AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

PhD (CURRICULUM AND TEACHING STUDIES - LANGUAGE EDUCATION)

THESIS

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UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

JUNE, 2021

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Thesis submitted to the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies, School of Education, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Teaching Studies (Language Education)

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JUNE, 2021

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used, acknowledgements and citation have been made.

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Full Legal Name

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Signature

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Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The undersigned certify that this thesis presents the student's own work and effort and has been submitted with our approval.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my son Mphatso Yewo Mafuta, my sidekick and to Prof. Paul Aidan Kazombwe Kishindo, my hero.

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The road to this PhD was long, winding and tough but with God's grace I have reached this far. I would like to thank all those that were part of this journey directly and indirectly. There were many that saw me through this journey so numerous to mention. However, there are some that cannot go without being mentioned.

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ABSTRACT

An ideal language teacher education programme should equip student teachers with subject content matter and pedagogy on how to transmit that knowledge to learners. The challenge is on how to integrate this subject content knowledge with pedagogical knowledge. In this regard, this study was carried out to explore how teacher training institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice for English language teachers. The study was a multiple case study which was guided by the Interpretivist paradigm of research. Data was generated using interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document analysis from teacher educators, student teachers and curriculum documents. The data was analysed using thematic analysis. The study found out that all the three institutions in the study, through their curriculum, made an effort to provide student teachers with subject content matter and pedagogical knowledge which eventually translate into pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). The study also found out that the various activities that teacher educators take their students through give them an opportunity to link theory with the actual process of teaching (practice). However, it is not clear from the study how the subject content is integrated in the practical activities. The study argues that while the various activities that the teacher educators take their students through provide a great opportunity for the educators to bring theoretical knowledge about how teaching should be done in practice, the theoretical knowledge about language that is taught in the content subjects is not used in the process of teaching student teachers how to teach.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CATS	Curriculum and Teaching Studies
CCK	Common Content Knowledge
CDSS	Community Day Secondary School
CHANCO	Chancellor College
CLA	Communicative Language Ability
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CoP	Community of Practice
CT	Cooperating Teacher
CUNIMA	Catholic University of Malawi
DCE	Domasi College of Education
EDF	Education Foundations
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EL	English Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETS	Education and Teaching Studies
KAL	Knowledge about Language

KCS	Knowledge of Content and Students
KCT	Knowledge of Content and Teaching
L2	Second Language
L1	First Language
LTE	Language Teaching Education
MAU	Malawi Adventist University
MoEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
MZUNI	Mzuzu University
NCE	Nalikule College of Education
NKHUNI	Nkhoma University
NSTE	National Standards for Teacher Education
ODeL	Open, Distance and eLearning
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
PCKg	Pedagogical Content Knowing
PIF	Policy Investment Framework
SCK	Specialised Content Knowledge
SL	Second Language

SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SLT	Second Language Teaching
SLTE	Second Language Teaching Education
TE	Teacher Education
TESOL	Teaching English to Students of Other Languages
TLA	Teacher Language Awareness
TP	Teaching Practice
UNILIA	University of Livingstonia
UNIMA	University of Malawi

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

English is taught as a second language in Malawi. In order to have effective and efficient teachers of English, Malawi has a number of secondary school teacher training institutions, both public and private. The role of the institutions is to equip student teachers with the relevant knowledge base to effectively implement the secondary school curriculum. The student teachers are equipped with subject content knowledge as well as pedagogical content knowledge which is knowledge that is taught in the confinements of the lecture rooms and is expected to be used in practice. Richards (2008) notes that the location of most teacher-learning in Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) is either the University or teacher training institution or a school. He argues that, on the one hand, the classroom is a setting for patterns of social participation that can enhance or inhibit learning. On the other hand, learning occurs through the practice of teaching which is contingent upon the relationship with mentors, fellow novice teachers and interaction with experienced teachers in school.

This study aimed at exploring how teacher training institutions integrate theory and practice in the process of training teachers of English language. The study argues that while the various activities that the teacher educators take their students through provide a great

opportunity for the educators to bring the theoretical knowledge about how teaching should be done into reality, the theoretical knowledge about the language that is taught in the content subjects is not manipulated in any way in the process of teaching student teachers how to teach.

This chapter, therefore, introduces this study. The chapter provides the background to the study which is divided into five themes: the education system in Malawi; the Malawi secondary school curriculum; teacher education in Malawi; dilemma in second language teacher education; and the contextualisation of theory and practice. From this background, the chapter provides the statement of the problem of the study. It also presents the purpose of the study and the research questions. The motivation for the study and the significance of the study are also presented in this chapter. Finally, the chapter presents the structure of the whole thesis.

1.2 Background to the Study

This section presents the background to the study. The background discusses the following issues: The education system in Malawi; The Malawi Secondary School Curriculum; Teacher education in Malawi; Dilemma in second language teacher education; and Contextualisation of theory and practice.

1.2.1 The education system in Malawi

Malawi uses 8-4-4(5) education system. That is, eight years of primary education, four years of secondary school, and four to five years of tertiary education. There are many subjects that students are expected to take at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and

these subjects include English. English is a compulsory subject from standard one to eight and from forms one to four. It is used as a medium of instruction from standard five in primary school, through secondary schools to tertiary levels. The use of English in the education system shows how important the English Language subject is in Malawi.

The need for the English Language in Malawi cannot be overemphasised. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) (2013), MoEST (2001) and Matiki (2001) outline a number of functions of the English language in Malawi. English is a subject for passing examinations and certification. Thus, while the student is expected to pass a certain number of subjects to get a certificate, English should be one of them. It is common practice that in the selection of students for further studies and jobs, working knowledge of English is emphasised. Furthermore, English is used in legislative, judiciary and government circles. Over and above this, English is used for mass communication. According to Fleming and Stevens (2004), the purpose of English as a subject is to develop pupils' ability to use language effectively. If the pupils develop this ability, they will then be able to pass examinations and understand different messages.

1.2.2 The Malawi secondary school curriculum

The Policy Investment Framework (PIF) (2000) document stipulates that "the purpose of secondary education is to provide students with academic basis for gainful employment in informal, private and public sectors. Secondary education will prepare students for further education according to their ability and aptitudes" in English (p. 24). Therefore, the aim of the secondary curriculum is to equip learners with the appropriate knowledge, skills and

attitude to enable them function as responsible and productive adults in their society after leaving secondary school, in an attempt to promote and sustain the socio-economic development of the nation (MoEST, 2001; MoEST, 2013).

The English curriculum in Malawi has been designed to achieve the goal of secondary education as well as to reflect the importance of English language in Malawi. Fleming and Stevens (2004) provide five models for teaching the English language and literature as reported by DES (1989). The first is the personal view model which emphasises the pupil as a creative and imaginative individual developing in terms of the teaching and learning of English, primarily through intensive engagement with literature and personal creative writing. The second model is a cross curricular approach which stresses the distinctive nature of the English language as the language of learning for virtually all curriculum areas and implying a definition of service to these areas and to education in a generic sense. The third model is the adult needs emphasis approach which essentially is a preparation for the demands of life beyond school in terms of effective understanding of and communication through use of the English language in its many forms, including those vocational based.

The fourth model, according to Fleming and Stevens (2004), is a cultural heritage model with the teaching based heavily on great works of literature generally drawn from the past. The last model is the cultural analysis view. This model leads pupils to a critical understanding of the social and cultural context of the English language, particularly the value systems which are inevitably embedded in the ways the language is used. The curriculum for the English language in Malawi seems to have borrowed from each of these

models. For example, the learners of English in Malawi apart from reading literary works, they are also involved in creative writing exercises; they are taught across the curriculum; and they are involved in the use of English communicatively in different contexts (MoEST, 2013; MoEST, 2001).

For the goal of education to be achieved in Malawi, there is need for teachers in secondary schools to understand this goal. The teachers, therefore, need to go through a teacher education programme which will equip them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that will help them effectively implement the secondary school curriculum.

1.2.3 Teacher education in Malawi

In Malawi, secondary school teachers for the English language are trained in four public institutions which are University of Malawi's Chancellor College (UNIMA, CHANCO), Mzuzu University (MZUNI), Domasi College of Education (DCE) and Nalikule College of Education (NCE). Some private universities and colleges have recently been opened which are also training secondary school teachers. For example, the University of Livingstonia (UNILIA), the Catholic University of Malawi (CUNIMA), the Malawi Adventist University (MAU) and Nkhoma University (NKHUNI) just to mention some.

The secondary school teacher training programme, in general, has three levels of qualification, namely, certificate, diploma and degree. There are various channels for one to get into these programmes. Firstly, students are recruited directly from among secondary graduates. Secondly, some students are enrolled under the upgrading scheme which caters

for unqualified teachers and under-qualified teachers. Nkhokwe, Ungapembe and Furukawa (2007) define under-qualified teachers as those teachers who have a qualification lower than a diploma and the unqualified as those teachers with general diplomas and degrees. The under-qualified are recruited for a four-year degree programme at MZUNI, NCE and DCE. The unqualified teachers go for a one-year University Certificate of Education at UNIMA (CHANCO), MZUNI and UNILIA. Those recruited from among the secondary graduates undergo a four-year degree programme on face-to-face, and a five-year programme on Open Distance and e-Learning (ODeL) delivery mode.

Richards (2008) notes that the location of most teacher-learning in Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) is the university or teacher training institution or a school. He argues that, on the one hand, the classroom is a setting for patterns of social participation that can enhance or inhibit learning. On the other hand, learning occurs through the practice of teaching that is contingent upon relationship with mentors, fellow novice teachers and interaction with experienced teachers in school. In line with this argument, all these institutions work with the various secondary schools in the process of training teachers.

1.2.4 Dilemma in second language teacher education

There seem to be a dilemma on what SLTE programme should offer. According to Leowenberg-Ball (2000) and Darling-Hammond (2006), the dilemma in teacher education is based on the relationship between knowledge of subject content and knowledge of the teaching methodologies. Thus, the questions that the pre-service teacher training programme needs to answer are: what should the programmes offer to the pre-service

teachers in order to fully prepare them for the teaching profession? Is it just the content of the subject matter or is it the teaching methodologies? To answer these questions, Johnson (2009) indicates that the knowledge base for a Second language (L2) teacher must include not only the disciplinary or subject knowledge that defines how languages are structured, used and acquired but must also account for the content of L2 teaching. This argument seems to suggest that the teacher needs to be grounded in both the subject content and the teaching methodologies.

Darling-Hammond (2006) argues that one of the perennial dilemmas of teacher education is how to integrate theoretically-based knowledge that has traditionally been taught in university classrooms with the experience-based knowledge that has traditionally been located in the practice of teachers and the realities of classrooms and schools. This could be true as experience has shown that the student teachers that we send for teaching practice seem to be confused the moment they get into the actual classroom to teach real students. The confusion is not because they did not learn how to teach, but because they cannot put what they learnt in theory into practice. In connection to Darling-Hammond's argument, Leowenberg-Ball (2000) argues that there are two critical questions that need to be addressed when discussing SLTE. The first question is: to what extent does teaching and learning to teach depend on the development of theoretical knowledge and knowledge of the subject matter? The second question is: to what extent does it rely on the development of pedagogical knowledge? She observes that the challenge in teacher education is the trend to leave to the individual teachers the challenge of integrating subject matter knowledge and pedagogy in the contexts of their work.

Darling-Hammond (2006) outlines a number of important pedagogical cornerstones that have been difficult to attain in many teacher education programmes. Firstly, coherence and integration among courses and between course work and clinical work in schools that challenges traditional programme organisations, staffing and modes of operation. Secondly, the importance of existence and intensely supervised clinical work, tightly integrated with course work, that allows candidates to learn from expert practice in schools that serve diverse students. Finally, strategies for connecting theory and practice cannot succeed without a major overhaul of the relationships between universities and schools, ultimately producing changes in the content of schooling as well as teacher training. These three pedagogical cornerstones focus on the relationship between practice and theory. They thus emphasise the unsolved dilemma in teacher education.

1.2.5 Contextualisation of theory and practice

In trying to solve the dilemma in teacher education, Graves (2009), Freeman (2009), Johnson (2009) and Richards (2008) have tried to define the knowledgebase of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE). According to Graves (2009), on one hand, knowledge base of SLTE is what teacher education involves and what language teacher educators need to know and be able to do in order to educate language teachers effectively. On the other hand, knowledge base of language teaching is what language teaching involves and what language teachers need to know and be able to do in order to educate language learners effectively. In view of this, SLTE curriculum needs to start with defining the knowledge base of language teaching. Obviously, for one to teach English at secondary

school level in Malawi he or she needs to have knowledge of the subject matter, and how that knowledge can be passed on to the learners.

Traditionally, according to Richards (2008), there are two strands of knowledge base of SLTE. One strand focuses on classroom teaching skills and pedagogical issues, while the second strand focuses on the knowledge about the language. Related to this, Graves (2009) stipulates that in the 1970's teacher education aimed to transmit two-part knowledge base. First, knowledge about language learning theories and the target culture, and second, knowledge about methodologies and the training of teachers to use the skills. Freeman (2009) similarly explains that training of teachers of the English language included learning about the language through grammar and applied linguistics; learning through the study of second language acquisition and teaching itself through the study of classroom methodologies.

According to Johnson (2009), second language teacher's (L2) knowledge base informs three broad areas: the content of L2 teacher education programme or what L2 teachers need to know; the pedagogies that are taught in L2 teacher education programme or how L2 teachers should teach; and the instructional form of delivery through which both the content and pedagogies are learned, or how L2 teachers learn to teach. These three broad areas seem to agree with Leowenberg-Ball's (2000) problems that need to be solved in order to meet the challenges to prepare teachers who not only know content but can also make use of it to help all students learn. These problems include identifying the content knowledge that matters for teaching; understanding how such knowledge needs to be held, and what

it takes to learn to use such knowledge in practice. In short, knowledge base of SLTE is based on the content the teachers need to know about the language (content knowledge), how the teachers should teach (pedagogical knowledge) and how the teachers learn how to teach.

The foregoing arguments support Richards' (1987) argument that in the field of teaching English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL), teacher education programmes typically include a knowledge base, drawn from linguistics and language learning theory, and a practical component, based on language teaching methodology and opportunity for practice teaching. Kelly and Grenfell (2004) contend that during language education, the practical experience of teaching in the classroom and the academic study of pedagogical theory and the subject area are to be treated holistically as they interact with each other. The study, therefore, aims to see how these interact in the course of training teachers of English.

This study, therefore, looks at theory as the subject content that is given to the students as part of knowledge about the language, as well as the basic knowledge they get in the classroom about language teaching and learning. Practice is looked at as the actual use of the content learnt in the lecture room in the real or simulated classroom situation. Figure 1.1 presents a summary of the link between theory and practice as used in the study.

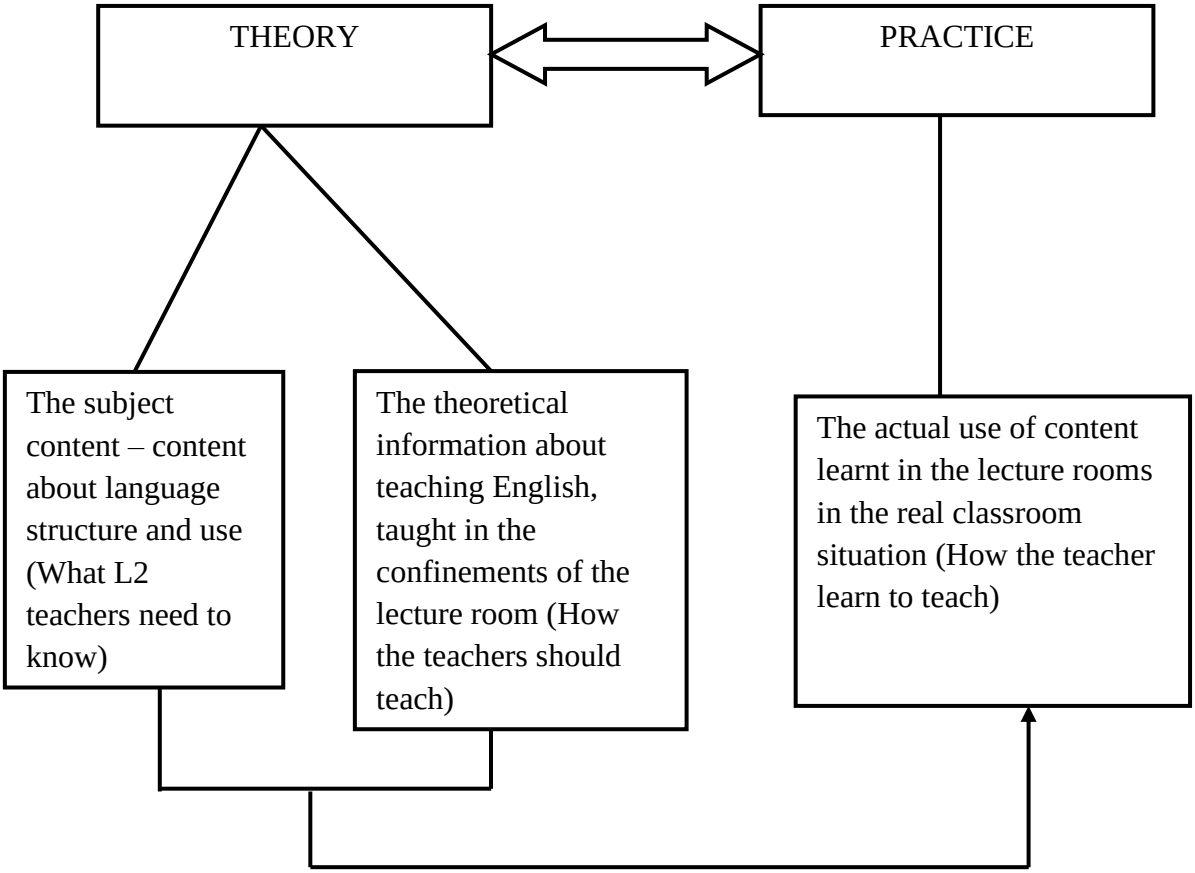

Figure 1.1: The link between theory and practice

Source: Research data (2017)

1.3 Statement of the Problem

A second language teacher education (SLTE) programme should provide student-teachers with the content of the subject that they are going to teach; the pedagogies that they will need to use to transmit that content to the learners; and help them learn how to teach, that is, learn to use the knowledge in practice (Leowenberg-Ball, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Richards, 2008; Johnson, 2009). However, the challenge is in integration of the theoretical knowledge and the practice of teaching. Rousseau (2015) argues that the integration of theory and practice in teacher education is a complex matter. He observes that most of the participants in his study which was done in South Africa showed a tendency

of separating theory from practice and that the integration of these two depended on individual lecturers.

Gravett and Ramsaroop (2015) observe that the notion that there is a gap between education of student-teachers at university and the demands of teaching is prominent in the data that was used to develop the *Strategic Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (2011).* They report that the teachers and teacher educators that were involved in the studies said that they contribute different kind of knowledge to the education of student teachers. These are typified as theoretical knowledge versus practical knowledge suggesting that the knowledge types remain largely distinct. These two studies by Rousseau (2015) and Gravett and Ramsaroop (2015) strengthen the argument that integrating theory and practice is a challenge in teacher education.

During the review of literature, no studies were found that explored how teacher training institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice in the process of training teachers of English. In this regard, it is not clear as to how teacher educators in Malawi integrate the theory and practice in the process of training teachers of the English language and literature. This study, therefore, explored the knowledge base of the teachers of the English language in Malawi in order to understand how the teacher educators integrate theory and practice as a means of preparing the upcoming teachers effectively.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore how teacher training institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice in the process of training teachers of English.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1.5.1 Main question

How do English teacher educators integrate theory and practice in the teacher training process?

1.5.2 Subsidiary questions

- How does the English teacher education programme document integrate theory and practice?
- How does the teacher educator implement the English teacher education programme?
- What challenges do English teacher educators face when integrating theory and practice?
- What are the proposed ways of dealing with the challenges faced in the integration of theory and practice?

1.6 Motivation

I am a teacher educator at Mzuzu University. It is one of the public universities in Malawi that trains teachers of the English language and literature. I am specifically responsible for English teaching methodology courses and in some cases I facilitate Applied Linguistics courses. I have facilitated the English Teaching methodology courses and I have been involved in supervising students on teaching practice for 13 years. The motivation of this research, therefore, is based on my experience with student teachers of the English

language as they go through the training. Most of the times, during teaching practice the student teachers seem to be confused as they discover that some of the content or methods they were taught in class are not useful in the schools. In other words, they seem not to know how to apply what they learnt at the university to the realities of the classroom.

At times, the experienced teachers that have come for upgrading programmes have expressed their sentiments that most of what they were taught in college did not work for them. This is because the schools had diverse kind of learners with different backgrounds, and that the contexts were not favourable to implement what they were taught in college. In addition, the students, both generic and upgrading, always complain that they are taking many subject content courses that they do not see any relevance to the teaching of English language.

The issues described in the foregoing paragraph made me wonder as to whether we as language teacher educators are doing enough to help our students and if not, what was wrong with our programmes that made students face these challenges. The idea to carry out this study came in as a way of learning what is happening in the other institutions. It was hoped that this would help improve our own teacher education practices. The absence of research that explored how teacher educators in higher institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice strengthened the need to carry out this study.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are significant in so many ways. Firstly, the findings of this study

will contribute to the body of knowledge as it will fill the gap that is there in literature on the way teacher educators integrate theory and practice. Secondly, the findings will also help the teacher training institutions to improve their English teacher education programmes in order to respond to the required skills and knowledge students really need. Thirdly, the understanding of the second language teachers' knowledge base through the findings of this study will inform teachers on how to improve their content knowledge base, teaching skills and adjust to the realities of the school and the actual classroom. Finally, the findings will also help the MoEST and other stakeholders in education to provide appropriate support to the programmes.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

A number of terms need to be defined to allow for clear understanding of the context in which they have been used. The following section provides the definitions of terms as used in the study:

Cooperating teacher or mentor teacher: This refers to a teacher from whom student teachers take over classes (Godwin, Reogman& Reagan, 2016).

Education Foundations: These are core courses for every student teacher. The courses provide student teachers with general knowledge about learners, the school, schooling and education in general (Field Data).

English teacher: In this study this refers to a teacher who teaches English to learners (Field Data).

Knowledge about language: It is the subject matter knowledge which includes the structure and use of the language (Bartels, 2005).

Knowledge of language: This is one's proficiency in the language, that is, the ability for one to communicate in the language (Andrews 2001, 2003).

Language Teacher Awareness: This refers to the knowledge teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively (Andrews, 2007).

Practice: It is the actual use of the content learnt in the lecture room in the real or simulated classroom situation (Graves, 2009; Freeman, 2009; Richards, 2008).

Theory: It is the subject content that is imparted to the students as part of knowledge about language, as well as the basic knowledge they get in the classroom about language teaching and learning (Graves, 2009; Freeman, 2009; Richards, 2008).

Teacher educators: This refers to those professionals who provide formal instruction and support for both teacher candidates and practicing teachers during pre-service and/or in-service teacher education/training programmes (Moradkhani, Akbari, Samar, & Kiany, 2013).

Teaching practice: This is an activity in which student teachers are expected to teach at a secondary school for a school term (Field data).

1.9 Outline of the Thesis

The thesis has five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction which contains the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, motivation and significance of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of literature that is related to the current

study. It also presents the theoretical framework that has been used in the study to make sense of the findings. Chapter 3 discusses the methodologies that were used in the study. This includes study sites for research, the sampled participants, data generation methods, data generation tools and a description on how the data was analysed. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the findings. These have been presented in line with the research questions and discussed using the theoretical framework as well as the literature review. Chapter 5 is the summary of major findings, conclusion and implications of the study.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the background to the study. The background has highlighted the education system in Malawi, the secondary school curriculum in Malawi, the teacher education in Malawi, the dilemma in teacher education, and has contextualised theory and practice in line with the current study. The chapter has also presented the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, motivation and significance. It has also provided the outline of the thesis. The next chapter will present the literature review and the theoretical framework of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter reviews literature related to the topic under study. The literature review will focus on describing, summarising and critiquing results and explanations in literature on how teacher educators integrate theory and practice (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2006). The review will help to justify why this study is necessary, urgent and important (Merriam, 2009) by identifying the existing gaps in the existing knowledge (Creswell, 2007). The review will also provide a benchmark for comparing the results of this study with other findings (Creswell, 2014) and help to contribute to the knowledge base by showing how the findings extend, modify or contradict previous work (Merriam, 2009).

The review of literature focuses on second language teacher education. It has been guided by the purpose as well as the research questions of the study. The review is divided into six main themes and these themes are: second language teacher education, practice in teacher education, teacher education programme design, shift in views on teacher learning and teacher education, and ways of bridging theory and practice. The chapter also discusses pedagogical content knowledge which is the theoretical framework for the study.

2.2 Second Language Teacher Education

Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly and Driscoll (2005) point out that studies have found that the most

successful teachers of the English Language (EL) have the following qualities: identifiable pedagogical and cultural skills and knowledge including the ability to communicate effectively with students and to engage their failures; have extensive skills in teaching the mechanics of the language and how it is used in different contexts and for different purposes; and have a sense of self-confidence regarding their ability to teach EL students. Granted this, it is important to understand the knowledge base of SLTE. This information will assist in understanding if the kind of knowledge base that the TE programmes in Malawi provide will produce a teacher with the qualities that Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly and Driscoll (2005) have presented.

2.2.1 Knowledge base of Second Language Teacher Education

Knowledge base of SLTE is often confused with knowledge base of language teaching (Graves 2009). According to Graves, on one hand, knowledge base of SLTE is what language teacher education involves and what language teacher educators need to know and be able to do in order to educate language teachers effectively. On the other hand, knowledge base of language teaching is what language teaching involves and what language teachers need to know and be able to do in order to educate language learners effectively. How the knowledge base of language teaching is defined affects all the other aspects of the SLTE curriculum. In view of this then, SLTE curriculum planning thus needs to start with defining the knowledge base of language teaching.

According to Johnson (2009, p. 21) Knowledge base of second language (L2) teacher education is "the basis upon which we make decisions about how to prepare L2 teachers to

do the work of the profession." In L2 teacher education, according to Johnson, the knowledge base informs three broad areas: the content of L2 teacher education programme or what L2 teachers need to know; the pedagogies that are taught in L2 teacher education programme or how L2 teachers should teach; and the instructional form of delivery through which both the content and pedagogies are learned, or how L2 teachers learn to teach. These three broad areas seem to agree with Leowenberg-Ball's (2000) problems that need to be solved in order to meet the challenges of preparing teachers who do not only know the content but can also make use of it to help all students learn. These problems include identifying the content knowledge that matters for teaching; understanding how such knowledge needs to be held; and what it takes to learn to use such knowledge in practice.

The knowledge base of L2 teacher education has assumed that the disciplinary knowledge that defines what language is, how it is used, and how it is acquired that has emerged out of the disciplines of theoretical and applied linguistics is the same knowledge that teachers use to teach the L2 and that in turn, is the same knowledge that students need in order to learn (Johnson, 2009). This argument seems to be in agreement with Darling-Hammond (2006) who argues that the dilemma that the teacher education programs find themselves in is that many lay people and a large share of policymakers hold the view that almost anyone can teach reasonably well. According to Darling-Hammond, it is argued that entering teaching requires, at most, knowing something about the subject, both in proficiency in the language and knowledge about its structure (Graves, 2009) and the rest of the fairly simple "tricks of the trade" can be picked up on the job.

Contrary to the views cited by Darling-Hammond (2006), Johnson (2009) and Graves (2009), Richards (2008) argues that teaching is not simply the application of knowledge and of learned skills. It is rather "a much more complex cognitively driven process affected by the classroom context, the teacher's general and specific instructional goals, the learner's motivations and reactions to the lesson, the teachers' management of critical moments during a lesson" (p. 167). In other words, teaching of a language requires more than knowledge of the subject matter, it also requires knowledge on how this subject matter can be transferred to the learners. In view of this, the knowledge base of L2 teacher education must include not only disciplinary or subject knowledge that defines how language is structured, used and acquired but must also account for the context of L2 teaching, that is, what and how language is actually taught in L2 classroom as well as teachers and students' perception of that content (Freeman & Johnson, 1998 as cited in Johnson, 2009).

Graves (2009) argues that the role of teacher education programme in the 1970s was to transmit two-part knowledge base, that is, knowledge about language, learning theories, the target culture and knowledge about methodologies and training teachers to use skills. This seems to agree with Richard's (2008) observation that there have traditionally been two strands of knowledge base within the field of SLTE. That is, one focusing on classroom teaching skills and pedagogic issues and the other focusing on what has been perceived as the academic underpinning of classroom skills; namely, knowledge about language and language learning. Most of the teacher education programmes in Malawi, in the absence of a thorough evaluation, seem to have the kind of knowledge base Richards has highlighted,

as the programmes offer courses in Pure and Applied Linguistics, Methodology courses and Education Foundations courses.

Freeman (2009) claims that the teacher education programs differed for those learning to teach foreign languages or languages other than the English language and those learning to teach English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign language. For, those training to teach other languages, their training included language, literature, cultural studies with some attention to classroom teaching (Schultz, 2000). On the other hand, those training to teach English learnt about language content through grammar and applied linguistics; about learning through the study of second language acquisition; and about teaching itself through the study of classroom methodologies. Freeman's historical background still emphasises on the two strands of knowledge base, the content knowledge through SLA and the pedagogical knowledge.

Darling-Hammond (2006) and Richards (2008) discuss the "what" of teacher education (knowledge for teaching) and the "how" of teacher education (programme designs and pedagogies). In the "what" of teacher education, the authors looked at the aspects that the teachers need to know. For example, they looked at the knowledge of the learners and how they learn and develop within social context, including knowledge of language development. They also looked at the understanding of the curriculum content and goals, including the subject matter and skills to be taught in light of the disciplinary demands, students' needs, and the social purpose of education. They further looked at the understanding of and skills for teaching including pedagogical knowledge and knowledge

for teaching diverse learners as these are informed by an understanding of assessment and how to construct and manage a productive classroom.

On the "how" of teacher education, they looked at the challenges in learning to teach. Thus, learning to teach requires that new teachers come to understand teaching in ways quite different from their own experiences as students. It is also required that new teachers learn not only to "think like a teacher" but also to "act like a teacher"; and it also requires that new teachers be able to understand and respond to the dense and multifaceted nature of the classroom, juggling multiple academic and social goals requiring trade -offs from moment to moment and day to day (Jackson 1974 in Darling-Hammond, 2006; Richards 2008). This then implies that the "what" and the "how" of teacher education as described by Darling-Hammond and Richards, is a shift from what teachers should know to who the teachers ought to be (Graves 2009).

2.2.2 The European Profile for Language Teacher Education

To clearly understand the knowledge base for SLTE, the current study has borrowed some ideas from the European Profile for Language Teacher Education (2004). This profile was developed as a way of having a shared understanding and terminology in teacher education. The study has of course not completely ignored the presence of the National Standards of Teacher Education (NSTE) which were published in 2017 by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST). The NSTE, however, are for general teacher education and not specific to the training of teachers of the English language. Section 2.2.3 will discuss the standards as a way of contextualising the current study.

The profile provides a toolkit of 40 items which could be included in a teacher education programme to equip language teachers with necessary skills and knowledge as well as other professional competences to enhance their professional development and to lead to greater transparency and portability of qualifications (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004). This study adopted seven items to explain what is expected in language teacher education and to assess if at all what the teacher trainers are doing is in line with what the profile suggests. Table 2.1 presents the items that the study adopted as benchmarks for teacher education in Malawi.

Table 2.1: European Profile for Language Teacher Education: A Frame for Reference

SN.	ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	A curriculum that integrates academic study and the practical experience of teaching	During language teacher education, the practical experience of teaching in the classroom and the academic study of pedagogical theory and the subject area are to be treated holistically
2	An explicit framework for teaching practice	Trainee teachers are given a specific set of guidelines to organise their practical experience in schools which includes advice on how to monitor and reflect on their experience
3	Training for school-based mentors in how to mentor	School-based mentors are given structured training in how to mentor trainee teachers. It is essential that the mentors fully understand what is expected of them by the university and fully develop this role with confidence.
4	Initial teacher education that includes a course in language proficiency and assesses trainees' linguistic competence	Trainee teachers are offered the opportunity to follow a course to maintain and improve their language proficiency. They are able to assess their own competence and devise strategies for developing their skills where appropriate.

