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Curriculum innovations and the 'politics of legitimacy' in
teachers' discourse and practice in a Mozambican primary school

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Education

University of Sussex

September 2016

SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

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Doctor of Education

Curriculum innovations and the 'politics of legitimacy' in teachers' discourse and practice in a Mozambican primary school.

In 2004, Mozambique introduced a new competency-based curriculum framed around the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy. Teachers need to strategically use local languages, traditions and culture to build on what children bring from home and share with their families to bridge the gap between schools and communities.

This study is a qualitative ethnography of the teaching and learning process in one suburban primary school in Mozambique. The aims of the study were to explore teachers' ideas, values, and understanding about the teaching and learning process, and to reflect on how these views, which are manifested in their classroom practices, influenced the implementation of curriculum changes at the classroom level. The study conceptualised the new educational policy in Mozambique as a discourse that has introduced in the field of teachers' practices new pedagogic possibilities and frame of references.

Informal conversations, interviews, and observations of lessons and school dynamics were the main methods used for the process of data collection. Teachers, students, parents and community members participated in the study. Ethnography as methodology offered the possibility to gain multi-layered insights into those contextual, social, and cultural realities around which teachers create meanings for their roles and actions, attribute significance to them, and build relations with students, parents, and community members. Understanding how these realities were represented and reproduced in teachers' discourse and practice was regarded as a precondition to interrogating teachers' interpretations of changes.

The study combined a Bourdieusian sociological analysis of the teaching and learning process with a postcolonial critique. Whereas Bourdieu's tools of field, habitus and capital supported an understanding of the 'whys' behind what is going on at classroom level and the cultural and ideological assumptions underpinning teachers' practices, a postcolonial critique exposed the rules of classification and exclusion underpinning the 'hows' of teachers' pedagogies.

The findings of the study showed that the pedagogic discourse of the new curriculum does not resonate with teachers' understanding of their roles, practices and professional identities. The conception of 'schooling as an extractive process' and the construction of Portuguese as the most important symbolic cultural capital legitimised the process of alienation between schooling and home socialisation and sustained the power relations, determining the separation between in-school and out-of-school languages and knowledges.

If, on the one side, teachers dismissed their responsibility to transform and integrate local knowledges into the official curriculum by constructing themselves as implementers of an educational policy that they did not fully grasp, then on the other side, in the process of making sense of the new curriculum, the socio-cultural values that teachers attached to it were challenging their field positions and maintenance. Teachers maintained their distinction through their 'Portugueseness'. The 'Portuguese-only discourse' was the most dominant 'doxa', taken-for-granted by teachers in their practices, despite the fact that Portuguese as Language of Learning and Teaching was perceived as one of the main challenges for student learning.

The implication of the study relates to the cultural micro-politics of teachers' identities. To attend to the introduction of curriculum changes as a technical matter fails to address the power-relations embedded in the teaching and learning process. The new pedagogic possibilities fostered by the curriculum are not succeeding. Without the re-narrativisation of how teachers think about them in order to build new field positions and meanings that resonate with changes, the reform seems unlikely to succeed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During this last year of writing I have often imagined myself working on this page as a way to envision myself at the end of this challenging but rewarding experience and as an opportunity to thank the people who have been particularly significant in this long journey.

My first *obrigadissima* goes to the school, the students and community members who participated in this ethnographic study and, in particular, to the teachers for having trusted me since the beginning of my fieldwork and for having shared with me their school lives, beliefs and ideas. The data presentation chapter of this thesis has been the most complex for me to write. I felt responsible to do justice to the time and energy that all the respondents dedicated to me as well as in representing as best as I could the complexity of their voices.

At the University of Sussex, first and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my main supervisor, John Pryor, for his constant encouragement and dedication throughout the various stages of this process. He has always pointed me in the right direction to move one-step ahead, to make sense of my data, and to be able to see what the story to be told through this research was really about. I would also like to thank my second supervisor, Jo Westbrook, for her precious comments on this thesis, which further strengthened its internal coherence.

I would like to thank my parents and friends who have left me the time to be 'absent' and dedicate myself to this work, especially, to its final writing stage. In particular, I would like to thank Vittoria, my little niece, who has often been sitting on my side with her drawings, colours, and notebooks, promising in vain not to distract me. She always made me smile.

Last but not least, I want to thank my late uncle, who soon after my undergraduate graduation told me that it was just a beginning and asked me how I was going to continue my studies. I stood in silence as I did not have many answers and I was clearly disagreeing with him at that time. Yet, that conversation came back to me often during this journey. He would have been pleased.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EFA	Education for all
EPC	<i>Escola Primaria Completa</i> Full Primary School
EP1	<i>Ensino Primário do 1º Grau</i> Lower Primary Education (grades 1 to 5)
EP2	<i>Ensino Primário do 2º Grau</i> Upper Primary Education (grades 6 and 7)
DPEC	<i>Direção Provincial de Educação e Cultura</i> Provincial Direction of Education and Culture
FRELIMO	<i>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</i> Liberation front of Mozambique
INDE	<i>Instituto Nacional Desenvolvimento Educação</i> National Institute for Educational Development
INE	<i>Instituto Nacional de Estatística</i> National Statistics Institute
LC	Local Curriculum
LCP	Learner-centred Pedagogy
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MINED	Ministry of Education
MT	Mother Tongue
PCEB	<i>Plano Curricular do Ensino Básico</i> Curricular Plan of Primary Education
RENAMO	<i>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana</i> Mozambique National Resistance
RM	<i>República de Moçambique</i> Republic of Mozambique
SNE	<i>Sistema Nacional de Educação</i> National Education System
SSA	Sub-Saharan African
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas

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Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION

This study is a qualitative ethnography of the teaching and learning process in one suburban primary school in Pemba (Cabo Delgado Province, Northern Mozambique). It explores linkages between teachers' classroom pedagogies, understood as discourse and practice, and wider social and cultural contexts framing their teaching experiences. The study focuses on the socio-cultural co-construction of the teaching and learning process and how teachers' ideas, values and attitudes, manifested in their teaching practices, have implications for pedagogic changes as enunciated and fostered by the *Plano Curricular do Ensino Básico* (PCEB), introduced nationally in 2004 and still referred to as 'the new curriculum'.

This chapter introduces the study by presenting its substantive issues, the rationale, its research questions, definition of key terms, and the structure of the thesis.

1.1 Premises and substantive issues of the study

The chronic misalignment between official education policies and classroom pedagogies in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and other low-income countries, is an uncontested matter in the literature on the implementation of pedagogic changes. Since the 1990s, the growing attention given to the agentive role of teachers in the process of hindering the transformation of classroom pedagogies, despite policy initiatives and objectives, is mirrored in studies investigating what actually goes on at the classroom level and the processes underpinning classroom practices and interactions. The choice to conduct a postcolonial ethnography exploring the cultural discursive co-construction of classroom practices and interactions reflects the attempt to identify the "*dialectical* relations" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.3, original emphasis) existing between culture, teachers' pedagogies, and the implementation of the PCEB, to expose the relations of power that shape and influence teachers' subject positions within the *field of education*, and to filter their process of making meaning of curriculum changes. This kind of research relies on the recognition of the sociocultural situatedness of the teaching and learning process. In this study, teachers' discourses and practices are seen as being situated within context-specific social structures and dominant discourses about the nature of schooling, expectations and values attributed to it, and the roles and relations of different actors involved in this process. The relations of power inscribed in these structures and discourses, internalised by teachers, parents and students, shape teachers' practices, mediate teachers' languages choices, teaching methods and pedagogic strategies, and might "produce competing ways of giving meaning to and constructing subjectivity" (Jackson, 2001, p.386) compared to those enunciated in education policies.

In 2004, Mozambique introduced a new thematic curriculum framed around the principles of *culturally responsive pedagogy* (Instituto Nacional Desenvolvimento Educação, 2003, p.5, hereafter INDE). In the Critical Analytic Study (Alderuccio, 2012), I deconstructed the elements of culturally responsive pedagogy in order to capture the nature of changes – the ‘what’, ‘why’, and ‘how’ – underlining the PCEB. I concluded first, that at the pedagogic level, a curriculum based on culturally responsive pedagogy starts with the premise that there is the need “to consider more robustly the possibilities for curricular interplay between strong ‘everyday’ and ‘specialised’ knowledge” (Zipin, 2013, p.165). Classroom practices should be enriched by drawing on learners’ *funds of knowledge*, defined as those “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll et al., 1992, p.133). Second, traditional teaching and learning processes, through which communities construct their views of learning and pass on to future generations important elements of their culture and everyday life, should also be investigated (Owuor, 2007). This suggests “a need to look for pedagogies in student’s lives outside schools” (Zipin, 2009, p.324) which are referred by Zipin (2009) as those inter-subjective and “interactive ways of knowing (or, ‘funds of pedagogy’)” (p.324, original emphasis). Third, the Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT)¹ is crucial to all aspects of learning and influences strongly classroom practices and teacher-student interactions. When a language that children do not know mediates learning, children lose their references breaking the possibility of building upon the vocabulary they know, the sounds they are used to hear, and the linguistic inputs they receive outside school (Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir, 2004). This situation risks perpetuating rote-learning, in which teachers support choral responses, memorisation and repetition to somehow compensate the gaps in communication due to limited language proficiency of both teachers and students (Arthur, 1996; Chick, 1996).

At ideological level, however, a curriculum based on the principles of culturally responsive pedagogy redefines a set of asymmetrical power relations inscribed in dominant discourses related to what was inherited by colonial educational systems, which finds its main forms of expression in the LoLT and Western supremacy on knowledge production. In SSA societies, after Independence, former colonial European languages, such as English, French, Portuguese², remained after

¹ The term Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) will be employed in this study instead of the term medium of instruction. Arthur (2001) adopts the term LoLT as ‘a reminder’ to suggest more participatory teaching methods in which the active role of learners is recognised. By contrast, the term medium of instruction implies a focus on the technical role of teachers in a ‘traditional’ model of pedagogy, without

² In relation to these languages, the term second language (L2) will be used to indicate their position as official languages and LoLT of African countries, rather than the individual mastering of the language next to the best (Skattum and Brock-Utne, 2009).

independence, the LoLT for economic and political reasons³ (Bunyi, 1999). Policy attempts at replacing colonial languages as LoLT in African schools with African languages⁴ have not been followed by stronger political support to implement the avowed policies (Bunyi, 1999; Arthur, 2001). If on the one side, local languages have been attributed an inferior status in relation to western languages under and after colonialism, on the other hand funds of knowledge are what have been constructed and still regarded as *subjugated knowledge* (Foucault, 1980). Kincheloe and Steinberg (2008, p.145) remind us that,

Viewed in its relationship to the traditional curriculum, subjugated knowledge is employed as a constellation of concepts that challenge the invisible cultural assumptions embedded in all aspects of schooling and knowledge production.

In the specific case of Mozambique, besides a bilingual policy that does not cover the entire country, the mainstream monolingual programme in Portuguese introduced for teachers a new flexible approach on the use of Mozambican languages in school. Teachers are requested to strategically use Mozambican languages and local knowledge in the teaching and learning process to focus on children's needs, build on what children bring from home, and bridge the gap between schools and communities. Overall, curriculum implementation has been seen as weak and filled with contradictions (Sim-Sim, 2010). Portuguese still remains the dominant language at school level, perpetuating (the appearance of) monolingual school settings, in which the majority of children do not understand Portuguese. Teachers' adaptations of the national curriculum to local realities appear to be uncertain (Sim-Sim, 2010). This brings into the picture of classroom pedagogies invisible cultural assumptions on how to educate children in a particular society, on what knowledges, skills and languages children need to master in formal and informal settings, and on appropriate ways for teaching and learning or behaving in a determinate setting. Such beliefs frame possible and impossible patterns of classroom interaction and relationship between teacher and students, community and school (Alexander, 2008) and are closely related to teachers' social and professional identity, considered as "a contextualised sense of self" (Akyeampong and Stephens, 2002, p.262).

Therefore, this study is aimed at understanding the reasons behind the apparent teachers' unchanged behaviours in their classroom practices. It begins with a description of teachers' practices, most recurrent discourses constructing their practices and teacher-students interactions,

³ The biggest exceptions have been where a non-colonial lingua franca has existed, such as Kiswahili in Tanzania. In Tanzania, soon after independence in 1961, President Nyerere advocated the use of Kiswahili, a lingua franca among 113 local languages, as LoLT throughout primary school level (Wedin, 2008).

⁴ African languages in the teaching and learning process will be referred to as first language (L1). The term L1 is considered more precise than the term mother tongue (MT), because children might be bilingual and while MT indicates the language children learn first, L1 indicates the language children master best (Skattum and Brock-Utne, 2009).

then it moves towards a more complex sociocultural understanding of the teaching and learning process, which brings in parents' and students' voices, to uncover and deconstruct the multiple relations and locations of power that 'regulate' classroom pedagogies.

1.2 Rationale for the study

My interest as researcher in the field of curriculum reforms in SSA can be traced back to 2007 when, for the final dissertation of the MA in International Education, I analysed the main trends shaping the efforts of the curriculum reconstruction in post-colonial SSA from the 1960s. The two main trends identified – the vocationalisation of the curriculum for primary education and the introduction of local languages as LoLT – were investigated through a case study of curriculum transformation in Mozambique (Alderuccio, 2010). My progressive shift from understanding the macro level of education policies to investigating teacher classroom discourse and practice relates to both my academic path as a postgraduate student in the International Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD) and my professional experience. Since 2008, I have worked across different provinces in Mozambique mainly with primary teachers. I learned Portuguese language by working with them. My Italian mother tongue facilitated this task. I worked first at the *Universidade Pedagógica* in the monitoring and evaluation of distance-learning teacher-training programmes, and then as coordinator of a project focusing on strengthening school-community connections in the teaching and learning process. Several recurrent topics in teachers' talk revealed a vague understanding of curriculum innovations with a major concern about the new examination system introduced with the PCEB. This was complemented by teachers' claims about a too complex curriculum designed without taking into account the 'reality' of learners, of their classrooms or the context in which they worked. This raised my curiosity in understanding what these realities were which teachers' perceived as hindering their possibilities to translate the curriculum into something relevant to their experiences. I also began to question what (in)visible walls between school and community these realities may have masked.

Moreover, Guthrie (2015) pointed out that in-depth research "within the classroom and on cultural context" (p.166) is a field that should be further investigated. It could provide "a cultural grammar for understanding actors' interpretations of schooling" (p.167) and for re-evaluating those culturally appropriate teaching styles that even if not aligned with intended changes could become "a focus for improvement of the effectiveness of classroom practices" (p.167). While agreeing in general terms with Guthrie's (2015) understanding, my argument focuses on the attempt to move the discussion on the chronic misalignment between policy and practice beyond the focus on learner-centred pedagogy (LCP). Many attempts to reflect on classroom pedagogy in SSA have been through the lens of the introduction of LCP (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008; Schweisfurth, 2011).

Culturally responsive pedagogies have been advocated as a response to the inappropriateness of the pedagogical renewal in SSA based on strict interpretations of a western notion of LCP (Tabulawa, 2003; Zipin, 2013 Guthrie, 2015) and the need to use African languages as LoLT in school to improve teaching and learning.

However, I argue that the focus on LCP does no justice to the complexity of many educational policies that alongside the introduction of LCP and a shift in competency-based curricula transformed other aspects of the curriculum, to complement the (socio)constructivist theory of teaching and learning rooted in LCP. Other changes involved the use of African Languages in the teaching and learning process with the introduction of bilingual education, the localisation of national centralised curricula, or changes in the assessment process. These changes have implications for the pedagogical renewal of classroom practices. I argue that to understand how the interrelation of these changes works in teachers' thought and action "within classrooms and on cultural contexts" (Guthrie, 2015, p.166) would actually build a more complex picture to reflect on teachers' responses to curriculum changes and on the pedagogical renewal of classroom practices. Hence, this work seeks to contribute to knowledge in the complex field of curriculum changes and classroom pedagogies through a comprehensive analysis of how wider social and cultural 'orders' in a specific school setting influence the pedagogical renewal of the teaching and learning process.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What *understandings* do teachers have of the teaching and learning process in one Mozambican primary school?
2. How do these *understandings* articulate with curriculum innovations that aim to facilitate a dialogue between in-school and out-of-school languages and knowledges?

Based on the premises of this study, the first question dealt with teachers' ideas and practices within three different domains of *understandings* in relation to (i) the classroom, (ii) the system/policy, (iii) the cultural/societal (Alexander, 2015) to move from an understanding of what was going on in teachers' classroom practices towards an exploration of teachers' views, values, and attitudes underneath and 'beyond' their practices. It was broken into a set of sub-questions as follows: what teaching practices do teachers employ, and how? What are teachers' discourses accompanying these practices? What are these discourses telling us about types of factors legitimising what is happening? What are the missing discourses that I was expecting based on analysis of the policy? How do these existing and missing discourses position teachers in relation to the community and its socio-cultural background, their students, and their role? The second

question re-positions teachers' discourses and practices within the field of the PCEB to understand what possible or impossible realities they construct and to reconstruct the whole picture of classroom pedagogies and curriculum changes after having deconstructed its parts with the first question.

1.4 Definition of terms

To begin a thesis on the invisible cultural assumptions of the teaching and learning process and the discursive formation of the teaching and learning process, it is imperative to give an accurate definition of the term 'culture' and the use I make of the terms 'discourse' and 'pedagogy'.

1.4.1 Culture

Culture is an intrinsically difficult term to define. Undoubtedly, culture influences the way people see the world and make sense of it. However, to avoid looking at culture as fixed, static, and bounded across generations – meaning that all members of a particular group are the same and believe in the same things without space for negotiating different interpretations – I adopt the understanding that “culture is not only a way of seeing the world, but also a way of making and changing it” (Dirlik, 1987, p.14).

Culture is an activity in which the social relations that are possible but absent, because they have been displaced or rendered impossible [...] by existing social relations, are as fundamental as the relations whose existence it affirms. (Dirlik, 1987, p.15)

This understanding is important to consider culture not as an “alien force ruling over living people” (Dirlik, 1987, p.44) but as an on-going creative process “offering framing *principles* for developing *strategies* to think and act in a certain way” (Grenfell, 2012, p.59, original emphasis). Culture is enacted in the everyday activities of schooling in any specific setting, in the practices of teachers, but also in the religious and economic practices of the community and its children (Coe, 2005).

1.4.2 Discourse

I use the term discourse in the Foucauldian sense: social reality can be seen as the product of discourse and its mechanisms of power and knowledge production. Unspoken rules of inclusion and exclusion regulate the statements that can and cannot be valued or authorised within a discourse. For Foucault, “discourses are about the creation and limitation of possibilities, they are systems of power/knowledge [...] within which we take up subject position” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 128). “To speak is to assume a subject position within discourse and to become *subjected* to the power and regulation of the discourse” (Weedon 1987 quoted in Pennycook, 1994, p.132, original emphasis). In this sense, to look at the discursive formation of the teaching and learning process

means to explore teachers', but also parents' and learners' subject positions within this discourse, the 'rules' regulating this discourse and the relations of power embedded in it.

1.4.3 Pedagogy

This study adopts Alexander's (2001a) definition of pedagogy as both discourse and the act of teaching:

Pedagogy is the domain of discourse with which one needs to engage if one is to make sense of the act of teaching—for discourse and act are interdependent, and there can be no teaching without pedagogy or pedagogy without teaching. (p.513)

This definition pays attention to teachers' values, beliefs, and ideas which accompany and inform the act of teaching, as a prerequisite to understand how teachers teach and why they teach the way they do. These ideas are "culturally loaded" (Alexander, 2015, p.255) and allow locating pedagogy within local, national, institutional, and inter-subjective discourses on the purpose of the teaching and learning process (Alexander, 2001a).

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This study is organised into seven chapters. After this introduction, Chapter 2 outlines from an historical perspective the developments of the education system in Mozambique, with a focus on primary education, from the establishment of Salazar's regime (1928) during the colonial period. The framework of the PCEB is presented in this chapter. Chapter 3 reviews literature on curriculum reforms and teacher classroom practices in SSA. In specific, it considers studies dealing with teachers' understanding of the teaching and learning process and cultural variables and constructs (Alexander, 2015; Clarke, 2003) internalised by teachers and manifested in their practices, which articulate with teachers' interpretations and implementation of changes. The theoretical framework of the study is presented at the end of this chapter. Chapter 4 overviews the methodology of this study and how it shaped its research design, the methods of data collection, and the process of data analyses. Ethnography was identified as the most suitable methodology for this research. Chapter 5 is a layered description of the teaching and learning process. It presents data on teachers' classroom practices and their views about teaching and learning, the school context, their learners and the community. It maps out an initial analysis of the themes that, according to teachers, influence their practices and construct the curriculum as 'un-attainable' within this context, under these conditions, and with these students. Pupils', parents' and community members' points of views counter-narrate or supplement teachers' accounts. Chapter 6 discusses the findings of the study adopting Bourdieu's thinking tools of field, habitus and capital to explore the structures, the principles, and the dialectical relations (Bourdieu, 1977) of the field of education embedded in teachers' discourses and practices. It then explores teachers' field positions through

a postcolonial critique of the socio-cultural construction of the teaching and learning process. Chapter 7 summarises the research findings, reflects on the implications of the study and the methodology adopted, and proposes suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2 – MOZAMBIQUE NATIONAL CONTEXT

This chapter locates my study within the broader Mozambican national context and its multilingual society. The first section provides some background information about Mozambique's location, its demographic and sociolinguistic profile. Data on Cabo Delgado, the province where the study was carried out, are discussed in this chapter comparatively with data on other provinces. The second section outlines developments in the education system in Mozambique from an historical perspective, focusing on primary education since the colonial period. The last section discusses the innovations introduced nationally by the PCEB in 2004.

2.1 Mozambique: location, demography, and languages

The Republic of Mozambique (RM) is located on the eastern coast of Southern Africa with a total area of 799,380 square kilometres. In 2013, the year of this study, its estimated population was 24.3 million based on yearly projections of the 2007 census⁵ (*Instituto Nacional de Estatística*, 2014, hereafter INE). It incorporates 11 provinces in three main regions: Cabo Delgado, Niassa, and Nampula form the Northern region; Zambesia, Tete, Manica, and Sofala are the Central region, Inhambane, Gaza, Maputo Province, Maputo City constitute the Southern region (see Map of Mozambique next page). The capital, Maputo City, counts as one province and hosts 5% of the country's population. The farthest northern province of Cabo Delgado covers 8% of the country's population. Approximately 70% of the population lives in rural areas, 38% concentrated in the two provinces of Nampula and Zambesia (INE, 2014). Despite constant economic growth⁶ from 1997 to 2011, Mozambique is still one of the poorest countries ranking 180 on the Human Development Index in 2015 (UNDP, 2015). The Southern region is the major economic pole of the country; strong disparities across regions and between rural and urban areas exist in terms of access to quality education, health and other services (INE, 2012).

⁵ 20.6 million in the 2007 census (INE, 2009).

⁶ 8% annual national average growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the period between 1997-2011, just three provinces (Maputo province, Inhambane and Tete) exceed it. In terms of GDP per capita, the northern region presented in 2011 a GDP per capita of USD 388, almost three times less than the southern Region (INE, 2012).

Map of Mozambique



Source : <http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/mozambique>

How many languages are spoken in Mozambique is still a complex issue⁷ (Ngunga, 2011). Based on the 2007 national census (INE, 2009), more than 20 Mozambican languages are spoken as mother tongue (MT) by 85.3% of the population from age 5⁸. Emakhuwa is the most widely spoken (25.13%) concentrated in the North, followed by Xichangana (10.15%) in the South, Cisená (7.43%) and Elomwe (6.93%) in the Centre. This shows a fragmented picture where none of these languages cut across the entire country. Emakhuwa, pupils' first language (L1) in the school where this study was undertaken, is spoken as MT by 75% of the population of the region (both in urban areas 65% and rural areas 79%). Portuguese as MT accounts for only 10.7%⁹ of the population of all provinces. Moreover, though 50.4% in 2007 claimed to speak Portuguese as second language (L2), it remains essentially an urban language¹⁰ and is acquired mainly through schooling.

Table 1 breaks this picture down at the provincial level. It considers the percentages of MT speakers of the 16 Mozambican languages introduced as official languages of primary education in comparison with the speakers of Portuguese as MT and L2 in each province. It shows the sociolinguistic diversity of the country at provincial level and that only in 4 provinces do more than 50% of the population speak the same language (Emakhuwa in Cabo Delgado and Nampula; Xitshwa in Inhambane; Xichangana in Gaza). Finally, it is important to observe that in Cabo Delgado only 11% of the urban population¹¹ reported using Portuguese as a language of daily communication. This percentage decreases to 0.9% in rural areas¹² (INE, 2009).

⁷ As Ngunga (2011) observes in studies undertaken since 1975 the answer to this question varied from 9 to 42 languages depending on the purpose of the study, the period when it was carried out, the sources used, and most important the notion of 'language' adopted, whether the study considered or not the level of mutual intelligibility of some languages and worked with language clusters.

⁸ Total Population from age 5 is 16 370 769 (INE, 2009).

⁹ Portuguese as MT was spoken by 1,2% of the population in the 1980 national census and 6% in the 1997 national census (Firmino, 2000).

¹⁰ Only 37% of the rural population compared to 81% of the urban population reported speaking Portuguese (INE, 2009).

¹¹ Total Urban Population from age 5 in Cabo Delgado: 278 660 (INE, 2009).

¹² Total Rural Population from age 5 in Cabo Delgado: 1 028 064 (INE, 2009).

Table 1: Mozambican languages and Portuguese as MT and L2 per province by total population (from age 5)

Region	Province	Province Population from age 5	Mozambican languages spoken as MT ¹³	% Population speaking Mozambican Languages as MT	% Population speaking Portuguese as MT	% Population speaking Portuguese as L2
North	Cabo Delgado	1 306 724	Emakhuwa	67.1	3.4	30.5
			Shimakonde	20		
			Kimwani	6		
	Nampula	3 183 399	Emakhuwa	87.2	8.7	39.4
	Niassa	904 781	Emakhuwa	43.6	6.8	39.6
			Ciyao	37.2		
Cinyanja			10			
Centre	Zambesia	3 021 246	Elomwe	37.1	9.2	43
			Echwabo	23.5		
			Cisena*	8.2		
			Emakhuwa*	2		
	Tete	1 415 977	Cinyanja	46.5	3.2	33.8
			Cinyungwe	27.5		
			Cisena	11.4		
	Manica	1 131 269	Cindau	26.9	5.7	54.2
			Chiwutee	22.6		
			Cisena*	13.3		
			Cinyungwe*	5.40		
	Sofala	1 338 709	Cisena	49.1	13.3	62.9
			Cindau	29.8		
			Echwabo*	3		
	South	Inhambane	1 058 135	Xitshwa	55.8	5.5
Gitonga				16.7		
Cicopi				16.3		
Xichangana*				2.2		
Gaza		1 024 911	Xichangana	87.3	4.8	59.2
			Cicopi	5.6		
Maputo Province		1 025 871	Xichangana*	42.8	27.7	83.9
			Xirhonga	13.3		
			Xitshwa*	4.7		
			Cicopi*	4.1		
Maputo City		959 747	Xichangana*	31.5	42.9	96
	Xirhonga*		9.7			

* Language introduced in other provinces as LoLT, but not introduced in that specific province.

Source: Statistics (INE, 2009); Languages use as LoLT in each province (Ngunga, 2011)

¹³ Other Mozambican languages spoken as MT, not considered for teaching: Kiswahili (Cabo Delgado); Koti (Nampula); Cibalke and Cimanika (Manica) (INE, 2009)

2.2 Historical Development of the Education Sector

Mozambique declared independence from Portugal in 1975, after almost five centuries¹⁴ of colonialism and ten years of armed struggle for Independence (1964–1974). In 1975, the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO) established a one-party state based on socialist-oriented ideologies, under the leadership of the President Samora Machel. Independence was soon followed by a period of civil war (1976–1992) between FRELIMO and the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO), the anti-governmental opposition supported by the white supremacist regimes of Mozambique's neighbours. During the 1980s armed conflict between FRELIMO and RENAMO nearly paralysed the country: the economy collapsed, the infrastructure was destroyed in all sectors, and education went through a period of stagnation (Mouzinho et al., 2002). The collapse of RENAMO's sponsor, the apartheid state in South Africa, opened the dialogue between FRELIMO and RENAMO that led to the establishment of a new constitution based on a multiparty system (November 1990), the signature of the Peace Agreement in October 1992, and the first democratic election won by FRELIMO¹⁵ in 1994. However, recent developments since the contested results of the October 2014 election, confirming FRELIMO as the ruling party, have raised uncertainties about the political situation in Mozambique and fears for the maintenance of peace.

