of their classroom. Conversation among teachers during professional development was a recurrent suggestion expressed by the participating teachers. Various studies on teacher learning and development suggest that time for reflection can act as a feedback mechanism that encourages a re-examination of existing beliefs and practices (e.g. Lumpe et al., 2000). Hatzitheodoulou-Loizidou (2017, p. 6), for example, has remarked that structured time for reflection can encourage a "reexamination of a belief, experience or practice".

Professional development is often associated with the promotion of a given curriculum policy, and with the aim to outcast existing ways of thinking and doing. Chapter 2 outlined the ways in which professional development served as a medium for achieving fidelity to the new

language curriculum. Yet, the findings of this study suggest that this model of professional development, largely focused on theory building, triggered the teachers' negative dispositions towards the new language curriculum. Some of the teachers also protested against the professional development scheme which, instead of encouraging learning and development, sought to promote a tabula rasa in their minds. The basic pursuit of professional development should not be the promotion of a new trend in education. The basic pursuit, instead, should be the development of teachers capable of making informed decisions about their classroom teaching, what they select for instruction, and how they deliver their lesson to their students. This suggests that teachers should be supported to become reflexive learners; to consciously reflect upon their classroom decisions, and to decide how best to approach their subject matter in response to their audience.

10.4 Implications for Schools

Chapter 4 presented and discussed studies that concluded to the significant role of supportive school cultures. For instance, many researchers agree that collaboration among colleagues and between teachers and head teachers facilitate classroom innovation (Kyriakides et al., 2010; Spillane, 1999; Spillane et al., 2004). Coburn (2001; 2004) suggested that collective sensemaking can help teachers to re-examine taken-for-granted assumptions. Ryder and Banner (2013) suggested that strong leadership styles that favour change can contribute to adaptive responses to change. The findings discussed herein substantiate these studies, and further suggest that schools played a significant role on whether the teachers were motivated to unfreeze from existing ways of thinking and doing, or whether they persevered in response to the new language curriculum. For example, teacher isolation and school priorities that favoured other classroom discourses instead of the enactment of the new language curriculum worked to encourage a more 'reserved' (Vähäsantanen, 2015) response on part of the teachers. Maria (T10), for instance, suggested that her identity was affected as a result of her isolated school culture that failed to communicate messages of collaboration and change. Similarly, Sylvia's (T2) identity as a highly trained teacher was reconfigured in response to her school's priorities, which served to define where she stood in relation to the new language curriculum. On the other hand, the teachers who talked from a place of accommodation, regarded themselves as teachers who evolve and change, and have expressed this identity within schools that promoted risk-taking and innovation, where lines of communication provided feedback, support, and openness. Drawing upon the findings of this study, what appears to be the role of schools in curriculum enactment is the development of teachers who

are resilient to change. Schools, in other words, can evolve into arenas for learning and development, where teachers are motivated and supported in considering change not as a threat to their identity but rather as an integral part of their role as teachers.

Creating links between the Pedagogical Institute and the schools can potentially help towards this direction and could also encourage teachers to regard professional development not as something provided by 'others' but rather as an integral part of the culture of their schools. In particular, the findings of this study suggest that teachers could be supported in their curriculum enactment with "experientially based learning process" (Guskey, 2002, p. 384), whereby the teachers are supported to learn from a new curriculum as they enact it inside their classrooms. Guskey (2002), for instance, developed a sequential model to suggest that it is not the development programmes *per se* but rather the experience of putting the policy into effect that stimulates teachers' commitment to new practices and behaviours. As Krajcik et al. (1994, p. 492) put it more concisely, "knowledge is transformed by action", suggesting that "teachers' understanding of the new practice will not, and indeed cannot, be formed until the practice is enacted". Practically engaging with the new language curriculum could potentially encourage teachers to re-examine their existing ways of thinking and doing, enhance their understanding of what the new language curriculum is about, and effectively adapt it to fit with the particularities of their classrooms.

The findings of this study implicate the role of mentors[16] as well. One teacher (T7) reflected on her experiences with mentors as having provided her with valuable support and guidance. The role of mentors was not investigated in this study. Yet, this teacher's reflections encourages the suggestion that mentors can serve to support teachers by providing ideas for classroom materials that are closer to the philosophy of the new language curriculum. Findings classroom materials that aligned with the philosophy of the new language curriculum was of major concern for many teachers – and discussing grade-related problems and questions faced by the teachers, particularly those who teach first and second grade students. The findings of this study, for instance, suggest that the first and second grade teachers were particularly reserved about teaching critical literacy in their classrooms believing that their students would not be able to keep up. Similar reservations were observed in several other studies that investigated critical literacy at the classroom level (Lewison et al., 2002), as

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[16] Mentors are seconded teachers working for the Pedagogical Institute. Their role is to visit schools and provide teachers with classroom materials, converse with teachers, discuss classroom practice and address their questions and concerns regarding classroom practice.

discussed in Chapter 3. In line with the findings of this research, mentors can provide teachers with the necessary guidance in identifying texts that would encourage fruitful and age-appropriate discussions about language within texts.

10.5   Implications for Future Research

This study adopted a sensemaking perspective on teachers' curriculum enactment with an emphasis on meaning making and agency. It has located agency within a sensemaking process consisting of three sensemaking elements in a state of negotiation, namely teachers' cognitions, official discourses of curriculum change, and school context. Related to these three sensemaking elements, the findings revealed the teachers' active role in defining and pursuing their own teaching priorities, which sometimes encouraged the teachers to enact their agency towards the new language curriculum and other times away from it. The findings further revealed that the priorities the teachers were pursuing inside their classrooms were also shaped and defined by their surroundings, which either motivated them to accommodate change or to go for tried-and-tested methods of language instruction; methods which felt to be safer, more reasonable, and more consistent with their history of successful classroom teaching. There are a number of implications that arise here for future research.

Firstly, this study suggests that teacher agency is not merely a concept that signals autonomy, in the sense that teachers act relatively unimpeded from the contextual forces around them. Priestley et al. (2012b), in particular, underlined the distinction between agency and autonomy, cautioning that misrepresenting agency as the capacity for autonomous action does not account for the role of the context. Contemporary studies conceptualise teacher agency as a product manifested through teachers' interactions with their working contexts (e.g. Buchanan, 2015; Ryder et al., 2018; Sloan, 2006). The findings of this research enriches such studies, yet they further highlights the notion that teachers are at the centre of a sensemaking process, during which they evaluate the possible trajectories of action as they search for equilibrium between what they believe and what it is possible or permitted within their contexts. For instance, the findings of this study suggest that the participating teachers actively prioritised particular classroom discourses over others, in ways that were suggestive of the teachers' roles as agents of their own instructional decisions. These decisions, as the findings suggest, sometimes favoured change, and other times favoured continuation. The findings of this study encouraged the understanding that this agentic orientation involved teachers that anchored their negotiations with the new language curriculum on what felt to be safe, possible

and reasonable. This was found to be related to the limited support they had been offered, which encouraged the majority of the teachers to persevere. These findings have implications for future research. Future research could potentially add to the field of curriculum implementation by investigating teacher agency not merely in terms of how structure can serve to afford or constrain its *achievement*, but rather how it is enacted in response to particular contextual contingencies in ways that might lead to maintenance or transformation. In particular, instead of focusing solely on how contexts can serve to impact, shape, inhibit or prohibit action, future studies could contribute to the understanding of the decisions teachers make when faced with a change in the curriculum. These studies could potentially provide useful insights into how to support teachers to deal with the constant changes around them, and what kind of learning and development opportunities should be available to them, particularly during their early deliberations with a new curriculum. This early intervention could potentially cultivate a sense of empowerment but also enhance their meaning making of a new curriculum. Future studies can build on the understanding that agency is not merely constrained or afforded but can be shaped to be directed more towards the change or away from it, as the findings also suggests. This understanding encourages the conceptualisation of agency as something that can shift and change, and thus encourages future studies to focus on the learning experiences that should be provided to teachers in order to aid them in unfreezing from existing practices and ways of thinking.

Secondly, and in line with many contemporary writings, the findings of this study strongly suggest that teachers' sensemaking was resourced by their past experiences and present judgements in ways that served to encourage the teachers to enact their agency more towards change (future) or continuation. Allied to this, teacher agency was found to have emerged as part of a sensemaking process that was found to be both reflexive – in terms of making sense and acting in the here-and-now while pursuing future goals (either long-term or more instrumental goals) but also retrospective. Retrospection in this study suggests a process of sensemaking that is ongoing and involves the examination and re-examination of selected courses of action. It was discussed in Chapter 5 that Weick's (1995) retrospective thinking ignited the critique of those who conceptualised agency as a manifestation within "presently evolving situations" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 971). The findings of this study suggest that retrospective thinking is influential, and that it could potentially encourage the enactment of agency towards different directions. Although incidents of retrospective thinking relate only to two participating teachers (T3 & T7), they add to current literature by demonstrating the ongoing nature of sensemaking, as well as the fluid nature of agency; manifested in

response to particular contexts at a given point in time. Future studies could concentrate on investigating sensemaking as it unfolds and shifts over time and could thus add to the understanding of how teachers can be supported in dealing with the constant changes around them. Longitudinal designs are thus needed in order for retrospective thinking is captured and investigated.

Lastly, this study relied upon teacher interviews as the primary source of data collection, and utilised classroom observations which served to provide context for the subsequent interviews with the participants. This design encouraged the participants to reflect upon their instructional decisions, and the factors that influenced such decisions. This design served the purposes of this study: to investigate meaning making and agency in the context of the new language curriculum. It is recognised here that this study could have benefited more from paying attention not only to the individual teachers but also to the individual teachers in their dealings with the social. In other words, teachers' sensemaking process is not only resourced by teachers who embark on a purposeful interaction with their contexts, but also by teachers who converse with their head teachers and their colleagues. Chapter 8 presented and interpreted data that support this claim. Teachers in School A and B reflected on shared priorities which were formed as the participants conversed with their colleagues and their head teachers. Future research could focus equally on one-to-one interviews and group conversations in order to explore how teachers' sensemaking process is resourced by a wider collective appreciation of change within their schools. Previous studies confirm that collective sensemaking can have a mediating effect on teachers' responses to change (e.g. Coburn 2001).

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Appendix A: Information for Teachers

Title of the research project:

From official curriculum to classroom practice: A case study of how Cypriot primary school teachers enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms.

This document is to invite you to take part in the aforementioned research project. Before you decide on your participation, it is important that you spend a few minutes to read the following information. Please do ask me if there is something you do not fully understand or if you need more information on something. Thank you for considering my research project and for taking time to read this.

The purpose of the project

The purpose of this project is to investigate how teachers enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms and the role of teachers' cognitions, school context and professional development on curriculum enactment.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you are a primary school teacher. Potentially two more participants will be recruited from your school. This research seeks to recruit 12 research participants working in potentially four different primary schools.

Do I have to take part?

The decision to take part in my research project is up to you. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to retain this information document and sign the consent form. However, you can still discontinue your participation at any time without your withdrawal affecting any of your benefits (e.g., anonymity). It is important to know that taking part in this research project will help advance theory and research on curriculum enactment, the role of professional development and the role of school context on how teachers enact the curriculum inside their classrooms.

What will happen if I agree to participate?