5	Training in ways of adapting teaching approaches to the educational context and individual needs of learners	Trainees understand the different factors that affect people's ability to learn and the different attitudes and cultural perspectives people bring to learning. Trainees are able to adapt their teaching approaches accordingly.
6	Training in the development of reflective practice and self-evaluation	Trainee teachers learn to develop systematic methods and strategies for assessing the effectiveness of their teaching.
7	Training in peer observation and peer review	Peer observation and peer review develop skills such as team-working, communicative ability, cooperation and practical analysis.

Source: Kelly & Grenfell (2004, p. 5, 7, 16, 20, 22, 25, 29)

The items in table 2.1 have not really diverted from what Darling-Hammond (2006), Richards (2008), Johnson (2009) and Graves (2009) describe as the knowledge base of second language teacher education. The study recognises the difference between the context in which it was framed and the context in which it is being used in this study. With this in mind, table 2.1 presents only those items that were thought to be easily adapted in the Malawian context. The profile is therefore, used in the study as a starting point to understand language teacher education in Malawi. The profile gives pointers to areas to look at in order to evaluate the various language teacher education programmes in Malawi.

2.2.3 Malawi National Standards for Teacher Education

The National Standards for Teacher Education (NSTE) try to answer the question; what kind of a teacher does Malawi need? According to the MoEST (2017, p. iv), the standards

have been developed "in order to achieve consistency in the approaches which institutions of teacher education use to prepare student teachers for their substantive roles in schools and to ensure that graduating students demonstrate expected competencies when they enter employment." There are 18 standards which have been grouped into three: outcomes, processes and leadership. This study has focused much on outcomes and processes. The reason for this is that the study is basically looking at the processes that the teacher educators take their student teachers through so that the student teachers are able to implement the secondary school curriculum. Out of the 18 standards, only seven have been considered by looking at their relevance to the current study. Table 2.2 presents the seven standards and the description of each standard.

Table 2.2: National standards for teacher education

SN.	STANDARD	DESCRIPTION
1	Learning for life	Evaluates the extent to which teachers develop transferable skill, qualities and attitudes which will be important for them as teachers and may also be applied in a wide range of other contexts through their future lives
2	Knowledge and understanding	Evaluates the extent to which student teachers have acquired the knowledge and developed the understanding they need to meet children's learning needs.
3	Pedagogy	Evaluates the extent to which student teachers demonstrate expected professional teaching competencies

4	Impact of teacher education partnership	Evaluate the effectiveness of joint working between institution and teaching practice schools and the extent to which together they achieve the aims of the partnership
5	Creating a learning community	Evaluates the extent to which institution is successful in developing a culture and environment which value and nurtures lifelong learning
6	Curriculum	Evaluates the extent to which an institution is successful in developing a culture and environment which value and nurtures lifelong learning
7	Teaching experience for student teachers	Evaluates the extent to which student teachers have access to teach and to observe others teaching, both internally and externally provided, which develop their professional skills and prepare them effectively for future employment.

Source: MoEST (2017)

The standards in Table 2.2 specify both minimum requirements and effective practice in teacher education, for use in evaluation at a number of levels, and in a range of contexts. One can observe from Table 2.2 what should be exposed to student teachers for them to become effective teachers. The most important aspect is student teacher's experiences in becoming a professional through what they learnt at the institutions, and the experience they gain at the teaching practice schools.

2.2.4 Knowledge about language and Second Language Teacher Education

As much as the focus of SLTE content has shifted from what the teachers should know to the understanding of who the teachers are; what skills they have; and who their learners

are; the knowledge about the language cannot be ignored as part of the knowledge base for SLTE. Wright (2002) argues that "becoming a language teacher involves a number of related processes, in particular, learning to create connections between the linguistics, or 'content' and the methodology or 'teaching', aspects of language teaching" (p. 113). In addition to Wright's (2002) argument, Bartels (2005) argues that to enable language teachers to take full advantage of Knowledge about Language (KAL) in their teaching, a significant amount of time in Applied Linguistics classes needs to be invested in helping novice teachers develop and engage in a variety of deliberate practice activities.

Related to the Knowledge about Language is Teacher Language Awareness. Andrews (2007) citing Thornbury (1997) defines Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) as the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively. Consequences of weakness in the area of Language Awareness as indicated by Thornbury (1997) include: a failure of the teacher to anticipate learner's learning problems and inability to plan lessons that are pitched at the right level; an inability to interpret course book syllabuses and materials and to adapt these to the specific needs of the learners, and an inability to deal satisfactorily with errors or field learners queries. Thus, as Wright (2002) puts it, a linguistically aware teacher does not only understand how language works, but also understands the students' struggle with language and is sensitive to errors and other inter-language features. It is apparent from these discourses that the knowledge about language goes beyond just knowing the structure of the language, it is more to do with how the language is acquired, learnt, used, interpreted and taught.

As observed by Wright (2002), Bartels (2005) and Andrews (2007) agree on the need for the teacher of second language to have some knowledge of the language that they will teach. Carter (1994) identifies awareness of the properties of language, creativity and playfulness, and its double meanings; awareness of the embedding of language within culture; a great self-conscious about the forms of the language we use; and awareness of the close relationship between language and ideology as the kind of knowledge the teacher should have (cited in Andrews 2007). What is coming out clearly is that the teachers need to know the structure of the language and how that language is used. This kind of description is important in this study to assess the kind of linguistic knowledge that student teachers are given in the teacher training institutions.

According to Attardo and Brown (2005), teachers of language need to have some idea about issues of prescriptive and descriptive grammars, language use and variation, language structure and history of English. They further argue that the teachers may not teach these aspects as part of the content but they will use them as background in making educational decisions while teaching reading, writing and oral communication. Andrews (2001, 2003) conversely argues that the L2 teacher needs to have knowledge about language and knowledge of that language. He looks at the knowledge about language as the subject matter knowledge which is the grammar of the language, and the knowledge of language as the proficiency in the language or the communicative language ability (CLA). Beytekin and Chipala (2015) likewise emphasise the importance of linguistic courses and contend that course work in the specific academic content area, a teacher is assigned to

teach can promote teacher quality and student achievement in some subject and grade levels.

According to Edge (1988) cited in Andrews (2007), a teacher trainee of L2 needs to become a language user, language analyst and language teacher. As a user, the teacher does not only possess the ability to use the language appropriately but also has an awareness of the social and pragmatic norms that underlie such appropriate use. As an analyst, the teacher should have the knowledge of how language in general and the target language in particular works, that is language description from phonetics to pragmatics. As a teacher, awareness of how to create and exploit language learning opportunities, the significance of classroom interaction and of learner output (Andrews, 2003; Wright, 2002) is quite crucial. The SLTE therefore need to help the teachers learn more about the language so that they can easily help the students they will teach.

Bartels (2005) further identifies a couple of characteristics of the activities that might be helpful to novice teachers. For example, they should work on solving the kind of problems of procedures and understanding that language teachers regularly face in their practice; they should focus on procedures used in language teaching or which could be used in a cognitively efficient way; they should help novice teachers develop schemata of language learners and language teaching, especially schemata of information that is task relevant and task non-relevant for a variety of language teaching situation; they should focus on helping novice teachers organise their knowledge so that relevant information is triggered by each schemata; they should help novice teachers develop appropriate “rules of thumb” for their

practice; and applied linguistics activities should complement each other and help novice teachers form a coherent network of knowledge about their practice. These kinds of activities are so practical, giving the impression that if they are implemented then the novice teacher will not have problems to implement what he or she learnt in Teacher Education.

KAL and TLA indicate the importance of a teacher having content knowledge. Suffice to say that knowing who your learners are and having the skills to impart knowledge may not be enough for a teacher. The teacher needs to have knowledge of the subject content he or she is going to teach. Therefore, a course in linguistics may be very important in LTE. Bartels (2005) also argues that "armed with knowledge about the language, teachers will among other things, be able to understand and diagnose student problems better, provide better explanations and representations for aspects of language and have a clearer idea of what they are teaching" (p. 205). However, Andrews (2003) seems to suggest that the relationship between subject matter knowledge and classroom teaching are very complex issues, and that subject matter alone is not sufficient to ensure effective application of TLA in pedagogical practice. It is the aim of this study to explore how teacher educators integrate the subject matter knowledge (theory) with the pedagogical practice (practice).

2.2.5 Teacher educators

According to Goodwin, Smith, Souto-Mannning, Cheruvu, Tan, Reed, and Taveras (2014), quality teacher education relies on teacher educators. As defined by Moradkhani, Akbari, Samar, and Kiany (2013), teacher educators are those professionals who provide formal

instruction and support for both teacher candidates and practicing teachers during pre-service and/or in-service teacher education/training programmes. Srinivasan (2016) argues that teacher educators' work in pre-service education is generally understood to include teaching theoretical courses; supervising students in schools; and contributing to academic administration within the institution.

Goodwin, et al. (2014) agree with Moradkhani et al. (2013) that there is not much research that has focused on what teacher educators need to know, and what their preparation entails. They also agree that most teacher educators were not prepared adequately to become teacher educators. Goodwin et al. (2014, p. 298) further argue that "if teacher educators are ill prepared in the work of teacher educating ... they cannot be expected to design quality teacher preparation programmes, envision innovation and conduct meaningful research in teacher education." The study by Srinivasan (2016) reveals that the field of teacher education has to pay greater attention to the preparation and continuing professional development of teacher educators, so that their pedagogical expertise may be strengthened.

In a study that Moradkhani et al. (2013, pp 131-133) conducted to shed light on the nature of language teacher educators' pedagogical knowledge by identifying its constituent categories, the following were listed as the knowledge based teacher educators need to have: knowledge of English proficiency and other fields that are directly or indirectly related to the English language teaching; knowledge of teaching language skills and components and awareness of technicalities; knowledge of the conditions in which teacher

candidates work and the way they behave with others; knowledge of lesson planning classroom and time management as well as differences in learning teaching among teacher candidates; knowledge of different types of research and available ELT resources; knowledge of practical solutions which are based on theoretical underpinnings; knowledge of pre-service and practicing teachers and the way they should be assessed; and knowledge of the ways to be engaged in reflection and critical pedagogy. This means that one of the foremost responsibilities of teacher educators is to promote the development of various forms of knowledge among the student teachers (Srinivasan, 2016).

2.3 Practice in Teacher Education

Glenn (2006) argues that "student teaching is a key event in the lives of teacher educators; it can make or break their success in their classroom" (p. 85). Glenn further argues that student teaching should provide students the opportunity to grow as educators; to learn from those who are more knowledgeable, to take risks, and to fail without becoming failures. Konig, Lammerding, Nold, Rohde, Strauß, and Tachtsoglou, (2016) agree with Glenn as they argue that "while courses in the academic setting often aims at primarily the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, practical learning opportunities at school give future teachers the chance to connect their knowledge to practical situations in the classroom" (p. 325). The field experience offers the student teachers the opportunity to learn about students, to confront classroom realities, and to think about themselves as teachers (Cabaroglu, 2014).

Caires and Almeida (2007) also agree on the importance of TP. They argue that the most important aspect in the learning to teach process is the field experience, that is, the opportunity to stand face-to-face with the challenges and demands of the teaching profession. That is, teacher education is most effective when it is integrated with practice (Benson, 2010).

Richards (1998) argues that "novice teachers do not translate knowledge they obtain from their SLTE preparation automatically because teachers must construct and reconstruct 'new knowledge' and theory through participating in specific social contexts and engaging in particular types of activities and processes" (cited in Farrell, 2012; p. 146). Koerner, Rust and Baumgartner (2002) and Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000) observe that student teachers find the whole school teaching experience overwhelming as it involves too many students and too many tasks while establishing and developing relationships with one or more cooperating teachers (CT) and university supervisors. Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000) explain that mentors help mediate the flux of activities that student teachers find themselves in the schools by introducing the student teachers to the school, giving advice and guidance, asking questions and drawing on the successful teaching moments they have accumulated. That is, the TP in SLTE gives the learners an opportunity to practice what they have been learning in the university lecture room in a real-life situation before they become qualified teachers.

The observations by Richards (1998) in Farrell (2012), Koerner, Rust and Baumgartner (2002), and Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000) show that the student teachers need to

be helped to translate what they learn in LTE in the school teaching experience. The skills that they develop through lectures at the university needs to be translated to practice. To do this, they need to be guided through this process by their teacher trainers as well as the qualified teachers in the schools. The effectiveness and the productivity of the teaching practice (TP) depends significantly, on the help and support provided by the university and school supervisors (Caires & Almeida, 2007).

According to Graves (2009) in order to make sense of practice, teacher-learners should engage in practice at two levels. First is classroom practice; teacher learners should be given the opportunity to observe teaching, to prepare for teaching, to teach, to reflect on it, to analyse it and thus learn it or learn from it in a natural setting. Apart from knowing how to teach, the student teachers need also to know how to reflect on their progress, work effectively with their colleagues and maintain their passion amidst personal and work-related stresses (Glenn, 2006).

The second level of practice is participating in communities of practice (CoP) (see more discussion on CoP in section 2.6.3). It should be noted that teaching is an activity situated in complex cultural, social and political context. In order to participate in these communities, teachers need to understand why they are the way they are, how they are positioned in these contexts, and how to develop power to negotiate and change them (Graves, 2009). The student teacher, therefore, should understand that there is more to teaching than just going into the classroom, that there is also understanding of the teaching profession discourse. CTs as mentors should also aim not only to help students become

effective practitioners but also help them develop as professionals in the field (Glenn, 2006).

2.4 Shift in Views on Teacher Learning and Teacher Education

The relationship between practical teaching skills and academic knowledge and their representation in SLTE programs has generated a debate over the years. In 1990, this was resolved by distinguishing teacher training from teacher development (Richards, 2008; Burns & Richards, 2009). Teacher training was identified with entry level teaching skill linked to a specific teaching context and teacher development was a longer-term development of the individual teacher over time. Freeman (2009) argues that

> the teacher development assumed that SLTE concentrated on learning profession input, defined variously as a mix of knowledge and skills and then that input would be applied in contexts through the activity of teaching. With the coming in of research into teacher learning and different conceptualisation of knowledge base this input-application relationship was redefined. Context was understood as more than simply a venue of application, rather it was seen as a basis for learning (p. 14).

According to Burns and Richards (2009), the contrast between training and development has been replaced by a consideration of the nature of teacher learning, which is viewed as a form of socialisation into the profession thinking and practices of a community of practice.

Johnson (2009) agrees with Burns and Richards (2009) that teacher learning is being viewed as a form of socialisation into the profession thinking and practices of a community of practice, as they argue that teacher educators have come to recognise teacher learning as socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of 'the self,' students, subject matter, curricular and setting. They further argue that teacher educators have begun to conceptualise L2 teachers as users and creators of legitimate forms of knowledge who make decisions about how to teach their L2 students within complex socially, culturally and historically constructed contexts. The teacher education programmes no longer view L2 teaching as a matter of simply translating theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) into effective instructional practices but as constructing of new knowledge and theory through participating in specific social contexts and engaging in particular types of activities and processes (practitioner knowledge) (Richards 2008).

Andrews (2007) describes teacher learning as a cognitive process, a personal construction and as a reflective practice. He argues that as a cognitive process, teacher development requires teachers to explore their own beliefs and thinking processes in order to examine how these influence their classroom practices. As a personal construction, the teacher should be helped to develop self-awareness, understanding of their classrooms and personal interpretations of knowledge. As a reflective practice teacher learning is enhanced by engaging in critical reflection on the nature, meaning and impact of classroom experiences. Andrews's description of teacher learning agrees with Davis and Krajcik (2005). They argue that teacher learning "involves developing and integrating one's knowledge base about content, teaching, and learning; being able to apply that knowledge

in real-time to make instructional decisions; participating in the discourse of teaching; and becoming enculturated into (and engaging in) a range of teacher practices" (p 3)

Johnson (2003) as cited in Richards (2008) captures current views of teacher learning as arising from research which has normative and lifelong characteristics as emerging out of and through experiences in social contexts as learners in the classroom and schools, as participants in professional teacher education programs and later as teachers in settings where they work; socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of the self, subject matter, curricular and setting; and L2 teachers as users and creators of legitimate forms of knowledge who make decisions about how best to teach their L2 students within complex socially, culturally and historically situated contexts.

Conchran-Smith and Lytle (2001) cited in Lee (2007) stipulate that pre-service education has shifted its emphasis from a transmission oriented to a constructivists approach where teachers focus on what they know instead of what they do, bringing prior knowledge and personal experience to bear on the new learning situations. Lee (2007) also argues that through reflection, pre-service teachers become more and more aware of themselves as would be teachers and of the pedagogical context that impinges directly on teaching and learning. This is in line with Richards' (2008), Burns and Richards' (2009), and Johnson's (2009) views on teacher learning as discussed earlier.

Macdonald, Kazemi and Kavangh (2013) examine the kind of shift that has taken place in teacher education. They note that teacher education has shifted from competency-based

education (in the 1960's to 1970's) to improvisational nature of teaching (in the 1980's). On the one hand, Richards (2013) views competence-based instruction as a "specification of the learning outcomes in terms of 'competencies' – the knowledge, skills and behaviours learners involved in performing everyday tasks and activities and which learners should master at the end of a course of study" (p. 24). On the other hand, the improvisational nature of teaching is not as a collection of behavioural competences, but instead a sense of moment to moment judgements calling on knowledge about instructional goals, students and the integrity of the discipline (Macdonald, Kazemi and Kavangh, 2013).

According to Macdonald, Kazemi and Kavangh (2013), the shift in teacher education from competency-based education to case-based methods was an attempt to better prepare teachers for the complex work of teaching, in the end neither successfully attended to the problem of enactment. Forzani (2014) and Macdonald, Kazemi and Kavangh (2013) propose the introduction of core practice-based education as an improvement to the practice-based teacher education. According to Forzani, in core practice teacher education novices are helped to understand instruction as a complicated practice and manage its complexity and uncertainty through video analysis and rehearsals, in addition to more traditional observation and student teaching. There is a suggestion to move towards identifying core practices in teaching which the novice teachers can learn to enact in their early years of teaching (Forzani, 2014; Macdonald, Kazemi & Kavangh, 2013). This means that the SLTE programme would focus on the core practices of teaching that are essential to teaching and this will help the student teachers to easily learn to teach. This could also be seen as a solution to the challenges that scholars in teacher education have identified.

Forzani (2014), Macdonald, Kazemi and Kavangh (2013), and Hollins (2011) further suggest a move towards a holistic practice-based approach. The practice-based teacher education is the kind of education that departs from the traditional academic model of teacher education and focuses much on the extended apprenticeship or opportunities to observe and practice in schools (Forzani, 2014). It is referred to as "discursive processes, reasoning and actions taken in interpreting and translating the experiences and responses of learners in authentic situations within and outside of classroom as a way to construct understanding of substantive relationships between learners learning, pedagogy and learning outcome" (Hollins, 2011, p. 403). According to Hollins, the knowledge and skills that the student teachers are expected to acquire through the practice-based approach include knowledge of the learner, knowledge of learning, knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of pedagogy, knowledge of accountability and assessment and ability to participate in a professional community. These skills will be acquired through focused inquiry, directed observation and guided practice.

The brief description on the shift of teacher learning and teacher education reveals the fact that the student teachers are not passive receivers of information. They are viewed as active members of the learning process through their exposure to information, their experience in the classroom as well as their engagement in a reflection on what they have learnt and what they have experienced in the real situations of the classroom. The implication of this to the current study is that it will help to check if student teachers in Malawi are engaged in a reflection process in the course of their training. The reflection process could also be seen

as one way that can help a student teacher connect the theoretical knowledge gained to the actual practice.

2.5 Teacher Education Programme Design

This study assumes that every English teacher educator is guided by a given programme document. The study also recognises the three dimensions of a curriculum as presented by Richards (2013). Richards discusses the following dimensions: the input, which is the content, that is, what the student will learn; the methodology, that is, the types of learning activities and procedures and techniques that are employed by teachers; and output, that is, what the learners are able to do as a result of a period of instruction. These are the major aspects that the study will focus on to understand the kind of knowledge base the English student teachers are equipped with.

Kelly (2004) differentiates between a planned curriculum, and a received curriculum. Kelly looks at a planned curriculum, on one hand, as what is laid down in syllabuses, prospectuses and so on, and on the other hand, looks at a received curriculum as the reality of the learners' experiences. The current study recognises both types of curriculum. In its quest to explore how teacher trainers integrate theory and practice, the study looked at both the planned curriculum and the received curriculum.

Richards (2001) emphasises that there are four fundamental questions in developing any curriculum and plan of instruction. Richards provides the following questions as outlined by Tyler (1950): what educational purposes should the school seek to attain? What

educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? How can these educational experiences be effectively organised? How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? These questions would then be very important in trying to understand the teacher training curriculum. They will help understand the purpose of the English teacher training, how the purpose is achieved, the kind of activities the student teachers are involved in, and how the institutions determine whether the purpose is achieved or not.

According to Richards (2013), there are three processes of curriculum design which are forward, central and backward. The forward design starts with determining the content which will be taught, then the processes or methods to be used to teach the content and then the expected outcomes. The central design starts from the processes, the methodologies that will be used in the programme and then determine the content and the outcomes. In the backward design, the outcomes are determined first, then the content and methods are determined later. Richards (2013) argues that the backward design "is a well-established tradition in curriculum design in general education and in recent years has re-emerged as a prominent curriculum development approach in language teaching" (p. 20). The process according to Richards involves diagnosis of needs; formulation of objectives; selection of content; organisation of content; selection of learning experiences; organisation of learning experiences; and determination of what to evaluate and ways of doing it. These steps are in line with Tyler's 1950's questions on curriculum design.

The implication of these steps of curriculum design as presented by Richards (2013) in English teacher education is that there is need to establish the needs for the sector that the student teachers are being trained for. The curriculum design of the secondary school English teacher education should match with the needs of the secondary schools. Graves (2009) proposes a framework for planning a curriculum for student teachers. She includes in the framework what the student teachers already know, what they will be taught and how they will be taught so that they gain the knowledge base for teaching the English language in schools. This framework is important at this point as it provides the connection of all the issues that have been raised so far. It will also be used to make sense of the kind of actions the teacher educators take in training teachers of the English language in Malawi. Figure 2.1 presents the framework for planning a teacher education programme.

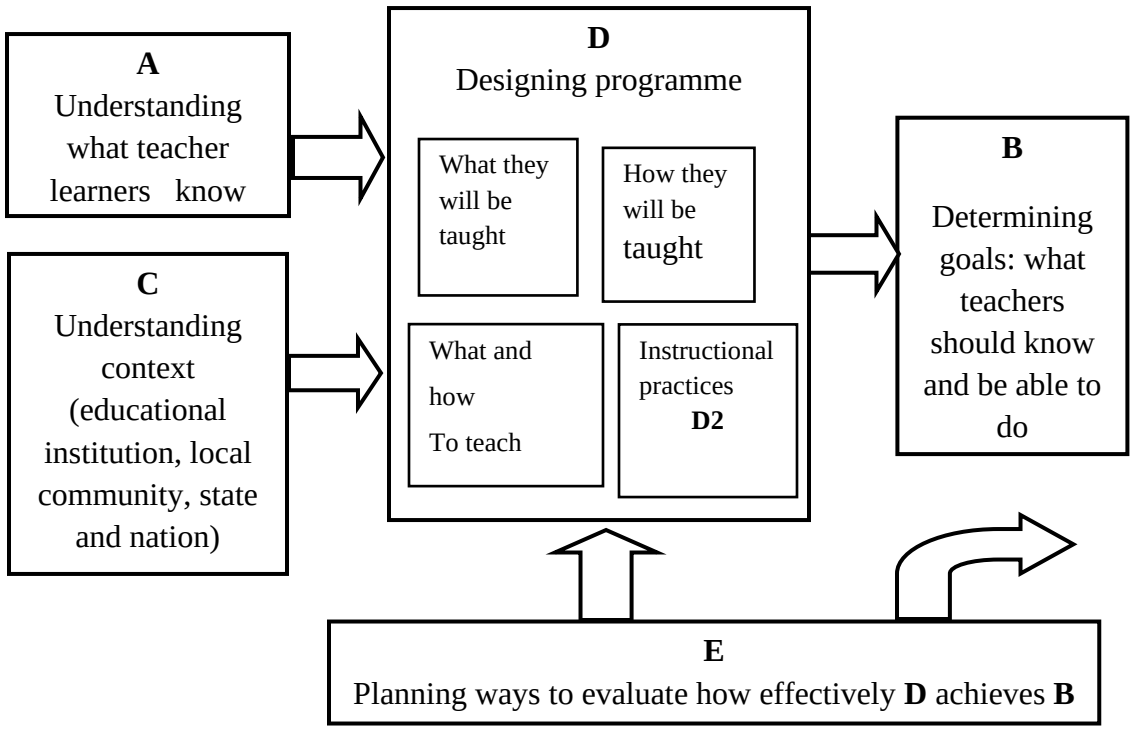

Figure 2.1: Framework for planning a teacher education programme

Source: Graves (2009, p. 116)

According to Graves (2009), a sound curriculum is based on needs assessment, starting with perspective A and ending with perspective B (see Figure 2.1). The programme D is designed to bridge the gap between what the student teachers know when they enter the programme and what they should know when they complete it. In other words, the curriculum should work on student teachers' beliefs about the language, language learning and teaching, the context in which the student teachers will work and then focus on the what and how of teacher education in order to produce the knowledge base for teaching English.

For language teacher education to be effective, the teacher trainers and trainees need to understand the purpose and the content of the curriculum which they will have to implement. Freeman, Coolian and Graves (2011) argue that the challenge in designing programmes in teacher education institutions that have close affiliation with the schools, is to establish a common ground in which the goals and needs of each institution are directly addressed and hopefully met. According to Nation and Macalister (2010), for every curriculum to be effective, there is need for clear goals. That is, the teacher training institutions and the schools should identify common goals for teacher training. If the goals are identified, it would be in each party's interest to use reasonable resources to achieve it (Freeman, Cooliam & Graves, 2011).

Hollins (2011) looks at teaching as a "complex and multidimensional process that requires deep knowledge and understanding in a wide range of areas and the ability to synthesise, integrate, and apply this knowledge in different situations, under varying conditions and

with a wide diversity of groups and individuals" (p, 395). The teacher education programme should therefore, help the student teachers not only understand the content of the secondary school curriculum and the approaches that he or she will be expected to use, but also understand what teaching is.

The pre-service teacher education programme curriculum should be based on the needs in the sector in which the student teachers are being trained for. It should help its student teachers to understand the kind of curriculum they are going to implement and prepare them for the realities of the classroom and the education system in general. The student teachers should be ready to implement the ever-changing secondary school curriculum.

2.6 Ways of Bridging Theory and Practice in Teacher Education

The study is based on the identified gap between theory and practice in teacher education. Leowernberg-Ball (2006), Darling-Hammond (2006), Richards (2008), Busch (2010), Freeman, Coolican and Graves (2011), Cabaroglu (2014) and Forzani (2014) agree that the dilemma in teacher education is the gap that exist between the theoretical knowledge or the subject content knowledge and the pedagogical knowledge or the actual practice.

According to Wubbels, Korthagen and Brekelmans (1997), one solution to the problematic relationship between theoretical and practical components of teacher education is long student teaching or early entrance into the field. This means that if student teachers get earlier into the field or they have long hours of teaching they will have enough time to learn what works and what do not work in the real classroom situation. The assumption based

on this argument is that if student teachers spend more time in the field, they will have enough time to learn how to teach by learning how they can integrate theory into practice.

Farrell (2012) suggests ways of bridging the gap between theory and practice. He suggests that during SLT preparation, pre-service teachers can better be prepared for what they will face in the classroom by firstly making clear connection in all the preparation courses to teaching in the first years. This might include the completion of reflective activities and assignments that are related to the subject matter of that course. Secondly, by adding a course called teaching in the first years which provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop skills in reflective practice so that they can better manage challenges, conflicts and problems they may face in their first years of teaching.

2.6.1 Reflective learning

Wallace (1995) in Richards (2008) identifies three models for teacher education namely the Craft Model, Applied Science Model, and the Reflective Model. Firstly, the Craft model is based on the principle that the expertise of teaching resides in the training and the trainee's job is to imitate the trainer. Secondly, the Applied Science Model is based on the fact that all teaching problems can be solved by experts in content knowledge and not by the practitioners themselves (traditional and most present model underlying most teacher education and training programs). Finally, the Reflective Model, which is the current trend in teacher education and development, envisions as the final outcome of the training period that a novice teacher becomes an autonomous reflective practitioner capable of constant self-reflection leading to continuous process of professional self-development. This is the

kind of teacher that Richards (2008), Johnson (2009), and Burns and Richards (2009) envision after he or she has been socialised in the community of teaching. Michoriska-Stadnik (2016) argues that in order for student teachers to face the challenges of classroom encounter more effectively, they should become more active in the process of reshaping their behavioural patterns.

Reflective learning is a process by which one looks back at past learning experiences and making sense of things by relating these past experiences to the current and future learning needs (Siang, 2002). Siang argues that for one to adopt reflective learning, there is need for explicit training in generating alternative solutions and establishing links among ideas. Kabilan (2007) views reflection as "subjective yet structured intellectual practice that can engage teacher's self-examination and enhance their understanding of teaching and learning in ways that are fresh, stimulating and challenging" (p. 684).

According to Colomer, Pallisera, Fullana, Burriel, and Fernández (2013), reflective learning is understood as a process that leads to reflection on all sources of knowledge that may contribute to understanding a situation, including personal resources and experiences. These scholars emphasise the need to consider previous knowledge of the student teachers in the process of becoming a teacher through reflective process. This prior knowledge of the student teachers is represented by their own learning experiences as language learners and by the modelling provided to them by past teachers (Watzke, 2007). The reflective process gives the student teachers an opportunity to critically analyse their own work in order to improve.

According to Richards and Lockhart (1996), in a reflective approach to teaching, teachers and student teachers collect data about teaching, examine the attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and teaching practices and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection about teaching. That is, for student teachers to develop reflective learning they are expected to teach and observe others teach and think about the teaching process in terms of what was done appropriately, what was not handled well and think of how the lesson can be improved. Through this process, the student teachers develop a sense of self-learning.

Lee (2007) carried out a study with pre-service teachers in Hong Kong to find out if the use of dialogue and response journal helps pre-service teachers of English become more reflective as one of the objectives of the study. The reflection comprised of identifying questions and key elements of a matter that has emerged as significant, then taking one's thoughts into dialogue with oneself and with others. The study found out that through writing of journals, the pre-service teachers reflected on relevant issues with reference to additional perspective, increasing their depth of understanding of their issues. It also provided opportunities for the pre-service teachers to apply their own experiences and values, helping them become more reflective. The pre-service teachers also developed reflectivity through examining the questions/key elements of the issue within the broader social cultural and pedagogical context.

Kabilan (2007) observes that merely instilling in teachers the value of reflective practices does not guarantee that they will change in positive ways. He proposes a process of reflecting on reflections. According to Kabilan, reflection on reflections "allows the

practitioner to internalise the ideas and knowledge that were conceived and constructed in the reflecting process and thus critically think about its functions for future applications" (p. 685). That is to say, student teachers need to be given an opportunity to reflect on their own reflections or colleagues' reflections in order to internalise what they learn through the process. In figure 2.2, Kabilan provides a process of reflecting on reflections. The figure shows the two phases of the process of reflecting on reflection which are: reflection on the presentation made (micro-teaching) and reflection on the reflections made on the presentation.

The Reflective learning as discussed by Kabilan (2007), Lee (2007), Siang (2002) and Richards and Lockhart (1996) seem to be in line with Richards' (1987) macro-perspective of teacher education. In this perspective, there is need for activities and experiences which will help a novice teacher understand and acquire the means by which an effective teacher arrives at significant instructional decision (Richards, 1987). This can only be done if the novice teacher or the student teacher is engaged in a reflective process. Richards provides the following learning experiences in the macro-perspective: practice teaching, that is, participating in a variety of teaching practice experience which is closely supervised by a skilled teacher; observing experienced teachers and then exploring with the teacher why things happened the way they did; self and peer observation; and seminar and discussion activities to reflect on the degree to which one's own experience as a student teacher relates to theory and to the findings of relevant research. These activities would help a student teacher reflect on his or her learning to teach.