The hierarchical and centralised regime (1928–1962) of the Portuguese dictator Salazar replaced centuries of “highly decentralized and disorganized colonial government” (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983, p.27). The *Regime do Indigenato* formalised with the Colonial Act (1930) the subordination of the majority of the population into the category of *indigena*. In contrast, an insignificant minority of the population gained the status of *assimilados*¹⁶ and obtained legal rights reserved to Portuguese citizens. Colonial social hierarchies and distinctions among groups “shaped and were shaped by

¹⁴ In 1498 Vasco da Gama reached Mozambican Island (northern Mozambique) that became a permanent Portuguese settlement since 1507. Until 1752 the country was administered from Goa as part of Portuguese India. During the first 300 years of nominal rules, Portugal was interested in gaining control over the country for the existence of Gold and Ivory and its strategic position as a trading station in the Indian Ocean. Gold from XVII to XVIII centuries and ivory in XVIII century were the main products exported. Since 1764 began the Slave Exports from Mozambique Island (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983). Isaacman and Isaacman (1983) refer to the XIX century as the “beginning of Mozambique's transformation into an international labour reserve – a phenomenon that continued throughout the colonial period” (p.16). Slaves were sold locally and shipped, among other countries, to Zanzibar, São Thomé, Cuba, and Brazil. The slave trade replaced all the other exportations. In the last decades of XIX century, Portugal faced strong internal oppositions in the north and south of the country and external threats mainly by Great Britain in the central part of the country. Until the beginning of XX century Lisbon could claim nominal control only in the southern half of the country (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983) and attempts to consolidate the colonial rule in the northern region of the country had failed. Hence, “[n]orthern Mozambique was the last region of Portuguese East Africa to be brought under effective of colonial rule” (Alpers, 1984, p.370).

¹⁵ The following elections were held in 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014 all won by FRELIMO.

¹⁶ To read, write, and speak Portuguese fluently were the first requirements to become *assimilados*, as well as having abandoned ‘tribal’ traditions (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983).

the dual Education system” (Errante, 1998, p.285). The population was divided in official government schools (public or private) located in urban areas for *non-natives* (Europeans, Indians and *mulatos*) and *assimilados* and *rudimentary* schools (later on from 1960 known as *schools for adaptation*) for *indigenas*, run by the Catholic Church mainly in rural areas (Errante, 1998). Even before the Salazar regime, however, the presence of Catholic school missions in the northern coast of Mozambique was challenged by a strong Muslim influence regarded by the colonisers as “a barrier to the assimilation of Africans into the Portuguese culture and nation” (Cross, 1987, p.556).

Salazar’s *Estado Novo*, emphasising strong obedience to social hierarchies, saw in the alliance with the Catholic Church an instrument for its ‘civilising mission’. The ‘first’ educational legislation endorsed in Mozambique in 1930 stated that “indigenous instruction would gradually lead the African from a savage to a civilised life” (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983, p.50) by bringing Christian values and Portuguese culture to the *indigenas*. The ideology of the state was presented in textbooks and in sentences such as “In the family, the father rules; in the school, the teacher rules; in the state, the government rules” (Errante, 1998, p.276). Instruction was only in Portuguese in both the systems. Children learned about “the heroic efforts of Portuguese adventurers and richness of Portuguese culture” (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983, p.52). Local traditions and culture were ignored and Mozambican languages banned from school (Cross, 1987). This system resulted in an illiteracy rate of almost 98% at independence (Errante, 1998). Schooling was mainly a mechanism for social control.

The FRELIMO government at independence inherited a racially discriminatory education system, an almost non-existent educational infrastructure, and vast differences in access to education between rural and urban areas and across provinces. Missionary schools were abolished and FRELIMO viewed both colonial and traditional education as equally dangerous in the establishment of the new Mozambican socialist society.

Machel’s speech at the “Second Education and Culture Conference” in 1973 demonstrates the political ideology attached by FRELIMO to traditional education and culture during the struggle for Independence, and maintained after Independence. He condemned the objectives of colonial education that aimed “to strengthen bourgeois oppression [and] depersonalise the Mozambican [...] by living on imported ideas” (Machel, 1973, p.3). FRELIMO also adopted a policy of marginalisation of religious leaders and traditional local authorities for their complicity with the colonial government. Traditional education was regarded as reproducing the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural distinctions supported by the colonial rule and represented obedience to the hierarchical authority of traditional and religious leaders as well as *obscurantism* and *superstition*:

Superstition occupies the place of science [...] science has to win over superstition. In this context [traditional] education aims to transmit traditions transformed in dogmas [...] In order to unite all Mozambican people, beyond traditions and languages, there is the need that in our consciousness the tribe perishes to give birth to the Nation. (Machel, 1973, p.3-4)

Culture, as manifestation of the Government's political ideology served the purpose of national unity. Religion was banned from school teaching. The country's cultural and religious diversity was replaced by standardisation of cultural expressions linked to the political ideology of FRELIMO (Machel, 1978).

Within this context, soon after independence, like many other African countries, FRELIMO opted for maintaining the language of the former colonisers as the official language of the country. "The use and promotion of Mozambican languages was seen as poisonous to the purposes of 'national unity'" (Ngunga, 2011, p.184). Portuguese was regarded as a sort of 'lingua franca' to promote national unity over the geographic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the country. In Education, Portuguese was retained as the only LoLT in schools, and local languages continued to be banned (Ngunga, 2011). Paradoxically this choice resonated with the Salazar's slogan of "one state, one race, one faith, and one civilisation" (Isaacman and Isaacman, 1983, p.39) and excluded almost every Mozambican.

In 1983, the National Educational System (SNE) was established (*República Popular de Moçambique*, 1983, Lei N° 4/83) and Education "was submitted to the project of developing a socialist society" (Castiano, 2005, p.55) in line with FRELIMO's Marxist-Leninist principles. Education was perceived as the main instrument "to create the New Person [...] free from the ideological and political charge of colonial education and negative values of traditional teaching" (Art. 1/c) and 'equipped with' a "national, patriotic, revolutionary consciousness and a scientific vision of the world" (Art. 12). The SNE had the mission to "spread, through education the use of Portuguese language to contribute for the consolidation of the national unity" (Art. 4/f). However, Mozambican languages, culture and history were perceived as the patrimony of the country to be studied and preserved (Art. 5) in order to create a cultural national heritage. This framework highlights among its pedagogical principles the need to promote "a close relation between school and community" (Art. 3/f). It is interesting to observe how this relation is constructed. "School acts as a dynamic centre for the socio-economic and cultural development of the community" (Art. 3/f), and also "receives from the community the necessary orientation to build an education that responds to the needs of edification of a socialist society" (Art. 3/f). Thus community is constructed as the foundation of a society built on socialist values and identity, which school supports to overcome superstition and tribalism at local level by re-centring a new cultural development.

In 1992, the framework of SNE was readjusted (RM, 1992, Lei N° 6/92) and explicit references to the political and ideological orientation of FRELIMO were removed. For the first time, an official document considered the revision of the language policy by acknowledging the need “to promote the progressive introduction of national languages in the education of citizens” (Art. 4), in order to reconstruct a national identity after the civil war and reflect changes in the political, social and economic sphere. In 1990, the INDE presented a study on dropouts, repetitions, and students’ low achievements. Portuguese emerged as “one of the major causes of the poor performance of the pupils in the first years of schooling” (Ngunga, 2011, p.187). Consequentially, from 1993 until 1997 the first experiment in Bilingual Education in lower primary education took place with the selection of two Mozambican languages¹⁷ and the adoption of an early-exit model¹⁸ (Benson, 2000). Despite material, knowledge, and training gaps, the results of this experiment showed evidence that bilingual education could positively influence the teaching and learning process (Benson, 2000).

From 1998, Mozambique undertook a process of curriculum transformation that led to the launch of the PCEB in 2004. For the first time, the revision of the language policy was taken into consideration. The following section draws on official policy documents to present the pedagogical innovations introduced by the PCEB. The following presentation of the ‘macro’ underlying discourses of the new policy aims to create a frame of reference in which teachers’ discourses can be positioned and the micro-politics of the implementation of curriculum transformation can be explored at classroom level.

2.3 The innovations of the ‘New Curriculum’

The old curriculum was perceived as extremely prescriptive and uniform with “insignificant practical relevance or utility” (INDE, 2003, p.15). The lack of flexibility did not allow the adaptation of the curriculum to regional and local needs, nor appreciation of the cultural, historical, and social diversity of the country. The main challenge in the transformation of the curriculum was to promote a more relevant education, understood as the need to:

Form citizens able to contribute to the improvement of their life, the life of their family, of their community and the country within the effort of preserving the national unity, maintain peace and national stability, widening democracy and respecting human rights as well as preserving Mozambican culture. (INDE, 2003, p. 7)

¹⁷ Cinyanja in Tete province (known as Chichewa in Malawi) and Xichangana in Gaza province (known as Xitsonga in South Africa). These two languages were chosen because the neighbouring countries of Malawi and South Africa had already some experience in adopting these languages in the education system (Benson, 2000).

¹⁸ The model adopted was evaluated as problematic because it introduced Portuguese too late (at the end of grade 2), “and tried to transition too soon to an all-Portuguese medium of instruction” by the end of grade 3 (Benson, 2000, p.156).

Within this conception is embedded the new democratisation process of a country that, like other SSA countries since the 1990s, underwent political, social and economic changes moving towards 'political pluralism' (with the multi-party election in the 1990s) and a new 'free-market' economic orientation, although retaining a highly centralised political system (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008). At macro level, the PCEB reflects a country re-evaluating its multicultural and multilingual traditions to redefine national identity after colonialism and civil war (RM, 2006). The Government aimed "to make culture a tool for raising the quality of education, [and] instruction" (RM, 2006, p.90).

Official guidelines for the PCEB overturned the policy on Mozambican languages – banned from school for more than 75 years. Introducing a bilingual policy, 16 Mozambican languages joined Portuguese as legitimate languages of the teaching and learning process. Use of Mozambican languages in the teaching and learning process follows three 'modalities'. The first introduces an early-exit transitional bilingual programme where a Mozambican language (L1) is used as LoLT alongside Portuguese (L2). In the first three years of schooling, students' L1 is the LoLT, while L2 is taught as a subject focusing on listening and communication skills. In the third year, students are introduced to reading and writing in L2, and by the end of the third year L2 becomes the LoLT. From grade 4, children's L1 is maintained as a subject. So far, this model has been introduced only in rural settings and in 2011 the bilingual programme covered 370 schools, involving 1.5% of the learners enrolled in lower primary¹⁹ (Chimbutane, 2013). The second modality maintains a Monolingual Programme in Portuguese that, however, "opens the possibility to use Mozambican languages as tools [of the teaching and learning process], whenever needed" (INDE, 2003, p.7). This study was conducted in a suburban school that adopted this modality. The third modality takes into account urban and heterogeneous linguistic and cultural contexts in which the bilingual model is not applied. A Mozambican language should be introduced as a subject "in order to establish or maintain a contact with the Mozambican culture" (INDE, 2003, p.32). The choice of the language is left with the school. While this last modality refers to the use of Mozambican languages as "a tool for the transmission of cultural values" (INDE, 2003, p.30), the rationale behind the introduction of bilingual education emphasises a pedagogical choice acknowledging that Portuguese "assumes the characteristics of a foreign language" (INDE, 2003, p.7) as most Mozambican children both in urban (84%)²⁰ and rural areas (93%) at home speak a Mozambican language (INE, 2009). Policy documents underline that all children should learn to read and write in their MT, but "the bilingual education programme in the short and medium-term will not be able to cover the whole country" (INDE, 2003, p.32). For this reason, a new flexibility for the use of Mozambican languages is

¹⁹ According to statistics, in 2011 at national level there were a total number of 10 800 lower primary schools and 4 373 183 of students enrolled from grades 1 to 5 (INE, 2014).

²⁰ Children's age 5-14 (INE, 2009).

advocated in the second modality of the monolingual programme to answer the needs of those children who continue learning in a foreign language.

Besides the new language policy, the introduction of the local curriculum (LC) is regarded by policy documents as one of the main innovations of the curriculum (INDE, n.d.). It aims to contextualise the centrally planned curriculum with the integration of topics considered relevant at provincial, district or local level (INDE, 2003). The innovative function of the LC – as enunciated by policy documents – relies on the fact that it brings together the school, the community, teachers and students to design and decide locally on topics to cover 20% of teaching time. The manual developed by the Ministry of Education to support teachers and schools in the collection, organisation and integration of topics of community interest in the ‘official’ curriculum identifies the following areas: culture, history and local economy, moral education, environment, agriculture, health and nutrition, and life skills (INDE, n.d.).

The organisation of the curriculum into three main learning areas (i) Communication and Social Science²¹; (ii) Mathematics and Natural Science²²; and (iii) Practical and technological activities²³ is another innovation of the PCEB (INDE, 2003). English, *Ofício* (Life Skills) and Civil and Moral Education are new subjects introduced in this curriculum. The subjects of each learning area are divided in thematic units – such as *Family*, *School*, *Community*, *The Environment surrounding us*, and *Our Provinces* – to be approached through an interdisciplinary and integrated approach. Teachers should treat the content within each learning area as one, by promoting linkages and practical activities across thematic units to support children to ‘transfer’ and ‘apply’ their skills across different subjects and learning areas. This approach is supported by the introduction of three cycles of learning (*Ciclos de aprendizagem*). The *Ensino Primário do 1º Grau* (EP1)²⁴ represents the first two cycles, Grades 1 and 2 in the first cycle, and Grades 3 to 5 in the second. The *Ensino Primário do 2º Grau* (EP2)²⁵ introduces the third cycle, Grades 6 and 7. Each cycle has its learning objectives and aims to develop specific skills, values and knowledge among pupils. While in the first cycle children will learn to write, read and do basic arithmetic, the 2nd and the 3rd cycle will build on what children have learnt by deepening learners’ knowledge and abilities (INDE, 2003). At the end of each cycle, only in “exceptional cases” might pupils repeat the grade (INDE, 2003, p.29). In justifying semi-automatic promotion, the PCEB emphasises that grade repetition

²¹ Subjects: Portuguese language (grades 1 to 7); Music Education (grades 1 to 7); Social Science (grades 4 to 7); English Language (grades 6 and 7); Civic and Moral Education (grades 6 and 7).

²² Subjects: Maths (grades 1 to 7); Natural Science (grade 3 to 7).

²³ Subjects: *Ofício* (grades 1 to 7); Visual Education (grades 1 to 7); Physical Education (grades 1 to 7).

²⁴ Lower Primary Education.

²⁵ Upper Primary Education.

does not necessarily improve pupils' achievements because they are not given the opportunity to learn at their own pace and progress in the system within their age-group (INDE, 2003).

Overall, the new curriculum implies for teachers a new pedagogic approach and conception of the teaching and learning process. Teachers will need to strategically use local traditions and culture to build on what children already know, and share with their families, to promote relevant education, and bridge the gap between schools and communities (INDE, 2003). This comprehensive approach, at least in theory, will encourage children to transfer and apply the knowledge acquired across a range of topics and disciplines rather than organising it around isolated subjects. The 'transformative' and 'empowering' role given to education also emerges. At the end of their primary education, students have to be able "to be reflexive and creative, that is, to question reality in order to change it for their own benefit and that of their community" (INDE, 2003, p. 21).

To this purpose, the PCEB suggests a new approach based on two interrelated principles: *culturally responsive pedagogy* and *functional communication* (INDE, 2003, p.7). "Through these principles, it is hoped to accommodate and boost the cultural experience and, in the specific case of language, the linguistic knowledge that children bring from home" (INDE, 2003, p.7). Official documents do not explore the articulation of these principles further. However, explicit reference is made to culturally responsive pedagogy as interpreted by Erickson's (1987) theoretical analysis of low achievements and school failures among minority students in the United States. Erickson (1987) constructs culturally responsive pedagogy in terms of "the politics of legitimacy" (p.354) aiming at establishing trust between teachers and students in a context in which teaching and learning is culturally alien to pupils' and communities' background:

If the [...] school is to be perceived as legitimate, the school must earn that perception by its local [...] community. This involves a profound shift in the direction of daily practices and its symbolism, away from hegemonic practices and towards transformative practice. (Erickson, 1987, p.356)

Moreover, functional communication looks at language acquisition as a context-based activity based on children's learning needs. These principles, as enunciated in the policy, recognise the need to re-define school-community relations and the "accountability" of the school towards the community (Serpell, 1993). The improvement of the quality of education and its relevance is to be sought in the profound shift needed for reconciliation between in-school and out-of-school knowledges and languages in order to de-construct the hegemonic culture of schooling. However, while the effort to make curriculum more relevant to children's needs should be acknowledged, analysis of the manual for the development of the LC (INDE, n.d.) raises some questions about the role of traditional knowledge as a precondition for learning.

For instance, the theme *Culture, History and Local Economy* includes integration in the curriculum, among other topics, of traditional songs, dance, games, art, craft, community myths, rituals, and oral literature. The competences that children should develop in approaching the content of oral literature are framed as follows: “Tell/retell legends and tales in local language; say proverbs and riddles in the local language” (INDE, n.d., p.20). However, none of the examples available in the manual to integrate the content of *oral literature* in the official curriculum makes any reference on how this knowledge could be a vehicle for learning in Portuguese classes. It is linked to the subject of Visual Education to “illustrate through visual art the characters of oral literature” (INDE, n.d., p.37). Moreover, in the examples used, traditional songs in local language, proverbs and riddles are integrated in the subject of Music Education “to know local songs [...] to sing traditional songs” (INDE, n.d., p.48). The place of this knowledge in the ‘official’ curriculum seems to (de)conceptualise indigenous knowledge through a binary opposition of the place in the curriculum for oral literature (Visual Education or Music Education) versus the place of Western knowledge in other subjects (Maurial, 1999). Moreover, the pedagogic model that aims to ‘identify’ local dances, ‘sing’ local songs, and ‘name’ local historical places (INDE, n.d.) begs the question of to what extent it really represents a new pedagogical approach and conception of teaching and learning. The operationalisation of these principles and the implementation of these innovations are approached in this study through an exploration of teachers’ discourse and practice.

2.4 Concluding remarks

This chapter has presented the sociolinguistic diversity of the country and reviewed the historical development of the Mozambican education system to contextualise the process of curriculum transformation that led to the launch of the PCEB in 2004 with the aim to make education more relevant and inclusive for the majority of children that begin school without knowing the LoLT. It raises the issue of how the principles and innovations of the new curriculum are operationalised in classroom and compete in redefining teachers’ roles and identities, in relation to the new ‘positions’ attributed to Mozambican languages, community’s and children’s values and knowledges in the teaching and learning process. These are investigated in this study through an exploration of teachers’ discourse and practice.

Chapter 3 – LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to build the complex picture of the multiple relations between culture, classroom pedagogy, and curriculum changes. It is divided into three sections. The first section explores debates on dominant teaching approaches in African classroom in relation to curriculum reforms oriented towards LCP. The second section investigates teachers' cultural beliefs as factors influencing their practices and, in turn, mediating their responses to curriculum changes. It moves the discussion beyond the focus on LCP, taking into account changes that involve the integration of traditional knowledge in national curricula, assessment systems and the use of African languages as LoLT. The third section discusses the theoretical framework of the study and it is divided into two parts. The first part draws on Bourdieu's notions of field, habitus and doxa to create a framework to analyse and locate teachers' cultural beliefs and practices within the structures and processes involved in the socio-cultural construction and (re)production of the teaching and learning process. The notion of teacher identity and subjectivity is presented in this first part. The second part explores how a postcolonial critique opens up the possibility to question the power relations through which teachers 'see' curriculum changes and to "[call] for a major rethinking of given categories and histories, questions assumed and fixed structures, and [bring] a greater sense of the political to the interpretation of social and cultural production" (London, 2006, p.37). Jessop and Penny (1998, p.399) regard "the paucity of teacher voices on the process of making meaning from the curriculum" as the missing frame to understand pedagogical reforms. The focus on teachers' classroom practices takes into account that "teachers have considerable agency to thwart policy objectives, either as a conscious reaction against the reform, or more subtly as a manifestation of their identities, priorities, and perceived limitations" (Schweisfurth, 2011, p.430).

Several types of literature such as peer-reviewed articles, collection of essays, as well as studies reviewing research on learner-centred pedagogies, curriculum innovations, and teaching and learning practices in developing countries, with a particular emphasis on SSA countries, are included in this literature review. Relevant references of articles reviewed have been traced back. The areas of interest of this study are linked to the different components of the pedagogical renewal of curriculum reforms that besides LCP promote bilingual education, the localisation of national centralised curricula, and changes in the assessment process. However, I decided to approach these areas through articles and studies with a focus on teachers' reasoning, ideas and beliefs to maintain a holistic approach to curriculum innovations and pay attention to the relations of power that underpin teachers' classroom pedagogies. For this reason, for instance, I did not focus in detail on specific literature on bilingual education or on the integration of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum, but I have instead reviewed the socio-cultural constructions that might become for teachers a barrier in the implementation of these changes.

3.1 Teachers' classroom practices and curriculum changes

Improving the quality of education in developing countries has received increasing international attention since the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000, representing the reaffirmed commitment of the international community towards the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) (1990). Since then, the notion of relevance has been closely related to the discussion on quality education advocating curriculum reforms that encourage the adaptation of curricula to the needs of children, their families and communities (UNESCO, 2000). Relevance in this context relates to the effort of bridging the gap between what is learned in school and the knowledges, languages, experiences that children bring into classroom. However, quality throughout the EFA process remains a contested terrain and it is still regarded as “a neglected priority in discussions on the post-2015 agenda for education” (Schweisfurth, 2015, p.259). Alexander (2015) underlines that the input-output understanding of quality in the EFA framework defined and measured quality in terms of educational outcomes, rather than paying attention to the *processes* that bring those outcomes. This understanding has left pedagogy for too long outside the discourses of educational quality (Alexander, 2015).

However, pedagogy does matter and what the global EFA framework missed was a stronger focus on the processes of classroom pedagogies to understand what actually makes students' positive learning outcomes happen (Schweisfurth, 2015; Alexander, 2015). Within this global framework, since the 1990s a convergence of themes, such as the case of LCP and a shift towards competency-based rather than content-based curricula, have been observed in curriculum reforms in many developing countries leading to “the growing homogenisation of educational discourse in sub-Saharan Africa” (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008, p.196). Curricula oriented by LCP have been considered at policy level as “an effective antidote” (O'Sullivan, 2004, p.585) to move away from teacher-centred practices – also labelled as formalistic, frontal, or traditional model of teaching – which seem to represent a dominant characteristic of African classes. LCP is regarded “as the pedagogical translation of social constructivism” (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008, p. 200). It was supposed to encourage students' active role as co-constructors of knowledge through task-oriented and problem-solving practices on the premises of less authoritative teachers that would build on what students brings from home – knowledge and language – to arrange participative teaching and learning styles, such as small group work, questioning and discussions, and students-led activities. Hence, the desired pedagogical renewal has been oriented towards improving students' achievement by providing more flexible and engaging learning opportunities and modifying teacher-student modes of interaction (Dembélé and Lefoka, 2007). However, the implementation of curriculum reforms has not always been successful in promoting changes in classroom discourse and practices (Altinyelken, 2010; O'Sullivan, 2004).

Research investigating teachers' practices in SSA shows evidence that "formalism remained consistently resistant to change across some two decades" (Guthrie 2013, p.129). In Botswana, Tabulawa (1997, p.192) "identified banking education as the paradigmatic location of teachers". In this conception of education "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Freire and Ramos, 1996, p.53). Teaching within this paradigm means to view knowledge as an objective collection of facts and information that are organised into disciplines and transmitted in school as subject-bounded content, "independent of time and place" (Giroux, 2011, p.36). Therefore, the role of teachers would be to narrate about an object that becomes for students neutral content to be memorised and repeated passively. As a result, students are presented to the unproblematic objects. How these objects interact in practice with the social, cultural or economic environments where the students come from, or what kind of values and assumptions are embedded in these objects remain unquestioned in this paradigm. Research in other African contexts shows a similar picture with the predominance of whole-class teaching centred "within the teacher's frame of reference" (Ackers and Hardman, 2001, p.251). A study conducted in primary schools in northern Mozambique before the introduction of the new curriculum identifies the three main pupils' activities as listening, waiting and copying (Palme, 1999). Teachers dominated classroom discourse, and pupils' oral participation was limited to repetition of short sentences and answers to closed-questions, which were mainly taken from textbooks and allowed only one correct answer. A more recent ethnographic study focusing on bilingual education in rural settings in southern Mozambique conducted by Chimbutane (2009) shows that even if bilingual education is positively contributing to change patterns of classroom interaction, in both L1 and L2 contexts, teacher-centred routines are still dominant:

Instead of facilitating learning, the teacher functions as a transmitter of knowledge. Pupils' role is to receive knowledge imparted by the teachers and respond to their queries. Little room is given to the pupils for them to express themselves at length and in a creative way, even when they could eventually do so. (p.189)

Chimbutane's (2009) findings seem to echo Bunyi's (1997, p.63) results of a study on classroom discourse and practice in primary schools in Kenya: "regardless of the medium of instruction, discourse in mathematics lessons remained teacher dominated and formulaic". Teachers adopted strategies, such as safe talking, repetition and closed-questions, which "did not require pupils to use language in constructing understandings and making connections in their learning" (Bunyi, 1997, p.63). Undoubtedly, the L2 as LoLT has serious implications in the ritualisation of teachers' practices limiting students' possibilities to participate. However, Chimbutane's (2009) and Bunyi's (1997) findings call for special attention to explore teachers' understandings of the teaching and learning process. On this regard, the findings of a recent review (Westbrook et al., 2013) of research on curriculum, teaching practices, pedagogy, and teacher education suggest that "the

crucial difference in the way teachers practice is not what is done, but how it is done, and this is shaped by how teachers understand the teaching and learning process” (p.38).

Technical issues and material constraints – poor infrastructure, overwhelmed classes, or limited teaching and learning materials – have undoubtedly challenged the ‘transformation’ of teacher practices and the implementation of reforms (Tabulawa, 1997; O’Sullivan, 2004). However, the review of the following body of literature suggests that conditions of scarcity surrounding teachers’ daily teaching routines and experiences in many SSA countries should not lead towards an underestimation of the pedagogic tradition that exists in these countries (Barrett, 2007). Akyeampong et al. (2006) suggest that whole-class teaching – deeply rooted in Ghanaian classroom culture – should not be judged just as an ineffective approach compared to small-group and individualised problem-solving instruction. Whole-class teaching, small groups or individualised instruction “need to be validated in teacher development activities and enter as equally important and relevant components into classroom instruction” (Akyeampong et al., 2006, pp.172-173). This intervention in the debate is important to underline also that how teachers’ current practices are valued and interpreted will influence the actions that will be designed to address teachers’ professional development (Akyeampong et al., 2006).

Tabulawa (1997) conceptualised the introduction of LCP in SSA as a paradigm shift in which teachers are required to “change their views of the nature of knowledge, of the learner and his/her role, and of classroom organisation in general” (p.192). These views have implications for changes and are strongly influenced by those social and cultural contexts in which they emerge. Hence, this shift “necessarily calls for the disintegration of the reigning paradigm, thus of the practitioner’s taken-for-granted classroom worlds” (Tabulawa, 1997, p.192). On the same line of argument, Guthrie (2013, p.121) argues that rather than replacing teachers’ “culturally intuitive teaching style”, there is the need to work “within the constraints of formalistic systems to improve the quality of formalism” (Guthrie, 2013, p.136). Tabulawa’s (1997; 2003; 2004) and Guthrie’s (2013) views are undoubtedly important in the discussion. They pay attention to teachers’ taken-for-granted assumptions underpinning their classroom practices, to the contextually-based nature of the teaching and learning process, and how cultural, social and institutional contexts in which teachers and students interact have an impact on changes. However, the emphasis on teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogies as “diametrically opposed” (Tabulawa, 1997, p.191) pedagogic paradigms “informed by distinctive and incompatible epistemologies” (Guthrie, 2013, p.122) has been criticised by other participants in the discussion (e.g. Croft, 2002; Barrett, 2007). It oversimplifies the discussion on teachers’ practices and their pedagogic strategies (Barrett, 2007).