If you agree to participate, you will take part in a longitudinal research (one school year). My data collection will include three interviews and two language teaching observations. The project will begin with a pre-observation interview, potentially 30 minutes in length, to understand you as a professional. You will be also asked to reflect on your classroom teaching and discuss your experiences in enacting the new curriculum. Then, you will specify when it is possible for me to observe one of your language lesson. Observations will be scheduled up to a week in advance. Each observation will be for a full class period. After the observation, I will ask you to arrange a meeting with me at your school to discuss about what has been observed during the first language teaching observation. During this second interview, you will be called to respond to a few semi-structured questions regarding your choice of instruction and activities. If it is required, I will provide to you my field notes. Another language lesson will be observed and it is up to you to decide when. After the second observation, you will again be asked to reflect on your teaching during a semi-structured interview. Keep in mind that this is a longitudinal study hence our meetings will be spread along the course of one school year.

What are the disadvantages of taking part in this research?

I ought to inform you that taking part in this research might involve giving up some of your free time. Yet, since this is a longitudinal study, our meetings will be spread throughout the course of one school year and thus you should not worry about me consuming your time.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The immediate benefit for you is that you will reflect on your teaching and consider your choice of instruction and your students' responses.

What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?

Because this will be a longitudinal study, it will not stop earlier.

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

Yes. Anything you say or do during the research project will be kept strictly confidential and my data will not be shared with another research participant, or teacher, or the head teacher of your school. To safeguard your anonymity and the confidentiality of the data, I ensure you that the name of the school will not appear anywhere in my research project and your name will be replaced by a pseudonym. Therefore, you will not be able to be identified. The data will be uploaded onto a secure server where access control is in place. The data will be deleted after the completion of my thesis.

What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant?

I will seek information about your beliefs about your subject-matter, teaching goals, role and concerns and how these inform your classroom teaching. During pre- and post-observation interviews, selected questions will be used to develop an understanding on your teaching, and your dispositions towards the new language curriculum. During classroom observation, I will try to get a detailed picture of your classroom teaching. This information is crucial for this project because it will help me to understand the decisions you make inside the classroom and how your cognitions, as well as your experiences with professional development and your experiences within your school inform your daily classroom teaching.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

I will seek your permission to audio record interviews and classroom observations. In the case of interviews, audio recordings will be used to record your responses to selected semi-structured questions. The audio recordings will be transcribed and then analysed manually. During classroom observations, audio recording will help to capture your classroom teaching, some interaction with students, instructional strategies and activities. In addition to that, I will take notes that I will later use, in conjunction to audio recordings, to portray your classroom teaching. It is important to note that audio recordings and field notes will only be used for the analysis of the data. No other use will be made of them and will be kept strictly confidential.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The data collected from interviews and classroom observations will be analysed to construct a profile for each research participant. This profile will be the result of my interpretative

approach to classroom observations and interviews. If it is required, I will provide you with this documentation at the end of the data analysis process. Then, the data collected from each school will be compared and contrasted to indicate recurrent regularities or differences between the teachers. The collected data will inform my thesis on how Cypriot primary school teachers enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms. During data collection and analysis, anonymity and confidentiality will be my ultimate goal.

Contact for further information:

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You will be given a copy of this information sheet. Please do retain the signed consent form. Again thank you for your time and for taking part in my research project.

Appendix B: Participant Consent Form

Title of the research: From official curriculum to classroom practice: A case study of how Cypriot primary school teachers enact the new language curriculum in their classrooms

Name of the researcher: Christina Gennari

Tick the boxes if you agree with the statements to the left

		I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated ……explaining the above research project and I had the opportunity to ask questions about the project
		I understand that my participation in the project is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without that affecting any of my benefits (e.g., anonymity) and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
		I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name and the name of the school within which I work will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified in the reports that result from the research.

Signature

Appendix C: Teacher Interview Guide

1. Can you please introduce yourself and your role within this school?
   1.1. What is your grade level
   1.2. How many students do you have in your classroom?
   1.3. What are your academic qualifications?
   1.4. How many years of teaching experience do you have?
   1.5. How long have you been teaching in this school?
2. What motivated you to get into teaching?
3. What do you believe to be the purpose of language teaching?
   3.1. What does good language teaching mean to you?
   3.2. Is there something you would like to change in your language teaching?
   3.3. What influences the way you teach language teaching
   3.4. How do you think your students learn best?
   3.5. What would you say are your priorities when it comes to language teaching?
   3.6. What kind of skills/knowledge do you expect your students to develop/enhance?
         3.6.1. Can you explain how you go about developing/enhancing those skills?
   3.7. How would you describe your role inside the classroom?
   3.8. What is the role of your students during language teaching?
4. Are you familiar with the new language curriculum?
   4.1. What is your opinion about the new language curriculum?
   4.2. What would you say are the objectives of the new language curriculum?
   4.3. Are these objectives important for your students?
   4.4. Would you say that the new language curriculum has influenced your language teaching?
5. Do you participate in professional development?
   5.1. When was the last time you had participated in professional development in relation to language teaching?
   5.2. What is your experience with participating to professional development?
   5.3. Has professional development influenced your disposition towards the new language curriculum?
   5.4. Has professional development influenced your language teaching in some way?
   5.5. What was it that motivated you to participate / not to participate in professional development?
   5.6. Are you satisfied with the professional development being offered to you?
   5.7. What is it that you think should change when it comes to professional development?
6. In what ways does your school influence your language teaching?
   6.1. How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues?
   6.2. What is the content of your relationship with your head teacher?
   6.3. What is it that influences your relationship with the members of your school?
   6.4. What are your school's goals?
   6.5. Would you say that your school goals influence you language teaching?

Appendix D: Post-Observation Interview Guide: Example

1. Talk to me about the purpose of the lesson observed
2. The lesson started with students observing an image in their textbooks and then you asking them to describe that image. Can you explain your rationale behind this activity?
3. You then talked about the difference between texts and poems. What was your purpose here?
3.1. Is this part of your classroom routines?
4. You have integrated a number of activities in your lesson. For instance, you asked your students to read aloud the letters indicated by you and asked your students to stand up and dance while they were doing so. Can you explain your goal here?
4.1. Also talk to me about the 'boom' activity. What were your students expected to learn through that activity?
5. Would you say that you have achieved the goal of the day?
6. Would you change something in your lesson observed?

Appendix E: Classroom Observation Sheet

Date Name of teacher	
Classroom arrangement	Teacher desk
	Walls and posters
	Other
Lesson	The lesson starts with:
Activities engaged by the students / classroom discourses	How are students working:
	Role of students:
	Role of the teacher
	Aim of the activity
	Nature of the activity
	Other:
Texts engaged by the students	Type / genre of text:
	Content / theme of text
	Source:
	Text analysis / meaning making / purpose of integrating the text

	Role of students
	Participation of students
	Role of teacher
	Other

Appendix F: Preliminary Analysis of Classroom Observations
(Source: Data collected during the first classroom observation)

Participants		Observational Aspects				Sample question generated
	Instructional strategy	Use of classroom materials	Teacher-student interaction to facilitate learning of the content to be taught	Classroom activities and tasks that students engage with		
Maria	To study the grammatical phenomenon (future simple and future perfect continuous) To comprehend the text of the day (p. 83)	Teaching guide Textbook Flyer containing questions to be answered (text comprehension activity)	Individual participation to the lesson Teacher visits each student and addresses individual questions	Table activities for grammar acquisition (activities from textbook practising future perfect continuous and other tenses). Teacher assigns home activities and students start their home activities 15 minutes before the lesson was completed.		What was your teaching goal during table activities?
			Students directed by the teacher to find the correct answer to her text comprehension questions (flyer activity) Teacher corrects students instead of guiding out of misconception Question-reply discourse	Teacher asks students to answer a series of questions that aimed at text comprehension (oral participation / basic comprehension). Teacher asks students to infer about the role of future perfect continuous and future simple within the text of the day / identify the position of the writer concerning the issue discussed in the text of the day.		

Paul	Text comprehension (p. 58) Grammar activities (p. 59)	Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher encourages all students to participate and asks for their opinions Students are comfortable with sharing their opinions, stating their agreement or disagreement with classmates' points of view.	Teacher urges students to hypothesise about the content of the text using textual cues (e.g. title and image). Teacher encourages group discussion about the last paragraph of the text (Romeo, the main character, thinks of theatre as an imitation of life). Students and teacher engage with a whole-class discussion about the meaning of this last paragraph.	After reading the text you asked your students to analyse the phrase 'theatre imitates life'. What was your intention here?
			Teacher closely directs students during table activities	Table activities for grammar acquisition during the second part of the lesson.	
Michael	Recognising text genres (p. 89) Compare and contrast content of text with previous texts/ recall previous knowledge	Textbook and teaching guide Literacy book with the same content Classroom projector	Students are eager to comment and engage in group discussion Teacher facilitates and overseas classroom discussion Teacher interjects to re-direct discussion toward	Teacher encourages students to draw connections between previous lessons and current lesson (textbook unit 'Family vacations' runs for a week) for preliminary meaning making. Teacher and students compare other text with the same content (i.e. family vacations theme). Whole-classroom discussions take place about the feelings that the different main characters within the different texts have about family vacations.	Once you have read the title of the text, you asked your students to identify the text genre. What purpose did this discussion serve?

			the main issue in question Students' voice is dominant	Teacher encourages students to hypothesise about the content of the text using textual cues (e.g. title). Teacher uses the word 'brave' found the in title to ask students to hypothesise about the purpose of the text. Teacher encourages students to elaborate on the motives and feelings of the main characters and to find textual cues to support their comments / Whole classroom activities with students listing the feelings of the main characters (classroom projector). Teacher uses the phrase "he should have behaved like a man and helped his mother" for analysis during a whole-classroom discussion. Meaning making activities involving scattered pieces of the text put back together by students. Text summary for text comprehension.	
Sylvia	Using newspapers to introduce text type to students (informative type) Using	Newspapers	Teacher closely directs students Teacher proceeds with step-by-step reading to help students read the	Teacher gives students newspapers and urges them to identify the type of text. Teacher asks students to read the title of the newspaper.	A big part of your lesson consisted of your students reading a particular article. What role does reading serve in your classroom in general?

	newspapers to introduce new text genre (article) Reading skills		content of an article Student participation is limited Students need direction from teacher Teacher's voice is dominant Question-reply discourse	Whole-class discussion on the appearance of the newspaper (font type, colour etc.) / whole-classroom discussion on what an article is and how it differs from literacy books. Teacher discusses the content of the newspaper/ encourages students to talk about what one can read about in a newspaper (e.g. social matters, sports etc.) Teacher urges students to find an article (from the newspaper) and read its title. Teacher directs students' attention to an article about cleaning up forests ('Our forests need oxygen. Don't turn them into dumpsters') and asks them to read the article aloud one by one.	
Helen	Text comprehension Reading Learning of phoneme 'ts'	Classroom projector Textbook teaching guide	Teacher's voice is dominant Teacher helps students to read Teacher directs and helps students during table activities Question-reply discourse	Teacher asks students to describe the picture of the text (shows a snowman). Teacher asks students to read the text of the day about snowman (short poem). Students read aloud one by one. Teacher asks students a series of questions about the text of the day (basic text comprehension). Teacher urges the students to state the difference between texts and poems / whole-class discussion about the	You have integrated a number of grammar activities in your lesson. Talk to me about the purpose that they were serving.

				structure of poems.	
				Teacher asks students to use a colouring pencil and circle all the words that have the phoneme 'ts'.	
				Teacher engages students with a number of whole-class activities delivered in a playful manner. Activities focus on encouraging students to read words that have the phoneme 'ts.	
Beth	Reading of the text of the day (p. 68) Text genre Text production	Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher determines the sequence of students reading the text of the day Whole-class discussions/ teacher's voice is dominant Question-reply discourse	Teacher directs students to read the text of the day aloud. Teacher asks students to identify the text genre of the text (letter). Teacher and students discuss the basic features of the letter (e.g. introductory phrases, how to end a letter). The purpose is to help students to write their own letter. Teacher asks a series of questions about letters as genre (e.g. introductory phrase 'Dear'). Teacher and students discuss how a letter addressed to a friend differs from a letter addressed to their head teacher etc.	What role does text production serve inside your classroom?