Process of reflecting on reflection

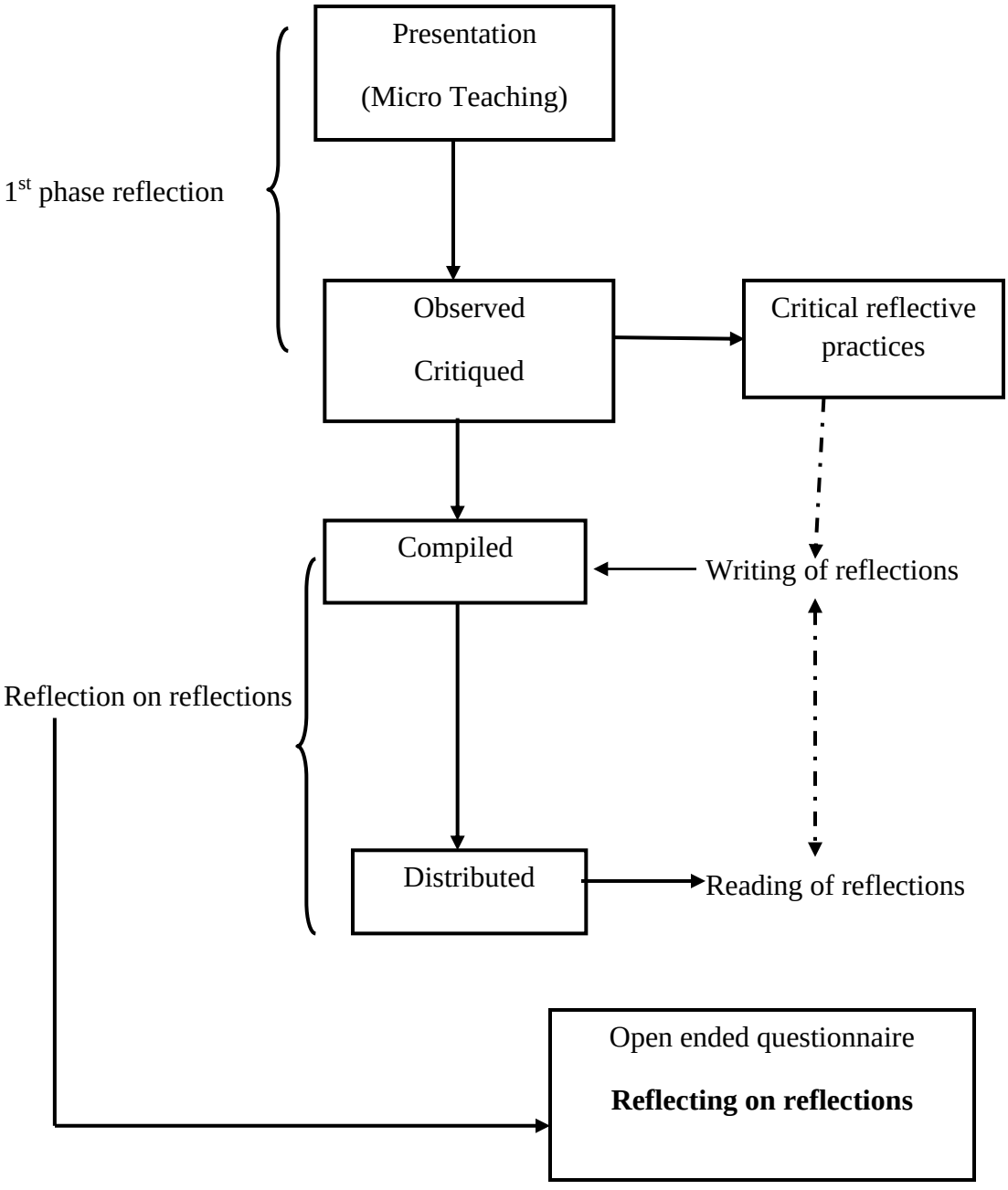

Figure 2.2: process of reflecting on reflections

Source: Kabilan (2007, p. 689)

The teacher educators should therefore, give the student teachers an opportunity to reflect on their own actions. The student teachers should further be given an opportunity to reflect on how they were taught, what they learnt in teacher education programmes and their experience in the real classroom. This will help them be able to link their subject content knowledge and their pedagogical knowledge.

2.6.2 Collaborative learning

The other approach that the literature has proposed as a way of linking what the student teachers learn at the university and what happens in the school is collaborative learning. Flemings and Stevens (2004) suggest the use of collaboration in implementing a school curriculum. They observe that the need for collaboration has been sharpened by the increase and generally very healthy – diversity of new entrants' degree background. Even among those whose degree is in English, there are bound to be areas of knowledge and expertise in which they will feel less secure than others. Collaboration amongst teachers could thus be a tool to use in the implementation of the ever-changing secondary school curriculum and to deal with the short-comings of the teacher education curriculum.

Collaborative learning is understood as the active participation of students in the learning process instead of being passive absorbers of knowledge (Kapucu, n.d). It is believed that teacher education programmes that incorporate collaborative partnerships between the university programmes and local schools have a positive effect on student achievement (NCATE, 2006 cited in Kessler & Wong 2008). Johnson (in press) cited by Richards (2008) identifies four possibilities for collaborative teacher development. These included

collaboration with fellow teachers; collaboration between teachers and university-based researchers; collaboration with students; and collaboration with others involved in teaching and learning, that is, administrators, parents, supervisors etc.

Farrell (2012) seems to suggest that one of the reasons there is a gap between what is learnt in the teacher training colleges and what happens in practice is because LTE programmes have limited information about how their graduates are faring in their induction years or even what their graduates' work lives involve. Freeman and Johnson (1998) in Farrell (2012) argue that there is need to establish more SLTE-school partnerships. This partnership involves the teacher educator, the novice teacher and the school management. They argue that this is important because teacher educators must have an adequate understanding of schools and schooling and the social and cultural contexts in which learning how to teach takes place. This proposition of partnership has ever been used in Nigeria and seems to have worked (Mereni, 1985).

According to Mereni (1985), the Nigerian teacher education system decided to combine all elements that are concerned with teacher education. This was decided because the teacher education programmes were facing three problems: the determination of the length of the student teaching assignment; inter-college and intra-school cooperation and relationship; and general problems relating to the supervision and guidance and evaluation of the student teachers. The elements involved included the Ministry of Education, which provided school inspectors who helped in training the cooperating teachers and participated in evaluating the teacher trainee; Union of teachers which provided all the teachers involved

in the exercise; the State Education Board which provided supervisors for the evaluation of cooperating teacher of the participating schools; and Teacher Training Colleges which provided the lecturers who acted as supervisors and instructors. They called this relationship synergism in education. This relationship suggests a legitimate role for democratic participation of all the groups in policy decisions and in formulation of new programmes especially through the identification of corporate needs, wants and problems.

Related to the Nigerian model of supervising teachers on practicum, Beck and Kosnik (2002) discuss a model which they call the Professors in the Practicum Model. In this model, the faculty works with the schools to train teachers. Instead of allocating a student per school about five students are clustered at one school. The faculty is in constant contact with the CT and the student teachers. The CTs are given the responsibility to do the evaluation of the teaching using the assessment tools that are designed by the faculty and discussed with the CT and the student teacher. From this model Gardiner and Salmon (2014) came up with the Faculty Liaison model in which the faculty (lecturers) supervised, but did not evaluate, practicum students. Their role was to communicate university's expectations, connected course work and field experiences and provided instructional feedback. The supervisor, the CT and student teacher spent more time together as the supervisor was assigned to a school rather than to a student. According to Beck and Kosnik (2002) and Gardiner and Salmon (2014), this kind of relationship apart from enhancing the TP, also enhanced the programme. The faculty grew in their knowledge and understanding of schooling and had more practical examples to use in the classes. The observation also

provided the supervisors with the insights into the problem of enactment the student teachers encountered.

From all these scholars, one thing that is coming out clearly is the working relationship between the universities or colleges, the schools and the student teachers. Freeman, Coolican and Graves (2011) argue that if these three parties work together, there is a possibility of each benefiting from the working relationship. For example, they argue that the student will become a professional member of the school community and will deepen his or her understanding of teaching languages; the university trainer uses this experience for professional work and research as well as develop a close relationship with the school personnel; and the mentor teacher deepens his or her understanding of mentoring new teachers. Grave (2009) argues that partnerships with schools are important in SLTE as they help apprentice teacher-learners into the discourses and norms of schooling; provide "reality check" for teacher educators on the relevance of what they teach in the SLTE context; and do provide fresh perspectives for practicing teachers.

2.6.3 Communities of practice

The literature has so far articulated the importance of practice in teacher learning. As earlier argued, student teachers are not only expected to teach in the classroom but also to understand the teaching profession. To understand the teaching profession, they need to be part of a community of practice. This section will discuss community of practice (CoP) as an essential part of teacher training. It will help understand how student teachers learn to

teach if involved in a community of practice as developed by Lave and Wenger in the 1990's.

Agrifoglio (2015) defines community of learning as "a group of people who communicate with each other (mutual engagement), and develop ways and resources (shared repertoire) for reaching a common goal (joint enterprise)" (p. 2). Wenger and Snyder (2000) look at it as a group of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise. Wenger (2009) argues that COPs are "formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour" (p. 1). From these definitions, we can simply define COP as a group of people with a shared vision. In the case of education, this could be a group of teachers or student teachers who would come together to share information on how to implement the school curriculum.

Wenger (2000) argues that "knowing always involves two components: the competence that our communities have established over time (i.e., what it takes to act and be recognised as a competent member) and our ongoing experiences of the world as a member (in the context of a given community and beyond)" (p.227). This argument shows how important it is that people with the same interests and goals come together as this will be one way of understanding the community that they belong to. Thus, bringing individuals together and forming communities of practice is an important tenet of learning, and learning patterns within a community are particularly important because most of the learning occurs due to human practice and interaction with others (Kapucu, n.d). According to Snyder and Briggs

(2003), COPs provide a social context for building and sharing ideas and experiences together, and for getting help from colleagues to put them in practice.

Wenger (2000; 2009), Snyder and Briggs (2003), Snyder and Wenger (2010) and Agrifoglio (2015) identifies three elements or characteristics of COP. The first is domain of COP. A domain is a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people (Wenger, 2009). Thus, members are bound together by their collectively developed understanding of what their community is about and they hold each other accountable (Wenger, 2000). Snyder and Briggs (2003) view a community's domain as a deep part of member's personal identity and a means of talking about what their life's work is about. The second element is the community which refers to the social structures that encourage learning through interactions and relationships among members. And the last domain is practice which is a set of shared repertoires of resources that include experiences, stories, tools and ways of addressing recurring problems.

Kapucu (n.d,) notes that COP and specifically those of the educational environment, should aim to prepare community individuals for the realities of the social world. In a sense, they should bridge between formal learning and informal practice; thus, creating more prepared and sophisticated citizens equipped with innovative and dynamic tools for problem solving. In other words, we might say, what pre-service teachers did for a required university course work need to be directly linked to what they were observing and doing in the field (Kessler & Wong, 2008). This can be possible if on one hand, learning is viewed as an "interplay

between social competence and personal experience" (Wenger, 2000) and on the other, the structures in the schools are aligned with the programmes in the university.

Through the project they carried out on learning community partnership between a university and a public middle school, Kessler and Wong (2008) came up with several shared structures. These included executive council meeting which involved university faculty, mentor teachers, site coordinators, principals and student representatives; involvement of site coordinators who were liaisons between the school and the university; shared planning for the teacher education seminars; professional development; and action research.

According to Wenger and Snyder (2000), one of the weaknesses with CoPs is that it is not easy to build and sustain them or to integrate them with the rest of the organisation. However, they argue that the way around this problem is for managers to: identify potential communities of practice that can enhance the company's strategic capabilities; provide the infrastructure that will support such communities and enable them to apply their expertise effectively; and use non-traditional methods to assess the values of the company's CoPs.

Wenger (2009) further observes that the school system has been very slow to embrace the CoP concept into its organisation structure. He argues that if adopted into the system, CoP could bring the experience of schooling closer to everyday life along three dimensions: internally – how to ground school learning experiences in practice through participation in communities around subject matter; externally, that is, how to connect the experience of

student to actual practice through peripheral forms of participation in broader communities beyond the school walls; and over the lifetime of students, that is, how to serve the lifelong learning needs of students by organising CoP focused on topics of continuing interest to students beyond the schooling period.

2.6.4 Circle of learning

McDonald, Kazemi, and Kavanagh (2013) propose a cycle of learning which involves collaborative planning of lessons, reflection on other teachers' teaching processes through video analysis and transcript analysis and reflection on own teaching through co-teaching and microteaching. These activities can be effective if student teachers participate in a community of practice. If students are engaged in these activities, they will find it easy to link what they learn at the university and what actually happens in the real classroom. In addition, they will be able to connect the knowledge about language and pedagogy as they are able to reflect on the knowledge of teachers and their own knowledge. Figure 2.3 is a cycle of learning according to McDonald, Kazemi, and Kavanagh (2013).

The circle of learning, in Figure 2.3, shows how teacher educators can use transcripts of lessons, lesson cases and videos on lesson implementation in TE. It also emphasises the need for collaborative learning through planning and teaching. If the teacher educators would use this circle of learning, the student teacher would be able to reflect on other teachers' actions and their own actions and learn to teach. The use of case studies in TE as presented in the circle of learning agrees with Shulman (1986) who emphasises the importance of cases in the development of student teachers' pedagogical knowledge (refer

section 2.7). Forzani (2014) argues that the use of videos, cases and rehearsals would help student teachers to learn the core practices of teaching even if they have no chance to go to the actual schools.

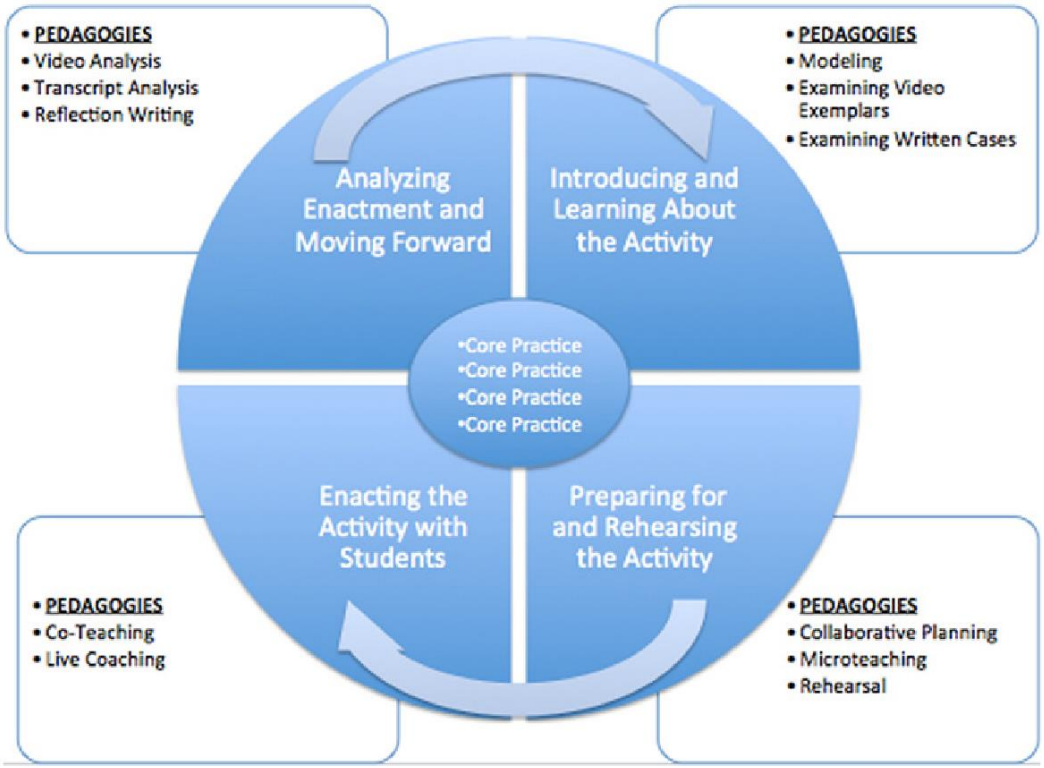

Figure 2.3: Cycle for collectively learning to engage in an authentic and ambitious instructional activity

Source: McDonald, Kazemi, and Kavanagh (2013, p.382).

The proposed approaches that can be used to bridge the gap between theory and practice seem to have one thing in common, that is, the view that learners are active members of the learning process. The reflective learning process seems to be the preferred among all the approaches discussed. The student teachers need to have time to reflect on their experiences and practices on their own, with peers, teacher educators or cooperating

teachers. However, the approaches do not explicitly explain how the theoretical knowledge especially the subject content will be used in the process of learning to teach. The assumption could be that in the process of reflection and in collaborating with others the student teacher will be able to understand how the content is linked with the practice they will be involved in.

2.7 Theoretical Framework for the Study

There are a number of theories that deal with second language learning and teaching and one of them is Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition. It is a theory that that clearly explains how learners learn their second language and, in the process, provides teachers with insights on how second language can be taught. The theory is elaborate as it provides five hypotheses that explain how second language is acquired: acquisition and learning, monitor, the input, affective filter, and natural order hypothesis (Brown, 2007; Krashen, 1989, 1982). As much as the theory is commonly used in language education to help student teachers understand how second language is acquired it does not clearly explain the knowledge base that teachers of second language need to have in order to help learners acquire language. Since this study focused on language teacher training it was felt that theories that will clearly explain the knowledge base the language teachers need to have will be appropriate. This study, therefore, used Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as its theoretical framework. PCK was proposed by Shulman in 1986.

Pedagogical content knowledge is the kind of knowledge base teachers need to have in order to bridge that gap between theory and practice. According to Mecoli (2013), PCK is

seen by some researchers as a tool for evaluating what pre-service teachers know and do in the classroom, while others use it as a measure of how prospective teachers' knowledge and ability come into play as they begin their journey into teaching. In this study, PCK will be used to evaluate the knowledge base the pre-service teachers gain in language teacher education programmes. More importantly, it will help understand if the activities that teacher educators engage their student teachers integrate theory and practice. PCK will be used as a bench-mark to evaluate if the knowledge base that the teacher educators in Malawi equip students with, would easily help the student face the realities of the classroom.

According to Shing, Mohd. Saat and Loke (2015), scholars believe teachers need to possess some minimum knowledge bases in order to teach well. Knowledge base is defined as "the secret of an expert system's expertise, the body of understanding, knowledge, skills, and dispositions that a teacher needs to perform effectively in a given teaching situation" (Wilson, Shulman, &Richert, 1987, cited in Shing, Mohd. Saat& Loke, p. 42). Shulman (1986) observes that for some time teachers' knowledge base focused on knowledge of the subject matter. He observes that "the person who presumes to teach subject matter to children must demonstrate knowledge of that subject matter as a prerequisite to teaching. Although knowledge of the theories and methods of teaching is important, it plays a decidedly secondary role, in the qualifications of a teacher" (p. 5). Johnson (2009) seems to agree with Shulman's observation as she indicates that the challenge with teacher education is that it is assumed that the disciplinary knowledge that defines what language is, how it is used and how it is acquired that has emerged out of the disciplines of theoretical

and applied linguistics is the same knowledge that teachers use to teach L2 and that in turn, is the same knowledge that students need in order to learn L2.

Shulman (1986) tried to understand how teachers' knowledge in teaching grows. He looked at how teachers prepare to teach something they never encountered in training, how they deal with deficiencies in the curriculum and how they transform their understanding of the text and transform it into instruction that their students can comprehend. In his conclusion, he outlines the following as the kind of knowledge the teachers need in order to deal with these issues: Subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge. In relation to this study, Fenstermacher (1994 p. 15) in Mecoli (2013) argues that research on teaching in the tradition of Shulman is rooted in a conception of what teachers should know and be able to do, with a concern for what categories and types of knowledge are required to achieve this state of competence.

Shulman (1986) looks at Pedagogical Content Knowledge as knowledge that "goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching" (p.9). He argues that this knowledge includes the most regularly taught topics in one's subject area, the most useful forms of representation of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations - in other words, the ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others; and an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult: the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of those most frequently taught topics and lessons. That is, PCK

represents “the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organised, represented and adopted to the diverse interests and ability of learners and presented for instruction” (Shulman, 1987, p. 8).

PCK concerns the manner in which teachers relate their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching) to their subject matter knowledge (what they know about what they teach) in the school context for the teaching of specific students (Cochran, King, &DeRuiter, 1993; Brophy, 1991 in Andrews, 2007; Van Driel & Berry, 2010). Konig et al. (2016) looks at PCK as subject specific knowledge for the purpose of teaching. That is, teacher knowledge of the curriculum, knowledge of learners and knowledge of teaching strategies and multiple representation. This is the kind of knowledge that will separate a linguist from a teacher of English. This shows that a teacher of English needs to understand English as a language, its structure, use and acquisition; needs to understand the different methodologies that can be used to teach English; needs to understand learners he is teaching and the context in which they are learning English. It is, therefore, the role of the English teacher education programmes to produce this kind of teacher.

Van Driel and Berry (2010) looks at PCK as specific form of knowledge for teaching which refers to the transformation of subject matter knowledge in the context of facilitating student understanding. That is, it implies a transformation of subject matter knowledge so that it can be used effectively and flexibly in the communication process between teachers and learners during classroom practice. According to Cochran, King and DeRuiter (1993), teachers’ transformation of subject matter knowledge occurs in the context of two other

important components of teacher knowledge which differentiates teachers form subject matter experts. One is teachers' knowledge of students including their abilities and learning strategies, ages and developmental levels, attitudes, motivations and their prior knowledge of the concepts to be taught. The other component is teacher understanding of social, political, cultural and physical environment in which students are asked to learn.

According to Shulman (1987), the transformation of subject matter knowledge involves a series of actions from preparation of materials, representation of ideas in various forms, instructional selections of teaching methods to adapting and tailoring instruction to specific learners and context. PCK is a "complex interplay between knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning and context, and the way in which teachers combine and use this knowledge to express their expertise" (Van Driel & Berry, 2010, p. 659).

According to Cochran, King and DeRuiter (1993), PCK cannot be described as a salad where the ingredients are merely added together and still retain their individual identities, but rather more similar to chocolate mousse, where the merging of ordinary ingredients results in an entirely new and extraordinary outcome. This analogy gives an idea of how the PCK should be like. It is not only knowledge of content on the one hand, and knowledge of the pedagogy on the other, but an amalgamation of knowledge content and pedagogy that is central to the knowledge needed for teaching (Leowenberg-Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2008). PCK can be seen as the more central knowledge category where subject content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge serves as a foundation (Konig et al. 2016).

2.7.1 Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Teacher Language Awareness

The PCK theory is mostly used in Science and Mathematics and that is why most of the studies that have been referred to in this study are from the sciences. However, there are a few models that have focused on developing PCK for language teachers. This study used Andrews (2007) model of PCK as a theoretical framework of the study, the reason being that the model is specifically for English Second Language teachers and this current study is focusing on training teachers of English, which is a second language in Malawi. The other reason is that the model's focus on TLA helps explain that connection between linguistic courses and the pedagogical knowledge. The model in Figure 2.4 presents the relationship between TLA and PCK.

Andrews (2007) model of PCK is an adaptation of Shulman's (1987) model. Shulman (1986) proposed three major categories of knowledge: the subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge, as earlier discussed. The categories were later extended to seven (Shulman, 1987) and these include: content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curricular knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners, knowledge of educational contexts and knowledge of educational ends, purpose and values and their philosophical and historical grounds.

Andrews (2007) model of PCK maintains the five out of seven categories of Shulman, namely: content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curricular knowledge, knowledge of learners, and knowledge of educational contexts. Instead of looking at Pedagogical Content Knowledge as a standalone category of knowledge, Andrews looks

at it as an overarching category of knowledge that contains a number of categories of knowledge within it. This description of Pedagogical Content Knowledge by Andrews is in tandem with the description of PCK as discussed in this study. The other departure from Shulman's model is the knowledge of educational end, purpose and values which Andrews has not presented as a category of knowledge. One would argue that when one gains the knowledge of educational context and curricular knowledge one should be able to understand the purpose as well as the values of education. This could be the reason Andrews did not include it on the list.

The knowledge of content as discussed in TLA and KAL reflects the teachers' knowledge of the language (strategic competence and Language competence) and teachers' knowledge about the language (subject matter cognition). As discussed earlier on, a teacher who is knowledgeable about the language does not only understand how language operates but also the kind of struggle the learners face when learning the language (Wright, 2002). This idea is reflected in the component of knowledge of learners. In this model therefore, the PCK is seen as the overarching knowledge base and TLA is seen as subset of the teachers' knowledge base (a knowledge base subset that is unique to the L2 teacher), which interacts with others and blends them in acts of expert L2 teaching (Andrews, 2007).

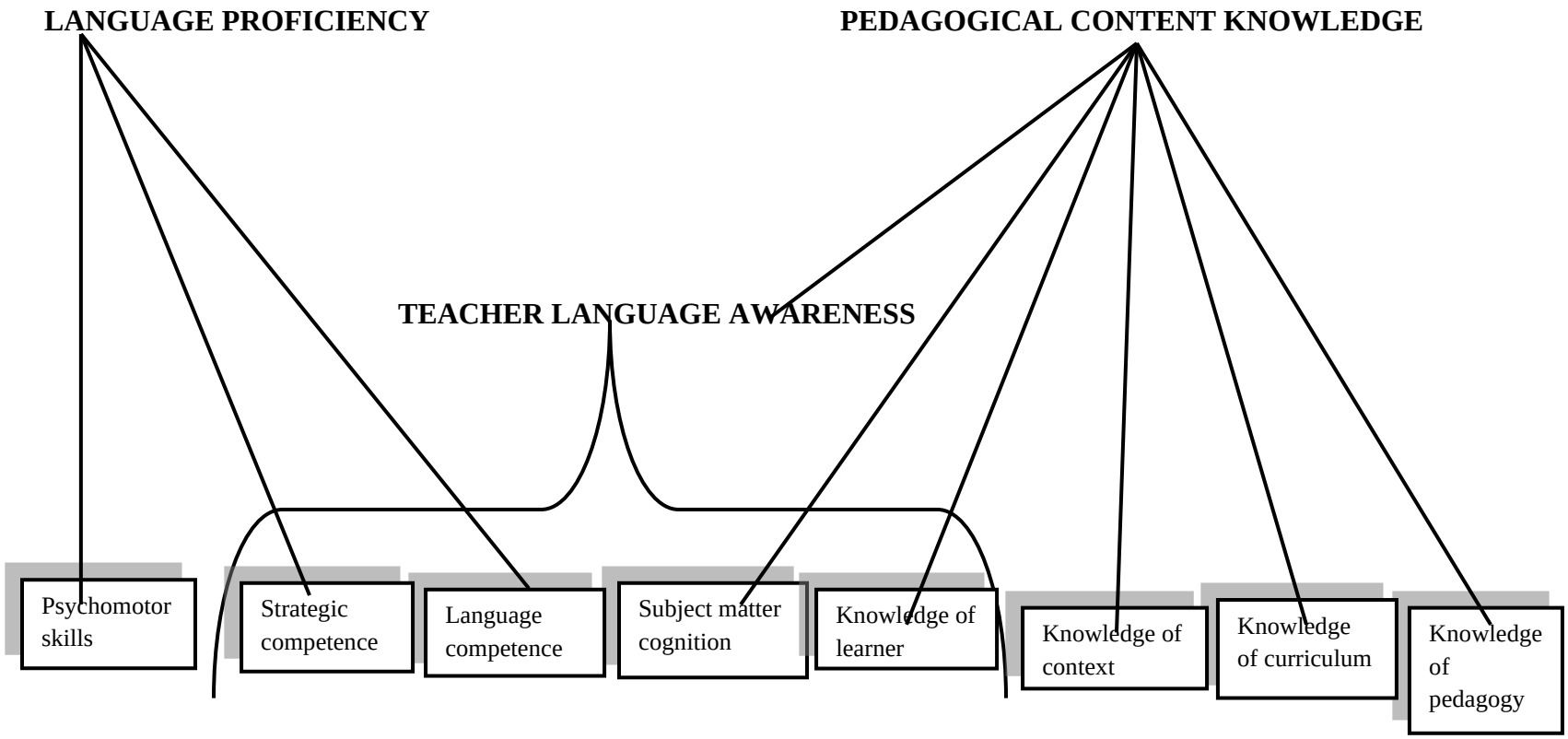

Figure 2.4: Teacher language awareness, language proficiency and pedagogical content knowledge

Source: Andrews (2007, p. 31)

2.7.2 Relevance of the theory

The connections that are represented in the model by Andrews (2007) make the whole PCK theory relevant to the current study. Peng (2013) argues that PCK is highly relevant to teaching practice and provides teachers the pedagogical reasoning based on specific content and specific learners and context. The model will help explain the kind of knowledge base teachers of English need to have in order to teach in secondary schools in Malawi. It will be used as a benchmark to understand how theory and practice are integrated in the process of training teachers of English. The model has illustrated how theoretical knowledge that is subject matter content can be integrated with practice that is pedagogy.

Peng (2013) observes that the weakness with the model by Andrews is the overstressing and the overlaps of TLA with the other PCK components of subject matter cognition and knowledge of learners which lead to the confusion in clarifying the inter-relationship among PCK components. According to Peng, it blurs the distinction between PCK, knowledge of pedagogy and knowledge of context. The two categories of knowledge are "treated as two PCK components but they are widely regarded as independent categories of teacher knowledge parallel with PCK" (p. 85). Despite this weakness, the overlap shows the strengths of TLA as a component of PCK. Moreover, though these are seen as separate categories of knowledge, the explanation of PCK hints on these as being components of the theory.

Freeman (2002) cited in Andrews (2007) describes PCK as a messy and even unworkable concept to apply to language as a subject matter. He argues that in L2 teaching, the teachers' knowledge of subject matter would probably be defined in linguistic terms, while learners' prior knowledge and conceptions of language would most likely be based on their first language. The meeting of these teacher's and learner's conception in the L2 classroom would therefore take in a mixture of L1 and L2, creating at least three potentially conflicting levels of representation: teacher linguistic knowledge, the students' first language background and the classroom language interaction. As much as this could be true, it is not a limiting factor to this study, as this study has defined the kind of linguistic knowledge a teacher is supposed to have. The assumption in this study is that training in basic linguistics will help the student teachers understand the challenges second language learners face when learning language. This is the whole essence of the notion of TLA or KAL in SLTE.

The theory will be helpful in understanding the dilemma of teacher education which is how to integrate theoretically based knowledge that has traditionally been taught in university classrooms with the experience-based knowledge that has traditionally been located in the practice of teachers and the policies of classroom and the school (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In view of the same, Lee (2007) argues that as pre-service teachers start their TP in school, they often find it difficult to bridge the gap between imagined view of teaching and the realities of teaching. Van Driel and Berry (2010) observe that in the context of pre-service teacher education "PCK can be promoted by addressing both pre-service teachers' subject matter knowledge and their educational beliefs, in combination with providing

them with opportunities to gain teaching experience and in particular to reflect on these experiences" (p. 659).

PCK therefore, provides a direction to the kind of knowledge that a teacher should be equipped with to easily survive in the language teaching world. PCK will therefore, be instrumental in assisting the researcher to determine whether the content included in the English teacher programmes prepare the teachers to easily understand the content they expect to teach and use appropriate methods to transfer that knowledge to students.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed literature that is linked to the current study. It has discussed the second language teacher education by looking at the role of knowledge of language and practice in teacher education. The chapter has also discussed the teacher education programme design, shift in views on teacher learning and teacher education, and ways of bridging theory and practice. The review has shown that teacher educators can bridge the gap between theory and practice through innovative ways of teacher training which include collaborative reflective learning and Community of Practice. The chapter has also discussed the Pedagogical Content Knowledge, as a theoretical framework informing the study, which is the knowledge special to teachers of English; the knowledge that separates a teacher of English from a mere major of English.

Most of the literature reviewed in this chapter is based on studies that were done in other countries. No literature was found, during this review process, which explored the knowledge base of second language teacher education in Malawi in order to understand

how teacher educators integrate theory and practice. This gap in literature is what the study aims to address. The next chapter, Chapter 3, will discuss the methodologies that were used to generate and analyse data for the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the research design, the study site and the study population. It also discusses the data generation methods that were used to answer the research questions as well as the tools that supported the methods. Before this study was carried out, a pilot study was done. The information on how the pilot study was done and the lessons learnt are provided in this chapter. The chapter also presents details on how the data that was generated was analysed. It also discusses credibility and trustworthiness of the study as well as how ethical issues were dealt with. Finally, the chapter outlines the limitations of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed qualitative case study research design to generate and analyse data.

3.2.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research has been defined by Golafshani (2003) as any research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. In other words, it is the kind of research that produces findings arrived from real-world settings where the phenomenon of interests unfolds naturally (citing Patton, 2001; Corbin,

1996). Relative to this, Creswell's (2007) views Qualitative research as research which begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a "complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action" (p. 37).