Croft (2002) invites to conceptualise learner-centred and teacher-centred pedagogies as “opposite ends of a continuum in practice, although theoretically belonging to different worldviews” (p.322). Croft (2002) shows how primary teachers in three schools in Malawi adopted elements of local culture in their practices, such as songs, to respond to students’ learning needs and conditions of paucity in which their lessons took place. Barrett’s (2007, p.292) study in primary schools in Tanzania shows that “teachers’ values and ideas regarding teaching and learning and their efforts to put these into practice warrant the recognition that their ‘pedagogic palette’ is mixed”. Teachers’ practices integrated some constructivist elements within whole-class teaching and related them to pedagogical values of non-formal Tanzanian traditional education, such as riddle games and the use of proverbs (Barrett, 2007). Vavrus’ (2009) ethnographic study of a teacher training college in Tanzania explores the notion of *contingent constructivism* as the combination of constructivist approaches and traditional teaching methods that “adapts to the material conditions of teaching, the local traditions of teaching, and the cultural politics of teaching in Africa, and beyond” (p.310).

In this regard, a recent debate in the *Southern African Review of Education* is worth attention. Hugo and Wedekind (2013a) draw on Basil Bernstein’s (2000) conceptualisation of pedagogy under performance and competence models, which however provides a binary understanding of pedagogic practices, to formulate the presence of pedagogy fallacy. They argue that “[i]n developing countries the first key issue to deal with is whether there is any teaching going on, and then what type of teaching” (Hugo and Wedekind, 2013a, p.151). If pedagogy is absent and starts from ‘zero’, the efforts for shifting teachers’ practices from teacher-centred routines (broadly speaking, performance model of pedagogy) to learner-centred instruction (broadly speaking, competence model) would be in vain. Zipin (2013) criticised vehemently the deficit view of teachers and teaching practices embedded in the ‘zero pedagogy perspective’. It fails to acknowledge the power of everyday knowledges brought to school by teachers and students “on which they can draw to get started and build learning momentum, even in very bleak conditions of material [...] deprivation” (Zipin, 2013, p.159). While agreeing with Zipin’s understanding, Hugo and Wedekind (2013b, p.173) underline that,

in no way does this qualify them as teachers. What does qualify them as teachers is precisely the specialisation of their consciousness and practice into the logics and forms of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

In this reply, Hugo and Wedekind (2013b) restate a deficit conception of teachers’ practices and give priority to the idea of teaching as an act (Alexander, 2015). It focuses on principles of pedagogy acquired by teachers through training programmes that can be applied as a set of ‘best practices’, independent from the context and reality in which they are adopted. Hugo’s and Wedekind’s (2013a) analysis does not say anything “on what aspects of their teaching should their training concentrate, and why?” (Alexander, 2015, p.254). As Guthrie (2015, p.165) observes,

“[z]ero pedagogy was blind to traditional cultures and their cultural explanations of education and its processes”. This view is particularly evident in Hugo’s and Wedekind’s (2013b) conception of the interplay of everyday knowledge and specialised knowledge of the official curriculum. The integration of ‘everyday’ knowledge into the curriculum seems to be seen just on the backdrop of ‘specialised’ knowledge and exclusively dependent on teachers’ technical “ability to analyse when the conceptual integration works and when it does not” (Hugo and Wedekind, 2013b, p.175). Within this framework, without dismissing the importance of training, the need would be “to understand teachers’ un-transformed behaviour first” (Johnson et al., 2000, p.180).

The major conclusions that can be traced from this section relates to the fact that dismissing dominant teaching approaches in African classrooms would narrow the range of possibilities for pedagogical changes by ignoring how social and cultural contexts influence changes (Akyeampong et al., 2006). If as Guthrie (2013, p.132) asserts “teaching is a cultural act”, local contexts and cultural factors have to be taken into account to understand how they influence teachers’ beliefs, values, attitudes, their implicit or explicit theories of teaching and learning, and in turn their practices, and why despite outlined curriculum changes, teachers’ teaching practices seem to have remained un-transformed.

3.2 Culture and pedagogy: teachers’ beliefs and ideas

Alexander (2015) identified three different domains to explore the notion of *teaching as ideas*. The first domain is the classroom as the site to investigate teachers’ attitudes towards their students, ideas about teaching and learning, and the curriculum. This domain deals with what “*enable[s]* teaching on a day to day basis” in a specific context (Alexander, 2015, p.255, original emphasis). The second domain is the system that expresses itself in the school as an institution endorsing the prescribed policy. This domain engages with teachers’ ideas about the policy and institutional frameworks that “*formalise* or *legitimise* teaching” (p.255, original emphasis). The larger sociocultural context is the third domain; it informs both the classroom and the system, and “*locate[s]* teaching” (p.255, original emphasis) and teachers’ values within those requirements, expectations and aspirations that a whole society ascribes to education. It means to deal with culture, self and history. Investigating these three domains illuminates those cultural variables (Alexander, 2015) or cultural constructs (Clarke, 2003) that “shape, breathe life and meaning” (Alexander, 2015, p.255) to teachers’ pedagogical practices and might become a barrier to the propositions of curriculum innovations (Clarke, 2003).

A cultural variable often-cited as a factor mediating classroom pedagogy relates to how the relationship of hierarchy and authority are structured at the level of society and renegotiated in classroom. In a culture that respects the authority of the adults, students are expected to obey the

authority of their teachers as an expression of respect and reproduction of “their traditional relationship towards elders” (Tabulawa, 1998, p.264). Tabulawa (1997) traces teachers’ authoritative position in Botswana back to both colonial missionary education and Tswana social structures, which inform traditional education. The bureaucratic-authoritarian model of schooling imported by missionaries based on the transmission-reception of religious knowledge could be seen as being “habitualised, routinised and institutionalised into a tradition” (Tabulawa, 1997, p.194). At the same time, Tswana traditional education reproduces and maintains adult-child relations based on a rigid and hierarchical structure (Tabulawa, 1997). Hence, while in some traditional African societies maintaining the distance between teachers and students might be regarded as culturally appropriate, Barrett (2007) shows another interesting insight. Those teachers confident enough to take their authority for granted “find it easier to ‘make contact’ with pupils” (p.287). On the contrary, teachers’ uncertainty towards their teaching abilities “work[s] at distancing themselves from their pupils in order to exaggerate their authority” (Barrett, 2007, p.287). Problematising the issue of hierarchy and authority and looking at its historical or cultural roots means to address how students themselves contribute to teacher-centred routines (Tabulawa, 2004). ‘Teacher-centredness’ is perceived as a negotiated co-construction “resulting from students and teachers exercising power (within the limits of the constraints set by their context) on each other” (Tabulawa, 2004, p.60). In the co-construction of teachers’ practices, from students’ points of view, while teachers might be expected to own the knowledge that will be passed to them, students’ expectation would be to receive explicit instructions rather than taking independent decisions through discovery methods (Vavrus, 2009). This means that the active involvement of children as co-investigators may open dilemmas in teacher-student relationship by delegitimising teachers’ knowledge and authority. Moreover, the emphasis on developing students’ critical skills “encourages children to question adults, to analyse and to explore” (O’Sullivan, 2004, p.596), while at the same time clashing with culturally and socially constructed roles of teachers and students. In the same line of argument, Clarke (2003) in a study of teacher thinking and actions in India found out that the cultural construct labelled as a hierarchical social framework limited teachers from “fully appropriating the concept of going down to the child’s level, their prior knowledge, interests and needs” (p.36). To draw on children’s knowledge means to validate students’ cultural baggage.

This raises also concerns on the localisation of curriculum. Shizha (2007) reports about teachers’ insights on the incorporation of indigenous science in primary schools in Zimbabwe. Indigenous knowledge for teachers “had no place in the teaching of science” (p.311). Teachers delegitimise its use based on the social construction of Western science as superior compared to indigenous knowledge. The other side of the coin highlights that “for them English and Western science are inseparable; English is the language of science” (Shizha, 2007, p.312). Western science and the English language are constructed as more valuable resources for a ‘global labour market’ (Shizha,

2007). Chick's (2002) ethnographic study in six South African primary schools identified an English-only discourse to signal the dominant characteristic of teachers' language-choice: code-switching from English to Zulu was largely not permitted in the classroom, while it was allowed in the playground. "Viewed as an ideological strategy, such discourse *naturalises* the use of English in prestigious domains" (Chick, 2002, p.470, original emphasis). Despite the fact that policy encouraged the use of South African languages in the teaching and learning process, teachers negotiated their identities in school within an English-only discourse. However, the ideological assumptions underpinning this discourse – such as English as the language of national unity and improvement of economic conditions – were taken for granted by teachers.

Gerdes (1988, p.141) explains it in terms of "cultural conscientization of future [...] teachers" to underline that teachers will draw on local knowledge only if they understand its pedagogic and 'scientific' values. This means that teachers will have to recognise not only the positive impact that Indigenous knowledge and language can have on children's learning, but they have to also validate them as valuable cultural capitals. Language and traditional knowledge can play an active part in the teaching and learning process only if they resonate with the logic of the field as constructed by teachers and society. Similarly, in rural Mozambique Cortesão's and Cuale's (2011) article draws on the notes of one primary teacher (Cuale) who participated in a project aimed to prepare a group of teachers to evaluate the new curriculum. The article explores how different positions co-existed among teachers, community and local authorities in addressing the cultural contradictions of the implementation of the new curriculum. The new values attributed to language and local knowledge in the curriculum in some circumstances "are felt (suffered) as wrong, even dangerous and threatening [...] by some teachers (dethroned from the role of sole guardians of knowledge)" (Cortesão and Cuale, 2011, p.127).

O'Sullivan (2004, p.594) argues that "learner-centred approaches can only be successfully applied if the contribution of the learner in the development of knowledge is acknowledged". In this regard, Chick (2002) in the above mentioned study reflects on how teachers' understanding of learners' social identities had an impact on the methods used. Teachers regarded group work as effective "when there is something to construct or when the learners have relevant knowledge" (Chick, 2002, p.475). Tabulawa (2004, p.68) also observes that teachers linked "in a somewhat causal relationship" students' poor knowledge of English as the LoLT in Botswana, their rural background and the inappropriateness of using learner-centred approach. A deficit view of students in terms of their social, cultural, or linguistic background may create low expectations on students, and "dismiss students who do not fit our prototype of a 'bright' student" (Sternberg, 2007, p.18). "Students may be cognitively and emotionally in very different places" compared to where teachers expect them to be (Sternberg, 2007, p.18). On the one hand, the construction of students' identities

as “language deficient and/or rebellious and/or unmannerly” (Chick, 2002, p.476) “sustain[s] the myth that learning is essentially an individual matter” (Chick, 2002, p.473). This brings in the notion of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1998) as some students depending on their social background might be seen as having more opportunities for succeeding in the educational system. On the other hand, Tabulawa (2004) suggests that a deficit view of students constructs teachers’ “responsibility in therapeutic terms: ‘My duty is to mould students into responsible citizens’” (p.68). Teachers’ control of classroom discourse within therapeutic terms is justified by their perceived need to ‘improve’ their students’ social status, but also from students’ internalisation of “their own perceived deficit status” (Tabulawa, 2004, p.68). This would lead both teachers and students to mutually exercise power on each other, but also to maintain and reproduce a pre-existing order (Bourdieu, 1998) in terms of hierarchy and authority, as observed in the beginning of this section.

Another critical point might emerge if underestimating “the significance of the alignment between the curriculum and forms of assessment” (Westbrook et al., 2013, p.28). Teachers’ implementation of curricula is challenged when the new pedagogic approach is not followed by changes in the examination system, which remains centralised and rigid (Westbrook et al., 2013). On the other side, Pryor and Lubisi (2002) explore the case of Curriculum 2005 in South Africa, which introduced a formative function of assessment, through formal and informal continuous assessment, alongside the ‘regular’ summative function. However, assessment as a form of social control with sorting purposes was still evident in teachers’ ideas influencing teachers’ understanding and use of assessment. Moreover, the conceptualisation of assessment as “formal collection of evidence” (Pryor and Lubisi, 2002, p.679) risked transforming continuous assessment into a “bureaucratic rather than an educational process” (p.679). Their findings recommend engaging with teachers’ current understandings of assessment “to reconceptualise the purposes and functions of assessment” (Pryor and Lubisi, 2002, p. 684). Moreover, Shizha (2007) mentioned the ‘pressure’ of national examinations felt by teachers as a barrier for integrating Indigenous language or content linked to indigenous science as examinations will not take them into account.

These studies into teachers’ reasoning, cultural and ‘structural’ variables show how “teaching cultures are contextually bounded and complex” (Akyeampong et al., 2006, p.160). The above discussion, although not exhaustive, revealed how teachers respond to changes based on the cultural and linguistic baggage that they bring to their practices. It introduced the issue of how socially and culturally constructed relations of power have implications for teachers’ practices and influence their appropriation of curriculum changes. Possible conflicts and tensions relate not only to socially accepted views of adults and children relations and behaviours, but also to how the social identity that teachers construct for their students and for themselves seem to legitimise their actions in class. Some of the studies reviewed, explicitly or implicitly, made reference to the work of

Pierre Bourdieu in observing how schools produce and reproduce certain relations of power and social or professional identities through some sort of habitus internalised by teachers and contributing to teachers' discourses or practices. The following section presents the theoretical framework of this study by drawing first on Pierre Bourdieu's accounts of the processes underpinning 'the field of education' and then on a postcolonial critique of the structures and power relations constituting this field.

3.3 Thinking with theory

3.3.1 Policy as a competing discourse in the *field* of Education

To perceive the teaching and learning process as socially and culturally constructed means to acknowledge that the views, values, and attitudes of all the agents involved in this study – teachers, students and parents – contribute to the co-construction of pedagogical practice and discourse. Applying Bourdieu's lens to a socio-cultural co-construction of the teaching and learning process means to acknowledge that the co-construction is not simply the result of social interactions among teachers, students, parents and their views and beliefs – mediated by language, culture, or the context – but it is also the product of dialectical relations (Bourdieu, 1977) between subjective points of view and objective structures of the field in which these views, values, and beliefs are generated. For Bourdieu a field is "a system of relations among the constitutive elements of a totality" (Bourdieu and Zanotti-Karp, 1968, p.700) and points of view are:

[...] views taken from a certain point, that is, from a determinate position within social space. And [...] there will be different or even antagonistic points of view, [...] since the vision that every agent has of the space depends on his or her position in that space. (Bourdieu, 1989, p.18)

Objective structures can be regarded as pre-existing principles of construction and legitimation, located in a specific time and space, "independent of the consciousness and will of agents, which are capable of guiding and constraining their practices or their representations" (Bourdieu, 1989, p.14). These structures influence teachers', parents' and students' habitus as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.72). However, habitus will differ depending on the position that each agent occupies in a determinate social space, it will mediate between field structures and field practices by retranslating the field structures into a meaningful system of preferences and dispositions, which encompass beliefs, attitudes, ideas, and actions (Bourdieu, 1998). Within this framework, Bourdieu's (1989) relational mode of thinking supports this study in focusing on "the system of circular relations, which unite *structures* and *practices*, through the mediation of habitus, qua products of the structures, producers of practices and reproducers of structures" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.203, original emphasis). In doing so it would be possible to explore the complex

network of relations *structured in* and *structuring* teachers' strategies in the field of practices and the mechanisms of power covertly or overtly realised in them.

Following from this, the study builds on the idea that education policies can be understood as ideological and cultural discourses (Hornberger, 2000; Jessop and Penny, 1998) entering the field of education and carrying with them a different set of ideological assumptions and values, which compete to redefine *practices* of the field, principles of action and relationships of power. Teachers might use "counter discourses that have implicit in them quite different assumptions" (Chick, 2002, p.464) compared to the discourse of the reform. If we consider teachers' dispositions as a 'sense of the game', the strategies used by teachers can be understood as "the product of a practical sense, of a particular social game" (Lamaison and Bourdieu, 1986, p.112). Teachers, as good players of the game, will select those pedagogical approaches and strategies based on what they believe will be more effective or relevant in the context in which their work. Teaching strategies in these terms can be seen as "a sense of the game that leads one to 'choose' the best possible match" (Lamaison and Bourdieu, 1986, p.113). However, it would mean that when teachers adapt their 'sense of the game' to the new curriculum, their adaptations are created within the limits and constraints of an established order or "school-specific doxa" (Atkinson W., 2011, p.342) that "tends to produce (to very different degrees and with very different means) the naturalization of its own arbitrariness" (Bourdieu, 1977, p.164).

To elaborate on this, curriculum reforms can be seen as opening "a struggle between orthodoxy and heterodoxy" (Atkinson W., 2011, p.343). A school-specific doxa (Atkinson W., 2011) endorsed by teachers in the field of practices encounters what might be perceived as a 'heterodox' discourse with *competing possibles* (Bourdieu, 1977), values and assumptions that might not resonate with the perceived logic of the field. Teachers might acknowledge different versions of their classroom realities and interactions, but only one dominant version (orthodoxy) will be recognised as 'correct' or 'possible' (Nolan, 2011). Failing to acknowledge teachers' agency in the process of making meaning of curriculum changes would mean to replace one school-specific doxa with another policy-specific doxa without acknowledging how multiple and 'possible' classroom realities might co-exist (heterodoxy) beginning with a better understanding of teachers' positions in the field and the processes (cultural, social, historical, generational, economic, and so on) that structured them.

Research with a focus on teacher thinking and actions brings into question the notion of identity. Akyeampong and Stephens (2002, p.262) refer to the notion of identity as "a contextualised sense of self—one which is often in tension with an external and professional sense of self, constrained by culture, context and circumstance". In postmodern terms, identity is not a unitary and fixed concept, but it is negotiated, contested and re-negotiated by individuals through their own

experiences. Professional identity is about how teachers as individual and professionals see themselves, but it also involves how students and parents (and other actors of the education system) view teachers. Welmond (2002, p.43) observes that “teacher identity [...] determines how teachers’ successes or effectiveness will be judged. In a given society, contradictory criteria will invariably be used to make these judgments”. Hence, it deals with what it means to be a teacher in a given society, what understandings teachers hold about their roles and responsibilities in relation to proposed curriculum changes, but also how religious, linguistic, national or ethnic identities are ‘lenses’ that constitute and construct multifaceted identities. Santos (2002, p.20) defines identity in the postcolonial Portuguese time-space as:

the product of mirror games among entities that, due to contingent reasons, define relations amongst themselves as relations of difference and ascribe relevance to such relationships [...] Whoever has the power to state difference, has the power to declare that difference superior to the other differences reflected in its mirror.

The idea of identity based on relations of difference can be further explored with Bourdieu’s (1998) notion of distinction. Distinction “is nothing other than *difference*, a gap, a distinctive feature, in short, a *relational property* existing only in and through its relation with other properties” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 6, original emphasis). The use of a postcolonial critique calls for an understanding of what distinctive signs (Bourdieu, 1998) teachers’ sociocultural located sense of self recognise, what kinds of differential relations these distinctive signs bring with them, what they include or exclude, and perhaps, most importantly, what symbolic power teachers attach to these distinctive signs and their relations. In other words, to look at identity in these terms means to deconstruct the structures shaping the meanings attached to what it means to be a teacher in a given society. Welmond (2002, p.43) identified four cultural schemata dealing with the characteristics of a “teacher-identity landscape” of primary teachers in Benin. However, “according to most actors, most teachers are illegitimate. [...] They are accused of not attending to the responsibilities associated with any of the four schemata” (Welmond, 2002, p.55). This analysis is relevant because it shows cultural schemata as socially positioned in relation to the strategies that teachers put in place to gain a status and *navigate* within the multiple dimensions of a teacher-identity landscape. Moreover, Barrett’s (2008, p.506) findings of a study on primary teacher identities in Tanzania reveal “how younger teachers refer to older models of teacher identity. So, whilst teacher identity is not homogenous or static, it does have a memory”. Hence, if policy discourse reconstructs a new definition of teacher identity, it “will inevitably compete with [...] historically grounded and widely accepted notions of teacher rights and responsibilities” (Welmond, 2002, p.60). In these terms, however, as observed by Barrett (2008, p.505) “it should also be possible to introduce innovation with a sense of deference that simultaneously respects how teachers construct their identity now and has an expectation of what can be realised in the future”.

3.3.2 The coloniality of schooling: towards a postcolonial critique

Postcolonial theory in social science is concerned with an understanding of the legacy and effects of colonialism on cultures and societies, on institutions and individual as well as on discourses and disciplines (Ashcroft et al., 2007). However, the term postcolonialism has been highly contested and discussed from scholars from different disciplines and perspectives (Loomba, 2005; Kanu, 2006; Rizvi et al., 2006). According to Hulme (1995, p.120):

If 'postcolonial' is a useful word, then it refers to a process of disengagement from the whole colonial syndrome, which takes many forms [...] 'postcolonial' is (or should be) a descriptive, not an evaluative, term.

Hence, postcolonialism as a *process of disengagement* attempts to challenge the epistemological and ontological nature of how colonialism has been studied and understood in the past (Tikly, 1999). The study of colonialism has been shaped and fixed by binary oppositions – such as coloniser/colonised, centre/periphery, Western knowledge/Indigenous knowledge, Western world/Third world (Tikly, 1999). This dichotomous interpretation of reality defines “the degree [...] to which each [pole of the opposition] has to be understood discursively” (Hall, 1996, p.253) with one pole always superior to the other. In postcolonial theory, this understanding of colonialism is replaced by more complex views of how the colonial experience influenced the formation of identities and subjectivities, the relationships between coloniser/colonised, and the definitions of culture, ideology, and language (Hall, 1996; Loomba, 2005).

Naming the world as 'post-colonial' is, from indigenous perspectives, to name colonialism as finished business [...] There is rather compelling evidence that in fact this has not occurred [...] the institutions and legacy of colonialism have remained. (Smith, 1999, p.98)

In this sense, the 'post' in postcolonial cannot simply refer to an historical temporal dimension related to the period and developments after colonialism. Rather, postcolonial “is a continuing process of contestation and reconstruction fueled by the desire to escape from dominant-cultural discursive practices that limit the possibility of self-affirmation” (Kanu, 2006, p.25). As a consequence, postcoloniality could be seen as an aspiration “to see beyond [...] the dominance of Western knowledge, cultural production, representation, and dissemination” (Kanu, 2006, p.8). If postcolonialism is seen as a critical dimension (Hulme, 1995) and an oppositional stance (Loomba, 2005), it could be used as a lens through which it is possible to question the rules and multiple legacies of colonialism, in terms of its cultural, social or economic and political effects, in both formerly colonised and colonising countries (Loomba, 2005).

In educational research, postcolonialism shows how power, discourses, and identities are strongly ingrained in the socio-cultural construction of schooling and practices. It pays attention to the fact that schools “as sites of struggle between competing discourses” (Chick, 2002, p.463) are part of the legacy with the colonial power (Coe, 2005) and are not immune by the influence of colonialism

“as a ‘civilising mission’ manifesting as legitimate school knowledge and practice” (Kanu, 2006, p.9). The western supremacy on knowledge production and on the legitimation of what is truth – and therefore worth to be included in the curricula – ignored indigenous and local forms of knowledges in society and in the education system. These knowledges are classified “as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated [...] located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity” (Foucault, 1980, p.82). At the same time, local languages have been also attributed an inferior status in relation to western languages under and after colonialism. Hegemonic discourses on the process of knowledge selection in school, teaching and learning approaches and patterns of language interaction in school not only influence practices, but in turn shape meanings, values, and individual and social relationships. Hence, the notion of “coloniality of power” (Quijano, 1999) described by Mignolo (2000 p.13) as “an energy and a machinery to transform differences in values” that relies on “the colonial difference as its condition of possibility” (p.13) can be borrowed to reflect on the coloniality of schooling in terms of its colonial legacy. The coloniality of schooling as a discourse based on differential values attributed to school and community knowledges and languages, in which a particular view of schooling is taken forward within “existing cultural and linguistic identities and the particular versions of modernity for which the school is a carrier” (Palme, 1999, p.267), might open dilemmas and tensions with the competing discourses brought by the new curriculum.

To apply this ‘combined’ lens to analyse the data of this research and theorise its findings was an ‘experiment’ to move beyond what has been considered as the ‘bleakness’ of Bourdieu’s vision, that is “symbolic power saturates consciousness and remains uncontested” (Saxena and Martin-Jones, 2013, p.290). I intended a postcolonial critique also as a space for the re-narrativisation of the teaching and learning process starting from teachers’ perspectives, in order to include, in the discussion on teachers’ practices and curriculum changes, teachers’ epistemological beliefs on the nature of the teaching and learning process. However, how this framework and a postcolonial critique worked in practice and what it implied in terms of re-narrativisation of the teaching and learning process and relations with participants is an argument of discussion in the final Chapter 7.

3.4 Concluding remarks

When teachers ‘receive’ the curriculum, as a selection and organisation of the larger society’s values and ideas, they “are themselves already located somewhere in relation to it [...] as members of one or another cultural group” (Alexander, 2001b, p.164). Curriculum can be seen as “a series of *translations*, *transpositions* and *transformations* from its initial status” (Alexander, 2001b, p.552, original emphasis). The agentive role of teachers in the process of translating and transforming curriculum is explored in studies with a focus on classroom practices as a

fundamental “unit of analysis for understanding education, curriculum and pedagogy” (Kanu, 2006, p.6). Therefore, this chapter reviewed education debates on curriculum changes and teachers’ classroom practices. Specifically, it focused on studies of classroom discourse and practice, mainly in SSA, in order to pay attention to teachers’ reasoning behind their practices and curriculum changes’ interpretations. This understanding investigates teachers’ classroom practices as culturally and socially positioned within a complex network of relations, structures and discourses. Identity has been seen as a construct that deals with “the cultural politics of difference, and it has direct connections with ideas about the way individuals think of themselves and others” (London, 2006, p.44) as well as implications in teachers’ interpretations and re-negotiations of changes. The final part presented the theoretical framework of this study. It introduced Bourdieu’s (1998) concepts of field and habitus, which are used to make sense of data collected by this study and explore the structures of the teaching and learning process, in combination with the adoption of a postcolonial critique, and the possibilities that this critique might open in de-constructing the structures of unequal relations, practices and discourses embedded in teachers’ interpretations and implementation of changes.

Chapter 4 – METHODOLOGY and METHODS

4.1 Introduction

Dunne et al. (2005) claim that methodology “can be seen as the study of, or a theory of, the way that methods are used” (p.163). Pryor and Ampiah (2004) conceptualise methodology as a “rubber sheet, which is constantly being stretched and shaped by pulling from [...] three directions” (p.161): the researcher’s epistemological and ontological assumptions about what is reality and how it can be known; the practical sides of carrying out research and its possible constraints of methods linked to the specific social context investigated; and researcher’s ethical beliefs and subjectivity. This metaphor conceptualises methodology as “dynamic, contingent, and dialogic” (Pryor and Ampiah, 2004, p.161), and supports an understanding of the nature of research as a social practice based on shifting and dynamic positions, rather than as a ‘technology’ of ‘value-neutral’ methods and actions (Usher, 1996). The stretching of a rubber-methodology guided and influenced the development of the research design, the decisions taken during the process of data collection, analysis, interpretation and representation of the social reality investigated, and had an impact in the final claims to knowledge of this research. Overall, the first assumption of my methodological position relies on the postmodern acknowledgment that:

It is impossible to escape the value-ladenness of research since ways of knowing are inherently culture-bound and will therefore reflect the dominant values of the particular culture in which they are located. (Usher, 1996, p.29)

It follows that ‘the ‘real’ is “unstable, in flux and contingent” (Usher, 1996, p.28) because it is constructed by and shaped around inter-subjective views which are dependent on social-cultural-historical and material conditionings of the contexts in which participants and researchers meet each other. How this postmodern vision relates to my epistemological and ontological stances and fits into the ‘ambitious’ project of decolonising research is the object of the following discussion.

This chapter begins with epistemological and ontological considerations in the construction of a postcolonial ethnography as the methodology of this research. Then it presents the research design, the methods of data collection, and the process of data analyses. At the end of this chapter, I reflect about my relation with participants and my work as ethnographer-listener and participant during the fieldwork and as an ethnographer-author during and after the fieldwork (Emerson et al., 2001).