				Teacher directs students to go to p. 21 exercise 1 and helps students to understand the aim of the exercise (write a letter addressed to the children series 'Red Balloon'). Students engage with the text production activity (individual activity).	
			Teacher visits each student to help with the text production activity	Teacher closely directs students on how to start their letter, whom to address the letter to, what to write in their letter and how to end it.	
Mario	How language is used to construct identities (good, bad) Text construction activities	Pictures from books and other materials found in the classroom that served to direct group conversation towards the goal of the day (identities and stereotypes)	Group discussions with the teacher providing the hint for conversations Group discussions on the role of genders in today's society. Discussion is facilitated with the teacher reminding students of relevant books Students' voice is dominant	Teacher urges students to talk about their knowledge of folktales (books the classroom has studied thus far: Little red riding hood, Cinderella). Teacher makes connections with Greek mythology to discuss identity and stereotypes (Hera and Aphrodite, Pandora and Hercules). Teacher makes connections with the biblical story of Adam and Eve to further discuss how genders have been depicted throughout history. Teacher and students discuss how language is used to construct identities within folktales (big bad wolf). Teacher and students discuss how women have been depicted in folktales	You paid particular emphasis on helping your students to remember the word 'stereotypes'. What do you think your students should learn about stereotypes when it comes to language teaching?

				(beautiful as helpless and strong as evil). Teacher asks students to produce texts from the wolf's perspective (little red riding hood)/ Text production activities that aim to help students realise how a voice can be supressed within a text (e.g. that of the wolf in little red riding hood).	
Anna	Text comprehension (p. 33, 34) Explore language and grammar to understand coherence within texts Writing	Party items to stir up classroom discussion Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher stirs up group discussion by providing specific cues to be discussed as they relate to the text of the day (party items) Students' voice is dominant	Teacher enters the classroom holding a birthday box. She opens the box and places items on her table (birthday card with the number 9 on it, plastic plates, spoons/ party items). She urges students to hypothesise about the content of the text based on the party items. Teacher reads the text of the day (p. 33). She then directs her students to observe the picture that accompanies the text and to summarise it into a statement relevant to the theme of the text (Melina's birthday). Teacher and students discuss the text of the day using verbs and phrases for analysing and comprehending the feelings of the main character (i.e. Melina). Teacher and students discuss each paragraph of the text and students summarise the central theme (writing activities).	I noticed that you paid particular emphasis on getting your students to elaborate on the cohesive elements within the text. What was the purpose of doing so?

				Teacher and students link the picture that accompanies the text with its matching paragraph. Teacher asks students to answer a series of questions relevant to what, where, who and how (e.g. what was the season, with students scanning the text to identify the key phrase 'the leaves were falling from the trees' to comment that it was autumn).	
Victoria	Recap the phoneme learnt the day before (ei/i) Teaching of new phoneme ai / e Reading Writing	Flashcards Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher directs discussion Teacher's voice is dominant Question-reply discourse	Teacher asks students to recall the phoneme taught the day before (ei/i). Teacher asks students to recall words that contain the phoneme ei/i. Teacher introduces the phoneme of the day (ai/e) and asks students to observe the flashcards on the board and indicate the words that contain the phoneme ai/e. Teacher directs students to open their textbooks at page 10 and asks them to read the title and circle the word that contains the phoneme ai/e. Teacher asks students to describe what they observe in the picture that accompanies the text of the day / Teacher asks students to write two sentences about what they see in the picture of the text of the day.	You started your lesson with a recap on previously learnt phonemes. What role does recap play inside your classroom?

				Teacher directs students to read the text aloud one by one. Practising with phoneme ai/e during a series of activities delivered in a playful manner (e.g. 'shark attack' activity: a little shark the teacher holds in her hands eats all the words that include the phoneme ai/e). Teacher directs students to write in their workbooks all the words found in the text that contain the phoneme ai/e.	
Laura	To recap the phonemes learnt thus far (ei/i; i; ou; ai/e) Reading Writing	Flashcards Workbooks Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher's voice is dominant Students are directed by the teacher during whole-class activities Question-reply discourse	Teacher asks students to recall the phonemes they have learnt / Students responded one by one with a word that contains the phoneme that the teacher writes on the board (first half of the lesson). Teacher asks students to open their workbooks and write down a series of short phrases (given by teacher) that contain words which include the targeted phonemes. Teacher asks students to open their textbooks and read the title of the text of the day (p. 8). Teacher directs students to read the text aloud, one by one. Teacher asks students to find the word used within the text to describe the dog (the text was about a puppy).	You invested the first half of your lesson in recap activities on the phonemes learnt thus far. What was your intention in doing so?

| | | | | Teacher asks students to close their textbooks and engages them with a series of table activities (teacher writes sentences on the board with a missing verb and asks students to paste the sentences in their workbooks and to complete the sentences using the correct verb). | |

Appendix G: Within-case analysis of RQ1

(Source: Data collected during the first classroom observation and first post-observation interview)

			Within-Case Analysis of RQ1			
	Observational Aspects				**Critical literacy discourses**	**Participants' rationale**
Participants	**Instructional strategy**	**Use of classroom materials**	**Teacher-student interaction to facilitate learning of the content to be taught**	**Classroom activities and tasks that students engage with**		Goal of the lesson to teach the two future tenses, remind students of the conditional tense and practice reading comprehension (T10_IN2_Q3).
Maria	To study the grammatical phenomenon (future simple and future perfect continuous) To comprehend the text of the day (p. 83)	Teaching guide Textbook Flyer containing questions to be answered (text comprehension activity)	Individual participation to the lesson Teacher visits each student and addresses individual questions	Table activities for grammar acquisition (activities from textbook practising future perfect continuous and other tenses) Teacher assigns home activities and students start their home activities 15 minutes before the lesson was completed		Teacher believes writing activities and table activities for the mastering of grammar skills to be essential for the primary school level (T10_IN2_Q1). The flyer served text comprehension goals. The teacher believes that the flyer helped students to remain concentrated on specific questions (T10_IN2_Q5).
			Students directed by the teacher to find the correct answer to her text comprehension questions (flyer activity) Teacher corrects students instead of guiding out of misconception	Teacher asks students to answer a series of questions (flyer) that aimed at text comprehension (oral participation for basic comprehension). Teacher asks students to infer about the role of future perfect continuous and future simple within the text of the day / identify the position of the writer concerning the issue	Attending to the tenor of discourse	Classroom discussions on the role of grammar were reported as a usual discourse (T10_IN2_Q4). The teacher believes that such discussions benefit her students' understanding of

				discussed in the text of the day		how grammar works within texts (T10_IN2_Q11). The teacher remarked that such discussions do not take long because she prefers engaging students with table activities for the mastering of grammar/ recall grammatical rules (T10_IN1_Q1).
			Question-reply discourse			
Memo for Maria			The teacher was pursuing two goals that were divorced from each other: to explore the function of grammatical forms and linguistic elements within the text of the day, and to teach grammar through table activities and in isolation from the text (most dominant discourse).			
Paul	Text comprehension (p. 58) Grammar activities (p. 59)	Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher encourages all students to participate and asks for their opinions Students are comfortable with sharing their opinions, stating their agreement or disagreement with classmates' points of view	Teacher urges students to hypothesise about the content of the text using cues (title, and image). Teacher encourages group discussion about the last paragraph of the text (Romeo, the main character thinks of theatre as an imitation of life). Students and teacher engage with whole-class discussions about the meaning of this last paragraph.	Developing and tending initial hypothesis Exploring text at a micro level / Endorsing positions	Goal of the lesson to develop students' critical thinking through the study of the text of the day (T8_IN2_Q1). Teacher believes that deciphering the meaning of texts with the use of textual cues is a helpful way of sharpening their critical thinking (T8_IN2_Q3). Teacher believes it is essential to engage students with whole-class discussions because they get to practise their Greek (non-native speakers) (T8_IN2_Q6).
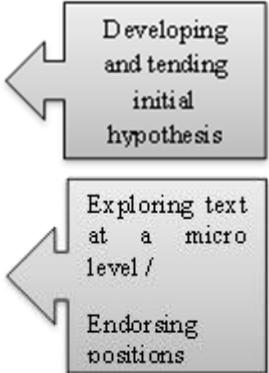
			Teacher closely directs students during table activities			Teacher believes that such discussions encourage meaning making and urge students to share opinions and draw from their experiences to make meaning of texts (T8_IN2_Q5).
				Table activities for grammar acquisition during the second part of the lesson.		Table activities served the mastering of grammar skills / recall grammatical rules (T8_IN2_Q7).
Memo for Paul		The teacher was pursuing critical literacy discourses, such as endorsing positions and analysing the texts at the micro level (role of grammar). Yet another dominant discourse was the teaching of grammar in isolation from texts (study of grammar in a decontextualised way).				
Michael	Recognising text genre (p. 89) Compare and contrast content of text with previous texts/ recall previous knowledge	Textbook and teaching guide Literacy book with the same content Classroom projector	Students are eager to comment and engage with group discussion Teacher facilitates and overseas classroom discussion Teacher interjects to re-direct discussion toward the main issue in question Students' voice is dominant	Teacher encourages students to draw connections between previous lessons and current lesson (textbook unit 'Family vacations' runs for a week) for preliminary meaning making. Teacher and students compare other text with the same content (i.e. family vacations theme). Whole-classroom discussions take place about the feelings that the different main characters within the different	Making connections and comparisons / Comparing and contrasting texts	Goal of the lesson to encourage students to share their opinions, to excel in their reasoning skills, to practise on critical analysis and critical thinking (T9_IN2_Q1). Teacher believes it is important to enrich the text with other texts and to draw connections between them (T9_IN2_Q2). The purpose of the discussion was to step into the main characters' shoes and acknowledge the different points of view when it comes to a particular issue

				texts have about family vacations.		(T9_IN2_Q3).
				Teacher encourages students to hypothesise about the content of text using textual cues (e.g. title). Teacher uses the word 'brave' in the title to ask students to hypothesise about the purpose of the text.	Developing and testing initial hypothesis	Deciphering the content using cues is a recurrent activity as it helps students to practise their critical understanding (T9_IN2_Q6).
				Teacher encourages students to elaborate on the motives and feelings of the main characters and find textual cues to support their comments / Whole-classroom activities with students listing the feelings of the main characters (classroom projector).	Attending to the tenor of discourse	Teacher believes that such discussions promote a democratic culture inside the classroom/ students are encouraged to express their opinions whilst drawing upon experiences, knowledge and believes / to identify the linguistic elements and structures the writer uses to show feelings (T9_IN2_Q10).
				Teacher uses the phrase "he should have behaved like a man and helped his mother" for analysis during whole-classroom discussions.	Exploring text organisation at a micro	
				Meaning making activities involving scattered pieces of text put back together by students.	Exploring text organisation at a macro level	
				Text summary for text comprehension.	Changing a text's discourse	Teacher remarks that such activities help students to deepen their understanding of the text of the day (T9_IN2_Q5).