This study was set to follow what Creswell has described as the process or the basis of a qualitative research. For example, this study intended to generate data from the natural settings of the training institutions. It also intended to provide a thorough description of the programmes without the use of statistical analysis but through document review and interviews.

Qualitative research approach was also chosen because of its focus on the process rather than the product, its methods which are soft, flexible, case study and inductive based, its setting which is natural and its data which is descriptive (Bogdan, Biklen & Knopp, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Lodico, Spalding & Voegtle, 2010). This study needed to use more flexible methods to generate the needed information, generate information in a more natural setting, that is, the universities and colleges, and generate more descriptive data.

3.2.2 The case study design

Lodico, Spalding and Voegtle, (2010) define a case study as "a form of qualitative research that endeavours to discover meaning, to investigate processes and to gain insight into an in-depth understanding of an individual, group or situation" (p. 269). It is also looked at as a "detailed examination of one setting, or a single subject, single depository of documents or one particular event" (Bogdan, Biklen & Knopp, 2007, p. 59). The two definitions highlight the main aspect of a case study design which is a focus on a particular element, that is, a situation, setting or subject in order to gain an in-depth understanding of it.

According to Cohen, Marion and Morrison (2011), a case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories. This description of a case study agrees with one of the advantages of qualitative research methods (see Gillham, 2000). He states that it helps the researcher to 'get under the skin' of a group or organisation to find out what really happens, that is, the informal reality which can only be perceived from the inside.

One of the strengths of case studies, according to Given (2008), is that it has a "strong comparative advantage with respect to 'depth' of the analysis, where depth can be understood as empirical completeness and natural wholeness or as conceptual richness and theoretical consistency" (p. 69). This is in support of Wills (2007) who also indicates that a case study allows a researcher to gather rich and detailed data in an authentic setting. In other words, the fact that it gives a researcher an opportunity to have an in-depth

understanding of an element in a rich and natural environment makes a case study better than other designs. This study therefore, opted for this design as it gave an opportunity to the researcher to have an in-depth understanding on how theory and practice are integrated in the process of training the teachers of English language.

The design was a multisite case study which, according to Merriam (2009), involves collecting and analysing data from several cases. She argues that "the more cases included in a study, the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be" (p. 49). This is in support of Miles and Huberman (1994) who stipulate that "by looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases we can understand a single case finding, grounding it by specifying how and where if possible, why it comes on as it does, we can strengthen the precision, the validity and the stability of findings" (p. 29). The two arguments emphasise the importance of multisite or multi-case study; that is, that it helps the researcher to have a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. This is the more reason the study opted for this design.

While acknowledging the strength of the design, the study also acknowledges the challenges. One of the challenges is that the design is prone to problem of researcher bias, may be selective, personal and subjective (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). To deal with this challenge, the study set clear criteria for identifying the cases to be used. In addition, a deliberate move was made to take out the teacher training institution where the researcher works. This was an attempt to make the researcher an independent researcher in the institutions. However, since the researcher was a teacher educator, there was likely to

be a bit of biasness and this was controlled by the checks on the data analysis process by the supervisory team and by the faculty members who critiqued the presentations made to them.

3.3 Research Paradigm

The study was guided by the interpretive research paradigm. The choice of research design, the data generation methods and the data analysis process were guided by this paradigm. According to Wills (2007), the core belief of the interpretive research is that the reality that we know is socially constructed. He adds that the interpretivists believe that an understanding of the context in which any form of research is conducted is crucial to the interpretation of the data that is gathered. This means that this paradigm puts much emphasis on the interpretation of the data based on the context the data is generated and the interaction between the researcher and the context.

According to Creswell (2007) and Wills (2007), interpretive researchers tend to gain a deeper understanding of a particular situation and its complexity in its unique context instead of trying to generalise for the whole population or discovering a universal law or rule. Pham (2018) adds that this single phenomenon or situation may have multiple interpretations rather than a truth that can be determined by process of measure. This is the reason this study opted for a case study design. The case study design helped to deeply understand how teacher educators in institution of higher learning integrate theory and practice. In this case, the question of generalising the findings does not apply.

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) explain that the interpretive paradigm assumes a subjective epistemology, a relativist ontology, a natural methodology and a balanced axiology. The subjective epistemology means that the researcher makes meaning of their data through their own thinking and cognitive processing of data informed by their interactions with participants. A relative ontology means that the situation or phenomenon has multiple interpretations (Pham, 2018). Kivunja and Kuyini describe the naturalist methodology as the methods that the researcher utilises data that is generated through direct contact with the participants, for example through interviews. A balanced axiology assumes that the outcome of the research will reflect the values of the researcher, trying to present a balanced report of the findings.

These assumptions as presented by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) have been manifested in the current study in that the data was generated through interactions with the participants through interviews. The data generated also seems to have different interpretations as observed through the various reactions and suggestions made by the faculty members and supervisory team when the data was presented to them. This, therefore, provides room for more interpretation of the data to have a deeper understanding of the situations and provide room for improvement on the English teacher education.

Pham (2018) presents two major advantages of an interpretive research. One of the advantages is that it does not only describe objects, human or events but also deeply understands them in their social context. The other advantage is that the researcher cannot only observe the participants but can also probe an interviewee's thoughts, values,

prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives. The foregoing are the reasons the study opted for this type of research, as it gave the researcher the opportunity to probe the interviewee's responses both during the actual interview and during the data analysis.

3.4 Study Sites and Population

Data was generated from three higher education teacher training institutions in Malawi. The first Institution was chosen because it is the oldest private institution that trains teachers of English, therefore it might provide very rich information. The second institution was a teacher training college, the first public secondary school teacher training college in Malawi. It was affiliated to the third institution that was also part of the study. The third institution was chosen because it is the oldest teacher training institution and would provide very rich information for the study. The institutions were given codes, Institution A, Institution B and Institution C, which were used throughout the report. From these institutions, the data that was expected to be generated was on how the English teacher education programmes are packaged and how they are implemented in order to integrate theory and practice.

3.5 Sample size

This section presents the sample size for the study. It provides the description of the training institutions and the participants that were involved in the study from the institutions.

3.5.1 Training institutions

The three training institutions were selected purposefully by looking at the experience they

have in training teachers of English. Institution A was the oldest private institutions that had been training teachers of English since 2003, hence it was likely that other private institution could easily learn from it. Institution B was also the oldest public secondary school teacher training college. Being an oldest teacher training college, it provided rich information on the integration of theory and practice. Institution C being the oldest, it was possible that the other institutions learnt from it as they were developing their programmes.

3.5.2 Research Participants

From the three institutions, data was generated from teacher educators and students.

3.5.2.1 Teacher educators

From the institutions, the study targeted the English teaching methodology lecturers, the Teaching Practice coordinators, the Heads of Department (HoD) responsible for the programme, Heads of Section for Language or English (HoS) depending on the structure of the institution, and the Dean of Faculty where the English teacher education programme belongs. The HoD and the Dean of Faculty were considered as the ones at the helm of curriculum development in the Faculty and were also expected to provide general ideas of why the programme was designed the way it was. The TP coordinator was included to give insights on how the teaching practice was done in the institutions as it was identified as one of the key components of the programme.

There was a total of eleven participants from the training institutions. Each of them was identified in view of the kind of information he or she would have on the English teacher education programme, how theory and practice are integrated in the programme and how

the programme is implemented. Table 3.1 shows the number of participants from each of the three institutions and the designations of each of the participants.

Table 3.1: Participants from each of the three institutions

	Code	**Participants**
1	Institution A	Head of Section (English)
		Head of Department (Humanities)
		Dean of Faculty (Education)/ Teaching Practice Coordinator
		Lecturer (English Teaching Methods)
2	Institution B	Head of Department (Languages)
		Dean of Faculty (Humanities)
		Lecturer (English Teaching Methods)
		Teaching Practice Coordinator
3	Institution C	Deputy Head of Department (Curriculum and Teaching Studies)
		Head of Section (Languages) and Lecturer in English Teaching Methods
		Teaching Practice Coordinator
	Total	**Eleven participants**

Source: Field data, 2018

The proposal was to have five teacher educators from each of the institutions with the assumption that the Institutions have Dean of Faculty, Head of Department, Head of Section, TP coordinator and Lecturer responsible for English teaching methodology. However, it was discovered that the institutions have different structures and the number was reduced to at least 4 per institution. For Institution C, it was not possible to get an interview with the Dean, however the needed information was generated through an in-depth interview with the Deputy Head of Department.

3.5.2.2 Student teachers

The study involved 24 student teachers from two institutions, B and C. The study intended to engage a total number of 48 students but due to other unforeseen circumstances that did not work. Firstly, from Institution A, the students could not participate because the participant who could guide the researcher in the whole process (the lecturer responsible for English teaching methods) passed on in the process of data generation. For Institution B, for the programme that was under study, there were no year 4 students. As much as students in both year 3 and 4 were used in Institution C, it was discovered that those in year three did not have much to share because they had only done a semester of Language Teaching Methods. However, the information they shared still helped to enrich the study in that the information shared helped to understand how the students transitioned from learning content courses and general education course to learning specific teaching methodology courses. Table 3.2 shows the summary of the number of student teachers that were involved in the study including their gender.

Table 3.2: Student teachers who participated in the study

Institution	Year	Gender	Number
Institution B	3	Females	4
		Males	4
		Total	**8**
Institution C	3	Females	4
		Males	4
	4	Females	4
		Males	4
		Total	**16**
		Grand Total	**24**

Source: Field data, 2018/2019

3.6 Sampling techniques

The study used non-probability sampling techniques. In this type of sampling, the sample is deliberately selected to reflect particular features (Given, 2008; Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003; Berg, 2001). The study specifically intended to generate data from participants who are part of the English teacher education programme as designers of the programme, implementers of the programme or recipients of the programme. Two non-probability sampling techniques were used, these were purposive and convenience.

3.6.1 Purposive sampling

According to Creswell (2014), the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help researchers understand the problem and the research questions. According to Given (2008), purposive sampling is a process where participants

are selected because they meet criteria pre-determined by the researcher. That is, the researcher uses his or her knowledge and expertise to select participants because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the topic under study (Creswell, 2007; Berg, 2001). It was the intention of this study to work with those that understand the English teacher education programme and can provide insights into it. Purposeful sampling, therefore, helped to select the right participants for the study. The purposive sampling was used to select the teacher educators. The following is the criteria that were used:

1. those involved in the programme design.
2. those that manage the programme at Faculty or Department level.
3. those that facilitate English teaching methodology course as a key to English teacher training.
4. those that manage and organise the teaching practice component of the programme.

Purposive sampling was also used to decide on the year of study of the students that were expected to participate in the study. The decision was made to engage year 3 and year 4 students as these were viewed to have gone through a number of English teaching methodology courses. Therefore, they were deemed to be in a position to give the needed information.

3.6.2 Convenience sampling

Convenience sampling was used to select the students to participate in the study from Year 3 and 4. Convenience sampling was used because the students had a lot of commitments and the researcher needed students that were willing, ready and free to participate. In other

words, the students that participated in the study were available and easy to access (Given, 2008; Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003; Berg, 2001).

3.7 Piloting

Piloting of the interview guides was done at one of the higher learning institutions that train teachers of English in Malawi from 22nd and 23rd January, 2018. The institution is the second public university in Malawi that trains teachers of English. The institution was chosen for piloting because it is where the researcher works, hence making it convenient and accessible for the researcher. According to Creswell (2007), pilot cases are selected on the basis of convenience, access and geographic proximity.

The reasons for conducting the pilot were: to find out if the questions in the interview guides would generate the kind of responses that would help answer the research questions; to reflect on the duration of the interviews; to reflect on the data generation process that includes plans; and to determine the natural order of questions, in the process, adding or removing some questions (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003; Creswell, 2007; Given, 2008; Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010).

According to Merriam (2009), when you carry out a pilot interview you do not only get some practice in interviewing, but you also quickly learn which questions are confusing and need rewording, which questions as suggested by your respondents you should have thought to include in the first place. So, apart from getting familiarised with the questions and the questioning technique, pilot interview helped me to make some changes to the

interview guides, though not many. The following are the notable changes that were made to the interview guides. All the interview guides had the question:

(a) What philosophy guides your teacher training?

(b) How does the philosophy permeate through the different levels of the programme, from preparation to implementation?

After asking the questions to the HOD (using HOS's interview guide) and the lecturer, it was felt that it would be better to change the questions in order to get the feeling of the kind of teachers the language teacher education programme aims to produce. The decision was reached when it was discovered that they might not know the philosophy behind their teacher training programme, but they had an idea of the kind of teacher they were trying to produce. However, the original question on the Dean's and HOD's interview guide was maintained. So, for the lecturer's and the HOS's interview guide the questions were changed to:

(a) What type of a teacher does your language teacher education programme aim to produce?

(b) How do you ensure that this aim is achieved in the process of facilitating the course?

The other adjustment made was on the interview guide for the HOS. The following question:

How does the programme prepare student teachers for the realities of the classroom? In terms of:

(a) understanding of the learners?

(b) the expectations of the teaching profession?

(c) understanding of the curriculum?

(d) use of the teaching methodologies?

Was changed to:

How does the programme prepare student teachers for the realities of the classroom? (Probe in terms of understanding of the learners, the expectations of the teaching profession, understanding of the curriculum, and use of the teaching methodologies).

It was discovered that by just answering the main rubric, all the issues (a) to (d) were addressed and going item by item was repetitive. So, the question was modified and used the items (a) to (d) to probe more if the respondent did not seem to have addressed the issues.

There was also a question that was added to the interview guide for the lecturer. The interview guide for the lecturer focused much on how practice is embedded in the modules that the lecturers facilitate. After the pilot interview, it was felt that there was need to directly ask about how the students get oriented to the content in secondary school as a way of finding out if there are deliberate efforts to teach the secondary school content, or if they felt the content taught at the university prepares them for the secondary school content. Hence, the following question was added:

How do you help your students get familiarised with the content that they will teach in secondary school?

In short, the pilot study was necessary because it gave the researcher an idea as to how field work will turn out. The pilot data was also analysed to see if the data analysis process proposed would be effective and to find out if the proposed theoretical framework would work with the kind of data generated from the field. The findings of the study were presented to the Faculty and through that a decision was made to include focus group discussion with students as well as classroom observation.

3.8 Data Generation Process

Data was generated from the three institutions between February and March 2018. More data was generated in November 2018, and the final data was generated in June 2019 (refer to appendix 4 for actual dates).

The sections that follow provide the details of the methods and tools that were used to generate data.

3.8.1 Data generation methods

Data was generated through interviews, document analysis, focus group discussions and observations. The following are the detailed descriptions of each of the method that was used.

3.8.1.1 Interviews

Data from the teacher educators was generated through interviews. According to Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2014), interviews are necessary when we cannot observe behaviour, feelings, or how people interpret the world around us. This is the first reason interviews

were chosen for this study. The other reason for using an interview as a data generation method is that it is flexible, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used. The order of the interview may be controlled while still giving space for spontaneity and the interviewer can press not only for complete answers but for responses about complex and deep issues (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Thus, there is opportunity to ask for clarification of answers or ask additional questions on unexpected issues that arise (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). The Interview method, in this case, helped to get in depth information from the participants.

However, interviews have got their own limitations, for example, Creswell (2014) observes that interviews may provide indirect information filtered through the views of interviewee, researchers' presence may bias responses, and not all people are equally articulate and perceptive. Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010) add that, most interviewers meet face to face with their interviewees, so even where confidentiality is promised, interviewees might be reluctant to reveal sensitive information. It was anticipated that these could be some of the challenges this study would encounter. In particular, the participants were reluctant to share more information because they felt the researcher might use the information at her workplace not for academic purposes only owing to the background of the researcher. These challenges were addressed by making sure that a good rapport was established before the interview was carried out to help participants to open-up and be as honest as they could be. At the same time, provision of the necessary information on the background of the researcher, aim of the study and what it intends to do, helped the participants to open-up.

A deliberate emphasis was also made that the researcher was a student and the information sought was for academic purposes.

The interviews were semi-structured. This was decided on as it gave room for the researcher to change the order of questions, omit question, or vary the wording of the questions depending on what happens in the interview (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). Since this study was based on people's views on how theory and practice were integrated in English teacher education programmes, semi-structured interview were the best method to use, because there was need to probe the participants for more information.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. Merriam (2009) observes that transcription of interviews is tedious and time consuming. In this regard, the transcription was done by a research assistant. Soon after the transcription, the researcher listened to the interviews again while going through the transcriptions to check their accuracy. The listening of the interviews and the reading of the transcriptions also gave the researcher a chance to internalise the content in preparation for coding and analysis.

3.8.1.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Focus group discussions were used to generate data from the students. Just as in traditional face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews also allow the researcher to access the substantive content of verbally expressed views, opinions, experiences and attitudes (Berg, 2001). According to (Bogden, Biklen &Knopp (2007), Finch and Lewis (2003), and Berg (2001), the focus group presents a more natural environment as it gives the participants an

opportunity to interact and influence or stimulate each other to articulate their views on a given topic. These characteristics of focus group discussion are the reasons the method was used especially with the student teachers. Considering the nature of the study, there was need to have student teachers together so that they help each other reflect on how their teacher educators integrate theory and practice.

Bogden, Biklen and Knopp (2007) observe that one of the challenges with focus group discussion is that there are individual members who talk too much. Another challenge that they identify is the difficulties of keeping that discussion on topic. This challenge was experienced, and it was dealt with by giving an opportunity to every member to speak. The participants were also encouraged to open up and feel free to say what they thought as their names would remain anonymous in the report. In the cases where the participants diverted from the topic, they were allowed to talk and afterwards they were redirected to the topic under study.

3.8.1.3 Document analysis

Document analysis was also used to generate information. The kind of documents that were analysed, were the programme documents and the route maps which helped to validate the data from participants and to have a clear understanding of how the programmes integrate theory and practice. The challenge that was faced with document analysis was that one institution did not have the programme document. The route maps that were used in place of the programme document did not have much of the needed information. To deal with

this challenge, during the in-depth interviews with the educators and student teachers, more probing questions were asked on the curriculum.

To locate the documents for analysis the teacher educators that were interviewed, especially the Head of Department or Head of Section, were requested to provide the required documents. Where there was need for clarification on the information in the documents, the participants were approached. The HoD was opted for to provide such document as he or she was viewed as one of the custodians for such documents.

3.8.1.4 Observations

The decision to have classroom observations came in as a way of validating data from the facilitators of English teaching methodology. Given (2008) argues that observation provides rich data which result in a fuller understanding of the topic under study. It was felt that if the facilitators are observed in their classes, it will help understand how they really integrate theory and practice in the implementation of the English teacher education programme.

The study planned to observe all the three facilitators of the English teaching methodology for all the three institutions, however, only the facilitator for Institution C was observed. Three of his lessons were observed. The observation was not fully executed because of the challenge stated in section 3.5.2.2 and because of the mismatch between the institutions' calendar and the schedule for the data collection process. This challenge agrees with the challenge that Given (2008) outlines. Given identifies time as a challenge in observation

because observation requires substantial time. This study did not have substantial time for the process because of the academic calendars of the institutions. Though the observation was not fully executed, the data generated still gave the researcher an idea of what really happened.

3.8.2 Data generation tools

The data generation methods were supported by several tools which included the interview guide, voice recorder and observation form.

3.8.2.1 Interview protocol/guide

An interview guide was used to generate information from the participants. Since the interviews were semi-structured, the interview guide had two sections. The first section sought to generate data on qualifications, work experience, roles, among others. Merriam (2009) observes that usually specific information is desired from all respondents in which case there is a more structured section in the interview. The other section had a list of questions on the topic under discussion.

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), the advantage of having an interview protocol is that the outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data, makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent and also interviews remain fairly conversational and situational. However, they argue that because of the flexibility of the semi-structured interview in the way questions are dealt with in the research protocol, it can result in substantially different responses, thus reducing the comparability of responses.

To deal with this challenge, the questions and the order of the questions only changed where there was a serious need for the change.

3.8.2.2 Voice recorder

To ensure that everything that is said is not lost before the analysis, all the interviews were audio recorded. The voice recorder was also used to record the lessons that were observed. The major drawback that was anticipated with this data generation tool is malfunctioning of the equipment and uneasiness of the respondents to be recorded (Merriam, 2009). To deal with the cases of malfunctioning, the equipment was thoroughly checked before the interview. On the participants, a deliberate effort was made to make the respondent feel comfortable with the recorder before the actual data was generated. The use of a small and friendlier recorder also helped the interviewees to relax.

3.8.2.3 Documentation

For the document analysis, a notebook was used where notes were written on what was observed. The notes were a detailed description of what was observed from the documents which were later thematically analysed.

3.8.2.4 Observation forms

An observation form was used to record data from the classroom observations. The observation form was opted for as it gives a chance to the researcher to record what is being observed in detail as opposed to a checklist which require yes/no or markings.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data was analysed qualitatively using the procedure outlined by Creswell (2007). According to Creswell, qualitative analysis of data involves these procedures: preparing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through the process of coding, condensing the codes and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion. This process is called Thematic Analysis. The data analysis process as proposed by Creswell (2014) was followed (see Figure 3.1).

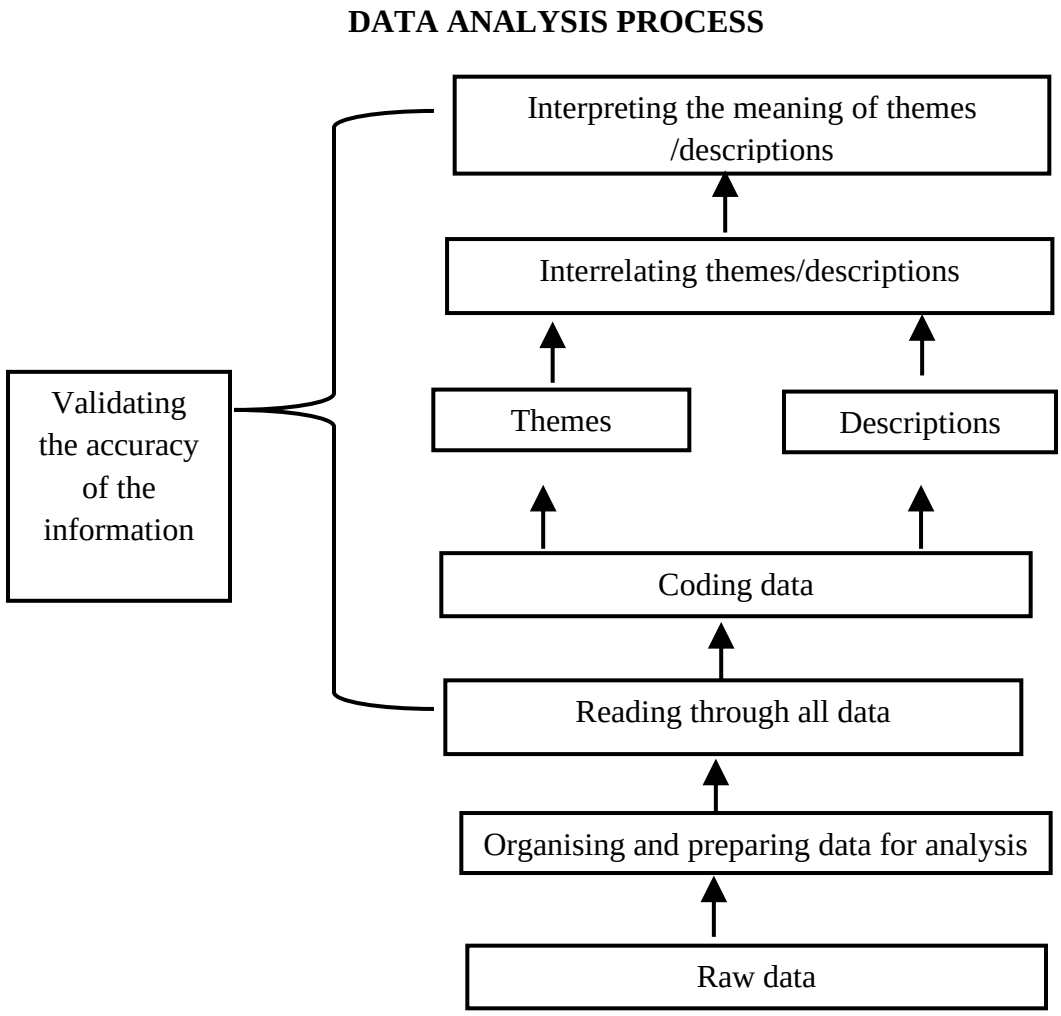

Figure 3.1: Data analysis process

Source: Creswell (2014)

Thus, the interviews were transcribed and were organised in terms of the set of different interviewees involved, for example, TP coordinator Institution A. The data was coded and interpreted in line with the research questions. The process also involved validation of accuracy of the data information through researcher's reflections, member check and debriefing.

According to Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2006), coding is the process of identifying different segments of the data that describe related phenomena and labelling these parts using broad category names. The data in this study was coded using a mixed approach where the concept driven approach and data driven approach were used. According to Martinez (2016), concept driven approach is where the codes are developed in advance and the data driven approach is where the codes are developed while reading the interview transcripts. This is also highlighted in Miles and Huberman (1994) who indicate that codes can be pre-determined before fieldwork. Such codes will come from "the conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypothesis, problem areas and/or key variables that the research brings to study" (p.58). Miles and Huberman also indicate that a researcher might not want to pre-code, he or she would instead wait till data is collected, and see how it functions or relates to its context, and then determine how many varieties of it are there.

In this study, these two ways of generating codes were combined. There were priori codes that were predetermined before the field-work-based on the research questions and the proposed theoretical framework. Other codes were generated after data generation. The decision to combine the two techniques came about because as the data was being read

through there were some categories that were emerging which were relevant and important. Given (2008) argues that categories are seldom static; they are reconceptualised, renamed, reorganised, merged or separated as the analysis progresses. In view of this, it was decided not to rely on the pre-determined codes but to provide room for the emerging categories. These emerging categories did not just add to the pre-determined codes but also helped to rename and reconceptualise the categories.

The predetermined codes were based on the theoretical framework, and the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Martinez, 2016). The pre-codes included theory which covered subject matter content and content on how to teach; practice which covered lecture room activities and teaching practice; challenges; and solutions. These codes reflected what is contained in the language teacher education. A successful teacher education programme needs to have theory and practice, hence the inclusions of these codes. There were few codes that were added after data generation and in most cases these were an improvement on the pre-determined codes. For example, on teaching practice it was discovered that the code was too broad as it had some issues within it, that is, planning, the actual TP, and post TP. These aspects were then treated as standalone codes. The other code that was added was site description which came in as an important theme for contextualization of the study.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), codes are usually "attached to 'chunks' of varying size, that is, words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs connected or unconnected to a specific setting" (p. 56). In line with this, the researcher manually

analysed the data by assigning different colours to words, phrases and in some cases whole paragraph of the transcribed data to represent various codes. Through these codes, themes were established and then interpreted. For example, every response that represented "practice" was highlighted with the colour, light blue. The particular words, phrases or sentences were cut from the main text and put them in a table. Each extract was read again, and new codes were assigned to extracts. Themes were then established. This process was done for one-on-one interviews with the participants, the focus group discussions and the curriculum documents.

For classroom observation the categories or codes were restructured. The restructuring mostly combined one or two codes as a way of checking how these were dealt with in the lecture room. The observation process provided an opportunity to see the kind of content and practice the student teachers were given and to see if there was a link between the theory and practice. The observation form that was used contained the following categories: content of lesson; connecting methodology with subject content; connecting lecture content to real classroom setting; utilizing students' experiences; and practical activities. The data from observation was already categorised from the data generation process which made it easy for analysis.

3.10 Credibility and trustworthiness

To ensure credibility and trustworthiness in a qualitative research, there are four criteria that should be considered: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Shenton, 2004; Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2006; Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010; & Creswell, 2014). Credibility refers to whether the participants' perceptions of the setting

or events match up with the researcher's portrayal in the research report (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). They further define dependability as whether one can track the procedures and processes used to collect and interpret the data (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010), thereby enabling the future researcher to repeat the work, not necessarily to gain the same results (Shenton, 2004).

Transferability refers to the degree of similarity between the research site and other sites as judged by the reader (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). Lastly confirmability deals with the objectivity of the study. Here steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible that the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004).

In this study, several steps were taken into consideration to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the study. In the first place, the research report has presented in detail all the steps that were taken to generate data. This includes what was planned and what actually took place. The research report has also described all the sites and respondents that data was generated from. Furthermore, the methods and approaches used in the study have been clearly described. Shenton (2004) notes that beliefs underpinning decisions made and methods adopted should be acknowledged within the research report, the reasons for favouring one approach when others could have been taken explained and weaknesses in the techniques actually employed admitted.

To avoid researcher's biases from influencing the results, peer de-briefers were used. The debriefing sessions were done with the supervisors. In addition, the biases that the researcher brought to the study have been clarified in the report by giving out researcher's background and experiences (refer to section 6.1). According to Patton (1990) cited in Shenton (2004), the credibility of the researcher is especially important in qualitative research as it is the person who is the major instrument of data collection and analysis. In view of the same, Creswell (2014) argues that the self-reflection creates an open and honest narrative that resonates well with readers. He further argues that a good qualitative research contains comments by the researchers about how their interpretation of the findings is shaped by their background.

The use of different groups of people as sources of information and the different data generation methods that were used helped to triangulate the data. Shenton (2004) observes that the use of a wide range of informants helps to verify individual viewpoints and experiences against others and ultimately, a rich picture of the attitudes, needs or behaviour of those under scrutiny may be constructed. Finally, effort was made to establish a good rapport with the participants, and they were encouraged to be free and open.

3.11 Ethical issues

According to Bogdan, Biklen and Knopp (2007), guidelines of ethics in research with human subjects attempt to ensure that participants enter research project voluntarily, understanding the nature of the study and the dangers and obligations that are involved and that informants are not exposed to risks that are greater than the gains they might derive.

Creswell (2007), citing Lipson (1994), adds the following groups of ethical issues: deception and covert activities; confidentiality towards participants, sponsors and colleagues; and participant requests that go beyond social norms.

To deal with ethical issues, several steps were taken. In the first place, permission was sought from the relevant authorities to collect data from the various institutions. For the training institutions, permission was first sought from the Principal (for Institution B) and College Registrars (for Institutions A and C). Flick (2007) stipulates that gaining access is not just

> a step at the beginning of the field contact or something that can be formalised by preparing a flyer about the project. It is negotiation running through several steps, facing immune reaction by the field (trying to send the invading research back) based on personal trust between the field and the researcher, finding gate keepers who open the doors to the field and to the right persons, and being clear to the field of what you expect from it (p. 34).

Before the interviews and the FGDs, the participants were given a consent form to sign (refer to appendix 2) if they were willing to be part of the study. The form contained the description of the study, what will be done with the findings, and the duration of the interview (Bogdan, Biklen & Knopp, 2007). The form also assured the participants of their identities being kept confidential. The participants were given an opportunity to refuse to participate to ensure that the data generation involved only those that were genuinely willing to take part and prepared to offer data freely (Shenton, 2004). Furthermore, before recoding the interview, permission was sought from the participant to record the interview.

Lastly, to ensure confidentially the names of participants and the research sites are not mentioned in the report.

3.12 Limitations of the study

There are several challenges that were faced especially in the course of data generation. Firstly, as already mention elsewhere in the chapter, the passing on of one of the key participants was a setback. Since the study was a multiple case study, the teacher educators' practices at this institution were analysed based on the data that was generated through in depth interviews with the educators and the document analysis. Secondly, the differences in academic calendars made it difficult to fit in the data generation process. Thirdly, most of the participants were very busy and it was very difficult to secure an appointment with them. These two challenges were dealt with by spreading the data collection process over a period of a year. That is, data was still being collected as the report was being developed. This enabled the researcher to generate most of the data that was needed for the study.

Finally, one institution did not have the needed programme document for analysis, and, for those two institutions that had the programme documents, the documents were based on a reviewed programme that had not run its course. However, there were not many changes in the new curriculum and what the teacher educators reported was also reflected in the documents. Despite these challenges, the data that was generated was still rich enough to make the necessary conclusions. This is because the in-depth interviews were done with three to five different teacher educators who validated each other's data. In addition, the in-depth interviews gave the researcher an opportunity to probe more into cases where

more information was needed. The researcher was in contact with the teacher educators throughout the process, and where more information was needed, they were contacted.

3.13 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the methodology that was used to generate data in line with the purpose of the study and the research questions. The chapter presented the research design and the research paradigm to support the choice of the data generation methods as well as analysis. It has also discussed the study site, population, sample size and the sampling techniques that were used to select the sample and why.