A preamble feels necessary. I (re)present in this chapter a chronological sequence of my fieldwork. However, the process was ‘trickier’ than this representation really shows, and ‘messier’ than I had expected. Rather than a straight path my way through the research was like a maze: it was easy to get lost in it and it was also easy to feel trapped in it with perceived limited possibilities of action. At

the same time, the multi-entrance gates of this maze facilitated the possibility to try different 'methods' to get lost, to come back to the entrance and try again by taking a different approach or even some short-cuts. In working with the community, but also with teachers, I constantly changed plans for many different reasons. In school, there were days, or even weeks, in which to use teachers' expressions "*nothing was happening*". There were not children, teachers, or really few of both. In the community, I changed plans mostly because what I had in mind was not working or I was approaching it from the 'wrong angle'. Compared to the initial research design, during the fieldwork some methods (such as interviews) were adapted or further developed, and others (such as formal focus group discussions) were abandoned based on practical, contextual factors and constraints. Hence, I would rather describe it as a complex multi-entrance maze.

4.2 The logic of enquiry

4.2.1 Ontological and epistemological positions

My ontological position claims that teachers' pedagogies – as teachers' practices and their interrelated discourses (Alexander, 2008) – arise from the multiple contexts in which their experiences are situated. Nevertheless, what counts as reality is always constructed within power relations. To know about the world means to understand how power relations are constructed, how they work in practice, and how they contribute to produce possible or impossible realities. Based on this ontological position, teachers' responses to curriculum changes – which aims at facilitating a dialogue between in-school and out-of-school knowledges and languages – depends upon context-bound values, meanings, understandings, expectations, and beliefs ascribed to the teaching and learning process.

Two important considerations need to be taken into account. First, as the research itself is "an enactment of power relations", denying it would lead towards research as "a source of oppression" (Usher, 1996, p.29). Hence, I consider reflexivity as a space to question my own epistemological and ontological assumptions and engage critically with a reflection on the power relations in which this account was constructed (Dunne et al., 2005). Second, "the model of power that we adopt will have an effect on the way we understand social action" (Dunne et al., 2005, p.14). My theoretical framework draws on Bourdieu's sociological account of symbolic power for analysing and positioning teachers' identities and understanding of the teaching and learning process within the broader socio-cultural context and the field of education. However, to explore at school level teachers' discursive production of their teaching practices and power/knowledge relations, I refer to the Foucauldian understanding of power. "Power is not [...] an attribute or possession of an actor or collectivity; it is a relational concept. Moreover, power is dispersed throughout multiple sites and discursive fields" (Atkinson P., 1985, p.178). Discourse can be seen as a "mechanism of power

functions in the creation of system of knowledge governed by rules of exclusion for what can and cannot be spoken, acted upon thought, or tolerated” (Cannella and Viruru, 2004, p.61). Therefore, discourse “authorises certain people to speak and correspondingly silences others, or at least makes their voices less authoritative” (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p.90). In these terms, the discursive formation of the ‘truth’ embedded in teachers’ practices is, on its own, the exercise of power. “[Individuals] are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power [...] individuals are the vehicle of power” (Foucault, 1980, p.98). Teacher might undergo power by finding themselves forced to implement a new curriculum that they do not understand or fully grasp, but they can also exercise their power by refusing to adopt a new system of values that does not make sense within their understanding and meanings attributed to the teaching and learning process. Foucault allows an initial understanding of how teachers’ discourses draw a map of their ‘classroom realities’ and create boundaries or possibilities for their practices based on meanings attributed to their students, their role, or community involvement. However, in Foucault’s account “there is no corresponding treatment of social structure. Power and discourse are strangely disembodied, floating in time and space” (Atkinson P., 1985, p.178). Within the understanding of power as a relational concept, I plug in the sociological account of symbolic power of Bourdieu. “What interests Bourdieu is the genesis, ‘the mode of generation of practices’; not, as in Foucault, what they produce, but what produces them” (de Certeau, 1988, p.58). To draw on Bourdieu means to situate discourses and teachers’ subjectivity in *time* and *place*, and uncover the principles and rules of the structures that *produce* their practices.

At the beginning of my path into this research, the methodology of this study blended a social constructionist research paradigm with a postcolonial critique. While social constructionism emphasises an understanding that reality and ways of knowing are always socially and culturally constructed (Crotty, 1998), a postcolonial critique aims to uncover the imbalances of power relations in the process of understanding reality and constructing knowledge. A postcolonial critique means to challenge how dominant discourses on culture, curriculum knowledge, and language are inscribed in the teaching and learning process and in the school system. This initial theorisation of my methodology underwent several turns at different stages of the research. While maintaining the postcolonial critique, the emphasis on the social-construction of reality borrowed from the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu the thinking tools of field, capital, and habitus. The application of Bourdieu gives to this methodology a post-structural turn to illuminate “the exercise of power in culturally specific yet socially reproductive processes” (Lather, 2001, p.479). Bourdieu (1989) refers to his work as “*Constructivist structuralism* or [...] *structuralist constructivism*” (p.14, original emphasis). This understanding is based on the recognition that “if individual knowledge is formed through the interaction with their socio-cultural surroundings, then it must also necessarily be partly formed by structures saturated with pre-existent values, principles, and ways of thinking” (Grenfell, 2012,

p.65). These structures – “independent of the consciousness and will of agents, which are capable of guiding and constraining their practices or their representations” (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 14) – are, nevertheless, mediated by the agents’ habitus that retranslates the structures into a meaningful system of preferences, dispositions, and actions (Bourdieu, 1998). In these terms, Bourdieu tries to move beyond objective-subjective oppositions. He emphasises the existing dialectical relations (Bourdieu, 1977) between subjective dispositions or points of view and the objective structures in which these dispositions, views, values, and beliefs are generated. Hence, the second turn encounters post-structuralism; if knowledge is constructed within structures saturated with pre-existent values which are, however, context-based and contingent “we can believe that structures are not absolute and we become responsible for examining those structures and exposing what they do” (Jackson, 2001, p.396).

4.2.2 The construction of a postcolonial ethnographic methodology

Teaching cultures are contextually bounded and complex, so understanding and producing insight into this culture requires approaches that explore, in depth, teachers’ reasoning about teaching, learning... based on specific educational contexts and accounts of experiences within them. (Akyeampong et al., 2006, p.160)

Choosing to conduct a qualitative ethnography shows my concerns for understanding the contextual, social, and cultural *realities* around which teachers create meanings for their profession and actions, attribute significance to them, and build relations with students, parents, and community members. Understanding how these *realities* are represented and reproduced in teacher discourse and practice was perceived as a precondition to interrogate teachers’ responses to curriculum changes. During one school year, I participated in the daily in-school life of teachers and children. Observing what was happening in school – inside and outside classrooms – listening to what was said, asking specific questions, but also engaging in informal conversations (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995) gave me the opportunity to learn about the socially and culturally embedded nature of teachers’ discourses and practices, the school system and its culture, as well as to gain in-depth insights into teachers’ representations of the community in which their teaching experiences were taking place. The long-term fieldwork, which is one characteristic of ethnographic studies, and the fact that I lived in the community where the school was located, allowed me to bring in the wider socio-cultural context in which the school was located, and discuss with parents and community members how they valued traditional education and schooling, their perceived role in the formal education process and their expectations of the school system and their children’s future. This process supported an understanding of teachers’ practices within and against broader contextual, social, and cultural realities surrounding their experiences.

Ethnography, in these terms, engages with the development of “an *analytic* understanding of perspectives, activities and actions, one that is likely to be different from, perhaps even in conflict

with, how the people themselves see the world” (Hammersley, 2006, p.4, original emphasis). I saw the development of an *analytic* understanding as the need to engage also with “what is not said, what discourses make it impossible to say, what practical or theoretical logics hide away from sight” (Miller et al, 2005, p.313). In the attempt to challenge the taken-for-granted embedded in the teaching and learning process, I perceived this process as constant movements ‘in-between’ the visible and the less visible sides of what teacher-students interactions and school-community relations were showing, and the power relations that the overall picture was hiding. It meant to move from a descriptive and technical understanding of how teachers teach, towards an exploration of why teachers teach the way they do by reflecting on those structures, social mechanisms, and dominant cultural perspectives that were shaping the teaching and learning process.

Clair (2003) contemplates whether “the concept *postcolonial ethnography* should be considered an oxymoron” (p.19, original emphasis). Cannella and Viruru (2004) reflect on ethnography as “perhaps the most widely used form of research with people who have been historically subjugated” (p.145). Ethnography was built on the master discourse of colonialism as the study of the ‘Other’ and as a form of control (Smith, 1999). Postcolonialism attempts to go beyond this master discourse by re-narrating the history of the colonial encounter from the perspectives of formerly colonised countries and people (Crossley and Tikly, 2004). In this attempt, postcolonial ethnography could be considered as “a turn from expressing a one-sided view of the ‘Other’ to expressing its own possibilities as a language of resistance and emancipation” (Clair, 2003, p.19). I interpret postcolonial ethnography as an attempt to decolonise this research process, which instead of pursuing “romantic aspirations about giving voice to the voiceless” (Lather, 2001, p.483), builds on culture-based co-constructions and accounts of teachers, parents and students to make visible and expose the structures that produce and reproduce the doxa (Bourdieu, 1977) in the teaching and learning process, and question how dominant or the complicity of dominated voices compete in displacing alternative ‘heterodox’ constructions of the teaching and learning process to maintain the boundaries of ‘doxa’.

4.2.3 Initial Ethical considerations

The real names of the town – Pemba – and the province – Cabo Delgado – in which the research was conducted are not changed. Taking into account the new position attributed to Mozambican languages and traditional cultures in the construction of the new curriculum and my understanding of teacher practices as contextually and culturally shaped, I believed that information on local languages and characteristics of the Emakhuwa society could not be omitted. This information would have easily identified the province and the town, even if I had changed these names. Conversely, the real name of the *bairro* (neighbourhood) is not revealed, and its ‘specific’ location

within the town is slightly disguised. I use pseudonyms for all participants in order to protect their identities, and anonymise the linkages between participants' identities and their ideas and values. These steps support the fact that the information presented cannot be traced back to individual participants. However, during my fieldwork I made clear to the participants, and specifically to teachers, that at local level it would be possible to relate my role as researcher and the content of my research to their school during and after the fieldwork. Having said this, it is also important to highlight that the nature of the inquiry was not controversial and all the participants directly involved in the study consented to be part of the study. The voluntary involvement of participants, their right to refuse to participate, or to withdraw at any moment was emphasised. Nevertheless, I acknowledge how perceived imbalances in power-relations might have limited participants' possibilities of refusing to take part in this study. I discuss how I interpreted participants' right to refuse or withdraw in the selection of the sample used in this study. With teachers, given their repeated and continuous participation, I did not want to take for granted their initial consent. For instance, teachers were aware that informal conversations would have provided an important part of data collection and analysis. However, when dealing with sensitive issues such as participants' personal lives, constraining living conditions, or money matters, I asked throughout my research the permission to use their ideas providing anonymity.

I used informed verbal consent either for participants with limited literacy or teachers. This approach was authorised during the University of Sussex ethical approval process, and it was appropriate in the context where the research was conducted. Asking participants to sign a consent form – as the first preliminary step to begin our dialogue and interaction – would have compromised or even precluded our relations. Based on my working experiences in the country, I came to know how people can be really diffident towards the need to sign something. During the research, I realised that teachers were also suspicious about my attempt to distribute transcriptions of interviews or observations as if *'I buried in the written pages something, that I did not want to ask'* (one teachers' idea – Abiba). Teachers regarded transcripts as *'unnecessary'*, oral communication as more appropriate. Therefore, I adapted the protocol on feedback and distribution of transcripts. I orally presented summaries of topics emerging from our conversations, and preliminary understandings to look for their feedback at various stages of the research. I also modified the protocol for the interpreter as it turned out that instead of one interpreter I worked with three collaborators from the community. I explained to the collaborators issues about confidentiality and ethics to protect the anonymity of information gathered. However, in general, participants never perceived anonymity as a concern.

4.3 Research Design

4.3.1 A summary of the implementation of the study

This ethnography was carried out in one full primary school (grades 1 to 7) in Pemba from January to November 2013; it covered one full school year. An introductory phase (January 2013) was followed by three phases of data collection. Each phase corresponded to one school term. After the first phase, dedicated mainly to what was happening in school, I focused both on school and community, and I used a combination of methods of data collection throughout the fieldwork. The choice to maintain the division in phases underlines the end of each term as an opportunity to review the data collected, and re-focus and/or re-think the following steps and strategies in the process of data collection.

The introductory phase consisted of official meetings with the hierarchical structures of the education system to receive the authorisation to conduct this study. While waiting for the authorization of the *Direcção Provincial de Educação e Cultura* (DPEC), the institution representing the Ministry of Education at local level, I had an informal meeting with the head teacher of the school in which I wanted to conduct the research. The head teacher gave me the immediate availability of the school to participate in the study, but the arrangements of further meetings with teachers and the beginning of my fieldwork were dependent upon the official authorisation. After the approval, the head teacher organised a formal meeting with the vice-director to discuss the details of my research. Then, the vice-director arranged a meeting with teachers. I presented my research project as a study focusing on teachers' understanding of the teaching and learning process, in the light of recent curricular changes. In presenting my research, I made clear from the beginning my interest in interacting with both, the school and the community.

In the first stage (February - April 2013), I focused on the school system. The main methods used were informal conversations with teachers and, occurring less frequently with students, as well as observations of lessons and school dynamics. I visited the school at least three times per week, either in the morning or afternoon shift, to spend time and get familiar with teachers and students. I observed as many classrooms as possible with all fifteen teachers of this school – independently from the grade and subject. Initially, the arrangements were quite 'structured' and formal. Teachers suggested the day and subject for lesson observation in advance. However, the extended fieldwork gave the opportunity to move beyond these formal pre-arrangements. This phase was the mapping phase of my fieldwork in school, while I was still trying to understand how to proceed in the community. This phase was crucial in building a trustful relationship with teachers, and gain preliminary insights into school dynamics, teachers' most recurrent discourses and practices.

In the second stage (May - July 2013), I continued informal conversations with all teachers and students and I changed my approach in the management of lesson observations. I negotiated with teachers the possibility to observe the development of one textbook's thematic unit – in between three to five lessons – from its introduction to its consolidation, and combine it with informal post-observation conversations in order to observe variations in teaching practices used to introduce, develop or review the topic, and explore their reasoning behind practice. All teachers gave their availability, but in practice it worked out – and just partially – with only two teachers, Abiba and Ornilda. Overall, during this phase, I observed mainly five teachers (Abiba and Ornilda in lower grades and Abel, Latifo and Damir in upper grades) who did not show any concern about my continuous presence in their classroom. The main lessons observed were Portuguese and Mathematics, but also Social and Natural Sciences. At community level, I collected traditional tales as a way to begin the dialogue with the community, in particular with mothers and grandmothers, while engaging in informal conversations with members of the community and conducting conversational interviews with four elders.

In the third stage (August - October 2013), I observed lessons only when teachers invited me and I conducted semi-structured interviews with ten teachers. I planned and conducted a group discussion with grade 6 students. Teachers suggested this session as a response to my interest in collecting traditional tales. I continued conversational interviews with community members.

4.3.2 Why Pemba and this neighbourhood?

The selection of the urban district of Pemba-*cidade*, the capital of Cabo Delgado, the furthest northern province of the country, was dictated by the fact that I was already living and working in this district and I had a full time job while at the same time carrying out this research. Therefore, the proximity and accessibility of the research site were major concerns in the selection of the district.

The research was conducted in a *bairro* (neighbourhood) of the coastal peri-urban area of Pemba. Although I was already living in this *bairro*, this was not the main aspect I considered in its selection. The rationale for the selection of this *bairro* and its school is twofold. First, I wanted to clearly separate my role as researcher from the work I was carrying out in urban primary schools. As part of my work, I was coordinating an education project dealing with strengthening the relationship between school and community. The interaction with teachers in those schools was strongly influenced by continuous mediations between project objectives and resources, and schools' expectations. I wanted to conduct my research in a different area of Pemba – far from the project – to build a relationship with school and community that moved away from fund-oriented interactions. I also wanted to deal with a smaller school (in terms of fewer teachers and students) compared to the 'bigger' schools (with at least 3000 students and more than 40 teachers), in which

I was working, to interact more easily with all teachers and students, as in bigger schools teachers and students are spread across three major shifts from 6:40 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Second, in urban and peri-urban settings, national educational authorities opted for maintaining a monolingual Portuguese programme, based on the ‘expectations’ of a more linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of these settings. However, the highly homogeneous Makhuwa cultural and linguistic profile of the coastal peri-urban area made this *bairro* an interesting case to explore the application of the new flexibility on the use of Mozambican languages in the monolingual Portuguese programme, in which teachers should build on their students’ L1 to scaffold learning and promote understandings. As observed in the previous chapter, Emakhuwa is the most widely spoken Mozambican language from a population of a bit more than 4.1 million people.

4.3.3 The Makhuwa society

In the northern coastal area (north Zambesia, Nampula, and Cabo Delgado), the Swahili world and its Islamic religious leadership²⁶ had been present “long before the arrival of the Portuguese, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries” (Bonate, 2008, p.637). The term Makhuwa was used to ‘name’ indistinctively the population of a huge territory²⁷ as “savagery, i.e. ‘non-Muslims’ and ‘uncivilized’” (Bonate, 2006 p.142), in opposition to the *Maka*, the Muslims and ‘civilised’ elite of the northern coast (Bonate, 2006). During the colonial period the term continued to be used by the Portuguese, in a smaller geographic area²⁸ (Medeiros, 2011). Nowadays, according to Bonate (2006, p.140),

[n]orthern Mozambican Muslims represent a paradox with respect to Islam and gender. While Muslim culture here was historically linked to the Swahili world, matrilineality continues to be one of its main features.

The *nihimo* in the Makhuwa society represents a matrilineal group. The “unit of belonging, reaching far beyond the visible world” (Arnfred, 2011, p.256) encompasses the descendants of the same ancestress. The *mwene* (male chief) of one *nihimo* is the eldest brother of the present *pwiyamwene* (female chief). Both *mwene* and *pwiyamwene* share the authority of the *nihimo*. Arnfred (2011) refers to *mwene* and *pwiyamwene* as the double power system that the Portuguese colonialism earlier, and FRELIMO later, failed to recognise, “they intervened in relation to the male power; they

²⁶ The northern inland expansion of Muslim religion leadership, instead, is dated back to the end of nineteenth century (Arnfred, 2011).

²⁷ From Zambezi River to Rovuma River, which represents the border between Mozambique and Tanzania, and inland up to the Lujenda River and the land of Yao people (border with Malawi) (Alpers, 1974).

²⁸ Nowadays, Makhuwa people live in four Mozambican provinces, namely south Cabo Delgado, south Niassa, Nampula, and north Zambesia.

never saw the female counterpart” (p.19). Makhuwa society is also matrilocal. The land is passed along the female line, from mothers to daughters. A woman after marriage does not leave her *nihimo* and land. Her husband becomes part of her women’s *nihimo*, moves into her area/village and “he will be working for a certain length of time on the land of the mother-in-law” (Arnfred, 2011, p.46). Conversely, in case of divorce, men leave the *nihimo*, children remain with the mother and her *nihimo* is responsible for their education. Compared to a patrilineal point of view, “[t]he close and important relation is not from father to son/daughter, but rather from uncle to nephew/niece i.e. to the sister’s children” (Arnfred, 2011, p.46). In these terms, the uncle rather than the father is the head of the family (Arnfred, 2011).

In general terms, matrilineality is a characteristic of northern Mozambique compared to the patrilineality of the South (Arnfred, 2011). Arnfred reflects on matrilineality versus patrilineality also in terms of how the process of economic modernisation, individualisation, and the nuclear family-ideal (father, mother, and sons) promoted by FRELIMO worked differently in southern and northern Mozambique:

The values of traditional kinship clash with the nuclear family-ideal promoted in the modernization process; paternal power in the nuclear family does not combine with the matrilineal tradition of strong uncle/nephew relations. (Arnfred, 2011, p.50)

Arnfred’s reflection offers an instrument to think about how school and community relationships are framed, and the extent to what the school system and teachers construct the relationship in terms of parents’ (as mothers’ and fathers’) involvement, rather than a more comprehensive vision of family. Although it is important to consider the possible erosion of this model of social organisation, and how the present reality of this *bairro* might differ from it, in the accounts of the mothers who participated in this study, women were still responsible for their children’s education, the linkages between the land, the farming, and the food were evident, as well as their roles in the maintenance of female initiation rituals. Moreover, the matrilocality – in sentences such as “[...] as my mother was from here, my father moved here” (Community member) – and the vision of the ‘future-son-in-law’ as a new labour force for the family, were also mentioned in interviews.

The above brief introduction about the Makhuwa society is relevant to understand some features of the *bairro* in which I carried out my research, and the matrilineal and Muslim background of its community. It also offers a frame of reference for the following chapter to engage with teachers’ portrayals of the community surrounding the school as a *community resistant to changes* and their perceived implications for the teaching and learning process within a Makhuwa culture and society.

4.3.4 Participants

4.3.4.1 *The teachers*

At least in theory, all fifteen teachers of this school participated in the research and gave their informed verbal consent. However, I decided to select a sample of twelve teachers. Two teachers did not feel comfortable in being observed. They participated from time to time in informal discussions, but I am not using their ideas in this research. I perceived their attitude of postponing observation and avoiding talking to me individually as an indirect way of telling me that they did not want to participate in the research. A third teacher was ill for more than three months, I observed a few classes with him, but I never had the chance to engage with him in formal discussions. The majority of teachers were male; there were only two women in lower primary (Abiba and Ornilda) and one in upper primary (Linda). The low number of female teachers is representative of the situation of the education system at provincial and national levels, in which the number of female teachers decreases throughout the progression of the system²⁹. Moreover, they were trained under four different models of pre-service teacher training programmes (7+3, 10+2, 10+1, 12+3)³⁰, and one in-service distance-learning teacher training (10+3). Within the sample selected at EP1, only one teacher (Abiba) had not received any pre-service training. At EP2, 1 teacher (Salimo) completed the pre-service teacher-training programme during my fieldwork. He was therefore the only teacher who received a new 'experimental' pre-service training programme aligned with the new curriculum. Teachers' previous years of teaching experiences varied from fourteen to two years. Latifo and Bernardo had been working in in this school since the beginning of their career for eleven and nine years, respectively, and five of them, even if for a short period, had experienced the previous curriculum as teachers.

Almost all teachers were from Cabo Delgado, coming from six different districts of this province. Only four of them were born and raised in Pemba, and none of them was from this community. With the exception of Salimo, who was Makonde, they were all Makhuwa. Emakhuwa was teachers' L1 for ten out of twelve teachers; the exceptions, Salimo and Americo, however, considered themselves as fluent speakers of Emakhuwa. All teachers knew at least another Mozambican language. Teachers learned Portuguese either in school or with their brothers or sisters, who went to school before them. Half of them were Muslim, and only one of them (Jamal) decided that year not to fast during Ramadan; the other half was Christian. It is important to say

²⁹ At provincial level 38% and 15% of teachers are female, respectively, at EP1 and EP2, while at national level the percentage of female teachers is 46% at EP1 and 28% at EP2 (MINED, 2014).

³⁰ Training differed in the number of years of schooling required as entry level (6, 7, 10, and so on) and the length of training (1, 2, and only recently 3 years). It means that teachers had received more or less intensive pedagogical training, but all teachers who had received at least one year of training (no matter what their entry level) are considered qualified. This variety in the 'little sample' selected reflects the fact that Mozambique since 1975 has introduced more than 20 different teacher training programmes to overcome the issue of teacher shortages (VSO, 2011).

that rather than selecting the sample, the sample was created around the voluntary involvement and interest of teachers. The table below summarises this information.

Table 2: Sample selected

Participants' pseudonym	Gender	Training (General education + years of training)	Years of teaching experience	Years of teaching in this school	Mother Tongue	Coming from	Religion
Abiba	F	12	2	0	Emakhuwa	Pemba	Muslim
Jamal	M	7+3	14	4	Emakhuwa	Other district	Muslim
Zé	M	10+3	7	4	Emakhuwa	Pemba	Christian
Ornilda	F	10+2	9	5	Emakhuwa	Pemba	Muslim
Bernardo	M	10+3	9	9	Emakhuwa	Other province	Christian
Americo	M	10+1	4	0	Gitonga	Other province	Christian
Abel	M	10+1	6	4	Emakhuwa	Pemba	Christian
Latifo	M	10+2	11	11	Emakhuwa	Other district	Muslim
Damir	M	10+1	4	4	Emakhuwa	Other district	Muslim
Salimo	M	12+3	4	4	Makonde	Other district	Muslim
Linda	F	10+2	9	6	Emakhuwa	Other district	Christian
David	M	10+2	5	4	Emakhuwa	Other district	Christian

4.3.4.2 The students

To delineate the sample of students, and community members soon after, requires a different exercise. Clearly, all students were indirect participants of the study throughout the school year. My research was presented to each class during the first observation with their teacher. I asked teachers to translate for me, from Portuguese to Emakhuwa, a brief and simple introduction of my research. Considering the daily high turn-over of children in school, I believe that many of children missed my initial presentation. However, I came back to explain to students, through the help of their teachers or bilingual students, the reasons for my presence in school, and I asked permission to write down 'their words' and use them in this study, in particular for students of grades 6 and 7, whose ideas are quoted in this research. In particular, I engaged in three group discussions mixed with storytelling and riddles with grade 6 students. The number of grade 6 students was supposed to be 119, divided in three classes. However, this group was often combined together and taught as one class. I worked with a group of roughly 30 to 45 students (almost half female) from ages ten to sixteen that represent those who attended their lessons during the days in which teachers 'handed-me over' (unexpectedly) their classes. Among them, based on data of previous observations, there were no more than six to ten students who were usually called individually by their teachers to answer, when the class was completely silent. Teachers suggested the involvement of this grade, without any specific reason. Students were all born in this *bairro*. Emakhuwa was their L1 and they unanimously reported to speak Emakhuwa with their parents, with their friends and in the *bairro*, and even in school.

4.3.4.3 *Community members*

While the steps needed to involve the school were clear for me based on the respect of the formal hierarchies of the school system, I had not the same clarity with the community. To involve the community, I followed two initial paths in the wrong way. The path of local authorities was the first one. I saw their initial involvement as an opportunity to officialise my research in the community. I asked their help to organise a meeting and present my research to the administrative, traditional and religious authorities of the *bairro*, but the meeting did not take place. My mistake was that I did not recognise that, as the school had its structures, the *bairro* was also following its structures. Rather than asking for a meeting with all different kinds of authorities, I should have, perhaps, asked to meet the Chiefs of smaller administrative units of the *bairro*, and then through them I would have gained access to 'specific' community members.

As a second attempt, I presented my research to the adult literacy class hosted by this school. The class was mainly composed by students' mothers who became (not in a straightforward way) some of the participants of this study and storytellers of the traditional tales collected. At the follow-up meeting, however, none of them showed up. In discussing it later on with Amina (one of the mothers involved), my mistake was to 'accept' the school (suggested by their teacher) as the place of our follow-up meeting. The school was not an appropriate and *comfortable* space, to discuss about 'the community and its culture'. I should have proposed a different place, such as one of their houses or the local market (where I could find some of them) not as a way of imposing myself, but as a way to 'move out' from a situation in which nobody would have disagreed openly with the idea to meet in school, suggested by their teacher. This 'episode' pushed me to reflect on the multi-faced aspects of 'authority'. It is interesting for me to reflect on the fact that while I was apparently aware that people from the community would not feel confident in 'entering the school ground', when I wrote my ethical proposal, I did not consider its full implications. I thought that by simply asking to manifest their preferred place for a meeting, participants would have felt in the position of suggesting it, however, they did not.