Memo for Michael		The teacher was pursuing critical literacy discourses and no other dominant discourse was identified. The teacher's comments made clear that he was consciously pursuing particular critical literacy discourses, having clear goals in mind that related to the enhancement of students' understanding of how linguistic structures and elements tie text with meaning.				
Sylvia	Using newspapers to introduce text type to students (informative type) Using newspapers to introduce new text genre (article) Reading skills	Newspapers	Teacher closely directs students Teacher proceeds with step-by-step reading to help students to read the content of an article Student participation is limited Students need direction from teacher Teacher's voice is dominant Question-reply discourse	Teacher gives students newspapers and urges them to identify the type of text. Teacher asks students to read the title of the newspaper. Whole-class discussion on the appearance of the newspaper (font type, colour etc.) / whole-classroom discussion on what is an article and how it differs from literacy books. Teacher discusses the content of a newspaper/ encourages students to talk about what one can read about in a newspaper (e.g. social matters, sports etc.). Teacher urges students to find an article (from the newspaper) and to read its title.	• **Possible discourses not enacted:** Exploring the relationship between textual features and text genre / Understanding how the use of image within multimodal texts is implicated by social setting and purpose	The goal of the lesson was to engage students with a different kind of text (newspapers), to identify its main features and to distinguish it from the other kinds of texts (T2_IN2_Q1) Teacher believes it is essential for her students to be able to recognise the various text genres (T2_IN2_Q2) Teacher believes her students' attainment level requires that she emphasise on enhancing their reading

				Teacher directs students' attention to an article about cleaning up forests ('Our forests need oxygen. Don't turn them into dumpsters') and asks them to read the article aloud one by one.		and writing skills (T2_IN2_Q5).
Memo for Sylvia		The teacher tried to enact critical literacy by introducing text genres to her students. The teacher was focused on discussions concerning how different text genres influence the use of structural (e.g. paragraphs), typographical (e.g. font types) and other elements (e.g. images) and then used the new text genre as a platform for enhancing/ practising reading and writing skills. No associations were made about the ties between genres and their tenor, field and mode.				
Helen	Text comprehension Reading Learning of phoneme 'ts'	Classroom projector Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher's voice is dominant Teacher helps students to read Teacher directs and helps students during table activities Question-reply discourse	Teacher urges the students to state the difference between texts and poems / whole-class discussion about the structure of poems. Teacher asks students to describe the picture that accompanies their text (shows a snowman). Teacher asks students to read		The goal of the lesson, according to the teacher was to critically analyse the text, to realise the difference between poems and other texts, and to learn the new phoneme 'ts' (TIN_IN2_Q1). Recognising text genres was not a priority for the teacher. The teacher explained that they approached the text genre in a rather superficial way and with the aim to realise how the structure of poems differs from other genres (T1_IN2_Q3). The purpose was to encourage students to speak so to develop their vocabulary and to learn how to use complete sentences

				the text of the day about snowman (short poem). Students read aloud one by one. Teacher asks students a series of questions about the text of the day (basic text comprehension). Teacher asks students to use a colouring pencil and circle all the words that have the phoneme 'ts'. Teacher engages students with a series of whole-class activities delivered in a playful manner. Activities focus on encouraging students to read words that have the phoneme 'ts'.		(T1_IN2_Q2). Teacher explained that such activities are a daily discourse and that they serve the enhancement of students' phonological awareness (T1_IN2_Q6).
Memo for Helen	The teacher argued to have enacted particular critical literacy discourses (text analysis) but no such discourses were identified. Helen used the text of the day for phonological awareness and basic text comprehension and invested the majority of her teaching time in activities that were meant for phonological awareness.					
Beth	Reading of the text of the day (p. 68) Text genre Text production	Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher determines the sequence of students reading the text of the day	Teacher directs students to read the text of the day aloud.		Goal of the lesson to learn about the structural features of letters (genre) (T5_IN2_Q1). Teacher explained that reading the text of the day is a daily activity. Her goal is to help her students to read fluently (T5_IN2_Q2).

			Whole class discussions/ teacher's voice is dominant Question-reply discourse	Teacher asks students to identify the text genre of the text (letter). Teacher and students discuss the basic features of a letter (e.g. introductory phrases, how to end a letter). The purpose is to help students to write their own letter. Teacher asks a series of questions about letters as genre (e.g. introductory phrase 'Dear'). Whole-class discussion on how a letter addressed to a friend differs from a letter addressed to an adult (head teacher etc.). Teacher directs students to go to p. 21 exercise 1 and helps students to understand the aim of the exercise (write a letter addressed to the children series 'Red Balloon'). Students engage with the text production activity (individual activity).	Attending to the tenor of discourse	The goal was for students to understand how the linguistic structures differ according to occasion (T5_IN2_Q7).
			Teacher visits each child to help with the text production activity	Teacher closely directs students on how to start their letter, to whom to address the letter, what to write in their letter and how to end it.		The intention was for students to practise with writing (T5_IN2_Q4). Teacher recognised that students could not work on their own and decided to closely direct them in order for her to proceed with the subject matter (T5_IN2_Q3). Teacher explained that she decided to closely direct her students to proceed with

						more writing activities (T5_IN2_Q5). Teacher believes that students need constant reminders to keep them in track with what they are doing (T5_IN2_Q6).
Memo for Beth		Teacher invested time in critical literacy discourses that involved whole-class discussions regarding the mode of letters as a genre (how grammar and syntax are influenced by social context/ audience). Yet, the teacher invested the majority of her time in activities that were meant for the enhancement of writing skills. No further connections were made between the tenor, field and grammar.				
Mario	How language is used to construct identities (good, bad) Text construction activities	Pictures from books and other materials found in the classroom that served to direct group conversation towards the goal of the day (identities and stereotypes)	Group discussions with the teacher providing the hint for conversations Group discussions on the role of genders in today's society. Whole-class discussions are facilitated by the teacher (reminding students of relevant books). Students' voice is dominant.	Teacher urges students to recap what they have learnt thus far from folktales about the role of grammar in establishing identities (books the classroom has studied thus far: Little red riding hood, Cinderella). Teacher makes connections with Greek mythology to discuss identity and stereotypes (Hera and Aphrodite, Pandora and Hercules). Teacher makes connections with the biblical story of Adam and Eve to further discuss how genders have been depicted throughout history. Teacher and students discuss how language is used to construct identities within folktales (big bad wolf).	Making connections and comparisons Comparing and contrasting texts Adopting an alternative point of view	The goal of the lesson was to demonstrate to students how structuralism works within folktales (T6_IN2_Q2). Teacher explains that folktales and other biblical stories or the Greek mythology provide the ground for exploring how language is influenced not only by content and ideology but also by time and the social conditions of a given period / how stereotypes are constructed (T6_IN2_Q5).

				Teacher and students discuss how women have been depicted in folk tales (beautiful as helpless and strong as evil).		
				Teacher asks students to produce texts from the wolf's perspective (i.e. Little red riding hood) / Text production activities that aimed to help students to realise how a voice can be supressed within a text (e.g. that of the wolf in little red riding hood).	Changing a text's discourse	Teacher explains that the purpose of this activity was to promote students' imagination by changing the ending of well-known tales, and to help them understand that there is a backstory to every situation in life, as he explained (T6_IN2_Q8).
Memo for Mario		The teacher devoted his classroom teaching in pursuing critical literacy discourses. The teacher had a clear rationale in mind, explaining that his goal as a teacher is to help his students to understand how texts are tied with their social context, ideologies and time.				
Anna	Text comprehension (p. 33, 34) Explore language and grammar to understand coherence within text. Writing	Party items to stir up classroom discussion Textbook Teaching guide	Teacher stirs up group discussion by providing specific cues to be discussed as they relate to the text of the day (party items) Students' voice is dominant	Teacher enters the classroom holding a birthday box. She opens the box and places items on her table (birthday card with the number 9 on it, plastic plates, spoons/ party items). She urges students to hypothesise about the content of the text based on the party items. Teacher and students link the picture that accompanies the text with its matching paragraph.	Attending to the tenor of discourse Developing and testing initial hypotheses	Goal of the lesson was to practise with cohesive devices, text discussion for comprehension of the text of the day and then to apply knowledge of cohesive devises (T7_IN2_Q1). Teacher explained that her intention was to stir up discussion about the content of the text of the day. Teacher believed that such role play activities keep students engaged with the text (T7_IN2_2). Teacher believes that such activities enable students to 'unlock' the text (text

					Teacher reads the text of the day (p. 33). She then directs her students to observe the picture that accompanies the text and to summarise it into a statement relevant to the theme of the text (Melina's birthday).	Changing a text's discourse	comprehension) (T7_IN2_Q5).
					Teacher and students discuss the text of the day using verbs and phrases for analysing the feelings of the main character (i.e. Melina).	Attending to the tenor of discourse	
					Teacher and students discuss each paragraph of the text and students summarise the central theme (writing activities).	Changing a text's discourse	Teacher believes that such activities help students to excel in their critical thinking and encourage them to draw connections between the text and their experiences (T7_IN2_Q6).
					Teacher asks students to answer a series of questions relevant to what, where, who and how (e.g. what was the season, with students scanning the text to identify the key phrase 'the leaves were falling from the trees to comment that it was autumn).	Exploring text organisation at a macro level	Teacher believes that such activities help students to realise how text production works and how each sentence is linked to the other to construct a whole text (T7_IN2_Q9).
Memo for Anna		The teacher invested the first part of her lesson in particular critical literacy discourses and the second part of her lesson in activities that were meant to help her students to demonstrate their code breaking and meaning making skills.					
Victoria	Recap the phoneme learnt the day before (ei/i) Teaching of new	Flashcards Textbook Teaching guide					Goal of the lesson to practice with reading and writing and to learn the new phoneme of the day (T3_IN2_Q1).

| | phoneme ai / e

Writing | | Teacher directs discussion

Teacher's voice is dominant

Question-reply discourse | Teacher asks students to recall the phoneme taught the day before (i.e. ei/i).

Teacher asks students to recall words that contain the phoneme ei/i.

Teacher introduces the phoneme of the day (ai/e) and asks students to observe the flashcards on the board and indicate the words that contain the phoneme ai/e.

Teacher directs students to open their textbooks to page 10 and asks them to read the title and circle the word that contains the phoneme ai/e.

Practising with phoneme ai/e during a series of activities delivered in a playful manner (e.g. 'shark attack' activity: a little shark the teacher holds in her hands eats all the words that include the phoneme ai/e).