The chapter has also presented the data generation methods, the tools that supported the methods and the process that was taken to analyse the data that was generated. The justifications for every choice that was made for certain methods and tools have been duly provided. The chapter has also discussed how credibility, trustworthiness and ethical issues were dealt with. The next chapter will present and discuss the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Chapter overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study and the discussion. The discussion is guided by the literature review and the theoretical framework. The chapter provides the description of the study sites, the analysis of the content of the programme documents, the practice that the teacher educators involve their students in, the challenges that teacher educators face when taking students through practice and suggestions on how to deal with the challenges.

4.2 General Findings: Description of the three training institutions

The findings of this study are divided into two: general and specific findings. This section provides the general findings of the study. The general findings comprise the description of the three secondary school teacher training institutions under study. The three institutions were given codes A, B, and C. Throughout the write up, the institutions are referred to as Institution A, Institution B, and Institution C. The participants in each of the institutions were also given codes 1 to 4, depending on the number of participants that were involved. Table4.1 summarises the codes that have been used in this chapter:

Table 4.1: Codes used in the findings and discussion of findings

	Code	**Participants**	**Code**
1	Institution A	Head of Section (English)	Participant 1
		Head of Department (Humanities)	Participant 2
		Dean of Faculty (Education)/ Teaching Practice Coordinator	Participant 3
		Lecturer (English Teaching Methods)	Participant 4
2	Institution B	Head of Department (Languages)	Participant 1
		Dean of Faculty (Humanities)	Participant 2
		Lecturer (English Teaching Methods)	Participant 3
		Teaching Practice Coordinator	Participant 4
3	Institution C	Deputy Head of Department (Curriculum and Teaching Studies)	Participant 1
		Head of Section (Languages)& Lecturer in English Teaching Methods	Participant 2
		Teaching Practice Coordinator	Participant 3

Source: Field data, 2018

4.3 Site description

This section presents the description of the research site. It provides the structure of the institutions in general, the faculty in which the teacher education programmes are held and the actual programme.

4.3.1 Institution A

Institution A was a privately owned university in Malawi. It opened its doors in 2003 with one faculty, the Faculty of Education, to offer degrees in Education. The University currently has two campuses, and it had grown from one faculty to four faculties: The Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Applied Sciences, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Theology.

4.3.1.1 The Faculty of Education

The Faculty of Education had three departments: The Department of Humanities, the Department of Education and Teaching Studies, and the Department of Basic Sciences. The Department of Humanities had the following sections: Geography, History, Social and Developmental Studies, Theology and Religious Studies, and English. The English section offers courses in Communication skills, Linguistics, Literature and English Teaching Methodology.

4.3.1.2 The Bachelor of Education (Humanities) programme

The Bachelor of Education (Humanities) programme was facilitated by the Department of Humanities and Department of Education and Teaching Studies. This was the programme

that trained teachers of English. A student teacher being trained as a teacher of English will register for courses in English, English teaching methodology and Education Foundations[1]. English and English teaching methodologies are hosted in the English section in the Department of Humanities. Education Foundations is hosted by the Department of Education and Teaching Studies (ETS). Figure 4.1summarises the structure of the Faculty of Education locating the Bachelor of Education (Humanities) programme at Institution A.

[1] These are core courses for every student teacher. The courses provide student teachers with general knowledge about learners, the school, schooling and education in general.

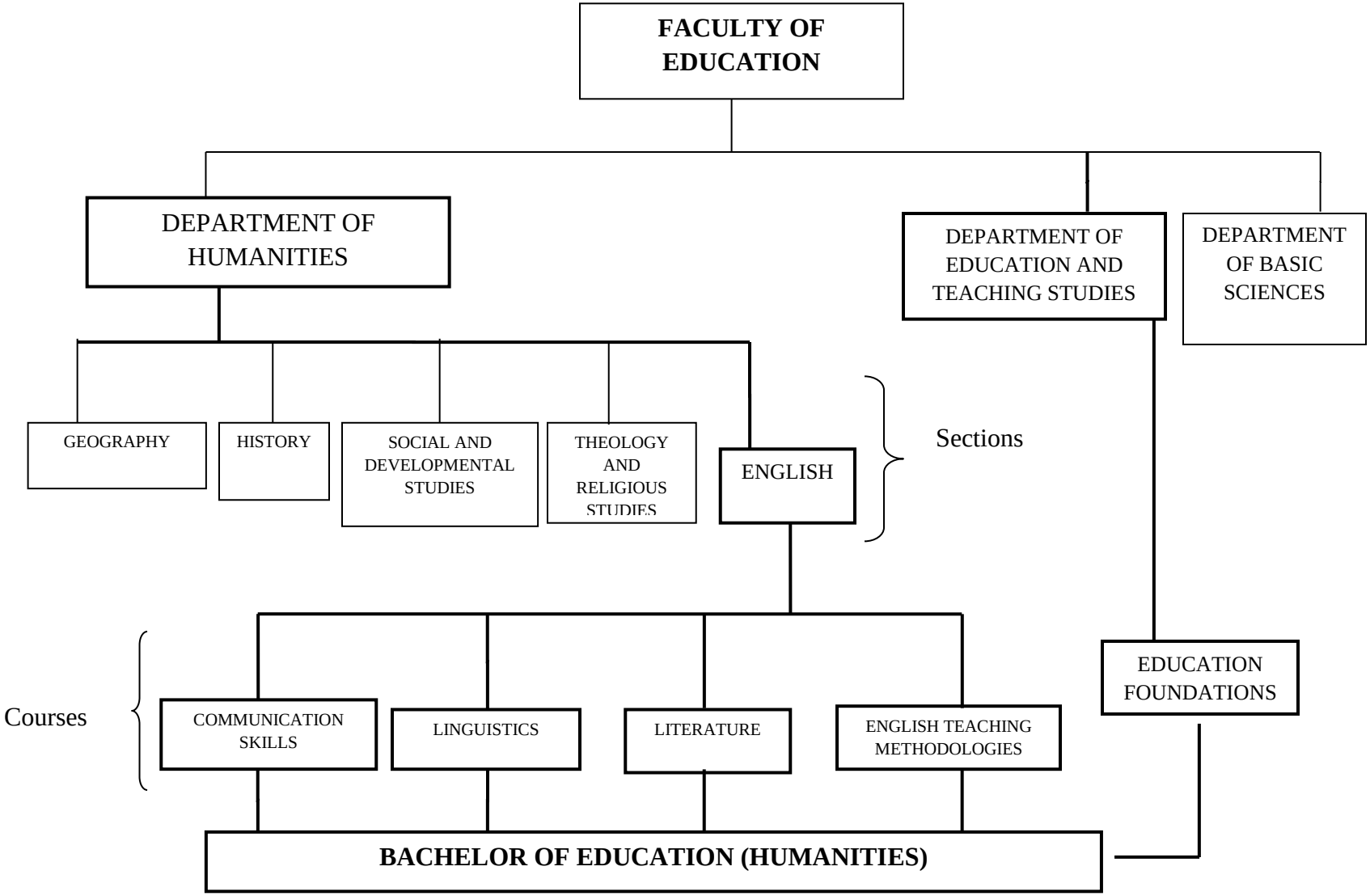

Figure 4.1: Locating the Bachelor of Education (Humanities) Programme, English major

Source: Field data, 2018

4.3.2 Institution B

Institution B was a government institution that was established by the Malawi MoEST in 1993 to train secondary school teachers in order to alleviate the shortage of teachers in secondary schools in Malawi. It had three faculties: Faculty of Education, Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Science. The Faculty of Education comprised of the Department of Educational Foundations, Contemporary and Emerging Issues, and the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies (CATS).

The Faculty of Humanities had the Department of Languages, and other humanities subjects like Geography and History. The Department of Languages offers Linguistics and African Languages, English and French. This means that a student who is registered in the Bachelor of Education (Secondary) programme majoring in English had to register in three departments: the Department of Languages, Department of Educational Foundations, Contemporary, and Emerging Issues, and the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies. Figure 4.2 is the structure of the Institution locating the programme.

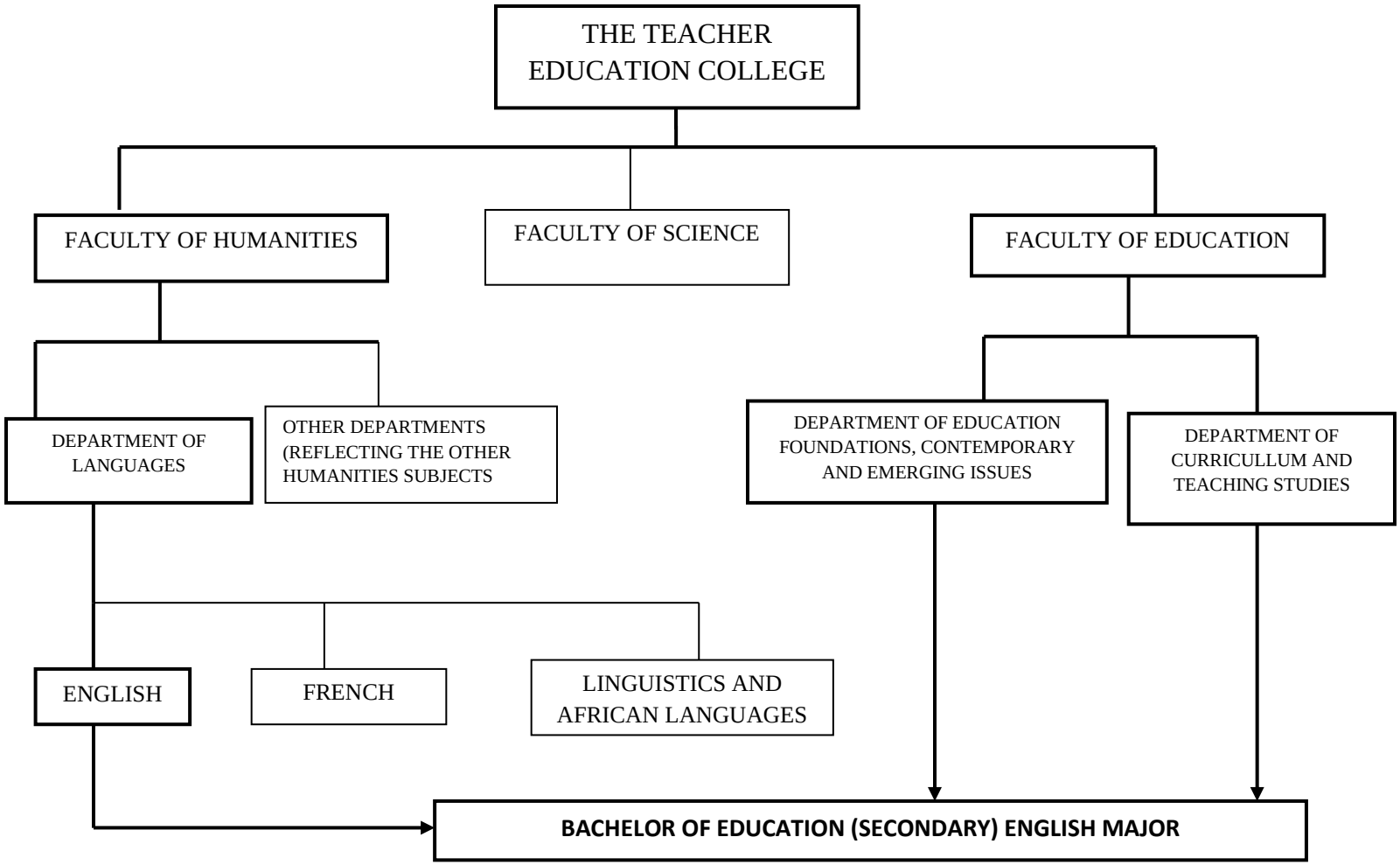

Figure 4.2: Locating the Bachelor of Education (secondary) programme English major

Source: Field data, 2018

4.3.2.1 The Bachelor of Education (Secondary)

Since its inception, the College had been offering a three-year Diploma in Education programme before it later introduced a 2 year-upgrading Degree in Education. The college had just introduced a four-year Bachelor of Education (Secondary) programme in which they merged the three-year diploma programme and the two-year degree programme.

According to the programme document for the institution, the teacher education programme at the institution "hinges on producing teachers who are knowledgeable in subject content, role models, professional in duties, reflective, understanding to the needs of the learners, culturally competent, problem-solvers, educational leaders and transformative in their approaches to teaching" (p. 5). This was reflected in the content of the courses that are offered in the programme as well as the way the programme is implemented.

4.3.3 Institution C

Institution C was a public institution. It was established in 1964. The College had four faculties and a school: Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences and School of Education.

4.3.3.1 The School of Education

The School of Education owned the Bachelor of Education (Language) Programme which was under study. The School had two departments and a Research Centre: the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies (CATS), which offered methodology courses, and the Department of Education Foundations (EDF), which offered general education courses and

the a Research centre. The Department of CATS was divided into sections: Sciences and mathematics, Social Studies, and Languages. This is a department that offered all courses to do with the teaching of the various subjects in secondary schools as well as those that carried research in the teaching methodologies of the same.

4.3.3.2 The Faculty of Humanities

The Faculty of Humanities amongst others, offered content courses to students in the School of Education. It basically supported the student teachers' training to become teachers of languages and the arts in secondary schools. The Faculty had several departments but of interest were the Department of English, the Department of French and the Department of African Languages and Linguistics.

4.3.3.3 The Bachelor of Education (Language)

The Bachelor of Education (Language) programme was a four-year programme that trains secondary school teachers who would teach languages such as English, Chichewa and French. A student registered in this programme had two teaching subjects in languages: major and minor. The focus of this study was on the training of a teacher that would teach English as a major teaching subject in the secondary school. A student teacher with English as a teaching subject was expected to register in three departments: the Department of English for the content, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies for the English teaching methodology courses and the Department of Education Foundation courses for the general education courses.

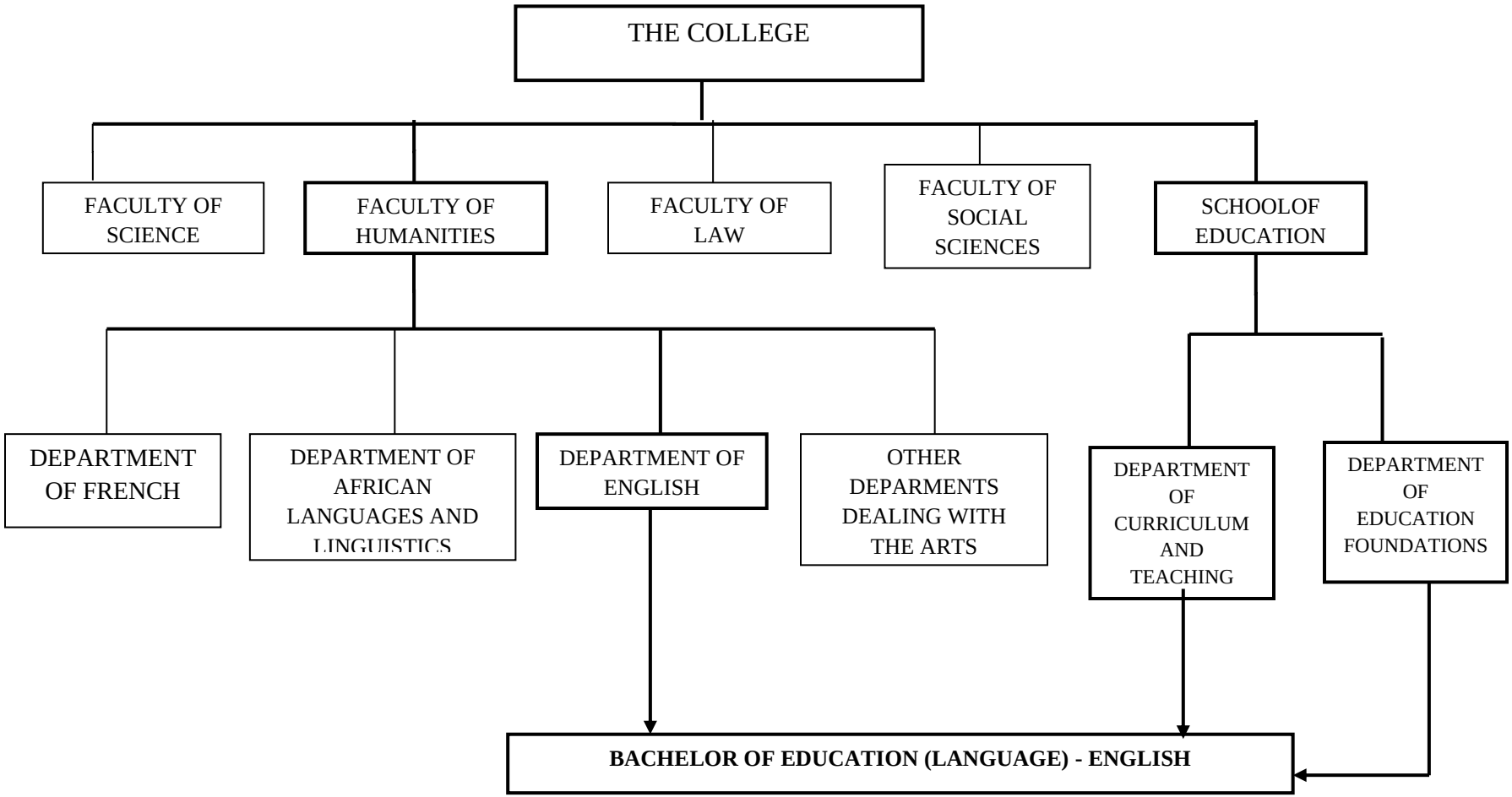

Figure 4.3: Locating the Bachelor of Education (Language) with English concentration

Source: Field Data, 2018

All the three programmes under study were four-year programmes. While these were not programmes that were strictly English Teacher Education programmes by the end of the four years, one of their products was a teacher of English. The programmes had different names, but they all produced teachers of English for the secondary schools in Malawi.

The programmes were facilitated by educators from different departments as well as different faculties as shown in Figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. This could bring in many challenges in terms of linking what is taught in each of the departments. The student teachers might look at what is taught in each department as separate from each other thereby, creating what Wubbels, Korthagen and Brekelmans (1997) call 'compartmentalisation'. They observe that the structure of education programme that is based on discipline, just as the programmes were structured in the three institutions under study, could promote 'compartmentalisation' and might inhibit student teachers in integrating insights from different disciplines for the solution of practical problems. In support of the same, Leowenberg-Ball (2000) argues that the problem of teacher education is that it is fragmented; it tends to fragment practice and leave to individual teachers the challenge of integrating subject matter and pedagogy in the context of their work.

4.4 Specific Findings

After presenting and discussing the general findings, this section presents the specific findings of the study. It will present the analysis on how the English teacher education programme document integrate theory and practice; the practice the student teachers are involved in; the challenges teacher educators face when taking students through the practice and the suggestions on ways of dealing with the challenges.

4.5 Integration of Theory and Practice in the Programme

The study firstly sought to find out how the programmes integrate theory into practice. This comes from the understanding that in language teacher education, "the practical experience of teaching in a classroom and the academic study of pedagogical theory and the subject area are to be treated holistically as they interact with each other" (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004, p.5). Therefore, the idea was to see how the programmes integrate academic study (theory) and practical experience of teaching (practice). The programme documents were analysed, and some data was generated through interviews. The curriculum was seen as the primary source of data as it outlines the content of the English Teacher Education programme, and how it has to be implemented. The study recognises the three dimensions of the curriculum: the content, the methodology and the output (Richards, 2013). That is why it was important to study the content in the programme documents as well as how the teacher educators implement it.

The study, however, does not ignore the fact that in some instances the curriculum, as it is implemented, appears to have little connection to the one planned (Graves, 2008). While acknowledging this, the study also argues that the teacher educators are involved in the curriculum design as this is not a kind of curriculum that is imposed on the teacher educators like the secondary school curriculum where the Government through the MoEST has a direct control; a situation where teachers are expected to operate a curriculum that has been imposed on them as they are not involved in the designing of it (Kelly 2004; Graves 2008). On programme design in the institutions, the study established that the process starts from the experts; those facilitating particular programmes, identifying the

need for a new programme. The findings are divided in two categories: the content of the curriculum and the Teaching Practice (TP) as part of the programme.

4.5.1 Content of the Programme Documents

The programmes from all the three institutions have four components: subject content matter, teaching methodology, Education and Teaching Studies (ETS) and Teaching Practice. The findings in this section are divided into four key areas: general education courses, subject content matter, teaching methodology and Teaching Practice.

4.5.1.1 General educational courses

The first component in the content of the teacher education programme in all the three education institutions were the general courses in education. In Institution A, they were called Education and Teaching Studies (ETS) and in Institution B and C, they were called Education Foundations (EDF). For institution A and B, the students started these courses in year 1 whilst in Institution C, they started the courses in year 2. The implication of this was that the student teachers in institution C were given fewer courses in Education Foundation which might mean they lacked some knowledge by the time they graduated. However, in the absence of the curriculum document for Institution C, it was difficult to say whether the students were given all the "must do" education courses. What was clear was that the students take fewer courses. The route maps indicated they took a total of 11 courses against 15 for Institution B and 16 for Institution A.

The content in the Education Foundational courses generally introduce student teachers to the general issues about teaching and learning. These are courses that provide students with

"mostly pedagogical theories and emerging issues impacting the implication of the pedagogical theories for the purpose of enabling students to understand, explain and demonstrate effective teaching, learning and leadership" (DCE Programme Document, p 8). There are courses that help the student teachers understand the learners who they are going to teach and how they will handle them. The courses include Educational Psychology, Adolescent Psychology, Counselling and Guidance, and Special Needs Education. There are also courses that initiate the students into the school environment, helping them understand the school as a place for teaching and learning and how to manage the school. These courses include: Sociology of Education and Education Administration, Leadership and Management.

An interesting course in Institution A is a course at Year 2 that introduces the students to the teaching profession in Malawi. The aim of the course is to equip student teachers with knowledge of education in Malawi for them to understand the operations of other teacher related organisations. The course has content like: the history of education in Malawi, the main elements of the teacher training curriculum, the organisation of teacher education, the meaning and process of teacher education, the changing trend in teacher career-path (1964 to present), Teachers Union of Malawi (TUM) and its roles, and the history, establishment and functions of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) (Teaching Profession in Malawi Course outline, 2016). This course is important as it initiates the student teachers into the world of teaching. This will help them understand and use the discourse of the teaching profession right in the university and not wait till they get into the field. Going through the curriculum document for Institution B, there is no specific course that deals with the content in the Teaching Profession in Malawi course. It is more likely that Institution C

does not have it because Institution B is affiliated to C. This means therefore that the student teachers from these two institutions go to teach without fully understanding the teaching profession and the bodies that regulate the profession. This might pose a challenge for the students to switch from being students to being professionals.

These courses on general education will help students to understand: what teaching and learning is generally about; the context in which they will teach; and the learners they are going to teach. Kelly and Grenfell (2004) indicate that teachers need to have training in ways of adapting teaching approaches to the educational context and individual needs of learners. According to Kelly and Grenfell, therefore, the Language Teacher Education (LTE) programme should help students understand the different factors that affect people's abilities to learn, and the different attitudes and cultural perspectives people bring to learning. LTE should also help students understand that adapting teaching approaches involves thinking about classroom management issues, sensitive and suitable use of materials and resources, and employing a variety of learning activities to achieve learning outcomes. In addition, LTE should help students adapt the teaching approaches for learners with special educational needs. The inclusion of these education foundation courses in the teacher education programme is a big strength to the programmes.

4.5.1.2 English subject content

As much as there are differences in the combination of the teaching subjects in the three institutions, one of the subjects a student needs to take is English. The content of English in the three institutions nevertheless differs. The content of the subject matter is in two, literature and linguistics or language.

(a) Linguistics (language)

The courses in both pure and applied linguistics give students a chance to understand how the English language operates, which might make it easier to teach the subjects to learners of English as a second language. Wright (2002) argues that a linguistically aware teacher not only understands how language works, but also understands the students' struggle with language and is sensitive to errors and other inter-language features. Andrews (2007) calls this Teacher Language Awareness (TLA). This is the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying system of the language that enables them to teach effectively. This implies that the provision of linguistic courses to student teachers of English in the three programmes is an important aspect of their knowledge base. Table4.2 provides a summary of the language courses offered.

Table 4.2 indicates the differences in the types of courses that are offered in the three institutions. In Institution A, there is much emphasis on general linguistics courses while in institutions B and C, there is much emphasis on the description of English as a language. This means that the students in Institution A gets a broader understanding of language issues while those in Institution B and C get information on a specific language, English, which is the subject they will teach. It was observed from the programme document for Institution B that most of the general linguistics courses are taught in the Linguistics and African Languages Courses. One of the aspects that the reviewed curriculum of the Institution focused on was to remove duplication of the courses. This could be the reason there are no general linguistics courses in the English programme, because the Diploma in

Education programme which the Institution is phasing out has a lot of general linguistics courses.

Table 4.2: Language courses in the Institutions

	Institution A	**Institution B**	**Institution C**
Year 1	• Introduction to English Grammar • Introduction to Linguistics • Language and Society	• Grammar for communication • Introduction to Description of English	• Usage of English and composition
Year 2	• Psycholinguistics • Introduction to phonetics and phonology	• Discourse Analysis • Language and gender • Description of English	• Practical English usage and expression
Year 3	• Semantics • Creative writing • Pragmatics • Advanced Syntax	None	• Description of English I
Year 4	• Discourse Analysis • Advanced Phonology • Stylistics • Morphology	• Stylistics	• Description of English II

Source: Field data, 2018

One of the key informants in Institution C indicated that after the restructuring of the departments in the institution, all linguistics courses were moved to the Department of

African Languages and Linguistics and what is remaining in the English Department are literature courses, that is, apart from the course in description of English. This is what he said "*as you might be aware, now the English Department after it was separated [from Linguistics]..., those who were taking linguistics ..., it's mostly now literature apart from the description of English courses*" (Participant 2, 21st March, 2018). This also explains why there are no general linguistics courses in the Department of English at the Institution C. This is supported by what Attardo and Brown (2005) argue that teachers of language need to have some ideas about issues of prescriptive and descriptive grammars, language use and variation, language structure and the history of English. This could also be the reason why Institutions B and C have courses in Description of English. This would give the student teachers specific content for the subject they will teach in secondary school. However, the students in Institution B and C might be lacking the understanding of the structure and use of English in relation to other languages. The broader knowledge about language structure would help the student teachers to appreciate the structure of English.

Bartels (2005) and Freeman (2009) emphasise the need for linguistics and applied linguistics courses which are the courses that Institution A is offering to its English student teachers. Bartels just like Wright (2002) argues that armed with knowledge in linguistics and applied linguistics, teachers will among other things be able to understand and diagnose students' the problems better, provide better explanation and presentation for aspects of language and a clear idea of what they are teaching.

From the foregoing arguments, it can be concluded that the need for general linguistics courses in language teacher education can never be over emphasised. The courses give the

student teachers a deeper understanding of the structure and use of the languages and how the languages are learnt. This might help the student teachers to make educational decisions on how to handle languages. It should also be acknowledged that since the institutions are training teachers of English the focus on the actual language they will be teaching, that is English, might be helpful to the would-be teachers.

(b) Literature

The second component of the subject matter content is literature. There are several literature courses that equip student teachers with skills to critically analyse various genres of literature. Apart from learning how to teach literature, the student teachers need to know how to do the actual analysis of the literary texts. The courses in these programmes have managed to address this need by exposing students to different texts in literature, and more importantly texts from Africa, and Malawi in particular. Most of the literary texts in the secondary school curriculum in Malawi are from Africa and Malawi. This then means that the students are given content that is relevant to what they will teach in the secondary schools. Table 4.3 gives a summary of the literature courses offered in the institutions of high learning in Malawi in this study.

Table 4.3: Literature courses offered in the institutions

	Institution A	Institution B	Institution C
Year 1	• Introduction to Literature • Introduction to the African Novel	• Practical criticism • Practical drama	• Practical Criticism • Introduction to literature • Introduction to oral literature
Year 2	• The African Poetry • Malawian Literature in English	• Introduction to English Literature • Introduction to African Literature • Shakespeare	• Introduction to English literature • Introduction to African Poetry and Plays • Introduction to African Novels and Short Stories
Year 3	• Literary Theory • Shakespeare • Advanced studies in African Novel	• European Novel • African Plays in English • Malawian Literature • Literary Theory and Practice	• Malawian literature • The African Novel in English • Literary Theory I • African American Literature • Caribbean Literature • History and Principles of Literary Criticism • Malawian Oral Literature • The English Novel
Year 4	• African Oral Literature • The European novel • Caribbean literature • African American Literature	• African Novel in English • Studies in English Poetry • African Literature in the Diaspora	• Shakespeare • Studies in African Poetry • The European Novel • Literary Theory II • Currents of Thought in African Literature • English Romantic Verse • American Verse

Source: Research data, 2018

Table 4.3 also shows the variation in the courses that are offered in the three institutions. It can be seen from Table 4.3 that most of the courses are similar even though they come at different levels. We cannot of course ignore the fact that Institution C has many courses in Literature. As much as some of these courses are elective, the fact remains that it offers more literature courses than language courses and more literature courses than any other institution in this study. It should also be noted that Institution B has more literature courses as compared to language courses. Institution A has a balance between Literature and Linguistics. The implication of this is that student teachers from institution B and C have content knowledge that is biased towards Literature. However, literature makes up just four out of the ten core elements of English taught in secondary schools. A proper balance between the two, linguistics and literature, is needed in all the programmes in order to produce a teacher who can handle all the core elements of English.

What is important to note however, in all the three institutions, is the emphasis on literature from Africa, Shakespeare, and Malawian Literature. These are courses that directly address the content in secondary school. The texts studied might not be the same, but the student teachers are exposed to contexts they will have to deal with in secondary school. There is also an effort to cover all the four genres of literature which include the Novel, Short Story, Poetry and Drama. This is very important because as teachers of English they will be expected to teach all the four genres of literature.

The content in both linguistics and literature seems to have a direct link with the content in the secondary school in that these courses will give the student teachers skills and

knowledge to analyse and teach language and literature effectively. This observation was strengthened by what the teacher educators themselves explained about their courses when asked if they have courses that directly address the content in secondary school. This is what was said:

> *…in case of literature courses, like Shakespeare, where the students are able to study the books and experiences shared by Shakespeare, things like Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth those which are actually there in secondary school. .... If we come to linguistics courses, there are courses like syntax and morphology which are very useful in the delivery of grammar* (Participant 1, Institution A, 28th February 2018).

Participant 2 in Institution C, added:

> *…they cover more than what is offered in secondary schools … for subjects done at secondary school like grammar, in the English department they have what they call description of English, this is the course that teaches them about grammar and there are courses about literature* (21st March, 2018).

Shulman (1986; 1987) and Andrews (2007) recognise subject content as an important component of the teacher knowledge base. Shulman (1986) argues that the subject matter content understanding of the teacher be at least equal to that of his or her lay colleagues, the mere subject matter major. This means that the teacher of English should have enough knowledge of the content in English, which in the case of Malawi secondary curriculum, is the knowledge of both language and literature. The three institutions seem to provide the student teachers with the necessary knowledge of the content which they will be expected to teach.

4.5.1.3 Teaching methodology courses

The other component of the programme is the teaching methodology courses. These are the courses that introduce the student teachers to the teaching of English as a second language in secondary schools. While language courses provide the academic content, the methodology courses show teachers how to teach the content (Richards, 2008). The difference between these courses and the Education Foundation courses or the Education and Teaching Studies courses, is that these are specific to the teaching of English. Table 4.4 is a summary of the methodology courses offered in the three institutions.

Table 4.4 shows that the institutions introduce their students to methodology courses at different levels. In Institution A for example, the students are introduced to English teaching methodology courses at year 2. In Institution B, the courses start in year 1 Semester 2, while in Institution C, it is in year 3.

However, Participant 2 from Institution C indicated that, "*we are going back to second year because we realised that we are giving them a raw deal; we didn't have enough time to prepare them for methodology*" (21st March, 2018). This aside, in all the three institutions, the students are exposed to the teaching of all the four language skills, literature and language structure and use (grammar), which are the core elements in the secondary school curriculum.