Finally, I decided to begin informally by involving some persons that I knew already in the community. The involvement of parents and community members was gained almost entirely through word of mouth across parents and community members. Beyond informal conversations with many people in the *bairro*, to whom I presented my research, I officially interviewed four elders individually (three women, one man), suggested by other participants for their skills and knowledge in storytelling, or for having a position in the organisation of initiation rituals, and fifteen persons (of whom twelve were women) either individually or collectively (no more than three persons together). They were mostly mothers, aunts, and grandmothers of some of the students that participated in this research. Gender relations in the community and the fact that education of children was

perceived as a mother's task within this society could explain why the majority of participants interviewed are women. I understood that postponing the interview several times, as teachers did for observations, was an indirect way to deny consent. Moreover, during informal conversations, to balance gender participation, I went to look for people representing the main professions of the *bairro* (as 'listed' by students and teachers): fishermen, brick producers, carpenters, and builders of traditional houses and fences.

4.3.5 Portuguese and Emakhuwa: the languages of the fieldwork

My knowledge of Portuguese, rather than Emakhuwa, and the focus of the research facilitated a straightforward and constant involvement and dialogue with teachers. Nevertheless, the involvement of the community was equally important for this ethnography. In Emakhuwa, I could understand only few words. I became familiar with verbs and their constructions and I took various informal Emakhuwa lessons with women in the community. I was often consulting my Emakhuwa grammar, but I was not able to discuss with children and parents in Emakhuwa beyond some pre-formatted sentences I had learned. The approaches I adopted to overcome this issue do not take for granted the power of languages in conducting research. The language used with teachers throughout the study was Portuguese. Though Portuguese was not their mother tongue, it did not seem to constrain or challenge our interactions. Their Portuguese was not 'standard', for instance they used mainly verbs in the infinitive instead of conjugating them. Nevertheless, this was a general characteristic of the Portuguese spoken in Pemba and their knowledge was comprehensive to discuss fluently any topic approached. Outside the classroom, only on rare occasions did teachers speak Emakhuwa among themselves (mainly to discuss family issues, sport and football). They switched to Emakhuwa to talk with younger students or with the few mothers or older brothers who came to school during school hours.

In school, in each class, those few learners confident enough to speak Portuguese with me were often the *spokeswomen* for their colleagues' curiosity. In each grade, through observations, I 'spotted' the learners who could understand and speak Portuguese and they were the 'informal translators' of my conversations and discussions with other students. Teachers also helped me with translations outside of their lessons. The 'object' that most attracted children's attention and initiated conversations in some occasions was their curiosity about 'my writing'. This subject of conversation showed, unexpectedly for me, students' perceptions on how a *nkunya* – a white person – "*learns by writing*" (Student, grade 4) compared to their perceptions of learning in school through *oracy*. Explaining my reasons for writing about their lessons became a tool to describe to students what I was doing in their classes.

My plan to formalise with the community the presence of one 'official' interpreter throughout my data collection process did not work out. This was mainly because the person I had selected, although a fluent speaker of both languages who could have acted as 'cultural mediator', was not from the community, and I needed major flexibility and availability in terms of time. Not only was it difficult and out of context to book interviews in advance in order to allow the participation of the interpreter, but also informal conversations, as a modality, did not fit with an official translation. Instead, I worked with three bilingual collaborators from the community, at least one of the three was with me during story collection, some conversations, and all interviews. However, the collaborators 'bridged' gaps in languages during interviews, to a certain extent. I noticed that the majority of participants preferred to code-switch between Emakhuwa and Portuguese to help my understanding. My lack of knowledge of Emakhuwa undoubtedly compromised the possibility of a smooth dialogue with students and community members. However, it is with many concerns that I employed it with the community and children. The leading concern was the irony of using the language of the ex-colonisers (Smith, 1999) – the language that was alienating children's active participation in school – in research that intended to reflect on the construction of culturally relevant pedagogies by building on Mozambican languages, local meanings and understanding of teaching and languages. Besides the involvement of bilingual speakers from the community as collaborators and translators, to begin data collection in the community with traditional tales, and to specify that I was interested in listening to them in Emakhuwa, in order to get familiar with the language or to learn the songs, names of objects, plants, or animals embedded in tales; these were my attempts to avoid silencing their stories, or imposing Portuguese or falling into impoverished discussions in Portuguese. Nevertheless, I consider the language issue as one of the main limitations of this study.

4.4 Data collection methods

4.4.1 Informal conversations with teachers

In this research, conversation as "a basic mode of knowing [...and] constituting knowledge" (Kvale, 1996, p.37) entailed talking and interacting with teachers, asking and answering questions about topics that emerged spontaneously depending on what was going on in school. They took place under a *massanica* tree at one corner of the school playground. On just a few occasions, parents, who came to talk to one of the teachers or to drop some documents, interrupted them. On many occasions, students who approached their teachers interrupted these conversations. Students also came to talk to me and bring me to the 'other side' of the playground to teach a game that they were playing. Usually, a few students stood in front, with many behind their backs as if they were the spokespersons for everyone. Teachers themselves interrupted conversations by sending some student to take water, or buy *bolinhos* and *mandase* at the market. That is to say, that while

conversations were taking place, I was also observing what was going on and “consciously [or unconsciously] gather[ing] sensory data through sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch” (Jones and Somekh, 2005, p.138). At the same time, conversations, after the interruptions, took another ‘turn’, introducing a different subject of conversation. Teachers wanted to ‘show’ me things or ‘re-mark’ aspects of what was happening on the playground, about parents coming or not coming, or about students (who their students were, some of their stories, or how they dressed and behaved).

Especially in the beginning, conversations built my relationship with participants. It was a way to spend time and interact with teachers individually and as a group, besides ‘invading’ their space in class. Moreover, it was a way to be available to answer their ‘curiosity’ about my personal or professional paths so far. The topics of conversations covered from everyday personal lives and concerns, teachers’ opinions of the context in which they were teaching, the physical environment of school, views on their students, the culture of the community and its relations with their work, their ideas about teaching and learning, the assessment process, stories about how they became teachers and various topics about their teaching strategies and daily challenges. These conversations revealed descriptions of their profession, their actions, their experiences combined with opinions, values, knowledge or misunderstanding about the new curriculum, their perceptions of the education system in Mozambique, and more.

Over time, conversations became a sort of informal – and at times collective – conversational interview. Patton (2002) refers to them as an open-ended approach without a pre-established set of questions to follow “the natural flow of interaction, often as part of on-going participant observation fieldwork” (p.342). The prolonged fieldwork allowed the natural and cyclical re-emergence of the most debated topics and gave me the possibility to come back naturally to the same topics on different occasions. It also coped with “the impossibility to make a complete record” (Jones and Somekh, 2005, p.138) of what was happening ‘at once’, including my impressions, teachers’ interpretations and my own efforts to make sense of the situations. In these terms, conversations were building on what had already been said or observed to gain new insights, follow different paths in order to seek for alternative understandings of their attitudes and behaviours in schools with children, or also challenge ‘previous understandings’. Conversations also became a way to receive feedback from teachers on my initial interpretations of the situation. I was taking fast written notes or writing down key words used by teachers during our conversations in the notebooks that I also used during lesson observations. I was expanding these notes either while still in school or soon after I left. Besides my notebooks, I recorded in a daily research journal a summary of ‘key points’ of each day: lessons observed, teachers I had interacted with, our topics of conversation, as well as my notes on issues I was struggling to make sense of. This supported me in keeping track of my field notes. Moreover, since the beginning, I used specific colours to visualise raw data: pink

for the LoLT, green for teachers' understanding of school-community relations, yellow for teachers' understanding of the new curriculum.

During the second phase of the fieldwork, I began to summarise, verbally during conversations, recurring topics to challenge and problematise some of the straightforward cause-effect relations embedded in teachers' understandings. When a cause-effect relation was re-emerging, I began to ask teachers about other possible factors that could be considered for further explaining the reasons behind a specific situation. For instance, teachers often linked learners' poor learning outcomes with their limited knowledge of Portuguese and their parents disinterest in the domain of schooling. To expand this relation meant bringing into the discussion teachers' ideas about how the new curriculum contributed to students' underachievement. Overall, conversations opened up a dynamic space for exchanging views in a less formal way for their "flexibility, spontaneity and responsiveness to [...] situational changes" (Patton, 2002, p.342).

4.4.2 Observations in school and in classrooms

Atkinson and Hammersley (1994, p.249) argue that social research "is a form of participant observation, because we cannot study the social world without being part of it". From this perspective, participant observation, rather than a specific research method is a pre-requisite of any qualitative researcher. As a method of research, however, my level of participation during observations depended on what was happening in school and what was my focus (LeCompte and Preissle, 1993). My position during lesson observation can be regarded as observer-as-participant (Gold 1958, in Scott, 1996). I was sitting at the back of the classroom taking detailed notes. During classroom observations, language was never an issue as Portuguese was the sole LoLT. On the few occasions when teachers used Emakhuwa, they always translated the words or sentences. I did not use a systematic or pre-arranged schedule for classroom observation or in-school observations, nor a recorder during observations. However, the use of a simplified Portuguese to allow children's understanding, the regular repetition of instructions and the rhetoric intonation of teachers' voices facilitated capturing teacher and student interactions verbatim. My approach aimed at "screening nothing out and noting as many details as possible, guided by some overarching categories" (Jones and Somekh, 2005, p.139) such as, for instance, use of code-switching for both teachers and students, teacher-students' dynamics of interactions, and reference made to the local context. Based on my expectations of what was supposed to be happening in the context of new curriculum reform, I was also observing the "absence of occurrence" and the "significance of non-occurrences" (Patton, 2002, p.295-296).

Lesson observation was often combined with a conversational post-observation interview in order to understand teachers' reasoning behind their practices. Individual conversational post-

observation interviews, in some occasions, became sessions for debating with other teachers those aspects that teachers perceived as the most challenging in their classroom routines, either to 'justify' specific methods used or to 'explain me' the *contexts* of their teaching. However, some teachers expected another kind of behaviour from my side, and questioned my attempt to understand what they thought of their lesson or the reasons behind their approaches or attitudes. Some of them were worried about perceiving '*if they did the right thing*' (Abel's concern) or about what '*I would have done, if I were in their shoes*' (Abiba's concern). Although their perceptions of my role changed during the fieldwork, their questioning showed their expectations on my role and my 'position' in their classroom practices. I discuss this further, at the end this chapter.

"Lesson observation can answer the 'what' questions and illuminates the 'how' questions [...] It can also provide some insights into the 'why' questions" (O'Sullivan, 2006, p.254). In my case, one of the 'what' and 'how' question considered in my lesson observation was: what are teachers' perceived contexts of their practices? How do these perceived contexts influence their practices? The most recurrent teachers' concern soon after their lessons was children's poor knowledge of Portuguese. This focus on language as something that children did not possess was 'omitting' an open reflection on teacher-student interaction patterns. In these terms, some of the 'whys' that I tried to understand were related to the reasons for not using Emakhuwa.

4.4.3 Semi-structured interviews with teachers

A different approach compared to informal conversations is that of semi-structured interviews with teachers. This approach was chosen to balance the flexibility of conversations with a more systematised approach, and to end my year in school and the data collection process. The choice to leave semi-structured interviews to the end related to the belief that power asymmetries would have been already 'reconstructed' by the end of the school year. Some teachers regarded this final interview as superfluous, '*I should have known the answers by now*'. Nevertheless, they participated and dedicated between one hour and a half to two hours of their time. To prepare the interview guide I used a preliminary analysis of my data, drawing on transcripts of observations, informal conversation and field notes.

The interview guide had three main topics (plus 1). Under each topic I had a list of the main open-ended questions which aimed to cover: (i) an evaluation of their school year going through what they perceived as their major successes, main challenges, and how they dealt with them; (ii) a reflection on their understanding of the teaching and learning process, their role as teachers and the expected role of students in this process; and (iii) a discussion on curriculum changes (their understanding of what it has changed and how it influenced their roles and the teaching and learning process). Few teachers bridged the gap between the second and third topic by linking their

perceived role as teachers with the new curriculum. The plus 1, turned out to be a second interview conducted the day after the first interview, because of time concerns. This part was dedicated to what I expected that teachers would have not explored among the changes of the new curriculum: the role of Makhuwa culture in school (to develop the LC). This part engaged with an attempt to 'reconstruct' teachers' understanding of the community's culture and knowledge and its possible role in the curriculum. Bilingual Education or the role that pupils' L1 as LoLT could play in this school was often discussed in this part of the interview. I asked teachers to end the interview by telling me first what would they change and why, if they had the opportunity to re-think the curriculum and, second, to tell me a traditional tale, riddle, a metaphor or a proverb in the language they wanted to use.

To say that they did not produce new information would be challenging. In some circumstances, I was surprised by their views. Latifo's case for instance is an example. I had noticed that he had never used Emakhuwa, but I did not realise his strong position against the use of Emakhuwa in school in the playground. Hence, semi-structured interviews with teachers were also a way to give importance to single voices. Conversation often turned out to be collective with some stronger personalities than others, or more confident to debate their opinions. For this reason, I asked all teachers to discuss the same topics as a way to allow the emergence of individual voices, which could have been lost in informal conversation. Moreover, especially in relation to the new curriculum, I was assuming their positions based on ideas expressed but a constructive reflection on what they perceived as real changes was still missing. I did use an audio-recorder for all interviews, transcribed them and translated only the parts quoted in the following chapters.

4.4.4 Storytelling and group discussions with students

With the exception of the first group discussion with grade 6 students, the other two group discussions, which included storytelling, were not planned. In the first group discussion, Abel was assigned by the head teacher the task to organise a meeting with grade 6 students "to evaluate the teaching and learning process so far" (Abel). He asked me to join him and plan the section together. Abel and I agreed to divide students in groups. Each group had to prepare an illustration that represented either what they enjoyed in their learning, what they did not like so far, or what they would like to learn which was not in their textbooks. Then each group had to present it. Abel explained in Emakhuwa the work to do and made clear that anyone in the group could present it in Emakhuwa, *"if not comfortable in using Portuguese"*. However, Abel left us after the first presentation done in Portuguese. As soon as Abel left, I suggested that we use Emakhuwa but I needed their help. After a brief discussion among themselves two girls appointed themselves as my translators, but many more students, to my surprise, helped them out with unknown words, pronunciation or conjugations. The most interesting part of this was to see how the class re-

arranged itself to 'participate' and to support my understanding; the dynamics of students' distribution among desks, interactions amongst themselves, and their participation changed significantly. Some of the boys that were always sitting at one corner at the right end of the class, moved to the front. One 'enforced' Emakhuwa "*Speak Emakhuwa. She said we could use Emakhuwa*", another one came straight to the front and said "*The teacher cannot send us home, children help in many ways*" to give his opinion after the first group's presentation. I wanted to avoid asking individual questions, as I was used to their 'yes or no answers' or their 'silences' when teachers asked them to express their concerns. For this reason, I had suggested to Abel the use of illustrations to be prepared by each group. However, when Abel left they told me individually their opinions without showing any concern, then other students were adding examples to supplement individual answers. They named their favourite teachers and the reasons for being the most 'appreciated'. They also had 'steady' ideas about what teachers' attitudes they did not like, what 'rules' they accepted and respected and the characteristics of a 'good teacher'.

Latifo and Damir suggested the following two discussions with their students. They had finished their lessons; other teachers were absent but they did not want to 'dismiss' the class so they asked me to work with them. The discussions began with riddles and storytelling, the meanings they attached to those tales and how they learned them. Then the discussions followed the same previous 'format', beginning with a task assigned to different groups (for instance, their favourite lesson of the year and related reasons, their favourite readings in the Portuguese textbook: 'let's read!') and then with my questions asked to individual students or to the class to 'develop' into more details their views. We also discussed how they were spending their time at home, the reasons for not coming to school, what their dreams about their futures were, and... what about the LoLT?

4.4.5 Storytelling and conversational interviews with the community

Searching for meanings invariably involves interpretations. On the outlook for local meanings, however, your interpretations have to be very open, flexible, alert and sensitive to context, atmosphere and emotions. What you want to grasp may very well lie beyond the words. (Arnfred, 2011, p.13)

Arnfred (2011) in discussing about her research in northern Mozambique observes how answers to questions asking why it was important to give continuity to initiation rituals, "were not very helpful [...] they gave this type of reply: 'They are our tradition.' It is an education of our daughters" (p.13). In my case, while I also received the same answers to a similar question, to ask about what they perceived as the importance of schooling was not helpful either. This question restricted answers to: "*to learn Portuguese*" (Mother, Fatima) and "*to learn to count, read and write*" (Father, Narcisio). Moreover, I realised that questions on aspects of their traditional knowledge that they would like to

integrate into the curriculum was not making much sense for the majority of mothers interviewed. My own searching for meaning left aside for a long while my questions about the importance of schooling and traditional education and what could be borrowed from one 'system' to strengthen the other, and vice-versa, and I began to listen to traditional storytelling to gain insight into values, beliefs, and practices. I also listened to 'stories' about what they learned from their mothers or grandmothers, uncles/fathers; what aspects of these *ensinamentos* (education) they wanted to pass on their children; how they were going to pass them on their children, and why. This indirect way to know about the importance of traditional education and initiation rituals revealed many aspects of the everyday practices of this community, its teaching and learning process, and situated children into a network of religious education, traditional education, and economic practices. The connection between their practices and traditional knowledge and school system remained 'unseen' in these conversations, but they revealed many interesting aspects about adult-child and school-community relations and community funds of knowledge and pedagogy.

Storytelling and conversational interviews took place outside the home of participants, and in one case also just outside my house as three women came to look for me because they had a story to share, "*I heard you are interested in tales, let me tell you this one*" (Mother).

4.5 Data Analysis, Interpretations and Representations

My process of data collection, as in most ethnographic research, ended with a very large set of data that I analysed, interpreted and theorised to make sense of the situation investigated. Data analysis was an *iterative* and *recursive* process (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999). This refers to the cyclical nature of analyses that "moves back and forth between inductive [...] and deductive analysis" (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999, p.15). Through an early and initial data analysis I tried to make sense of what I heard, observed and experienced while I was still engaged in the process of data collection. I identified the emergence of recurrent themes and categories and their manifold patterns of relations, convergences, but also divergences. For instance, to use one example, the process of mapping out themes and identifying their relations showed the emergence of topics such as that of 'Dealing with semi-automatic promotion' in relation to teachers' pedagogic approaches used in their lessons, teachers' understanding of their role, teachers' relationship with community and children, and teachers' views of the new curriculum. During the different phases of the fieldwork, I kept reading full transcriptions of observations, informal conversations, field notes, as well as the subsequent transcription of interviews, to avoid losing the sense of the whole picture that, nevertheless I was regarding as "partial, incomplete, and always in a process of re-telling" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p.ix). The majority of transcripts I was reading were in Portuguese. However, during the first stage, based on the belief that they would be helpful for later stages of this study, I translated almost all first-phase lessons' observations (around 30). Apart from this, I

chose to translate from Portuguese to English only those parts that I was directly quoting in my text, as I have always felt the need to go back to the transcripts in Portuguese and re-read the translated quotations in Portuguese. Hence, it can be said that translation took place from the beginning to the end of the writing stage.

This process supported me in seeking further participants' feedback especially on those views that I was regarding as contrasting, contradictory or ambivalent. For instance, I often went back to reflect with teachers on what they meant by one of their most-recurrent ideas such as "*The school does not belong to the teacher. It belongs to the community*" (Zé, as well as the majority of teachers). I was not able to understand how this understanding was co-habiting smoothly with other "recurring regularities" (Patton, 2002, p. 465), such as the fact that the school was not talking the language of the community or teachers did not seem to be interested in valuing community knowledge in the school curriculum.

This process prepared the ground for the theoretical interpretation of data. However,

[w]e, as researchers, question what we ask of data as told by participants, question what we hear and how we hear (our own privilege and authority in listening and telling), and deconstruct why one story is told and not another. (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p.ix)

I assumed in the beginning that my role would have been "to challenge any 'obvious' interpretation of what is observed, and seek for ways of revealing underlying layers of meanings" (Jones and Somekh, 2005, p.139). The implication of this claim calls for problematising any taken-for-granted interpretation of what has been observed, heard and said. It stresses the importance of reflexivity and exploring the dynamics of power, culture and identities in the construction of the research since its initial development to its written representations. I understood the process of data analysis and interpretation as the generation of multiple readings (Dunne et al., 2005) to highlight difference in participants' attitudes, perspectives and positions. This means to seek for "voices that, even partial and incomplete produced multiplicities [...] of meaning and subjectivities" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p.4).

On the contrary, I felt many times lost in the first layer of the taken-for-granted. I struggled with the fact that the multiple readings and the multiplicities of voices even if partial or incomplete were (as a whole) pointing to the same direction to the monolithic and oppressive construction of schooling entrenched in binaries of dichotomous power relations. Considering the fact that, in this written representation of my research, teachers, parents, students cannot "speak for themselves" and "[i]n order to give an impression of it we have to select, edit, and *represent* their spoken narratives" (Atkinson P., 1992, p.23, original emphasis), was it me, who could not see further?

4.6 My roles: as attributed by participants and self-constructed

Reflexivity it is not simply to problematise researcher's identity as a way to reflect on the relations between the researcher and participants, but also "to direct our attention to the problematics of [...] the identity of research [...] what is going on in this research? What kind of world or 'reality' is being constructed by the questions asked and methods used?" (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p. 148). Research is dependent upon unbalanced power relations between the researcher and participants. In this research, the imbalance among participants' voices in relation to who possessed the 'authority'— conferred or self-constructed — and who did not, to discuss about school knowledge and the process of schooling, the culture of this community and its traditions, is a central element to the co-construction of knowledge.

Drawing on teachers' perceptions of '*who I was*', I take a self-reflective stance to challenge my multiple roles, positions, identities in relation to the participants, in particular the teachers. I moved unconsciously across multiple 'positions' attributed by teachers' views. These positions represent a movement between insider/outsider positions. Rather than focusing on it, I explore the asymmetries and tensions that these positions hide in terms of "the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true" (Foucault, 1980, p.131). Teachers (Jamal, Salimo, David) confessed to me, in one of our informal conversations, that they thought I was "*the highest Portuguese*" (defined by teachers as someone from the Ministry of Education, who despite her/his race, was usually taking the position of an inspector). But then, they referred to me as "*one of the many stakeholders of the Mozambican education system*" (Americo, Ornilda, Abiba), and "*a nossa companheira de luta*" — literally, our *Comrade* in the struggle for Independence from the colonial power; metaphorically, "*one-of-us*" (Latifo, Damir, David). I believe that none of these perceptions became dominant in 'absolute terms' because they are also relational to the specific teacher I was interacting with. Some teachers, Linda for instance, always maintained a 'formal distance' from me. Hence, these perceptions should not be seen as simply chronological, but overlapping and constructed my spaces in school.

The fact that I had been working in Mozambique since 2008 in the education system positioned me beyond my identity as a researcher. These three positions — or the three discourses that created my positions — however, gave me and took away some authority and 'power' in terms of discourses and practices that were accepted or recognised as true depending on my position (Foucault, 1980). In the position of the *highest Portuguese*, but also to a certain extent in the position as a *stakeholder*, I represented metaphorically 'the system', the new competing discourse of the curriculum, in which teachers felt delegitimised because it was challenging the everyday order (Bourdieu, 1977). According to teachers, my attitudes and behaviours showed them that I was

acting differently from the *highest Portuguese*, mainly because I was not ‘*showing off my authority and higher level*’ (Jamal’s idea), and ‘*I was not telling them what they have to do*’ (Abiba’s idea). At the same time, my informality was un-authorising the *highest Portuguese*, as informality was perceived as not appropriate for my position. This position attributed to me ‘silenced’ teachers’ voices. It is interesting to observe that in the position of a *nossa companheira de luta*, even if Emakhuwa language was not valued by teachers as school language, according to teachers, my previous experiences and the knowledge of the reform would have been of no ‘use’ in class, in particular in early grades, as I did not speak Emakhuwa. As an ethnographer-author during and after the fieldwork (Emerson et al., 2001), I had the power in this text to name, to claim, to describe, to explain or even condemn other’s ways of knowing (Smith, 1999). The dilemmas of my multiple roles, positions, and identities combined with *my powers to name and explain* and the use of a postcolonial critique – as an effort to show “how alternative, suppressed discourses and realities may emerge” (Crossley and Tikly, 2004, p.149) – are objects of a final reflection and implication of this study in Chapter 7.

4.7 Limitations of the study

As mentioned above, language was one, and perhaps the main, limitation of this study. Moreover, I was not able to reach the religious authorities of the *bairro* and leaders of religious celebrations, therefore, I did not interview a *Mwalimo* and a female *Khalifa*, teachers of Quranic schools (Madrasa). To have involved religious authorities would have explored another important relation in the construction of the teaching and learning process. I also did not involve any *mwene* and *pwiyamwene*. My initial attempt to reach ‘traditional’ authorities through the local administration slipped into a ‘political’ rather than representative issue into a FRELIMO, rather than RENAMO, *mwene* and the non-existence of a *pwiyamwene*. The *pwiyamwene* of some of the women interviewed were not living anymore in this *bairro*, as they ‘returned’ to their ‘original’ home place from which they moved with a part of their *nihimo* to have easier access to Pemba’s market. However, as the focus of inquiry was teachers’ discourse and practice and it was not possible “to run through the complete network of the relations which give each relation its complete meaning” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.203), I regard the number and typology of participants from the community, their stories and views as appropriate to get a complex picture of this Makhuwa community and situate teachers within the socio-cultural context surrounding their experiences. The study centred on just one school. Time-constraint was of course one issue for taking this decision. I had initially planned to involve two schools, and I worked with two schools only during the first term. However, borrowing Ricento’s and Hornberger’s (1996) metaphor of language policy as an onion, in my case the whole onion is the PCEB, the strength of ethnography as methodology is “metaphorically speaking, [to] slice through the layers of the [policy] onion to reveal varying local

interpretations, implementations, and perhaps resistance” (Hornberger and Johnson, 2007 p.510). Hence, to avoid giving a partial account of the layers and interpretations, I made the decision to focus on one school.

4.8 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I presented the stretching of my rubber-methodology through my epistemological and ontological assumptions, how they influenced the research design and the decisions taken during and after the fieldwork in the process of data collection, analysis and written representation. I described in detail, conceptualised and reflected on the methodology, methods adopted, and relation with participants as an attempt to give ‘voice’ to the challenges and processes of carrying out this research as a complex multi-entrance maze, despite the chronological and ‘ordered’ sequence of my fieldwork as reported in this chapter.

Chapter 5 – DATA PRESENTATION

This chapter is a description of teachers' classroom pedagogies and an account of the factors pointed out by teachers to understand what is influencing their teaching practices and what is interfering with the teaching and learning process in this school. After a brief introduction of the school in which the study is carried out, the chapter is organised into three main parts. The first part considers teachers' thinking and actions in their daily classroom practices. The second and third part isolates the factors identified by teachers by bringing into the discussion teachers' discourses about the language of teaching and learning, attitudes about their students' and families' socio-cultural background. This second part also deals with parents' and community members' discourses to counter-balance teachers' descriptions of the community in which the school is located. Students' views are introduced to interact with teachers' and parents' discourses. Finally, the third part unfolds teachers' discourses that construct the new curriculum as inappropriate under these conditions, in this context and with these students as well as a factor impacting negatively the teaching and learning process. Alexander (2001, p.271) observes, "researchers have become adept at dissecting teaching but poor at reconstructing it". To gain a deeper understanding of the teaching and learning process a balanced attention to both the parts and the whole should be paid. In this chapter, I tend to dissect teachers' thinking and action, to look at the parts and "to isolate certain process factors" (p.271). In the next chapter, I aim at reconstructing the logic of the field.

5.1 The school: an overview

The school is located in a suburban coastal area, almost 10 km away from the city centre and it is split into two sites located 30 to 40 minute-walk one from another, being the farthest about a one-hour walk from the first *chapa* (privately-run 'minibuses') stop coming from town. There was also one *machimbombo* (public bus) passing close to the school, but only twice a day. Usually, teachers preferred to walk or take lifts on the way to school, rather than waiting for the *machimbombo*. Both sites were not easily accessible for teachers during the rainy season as the road was covered with mud puddles.

In 2013, the school had enrolled a total number of 719 pupils, 339 boys and 380 girls, 508 (241 boys and 267 girls) at EP1 (grades 1 to 5), and 211 (98 boys and 113 girls) at EP2 (grades 6 and 7 – EP2). Students were distributed in fourteen classes and supported by fifteen teachers (Table 3). As table 3 shows, there were mainly two classes per each grade. Classes belonging to the same grade were quite homogenous in terms of numbers of pupils. At EP1 each class was assigned to one teacher. This means that the same teacher follows the students from grades 1 to 5 and 'covers' all subjects.