Teacher asks students to describe what they observe in the picture that accompanies the text of the day / Teacher asks students to write two sentences about what they see in the | | Teacher's intention was to help her students recall their phonemes. Teacher believes students need repetition and reminders (T3_IN2_Q2).

Teacher explained that her aim was to help students to realise how words break into phonemes. Her rationale is that students will realise that words with the same root are written in the same way and this would help them to excel in their writing and reading (T3_IN2_Q3).

Enhancing vocabulary (T3_IN2_Q6).

Teacher explains that students have difficulties with reading. Her goal is to help her students read fluently (T3_IN2_Q9). |

				picture of the text of the day. Teacher directs students to read the text aloud one by one. Teacher directs students to write in their workbooks all the words found in the text that contain the phoneme ai/e.		Teacher believes that students need to practise with writing. Table activities served this purpose (T3_IN2_Q9).
Memo for Victoria			The teacher's rationale for classroom instruction suggests that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted that served the enhancement of reading skills (breaking words into phonemes). The teacher, however, did not enact this discourse. No words were broken into phonemes but rather phonemes were taught as isolated entities and then a series of activities were enacted that aimed at phonological awareness.			
Laura	To recap the phonemes learnt thus far (ei/i; i; ou; ai/e) Reading writing	Flashcards Workbooks Textbooks Teaching guide	Teacher's voice is dominant Students are directed by the teacher during whole-class activities Question-reply discourse	Teacher asks students to recall the phonemes they have learnt / Students responded one by one with a word that contains the phoneme that the teacher writes on the board (first half of the lesson) Teacher asks students to open their workbooks and write down a series of short phrases (given by teacher) that contain words which include the targeted phonemes		Goal of the lesson was to recap the phonemes learnt thus far and to proceed with the phoneme of the day (T4_IN2_Q1). Teacher explained that recap activities are a daily theme and last for about 20 minutes per day. She believes that students need repetition and guidance so they will not forget their letters (T4_IN2_Q2).

				Teacher asks students to open their books and read the title of the text of the day (p. 8). Teacher directs students to read the text aloud, one by one.		Activities that were meant for the enhancement of reading skills. Teacher expects students to read fluently (T4_IN2_Q3).
				Teacher asks students to find the word used within the text to describe the dog (the text was about a puppy).	Attending to the tenor of discourse	A classroom discourse that was meant for text comprehension and enhancement of vocabulary. (T4_IN2_Q4).
				Teacher asks students to close their textbook and engages them with a series of table activities (teacher writes sentences on the board with a missing verb and asks students to paste the sentences in their workbooks and to complete the sentences using the correct verb).		Activities that were meant for learning the phoneme of the day (T4_IN2_Q5).
Memo for Laura			The teacher was observed investing some of her teaching time in pursuing a particular critical literacy discourse that concerned the study of the social function of text (identify the main character and how the character is depicted within a given text). The teacher then emphasised on phonological awareness, writing, and spelling.			

Identified critical literacy discourse

Other dominant discourse

Discourse not identified

Appendix H: Within-case analysis of RQ2

(Source: Matrix 10: Interview data collected during the base line, the first and the second post-observation interviews with T10)

Sensemaking element	Indicators			Summative Statements
			MATRIX 10: Maria (T10)	
Teacher Cognitions	Identity of subject matter		Text production! I think that language [as a subject matter] should aim to help students to express themselves clearly and correctly and I think that text production can really serve as an assessment tool for how students express themselves, whether they have a rich vocabulary, whether they use grammar correctly, whether they spell correctly, you know the basics let's say (T10_IN1_Q2).	Text production for basic skills acquisition and expression of self (T10_IN1_Q2).
	Teacher's goals and concerns	Teaching goals	I often engage them [students] with unfamiliar texts [meaning texts that are not to be found in the teaching guide] and I allow them time to discover information like who the key people are, how they feel and what the text is about who the main characters are and so forth. To me this is very important because it comes down to how they unlock a text and how they make meaning (T10_IN1_Q3).	Teacher's goal for students involves meaning making of texts (T10_IN1_Q3).
			I also invest time in writing activities [text construction] which I consider to be the ultimate goal of language teaching, because if you know how to write it means you have mastered your grammar skills, for instance starting with capital letters, spelling correctly, learning when to start a paragraph (T10_IN2_Q1).	Teacher's goals include text production activities for the mastering of the technical skills (T10_IN2_Q1).
			Well, the one thing that comes into my mind [when discussing about language teaching] is for my students to excel in their writing skills and learn how to speak correctly. I expect them to know the basics of their language, like leaving space between the words, starting a sentence with a capital letter, ending a sentence with a full stop, learning the correct endings of the verbs. I mean these things are my priority when it comes to language teaching and we also emphasise on how a written text is structured and how we structure paragraphs. My goal for this year was to help my students excel in their oral abilities and learn how to speak correctly. I can say that I am satisfied with the progress of my students. When the school year started they needed a lot of guidance and constant reminders that, for instance, we need to start with a capital letter or change paragraph. There are two students that are still facing some problems but, I guess, they too have progressed (T10_IN3_Q1).	Goal for the year to help students excel in their writing skills and learn how to speak correctly (T10_IN3_Q1).

		Teacher role	When it comes to reading texts I believe it is important that they [students] do all the work and search for clues and information [...] they should be able to work on their own. I don't want to sit there and do all the talking and have my students listening to me instead of trying on their own (T10_IN1_Q21).	Teacher encourages students to take on an active role during text comprehension (T10_IN1_Q21).
			I would say that my role is mainly to supervise and guide them. *When students are working on text production, I can see that they need constant reminders 'start with capital letter', 'change paragraph', 'check your spelling'. [...] Out of my 20 students, only seven can work independently, the others have difficulties with writing [...]. For instance, we were on the passive voice and the next day they forgot about it. They need to constantly practice their grammar so they don't forget the [grammatical] rules* (T10_IN1_Q7).	Teacher role to also supervise and guide students, particularly during grammar skills acquisition (T10_IN1_Q7).
		Teacher cognitions about student learning	When students are working on text production, I can see that they need constant reminders 'start with capital letter', 'change paragraph', 'check your spelling'. [...] Out of my 20 students, only seven can work independently, the others have difficulties with writing [...]. For instance, we were on the passive voice and the next day they forgot about it. They need to constantly practice their grammar so they don't forget the [grammatical] rules (T10_IN1_Q7).	Teacher believes students need guidance and reminders when mastering technical skills (T10_IN1_Q7).
Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	Professional Development	Experiences with professional development	But to tell you the truth nobody trained us [the teachers]. I remember going to a few seminars at the start of the year [2011] but they were overly theoretical and nobody came here [at the school] to help (T10_IN1_Q4).	Teacher transfers professional development to experts (T10_IN1_Q4).
		Experiences with learning through professional development	I've talked to a few teachers after the seminar and all of them felt that it was not helpful [...] because they [trainers] were only talking about its [the new language curriculum] philosophy and why it's good for students (T10_IN1_Q30). I don't know it all that well [new language curriculum]. I remember the trainers encouraging us to develop our own units and that we had to analyse texts in such a way that grammatical rules are studied through the text, if I understood it correctly. They said that students should be the ones to decide on the content to be taught. I personally disagree with all that. I am opposed to isolating the book [teaching guide] [...] I support its use (T10_IN1_Q17).	Professional development not helpful / too theoretical as the teacher remarked (T10_IN1_Q30). Professional development not helpful / reluctant to leave textbook aside (T10_IN1_Q17).

The new language curriculum	Experiences with enacting the new language curriculum	From my experience, critical literacy cannot work. I had a really disappointing experience with it and I strongly believe that it requires older, more mature students (T10_IN3_Q10). I was teaching third-grade, if I remember correctly. It was our head-teacher's decision to try the new curriculum out and so we did. I mean it's not like he would have said something if we didn't do it but since he said so we had to do it. We had to plan a unit about dinosaurs and so I asked them [students] to bring in their own materials and they did but the materials were not grade-appropriate […] and this was tiring me out because they had questions and they would constantly ask for my support and I didn't know how to manage my lesson and what to do with the different materials (T10_IN3_Q11).		Disappointing experience with piloting the new language curriculum (T10_IN3_Q10, T10_IN3_Q11).
	Dispositions towards the new language curriculum	I think we [primary school teachers] need to emphasise more on the essence and prepare them [students] for secondary school and once they are there, they can engage with critical literacy. […] If I devote my time in critical literacy and skip other skills, like helping them with their reading and writing skills […] then my students will enter the secondary school knowing absolutely nothing about grammar (T10_IN1_Q11).		Teacher believes that the essence of primary school teaching is to get students ready for secondary school/ transfers critical literacy to secondary school (T10_IN1_Q11).
School Context	School leadership	I wouldn't say that I want our relationship to change [with head teacher]. But I would like more support from him [the head teacher] but you know, I am not one of those [teachers] to whom the support is given" (T10_IN3_Q12).		Would like the support of her head teacher but teacher feels lack of alignment with others (T10_IN3_Q12).

	School Collegiality	In my previous school, my relationship with my colleagues was great. My third grade colleague and I have even won first prize on a science competition. What does this mean? Well, it means that it was not just me and my students who won the prize. It was the team work and so I strongly believe that team spirit adds to your teaching, something that this school does not get. Everybody is so isolated here. The culture of 'let's help each other and push each other for more' is absent here (T10_IN1_18).	Teacher's sense of motivation changed after joining her new school (T10_IN1_18).
		Now I'm doing nothing. Well, I mean, I am just doing my job, I am not getting into the trouble of doing something more than that (T10_IN1_Q21).	Lack of teacher collegiality increases dissatisfaction/ teacher just doing her job (T10_IN1_Q21).
		Now I am going back to what I said before. If my relationship with the head-teacher or my colleagues is not good, then we do not try for something more. We are so alienated and each teacher is alone and so no one would motivate the other or be like ok help me with that and I will help you with your stuff and then we will be better teachers together. As long as I am in this school I will keep doing what I have to do and that's it. I mean why should I push myself for more and spend my free time studying when people will never appreciate my job? (T10_IN1_Q22).	Teacher feels nobody in her school appreciates her work (T10_IN1_Q22).
		Well our interaction [with colleagues] has not really changed, we just say hello and good bye and that's it. And I cannot help but wonder whether it's the school's fault. In the past, I was an enthusiastic and highly motivated teacher and I would organise activities for my students and encourage them to participate to competitions as a classroom, but now I do not feel that urge (T10_IN3_Q1).	Teacher no longer feels enthusiastic and motivated (T10_IN3_Q1).

Appendix I: Cross-case analysis of RQ1
(Source: Observational Data)

A. Cross-case analysis of RQ1 in the case of accommodation

MICHAEL	MARIO	ANNA
The teacher was pursuing critical literacy discourses and no other dominant discourse was identified. The teacher's comments made clear that he was consciously pursuing particular critical literacy discourses, having clear goals in mind that related to the enhancement of students' understanding of how linguistic structures and elements tie texts with meaning.	The teacher devoted his classroom teaching in pursuing critical literacy discourses. The teacher had a clear rationale in mind, explaining that his goal as a teacher is to help his students to understand how texts are tied with their social context, ideologies and time.	The teacher invested the first part of her lesson in particular critical literacy discourses and the second part of her lesson in activities that were meant to help her students to demonstrate their code breaking and meaning making skills.