Table 4.4: English Teaching Methodology courses offered by the Institutions

	Institution A	Institution B	Institution C
Year 1		• Introduction to the teaching of English in secondary schools	
Year 2	• Language Education • English Teaching Methodology 1[2]	• The teaching of English Language • The Teaching of Literature in English	
Year 3	• English Teaching Methods 2 • English teaching methods 3	• Introduction to language assessment and syllabus evaluation • Language assessment and syllabus evaluation	• Theories and approaches to language teaching • Teaching speech, grammar and literature • Language testing and evaluation • Teaching reading and writing
Year 4	• TP Evaluation	• Approaches and methods in second language teaching • Research in Language Education	• Language classroom observation and evaluation • Classroom practice in English

Source: Field Data, 2018

[2] The numbering of the courses was done by the researchers and for the descriptions of each course (aim) refer to appendix 1

By looking at the content of the methodology courses, it is clear that they are designed to help the students understand the kind of content they will be expected to teach in the secondary schools. The courses also aim to help the students understand the different theories that have informed the teaching of English in schools and equip them with the skills and strategies to apply such theories in the teaching process. Basically, there are not so many differences in the content of the methodology courses that the institutions offer despite the different names given to the courses. What seems to be different is how the courses are packaged. One might argue then that this is the case because if the institutions are training teachers that will implement the same curriculum, then the training should be based on the needs of that curriculum. However, we cannot overlook the relationship that exists between Institution B and C and the influence Institution C might have on the other teacher training institutions in Malawi. On the one hand, Institution C might have influence on Institution B through their close working relationship as B is affiliated to C. On the other hand, Institution C being the oldest teacher training institution in Malawi, it is most likely that it has influences on Institution A through the curriculum development processes and developers the majority of which might have been trained by Institution C.

The uniqueness of the teaching methodology courses in Institution B is the presence of a course such as the Teaching of English Literature in the teaching of literature. Whilst in Institutions A and C, the teaching of literature is embedded in the other courses. Relative to this, Participant 2 of Institution C observed that they do not give their students enough content on the teaching of literature as most of the times they focus on the teaching of language and would like to start offering methodology courses from year 2 so that they

have time for Literature. This is how they plan to organise the programme:

> *So what we have done now, the one [curriculum] we have reviewed, there are special courses for literature, so there will be now starting in second year, so second year we will have a course that will deal with theories of the teaching of literature as a special course, then we will have also another one on approaches to the teaching of literature as a complete course* (21st March, 2018).

As much as Institution A starts methodology courses at year 2, they do not seem to have a special course that deals with literature. However, the participants did not mention this as an issue. It seems they are able to deal with the literature content in the courses they have. This is evidenced from what Participant 4 stated.

> *I tell them the books that they will find in secondary schools. Poetry, how to handle poetry, talk on the part of the novel, on the part of the play, on the part of language, all those books they will find in secondary school are made known to them, the content is made known to them* (24th April, 2018).

According to participant 4 of Institution A, the student teachers are exposed to the literature content they will find in the secondary schools. They are taught how they can deal with each of the genres of literature. This means despite the absence of a course in the teaching of literature, the student teachers still have a feel of what to expect in the schools. However, the challenge with not having a full course in the teaching of literature could be the depth and thoroughness of the training on the teaching of literature as observed by Participant 2 from, Institution C.

The other unique course that Institution B has is the course in Research in Language Education. In view of the Reflective theory that informs the LTE programme at this institution, this is very commendable. This is also in agreement with Kelly and Grenfell (2004) who look at action research as an important component of language teacher education. They note that "action research encourages reflexivity and an enquiring approach and gives teachers a substantial theoretical framework for resolving difficult issues" (p. 35). Richards (2008) also observes that the coursework in areas such as reflective teaching, classroom research and action research now form parts of the core curriculum in most teacher education programmes. This means the institution has taken the right direction in terms of teacher training.

On research, as much as Institutions A and C have a component of it, the research is not specific to language education. For Institution A, the research is for general research in education and the students are free to explore studies and carry out research in Education Foundations, Language Education, Linguistics or Literature. For institution C, the students carry out research in the content areas, in this case, English. This is the reason it has been argued that Institution B has taken a right direction as research in language education will help the students understand the teaching of English better.

In the programme document for institution A, there is a course in Year 4 which deals with the evaluation of the Teaching Practice. This however is a curriculum that has not run its course yet as they have not really implemented it. This means it is just a proposal as the members of the faculty feel it will be very important to have the students back at the

institution after they have done their TP. Participant 2 from the Institution explained that, *"there are plans that we change that they go between Semester 7 and 8. Some people were arguing that after the teaching practice, we need to have an evaluation of what happens in the field and come up with corrective measures* (1st March, 2018). This was echoed by participants from the other two institutions. Participant 3 from, Institution B argued *"but I could have loved if the students were able to come back to the college after the actual teaching practice for that evaluation session"* (12th March 2018).

In relation to the same, Participant 3 at Institution C indicated that if they had a way of playing around with the college's calendar, they would have sent their students for TP and bring them back for evaluation. He argued that "*we would send students out for six weeks and then get them back here and give them feedback and if there are some areas which require to be worked on, we would work on those and then send them back to the schools again"* (28th March, 2018). The students from Institution C also suggested that they would have loved to go for TP before the end of the programme just as it is done in other programmes where students go for attachment before the end of the programme. This makes sense if we account for the Reflective Model Institutions, B and C are following.

The Reflective Model that Institutions B and C mirror their programmes on is very important in teacher education. Reflective learning means looking back at our past learning experiences and making sense of things by relating these past experiences to our current and future learning (Siang, 2002). Lee (2007) argues that through reflections, pre-service teachers become more aware of themselves as would-be teachers and of the pedagogical

contexts that impinge directly on teaching and learning. Therefore, giving the student teachers a chance to come back to the institution after TP would give them a chance to be aware of themselves as would-be teachers. This will give them a chance to think through their previous knowledge or beliefs about English teaching and learning, their teacher training and experiences in the field, and come up with better alternatives for the teaching of English in Malawian secondary schools.

The methodology courses could be seen as courses that provide the learners with pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) which Shulman (1986) looks at as knowledge beyond subject matter. PCK is a:

> special form of professional understanding that is unique to teachers and combines knowledge of the content to be taught with knowledge of what students know or think they know about this content, and knowledge of how this content can be presented to the students through examples and analogies in the way that are most likely to be effective in helping them attain the intended outcome of instruction (Brophy, 1991 cited in Andrews 2007, p. 29).

Van Driel and Berry (2010), and Peng (2013) simply look at PCK as the understanding of the content knowledge and presenting the same to students in order to facilitate understanding. The methodology courses provide the platform for the student teachers to link the subject content with how the content can be presented to students in order to attain the intended outcome of the instruction. The knowledge that the student teachers gain through the methodology courses separates them from mere majors of English.

According to Shulman (1987), PCK represents "the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organised, represented and adopted to the diverse interests and ability of learners and presented for instruction" (p. 8). The methodology courses give the student teachers an opportunity to blend the content and pedagogy to understand the teaching of English as a subject, the way it is organised, presented and adopted to the needs of the learners, thereby helping the student teachers develop PCK. This is the knowledge they will need to teach English in Malawian secondary schools.

However, the programmes seem to have more subject content courses than the more practical courses such as methodology courses. There seems to be more units or credit hours given to the subject content than the methodology courses. This could affect the development of PCK as the student teachers will not have enough time to reflect on their prior knowledge, new knowledge acquired and experience. Beytekin and Chipala (2015) however, argue that course work in the specific academic content areas, a teacher is assigned to teach, can promote teacher quality and student achievement. With this argument and the observation by the teacher educators in Institutions A and C, that by the end of the programme their students are specialists in the subject content, one might then conclude that this is the justification for giving the student teachers more content courses. While acknowledging that, it should also be considered that these students are being trained as teachers of English not as mere English majors. Hence, the need for more courses that will make them comprehensive teachers.

4.5.1.4 Teaching practice

Van Driel and Berry (2010) observe that PCK can be promoted by addressing both pre-service teachers subject matter knowledge and their educational beliefs, in combination with providing them the opportunity to gain teaching experience and specifically to reflect on these experiences. This way, the other component of the English teacher education programmes is the TP. This gives the student teachers an opportunity to experience the actual teaching and reflect on their teaching. There are a number of practical activities that the student teachers are involved in but this section will focus on the notion of TP that requires the students to stay in school for a period of 10 to 14 weeks.

Graves (2009) looks at TP from two perspectives: classroom practice and participating in communities of practice. He looks at classroom practice on one hand, as where student teachers are given an opportunity to observe teaching, prepare for teaching, teach, reflect on it, analyse it and thus learn it or from it. On the other hand, he looks at participating in the communities of practice as a student being given the opportunity to understand why teachers are the way they are, how they are positioned in these contexts and how to develop power to negotiate and change them. The teaching practice gives them an opportunity to be involved in these two forms of practices. Cabaroglu (2014) agrees with this observation as he indicates that the field experience offers the student teachers the opportunity to learn about students, to confront classroom realities and to think about the 'self' as teachers.

For all the three institutions, the TP is done at the end of the programme. The reason that was given for this is that they want to make sure that they have done all the content required

and that they have passed the course work. The other reason, especially for Institution C, is failure to synchronise the timing for TP and the delivery of content courses which are offered by other departments from other faculties. According to participant 1, Institution C, "*the advantage of putting it at the end is that they are specialist at the content, they have mastered the content"* (11th March 2018). This concurs with what Participant 3 from Institution C said, "*it also gives us strengths because our students are well grounded in the content. One reason why we also like this arrangement is that they have the competence in the subject matter so they are very good and they are competitive*" (28th March, 2018). This means by the time they go for TP; they have covered all the content discussed in the previous sections and they have passed. There are many similarities in how the TP is handled in all the three institutions. The TP will be looked at in three different stages: the planning stage, during TP activities and post TP activities.

(a) The planning stage

In all the three institutions, there is a TP coordinator who coordinates TP activities. Table 4.5 shows the activities in the planning stage for each of the institutions.

The processes that the institutions go through before the student teachers go for teaching practice, as indicated in table 4.5, are similar. The similarities could be because all the institutions understand the need to work with the schools in the process of training teachers as such, they cannot impose students on the schools. The visit to the schools or liaison with the school before sending the students is important as it will enhance collaboration between

the training institutions and the schools. The similarities could also imply that the other institutions have been following the standard that Institution C has set over the years.

Table 4.5: Activities in the TP planning stage

Institution A	Institution B	Institution C
• Visit the secondary schools to seek permission to do TP at their school and ask for the school requirements for subject combinations. • Give students information about school requirements • Students decide where to go in line with the requirements • Allocating students to the schools based on their choices	• Visit the school to get information about the schools' requirements in subject combinations • Give information to the students • Students decide where they want to go • Allocating students to schools of their choice	• Liaise with the schools on student placement and schools provide their requirements • Give students information regarding what TP involves • Students decide where they want to go • Placement of students in schools

Source: Research data, 2018

The period the students are expected to be in schools vary from one institution to another institution. In Institution A, the students are expected to stay in school for the whole term. For Institution B, the students are expected to stay in school for 12 weeks, but they normally

stay for the whole term. Participant 4 at Institution B claimed that "*...on paper it's twelve weeks but in practice when they go to the schools, they normally stay there for much longer than twelve weeks ... normally around fourteen weeks sure"* (13th March, 2018). For Institution C, the students are expected to be in school for a minimum of 10 weeks. In essence, the duration stipulated in the two institutions, B and C, are equivalent to a school term. In Malawi, the shortest school term is 12 weeks and the longest term is 14 weeks.

There are two major reasons the students are expected to stay in schools for 10 to 14 weeks. The first reason is for them or the university not to disturb the activities at the hosting secondary schools, as Participant 2 of Institution A, noted *"we want them not to disturb the schools, the learning of the learners because if they leave mid-way they will obviously leave the learners somewhere hanging so that will compromise their studies*" (1st March, 2018). This was also echoed by Participants in Institutions B and C. Participant 4 from Institution B indicated that at first, the students would go for six weeks and come back to college and go for another six weeks but the schools complained so they now go for the whole term.

Similarly, Participant 2 from Institution C indicated that "*In the past we would send them when they are starting, and they would leave earlier, so the schools complained*" (21st March, 2018). Thus, withdrawing the students from the schools earlier could disturb the school system as they could take over the classes and leave before they have assessed the students they had been teaching.

The second reason is based on the kind of experience the student teachers are expected to gain from the TP experience. Participant 1 from Institution A, noted that "*we feel they need to begin, evaluate themselves, be able to give exams, mark before they leave at least not to cause any inconveniences to the school*" (28th February, 2018). This reason was also echoed by Participant 1 at Institution B, who observed that, "*in that full term, they are supposed to administer exams and do everything that a teacher does, right from the first week to the last week"* (18th March, 2018).

The observations presented by the teacher educators on the reasons student teachers stay in the schools for a term make sense. The schools have a system that needs to be adhered to; at the same time, the schools need to assist in teacher training. It should be noted that the primary role of the schools is to teach the learners hence, the need not to disturb the core function of the schools.

(b) During TP activities

When the students are in schools, they are supervised by both the faculty and the teachers in the schools. The supervision for the students from the three institutions differs. For Institution A, supervision is in two parts: clinical and moderation. According to the Participant 1, clinical supervision is a kind of supervision "*whereby, we don't go there for like find faults but is to watch, observe a lesson and thereafter help them maybe where they found problems where they need to improve. If they are doing fine, just encourage them to continue doing so"* (28th February, 2018). In moderation, they *"just want to have a balanced view on the performance of the learner so we have two or three (supervisors)*

who come to a consensus as regards the performance of the learner". (Participant 3, 1st March, 2018). In clinical supervision, there is one supervisor sitting in the student teachers lesson and they discuss the lesson before and after the class. In moderation, there is more than one supervisor, and there is no discussion with the student before and after the lesson. The clinical supervision is taken as a continuous assessment and contributes 40 percent to the final grade. The moderation is the examination, and it contributes 60 percent of the final grade.

From the interviews that were done at Institution B, it was indicated that the institution too had a two-part kind of supervision with a slight difference from Institution A. It was also established that, at first, the students at Institution B were going for TP twice before they finish the programme. Participant 4 from Institution B said "*students would go to the fields in their second year that was clinical supervision, they would be supervised but not graded, in the third year; they would then also go for six weeks, that's when they would be graded*" (13th March, 2018). This time around, they have combined the six weeks into twelve weeks. With the changes in the programme structure at Institution B, the clinical supervision is done as the students are still on campus (year 3) and it is still not assessed. This means when they go for TP, they go straight into moderation. The difference in moderation for this institution is that they do not have more than one supervisor in the classroom. This new arrangement is not different from Institution C.

The clinical part of the TP supervision provides the students with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching. This is so because the supervisors after supervision, they discuss with

them areas that need improvement. So as much as the institutions are complaining about not having the students back on campus after TP, the process of supervision would help in evaluating the TP as well as helping the students reflect on their own teaching. The challenge though could be, not all students might be supervised by their English methodology lecturer.

According to Participant 3, Institution A, the supervisors work in teams. In each team, there is a combination of expertise, "*we get sciences in the team, humanities in the team and other subject areas in the team so that at least, they should give proper guidance in some areas a particular subject of specialisation*" (1st March 2018). This was also echoed by participants in institution C. It was indicated that "*we have language specialists, we have social studies specialists so that when they go into the schools, the science teacher will supervise the science students, language teachers will supervise language students* (Participant 3, Institution C, 28th March 2018).

From the research data, it was observed that the ideal situation is where the students are supervised by experts in the teaching methodologies. However, due to the shortage of methodology experts, they opt for anyone who has studied education. For institution B, the case was not really on shortage of experts, it was more to do with the fact that teaching is the same regardless of the subjects. This was noted from the comment that Participant 4, Institution B made when he was asked about how the supervision is done. He said, "*we believe as teachers, all of us can observe any lesson. Normally, we standardise our observations. When placing teachers for supervision, we meet and then discuss a few other*

areas. We standardise how to observe a language lesson, a physical education lesson and other subjects" (13th March, 2018). However, they also use teams only that they are not particular on who should be in which team.

While appreciating that the student teachers of the English teacher students should be supervised by English teaching methodology experts, the study acknowledges the challenges that the teacher educators face in terms of number of students (section 4.7.6). If the students are viewed as creators of forms of knowledge who makes decisions about how to teach their L2 students within complex socially constructed situations, (Johnson, 2009; Burns and Richards, 2009) then it will not matter whether the supervisor is an expert in English or not. Richards (2008) also argues that L2 teaching is not just a matter of translating theories of SLA into effective instructional practice but also the construction of new knowledge and theory through participating in specific social contexts. This means that the supervisor needs to act as a facilitator; taking the student through the process of personal reflection, in turn helping the student teachers improve their teaching experiences. This process does not really require a supervisor who is an expert in the teaching subject since learning is a cognitive process, a personal construction and as a reflective process (Andrews, 2007).

Apart from the supervisors from the university, it is also expected that the students be supervised by the cooperating teachers (CTs). The cooperating teachers are the teachers that the students take over subjects from. Participant 3 from Institution A indicated that "*when students are sent to do their teaching practice, they take over the subject from the*

existing subject teachers who automatically become cooperating teachers, in order to help them in one way or the other" (1st March, 2018). These teachers are expected to work with the students throughout the TP. As much as this is the case with Institutions B and C, the two institutions do not really talk about cooperating teachers. When asked about how they work with cooperating teachers, Participant 3 from Institution C said "*unfortunately we do not have cooperating teachers, we have never used that term, yes what we do is we just work*" (28th March, 2018). This means, for these two institutions, they do not have so much expectations from the teachers in the schools they put their students as it is the case with Institution A.

The findings by Farrell's (2008) on the kind of support student teachers of English received from CT could explain why Institutions B and C do not expect much from these CTs. Farrell found out that student teachers were influenced by their TP supervisors and not their CTs. Kelly and Grenfell (2004) also provide the importance of mentors in teacher education. They contend that mentors "advise trainees and offer guidance about all aspects of teaching and learning; they perform a valuable role in supporting the trainee through the school-based experience and helping them make the transition from trainee to qualified teacher" (p.8). In the case of Institution A, the CTs are regarded as mentors as they are expected to mentor the student teachers. This means that if the CTs are told exactly what is expected of them they would be of great help to the student teachers.

From all the three institutions, it was established that the number of supervisions per student was at least four, although three supervisions are also acceptable. The difference in

the institutions is how the four or three supervisions are handled. With Institution A, it means the first three supervisions are for clinical supervision and the last one is for moderation. For institution C, the students are expected to be seen by three different supervisors and the first supervision is not graded. Participant 3 from Institution C indicated that *"so to get an objective grade, we want a minimum of three visits by different supervisors if I see a student twice that will count as one supervision"* (1st March, 2018). For institutions A, it does not matter if a student is seen by the same supervisor twice because of the way the supervision is structured. In Institution B, the case is similar to that of Institution C this could be because B is affiliated to C.

In the absence of support from the CTs, the three to four supervisions are not enough to assess the student teachers if indeed they can translate theory into practice. This observation was also made by participants in all the three Institutions (refer to section 4.8.4). Considering that this is the first and only time this student teacher is teaching as part of the teacher training; the student teacher needs more support from the teacher educators. The four visits by different supervisors do not give the student teacher enough time to discuss his or her fears and challenges and does not give enough time for the teacher educators to check if the student teacher is making progress or not.

(c) Post TP activities

The two activities that are done after teaching practices are grading and evaluation. On grading, each of the three institutions has its own way of dealing with the grades. Institutions B and C have a similar way in which they handle the grades. According to

Participant 3 in Institution C, the TP grade is a "*passing grade; the student has to pass the teaching practice to graduate with a Bachelor of Education because then we will certify that this one can teach so the contribution is not much but it's very important*". (28th March, 2018). This was echoed by Participant 4 at Institution B who explained that the TP grade was a standalone grade "*which does not affect mathematically the grading, if anything it is just there as a watchdog so to speak. In other words, the TP grade is not used but it determines who gets a credit, who gets a distinction and so on and so forth."* (13th March 2018). This means that as much as TP is seen as an important aspect of teacher training, for institution B and C, TP is treated just as an activity that one needs to fulfil not as a major part of the teacher training.

For Institution A, the case is different. The TP grade is given so much prominence like that of the content grade. According to the participants from the Institution, TP grade is a standalone grade. In the final compilation of grades, the assessment committees look at average grades from Semesters 5, 6, 7 and 8, that is Year 3 and 4 semesters, research grade and TP grade. The class of the degree is determined by the lowest grade from the six categories. This shows that TP at institution A is seen as an important aspect of teacher training, just as the content.

If we consider the importance of TP as highlighted by Glen (2006), Caires and Almeida (2007), Benson (2010), Cabaroglu (2014) and Konig et al. (2016), then it needs to be given prominence in terms of its assessment. The assessment procedures should reflect the importance of practice in teacher training. Institution A has taken the right direction by

making TP as prominent as the content courses in the programme. As much as Institutions B and C considers the TP grade as important by making it a determining factor for one to pass or fail in the programme, there is need to give it the prominence it deserves.

The other activity after TP is evaluation of the TP process by the supervisors. This is the only evaluation process of the TP that the institutions have. Participant 3 Institution B argued that:

> *…we would depend on the meetings that are conducted after teaching practice organised by the teaching practice committee, where the coordinators report the successes and the challenges of the experiences and then as an English methodology instructor, I am always attentive when they are talking about something relating to English and then I jot down and then I take it to the classroom* (12th March, 2018).

This means therefore, there is no voice from the students themselves after going through the lectures and the TP. It might be helpful if the students were given a chance to say what they experienced and how the programme helped them fit into the world of teachers. This would also have helped the teacher educators to work on the different weaknesses in the programme. The proposal to have the students come back to campus after TP, as discussed in section 4.5.1.3, needs to be seriously examined. However, considering the challenges the institutions are facing to have TP in between semesters, they could put in place mechanisms that would help them get information from the students. The use of a questionnaire distributed to each of the student teachers on TP, might be one of them. In addition, the supervisors might extend their role from discussing the lesson observed and

discuss the fears, experiences and challenges of the student teachers. This process might provide the institutions with the information they need to understand how effective the training is.

The education programmes under study have all the necessary courses to help students acquire the different categories of Andrews' (2007) model of PCK. What is missing in the programmes are courses that would help the student teachers to work on their strategic and language competence. Andrews (2003; 2001) argues that teachers of English need to have knowledge about language (content knowledge) and knowledge of language (language proficiency). It has been noted that apart from the general communication studies courses that are offered to all students at the university and the colleges, there is no other course that would help student teachers of English to develop their strategic and language competence. One might argue that the English Grammar and Linguistics courses, for example, Introduction to English Grammar (Institution A), Grammar for Communication (Institution B), and Usage of English and Composition (Institution C) would help student teachers develop strategic and language competences. However, going through the course outlines, one notices that the idea is to help the student teachers understand the language that they will teach, not necessarily for them to learn to communicate using the language.

The emphasis on strategic and language competence is in line with Kelly and Grenfell's (2004) observation that LTE programmes should include training in the development of independent language learning strategies. They indicate that student teachers should develop independent language learning strategies to improve their language competence

and be able to transfer these skills to their own learners. The importance of competence in the language of instruction can never be overemphasised. A teacher needs to be competent in the language of instruction if he or she is to make teaching effective. This omission in the teacher education programmes could be based on the assumption that by Year 1 at the university or college, they have mastered enough English to use for teaching. However, experience has shown that this might not be the case. Hence, the need to have special courses for English student teachers that would help them improve their proficiency in English.

4.6 Lecture room practices

The study sought to find out how English teacher educators implement the curriculum. The focus was on the English teaching methodology courses since those are the courses that introduce the student teacher to the actual teaching and learning situations. There are a number of activities that the educators identified that they do with the student teachers to help them apply theory into practice. Table 4.6 shows a compilation of the activities by institution.

From Table 4.6, it is clear that all the teacher educators in the three institutions are making an attempt to implement the English teaching methodology courses the way they are expected to. By taking the students through practical activities, the student teachers are prepared for the real-life situation of the classroom. The following is a detailed analysis of the activities

Table 4.6: Activities teacher educators involve student teachers in

Institution A	Institution B	Institution C
• Peer teaching • Teaching practice • Microteaching • Classroom observation	• Peer teaching • Teaching practice • Microteaching • Classroom observation (Primary and Secondary School) • Teacher assistantship	• Peer teaching • Teaching practice • Microteaching • Classroom observation

Source: Field data, 2018

4.6.1 Peer teaching

Almost all the teacher educators that were interviewed in Institutions A and B mentioned peer-teaching as an activity that the student teachers are involved in as a way of preparing them for the actual teaching in the schools. Participant 4 from Institution A argued "*I know that theory only is not enough because somebody still hopes to stand in front of students so one should start right away at the university"* (24th April, 2018). This argument was also supported by students at Institution C. When asked about the importance of peer teaching in their training, they argued:

> *We are also prepared emotionally because to stand in front is something, the teacher must… if we go into the school, we might be shaking something like that … so for us to manage our emotions* (FGD, 5th November, 2018).

Another student agreed with her fellow student on the importance of the peer teaching by saying: …*It also helps us familiarise with classroom settings because when the teacher is in front is seen as simpler than when you are in front teaching yourself*" (FGD, 5th November, 2018).

Students at institution B also agreed that peer teaching is important as it helps them gain the skills of English lessons delivery. One student argued:

> … *I think it has given us the skills on how we can really teach because getting the content is another thing, standing in front of learners is also another, so doing that is like being modelling what the situation will be like in the classroom so the importance is that they are equipping us with the skills on how we can handle classes* (FDG, 4th June 2019).

Considering the comments that the participants made, the peer teaching gives the student teachers a chance to implement what they have learnt in a simulated classroom situation. This activity gives them a chance to reflect on what they have learnt and the actual implementation of the knowledge in a classroom setting.

According to Participant 4 at the Institution A, for the peer teaching activity, the student teachers are expected to prepare and teach a 40 minute lesson. After the student has taught, he or she gets feedback from fellow learners and then he or she is given a chance to comment on his or her own teaching. It was indicated that because of time constraints, these activities are done outside the timetable, mostly in the evenings. However, "*the expectation is that after everybody has made a presentation if I have 35 students by the*

time the last student makes his or her presentation, it means each one of them by that time at least gained enough confidence." (24th April, 2018). In institutions C, the implementation was a bit different as the student teachers claimed that it was basically volunteers that were given an opportunity to teach and not everyone. This situation could be because of the numbers in the class as it was observed that in this class, there were about70 students.

Participant 3 from Institution B indicated that after introducing them to the different core elements that the students will be expected to teach in secondary schools, they are given a chance to practice how to teach it. The participant reported that the process starts from preparation to the implementation. On this he argued:

> ...*beginning with preparation, because before the actual teaching one has to prepare for their lesson, so the students are engaged in practical preparation for lessons like practicing drawing schemes of work, preparing lesson plans for the different core elements that they will be teaching and then the modules stipulates that the students should be engaged in practical teaching* (12th March, 2018).

As much as the teacher educators did not specifically talk about giving the students a chance to teach a 40-minute lesson as was done in the other institutions, the fact remains that the student teachers are given an opportunity to plan and implement lessons based on what they have learnt.

As indicated earlier, the teacher education programme in Institution B and C is based on the Reflective Model of learning. The Reflective Model gives the student teachers a chance

to reflect on their actions and think of a way of improving (Kabilan, 2007; Lee, 2007; Siang, 2002; Richard &Lockhart, 1996). The process that the students go through as described by the teacher educators and the students is in line with Kabilan's (2007) process of reflection on reflection with a bit of twist on how the evaluation is done. The comments that the student teachers get after presenting the lessons would give them an opportunity to reflect on how they implemented the lesson and how they could improve on it. Figure 4.4 provides a summary of the peer-teaching process in view of the reflection process.

Figure 4.4 shows how the process of peer teaching is done and how it helps in the reflection process. Richards (1987) argues that the reflective process gives the student teachers an opportunity to understand how an effective teacher comes to significant decisions in the classroom. The decisions to be made in class include the type of content to be taught and the kind of strategies to use in order to help a particular group of students understand the content. In this regard, one would expect the student teachers to apply the knowledge about language, the knowledge about language learning and learners and knowledge about teaching in the process of teaching and reflect on the same.

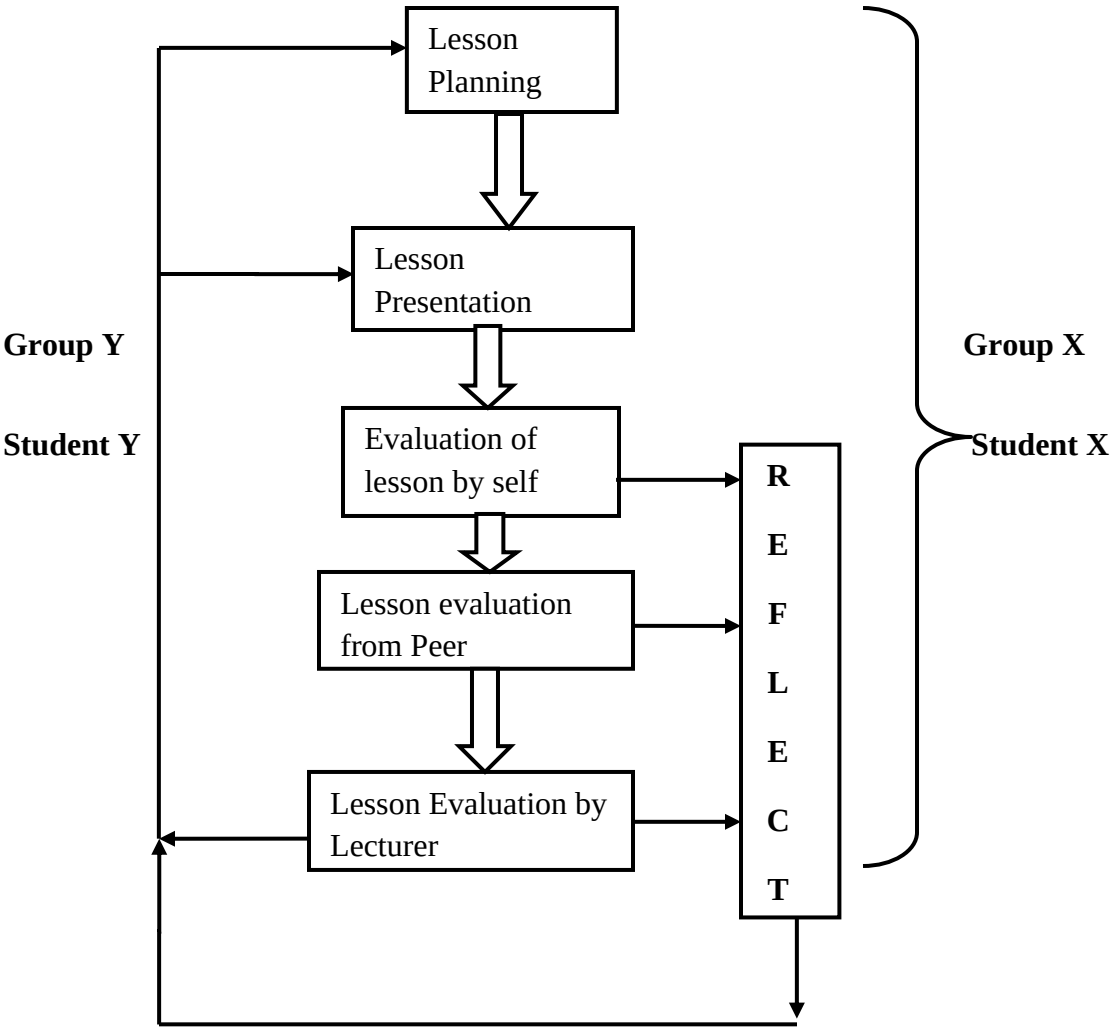

Figure 4.4: The peer-teaching process

Source: Field Data, 2018

It is worth noting, from figure 4.4, how the reflections inform the next lesson to be presented. In an ideal situation, it would be expected that after reflecting on a lesson, the same student would present another lesson; improving on the weaknesses observed in the first lesson. In the situation of the three institutions, the reflections made on a lesson presented by one student or a group helps improve on the next lesson to be presented by

another student or group. This could be viewed as a weakness of the process. However, if one views this as part of the collaborative learning as Stevens (2004) and Kapucu (n.d.) suggest then the process is not completely useless.

4.6.2 Teaching practice

Teaching practice was also mentioned as an activity that helps the students to have a chance to practise what they have learnt in class. The discussion in section 4.5.1.4 has shown that TP is an activity in all the three institutions that gives the students a chance to practice what they learnt in class. The process of the TP has already been discussed in section 4.5.1.4. However, it is worth noting that the TP is the major practical activity that helps the teacher educators to actually check if the students are able to transfer the knowledge learnt in the university to actual classroom in the field. This is because TP is done in a real classroom set up not a simulated class like the one during peer teaching.