Table 3: Numbers of classes, pupils and teachers

		Classes	Students	Teachers
EP1	Grade 1	2	173	2
	Grade 2	2	114	2
	Grade 3	2	78	2
	Grade 4	2	90	1
	Grade 5	1	53	1
	Sub-total EP1	9	508	8
EP2	Grade 6	3	119	2 (+3)
	Grade 7	2	92	2
	Sub-total EP2	5	211	7
	Total EPC	14	719	15

At grade 4, two classes were combined and taught together as one because one teacher had left for maternity-leave at the beginning of the school year. She was replaced only during the last term. According to teachers, the relatively low number of students at grade 3 (78 students) was not linked to pupils' dropout or repetition of Grade 2³¹, but it was related to low enrolment rates at grade 1. Grade 5 did not have enough students to be divided in two classes, while grade 6 had instead three classes. The higher number of students in grade 6 is connected to the influx of students from a neighbouring school, which only offered classes up to grade 5.

The further site³² was regarded as the main site in which official meetings among teachers, and among the school direction and students' families took place. It consisted of two small rooms, which served as Director's and the Pedagogic Director's offices, three huge classrooms that hosted Grade 6 students, and one storage room. All three classrooms were equipped with desks to fit all pupils and a big chalkboard. Classrooms had wooden doors, and mosquito nets at the windows; roofs were covered with zinc plates. The second site showed poorer infrastructures and conditions. It comprised of one little storage room and six classrooms. One classroom was still unfinished, showing unpainted walls made of sandy bricks, one little opening resembling a window and a sandy floor. None of the classrooms had functioning doors to lock them when the school was closed; either the door was missing or the lock had been removed. The majority of windows were frameless and only two classrooms had mosquito nets at the windows. Zinc plates covered the roofs. During the rainy season, rain entered from the windows, and sometimes from the roofs. All classrooms had one chalkboard with one desk and chair at the front for the teacher. However, only two classrooms had enough desks with chair to accommodate all students. In the other

³¹ The progression to grade 3 is not automatic because grade 2 represents the conclusion of the first cycle of EP1.

³² The oldest block of this site was built in 1972, when the school was established. It consisted initially of one classroom and one small room.

classrooms, there were fewer desks with three or four students sharing the same desk, while the rest (usually younger students or latecomers) sat on the floor. Teachers had serious difficulties in moving around the classrooms, especially in grade 1 and 2. Although this site had poorer infrastructure and furniture, it hosted eleven out of fourteen classes (from grades 1 to 5 and grade 7). To accommodate all classes, this site worked in two shifts, morning and afternoon. Grades 1, 2, and 7 attended the morning shift, and grades 3 to 5 the afternoon shift. Its central location in the *bairro* influenced this choice as it facilitated access to school for the majority of pupils who did not need to walk long distances. Following the same criteria, the main site hosted grade 6 because it was closer to 'new' students coming from a neighbouring EP1 school.

Overall, classroom sizes were not proportional to the number of children per class. For instance, the two classrooms allocated to grade 7 were twice as big as those assigned to grades 1 and 2, which were actually the grades with more pupils enrolled. Classroom conditions improved in accordance with pupils' progression across the system. The smallest and least equipped classrooms were left for pupils in Grade 1. Abiba and Jamal (grade 1) complained about classroom allocation. The combination of high-class size and precarious conditions was considered as challenging mainly by grade 1 teachers (Jamal and Abiba). *"To teach 90 to read in these conditions is an arduous task"* (Jamal). Overall, there seemed to be a general agreement among all teachers that students in upper grades were assigned more demanding tasks and for this reason they needed *"an organised space for solving exercises on their own and copying texts"* (David). Teachers also saw this distribution as *"rewarding students who reached higher grades and were preparing themselves for secondary education"* (David). Textbooks³³ were distributed to all pupils. However, there were no other additional learning materials available to be used in class. Teachers received manuals designed to orient them in planning their lessons for each subject and corresponding grade.

Overall, poor infrastructure, the scarcity of furniture and lack of additional teaching and learning resources were a concern for teachers, but they often maintained a 'positive' attitude with the idea that *"complaining about resources would have not solved their problems"* (Linda), and *"a good teacher makes the most out of nothing"* (Bernardo). However, in each grade lack of chalks paralysed lessons. Within this overall limited conditions, without chalks teachers seemed to be left without the most important resource they had *"to conduct a normal lesson"* (David) as they could not use the blackboard to write examples as practical demonstrations of their explanation or

³³ At EP1, pupils received their textbooks for each subject: Portuguese and Mathematics (all grades), Natural Science and Social Science (from grade 3), while for Visual Education, Music Education and Life Skills, pupils' textbooks have not been developed yet.

simplify textbooks' language for the pupils, and pupils could not practice exercises on the blackboard.

5.2 Teacher classroom pedagogies: actions and meanings

5.2.1 An introduction to practices

As observed in the previous chapter, Bernardo and Latifo had taught in this school since the beginning of their career, nine and eleven years respectively. *"At that time, we were going house by house to tell parents that school is for everyone and if they had children, these children had to go to school"* (Bernardo).

Nowadays, we are not doing it anymore, we believe things have changed, because the number of children has undoubtedly increased, but I think things have not changed completely. (Latifo)

Bernardo and Latifo began their career without any pedagogic training, as almost all teachers in this school did (eleven out of twelve). Latifo still remembered his first days of teaching as a 'nightmare':

It was not easy at all, really! I did not even know this bairro. Here, it was bush, nothing more. The first day I met the head teacher [...] He asked me to come back the day after. I came back. [...] He told me 'Fine, from now on you are a teacher, here your chalks, textbooks and in class there is a chalkboard. Go and teach'. And so I entered in class, I felt like dying, but I managed. (Latifo)

Teachers with longer teaching experience (more than five years) mentioned as main concerns at the beginning of their career a combination of technical aspects such as their poor knowledge of the subject matter, difficulties in planning lessons, but also ways to communicate efficiently with children:

I had no idea on how to plan a lesson, I did not know whether it was making sense or I was doing something wrong. It was difficult to interact with students. I did not feel comfortable. Then I studied. Now it is getting better. (Zé)
I had to review many things I had forgotten. How can you teach science concepts if you do not remember yourself? (Jamal)

The importance of mastering official curriculum knowledge to be a 'good' teacher as well as the role played by years of teaching experience in the process of mastering this knowledge were recurring themes in teachers' interviews:

I learned the content by teaching it, as I discovered through the years that I was good in Maths and it is difficult to find Maths teachers, I requested to be placed at EP2 and teach only Maths. (Latifo)

Training supported them on how *"to distribute the content across lessons"* (Linda), *"to prepare lessons' plans in which activities and objectives are aligned"* (Zé), but still *"training does not prepare you to deal with a class that reached the end of primary education and does not read"*

(Salimo). Salimo, who was in his last year of training, had the impression that training was not answering his questions. He believed that the government should pay more attention to continuous professional development, as it used to soon after the civil war. Continuous professional development at local level, through workshops and seminars, was perceived as an opportunity to answer some of their questions: *"We have students, they do not speak the LoLT, what do we do?"* (Abiba), *"How does it work in other schools? Let's discuss it. Let's share it"* (Salimo).

All participants, with the exception of Salimo, mentioned the role of older family members in influencing their professional choice to become teachers. The majority of teachers (ten out of twelve) considered teaching as *"the dream of their life"* (David), either because their family members were teachers or because they hoped to continue studying. To become a teacher was perceived as an opportunity to gain access to both training designed for in-service teachers or higher education, through scholarships financed by the government. Teachers seem to suggest that even when the *'dream of their life'* was to become a teacher they could have not afforded the possibility to enter a teacher-training institute, without first being placed as teachers. Specifically, teachers believed that their profession was one of the most accessible opportunities to pursue a career as *Funcionarios do Aparelho do Estado* (Civil Servants): *"in the education public system it was simpler to gain employment compared to other sectors"* (Americo).

I did not want to be a teacher. It was not my dream, but at that time [after the civil war] if you had good results as student, it was easy to be placed as teacher. I entered the system because my brother insisted and then I received my training. [...] I ended up enjoying this work. (Jamal)

Teachers believed that the quality of the education system in Mozambique was declining drastically and *"the quality of Education cannot be improved without beginning by giving more attention to its teachers"* (Bernardo), by *"investing in its teachers"* (Zé) in terms of *"respectable salaries"* (Bernardo) and, as seen above, *"opportunities for learning"* (Linda). Few teachers openly complained about their poor salaries until the end of my fieldwork. In a group conversation, Abiba tried to make me understand how difficult it was to live on her salary by listing the cost of all basic goods needed by her family for living. In relation to low salaries and 'family', David underlined that I needed to understand that when they talk about 'supporting the family', *"it is always an extended family"* (including children from previous marriages, younger brothers, sisters or nephews that are still studying, and older family members). At times, teachers missed school because they needed to sort out problems with their salaries (the salary was late or the government had not calculated the annual increase). One teacher 'confessed' that he was running a small private business in a near town, but he was not the only one.

Teachers regarded the fact that the majority of pupils reached grades 6 and 7 failing to read and write as the most evident example reflecting on the decreased quality of the education system in Mozambique. In the specific case of this school, for instance, teachers reported that in one of the three classes at grade 6 *“only two students read fluently and write properly”* (Damir), in the other two classes *“a minority reads fluently, the majority mumbles something, and a few still have problems in joining syllables”* (Damir). The same situation was seen at grade 7, *“Twenty students read, seventeen read perfectly, the others [in theory 60] are still trying to join vowels and consonants”* (Linda). Moreover, when teachers referred to their class they always stated the ‘official’ number of students on the roll and the average of the ‘real’ number of students attending lessons. Class sizes varied from day-to-day and decreased drastically throughout the school year. *“On the roll grade 6, class A has 40 students, but in class they are usually 25”* (Damir), *“My class should have 84 pupils, in practice 60 are still coming, out of them 40 are having good marks”* (Abiba). Within this context Latifo’s belief mentioned above – *“things have changed [...] but [...] have not changed completely”* – can be understood: even if enrolment rates have increased since Latifo began his career in this school, attendance rates were still a huge concern. However, while in the past going *house-by-house* was recalled by Latifo as an institutionalised good practice, nowadays it became an individual effort carried out by motivated teachers: *“to meet parents in their houses depends on teachers’ good will”* (Latifo).

Moreover, at the beginning of my fieldwork, teachers did not criticise openly the new curriculum for affecting poor children’s learning outcomes, but in their words the new curriculum always played a central role in the perceived ‘deterioration’ of quality in primary schools. Among teachers there was a widespread understanding that *“the new curriculum is inappropriate to the Mozambican reality”* (Jamal), *“changes are not helping teachers”* (Latifo), and *“teachers have lost their strength”* (Bernardo) in school and at community level. Jamal related the loss of strength at community level as a matter of *“losing prestige”* and Latifo linked it to the *“democratisation of the system.”* Senior teachers like them *“cannot anymore tell to other teachers what they should do”* (Jamal) to deal, for instance, with students arriving late or missing classes often. It is interesting to observe that the inappropriateness of changes is constructed around the perception that Mozambique did not have either the material resources to implement these changes or *“developed enough mentality to accept the changes”* (Damir). Mozambican reality was described as a country *“born yesterday”* (Jamal) that is *“just beginning to open its eyes”* (Zé), that *“is coming from a very low position, as many other countries did, but we are late and behind the lowest”* (Latifo). Hence, in teachers’ eyes, Mozambique had embarked on a reform that it was beyond its possibilities in order *“to align its education system with other African countries”* (David), *“to eradicate illiteracy or to show at least the appearance of a more literate country”* (Latifo). It is equally interesting to note that the deficit description used by teachers to characterise Mozambique as a country not ready for the changes

introduced by the new curriculum was also often used to describe the social, cultural and economic *realities* surrounding their teaching experiences. According to teachers this area, even if close to town, had typical characteristics of coastal rural areas, which contributed to children's poor attendance and learning outcomes. Teachers described these characteristics in terms of homogeneity of the language spoken at home (Emakhuwa) and the Muslim religious beliefs of a poor community resistant to changes and that did not value education and did not support teachers' efforts in the teaching and learning process.

Fernando, one person of the community told me the following proverb to illustrate his disappointment towards the status quo of the education system in Mozambique and the lack of vision of the people of his community *"in the land of blind people, one eye is the king"*. This means that "teachers are there not because they are intelligent or wiser, but because the others do not know anything". Fernando moved on reflecting:

Preservation [in the community] is alienation. 'Acculturation' [in school] is modernisation. However, alienation comes from many forms. Today no one is interested in olaria (pottery). Clay pots, we do not use it anymore, now everything is metal, even if the taste is not that good, even if they are expensive. Pottery was an art, this was the art of women. Clay pots could have evolved instead of disappearing. (Smiling) I am scared that if one day someone comes and tells us, in Africa drumming does not exist, we are all going to believe it.

Alienation was perceived as incapability to adapt traditions to 'modern' times instead of dismissing them or 'crystallising' them, but Fernando also believed that *"alienation comes from many forms"* and one of these forms is schooling as an ambiguous model of 'modernisation' with its dangerous messages sent to 'blind' people by 'almost' blind people.

In order to reach the position to discuss the social and cultural co-construction of the teaching and learning process and how it influences teachers' implementation of curriculum changes, the following part presents teachers' classroom practices and the meanings that teachers attach to their practices. Teachers' thinking and ideas are explored to map out the inner ambiguities and contradictions as well as the convergence of certain 'themes' that create and 'validate' teachers' practices and pedagogic strategies, and problematise a 'one-dimensional' understanding of the teaching and learning process as irremediably bounded within a transmission model. It is a picture describing what is happening in school at classroom level under teachers' subjective points of view. It is difficult to 'isolate' factors influencing practices, as it is rather a correlation of factors contributing to what is happening linked by teachers *"in a somewhat causal relationship"* (Tabulawa, 2004, p.68). Parents' and students' views are also explored to counter-balance this causal relationship.

5.2.2 Overview of a typical lesson structure and teaching practices

The study encompasses observations of 71 lessons, 44 were conducted from grades 1 to 5, and 27 in grades 6 and 7 (Table 4).

The shortest lesson consisted of 30 minutes and the longest was 1 hour and 20 minutes. However, a typical lesson had a timeframe of either 60 minutes (the majority of lessons) or 45 minutes (as prescribed by curriculum guidelines). The analysis of the whole sample of lessons observed shows that lessons follow a virtually universal structure consisting of three main parts:

1. The first part is “a brief introduction” in which “the teacher has to motivate children” (Ornilda). It usually did not last more than 10 minutes;
2. The second part is called by teachers “*facilitation of content*” (Ornilda) or “*development of lesson*” (Latifo). This part was the main and the longest part from grades 1 to 3;
3. The third part is “the consolidation of the lesson and its conclusion” (Ornilda). From grades 1 to 3, the length of this part was short, in between 5 to 10 minutes. From grade 4, this part began to occupy progressively more time. At EP2 the lesson was equally divided between the second and the third part.

Table 4: Sample of lessons observed

Participants' pseudonym	Grade taught	Subject taught	Lessons observed	Sample of lessons observed
Abiba	1A	All subjects	Portuguese, Maths	10
Jamal	1B	All subjects	Portuguese, Maths	6
Zé	3A	All subjects	Portuguese, Maths, Natural Science	6
Ornilda	3B	All subjects	Portuguese, Maths, Natural Science	10
Bernardo	4, all classes	All subjects	Portuguese, Maths,	6
Americo	5	All subjects	Portuguese, Maths, Natural Science	6
Sub-total lessons observed at EP1				44
Abel	6, all classes	Portuguese; Social Science	Portuguese	6
Latifo	6, all classes	Maths	Maths	5
Damir	6-7, all classes	Civic and Moral Education; Music Education	Civic and Moral Education, Music Education	6
Salimo	6-7, all classes	Natural Science; Physical education; Life skills	Natural Science	4
Linda	7, all classes	Portuguese; Social Science	Portuguese	3
David	7, all classes	Maths, Visual Education	Maths	3
Sub-total lessons observed at EP2				27
Total lessons observed				71

In the following sub-sections, two full lesson descriptions are broken down under the three parts of this virtually universal structure. Lesson descriptions are discussed in relation to the whole sample

of lessons observed. After each description, I review teachers' teaching practices and I draw on teachers' views to present complementary or additional ways to describe methods and strategies adopted in each part of the lesson and reasons for adopting them.

5.2.2.1 The Introduction of the lesson

A ritualistic intonation of greetings would open the first lesson of the day in each class. The extended version of greetings often ended with students' chorus saying, "*Now we are going to sit, study and be quiet*", which represented teachers' expectation of "*diligent students' behaviour*" (Ornilda). Then the teacher would write on the blackboard the date, the name of the school, the subject of the lesson, and its main topic. Only at EP1, and mainly from grades 1 to 3, children would intone a song, while the teacher would write this information. "*To create a less intimidating environment*" (Zé) for children beginning school without speaking Portuguese was the main recurrent idea behind the use of songs. Through songs "*children gain the willingness to express themselves in Portuguese*" (Ornilda), "*...get used to it*" (Jamal), and "*...feel comfortable in using it*" (Abiba). There was a repertoire of five songs used in school; two of them were included in grade 1 Portuguese textbooks. Teachers mentioned to have learned the 'pedagogic value' of songs in one of the seminars linked to the introduction of the PCEB: "*we can introduce vowels and consonants, until the end of the year*" (Jamal). However, as the extract below shows, songs were often used as part of the ritualistic practices at the start of lessons to manage the class.

Extract 1 – Jamal's ritualistic use of songs

Grade 1, Portuguese

T³⁴: I am going to, I am going to...*
 C: I am going to school*
 T: I met Antonio*
 C: Just to say AAAAAA**

After having covered all five vowels, Jamal who is still checking students' exercise books intones the beginning of a second song and kept checking students' exercise books

T: Mum, Mum I am calling you*
 C: Mum, come here! The baby is crying*
 T: But that 5 letters are not difficult to read*
 C: A, E, I, O, U*
 T: Fine. Today we are going to practice our vowels. We have already learned 'how to write i'. Who does want to write it?***

* Sung; **Spoken

Throughout the year, Abiba and Jamal used the same five words associated to the corresponding vowels and never adapted the song from the use of vowels to consonants, when they moved into the teaching of consonants. The word used for 'i' was always *Igreja* (Church), and Zé mentioned:

³⁴ T = teacher; C = class; S= Individual student; Ss = few students.

One day, I did an exercise with my class and I have realised that almost none of them had ever seen a church; in this area there are only Mosques. They were just repeating the word without understanding what it was.

As an alternative to songs, Abiba used to recount a story about good and bad students' behaviour. The shorter version of this story showed to her class how *bad behaviours* of missing class, being late, not paying attention, playing at home and not doing homework had led a pupil to 'failure' (Extract 2). According to Abiba, this story had to motivate children not to behave as "*falling children*." In the longer version of this story, one year later when the child comes back to school, *good behaviours* such as listening to the teacher, sitting in front, arriving on time, caring for textbooks and doing homework supported the child to pass all examinations. In this way, Abiba is 'passing on' ideas about good behaviour for succeeding in school.

Extract 2 – Abiba's ritualistic introduction of a lesson

Grade 1, Portuguese

T:	At the end of the year...
C:	Yes
T:	The child cried
C:	Yes
T:	Why did he cry?
C:	<i>Chumbou</i> (he failed)
T:	What?
C:	<i>Chumboooooou</i>
T:	Have you understood?
C:	Yesssss
T:	<i>Estudar é muito bom!</i>
C:	Noisy students?
C:	Noooooo
T:	To study?
C:	It is really good!

After few minutes of singing or storytelling, the first part would include a brief revision of the previous lesson or introduction to new content. I present below the descriptions of two lessons' introductions.

The description below (Box 1) shows a brief review in which Ornilda brings a small plant in class in order "*to allow students to link words with a real object. [...] The plant is part of the resources that teachers should use to make learning concrete*" (Ornilda). She first instructs the class to close all books, and then she tries to involve the class in repeating in unison three words. Few students, however, seem to know these words. After this, she explains clearly the tasks for her students. Other instructions such as "*Nobody copy, just listen to me first*", or "*Let's open the book at page 18*" were often given soon at the beginning of many lessons observed.

Box 1: Ornilda's lesson, first part**Grade 3, Natural Science**

Timeframe: 45 minutes

Around 60 students (two classes combined together)

After initial greetings, Ornilda writes up on the chalkboard, the date, the name of the school, the lesson subject 'Science', and the lesson topic 'The parts of a plant'. The class is singing.

She then invites the class to close all textbooks and look at her. She has brought a small plant; she stands in the front corner of the room while holding it up: *"We want to look at the main parts of a plant. Who does remember the parts that we have already seen? (Silence) How do we call this?"*

She touches in turn three different parts of the plant – *raízes* (roots), *caule* (stem) and *folha* (leaf). Few voices reply uttering each word. This review is done twice. More children pronounce the words the second time.

She then explains that who wants to name these parts has to come to the front, hold the plant, indicate one-by-one its parts and pronounce the words. She then hands the plant to the first volunteer, who quickly stands up and moves to the front.

Whole-class repetition of single words, vowels or consonants or simple exercises to be solved at the chalkboard by volunteers (Extract 1, last line) were methods observed to review lessons in grades 1 and 3. In the majority of lessons, rather than bringing an object, teachers would hold the textbook up, point at one illustration and ask to the class what they could see to initiate repetition.

In many cases, the introduction of a new topic was perceived as the moment in which teachers should draw on children's experiences to create a link between their experiences and the topic of the lesson. This link consisted in questions such as *"You know many fishes, don't you? What fishes do your father, brother or uncle bring home when they come back from fishing?"* (Ornilda), *"We all know domestic animals, what are the small animals living in our yard?"* (Zé).

In upper grades, there was an overall understanding that when the lesson introduced a new topic, *"if we go directly to teaching, it generates high confusion"* (Americo).

Teachers cannot just begin by saying: 'these are the cardinal numbers', otherwise they are not going to understand anything. The approach then depends on [individual] teachers, I would use a story related to counting to awaken students' attention and create an initial understanding. This helps a lot [...] For the continuation of the lesson I can just greet the class, ask some simple questions, so that students do not feel intimidated, and then from there I move directly into the continuation of the lesson. (Latifo)

Lesson analysis shows that *simple questions* mentioned by teachers to review a topic are one main initial open-ended question (*What do we understand by the word 'letter'?* – Box 2) usually simplified, rephrased and repeated in the attempt to generate a response. Bernardo's question-and-answer approach below shows his repeated attempts to involve the class in reviewing a topic previously approached.

In the description below (Box 2), Bernardo looks first for individual responses, when he perceives that nobody is going to answer, he selects a student. Carminda does not know the answer, but she selects her 'friend' that gives the answer by reading it. Then, Bernardo uses a choral response to "*bring the class back together*" to one-word answer. This sequence was common in many lessons observed. Usually, the student selected by the teacher knows the answer and he/she always reads it to the class. The class then repeats the answer. This implies that teachers select 'best' readers to answer questions that require a fully structured sentence and that students need to feel comfortable in reading to answer individually with a full sentence. When Bernardo asks the class if anyone has a different idea, nobody answers, but Bernardo does not leave any time to the class to answer. It seems to be a *ritualistic question* adopted to 'close' the review session before moving into the second part of the lesson. I comment further on the question-and-answer approach in the following sub-section, as it was one of the main methods observed for the facilitation of content.

Box 2: Bernardo's lesson, first part

Grade 4, Portuguese

Timeframe: 60 minutes

Around 80 students (two classes combined together)

Bernardo writes up on the chalkboard, the date, the name of the school, the lesson subject 'Portuguese', and the lesson topic 'A letter'. While Bernardo writes the class waits silently.

- T: To write a letter to someone is a new topic for us?
 C: NOOOO
 T: What do we understand by the word letter?
 C: (Silence)
 T: Could you please tell me what letter means to you?
 C: (Silence)
 T: Could you please clarify your teacher's doubt? We said that this is not a new topic, don't we? So what is a letter?
 C: (Silence)
 T: Carminda, could you please say what you think letter is.
 S: (Carminda stands up. She does not answer).
 T: Could you please select one of your friends to give me this answer?
 (Carminda selects a student)
 S: It is used to send a message to a friend
 (The student reads from her notes in a weak voice difficult to hear)
 T: So what is a letter?
 Ss: A message (few voices)
 T: WHAT?
 C: A message (voices are stronger)
 T: Does anyone have a different idea?
 C: (Silence)
 T: Today, we are going to see how we structure a written message.

This part has taken a bit less than 10 minutes.

5.2.2.2 The facilitation of content

From grades 1 to 3, this part consisted of at least 25 minutes reiteration of different variations of one given oral or written exercise. The second part of Ornilda's lesson (Box 3) illustrates this format. The description below shows that: out of 60 students, only 25 repeated individually the words and six of them, who failed the first attempt, were given the opportunity to repeat them at the end of the lesson. I noticed that Ornilda moved to whole class repetition when there were no more volunteers.

Box 3: Ornilda's lesson, second part

After a brief introduction, in the first 15 minutes, almost 25 children go as volunteers or are summoned by Ornilda, to take the plant and name three parts. Almost 10 fail to remember the word 'leaf', and almost everyone has difficulties in remembering at least one of the three words. Ornilda encourages them "One more, don't be afraid... it is easy", "If nobody comes I have to summon someone, so you". A child stands in the front of the room touching a 'leaf' but he does not say the word:

- T: In Emakhuwa you know it, do you?
 S: Yes
 T: So, tell me
 S: *Ncoterá*
 T: Please, stay here and pay attention [the child was left standing with other 5 'colleagues' who had the same problem]

Then, Ornilda takes the plant back, draws a tree up to the chalkboard, writes the three words practised, and introduces two new words – *flores* (flowers) and *tronco* (stem). "How do we call this part?" She indicates the new parts with the chalk; only few students know the words.

Another 15 minutes are spent to repeat five words at unison. Ornilda indicates one by one each one of the 5 parts, and the class repeats them. Finally, those children left standing were summoned one-by-one to repeat the words, while she indicates each part of the drawing. "Good boy, you can go back to seat! Let's clap our hands". Then she calls three volunteers, she hands over the chalk, each volunteer has to name one-by-one the different parts, and then the class repeats after them.

- T: So, how many parts do we have? [*Então, quantas são as partes?*]
 C: 5
 T: What are these parts? [*Quais são?*]
 C: 5
 T: I did not asked *Quantas* but *Quais*! Have you understood?
 C: Sim
 T: Really? Are you going to forget?
 C: No
 T: Now you can pass the illustration and write the names in your exercise book

Ornilda commented after her lessons that in every lesson most of the vocabulary is new for students and the pronunciation is difficult. "Repetition helps students in memorising new words" (Ornilda) and "it helps the teacher to understand if students are able to pronounce words correctly" (Zé). All teachers in EP1 expressed the same concern. However, Ornilda was aware that even with repetition many students still had difficulties in remembering the words at the end of the lesson. Ornilda believed that the class had difficulties in understanding basic instructions. She mentioned the episode in which she asked "how many parts has a plant?" and soon after "what are these

parts” but the class answered five to both questions. *“Have you heard? They did not even understand the difference between quantos (how many) and quais (What)”*. However, another possible reading of this event could be that children are used to repetition and changing the question abruptly without repeating the answer given, led them to reply automatically *“five”*. Besides the plant, her drawing was also a strategy to support students’ memorisation of words with visual aids. At EP1, during the second part of the lesson, teachers used drawings to illustrate words or numbers only in Maths and Natural Science lessons. Ornilda was the only teacher observed bringing ‘uncommon’ objects (a plant, dried fishes, little bananas) to complement her exercises or explanations. The other teachers mainly used sticks, little stones and coins.

For Abiba *“repetition is like a song, repeating, repeating, repeating until they do not forget”*. Abiba, as many other teachers did, linked the need to repeat to the fact that *“children go home and forget everything”* (Abiba) because parents do not support them at home. Moreover, Abiba mentioned that traditional storytelling uses repetition. *“Repetition maintains children’s attention”* (Abiba) and children are used to it. For this reason, writing exercises in her class were also turned into whole class repetition of how to write a vowel. For instance, to write ‘e’, her strategy was to accompany hand movements with oral repetition. She used to turn her shoulders to her class, lift her right hand up and accompany the movements with a chorus *“first we go up, up, we turn, and then down, down”*. Throughout the year each vowel or consonant had its ‘own’ movements and associated ‘chorus’:

They first follow me and write a letter up in the air, then in the sandy ground or in their desks, then they practice at the chalkboard, finally in their exercise books. I like this way of teaching; it supports the children and me. (Abiba)

Besides supporting memorisation, teachers believed that to repeat the same set of exercises across the year had a positive impact to encourage participation *“they feel safe, they have done it already, they feel confident”* (Abiba).