Classroom observations revealed that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted inside the classroom in ways that resonated with the official intend. Teacher interviews revealed that the goals the teachers were pursuing matched the official intend of the new language curriculum. Teachers' rationale for classroom instruction indicates that the teachers had a clear direction in mind which served the development of their students' critical thinking and critical awareness of how texts are tied with tenor, mode and field.

Accommodation

B. Cross-case analysis of RQ1 in the case of parallel structures

MARIA	PAUL	BETH	LAURA
The teacher was pursuing two goals that were divorced from each other: to explore the function of grammatical forms and linguistic elements within the text of the day, and to teach grammar through table activities and in isolation from the text (most dominant discourse).	The teacher was pursuing critical literacy discourses, such as endorsing positions and analysing the texts at the micro level (role of grammar). Yet another dominant discourse was the teaching of grammar in isolation from texts (study of grammar in a decontextualised way)	Teacher invested time in critical literacy discourses that involved whole-class discussions regarding the mode of letters as a genre (how grammar and syntax are influenced by social context/ audience). Yet, the teacher invested the majority of her time in activities that were meant for the enhancement of writing skills. No further connections were made between the tenor, field and grammar.	The teacher was observed investing some of her teaching time in pursuing a particular critical literacy discourse that concerned the study of the social function of text (identify the main character and how the character is depicted within a given text). The teacher then emphasised on phonological awareness, writing, and spelling

Classroom observations revealed that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted in parallel to the participants' other teaching goals, namely the enhancement of technical reading and writing skills. The critical literacy discourses were enacted in a reduced form. Teacher interviews revealed that the participants were mostly focused on the acquisition of reading and writing skills, which they believed required a teacher-centred approach.

Parallel Structures

C. Cross-case analysis of RQ1 in the case of assimilation

SYLVIA	VICTORIA	HELEN
The teacher tried to enact critical literacy by introducing text genres to her students. The teacher was focused on discussions concerning how different text genres influence the use of structural (e.g. paragraphs), typographical (e.g. font types) and other elements (e.g. images) and then used the new text genre as a platform for enhancing/ practising reading and writing skills. No associations were made about the ties between genres and their tenor, field and mode.	The teacher's rationale for classroom instruction suggests that particular critical literacy discourses were enacted that served the enhancement of reading skills (breaking words into phonemes). The teacher, however, did not enact this discourse. No words were broken into phonemes but rather phonemes were taught as isolated entities and then a series of activities were enacted that aimed at phonological awareness	The teacher argued to have enacted particular critical literacy discourses (text analysis) but no such discourses were identified. Helen used the text of the day for phonological awareness and basic text comprehension and invested the majority of her teaching time in activities that were meant for phonological awareness

Classroom observations revealed that particular critical literacy discourses, if and when enacted inside the classroom, were assimilated into existing teaching trajectories. Teacher interviews revealed that the participants were mostly focused on the acquisition of reading and writing skills.

Assimilation

Appendix J: Part 1 of the Cross-case analysis of RQ2
(Source: Interview Data)

		Matrix 1: Parallel Structures				
Sensemaking element	**Indicators**	**Paul**	**Maria**	**Laura**	**Beth**	**Initial Codes**
Teacher Cognitions	**Identity of subject matter**	Language teaching for text comprehension and expression of opinions (T8_IN1_Q2). Language teaching for technical skills acquisition (T8_IN1_Q3).	Text production for basic skills acquisition and expression of self (T10_IN1_Q2).	Teacher considers the acquisition of technical skills as more important than other skills (T4_IN3_Q1).	Language as the enhancement of technical skills through literacy (T5_IN1_Q2). Language teaching for the mastering of the cohesive devises through literacy (T5_IN1_Q4).	Language teaching for basic comprehension and the acquisition of technical skills
	Memo: Teachers see their subject matter as a platform for the enhancement of decoding skills (basic text comprehension) and grammar skills. Although the teachers used the vocabulary of the new language curriculum, they did not explicitly stated the congruence of their cognitions with the new language curriculum					
	Teaching goals and concerns — Teaching goals	Teacher's goal to help students to excel in text comprehension and technical skills acquisition (T8_IN1_Q4). Teacher's goal to help students "read beyond what it is stated within a text" (T8_IN1_Q5). Teacher's goal to enact the Daphne programme (T8_IN1_Q17). Teacher believes it is important for students to endorse different positions during text comprehension (T8_IN3_Q13).	Teacher's goals for students involve meaning making of texts (T10_IN1_Q3). Teacher's goals include text production activities for the mastering of the technical skills (T10_IN2_Q1). Goal of the year to help students to excel in their oral abilities and learn how to speak correctly (T10_IN3_Q1).	Goal of the year to help students to learn how to read and write (T4_IN1_Q10). Teacher invests in hypothesising but believes she should invest more time in helping students to master their technical skills (T4_IN1_Q9). Grammar teaching was framed as the teacher's main concern and goal (T4_IN3_Q4).	Classroom rules and goals to use language correctly (complete sentences/ correct use of cohesive devices) (T5_IN2_Q2).	
	Teacher role	Teacher sees his teaching role as: "not traditional per se but I like structure" (T8_IN1_Q12).	Teacher encourages students to take on an active role during text comprehension (T10_IN1_Q21). Teacher role to also supervise and guide students, particularly during grammar skills acquisition (T10_IN1_Q7).	Teacher's role to help students to acquire the technical skills (T4_IN1_Q11).	Teacher's role to help students to read and write (T5_IN1_Q14). Teacher views self as qualified to adapt her lesson to students (T5_IN1_Q10). Teacher role involves searching for materials and activities to add to her lesson (T5_IN1_Q30). Teacher assumes a traditional role for the mastering of technical skills (T5_IN1_Q13).	

Teacher Cognitions	Teaching goals and concerns	Teacher cognitions about student learning	Teacher thinks students need direction to acquire the basics of their language (T8_IN1_Q4).	Teacher believes students need guidance and reminders when mastering technical skills (T10_IN1_Q7).	Teacher believes students need guidance to learn the basics of their language (T4_IN1_Q11).	Teacher believes students require her starting from the basics (grand zero) (T5_IN1_Q13).	Pursuing two separate teaching goals, leading to contradicting roles

Memo: Teachers' goals and concerns include contradicting remarks. The teachers aim towards goals that resemble the goals of the new language curriculum yet also aim towards grammar acquisition as a skill to be acquired in isolation from texts. These two competing goals gave rise to competing teaching roles, with the teachers stating that they were trying to promote openness and adopt a student-centre teaching approach, yet they also believed that their students needed guidance and direction, particularly when it came to the teaching of grammar.

Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	Professional development	Experiences with professional development	Teacher participated to one seminar during the year on how to implement the Daphne programme (T8_IN3_Q9).	Teacher transfers professional development to experts (T10_IN1_Q4).	Teacher transfers responsibility of curriculum enactment to experts (T4_IN1_Q18).	Transferring professional development to others (T5_IN1_Q21). Conflicting and confusing curriculum messages (T5_IN2_Q9). Teacher in pursue of ideas and material suggestions (T5_IN3_Q5).	Inadequate professional support inhibiting meaning making and promoting reliance upon teaching guides
		Experiences with learning through professional development	Collaboration with colleagues acting as a learning experience for the teacher (T8_IN1_Q1, T8_IN1_Q7).	Professional development not helpful / too theoretical as the teacher remarked (T10_IN1_Q30). Professional development not helpful / reluctant to leave textbook aside (T10_IN1_Q17).	Conflicting messages about critical literacy (T4_IN1_Q17). Professional development did not support understanding (T4_IN1_Q3). Teacher follows teaching guide to have a sense of direction (T4_IN1_Q6).	Professional development as overly theoretical and irrelevant to grade level (T5_IN1_Q19). Professional development did not support curriculum implementation (T5_IN3_Q6). Teaching guide providing the basis for teaching (T5_IN1_Q33).	Teacher is not concerned with professional development

Memo: Paul is not concerned with professional development. He remarked that he had never participated to professional development and he was not concerned with learning about the new language curriculum. From his point of view, learning happens whilst conversing with other teachers.

Memo: The teachers found the professional support as overly theoretical and as communicating conflicting or complex messages to them. They argued that professional development is not their responsibility. Teachers' remarks about their hesitation to leave their textbook aside can be seen as signalling their need for a sense of direction, given the inadequate support they had been offered.

Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	**The new language curriculum**	Experiences with enacting the new language curriculum	Teaching experience as a factor of disinclination to enact the new language curriculum (T8_IN1_Q11). Teacher satisfaction with current teaching as factor of disinclination (T8_IN2_Q12).	Disappointing experience with piloting the new language curriculum (T10_IN3_Q10, T10_IN3_Q11).	Pilot curriculum enactment was experienced as a confusing situation (T4_IN1_Q13). Pilot curriculum enactment enhanced discretion over what it is important to be taught (technical skills) (T4_IN1_Q5).	Curriculum as irrelevant to students' learning needs (T5_IN1_Q7).	The new language curriculum does not correspond to the primary school level
		Dispositions towards the new language curriculum	Curriculum goals as impairing the teacher's agency (T8_IN1_Q13). Teacher sees self as unconventional in terms of curriculum enactment (T8_IN1_Q14). Current teaching practices as the result of extensive experience (T8_IN1_Q9). Constant curriculum changes as a factor of disinclination to engage with the new language curriculum (T8_IN1_Q10).	Teacher believes that the essence of primary school teaching is to get students ready for secondary school/ transfers critical literacy to secondary school (T10_IN1_Q11).	Students' attainment level encourages the teacher to think of the new curriculum as more relevant to older students (T4_IN1_Q11).	Teacher in agreement with the overall goals of the curriculum (T5_IN1_Q12). Students are immature for critical thinking (T5_IN1_Q9). Curriculum requires students who are academically ready (T5_IN1_Q6).	Teacher is not concerned with curriculum enactment
		Memo: Paul is not concerned with the new language curriculum. His sense of satisfaction with current practices, and his beliefs that curriculum goals are constantly changing, were identified as a source of disinclination for the teacher to change his teaching.		Memo: Teachers regard the new language curriculum as being foreign to their students' attainment level and to what they believe to be the purpose of their grade-level.			