Participant 2 from Institution B emphasised the importance of TP. He stated that TP gives the student teachers a chance to practice what they have learnt at the college. He asserted: "TP *gives them an opportunity not only to teach but also to have that experience necessary for a teacher. So, it gives them not only the theory they had in the college but also the experience. So, we want them to also have a feel of what it means to be a teacher in the field"* (23rd March, 2018). In other words, the TP takes students into the community of practice, since during TP they do not only learn from their supervisors and fellow students but also from the experienced teachers in the schools. This observation augers with what Graves' (2009) terms the 'second form of practice'.

4.6.3 Micro-teaching

All the three institutions mentioned micro-teaching as one of the practical activities that the students are involved in. The institutions use the schools around to do this activity. With Institutions B and C, it is an activity that is embedded in the curriculum as part of the requirements for the English teaching methodology courses. On this, Institution B has a demonstration school for such activities. For Institution A, it is the facilitator that would decide whether to take students to the nearby school or not. In their situation, even if it was a requirement, the location of the institution will make it a challenge as they only have a single secondary school around them.

The organisation of the school-based experiences at Institutions A, B and C is different. For Institution B, the students are sent to the schools to teach for a specified period. Then the English teaching methodology lecturers go to supervise them. The student teachers are encouraged to have a file (portfolio) which will contain all the information about their experiences like, schemes and records of work and lesson plans. At Institution C, the students work in teams and plan as a team but teach as individuals while the other members observe. After a lesson is taught, they reflect on the lesson as a group and make improvements for the next person to teach. As for Institution A, since it is at the discretion of the lecturer responsible, the procedures taken are not clear.

The process outlined for institution C is not different from the process that the student teachers go through in the process of peer teaching. The only difference is that in the case of micro teaching, they are teaching real secondary school students in a real secondary

school classroom. Micro-teaching is very important as it prepares the students for real-life in the classroom before they go for the term long TP. This gives them a chance to reflect on their teaching before they are graded on the same.

Participant 1, in Institution C emphasised the process of reflection through the micro teaching. She indicated that as students, they are given classes which they teach as individuals but reflect as a group. She said, "*so they will teach, their friend observe and then when they come to the next class, they discuss that and reflect on that one, then the next person that goes to teach that same class will improve on what the previous person did so it is group work but you face it in the classroom alone*" (11th March 2018).The reflection process is crucial in becoming a teacher, and as observed earlier on, the current trend in teacher education is having a reflective kind of education (refer to section 4.6.1 and Figure 3).

4.6.4 Classroom observation

The other practical aspect that was mentioned through the interviews with the teacher educators was classroom observation. Classroom observation is very important as it gives the learners a chance to see what they have learnt in class being implemented in a real classroom situation. As much as the three institutions have classroom observation as a practical aspect, it differs in how it is implemented. For institution A, it is basically observation from a different angle altogether as this is implemented in an Education and Teaching Studies course. In this case, it does not focus on the teaching of English as a

second language but focuses on general teaching methodologies and classroom management issues.

One of the uniqueness of Institution B's curriculum is that teaching practice is embedded in the curriculum from Year 1. It should be noted that this is the only institution out of the three institutions under study that has primary and secondary schools as demonstration schools. This could also be the reason it is easy to expose the student teachers to the school environment in year one. According to the programme document, there are many practical activities that the students are required to do throughout the programme, and one of those activities is observation. According to the programme document and also from the teacher educators' point of view, the students go through this kind of process as represented in Figure 4.5.

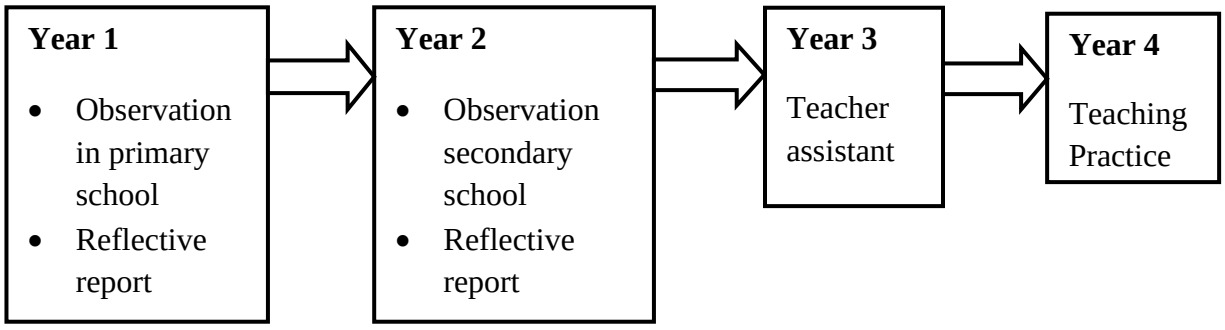

Figure 4.5: Stages in the practical based experience for Institution B's students

Source: Field data, 2018

This process that the student teachers at Institution B undergo would help them reflect on the teaching of English in schools. According to Participant 2 at the institution, the students

are expected to identify a problem from the schools, and with the help of the lecturers they reflect on it and identify a solution to the problem. At the end, they need to write a reflective report. In year 3, the students help in the process of teaching though they do not do the teaching themselves. This gives them a chance to see how the qualified teachers are implementing the curriculum which they too will be expected to implement. It also gives them a chance to experience what really happens in a real classroom setting.

The students at Institution B when asked whether they learnt anything from the observation that they did at primary and secondary schools, they all agreed. One student indicated that she learnt that there are different strategies one can use to teach primary and secondary school learners. She said "... *primary experience how those little children are being handled what kind of skill do they need for them like to be equipped with the knowledge and the content it is totally different from the way the secondary teachers were doing"* (FGD, 4th June, 2019). Another student indicated that he learnt about how to reinforce students' responses. He indicated that "*In terms of how teachers handle learners who answer question correctly or wrongly, the way these teachers encourage these students is encouraging…"* (FGD, 4th June, 2019).

The responses from the student teachers emphasise the importance of classroom observation. However, one clearly notices that what they observed and learnt was not specific to the teaching of English. One would expect that the observation will be tailored towards teaching of English with specific elements to learn from. That is, one would expect that the observation will be based on the kind of knowledge base they are gaining from the

institutions as teachers of English to see how it is implemented in schools. The explanation for this could also be because the observation is done as a general process in the Faculty of Education not specific to English teaching methodology course or English course which is a different case with Institution C.

For Institution C, the programme has a course dedicated to language classroom observation. In this course, the students are allocated schools and classes and they are expected to teach and observe each other. According to the course outline, the aim of the course is "to introduce students to ways of observing and analysing classroom behaviour in a language lesson, with a view to aiding them in their self-evaluation of language teaching competence". In the class that was observed on 5th and 6th November, 2018, the students were given a task which required them to go and carry out classroom observation. They were put in groups and were asked to observe an aspect allocated to the student, and later on discuss with the other members. This is also a reflective process just as it is done in institution B. The aspects they were expected to observe included questioning, nature/form of interaction language, teaching and learning activities, teaching and learning resources, feedback, classroom management, class exercise and homework. Box 4.1 presents the task that the student teachers were given.

TASK

- Individually, observe the assigned lesson aspect/feature
- When observing, note the time (in case there are disagreements we can replay the part) of the worthwhile event and describe it.
- In groups discuss the lesson based on the questions provided (you may even present something not covered in the task but relevant to the assigned feature)
- Share with a group that has a similar task and then present to the class for discussion

Box 4.1: Task for Classroom Observation and Analysis

Source: Field Data, 2018

Before the students were given the above task, they were involved in a practical activity on how they can do the analysis. They were given a transcript which they were supposed to analyse. The transcript was based on the classroom situation. The task that was given to them before they went for the actual observation reflected what they would meet in the classroom. It gave them an opportunity to predict the kind of situation that they will find in the schools, thereby preparing them for the real experience. This is in line with Bartels (2005) who argues that the activities in class should reflect what the student will face in the real situation.

Richards (1987) considers the kind of teacher education in the three institutions as a macro-perspective or a macro approach to LTE. This reflects a view of teacher preparation as

education and focuses on clarifying and elucidating the concepts, and thinking processes that guide the effective second language teacher. In this particular approach, the learning experiences include practice teaching; observing experienced teachers; self and peer observation, that is, reflecting on self and peer performance in actual teaching situation; and seminar and discussion activities, that is, reflecting on the degree to which one's own experience as a student teacher relates to the theory and to the findings of relevant research. These are basically the activities that the teacher educators identified as activities they usually involve their students in. As argued earlier on, the study did not expect much differences between the planned curriculum and the received curriculum as the curricula were designed by the teacher educators themselves. The activities mentioned in this section by the teacher educators are not different from the ones that are indicated in the curriculum documents (in cases of Institutions A and B whose curriculum documents were available.)

According to PCK, a teacher needs to have gained a number of categories of knowledge in order to confidently teach English. The knowledge gained through the theoretical courses in actualised through practice. The activities discussed in this section give an opportunity for the student teachers to put into practice what they learnt in the lecture rooms. The teacher educators provide opportunities to the student teachers to apply what they have learnt. This is also an opportunity for the teacher educators to check if there is knowledge transfer of what the students have learnt to practice. The practice that the three institutions offer to the student teachers meets the minimum standard for teacher education in Malawi. MoEST (2017) stipulates that one of the standards that needs to be fulfilled in teacher

education is the student being given a chance to teach and observe others teach internally and externally.

However, through both the document analysis and interviews with the teacher educators, what is missing is how the content from linguistics is infused into the English teaching methodology courses. It does not clearly come out as to how the content is linked with the process of teaching. As much as students in Institution B argued that they see the connection between the content they learn in English courses with the methodology courses, they did not clearly state if indeed an effort is made to show such connection. Students at Institution C clearly indicated that they do not see the link. The interviews with the lecturers for the English teaching methodology show that the effort is made to familiarise the student teachers with the content from secondary schools. There is no mention on the effort made to link what is taught in the content course to the methodology courses. In this case, we can argue that the there is a process that is missing in the teacher education programmes in the three institutions. Such a missing link is what Wright (2002) argues for as he contends that becoming a teacher of language involves learning to create connections between linguistics and methodology.

4.7 Comparing the three institutions' in view of PCK

This section compares the three institutions in the effort to integrate theory and practice in view of Andrews' (2007) model of PCK. Table 4.7 provides the comparison of the three institutions in view of PCK.

Table 4.7: Comparison of the three institutions in view of Andrews (2007) model of PCK

	Category of knowledge	Institution	Observation	Recommendation
1	Language proficiency	A	Not adequate courses to achieve this	Include courses in English language and communication for teachers of English in year 3 and 4 when they start specialising
		B	Not adequate courses to achieve this	
		C	Not adequate courses to achieve this	
2	Subject matter content	A	Adequate courses to achieve this	There is need to include a course that will directly address the secondary school content.
		B	Adequate courses to achieve this	
		C	Adequate courses to achieve this	
3	Knowledge of learners, context, curriculum and pedagogy	A	Content of the courses offered achieve this	• Institution A and C should introduce methodology courses in year 1 so that the practice is spread over a period of 4 years. • The institutions should strive to train the student teachers to be reflective learners and critical thinkers
		B	Content of the courses offered achieve this	
		C	Content of the courses offered achieve this	
4	Practice	A	Need more practice	• Institutions A and C should adapt the practice in Institution B
		B	Adequate practice, just need to increase the period they spend teaching in school before going for TP	
		C	Have reasonable practice, but need to do more	

Source: Field data, 2018

Table 4.7 shows that there are not many differences in the programmes that the three institutions offer. All the programmes that the English teacher educators implement strive to equip students with the various knowledge bases that would help them translate theory into practice. The programmes seem to have addressed almost all the categories of knowledge (see Shulman, 1987 & Andrews, 2007). From the various activities that the teacher educators take their students through, translation of theory into practice is enabled. The activities also help the teacher educators integrate theory into practice. However, the programmes should include courses that would help students develop language and strategic competence and include more time for practice. Also, the teacher educators should strive to help students become reflective learners as this would assist them easily connect what is taught in the classroom to what is expected in the real classroom.

4.8 Challenges with practice

The study also sought out to find out the challenges that the teacher educators face when integrating theory into practice. This section, therefore, presents the challenges that the teacher educators identified.

4.8.1 Programme focus

One of the challenges which the teacher educators at Institution A are facing is the programme's concentration on subject content matter than the practice which is basically embedded in the teaching methodology courses. Participant 3 pointed out that there is a debate at the institution on how much content should be given to the students as others feel the students are being overloaded with content. He said "*One on the theoretical perspective*

which is still under debate is the, I think we give them a lot of content …but people are debating that maybe we are over loading them but we are not yet settled on that" (1st March, 2018).

The findings from the programme document agree with Participant 3's observations. It has been observed that for a student to graduate with a Bachelor of Education (Humanities) after four years, he or she would have done thirty units of content, six units of teaching methods and eight units of Education and Teaching Studies. If one is a major of the English, then by four years he or she would have done 16 units of subject content, 8 units of Education and Teaching Studies and 3 units of English Teaching Methods courses. This shows that there is more concentration on subject content than the teaching methodology which is the ground for the practical aspect of the programme. The implication of this is that the student teachers graduate as experts in the content with a little experience in methods and practice. The student teachers might be grounded in the content but lacking in skills to deliver the content to the learners.

This challenge was also identified by one of the participants at Institution C, where it was indicated that the students are not given enough methodology courses as they start in year three. The English teacher educators realised that there are many gaps in the curriculum and are planning to sort out the problem. This can also be seen in the programme documents and the route maps from Institutions B and C respectively. One can also see that there are not many methodology courses that are offered to the students compared to content courses.

This challenge on the lack of more practice was also echoed by the student teachers from Institutions B and C. This was further observed in the kind of improvements they were suggesting for the programme. A student from Institution C argued *"...I would love if education students will start going to secondary schools in first year or maybe second year so that when they will be in final year, they will have a clear picture of how the classroom setting is all about"* (FGD, 5th November, 2018). As much as students from Institution B spend more time in the schools than Institutions A and C, the actual teaching is done in year three for two to three weeks before they go for the term long TP.

A similar suggestion was made by a student from Institution B. He said "*In terms of teaching practice, we have been doing peer teaching, but the challenge is going to real schools having that real experience so I will have to suggest an improvement to the course I would say for the coming years they should be starting going to the secondary schools maybe in second year not waiting for the final year ..."* (FGD, 4th June, 2019).

The suggestions above reflect the feeling that the students have about the programme. As much as they have not talked about the content being too much, but they have clearly indicated lack of practice in the programme. The teacher education programmes that the institutions are offering seem to be more academic as Forzani (2014), Macdonald, Kazemi and Kavangh (2013) and Hollins (2011) would describe them. These scholars then suggest a move towards a holistic practice-based approach. The practice-based teacher education is the kind of education that departs from the traditional academic model of teacher education and focuses much on the extended apprenticeship or opportunities to observe

and practice in schools (Forzani, 2014). This suggestion agrees with Wubbels, Korthagen and Brekelmans' (1997) argument that student teachers should enter the field earlier or have a longer time in the field in order to learn more about language teaching.

The arguments from both the teachers and the students indicate that there is need to balance the subject content matter and the practice through the methodology courses. The study acknowledges the need to produce graduates who have mastered the content but it should be appreciated that the institutions need also to produce teachers of English that can confidently teach English notwithstanding the fact that some skills are learnt on the job.

4.8.2 No evaluation of the TP

The other challenge that was picked was the fact that there is no time to evaluate the TP as students go to the schools after fourth year, and they do not come back to campus after that. This challenge was shared by all the three institutions. The teacher educators felt this evaluation process would help students reflect on their experiences and work towards improvement of their teaching strategies (refer to section 4.5.1.4).

4.8.3 Cooperating teachers not helping

Another challenge that was expressed was that the cooperating teachers do not work as expected. Participant 3 from Institution A observed that it could be because the institution stopped giving them the incentives it used to give the CTs. This was also echoed by Participant 4 Institution B. However, this challenge was not spotted by Institution C. Participant 3 in the institution argued:

> *I think the reason others complain is ..., I know that other teacher education institutions they identified a cooperating teacher and they kind of enter into a contractual agreement with the cooperating teacher, this is what we expect from you and there will be a kind of payment so if they are not doing what they are paid for it becomes an issue* (28th March, 2018).

This argument by Participant 3 from Institution C strengthens the reasons the two institutions gave for the cooperating teachers not to do what is expected of them. However, despite the fact that Institutions A and B, use the term cooperating teachers to refer to the teachers that student teachers take over classes from, in essence they do not do the job of CTs. According to Kelly and Grenfell (2004) the school-based mentor needs to be trained on how they can mentor a trainee teacher. They need to understand what is expected by the universities. Glenn (2006) and Koerner, Rust and Baumgartner (2002) emphasise that the CTs need to work with the student teachers to help them apply what they have learnt at the university in the real classroom situation. This means there is need for formal agreement between the university or colleges and the CTs. In the two institutions, there are no formal agreements between the school-based teachers and the university or colleges.

As much as there is no formal agreement with the CTs, there is still need for some sort of communication between the institutions and the school-based teachers (CTs). There seem not to be much communication between the teachers and the teacher educators. This little communication leads to misunderstanding of the roles of the CTs and the faculty members. CTs see their task as fairly practical ones, a matter of initiating student teachers into "the realities" of teaching. By contrast, faculty members feel the CTs should do more (Maynard Cited in Beck & Kosnik, 2002). Kelly and Grenfell (2004) recommend that mentor (CTs)

be fully briefed and trained and understand the expectations of both the trainee and the educational institution. The challenge that Institutions A and B are facing could be because the CTs are not briefed or trained on their roles in the programme. Farrell (2012) emphasises the importance of training the mentor teachers. He argues that the mentor teachers need training on how to explain what they know intuitively about teaching so that they can articulate this clearly to novice teachers. This then can be accomplished by more collaboration between the school and Second Language Teacher (SLT) educators that can facilitate such training.

4.8.4 Inadequate supervision during TP

One of the challenges that the study established was the number of supervisions given to the students. Participant 3 from Institution A indicated that because of lack of resources, the students are only supervised three times; two clinical supervisions and one moderation. In this case, two supervisions for a student teacher might not be enough for him or her to learn how to teach especially in the absence of support from the CTs.

The issue of inadequate supervision was also echoed by participants from Institutions B and C. For example, Participant 4 from Institution B argued:

> *…Normally we have a large intake; on average we have three hundred students and then they are placed in zones as indicated then there is this factor of distance because some of the schools you know are relatively far away from each other. Yes, if resources were there, we would supervise them each and every week but then we are talking of twelve weeks and normally we visit them at least for four weeks* (13th March, 2018).

Participant 3 from Institution C, describe the relationship between the student teacher and the teachers in the schools in this way:

> *…the students work with the teacher that they are taking over the classes from, yes, the relationship is that the students before they go in, before they start teaching, they observe the teacher teach, afterwards they take over the classes, they teach, the teachers will go in their classes, see them teach and give them feedback. Behave a form that we use ourselves as supervisors but we also give the forms to the student teachers, so they photocopy and give that form. Its supervision form, they give the form to the teachers and the teacher will fill in the form and then give the form to the student teacher as a record so that we can see the process* (28th March, 2018).

This shows that as much as this institution is not really concerned about the CTs, it still values the contribution that the teachers make in the training of the teachers. The institution follows Freeman, Coolican and Graves (2011) description on how TP is done. They explain that student teachers are placed with master or cooperating teachers in their field work and work closely with this teacher to learn the culture and specific teaching practices of that classroom. If indeed the teachers in the schools would supervise the students and provide feedback, then the institutions would not worry about the number of visits to the schools. Caires and Almeida (2007) argue that the effectiveness and the productivity of the teaching practice (TP) depend significantly on the help and support provided by the university and school supervisors. This shows that there is need for collaboration to help the student teachers learn to teach. However, this observation seems to be missing in the teacher training process in the three Institutions under study.

Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000) argue that mentors introduce the student teachers to the school, giving advice and guidance, asking questions and drawing on the successful teaching moments they have accumulated. This means, even in the absence of the university supervisors, the student teachers should be able to learn to cope with the school experience. If the training institutions had a formal agreement and trained the schoolteachers in what is expected in teacher training as Kelly and Grenfell (2004) suggest, then the institutions would not be complaining about the inadequacy of supervision. The study acknowledges the financial implications of this proposition as most CTs would want to be paid which might be a constraint to the Institutions. In this regard, the study proposes collaboration between the MoEST, school teachers and the teacher training institutions. With this collaboration, the MoEST will empower the teachers, as part of their job description, to take part in mentoring the student teachers. This is what Mereni (1985) calls 'synergism in education'.

4.8.5 Relationship with the nearby schools

One of the challenges that came out of the interviews was the issue of relationships with the schools. This issue was shared by all three institutions. This affects the implementation of the programme.

One of the teacher educators at institution A indicated that they sometimes use the Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) for classroom observation and miniature TP. However, it was observed from the interviews that the relationship between the institution and the CDSS is not as good as one would expect. It was pointed out that at some point,

the school's administration was barring the university students to go to the school for micro-teaching. They only allowed them to go there for classroom observation, and in some cases for the actual TP. This case emphasises the need for the MoEST to be part of the training process. If the Ministry was part of this teacher training process and all schools were advised to be involved, then such cases would be avoided.

In the case of Institution B, as much as they have their own demonstration school, they still use the other schools around because of the number of students they have. Participant 2 at the institution explained that the challenge that they face is the decisions that the schools make in terms of accommodating student teachers. For example, he argued "*this year we are allowed to a certain school the next year you are not allowed to a certain school then you have to adjust accordingly*" (23rd March, 2018).

For institution C, the case was a bit different in that it was not really about the school administration not allowing them to go for microteaching or observation but the teachers themselves. It was observed that most teachers did not want to be observed which compromised the course on Language Classroom Observation and Analysis. This attitude of the teachers might be due to some factors. Firstly, it could be because they would want to be given an incentive for helping the student teachers. Secondly, it could also be because the teachers might not feel confident enough to be observed. Thirdly, it could be because they feel that the observation is a process of fault finding. Whatever the reason, the teachers might have for not wanting to be observed, the fact is that the teachers lack understanding

on their role in the teacher training process. As observed earlier on, the teacher might not have been empowered by their employer to assist in the teacher training process.

According to NCATE (2006), teacher education programmes that incorporate collaborative partnerships between the university programmes and local schools have a positive effect on student achievement (cited in Kessler and Wong, 2008). This emphasises how important collaboration is in teacher training. The importance of collaboration has been discussed more in section 4.8.4.

4.8.6 Number of student teachers per class

The other challenge that was identified had to do with the number of student teachers. This challenge was shared by all the three institutions.

Participant 4 at Institution A indicated that he usually had his peer teaching lessons in the evening, that is, outside the timetable, so that every student teacher has a chance to present a lesson. This implies that there is not enough time in the timetable to accommodate this practical activity. This was also echoed by the Participant 2 who observed "*the students are many so for them to individually showcase their skills is a challenge*" (24th April, 2018).

The issue raised by the teacher educator at Institution A was also raised by Participant 3 at Institution B. On this he argued:

> *….and then the other challenge would be on the numbers in the classroom is quite often the figures are just like this third year that is about to go we have more than 73 students. Ideally, you would want maybe have three or four weeks for the practice part and the three hours a week so the numbers… the classroom numbers of students present challenges as well* (12th March, 2018).

At Institution C, Participant 2 complained that "*the classes are considerably large (70-80+) which makes it impossible for a lecturer to supervise the students as they plan their lessons in groups. It is even worse when it comes to lecturer observing lessons as normally 9 groups go to schools per allocated time.*" (21st March, 2018). This was also corroborated by Participant 3 of Institution C who narrated:

> *….for the others there are very few students so that is not a big concern because the lecturer can take his or her class to, for experience, for classroom experience as many times as possible so that the students are able to get very good practice. For big classes, students have mostly one teaching experience and the rest just see their friends teach, they give their friends feedback* (28th March, 2018).

The issue of number of student teachers has a bearing on the time one is required to take student teachers through the practical aspects. In most cases, the teacher educators need to go through the theoretical aspects of the course before going into the practical aspects. After the practical aspect, there is need for reflection. Now with the large numbers, then the time for practice becomes reduced as a result not everybody will have a chance to do what they need to do. At the same time, the teacher educators will have a challenge to monitor the activities which would lead the teacher educators to focus much on theory.

This challenge seems to be a big one in the three institutions. With this challenge, the student teacher might not have proper school experience before they go for a term long TP.

4.8.7 Attitude of students

This challenge came from Institution B. Participant 3 at this institution observed that most of the times his students do not seem to like the theoretical part of the courses that he offers. For them, the most important aspect is the practical aspect than the theory. He observed:

> *…the other challenge* w*ould be with the attitude of the students themselves as practical people who would just be concerned with what they are going to teach in the schools but the module expect them to discuss all these theoretical issues mainly you struggle getting them to understand the significance and relevance of that theory. You… so that the challenge getting them you know, understand the relevance of the theoretical part of the modules* (12th March, 2018).

This could be because they do not see the link between the theories they are being given and the teaching process itself. In other words, they fail to apply the theory into practice. They would rather just do the practice without the theory. According to the teacher educator, this is resolved by helping students understand the relevance of the theory in the practice.

The teacher educator's attempt to help students understand the relevance of theory in practice is in line with what Farrell (2012) recommends. He argues that one way of bridging theory and practice is by making clear connections in all preparation courses to teach in the first year. The student teachers need to be guided as to how they will use the content in

practice. In this study, as much as it is clear that there are effort to connect theory and practice, the focus seems to be more on the connection between theory on how language is taught with the actual teaching. What is missing is the attempt to connect the subject content matter and the process of teaching the subject, as the content taught in the university and colleges is not the content that is taught in secondary schools.

4.8.8 Mismatch between what is taught at the institutions and what happens in the schools

One of the challenges that was identified was on the mismatch between what the institutions teach and what happens in the schools. Participant 4 from Institution B emphasised the use of participatory approaches in the secondary schools. He observed that the college normally emphasises their students to use participatory approaches but when they go to the schools, they find some kind of resistance from the teachers and the students. This challenge was also shared by the other two institutions.

In relation to the issue of mismatch between content in the training institution and the schools, Participant 2 from Institution C indicated that his student teachers complained that the content that they were given in class was so general that they had problems to teach English when they went to the schools. The student teachers are said to have complained this way:

> *….how can we teach for example phrases, so that's what they wanted and even note making how do you teach note making while here we talk about theories of writing?…how do you teach writing?... the process so they would want us to focus on the things that are, speech writing, how do you*

> *do that so that is what they are requesting* (Participant 2, Institution C, 21st March, 2018).

This problem was also highlighted by year 4 students in the same institution through focus group discussion. They felt the content that is given to them was too general for them to use. They felt it was better they were given content that directly addresses the content in the secondary schools. One of the students said, "*we are being taught the theory but we are not taught how we are going to teach that*" (5th November, 2018). Another argued, "*sometimes when we are learning we just feel like we are learning for the sake of learning not that we are learning to use those things*' (5th November, 2018). She proceeded to say, "*may be if they will tell me that when you are going to teach, this is how you use phonology or what*".

Some students suggested a more specific approach to the training. One student suggested:

> *They should be able to give us examples that this is a story and tell us how you are going to teach this one. Because they might say go teach literature where are you going to start from. All you have the knowledge is on how to manage the class. You have theories but you do not even know what things you are going to teach in English* (5th November, 2018).

The issue of mismatch between what the students are taught and what actually happens in the schools was echoed by students from Institution B. One student claimed:

> *Just a general comment on what we learn here and how practical it is out there, sometimes honestly you feel the content is just prescription whose practicality out there is really unimplementable. We have been taught how*

> *to conduct assessment how to teach analysis of terms of literature but if you have to go to the nitty gritty of each point and what is prescribed here you see that it is impractical out there (*FGD, 4th June, 2014).

This comment was based on their observation when they went out on an observation exercise. They claimed to have noticed that the methodologies they were taught at the college might not work in the real classroom situations.

Bartels (2005), Farrell (2012) and Gardiner and Salmon (2014) argue that for a teacher training programme to be effective, the activities that the student teachers go through should be in line with what they will be expected to do in the schools. In this regard, the observation made by the participants on the mismatch between what is taught in the teacher training institutions and what is expected in the schools needs serious attention.

4.9 Suggestions to deal with challenges on practice

The study also sought to find out ways of dealing with the challenges that teacher educators faced when integrating theory into practice. There were a number of suggestions that were given by the teacher educators. This section will discuss these suggestions.

4.9.1 Demonstration schools

Since the teacher educators claimed there is not much practice in the teacher education programmes, they suggested the introduction of demonstration secondary schools. This was suggested by the teacher educators for Institutions A and C. It was observed that if the institutions had their own demonstration schools, then the students would have a chance to

experience the real classroom setting earlier, than it is now. The belief is "*if they start at level 2 where we start methodologies visiting the classrooms up to level 4, we expect them to be well grounded in that*" (Participant 3, Institution A, 1st March, 2018).

This observation could be true if what is happening at Institution B is anything to go by. They have managed to embed the practical aspect of teacher education in the curriculum from first year. As much as they use other schools around, they have a school that is readily available for the practical.

4.9.2 Improvisation

A case of improvisation was presented as a way of dealing with a challenge of large number of student teachers and the challenge with teachers who refused to be observed. The innovation that Participant 2 from Institution C use is instead of the student teachers observing qualified teachers in the schools, they observe each other. The teacher educator explained that instead of using public schools, he uses private schools which give him slots for his students to teach, so as one student is teaching, the other students observe. This works well for both teams, the school and the college. For the school, they have a teacher teaching their students for free, and for the college, they have access to the real classroom.

The other innovation is the use of group work. One aspect that was observed from all the three institutions is the use of group work to deal with the large number of students. The most interesting aspect from Institution B is where they are told to work in groups but are

not told who will do the presentation, in that way students are forced to participate in the discussions. The process was described in this way:

> *...quite often I resolve to group work so I organise class into groups and then I give each group a topic to present but then I always emphasise active participation of every member in the group and then I ask the group leaders to report to me if any members of the group are not that active but then on the day of presenting what we do is we pick the presenter randomly. It is not like the group knows who is going to present the lesson on behalf of the group* (Participant 3 Institution B, 12th March, 2018).

McDonald, Kazemi, and Kavanagh (2013) propose a cycle of learning which involves collaborative planning of lessons, reflection on other teachers teaching processes through video analysis and transcript analysis and reflection on own teaching through co-teaching and micro-teaching which is in agreement with Kabilan's (2007) process of reflection. The innovation that McDonald, Kazemi, and Kavanagh are suggesting is the use of video and transcripts of lessons. This could be a great innovation to use in cases where teacher educators have many student teachers who cannot all have a chance to teach or observe a teacher. They can read through the lesson transcripts or watch videos of teacher at it, and reflect on them. This might still give an opportunity to the student teachers to learn how to teach.

The use of video and transcripts of lesson in teacher education is also in agreement with Forzani's (2014) suggestion to focus on core practice in teacher education. According to Forzani, in core practice, teacher education novices are helped to understand instruction as a complicated practice and manage its complexity and uncertainty through video analysis

and rehearsals, in addition to more traditional observation and student teaching. These activities are similar to the activities in the circle of learning.

Gardiner and Salmon (2014), Graves (2011), Freeman, Coolican and Graves (2011), Beck and Kosnick (2002), Lightbown (2000), Shulman (1986) and Mereni (1985) agree on the importance of research in second language teacher training. They argue that if teacher educators are involved in research in the schools, they will have a deeper understanding of the schools and the teaching. This means that if there is collaboration between the schools and the training institutions, the teacher educators will have an opportunity to record lessons and use them for training of the teachers. If this is done, the issue of numbers of students might not be a problem.

4.9.3 Curriculum review

The other way of dealing with the challenges that was suggested was that the curriculum should be reviewed to deal with two issues: to add more practical work in the programme (refer Section 4.8.1) and to have TP in between semesters so that the students can come back for a review of the practicum (refer Section 4.8.2).

There was a feeling from the Institutions especially A and C that the students do not have enough classroom experience before TP. One of the reasons as indicated earlier on is the number of students. For Institution A, it was more to do with how its curriculum is designed as it does not have courses that are mandatory for the students to go for microteaching, hence the need to review the curriculum. Participant 3 at Institution C observes that if the

students were given enough time for school experience, they would learn more as they will not have to worry about resources and other challenges. He observed:

> *…to have more time for school experiences that would have been much much better because when they go for teaching experience, they come from the college, they go with their college supervisors and all the resources they need are provided by the department not by the schools so that would give them an opportunity to use resources which may not be available in the schools, and they would have the interaction with and the feedback from their lecturers and their peers* (28th March, 2018).