For instance, pupils when practising the times table would know already what teachers expected from them. To explain the times table, for instance the seven times table, the teacher would intone, *“I went to the market, the first time I came back with seven mangos, how many mangos do I have?”* (Zé). The class would answer and then the teacher would ask for a volunteer to check if the answer was right. Children knew they had to go to the chalkboard to draw seven circles within a bigger circle already prepared by the teacher, count the little circles and write the number. The same exercise would be repeated for the whole times-table. A variation of this exercise involved the teacher’s drawings of seven mangos in each circle, the class counting each ‘mango’ and one volunteer writing the corresponding number. This sequence was observed in both Ornilda’s and Zé’s lessons. Overall, teachers believed that students in Maths did not have any problem; they

participated and interacted more than in Portuguese classes. *"They are used to the Market-Mathematics. You just need to bring examples from the market. They buy things, they sell them"* (Jamal). Zé mentioned that the idea of using the circle with inside some kind of fruit was 'recalling' the organisation of the market in which the 'goods' to be sold are organised in small 'units'. Children seemed to enjoy repetition, participated loudly in choral repetition and they always showed more enthusiasm for participating in written exercises at the blackboard, rather than oral individual repetition.

The analysis of lessons shows that grade 4 is a 'transitional' grade in terms of teaching methods. Bernardo either used the methods observed above with the predominance of whole-class repetition of a given exercise or he moved into what was observed at EP2 level: teachers' explanations framed within a question-and-answer approach. I use the second part of the description of Bernardo's lesson (Box 4) to comment on a question-and-answer approach.

To phrase the sentence or question in a way that students have to fill only the last word (*A written message is when your teacher uses...*) was perceived as an approach to involve more students than those who always reply individually. In the description below an open-ended question *'How do we structure a written message?'* was soon 'dismantled' by Bernardo who then states the first component of a letter (the place and date). When many students repeat at unison a full-memorised sentence *"I am writing you this letter to know how you are"*, Bernardo seemed to be positively surprised. It happened rarely in a question-and-answer approach. He was not expecting it. The whole class usually repeats full sentences during the teaching of 'reading', when the teacher or 'good' student-readers read a sentence first, and then the class repeats it. He explained me that the topic was not *"really"* new. The content of thematic units is repeated throughout grades with a different level of difficulties and different kinds of competences required. He commented smiling *"Sometimes they remember what we studied in the previous year"* (Bernardo).

Collective repetition of a given answer was perceived as a way *"to call everyone's attention on individual answers"* (Latifo), and *"to emphasise the importance of the answer given"* (Abel). *"Through collective repetition the voice gets louder"* (Bernardo). Teachers take it as a sign that more students, even "slower learners" (Latifo) are following. Hence, *"it gives time for those who did not hear the answer the first time, or did not catch it straight away to join the others and participate"* (Latifo). Overall, choral responses to ritualised yes/no questions, such as *"Is it right?"*, *"Can we move on?"*, *"Have we understood?"* represented one consistent form of teacher-student interaction to move the lesson further. Students' enthusiasm in volunteering and participating loudly in choral repetitions decreased from grade to grade. The more children progressed, the more they became

silent. *"In grades 1 and 2 children participate and talk, but they reach grade 6 and they do not talk anymore"* (Damir).

Box 4: Bernardo's lesson, second part

Bernardo explains that a message can either take an oral or written format and asks the class to give the definition of an oral message. Students do not answer. He gives both definitions while writing them on the blackboard, then he gives an example:

- T: I am not coming to school and I ask Zé to tell you. This is an...?
 C: Oral message (Class answers at unison)
 T: A written message is when your teacher uses...
 S: A pen (just one voice)
 T: and...?
 Ss: A paper (few voices).
 T: so, this message is...?
 S: written
 T: How?
 Ss: written (voices are stronger)
 T: Are we together, are not we?
 Ss: Yes (few voices)
 T: How do we structure a written message?
 C: (Silence)
 T: How do we begin a letter?
 C: (Silence)
 T: We first write the place and the date. Where do we live?
 Ss: Pemba
 T: Where?
 C: Pemba (the class answers at unison)
 T: What date is today?
 C: Seventh March

Bernardo says that they need an initial greeting, and asks the class what greeting could be used. The class answers again at unison. Bernardo writes the name of each part at the chalkboard and under each part he writes what the class tells him.

- T: So after initial greeting, what do we have?
 Ss: An introduction
 T: What?
 C: An introduction
 T: What kind of introduction can we write?
 Ss: *I am writing you this letter to know how you are*
 T: That is good! Did we all understand it?
 C: Yes

The same sequence of question and interaction was repeated for the 'body of the letter' and 'final greetings'.

Finally, feedback consisted mainly in accepting and praising the right individual answer and involving the class to clap their hands. In lower grades, teachers mentioned the need to involve the class in praising 'the right answer' or volunteers in correcting the wrong answer in order to encourage students' participation and develop an 'attitude of competition' among pupils (Zé, Ornilda, Abiba). While receiving class' applause would *"encourage students' participation through the wish of receiving the same treatment"* (Zé), the selection of a volunteer serves as a model *"to*

motivate students by receiving the authority to correct the others" (Ornilda). For instance, Ornilda (Box 3) confers to three 'best' students the 'authority' and the 'pride' to do what a teacher usually does and what she has previously done (to name one-by-one the different parts, to initiate repetition). Instead, the practice of asking the student to select a friend to answer was done so that you *"do not choose the same pupils over and over again"* (Damir). According to teachers, students often chose 'real friends' rather than 'best' students. At EP2, apart from few students willing to talk or being more confident, the others when they had to talk covered their eyes, mouth or face with both hands and answered with a low voice, which was not easy to hear. Students never asked a question individually to the teacher in any of the lessons observed, even when the teacher tried to encourage them to ask.

Competition was prompted by teachers through questions such as *"I see just girls at the blackboard, where are the boys?"* (Bernardo) or in terms of younger and older students in Abiba's class. Ornilda and Abiba also mentioned the need to be *"sometimes harsh on children"* (Ornilda) because the feeling of 'embarrassment' – making the students who answered wrongly stand in the corner of the class or remark in front of the class the dislike of their negative performance during assessment – would motivate child's self-improvement: *"[child thinks] that day they embarrassed me but I have to reach that level so they will clap their hands for me"* (Abiba). Latifo was the only teacher who often praised and thanked a wrong answer, *"Well, at least you tried, thank you!"*. The combination of praising the right answer, promoting competition and letting students correct a wrong answer was seen as a strategy to motivate students, and *"force participation in activities"* (Abel).

5.2.2.3 Consolidation of the lesson

The third part consisted in students' individual copying of definitions or exercises practised during the second part. From grades 1 to 3, the time left for this final part seemed always too short, in between 5 to 10 minutes. Teachers frequently left the class alone, and then they came back to check children's exercise books. I remained in class while teachers were outside: many children did not try to copy the exercises, they did not have any pencils or pens, and the majority had just the time to copy the name of the school and initial information about the date, content and lesson rather than the examples. Ornilda's lesson (Box 5) is one of the few lessons in which a teacher asked pupils to draw an illustration and write the 'words' next to the illustration, rather than copying a list of words or full sentences. She integrated the strategy of complementing students' memorisation of words with visual aids throughout the lesson, instead of using it simply as a ritualistic introduction. This was an uncommon feature in the whole sample observed. *"When children go back and see the drawing they will remember what the words mean. Otherwise, those words will not have anymore any meaning"* (Ornilda).

Box 5: Ornilda's lesson, third part

Children spend the last 10 minutes of the lesson to draw and write the names of different parts. Ornilda leaves the class, then comes back, she holds the plant again: *"Let's repeat it one last time. What is this? ...and this?"* Class repeats the words at unison. *"Ok, anyone who has finished can go for the break."*

Moreover, Bernardo's conclusion of his lesson (Box 6) represents another 'atypical' conclusion. In general, it was the only example of group-work in the whole sample of lessons observed, and one of the few cases in which students did not need to copy definitions written at the chalkboard. As the segment below shows, Bernardo left the class alone and did not check what was going on in each group. When I asked a group of five students chatting on their own what they wrote in the letter to me, another student next to them mediated promptly *"They cannot tell you, they do not speak Portuguese."*

Box 6: Bernardo's lesson, third part

Bernardo asks his students to form 4 groups. They have to write a letter to me. *"You cannot copy what we have just written and you cannot leave just one colleague writing alone. The group has to contribute with new ideas. Do we agree?"* Bernardo intervenes only to divide some students who formed a group of more than 30 students. Each group consisted of two or three students sitting 'properly' around one desk and the rest of the group was all around them, either sitting above one desk or standing on a desk.

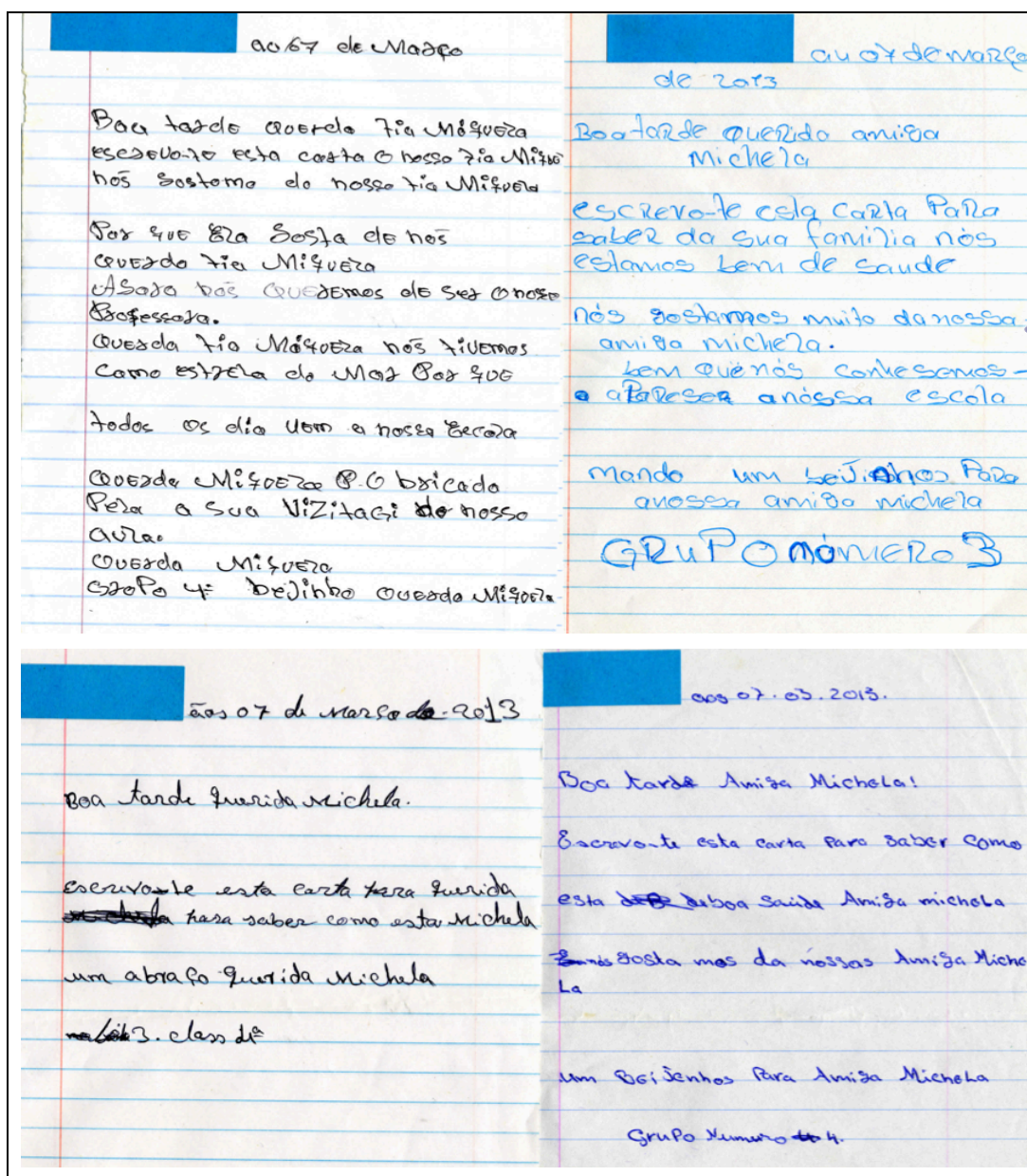
I could overhear just the name of the parts in Portuguese *"Greetings, greetings"*. The language of each group was Emakhuwa. In each group there was someone searching in the book for an example. Bernardo waited outside. After no more than 10 minutes the majority of students in each group seemed to be busy with their own chatting, and only a few were still interacting with the student-writer. Some students came to ask how to write my name. After 20 minutes since he had left, Bernardo came back to correct each letter. Then, each group offered me its letter.

All four letters (Box 7) had 'place', 'date' and 'initial' greetings on it. Two of them moved from the introduction directly to final greetings. All the introductions maintained the sentence, *"I write you this letter to know how you are..."*. The two letters that 'covered' the 'body of the letter' tried to introduce some variation compared to the examples written at the chalkboard.

At EP2, teachers always instructed students to copy full summaries of explanations, definitions and exercises. For Maths lessons the 'summary' consisted of examples, explanation of examples and written definitions. The activity of "copying-writing" took a significant proportion of the lesson at or for grades 6 and 7, usually half of the lesson (around 20 and 30 minutes). In the meantime, teachers would finalise the summary or write down students' homework. Then, they would often sit next to me to explain the reasons behind the methods used during their lessons. These summaries

were seen as a strategy to simplify the standard Portuguese of textbooks. Teachers referred to textbooks' language as "the Portuguese of Portugal" (Abel), which was "far away from students' comprehension possibilities" (Abel) because besides the fact that students had a poor vocabulary, often the terms used in their textbooks were different from their "Mozambican Portuguese" (Abel). Moreover, the exercise of copying was perceived as a response to students' poor writing skills. It was valued important "to force them to write down, practise writing, and improve their skills" (David).

Box 7: Letters addressed to me by Bernardo's students



The focus on 'copying' was linked to the examination system. Students needed to know how to write properly "for having at least a chance to pass final examinations" (David).

Michela: *...But if they do not read, how do they read and understand questions during assessments?*

David: *Just like that, either they fail or they copy. If they knew how to write, we could focus on conversation, but they do not. When the time for exams comes, you can copy a name, you can copy anything. This is the reason for their poor results. They do not know what they do, but they reached grade 7, and we should ask why.*

'Assim mesmo' (Just like that) was one of the most recurrent expressions used by teachers to acknowledge the limits of the teaching and learning process in this school, but also teachers' complicity towards a situation that in some cases was not making much sense. Yet, this was the way of doing things and going on as if there were not many other options available with these students in 'this context' and within this 'system'.

5.2.3 Teachers' understanding of teaching and learning

Teachers defined teaching as the act of *"transmitting knowledge"* (Latifo) and *"delivering the content"* (Zé) in order *"to prepare students for final assessment"* (Abel). Jamal's definition of teaching as *"making someone know about a specific thing"* seems to be the literal translation from the Emakhuwa term 'osomiha', which means to teach. The causative suffix -ih indicates *"the action of teaching as transferred from someone to someone else who receives it"* (School Director). While the construction of learners as receivers of knowledge is embedded in the verb 'osomiha', the image of passive learners is also conveyed in the following understanding of learning. Learning happens when *"teachers are well prepared about curriculum knowledge"* (Latifo) and students are able to *"collect something"* (Latifo), *"grasp an information, a message spoken by the teacher"* (Ornilda), and *"retain what the teacher explains"* (Abiba). According to teachers, in order to 'participate' in the teaching and learning process students *"have to listen first"* (Jamal) and *"be active listeners"* (Abel), that is to *"follow teachers' instructions"* (Ornilda), *"comprehend them"* (Abel), *"answer questions and solve exercises"* (David).

Teachers' reasoning underlying their practices points to the need to maintain a simple structure in order to encourage participation, motivate learners and create a safe environment for learning. This structure is further strengthened by the need to 'repeat' and 'reiterate' the same 'style' of whole-class teaching and learning tasks to allow participation. The analysis of classroom observations shows that teachers adopted what in Bernstein's (2000) terms is defined as a performance model of pedagogy. Within strongly framed lessons' structures, teachers explicitly control *"the selection of the communication, its sequencing (what comes first, what comes second), its pacing (the rate of expected acquisition)"* (Bernstein, 2000, p.12-13). This model is evident in the extracts and descriptions given above. Teacher-student interaction is strongly framed within the methods reviewed; teachers always mark the transition to the following sequence of the lesson or set of

questions; they say explicitly what students have to do. When teachers do not spell out what is expected in detail (the times table, for instance), they seem to weaken the frame but it is part of a ritual in which “[students] have done it already” (Abiba), and they know what is expected from them. Hence, teachers seem to focus on transmission of knowledge to be absorbed by learners within predictable lessons’ structures that moved from the beginning to the end within a whole-class format, ritualised patterns of teacher-students interaction and quite homogenous sets of learning tasks and activities, repeated across subjects and grades in order to allow participation. However, “if pedagogy combines the act of teaching with the attendant discourses, then the explication of values and ideas will be essential to the process of making sense of observable practice” (Alexander, 2008, p.78).

Meanwhile teachers’ *attendant discourses* seem to echo learner-centred dispositions, as for instance, the idea of Market-Maths adopted by Zé and Ornilda, the role of songs to ‘*create less intimidating environments*’, initial questions to link the topic of the lesson to children’s prior experiences, or teachers’ repeated efforts to involve the class in answering questions and participating. Recitation and repetition become ways to cover the content, as if teachers and students were rehearsing a ‘script’. Delivering this seems more important than ensuring the full participation or understanding of students. In this rehearsal, teachers try to bring the resources they have (mainly chalks and textbook illustrations) or additional resources (coins, stones or sticks) taking into account that the majority of students do not read and write and have serious problems in understanding Portuguese. Teachers at times make fun of their ‘position’, “*the school is not for the teacher to talk alone, may be someone told you that I am a radio, but I am not*” (David), or exhort the class to respond, “*lessons do not belong to the teacher, they belong to you. Help your teacher, he wants to hear your voices*” (Latifo).

Recitation, collective answers, and question-and-answer are undoubtedly tools for filling communication gaps in teacher-student interaction and cover the content. However, what teachers are also trying to do is “*to recover those who can manage*” (Americo). “*As it is said, in any war there are victims, some of them will not manage, but we must try*” (Americo). Within this view, simple and repeated activities are needed in a simple narration-style to allow participation not just from the few that read and write and are “quicker”. There were occasions in which Latifo and Damir used to say (smiling) “*I do not want to hear the same five answering my questions or see them at the chalkboard*” to ‘force’ other students to participate. In their evaluation of the year of schooling, almost all teachers mentioned as their major successes their ability to cover all content (for those few learners who managed to follow), while at the same time having recovered ‘x’ number of students. In this way, “*children that struggle more can gain at least something*” (David and Latifo), that it is not even the content itself but the possibility to read or write. In these terms, teachers

privileged a performance model of pedagogy (Bernstein, 2000) but embedded it in *learner-centred discourses*, in which the framing regulating pedagogic practices has to be maintained strong in order to reach the objective of ‘recovering students’. The majority of teachers had ‘lists of students’ in each class about who was reading fluently, those who were joining syllables, and those who did not read at all. *“If sometimes I am still going back at the primer, it is to support them in joining syllables”* (Abel). Americo (grade 5) and Linda (grade 7) distributed photocopies of exercises with syllables from time to time to students, *“those who are interested in it, bring me back the exercises done, and I can help them”* (Linda). Americo used also to avoid the break-time and remain in class with the students in the list of those who did not read. Bernardo “enjoyed” the initiative and replicated it in his class.

If on the one hand, teachers’ practices were meant to be tailored around teachers’ perceived needs of their students – even if songs, stories and questions building on children’s experiences become ritualistic introductions partially explored in the process of ‘knowledge transmission’ – on the other hand, it can be inferred that the LoLT constructs their practices. Teachers always relate their practice to the LoLT as a language that children do not master, do not feel confident in using and it challenges their understanding of basic instruction. Patterns of classroom interaction can be seen as a response to the fact that *“the class is silent”* (Abel). However, children’s L1 does not feature in the two full descriptions unless when Ornilda (Box 3) asks to a student to use Emakhuwa to repeat a word he does not remember in Portuguese (and then the child waits standing on a side until the end of the lesson, when he is given the opportunity to repeat the word in Portuguese). The flexibility of the new language policy does not seem to be recognised. The following section deals with the ‘factors’ that teachers identified as having an impact on the teaching and learning process. It maps out teachers’ assumptions about the appropriate language of the teaching and learning process, their understandings of who their students are, and attitudes towards students’ social backgrounds in order to further reflect on discourses underpinning teachers’ practices.

5.3 Re-viewing factors: teachers’ beliefs and attitudes

5.3.1 “Tell me honestly, who have you ever heard speaking Portuguese”

The use of Portuguese in early grades is structured around ‘words’, students are rarely challenged to engage in constructing a full sentence without either reading from their notes or repeating memorised sentences. Damir commented often after his lessons *“children are afraid to talk, to express themselves [...] If I had used Emakhuwa, they would have answered.”* All teachers expressed frequently this concern. They assumed that more students than those who participate voluntarily or answer when summoned understand the questions and know the answers, but: *“If*

[...] they make mistakes then the class will laugh at them, hence children do not want to use Portuguese” (Zé).

Have you seen that child? He was making noise, and beating his leg with his fist. He understood, he wanted to talk, but he did not know how to structure a full sentence in Portuguese. (Ornilda)

Portuguese as LoLT is undoubtedly a key factor influencing the regular structure explored above. Teachers identified the linguistic discontinuity between the languages used by children, at home and in school, as an important characteristic of this school influencing students’ low achievements and limited participation in class. Children’s daily life at home and in the community is surrounded by their mother tongue. The exposure to Portuguese language, for almost all students, begins in school and it is restricted to school hours:

Children at home speak Emakhuwa, they grow up talking Emakhuwa [...] they have nobody who speaks Portuguese with them and, usually, these children begin to speak Portuguese in school. Here they learn how to say good morning, how are you? What is your name? All of this, they learn in school. (Abiba)

They also acknowledge the mismatch between the level of language proficiency required by textbooks and the ‘real’ level of their students. According to teachers *“this makes the process more problematic”* (Abiba) because soon from the beginning the content of teaching and learning is difficult and it becomes progressively *“beyond children’s capabilities”* (Americo).

I use Abiba’s discourses and practices as examples to introduce and illustrate the apparent incongruences between teachers’ recognition of a school context in which the LoLT is not accessible to children, their strict ‘application’ of Portuguese-only discourse, and negative attitudes towards students’ use of Emakhuwa in class. I integrate other teachers’ voices to complement Abiba’s perceptions and ideas. On many occasions, Abiba refers to the LoLT as a language that does not facilitate learning and limits students’ participation in classroom: *“by using Portuguese what children can do is just to answer Yes or No”, “[...] with Portuguese Language alone we are not going anywhere.”*

This view is consistent throughout the school year and all teachers often shared the same view with me after their lesson. However, the following extracts from classroom observations show Abiba’s attitudes and behaviours towards children’s use of Emakhuwa in class. Abiba delegitimises its use and through her behaviour she makes explicit the idea that Portuguese is the language to be used by children in class and students are not allowed to use their mother tongue with her.

Extract 3 – Abiba's delegitimation of children's use of Emakhuwa in class

Grade 1, Portuguese

Abiba is calling one by one her students to check their presence.

- T: Yusuf?
 S: *Estou* ('I am here')
 T: Fatima
 S: '*Lapé?*' (Emakhuwa word used to reply when someone calls your name, meaning 'Yes?')
 T: (faking giggles and calling for class' attention) Class have you heard she does not even know how to answer.

The class joins Abiba in giggling while she continues to check children's presence.

Extract 4 – Abiba's 'indirect' enactment of language-separation policy

Grade 1, Portuguese

Abiba moves among desks. She wants to check children's exercise books. Meanwhile, she uses Emakhuwa to explain to some children how to hold a pencil or to ask where they left their pencils and books.

- T: Who has already finished with the exercise?
 S: (standing up and raising his hand) '*Mi*' (Emakhuwa form to say 'I') –
 T: It's not '*Mi*' is '*Eu*' ('I'). This is really sad, you know?

Abiba makes an upset face and moves forward to the next child, without checking the child's exercise book. She keeps using Emakhuwa to individual children, and then suddenly she turns and complains to two students, who were speaking Emakhuwa among them, "*You too, are not you ashamed to speak dialect in class?*"

In the first case, instead of correcting Fatima, Abiba derides her and moves on. In the second case, Abiba manifests her disappointment to the child answering in Emakhuwa to her question, who was however the 'quickest' student to finish the exercise. She does not check his exercise and moves on. This extract also shows a common practice. In this specific case, Abiba code switches to understand why some children are not doing the exercise, and explain how to 'properly' hold a pencil. Teachers often used Emakhuwa 'off-stage' (Arthur, 1996) with individual children to clarify a task previously presented to the whole class, and in rare occasions to discipline students.

In general, I observed in class a clear and taken-for-granted application of Portuguese-only discourse and a limited use of code switching. Code switching, which refers to the alternation of at least two languages in the same conversation, was used with the main objective of repairing the flow of recitation with two leading functions: to translate new words and to check students' comprehension of words. The following extract from Zé gives an example of how code switching served "to oil the teacher–pupil interaction, which had been temporarily blocked" (Chimbutane, 2013, p.321).

Extract 5 – Zé's use of Emakhuwa to check on students' comprehension and 'prepare' recitation
Grade 3, Mathematics

- T: Who can borrow me some little coins?
S: (Silence)
T: Do you know what does '*pequeno*' (little) mean?
C: Yesssss
T: How do you say it in Emakhuwa?
Ss: *Ya'nkani*
T: Yes, exactly. How do you say coin in Emakhuwa?
Ss: *Nsurukhu*
T: How many little coins like this one [showing a 10 meticais coin] we need to have '*a nota*' of one hundred meticais?
S: (Silence)
T: That money made by paper, how is it call in Emakhuwa?
Ss: *Nsurukhu kanta*
Ss: Yes, in Portuguese is '*nota*'
T: So, how many?
Ss: Ten
T: Let's see if it is right. Ten plus ten?
C: Twenty
T: Plus ten? (the class answers until they reach 100 and at any answer the teacher draw one more coin at the chalkboard)

During classroom observations, Jamal's use of code switching is the only example in which a teacher used pupil's L1 'on-stage' (Arthur, 1996) to explain the meaning of new vocabulary and support children's understandings. Instead of using the common practices and questions observed in the extract above – *How do you say 'it' in Emakhuwa?* – Jamal introduced the word 'island' by phrasing a question in terms of traditional riddle: "*Ixiani? Ixiani? Irukureriye ni maci?*" (*What is, what is that thing surrounded by water?*). The whole class answered in Emakhuwa. Then Jamal asked if anyone knew it in Portuguese, few students answered, and Jamal asked the class again to repeat it in Portuguese. Finally, he repeated the riddle in Portuguese and almost the whole class answered. There were no other examples in which teachers formulated whole sentences in Emakhuwa. However, during interviews, grades 1 and 3 teachers referred to Emakhuwa as a language that "*we are forced to use it, when children do not understand*" (Zé), and "*it is a waste of time because we have to repeat everything twice, first in Portuguese then Emakhuwa*" (Ornila). Nevertheless, the examples used by teachers to clarify its use are related to translation of words:

If you show them the book and you ask 'Children what is this?' They do not know the word in Portuguese, they answer in their mother tongue, they say 'Iraue (beard)' and we have to translate it. (Abiba)

Overall, in lower grades, pupils can code switch when prompted by teachers or when they are asked what images they see in their textbooks or to answer questions that usually produce a list of words. However, the rule that regulates who can and who cannot use Emakhuwa was taken-for-granted by teachers and never explained to students. Data suggests that Emakhuwa 'on-stage' was seen by teachers as a shared language with their students only as the 'last option available' to

make recitation flows. In lower grades the focus seems to be on discouraging children in using Emakhuwa and tracing boundaries between in-school and out-of-school languages to enforce separation – *“Here is not to talk dialect”* (Ornilda); *“The dialect stays at home”* (Abiba); *“You, down there, stop talking Emakhuwa or you go out”* (Jamal). On the contrary, in upper grades teachers tried their best to make students feel comfortable in using Portuguese: *“I do understand your challenges, but if you sit on your fears, it does not solve your problems”* (Damir); *“Are you afraid? You do not have to be; here if we make mistakes we are together to support each other”* (Abel).