			Matrix 2: Assimilation			
Sensemaking element	**Indicator**		**Sylvia**	**Helen**	**Victoria**	**Initial Codes**
Teacher Cognitions	**Identity of subject matter**		Limited input on the identity of subject matter/ a focus on teaching strategies (T2_IN1_Q2).	Language for the mastering of oral skills with the eventual development of writing skills (T1_IN1_Q3, T1_IN1_Q4, T1_IN1_Q2).	Language for the mastering of speaking and writing with the eventual development of text comprehension (T3_IN1_Q19).	Language teaching for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner
	Memo: The teachers, if they would elaborate on what they believed to be the identity of their subject matter, would regard language teaching as the platform for the development of oral skills, which were considered as the basis for the development of other technical skills (reading and writing).					
	Teaching goals and concerns	Teaching goals	Teacher goal to familiarise students with text genres (T2_IN3_Q2). Teacher goal to help students to acquire the basic technical skills (T2_IN1_Q3).	Teaching goal to help students to enhance their oral skills, which the teacher considers as the platform for the development of writing skills (T1_IN1_Q2). Textual analysis as part of classroom goals and discourses (T1_IN1_Q10). Teaching goal to enhance students' vocabulary (T1_IN2_Q2). Teaching goal to help students to use complete sentences / enhancement of oral skills and the eventual enhancement of writing (T1_IN1_Q4).	Teacher goal to help students to excel in their reading and writing skills (T3_IN1_Q9).	Teacher goals and role to help students to acquire technical skills
		Teacher role	Teacher role to keep her students' interested in her teaching/ learning in authentic contexts (T2_IN1_Q5).	Teacher role to help students to progress in their basic skills (T1_IN1_Q6).	Teacher role to help students with their grammar, lexis, reading and writing (T3_IN1_Q7). Teacher role to direct, trigger, guide, and remind students (T3_IN2_Q1).	
		Teacher beliefs about student learning	Students' low attainment level encourages learning in authentic contexts (T2_IN1_Q5). Enactment of "creative activities" to match students' attainment level and to enhance teaching (T2_IN1_Q13).	Teacher believes students cannot work independently and need constant guidance (T1_IN2_Q4). Teacher finds it "utopic" to request a more active role on part of her students (T1_IN1_Q5, T1_IN1_Q6).	Limited teaching options / attainment level influencing student participation (T3_IN1_Q8). Teacher believes students learn through direction, repetition and guidance (T3_IN2_Q1). Teacher believes students are used to a particular teaching approach (teaching delivered in a playful manner) and thus diverging from it would confuse her students (T3_IN1_Q2).	
	Memo: The teachers assigned a role for themselves to help their students to progress in the technical skills. Students' attainment level and young age encouraged Victoria and Helen to believe that students require guidance and repetition in order for them to learn the basics of their language. Sylvia believed that, by enacting creative activities (similar to Victoria's belief that students are accustomed to a teaching approach that is delivered in a playful manner) would help her students to acquire the basics of their grade level.					

Official Discourses of Curriculum Change					
	Professional development	Experiences with professional development	Professional development as referring to ideal students (T2_IN3_Q8).	Teacher in quest for practice-oriented seminars (T1_IN3_Q4, T1_IN1_Q16). Disinclination to participate to prolong professional development given its theory-based content (T1_IN3_Q9). Teacher requests a more active role during professional development (T1_IN1_Q16).	Disinclination to participate to prolong professional development given its theory-based content and confusing messages (T3_IN1_Q16). Teacher in quest for practice-oriented seminars (T3_IN1_Q30).	
		Experiences with learning through professional development	Self-efficacy concerns / teacher wonders if she has the skills to act as curriculum developer (T2_IN1_Q16). Self-efficacy concerns / teacher regards increased teacher autonomy as not safe (T2_IN1_Q29). Does not feel ownership of the curriculum/ positions self as less capable to deliver the curriculum (T2_IN3_Q4).	Confusing messages about the new language curriculum and its predecessor (T1_IN1_Q8). Self-efficacy concerns/ reservations regarding her role as curriculum developer (T1_IN1_Q11). Self-efficacy concerns / reservations regarding teacher autonomy (T1_IN1_Q13).	Inadequate professional development as impairing curriculum enactment (T3_IN1_Q29). Transferring professional development to others (T3_IN1_Q29, T3_IN1_Q18). Limited professional support igniting resistance to autonomy inside the classroom (T3_IN1_Q18, T3_IN1_Q5). Self-efficacy concerns / teacher in need of guidance (T3_IN1_Q24). Relying on teaching guide to learn about first grade teaching (T3_IN1_Q22, T3_IN3_Q1). Inadequate professional development led to reliance on the teaching guide (T3_IN3_Q15, T3_IN3_ 16).	Professional development impairing meaning making, promoting self-doubt (self-efficacy concerns) and resistance towards autonomy
	Memo: The teachers found the professional support provided to them as overly theoretical and that it had communicated to them conflicting or complex messages that inhibited curriculum implementation, but also promoted feelings of low self-efficacy. Victoria argued that professional development should concern those involved. Teachers' remarks about their hesitation to leave their textbook aside can be seen as signalling their need for a sense of direction, given the inadequate support they had been offered					
	The new language curriculum	Experiences with enacting the new language		No real changes between the new curriculum and its predecessor (T1_IN1_Q14). Teacher views the new language curriculum through the lens of the communicative approach (T1_IN1_Q7).	Curriculum cannot be implemented in the teacher's classroom (T3_IN1_Q4). Critical literacy was always part of teachers' classroom practice (T3_IN1_Q11). The change of the curriculum was experienced as confusing / no changes occurred (T3_IN1_Q13). Curriculum as a waste of time (T3_IN1_Q8).	

Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	The new language curriculum	Dispositions towards the new language	Positive remarks about the proposed active role of students (T2_IN1_Q6). Curriculum as proposing unattainable learning objectives for students (T2_IN1_Q9). Student attainment level impairing the enactment of critical literacy (T2_IN2_Q2).		Positive remarks about critical literacy / goals as important for today's citizens (T3_IN1_Q6, T3_IN1_Q12). A change in teacher's perspective about the utility of the new language curriculum (T3_IN3_Q9, T3_IN3_Q11).
			Memo: Sylvia had positive dispositions towards the new language curriculum. She believed, however, that it was proposing unattainable learning goals.	Memo: Helen and Victoria believed that nothing has changed with the new language curriculum. They believed that it had proposed goals that were already part of their classroom teaching and saw no differences between the new language curriculum and its predecessor.	
				Memo: Victoria also believed that the new language curriculum could not be implemented as she found it irrelevant to the grade level of her students. A change in Victoria's dispositions towards the new language curriculum was observed.	

Nothing has changed with the new language curriculum

The new language curriculum does not correspond to students' level

| Matrix 3:Accommodation					
Sensemaking element	Indicator	Mario	Anna	Michael	Initial Codes
Teacher Cognitions	**Identity of subject matter**	Language as expression of self and understanding different facets of reality (T6_IN1_Q3). Language teaching as promoting "students' imagination" (T6_IN1_Q8). Language teaching as a platform for the development of critical students (T6_IN1_Q9). Language teaching for understanding of how reality is constructed (T6_IN2_Q1). Language teaching as a platform for understanding how stereotypes and identities are constructed (T6_IN3_Q1).	Language teaching as interactive process of opinion sharing, exchanging of ideas and creating the world (T7_IN1_Q3). Language teaching for promoting critical thinking (T7_IN2_Q3, T7_IN2_Q4). Language teaching for the promotion of critical literacy skills / justifying opinions, critical thinking, understanding motives, acting contrary to expected norms (T7_IN1_Q5).	Language teaching for decoding and expression of opinions (T9_IN1_Q3). Language teaching as a platform for students to become accustomed to thinking critically (T9_IN1_Q6). Language teaching for acquiring not only technical skills, but also realising how grammar helps to construct the world (T9_IN2_Q13).	Language teaching for the development of critical thinkers, readers and writers
	Memo: Teachers regard language teaching as the platform for the development of critical thinkers, readers and writers. Teachers were ready to reflect upon the identity of their subject matter as being mostly concerned with helping students to express themselves, think critically and, ultimately, to help them acquire the skills that are deemed necessary for today's citizens (e.g. reading beyond what it is stated within texts).				
	Teaching goals and concerns — Teaching goals	Teacher goals to help students develop into critical thinkers / analyse motives behaviours, intentions, and actions, to understand how stereotypes are constructed (T6_IN1_Q10, T6_IN2_Q5).	Teacher goals to help students to develop their critical thinking / constructing arguments, justifying opinions, using cohesive devises to justify points of views, meaning making and text production (T7_IN1_Q10).	Teacher goals to help students to enhance text participant roles / understanding the semantic role of language through various text genres (T9_IN3_Q1, T9_IN1_Q11).	
	Teacher role	Teacher sees self as a professional educator / to teach beyond the conventions of school books (T6_IN2_Q3). Teacher sees self as responsible to find own materials / responsible to study the literature on his subject matter (T6_IN1_Q7).	Teacher sees self as constantly evolving and adapting to change (T7_IN1_Q6).	Teacher role as catalyst (T9_IN1_Q4). Teacher sees self as responsible to find his own materials that would encourage the development of students' critical thinking (T9_IN2_Q2, T9_IN2_Q13).	

Official Discourses of Curriculum Change		Teacher beliefs about student learning	Teacher to engage students with intriguing texts so to help them think critically (T6_IN1_Q6). Adapting critical literacy to the affective and cognitive level of students/ enacting critical literacy in ways that align with students' interests and grade level (T6_IN2_Q6).	Teacher believes students need world experiences that cannot be taught through a single teaching guide (T7_IN1_Q11).	Teacher regards self to be responsible to engage students with inspiring texts that would help them to develop into critical thinkers (T9_IN2_Q2).	Teaching goals and role to help students to develop into critical thinkers and writers

Memo: The teachers assigned a goal for themselves to help their students develop into critical thinkers, readers and writers. The teachers explicitly regarded the acquisition of such skills as their own responsibility and saw themselves as responsible for finding their own materials that would satisfy their goals, as well as their students' attainment level and interests.

| | Professional development | Experiences with professional development | Theory-based seminars as a factor of disinclination to engage with professional development (T6_IN1_Q13).

Professional development to provide a general idea and not a blueprint for good teaching (T6_IN3_Q3). | Overwhelming information led to confusion (T7_IN1_Q15, T7_IN3_Q1).

Teacher re-claiming expertise by resisting top-down professional development (T7_IN3_Q2).

Professional development to allow time for discussion and reflection for resolving teaching concerns and addressing questions (T7_IN3_Q4).

Inadequate support and vacuum direction in relation to curriculum enactment (T7_IN3_Q5). | Professional development to focus on resolving teacher issues and concerns (T9_IN1_Q12).

Professional development as overly theoretical (T9_IN1_Q12).

Targeted professional development to help resolve issues and concerns (T9_IN1_Q21). | |
| | | Experiences with learning through professional development | Assuming a proactive role when it comes to learning and development (T6_IN3_Q4).

Becoming familiar with the new language curriculum was regarded as own responsibility (T6_IN3_Q5).

Teacher on a process of self-education for enacting critical literacy (T6_IN2_Q4, T6_IN1_Q12).

Teacher investing time in finding own materials and studying the online depository (T6_IN1_Q14). | Inadequate support led to self-education / studying classroom materials (T7_IN3_Q5).

Teacher in quest for seminars to support her curriculum enactment (T7_IN3_Q7).

Teacher second-guessing her curriculum enactment (T7_IN3_Q8). | Language as a subject matter that constantly evolves requires constant learning and development (T9_IN1_Q22, T9_IN1_Q14). | Inadequate professional development encouraging self-education |

Memo: The teachers' experiences with professional development, being overly theoretical, encouraged them to distance themselves from professional development and to embark on a process of self-education.
The end of the school year found Anna requesting more support from professional development and doubting her teaching.