As discussed earlier on, all the three institutions felt that there is need to bring the TP in between semesters so that they come back for review. The challenge that Institution C is facing now is that their students learn with students in the other programmes, as such it might not be possible to take them out of the system before they have covered the content courses. As a solution to such a challenge, the institution is working towards having a self-contained School of Education in which they will have to teach content courses as well as education courses, instead of depending on the departments from other faculties.

At Institution C, they are thinking of coming up with a course(s) that will directly address content in secondary schools. This could be a welcome development for the students. When the students were asked if they would be comfortable to have a course that directly addresses content in the secondary schools, there was a resounding "yes". When one student disagreed with the rest, claiming that he as an educator, needs the kind of content he is getting, another student responded "*what we are saying is there should be another*

course that will specialise us into being teachers in addition to what we are learning" (FGD, 5th November, 2018).

As much as it will be necessary to add more content that addresses what is taught in the secondary schools as well as practical experiences, the training process should also be looked into. The student teachers need to be trained more in reflective learning. Kabilan (2007) views reflection as a process that helps teacher's self-examination and enhances teacher's understanding of teaching and learning in ways that are new and challenging. Siang (2002) argues that for one to adopt reflective learning, there is need for explicit training in generating alternative solutions and establishing links among ideas. If student teachers in these institutions are trained to reflect on their learning, they will be able to use the knowledge they gain through the practice that the teacher educators offer. They will also make connections between the concepts they learn in subject content courses with what they are expected to teach.

Johnson (2009) and Burns and Richards (2009) observe that teacher educators' view of L2 teacher learners has changed over the years. They argue that the teacher educators now view L2 teachers as users and creators of knowledge who make decisions about how to teach their L2 students within complex, socially, culturally and historically constructed contexts. According to Richards (2008), the teacher education programs no longer view L2 teaching as a matter of simply translating theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) into effective instructional practices but as constructing of new knowledge and theory

through participating in specific social contexts and engaging in particular types of activities and processes.

From the arguments by Johnson (2009), Burns and Richards (2009) and Richards (2008), it is clear that it is not just the content in the programme that matters, but also how the students learn. The programmes need to make the student teachers active members of the learning process. Teacher learning should be seen as a cognitive process, a personal construction and a reflective practice (Andrews, 2007). It should involve developing and integrating one's knowledge base about content, teaching, and learning (Davis &Krajcik, 2005).

4.9.4 Increase contact with the schools

Another way of dealing with the challenges that was suggested was that there is need for the training institutions to have a very good relationship with the schools around. If this is done, the institutions will be free to use the schools for more practice. The importance of the schools can never be overemphasised. Graves (2009) outlines the following as importance of partnership with schools in SLTE. Firstly, they apprentice teacher-learners into the discourses and norms of schooling. Secondly, they provide reality check for teacher educators on the relevance of what they teach in the SLTE context. Finally, they provide fresh perspective for practicing teachers.

In relation to this, there was mention on the need to have coordination between the teacher training institutions and the institutions responsible for secondary school curriculum. Participant 3 from Institution B argued that there is need for

> *…Coordination between teacher education institutions and the institutions that are responsible for developing the secondary school curriculum like the MIE in this case then the examination board MANEB, I think training a teacher is not that easy, it's not just a classroom experience and then there is new curriculum development, there is need for the institutions to meet* (12th March, 2018).

This implies that there is need for more collaboration in the training of teachers of English in Malawi, not only with the schools where the student teachers will teach but also with the other institutions responsible for secondary education.

This suggestion agrees with Farrell's (2008) recommendation that there is need for quality collaboration between the triad supervisors, the CTs and the student teachers. Mereni's (1985) suggests synergism in education. He looks at a close working relationship among the different players in the education sector; namely, Ministry of Education, State Education Board, practicing schools and teacher training colleges. This kind of working relationship makes it possible for the training institutions to offer content that is expected in the schools, and also gives the other players the opportunity to own the teacher training programmes. Beck and Kosnik (2002) observe that as long as education professors and associate teachers (CTs) live in separate worlds, it will be difficult to develop a sound shared approach to teaching and learning.

Farrell (2012) suggests more SLTE school partnership. Freeman and Johnson (1998) argue that, in order to establish effective knowledge base for SLTE, SLT educators must have an adequate understanding of schools and schooling and the social and cultural contexts in which learning how to teach happens (cited in Farrell 2012). This will give the SLT educators an opportunity to build a corpus for case studies which can be fed back into SLT preparation programmes for pre-service teachers to explore (Farrell, 2012).

The use of case studies in teacher education is in line with Shulman (1986). He suggests three forms of teacher knowledge: proposition knowledge, case study knowledge, and strategic knowledge. He looks at case knowledge as knowledge of specific, well documented and richly described events. These cases are used to illuminate both the practical and the theoretical. The use of case studies will therefore give the student teacher a chance to reflect on what they have learnt in class in relation to the actual classroom practices. This might be a way of linking theory and practice in teacher education.

4.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter has provided the findings of the study and discussed them in line with the literature review and the theoretical frame work. The findings have been divided in two: general and specific findings. The general findings have provided the information on the study sites, that is, the three teacher training institutions where the study was carried out. The specific findings have looked at the content of the programme documents, the practice that teacher educators take the student teachers through, the challenges the teacher educators face when involving students in practice and suggestions on ways to deal with

the challenges. The next chapter will provide the summary of the findings, conclusions and implications.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

5.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter 4 has presented and discussed the findings of the study in line with the research questions. The findings were based on the one-on-one interviews with key informants, observations, document analysis and focus group discussions. This chapter presents the summary of the major findings, the conclusion and the implications of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study aimed at exploring how English teacher educators integrate theory and practice in the teacher training process. It specifically aimed to answer the following questions: How does the English teacher education programme document integrate theory and practice? How does the teacher educator implement the English teacher education programme? What challenges do English teacher educators face when integrating theory and practice? What are the proposed ways of dealing with the challenges faced in integrating theory and practice?

The study argues that while the various activities that the teacher educators take their students through provide a great opportunity for the educators to bring the theoretical knowledge about how teaching should be done into reality, the theoretical knowledge about

language that is taught in the content subjects is not manipulated in any way in the process of teaching student teachers how to teach.

This section presents the major findings. The presentation of the summary of the findings follows the order in which the discussions were done in chapter 4.

5.2.1 The institutions

All the three institutions that were involved in this study have a four-year secondary school teacher training programme. The programmes have different names, Bachelor of Education (Humanities), Bachelor of Education (Language) and Bachelor of Education (Secondary) but by the end of four years, one of the products is a teacher of English.

The programmes in the three institutions are facilitated by different departments which include departments responsible for subject content matter, departments responsible for general education courses and departments responsible for English teaching methodologies.

5.2.2 How does the English teacher education programme document integrate theory and practice?

After the review of the programme documents and route maps for the three institutions, it was established that all the three institutions have a four-part secondary school teacher education programme. The students that register for these programmes are expected to go through subject matter content, general education courses, English teaching methodology

courses and a term long teaching practice. The term long teaching practice and other practical activities embedded in the English methodology courses give student teachers a chance to reflect on the content, other student teachers' actions and their own actions to improve their own learning.

The difference, in the three institutions, is how each of the courses is packaged as well as the number of credit hours allocated to each of the categories of the programme. There is also a difference in the kind of subject content matter that the students in the three institutions are offered especially in the language part of the content. For example, Institution B and C offer Description of English courses while Institution A offers general linguistics courses.

The other difference is the point at which the courses are introduced. For instance, Institution A starts offering English teaching methodology in year two and general education courses in year one. Institution B starts offering both English teaching methodology and general education courses in year 1 while Institution C starts offering English teaching methodology in year three and general education courses in year two.

5.2.3 How does the teacher educator implement the English teacher education programme?

The teacher educators in the three institutions are expected to implement the four-part secondary teacher education programme. The study acknowledges that there is a difference between a planned curriculum and a received curriculum. With this in mind, teacher

educators and their students were interviewed. The focus was on the facilitators of English teaching methodology as these courses are the ones that bring subject content matter and general education courses together. The study revealed that there are several activities that teacher educators take the student teachers through to give them a chance to integrate theory and practice. The activities include peer teaching, teaching practice, micro-teaching and classroom observation.

The various activities that the student teachers are involved in give the student teachers a chance to reflect on their own actions and peers' actions. On the one hand, through peer teaching, micro-teaching and TP, the student teachers have an opportunity to reflect on their own teaching and the content that they are teaching. This is because they get feedback from peers and feedback from the teacher educators on top of getting a chance to evaluate their own lesson. On the other hand, through classroom observations, the student teachers have an opportunity to reflect on other teachers' actions. This process of reflection helps them improve their teaching experiences. The reflection process gives them a chance to find innovative and improved ways of integrating theory and practice.

5.2.4 Comparing the three institutions in view of PCK

The English teacher education programmes that the three institutions offer are similar with minor differences. The programmes and the activities that the teacher educators take their students through strive to help students acquire the various categories of PCK which is relevant to the teaching of English in secondary schools in Malawi. It is envisioned that the kind of knowledge that is acquired through the content and the practice will help the student

teachers easily implement the secondary school curriculum. This is because the practice gives them that opportunity to put into practice what they learnt in the lecture rooms (theory).

However, the programmes do not adequately address the category of knowledge on language proficiency. The study has established that the language courses that the programmes offer focus on equipping student teachers with the knowledge about language and not knowledge of the language. TLA requires that, apart from the subject content knowledge, the student teachers should master strategic and language competence in the language they teach so that they can easily teach the same to the learners. There is need therefore, for a deliberate effort to equip students with strategic and language competences by exposing them to courses that would help them improve these skills.

5.2.5 What challenges do English teacher educators face when integrating theory and practice?

The study has established that there are a number of challenges that teacher educators face when taking students through practice which is the opportunity they have to use the theory learnt. The challenges that have been established in the study include the programmes for the institutions being inadequate for practice; lack of evaluation of the term long TP; poor assistance or cooperation from the cooperating teachers or class teachers during TP; poor relationships with the schools around the institutions; large numbers of student teachers enrolled in the programmes; students' negative attitude towards theory, and a mismatch between what is taught in the institutions and what exactly happens in the schools.

5.2.6 How do teacher educators deal with the challenges faced in integrating theory and practice?

The study has found out that, though there are these challenges, the teacher educators still take the student teachers through practice by finding ways of dealing with the challenges. The teacher educators also suggested several ways they could use to deal with the challenges that were identified. The suggested ways include having a demonstration school especially for Institution A and C; use of innovative ways of teaching for example the use of case studies, videos as well as group work; review of the curriculum to factor in more practice as well as room for evaluation of TP; and increase contact with the schools and other organisations that focus on education.

5.3 Conclusion

For the teacher training institutions to bridge the gap between theory and practice, they need to change the way they view the nature of teacher learning. The three institutions, through their curriculum and the activities used to implement the activities, reflect an effort to closely integrate theory (how the teachers have to teach) and practice (how teachers learn to teach). However, it is still not clear how the subject content matter learnt in the university or colleges, which is another dimension of theory in this study, is linked to the teaching of English. This means, therefore, that while the various activities that the teacher educators take their students through provide a great opportunity for the educators to bring the theoretical knowledge about how teaching should be done into reality, the theoretical knowledge about language that is taught in the content subjects is not used in any way in the process of teaching student teachers how to teach.

5.4 Implications

The following are the implications of the study according to policy, practice and theory.

5.4.1 Policy

Considering that the study has established that the institutions need more time for practice as this is the only way the teacher educators and students can integrate theory and practice, there will be need for more collaborations with the schools. The collaboration will give the teacher educators and the students access to the schools for practice with ease. At the same time, there is need for assistance from the class teachers to help equip the student teachers with practitioners' knowledge. This implies drawing of a policy by the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) to allow all secondary schools to assist in teacher training.

The collaboration between the institutions and the schools also implies the inclusion of the school-based teachers in the process of developing and reviewing the teacher education programme. Their inclusion in this process will enhance ownership of the programme thereby making it easier for them to commit to the process of training teachers.

5.4.2 Collaboration

The similarity of the programmes in terms of content and activities in the three institutions implies the need for collaboration between and among institutions. Since they have the same goal of training teachers of English for the secondary schools in Malawi, they should view themselves as partners and not rivals. This means there is need to work together as a

community of practice. This community of practice should not only be limited to the teacher educators but also the student teachers in the process of becoming reflective teachers.

5.4.3 Programme review

The study acknowledges that in Malawi, English is a subject and a medium of instruction from primary to tertiary. In this regard, by the time the students come into the teacher training programmes, they must have mastered English elements to use for teaching and learning. However, the language teacher education programmes can help them enhance language competence of students by exposing them to language and communication courses. This might be effective if the courses give them enough practice on the language skills as opposed to theoretical knowledge. Apart from factoring in courses in Language and Communication, there is need to factor in a course that will train them in critical thinking. Critical thinking will help them to reflect on the content offered to them and how they can use that content in teaching. The teacher education programme should strive to produce a reflective learner.

The institutions should also consider introducing course(s) that will address the content in secondary school. This would provide a platform for teacher educators to help the student teachers link the subject content matter they learnt at the university and what they will be expected to teach. This might be an opportunity for student teachers to understand and appreciate the relevance of the Linguistics, Language and Literature courses they go through.

As established in the study, English teaching methodology course is the course that brings subject content matter and general education content together to create special knowledge for teachers. In addition, it is the course through which teacher educators teach students how teaching ought to be done and help them learn to teach through the various activities provided. Given this, there is need to consider this course as the most important course in teacher training. This implies an increase in the notion/credit hours allocated to the course. There is need for a recalculation of the credit hours for each of the four parts of the programmes in line with the intended outcomes of the programmes.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

Firstly, the current study has established that teaching practice is one of the key areas in language teacher education. It has explored how the various institutions carry out the teaching practice and the challenges that the institutions face. However, the study has not looked at whether the teaching practice is effective or not. There is need, therefore, to explore the effectiveness of teaching practice in language teacher education in Malawi. This will help the institutions to review the TP process and find innovative ways of implementing it.

In addition, the study has also established that in most cases, the teachers in schools do not actively participate in the teacher training process even though the teacher training institutions expect them to do so. The study, however, has not shown the reasons teachers are not actively involved in teacher training. There is need, therefore, to explore secondary teachers' attitude on their role as partners in language teacher education.

Furthermore, the study has established that one way of linking theory to practice is through communities of practice. However, the study did not investigate if this is being used in the training of teachers of English in Malawi. There is need, therefore, to investigate how institutions use or would use communities of practice in the training of teachers. The study should focus on the use of CoPs both at the university and during TP.

Lastly, this study has views from student teachers; it does not have views from teachers who went through the same programmes. There is need to explore the attitude of the graduates of LTE institutions on the LTE programmes and how they feel these programmes prepared them for the realities in secondary schools. This would help the training institutions to review their programmes accordingly.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of introduction from Chancellor College

ACTING PRINCIPAL
Prof. Samson Sajidu, BSc Mlw, MPhil Cantab, Ph.D Mlw

Our Ref: **CC/AP/1/1/2021**
Your Ref:

CHANCELLOR COLLEGE
P.O. Box 280, Zomba, Malawi

Telephone: (265) 524 222
Fax: (265) 524 046
E-mail: principal@cc.ac.mw

To: Whom it may concern

From: PG office, Curriculum and Teaching Studies department

Date: 3rd October, 2017

CLEARANCE TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA: MS LYDIA KISHINDO-MAFUTA

Ms Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta is Doctorate student registered in the department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies at Chancellor College, University of Malawi. She is not doing her research. The title of the research is "**An exploration on how teacher training institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice for English Language teachers**". We shall be grateful if you could provide her permission and support to collect the research data.

Your support will be greatly appreciated. If you need further details on the request please contact me on: bmaseko@cc.ac.mw or mobile:+265996787515.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Maseko, PhD
PG COORDINATOR
CURRICULUM AND TEACHING STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Email: bmaseko@cc.ac.mw

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI CHANCELLOR COLLEGE 3 OCT 2017 CATS DEPARTMENT P.O. BOX 280, ZOMBA

Appendix2: Consent Letter/Form

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

Dear Sir/Madam,

A request for consent to be interviewed as part of a study on Theory and Practice in Language Teacher Education Programmes in Malawi

My name is Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta Registration number PHD/ED/LED/04/16. I am a PhD student in Curriculum and Teaching Studies (Language Education) at Chancellor College,University of Malawi. I am carrying out a study on "**An exploration on how teacher training institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice for English language teachers**" The purpose of the study is to explore the knowledge base of Secondary English Teacher Education Programmes in Malawi in order to understand how they balance theory and practice. You have been purposively selected to participate in this study because you have been part of Teacher Education Programmes in Malawi as a designer, implementer, monitor or even a beneficially. It is felt that through your experience you would be in a position to share a few insights on the Education programmes in Malawi, especially in Language Teacher Education.

I, therefore, would like to ask for your consent to interview you. I have planned this interview to last no longer than 30 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that we would like to cover. To facilitate my note-taking, I would like to audio tape our conversations. Again, I would like to ask for permission to record the interview. Please note that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) I do not intend to inflict any harm.

Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta

For the interviewee

I _____ of _____ have read the brief and understands the purpose of the study and what it intends to do. I give consent to be interviewed and recorded.

Signature _____ *Date*_____

Appendix 3: Sample Letter Seeking Permission to Generate Data at an Institution

Mzuzu University
Department of T L C S
Faculty of Education
Luwinga, **Mzuzu**

19th February 2018

The Registrar
Chancellor College
P.O. Box 280
Zomba

Dear Sir,

SEEKING PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

I am writing to seek permission to carry out research at your institution from 19 to 23 March 2018. My name is Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta a PhD student in Curriculum and Teaching Studies (Language Education) at University of Malawi, Chancellor College. I am carrying out a study on "**An exploration on how teacher training institutions in Malawi integrate theory and practice for English language teachers**" The purpose of the study is to explore the knowledge base of Secondary English Teacher Education Programmes in Malawi in order to understand how they balance theory and practice.

My study will involve interviewing the Dean of the Faculty in which the Language Teacher Education Programme is housed, the Head of Department and/or Head of Section

responsible for Language Education with focus on English, the Teaching Practice Coordinator and lecturer(s) responsible for English Teaching Methods courses. In addition, I would like also to have an opportunity to go through the curriculum documents for the Language Teacher Education Programme.

I will be so glad if I will be granted permission to carry out this research at your institution. Be assured that the data that will be collected at your institution will be strictly used for academic purposes as a fulfilment for my studies towards a PhD in Curriculum and Teaching Studies (Language Education).

Yours Faithfully

Lydia Kishindo Mafuta

Attached: Introductory Letter

Appendix 4: Dates when data was generated

Institution	Data generation method	Dates
A	Interviews	27th February – 2nd March 2018
	Document Analysis	27th February – 2nd March 2018
B	Interviews	12th – 23rd March 2018
	Document Analysis	12th – 16th March 2018
	Focus Group Discussion	4th June 2019
C	Interviews	19th – 23rd March 2018
	Document Analysis	19th – 23rd March 2018
	Focus Group Discussions	5th November 2018
	Observations	5th and 6th November 2018

Source: Field data, (2018, 2019)

Appendix 5: General objectives for English Teaching Methodology Courses

Institution A

Year 2

- Language Education (Introduces students to English language teaching skills, procedures and strategies relevant to secondary school)
- English Teaching Methodology1 (familiarise students with theories that influences language teaching in English as a second language classroom)

Year 3

- English Teaching Methods 2 (introduces students to the theories and strategies of teaching reading and writing – to effectively teach reading and writing)
- English teaching methods 3 (aims to develop students competence in the teaching of writing in secondary schools)

Year 4

- TP Evaluation (helps students to review their language classroom practice during block teaching practicum in order to draw lessons for improvement)

Institution B

Year 1

- Introduction to the teaching of English in Secondary schools (introduces students to the major theories of language learning and teaching and how the theories inform practice in the learning and teaching of language in formal academic contexts)

Year 2

- The teaching of English Language (aims to prepare students to effectively teach English as a second language in Malawian schools by equipping them with the

necessary knowledge, skills, techniques for teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing and language structure and use.

- Teaching of Literature in English (equips students with necessary theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills for teaching literature in order to prepare them for effective teaching of the subject in Malawian secondary school)

Year 3

- Introduction to language assessment and syllabus evaluation (introduces students to the theoretical foundations and principles of language assessment and syllabus design)
- Language assessment and syllabus evaluation (helps students to apply the theories and principles of language assessment and syllabus design to the planning, design, use and evaluation of language syllabi and assessment schemes, methods and instruments for different purposes and contexts)

Year 4

- Approaches and methods in second language teaching (familiarises students with major approaches and methods to the teaching of a second language in order to help them make informed relevant decision in their teaching of a second language in Malawian secondary schools)
- Research in Language Education (equips students with practical experiences in conducting, reporting and disseminating research findings)

Appendix 6: Interview Guide for Lecturer

AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Interview Guide for Lecturer

Institution: _____

Position: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date:_____

Duration: _____

Interviewee's background

1. For how long have you been at this institution?
2. For how long have you been facilitating the Language teaching methodology courses?

The Language Teacher Education Programme

3. (a) What type of a teacher does your language teacher education programme aim to produce?
   (b) How do you make sure that this aim is achieved in the process of facilitating the course?

Embedding practice in the course

4. (a) What practice-based aspects do the modules you teach have? (Probe: how do you

organize these practice-based tasks during your module?)

(b) How do these components contribute to the overall development of practical skills for your students? (How do they help students integrate theory and practice at that level?)

(c) What is the weighting of the practice-based components against theory in your course/module? Why is this the case?

5. How do you help your students get familiarized with the content that they will teach in secondary school?

6. (a) What overall challenges do you face in integrating theory and practice at module/course level at your institution?

(b) How do you deal with these challenges?

7. What feedback have you received from your students on the challenges they faced when implementing what they learnt at the University in their teaching during TP and after?

8. How do you think the teacher education programmes could be improved to help novice teachers to easily use the skills and knowledge learnt in the University lecture room in their teaching experience?

Teacher beliefs and teacher education

10. (a) To what extent do you consider learners beliefs infacilitating language education

courses?

(b) Explain your answer.

11. How does the programme help the students to confront their beliefs and use the knowledge gained to teach their lessons during TP and beyond?

General comment

12. Do you have anything else to say about the language teacher education programme that your institution offers?

Appendix 7: Interview Guide for Head of Section

AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Interview Guide for Head of Section

Institution: _____

Position: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date:_____

Interviewee's background

1. For how long have you been at this institution?
2. For how long have you been facilitating the Language teaching methodology courses?

The Language Teacher Education Programme

3. (a) What type of a teacher does your language teacher education program aim to produce?
   (b) How do you make sure that this aim is achieved in the process of facilitating the course?
4. I would like to know about the following components of the Language Teacher Education Programmes?
   (a) Content
      i. What type of content are the student teachers given?
      ii. Do you have any content courses that directly address the secondary school content?
      iii. Why is that the case?
   (b) Teaching methodology

i. At what point do they start teaching methodology courses?

ii. Why is that the case?

(c) Teaching practice

i. At what point do the students go for teaching practice?

ii. Any reasons why the students go for TP at that point?

iii. For how long are the student teachers expected to be in the schools?

iv. Why is that the case?

8. In terms of assessment how much does each component contribute to the final grade at the end of the programme?

9. How much weighting should be given to the different components of the programme? Why should this be so?

10. How does the programme prepare student teachers for the realities of the classroom? (probe in terms of: understanding of the learners, the expectations of the teaching profession, understanding of the curriculum, use of the teaching methodologies)

Knowledge transfer of the knowledge gained at the university to the classroom

11. How do you ensure that the student teachers easily use/transfer the knowledge gained from the university lecture rooms in the real situation of the classrooms?

12. (a) What feedback have you received from your students on the challenges they faced when implementing what they learnt at the University in their teaching?

(b) How did you get this feedback from the students?

13. How do you think the programmes could be improved to help novice teachers to easily use the skills and knowledge learnt in the University lecture room in their teaching experience?

Teacher beliefs and teacher education

14. (a) To what extent do you consider learners beliefs in facilitating language education courses?

(b) Explain your answer.

15. How does the programme help the students to confront their beliefs and use the knowledge gained to teach their lessons during TP and beyond?

General comment

16. Do you have anything else to say about the language teacher education programme that your institution offers?

Appendix 8: Interview Guide for TP Coordinator

AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Interview Guide for TP coordinator

Institution: _____

Position: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date:_____

Interviewee's background

1. For how long have you been at this institution?
2. For how long have you been the TP coordinator?
3. What other positions have you held at this institution apart from being TP coordinator?
4. What is your area of expertise?
5. What is your role in the Teacher Education Programme?

Teaching practice

6. (a) At what point do the students go for teaching practice?
   (b) Any reasons why the students go for TP at that point?
7. (a) For how long are the student teachers expected to be in the schools?
   (b) Why is that the case?
8. How are the student teachers allocated to schools for TP?
9. How are the supervisors allocated? (Are the student teachers teaching English for

Example, supervised by lecturers who are experts in English?)

10. How does the institution work with the cooperating teachers?
11. (a) What is the minimum number of supervision per student?
    (b) Why is that the case?
12. In terms of assessment how much does TP contribute to the final grade at the end of the programme?
13. (a) How much weighting do you think should be given to TP?
    (b) Why should this be the case?
14. What feedback have you received from your students on the challenges they faced when implementing what they learnt at the University in their teaching during TP?
12. How do you think the teacher education programmes could be improved to help novice teachers to easily use the skills and knowledge learnt in the University lecture room in their teaching experience?

General comment

13. Do you have anything else to say about the language teacher education programme that your institution offers?

Appendix 9: Interview Guide for Dean and Head of Department

AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Interview Guide for Heads of Department/Deans of Faculty

Institution: _____

Position: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date:_____

Interviewee's background

1. For how long have you been at this institution? _____
2. For how long have you been the Head of Department/Dean of faculty?
3. What other positions have you held at this institution apart from being HOD/Dean?
4. What is your area of expertise?
5. What is your role in the Teacher Education Programme?

Programme Designing

6. I would like to know about how your institution develops programmes.
   (a) What processes do the Faculties/Departments go through to come up with new programmes?
   (b) What guides these processes?
   (c) How does the institution make sure that quality of the programmes is maintained at all times?

Teacher training programme

7. (a) What philosophy guides your teacher training?
   (b) How does the philosophy permeates through the different levels of the programme, from preparation to implementation?

Teaching practice

8. (a) At what point do the students go for teaching practice?
   (b) Any reasons why the students go for TP at that point?
9. (a) For how long are the student teachers expected to be in the schools?
   (b) Why is that the case?
10. (a) In terms of assessment how much does TP contribute to the final grade at the end of the programme?
   (b) Why is that the case?

Knowledge transfer of the knowledge gained at the university to the classroom

11. (a) How does the programme ensure that the student teachers easily use/transfer the knowledge gained from the university lecture rooms in the real situation of the classrooms?
   (b) What challenges does the programme meet in this area (of knowledge transfer)?
   (c) How does the faculty/department resolve this?
12. (a) What feedback have you received from your students on implementing what they learnt at the University in their teaching? (Probe: what challenges do the students report)
   (b) How did you get this feedback from the students?
13. How do you think the programmes could be improved to help novice teachers to easily use the skills and knowledge learnt in the University lecture room in their teaching experience?

Teacher beliefs and teacher education

14. (a) To what extent does your institution consider learners beliefs in designing teacher education programmes?
   (b) Explain your answer.
15. How does the programme help the students to confront their beliefs and use the knowledge gained to teach their lessons during TP and beyond?

General comment

16. Do you have anything else to say about the teacher education programme that your institution offers?

Appendix 10: Interview Guide for Student Teachers

AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Interview guide for student teachers

Programme:_____

Institution:_____

Date of Interview:_____

Level of study:_____

Composition of group:

Males	Females

Status of the members

Status	**number**
Upgrading (qualified primary teachers)	
Generic (school leavers)	

QUESTIONS

1. (a) Would you please describe to me the course you are doing this semester as

part of your English teacher training?

(b) What other courses have you done so far?

(c) What practical activities have you done in your English Methodology courses?

(e) How important do you think these courses/activities are in preparing you for the real teaching in schools during teaching practice and beyond?

2. Do you feel the training you have gone through has equipped you with the necessary skills to teach English in secondary school?

3. (a) In the course of your programme you have done a number of content courses like linguistics, how was that content used in the methodology courses?

(b) How does the content you covered relate to the content you will teach at secondary school?

(c) How would you use that knowledge you gained from the content courses in the teaching of English in schools?

4 (a) What beliefs did you have about English teaching before you went through the courses in the programme?

(b) How have the courses helped you to confront your beliefs and embrace new English teaching approaches?

(c) How do you view English teaching now that you have gone through this Programme?

5. How do you think the programme could be improved in order to help novice teachers to easily transfer knowledge that they gain from the lecture rooms of the college to the real classroom?

6. What general comment do you have about the programme?

Appendix 11: Classroom Observation Form

AN EXPLORATION ON HOW TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MALAWI INTEGRATE THEORY AND PRACTICE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS

OBSERVATION FORM

Preliminary information

School : _____

Class : _____ Time : _____

Module: _____

Number of students: _____

Observer: _____

	CATEGORY
1	CONTENT OF THE LESSSON (What is the content of the lesson?)
2	CONNECTING METHODOLOGY CONTENT WITH SUBJECT CONTENT (Is the teacher trainer connecting the teaching methods content to the subject content?)

3	CONNECTING LECTURE CONTENT TO REAL CLASSROOM SETTING (Is the teacher trainer giving examples from the real classroom setting?
4	UTILIZING STUDENTS EXPERIENCES/BELIEFS (Are the student teachers allowed to share experiences? How are student teacher's experiences used in the course of the lesson?)
5	PACTICAL ACTIVITIES (Are student teachers engaged in any practical activities?)

General comments:

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Appendix 12: RESUME FOR LYDIA LUMBANI KISHINDO

Personal Background

Lydia Kishindo comes from Kachenga Village, Traditional Authority Kalembo in Balaka District. Lydia was born on 3rdNovember, 1979 in Zomba to Paul and Emma Kishindo. She grew up in Zomba and spent most of her young life in Zomba. She is the last born in the family of 2. Lydia is married to Mavuto Trocco Mafuta and together they have a son, Mphatso.

Academic Background

Lydia did her primary school in Zomba, Mponda Primary School in particular. She attended a number of secondary schools including St Mary's Secondary school in Zomba. In 1999 she joined Chancellor College of the University of Malawi as a student in the Faculty of Education and graduated in 2003. Lydia got a Bachelor of Education Degree with credit and her concentration was in English. She rejoined Chancellor College in 2005 in the Department of English, this time for a Master of Arts in Applied linguistics Degree and graduated in 2009.

Work experience

In 2004, Lydia joined the Ministry of Education as a secondary school teacher teaching English at Luchenza Secondary School. In 2006 she joined Mzuzu University as a Staff Associate and moved to the rank of lecturer after obtaining her MA (Applied Linguistics) in 2009. Lydia has been with Mzuzu University since then. She is a language teacher educator. As a member of the academia, Lydia is an active teaching and learning material developer for Open, Distance and eLearning students at Mzuni, a supervisor of students' research, a researcher, a mentor and a trainer.

For the years Lydia has been with Mzuni, she has held a number of positions and she has been a member of a number of committees. Currently, Lydia is the Deputy Dean in the Faculty of Education, a position she is holding for the second time. Lydia has been the Dean of Students and Senate representative on the University Council.

In 2017 she was involved in a project, under the organisation called Oral Traditions Association of Malawi that aimed at safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in Malawi with support from Malawi Commission of UNESCO. From this project she and her colleague produced a book titled *Miyambi ndi Nthano za mChichewa*/*Chichewa Proverbs and Folktales* which was published by Dzuka and was distributed in various libraries in Malawi. In 2016 she and her colleagues published a paper on "an analysis of verbal extensions in Malawian Tonga: Towards Mirror Principle and Templatic Morphology", which was published in the *International Journal of Linguistics*. In 2013/2014 she published a paper in the *Journal of Humanities* titled "the role of Discourse in the Promotion of the Education of the Girl Child in Malawi" which was based on her MA thesis.

Motivation

Her motivation in the field of Education comes from within; from the urge to encourage more young men and women to join and enjoy the teaching profession just as she does.

Future Ambitions

Her future ambitions are to reach the pinnacle of the academic professional ladder and to be one of the female Vice Chancellors in Malawi.