The new language curriculum	Experiences with curriculum enactment	Critical literacy as part of the teacher's classroom practice (T6_IN1_Q2). Critical literacy as being the basic pillar of the teacher's classroom practice (T6_IN1_Q5). The new language curriculum helped to update and inform classroom teaching (T6_IN1_Q5). Teacher expressed the intention to enact the new language curriculum in the long run (T6_IN1_Q4).	The new language curriculum encouraged a change in classroom teaching (T7_IN1_Q4, T7_IN1_Q9). The new language curriculum encouraged the teacher to re-call what good teaching means for her after a long period of traditional teaching (T7_IN1_Q1, T7_IN1_Q7, T7_IN1_Q8). New language curriculum as encouraging the teacher to update and enhance teaching (T7_IN1_Q12). Curriculum goals as encouraging self-education (T7_IN1_Q14).	Classroom teaching in alignment with official policy (T9_IN1_Q2). Curriculum helped to update classroom teaching / more emphasis to be paid on text-to-text comparisons (T9_IN1_Q5) and genre awareness (T9_IN1_Q11). New curriculum as an opportunity to update teaching and filter existing practices and goals (T9_IN1_Q15). Curriculum as encouraging self-education and updating of classroom materials (T9_IN3_Q3).	
The new language curriculum	Dispositions towards the new language curriculum	Positive dispositions towards the new language curriculum (T6_IN1_Q1).	New curriculum as proposing better teaching goals than its predecessor (T7_IN1_Q2). Memo: The new language curriculum encouraged a change in the teaching practices of Anna. The teacher embarked on a process of self-education so to enact critical literacy in her classroom.	Curriculum as proposing desirable practices (T9_IN1_Q1).	The new language curriculum encouraged teachers to update or change their teaching The new language curriculum legitimises classroom practice
		Memo: Mario and Michael believed that the new language curriculum came to legitimise their classroom practice. The teachers explained that critical literacy has always been part of their teaching. The launch of the new language curriculum encouraged the teachers to delve deeper into critical literacy and to integrate activities relevant to genre-awareness and meaning making.			

Matrix 4: The Influence of school context						
Sensemaking element	Indicators	School A		School B			Initial Codes
		Helen	Sylvia	Victoria	Laura	Beth	
School Context	School leadership	Head teacher as helping with day-to-day matters (T1_IN1_19).	Teacher-head teacher interaction focuses on day-to-day matters (T2_IN1_Q19).	Head teacher pre-occupied with running the school (T3_IN1_Q20).	Relationship with head teacher as not influencing classroom teaching (T4_IN1_Q28).	Flexible head teacher who does not intervene (T5_IN1_Q23).	
	School goals	School context as influencing teaching goals (T1_N1_Q22). School goals to help students to reach their potentials (T1_IN1_Q20).	School culture as influencing teaching (T2_IN1_Q7, T2_IN1_Q19). School culture as impairing the enactment of critical literacy (T2_IN1_ Q20). School goals to help students to develop their basic skills (T2_IN1_Q11).	School goals to achieve better results in language (T3_IN1_Q23). Action plan for the enhancement of text comprehension (T3_IN1_Q21). School goals as influencing classroom teaching (T3_IN1_Q21). Achieving the goals of the curriculum as a school goal (T3_IN1_Q25).	School goals to raise standards in language (T4_IN1_Q29).	Development of oral and written skills as school goals (T5_IN1_Q26, T5_IN1_Q22).	Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation School goals influencing classroom teaching and curriculum enactment
	Availability of materials			Paucity of materials as impairing the enactment of critical literacy (T3_IN1_Q5).	Paucity of materials impairing curriculum enactment (T4_IN2_Q22, T4_IN1_Q6).		
	School Collegiality	Support in the form of exchanging classroom materials and ideas (T1_IN1_Q21, T2_IN1_Q26)	Healthy collegial interaction (T2_IN1_Q27).	Support in the form of exchanging classroom materials and ideas (T3_IN2_Q3).	Supportive collegial culture in the form of exchange of materials and ideas (T4_IN2_Q3).	Supportive collegial culture in the form of exchanging ideas and materials (T5_IN1_Q23).	
		Memo for School A: The teachers are satisfied with the collegial culture of their school and had positioned themselves favourably towards their head teacher. The teachers explained that the goal of their school is to help students to reach their potentials. According to the teachers, their teaching, as well as curriculum enactment, had to be adapted to their school's goals and students' attainment level.		Memo for School B: The teachers are satisfied with the collegial culture of their school and had positioned themselves favourably towards their head teacher. The teachers explained that the goal of their school is to raise standards in language, which was translated into helping students to excel in their reading and writing skills and text comprehension. Although the school has also prioritised the enactment of the new language curriculum, the teachers explained that their main emphasis is on the enhancement of technical skills. Lack of classroom materials was also projected by Victoria and Laura as impairing curriculum implementation			

Sensemaking element	Indicators	School C		School D		School E	Initial Codes
		Mario	**Anna**	**Paul**	**Michael**	**Maria**	
School Context	School leadership	Head teacher is open and progressive (T6_IN1_Q5). Teacher enjoys freedom inside his classroom (T6_IN1_Q32).	Head-teacher establishing feedback and support for curriculum enactment (T7_IN1_Q28).	Absent leadership role/ teacher maintains a friendly interaction with head teacher (T8_IN1_Q15).	Teacher and head-teacher interact on a friendship level (T9_IN1_Q29). Teacher feels trusted by the head teacher / feeling the legitimacy to pursue own classroom objectives (T9_IN1_Q29). Teacher considers self as autonomous inside the classroom (T9_IN1_Q28).	Would like the support of her head teacher but teacher feels lack of alignment with others (T10_IN3_Q12).	
	School goals	School goals match the teacher's own teaching goals (T6_IN1_Q5).	Enactment of the new language curriculum (T7_IN1_Q28).	Teacher made use of his initiative /space provided by head teacher to be allowed the implementation of Daphne programme (T8_IN1_Q8, T8_IN3_Q12).	Teacher and school goals align / better literacy results (T9_IN3_Q12). Head teacher encouraging curriculum implementation / providing legitimacy to pursue own objectives (T9_IN3_Q13).		I am just doing my job
	School Collegiality	Colleagues as a source of motivation and inspiration (T6_IN1_Q20).	Support and motivation from colleagues for curriculum enactment (T7_IN1_Q28).		Collegiality in the form of exchanging materials, ideas and solving problems (T9_IN1_Q17).	Teacher's sense of motivation changed after joining her new school (T10_IN1_18). Teacher no longer feels enthusiastic and motivated (T10_IN3_Q1). Teacher feels nobody in her school appreciates her work (T10_IN1_Q22). Lack of teacher collegiality increases job dissatisfaction (T10_IN1_Q21).	Innovative and supportive school culture encourages curriculum enactment
			Memo: Risk-taking and supportive culture had provided Anna with the motivation to pursue a change in her teaching.			Memo: Culture of isolation as a source of dissatisfaction and misalignment with others and the teaching profession. As the teacher said, "I am just doing my job".	

| | | Memo: School openness and school matching agenda providing the teachers with the legitimacy to pursue their own goals inside their classrooms. | | School openness encourages the pursuit of own teaching goals |

Appendix J: Part 2 of the Cross-case analysis of RQ2
(Source: Interview Data)

A. Initial codes for teachers' cognitions and experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change

		Parallel Structures	Assimilation	Accommodation
Teacher Cognitions	Identity of subject matter	Language teaching for basic comprehension and the acquisition of technical skills T8, T4, T5, T10	Language teaching for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner T1, T2, T3	Language teaching for the development of critical thinkers, readers and writers T6, T7, T9
	Teaching goals and concerns	Pursuing two separate teaching goals, leading to contradicting roles T8, T4, T5, T10	Teacher goals and role to help students to acquire technical skills T1, T2, T3	Teaching goals and role to help students to develop into critical thinkers and writers T6, T7, T9
Official Discourses of Curriculum Change	Professional Development	Inadequate professional support inhibiting meaning making and promoting reliance upon teaching guides T4, T5, T10 Teacher is not concerned with professional development T8	Professional development impairing meaning making, promoting self-doubt (self-efficacy concerns) and resistance towards autonomy T1, T2, T3	Inadequate professional development encouraging self-education T6, T7, T9
	The new language curriculum	The new language curriculum does not correspond to the primary school level T4, T5, T10 Teacher is not concerned with curriculum enactment T8	The new language curriculum does not correspond to students' level T2, T3 Nothing has changed with the new language curriculum T1, T3	The new language curriculum encouraged teachers to update or change their teaching T6, T7, T9 The new language curriculum legitimises classroom practice T6, T9

B. Initial codes for teachers' experiences of belonging within their schools

School Context		School A	School B	School C	School D	School E
School Goals	School goals influencing classroom teaching and curriculum enactment T1, T2	School goals influencing classroom teaching and curriculum enactment T3, T4, T5			
Availability of materials		Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation T3, T4			
School leadership			School openness encourages the pursuit of own teaching goals T6	School openness encourages legitimacy over teaching goals T8, T9	
School Collegiality			Innovative and supportive school culture encourages curriculum enactment T7		I am just doing my job T10

C. Cross-case examination and re-wording of the initial codes relevant to teachers' cognitions

Identity of subject matter

Parallel Structures

Language teaching for basic comprehension and the acquisition of technical skills
T8, T4, T5, T10

Assimilation

Language teaching for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner
T1, T2, T3

Accommodation

Language teaching for the development of critical thinkers, readers and writers
T6, T7, T9

Comparison of how the teachers talked about the identity of their subject matter (purpose of language teaching) and re-wording the initial codes

Language teaching as a platform for basic comprehension and technical skills
T4, T5, T8, T10

Language teaching as a platform for the mastering of technical skills in a hierarchical manner
T1, T2, T3

Language teaching as a platform for critical thinking
T6, T7, T9

C. Cross-case examination and re-wording of the initial codes relevant to teachers' cognitions (con.)

**D. Cross-case examination and re-wording of the initial codes relevant to teachers'
experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change**

Parallel Structures	Assimilation	Accommodation

Professional development

Inadequate professional support inhibiting meaning making and promoting reliance upon teaching guides

T10, T4, T5

Similar responses

Professional development impairing meaning making, promoting self-doubt (self-efficacy concerns) and resistance towards autonomy
T1, T2, T3

Inadequate professional development encouraging self-education
T6, T7, T9

Teacher is not concerned with professional development
T8

Comparing teachers' reflections about their experiences with professional development and re-wording the initial codes

Breaking down the initial code

Curricula do not concern me
T8

Professional development encourages self-education
T6, T7, T9

Professional development inhibiting meaning making
T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T10

Increased autonomy is resisted
T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T10

**D. Cross-case examination and re-wording of the initial codes relevant to teachers'
experiences with the official discourses of curriculum change (con.)**

E. Cross-case examination and re-wording of the initial codes relevant to teachers' experiences of belonging within their schools

| School A | School B | School C | School D | School E |

School A — School goals influencing classroom teaching and curriculum enactment T1, T2

Similar responses

School B — School goals influencing classroom teaching and curriculum enactment T3, T4, T5

Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation T3, T4

School C — School openness encourages the pursuit of own teaching goals T6

Innovative and supportive school culture enabling curriculum enactment T7

Similar responses

School D — School openness encourages legitimacy over teaching goals T8, T9

School E — I am just doing my job T10

Comparison of teachers' reflections about their experiences of belonging within their schools and re-wording the initial codes

Our school has other learning goals T1, T2, T3, T4, T5

Paucity of classroom materials inhibiting curriculum implementation T3, T4

Our school encourages risk-taking and innovation T7

I am given space to pursue my own goals T6, T8, T9

I am just doing my job T10