I looked at teachers’ interpretation of language policy requirements and teachers’ views on language and education to understand their language choices in class. Teachers did not acknowledge the flexibility of the new educational policy that allowed them to use students’ L1 in the monolingual programme in Portuguese “whenever needed” (INDE, 2003, p.7) and which advocated its use also in upper grades (INDE, 2003). The limited use of code switching in teachers’ classroom practices is consistent with an “ideological residue” (Chimbutane, 2013, p.323) of language policies that prior and after Independence banned Mozambican languages from school. Overall, teachers embraced the belief that they cannot teach in Emakhuwa because their school adopted the Monolingual Programme. Teachers construct the ‘school system’ as either implementing a monolingual or bilingual programme. This suggests that teachers through their language choice are enacting a monolingual language policy and adhering to policy requirements. However, taking into account children’s needs, teachers created their own rules about when, how, and in what grades *“Emakhuwa is or it is not acceptable in large percentages”* (Latifo).

I am beginning to realise that to teach in Emakhuwa would make sense [...] but grade 5 is a mature class that has final examinations, it would not make sense to teach in Emakhuwa. (Americo)

They allow the use of Emakhuwa, but in grade 6 it is not acceptable in large percentages. In my case, I think, I can use it just 1% or 2% [of time]. In lower grades, it could be used more to frame children’s learning. (Latifo)

Teachers’ main pedagogical argument of the need to limit the use of code switching relates to the understanding that *“in school the language that children need to learn has to be spoken”* (Zé). *“You learn a language by using it [...] If they do not speak they do not learn”* (Damir). Hence, a teacher *“can speak Emakhuwa in class, but students cannot be encouraged to use it, otherwise they will not learn Portuguese”* (Latifo). Moreover, the understanding that *“school is the only place where children have access to Portuguese”* (Zé) and *“...have the possibility to learn it”* (Salimo) strengthens teachers’ positions.

At times I forbid them to speak to me in Emakhuwa [after class]. Every day when I come to school and I see the use of Emakhuwa increasing, it bothers me. I asked my colleagues to avoid talking to them in Emakhuwa after lessons [...] to fight against its use, but they do not agree. (Latifo)

This shows another important point, outside-class children are allowed to use (and they do use) Emakhuwa to interact with their teachers. After classes, teachers used Emakhuwa with their students to understand why a child missed classes or to know about other 'missing' students, their situations at home and where did they live. On the rare occasions where parents visited school during or after classes, teachers switched to Emakhuwa to discuss with them.

Grade 6 students' voices are interesting to be heard in relation to the language issue. Students understand Portuguese as "a very difficult *'thing' to learn*". The interesting aspect is that students rather than seeing Portuguese as the language that mediates their learning, "*to learn to speak Portuguese*" is what the group perceived as one of the main reasons for coming to school. When I asked them to re-think about their first years of schooling and imagine the possibility to use Emakhuwa for learning their favourite subjects, their reactions were "*I do not want to learn Emakhuwa*", "*we know it already*", "*what we do not know is Portuguese*". However, I had the suspicion that the concept of *learning* Maths or Science *through* Emakhuwa rather than learning the language itself was lost in the translation. When I tried to explain it again, the class giggled and divided between those who defended Portuguese-only and those who began to think, "*Yes, in this way yes, I would like to use both*". They assimilated the idea that "*to learn Portuguese is a complicated task*", and "*it is a fight*" because "*it is a huge language*" and "*our heads are lazy*". In the group discussions with grade 6 students, to speak Portuguese in class emerges as one rule of students' good behaviour. In doing so "*a student respects the teacher*".

5.3.2 Teachers' accounts about the community, its 'culture' and children

This school is isolated, even if its location is at the centre of the bairro. In this area we find students fishing, selling peas or 'mandase'. This aspect is the focus. School isolation begins with its own community [...] The community is not able to impose on their children the need to go to school. (Abel)

This section focuses on the linkages identified by teachers between the lack of the community's recognition of the value of education and students' poor participation, progression, and achievements. Overall, teachers believed that the community does not perceive education as a priority for its children. In teachers' views, the lack of parents' recognition of the value of formal education and, in turn, meagre parental involvement in children's education relate to two interlinked aspects: the location of the school and "*the Muslim culture of this complex community*" (Damir):

The northern coastal area has always had problems with formal education and Portuguese language, I do not know exactly how [...] but this has something to do with religious beliefs. (Damir)

I do not know why, but the religious practices of this community and schooling do not match. (Zé)

Teachers did not identify themselves with the culture and worldviews of the community. During conversations, culture and religion overlap. Teachers explore the culture of this community through its religious norms, rituals, and ceremonies. Culture is *“their way of dressing, their capulanas³⁵, their lenços³⁶ [...] the way they treat some disease, rituals, funerals, ceremonies”* (Abiba); it is *“their ways of living, and here in this area I am going to talk about the Muslim religion [...] the culture of the Madrasa and fasting”* (David). Culture-religion is seen as a barrier for the teaching and learning process because, in their opinions, parents prioritise religious education, holidays and practices over the school system:

On Friday afternoon classrooms are empty, students have to go to the Mosque.
(Bernardo)

During Ramadan there is no one in school. Those who are around are sleeping in class because they are starving. (Zé)

They acknowledged the fundamental dimension occupied by religion at community level, but this dimension cannot be encouraged if it is believed that it negatively interferes with the teaching and learning process: *“Muslim religion comes to contribute to the learning difficulties of the student”* (Zé):

I cannot defend the culture of this community. They are different; Arabs influenced this area for many centuries... Here traditions are different. I am Makhuwa, we have different habits and costumes passed through generations, and they belonged to our ancestors [...] Here, I do not know, I never tried to deepen my knowledge; it is a complex community.
(Jamal)

Teachers, by fragmenting Makhuwa culture into many smaller sub-cultures – *“Makhuwa from the inner land, Makhuwa from the coast, Makhuwa from Nampula”* (Bernardo) – and by focusing on community religious identity, dismissed the possibility of understanding the ‘culture’ of this community:

There are various ramifications of Makhuwa people [...] each community has its own culture and traditions, I cannot talk about the culture of this community. (Ornila)

About the culture of this community, I don’t know. (Zé)

It is difficult to talk about the traditions of this community, I am not from here. (Abiba)

According to teachers, the lack of parents’ support in every aspect of children’s school life is manifested in the fact that parents do not provide children with pencils and exercises books, do not care if their children arrive on time in school, and do not show up when called in school. *“One year can pass by without the majority of my students’ parents showing up. You have to insist. Call them at least twice before they come”* (Zé). This is also perceived as lack of recognition of their profession at community level:

³⁵ Women’s clothes made of colourful and bright pieces of cotton. One piece is used as skirt and the other piece can be used to cover the hair.

³⁶ Smaller pieces of cotton (usually with darker colours and smaller drawings) used to cover their hair.

If you call parents, they speak shamelessly 'This [referred to a boy] was selling mandase. What do you want? Are you going to feed my child?'. For this reason, I believe teachers are not well seen in this community. (Ornilda)

Teachers believe that parents' attitudes towards their work were related to a degraded status of their profession at community level and whether they do or they do not do their work in school, community is not interested in what happens in school:

The community makes no demands on us. If pupils return early they are not asked, 'did the teacher not come today? (Abel)

Parents leave with us the responsibility to teach their children how to read and write, but they do not help them at home. At home, children are left on their own. (David)

Teachers complained about the fact that after or before school children do errands in groups in the *bairro* carrying the youngest, while parents are not at home. According to teachers, as a consequence of this independence "parents do not have control of them" (Jamal) and "children do what they want" (David). Moreover, due to the lack of parents' involvement in children's formal education "children lose interest in school" (Bernardo), "...are always late" (all teachers), "...do not know why they are in school" (Jamal), "they come when they want, they can miss one full term" (Linda), "they drop-out, then they come back" (Abiba), "they do not take education as seriously as the learning of the Koran" (David).

Last year I asked one of my students why she was missing class so often. I also told her that she was going to repeat the school year if continuing in this way. [She answered me] 'Do you know what? I can study up to whatever level I want, but in school no one is going to guarantee a place for me in Paradise'. (Ornilda)

In teachers' daily routines this means that students' attendance is poor, the majority of students arrive late, lessons never begin on time and children's progression and achievements in the system are at risk:

We begin class late. It's already 8 a.m. do you see the number of pupils around us? It should not be like this but that's the reality. It is due to lack of parents' control. (Jamal)

Here the teacher arrives first, the student is the last. Delay is parents' fault. They send them to do some work. (Ornilda)

The most common strategy used by teachers to overcome the issue of students' delay was to leave students to wait outside for a while, or in some extreme circumstances to send them home, when it was really too late (around 9–9:30 a.m.):

Have you seen that girl? I sent her home. This is for her parents to understand that she cannot arrive at this time. She missed my explanation, what is she going to do? Just copying from the others. If she does not come earlier tomorrow, I will send her home again! She told me she missed assessment because she was fetching water. You see, school is not a priority to her! (Abiba)

Americo represented the only discordant view among teachers. He highlighted that less than 40 years ago the majority of Mozambicans, in particular those living in poor communities like this one, were excluded by the education system:

There are a few parents who care, they show up, they value our work; they want their children to study. Many are mothers, and they are alone at home [...] They ask for advice [...] As it is a minority, and it is said that the majority is what you see, some of us are not seeing that something is changing, people begin to think that studying is worth and school is for everyone. In the past, school was just for those who could afford it. (Americo)

Americo believed that teachers should create a dialogue to understand families' challenges, rather than criticising and blaming on them. He was the only teacher pointing out that calling parents to school to tell them that their children are failing and 'this is their fault' might actually generate a counter-productive effect. He imagined himself in the position of a parent "If I am told that my son is a bad student who does not have any possibility to succeed, why shall I still send him to school?"

5.3.3 Parents' and community members' accounts

School is important [...] but family teaches us to live together in the community, to know how to deal with other people, to respect every single person, accomplish what elderly persons tell you to do – sweeping, carrying water, going to school [...] In school, teachers also tell you to respect them, the teachers, by being on time, dressing well, [and] preserving the textbooks. (Father, Narcisio)

In order to prepare their children for everyday life and adulthood, three main discourses parallel to formal education emerged from parents' discourses. The first discourse relates to the fact that many things learned in school are not useful for children's everyday life and there is the need to teach them how to conduct communities' activities and practices. Parents reported that they teach these practices in the same way 'they were taught'; teaching and learning involve active participation, children learn by being with their parents or other adults and by doing:

I went to school [...], I learned many things but many of them I forgot, I did not need them. For my daughter it is the same, what she learns sometimes is not useful. She also needs to know what my mother taught me. [...] I learned many things from my mother. She taught me to cook, prepare 'chamussas' and sell them at the market. I used to go with her to the machambas (field), I know when I have to plant this or collect that. To do everything, we were going together. I went with her to collect cicopwe (molluscs) at the beach, she taught me to understand when to go [...] we have to leave home when the tide is getting low and we come back when it comes in. It depends on the moon, I see it, and I know when it is time to leave home. [...] Kids today still go, they learned it from us, by being out there with us, but some parents take them during weekdays because they do not care about school, others go with them at weekends, because they have to go to school first! (Mother, Fatima, who completed grade 6 in the school in which her son is enrolled)

The second theme relates to the values and principles that children should know "to obey the rules of the elders and show respect to them" (Narcisio). In the conversations with parents, I tried to understand how values such as 'respect for elders', 'cooperation' or 'respectable moral behaviours'

(recurrent words in these conversations) were taught to their children. It emerged the role of traditional stories and initiation rites:

There are many traditional stories in which animals represent the whole community, and the community needs everyone, especially during difficult times, to find out solutions and work together. For instance, during dry times, there was not any water, animals joined together to dig a well but the rabbit stole water and cheated all the other animals that in turns were placed as guardian of the well. The lion allowed the turtle to try stopping the rabbit only after all the other animals had failed [...] the turtle was able to catch the rabbit. [...] The rabbit is smart but being smart is not helpful if you cannot comply with communities' rules, the lion is influential but he cannot disrespect the turtle just because it is little. The turtle was smarter than the rabbit and she used her intelligence to benefit the community. This means that everyone has his own value at community level, everyone has worth and has to be respected. (Narcisio)

All parents or adults who participated in informal conversations or semi-structured interviews remembered at least one *ensinamento* (lesson) received during their own initiation rituals through elders' theatre performances or through storytelling. Elders' underlined that storytelling and performances had to show indirectly to children "good behaviours through bad ones [...] Traditional stories are references to know how to behave" (Elder woman, Awaje):

They receive advice, and if they do not want to hear elders' advices, they know they will marginalise themselves with their own behaviours [...] they will live a life disconnected from their community. (Elder woman, Helena)

In this regard, one of the tales told by students in grade 6 is worth attention. The tale was about the history of a rabbit that was not invited to participate in ceremonies organised by the community. However, the rabbit prepared a mask with clay and took part in ceremonies "by pretending to be someone else" (Student, grade 6). During the ceremonies the rabbit was always discovered through his inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour. When the rabbit was discovered, he was beaten, left alone and excluded by the whole community. Grade 6 students' interpretations were that "You have to know how to behave properly, you cannot act badly otherwise you are excluded", "Youths who does not want to listen, marginalise themselves". This emphasis on how to behave properly has an influence on how children understand their role and their position in school. Whereas they accept 'the rules' of the Portuguese-only discourse, they are against the practice of teachers sending them home when they are late. "The teacher cannot send a child home. A child helps in many things" (Student, grade 6). "Just because children are little, it does mean that they are not helpful" (Student, grade 6). This idea of 'being little but helpful' seems to echo the moral of the tale mentioned above "the lion is influential but he cannot disrespect the turtle just because it is little". Students confirmed they arrived late or missed classes because they carried out the activities mentioned by teachers, but from their point of view they were helping their families and this is what they 'learn' as a sign of respect within the family.

Box 8: Drawing on reasons for missing school: *selling goods at the market*



Moreover, initiation rituals for girls and boys were also perceived as important moments to teach about community values and principles, and how to ‘enter the adulthood world’ (Elder). However, initiation rituals were also the most contested aspect of *traditional education* by some members of the community interviewed:

Rituals have lost their real meaning because community is not able to see how our lives have changed. The real values and meanings of initiation rites disappeared already, we cannot even say that values are going to disappear; they are lost, gone! Why? I do not know it, but... Rituals now are done because they have to be done. Nowadays, it seems that they are dictated by poverty. They are to show-off. They involve money and there seems to be a new concept around initiation rituals, especially for girls. Girls’ interpretation is “Now I am ready to get married”³⁷. That’s all! ...In the old time, this thought did not exist. (Fernando)

Teachers expressed the same concern in a really similar way:

Initiation rituals are not bad in themselves, they are important, but the meaning attached to them nowadays is really dangerous [...] The family is communicating to the community that the daughter is at the age to get married. (Abel)

Consequently, “*this takes them out of school*” (Latifo). This was the only concern that teachers manifested towards overage female students. In general, overage learners were seen as some of the most motivated students, “*they are getting good results*” (Jamal), “*they came back because they want to learn, and they understand that school is important*” (Abiba). They understood “*the value of getting an education*” (Abiba). However, “*if a 15-year-old girl is still enrolled at grade 5, evidence shows that she does not have any chance to finish primary*” (Latifo, but also Abel and

³⁷ As explored in the previous chapter, in a Makuwa matrilineal society when girls get married the husband moves into her wife’s house. It is in these terms perceived as a “young man that can supports the family with his work” (Latifo).

Damir). This was another recurrent teachers' argument to underline that education was not a priority for this community, and *"poverty makes things happening in this community"* (Latifo).

The third discourse among parents and community members highlights the role of Islamic education for the construction of children's religious identity:

Our children in this community go to the Madrasa to learn to read and recite the Koran, to learn that Allah is one and to know about His teaching. (Awaje)

According to parents, *Madrasa* and the organisation of initiation rituals do not interfere with formal education. Initiation rituals are organised during school breaks, in particular during November and December before the beginning of the rainy season. *"If children go to school in the morning, they go to the Madrasa in the afternoon, and vice-versa"* (Fatima). However, a few mothers timidly said that *"sometimes on Friday, she can miss class... only on Friday, sometimes"*. Ramadan was the 'hardest' period for children *"My son never wants to go, he says that other children are not going to. I understand it. I know parents are not sending them to school. I force him to go, even if he comes back soon after"*. Only one father giggling said, *"Why shall evaluation be scheduled for Friday afternoon? Cannot it wait until Monday?"* (Father).

These insights show that the community values traditions as important to prepare children for their adulthood. Traditions relate to everyday communities' activities and practices such as fishing and farming, but also on how to live following the rules of the community. Discontinuities between school and community knowledge are evident. However, formal schooling for parents is not threatening their tradition, school serves different purposes: to prepare youth for future employments. On the one hand, school represents a separate system associated with the possibility of getting access to different positions in society. School is perceived by parents as a way to give their children the opportunity to *"live better [...] improve life conditions"* (Father). School is regarded as the main instrument to acquire those skills – reading, writing, and counting – needed *"to find employments in offices with good salaries at the end of the month and not depend to on the sea, on rainy or dry seasons and occasional work"* (Mother, enrolled in an adult literacy programme). Besides basic literacy skills, parents look at school as the place in which their children learn to communicate in Portuguese. Portuguese language is considered by parents as the prerequisite to fulfil the purpose of *"get[ting] proper jobs in town"* (Mother, enrolled in an adult literacy programme at this school). The knowledge learned in school might not be useful for everyday life, but it is not expected to be useful or comprehensible, it is expected to develop literacy and numeracy skills. In these terms, parents did not question the value of schooling and the majority of them did not feel in a position to do so, or to comment on what children learn or should learn. In the majority of cases, parents knew little about the school. Some parents knew the name

of some teachers and used to go to meetings about 'administrative communication'. One mother commented at the end of May that her son was not going to pass this year and he had to repeat. As a consequence, the mother decided to let him stay at home to support her. The mother did not feel in the position to question the authority of the teacher, "*he has already decided*", neither to find an alternative possibility considering that there were still almost two full terms ahead. On the other hand, for parents one system does not exclude the others. Family, traditional and religious education belong to other parallel teaching and learning domains preparing children to be aware of cultural practices, religious norms, roles and responsibilities to be adopted at home and in the community. Together they contribute to children's development. However, the challenging conception of initiation rituals as emerging in teachers and some community members' views should be acknowledged.

5.4 The 'inappropriateness' of the new curriculum: teachers' views

Teachers' understandings about the new curriculum always began by saying "*it is a good curriculum, but...*" (Americo), or "*I am not going to say the contents are bad, but...*" (David). Teachers felt that the new curriculum was given to them without preparing them to implement it:

We perhaps understood the new curriculum wrongly, but the curriculum changed abruptly without a specific training or a convincing explanation for adopting the new methods. The interpretations they [local education authorities] brought to us were not clear. (Bernardo)

Teachers with longer teaching experience (at least 7 years) often mentioned attending seminars on the PCEB organised by the Danish International Development Agency. Information about the number and the content of seminars were vague. However, Ornilda, Jamal and Zé mentioned learning the 'pedagogic value' of songs in one of these seminars. Moreover, Latifo and Bernardo also mentioned receiving in-school visits from local education authorities, who "briefly" introduced the innovations of the curriculum to them. Overall, all teachers underlined that their training was not aligned with the new curriculum. None of the teachers had ever received specific training, for instance, on the development of the LC and they did not know about the existence of the manual developed for its development. The other documents related to the PCEB were available for teachers to be consulted. Damir and Latifo often consulted these documents and 'interrogated' my knowledge to reflect on the use of formal and summative assessments. Overall, teachers lacked the 'vocabulary to talk about the new curriculum. Latifo was one of the few teachers mentioning repeatedly the idea of a *pedagogia centrada no aluno* (LCP). It was otherwise referred to as "*That approach... You know it!*" (Jamal) or "*That approach... how do you call it?*" (Abiba).

However, "*there was nothing else to do, but implement it*" (David). Among the various most recurrent '*but*' attributed to the new curriculum, the first '*but*' encompasses a concern with the fact

that children are overwhelmed with “too many subjects” (Zé). Subjects as Life skills, Music Education and Visual Education for lower grades pupils were considered as “stealing precious time” (Latifo) from both teachers and children. “The time is short and it is distributed across too many subjects” (Latifo). While at EP2, teachers believed that their possibilities to implement these subjects were limited by “the lack of adequate training and material resources that Mozambican schools do not possess” (David). At EP1, teachers believed that “children will end up by not understanding what they have to do” (Jamal). In the following constructions of children, teachers are ‘justifying’ the reasons for not paying attention to these subjects. There was an overall understanding that pupils at age 6 are still “mentally not ready for this” (Zé), “They forget easily, their brain is weak” (Abiba), “A child of this nature does not have any capacity” (Latifo). There is a unanimous understanding that more time should be dedicated to the teaching of Portuguese and Mathematics “to open children’s mind” (Latifo):

In the previous curriculum we always came back to Portuguese and Maths, in a way or in another, children by the end of grade 2 had learned to read and write. Now this is not happening any more. Are teachers to be blamed? I don’t think so, many teachers are untrained, but also in the past they had no training. (Americo)

Moreover, a second ‘but’ relates to teachers’ reinterpretation of a learner-centred approach. “They [local education authorities] say that we should integrate students’ knowledge into our explanations, into the content we have to deliver. But this is complicated” (David). It was perceived as “complicated” because it “moves from the abstract to the concrete” (David) or “from difficult to easy” (Jamal). The abstract and difficult for teachers meant to begin by interrogating students’ understanding of the topic and discussing it with them. Teachers are in these terms talking about LCP, which was perceived mainly as “beginning with what students does not know” (Americo) in a language that they do not master. The concrete or the easy was to deliver teachers’ explanation. Latifo’s quote below compares the “past” classroom routines with the present in the light of changes:

Back in time the teacher was talking alone, but nowadays, he is still talking alone [...] Of course, it depends from teacher to teacher but the Ministry of Education is saying that we have to focus the teaching on children’s needs, [...] this requires strong efforts for both side, teachers and pupils, the knowledge [of the language] that children do not have, and teacher patience because he cannot arrive, give the content, and go. This approach takes time. (Latifo)

Teachers mentioned group work and debates as ‘forms’ of a “kind of teaching” (Latifo) that “does not work here” (David), “it is for university students” (Abel). Linda and Damir perceived group work as “independent work”, in which “the majority does not do anything, the good ones do all the work” (Linda). Instead, individual work structured within whole-class teaching is seen as “what works locally for these children” (Abiba), because through this method “the child does the work, but the teacher prepares everything, puts him/her in the condition to do the work alone, and follows

him/her closely" (Damir). This view implies a relation between teachers' views of their students and the "*kind of teaching*" (Latifo) that can or cannot work with these students. However, what really challenges teachers' understanding of *learner centred pedagogy* is the idea that:

Now, the child has to feel free, he has to do everything he wants in class [...] the teacher cannot put pressure on the child to learn [...] when we were students, we had feared the teacher, but today the teacher is almost nothing for his/her students. They are independent; they do what they want. (Jamal)

Teachers often associate LCP to the most controversial '*but*' of the new curriculum: semi-automatic progression. The major instrument to put pressure on the child to learn was the 'lost' "sorting function" (Pryor and Lubisi, 2002) of assessment. Teachers think that the new semi-automatic progression combined with the idea that "*the child has to feel free*" (Jamal) led to the point that "*nothing anymore scares them*" (Ornilda).

Teachers' reasoning often followed this path: if on the one hand "*children's poor knowledge of Portuguese and parents' weak interest in their children's education work together to contribute to poor results*" (David), on the other hand:

Automatic progression spoiled everything. It ruined the education system. All children already have in mind that 'I know or I don't know, I go [to school] or don't, it does not matter, I will pass anyway'. This reduced our strength, this demotivated children, but also us. They [local education authorities] control our percentages. If failing percentages are higher than good marks, I am hanging myself. [...] Then, we let them pass, even if we do not like it! (Latifo)

"The Government does not see it, but because of it [semi-automatic promotion], the teacher feels that he is worth nothing, and everything falls into nothing at all!" (Jamal). 'What the Government does not see' is the disempowering effect of changes on teachers' status and authority in class and at community level. Teachers focused on an understanding of semi-automatic promotion in terms of power relationships, not only among students and teachers, teachers and parents, but also teachers and district educational authorities. Teachers felt pressured by 'time' to cover all content – despite children's absenteeism and poor knowledge of the LoLT among many other concerns – and by the system "*to do the impossible... let's say it, we push pupils up to grade 7*" (David). Independently from students' learning outcomes, "*students have to pass*" (Zé), "*...when you fail half class, the problem is yours*" (Americo). To a certain extent, data show that a weakened framing in terms of control over students' progression is threatening teachers' authority and this is contributing to the fact that children are not learning. However, teachers' reasoning is complex and highlights the internal contradiction of the new curriculum and how local authorities administer it. On the one hand, in order to 'cover' all content, teachers believe that they have "*to impose the discipline*" (Jamal), on the other hand:

We are moving too fast, I know. But what shall we do? In order to respect the schedule of programmes we push students through [thematic units]. When we follow children's needs,

we automatically stay behind. (Ornilda)

Behind these words, there is an understanding of the guidelines of semi-automatic promotion as the recognition that children learn at different paces and this innovation should encourage pupils to learn at their own pace (INDE, 2003). However, these guidelines clash with the tensions generated by the need “to respect rules, programmes, and timing” (Abiba). During one conversation in school, Jamal questioned Abiba because she was worried too much about supervisors and about “following prescriptions” on the number of lessons and hours to be spent in the teaching of each thematic unit, without considering the *reality* of her class. The majority of teachers believed that the programme had to be covered at the pace established by curriculum guidelines because supervisors check their lessons plan, value their work based on this, and the assessment process at the end of each term has to cover a number of pre-established thematic units in any given subject. Teachers received three visits from district education authority professionals through the school year. Their visits paralysed normal daily classroom practices. Teachers, usually, knew in advance about their visits and they were literally waiting in fearing of their arrival. I was sent home “*They might ask you questions. [Smiling] You know too much*” (Zé). According to teachers, the aim of this visit was *pedagogic supervision*, but it was not perceived as an opportunity to clarify doubts or receive constructive feedback on their practices. It emphasised the technician and ‘administrative’ dimensions: examples of ‘good lesson’ based on the almost universal structure previously presented, management of timing, coherence between lesson objectives and its development, but also revision of lesson plans, class registers, or timetables for internal evaluation.

These concerns reflect the results of Sim-Sim’s (2010) evaluation of the new curriculum: despite the interdisciplinary and integrated approach enunciated in the PCEB, the curriculum maintains a rigid division of knowledge into subjects since grade 1 (Sim-Sim, 2010). These data reveal that there is an internal misalignment among the competence model of pedagogy as enunciated and how curriculum is structured and assessed.

5.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter dealt with teachers’ classroom pedagogies and the ideas, values and belief that surround teachers’ and learners’ experiences. I mapped out issues and relations embedded in teachers’ pedagogies as perceived by teachers to reflect on their practices. From the above description many different areas for further investigation emerge. Teachers’ descriptions of their students show how the poor social background is seen as having a negative impact for students’ poor participation, progression, and achievements. It reveals *dissonant regularities* as for instance the emphasis on practices to involve children, motivate them, allow their participation and the ‘attachment’ to Portuguese that limits participation and excludes the majority of children. Moreover,

a deficit construction of students, and their families seems to legitimise a performance model of pedagogy, while the shifting towards a competency-based curriculum seems to have weakened their possibilities to attain curriculum objectives. The flexibility of the new language policy is not acknowledged. Moreover, there is not reference to the development of the LC, which is regarded by policy documents as one of the main innovations of the new curriculum (INDE, 2003). Students' prior knowledge is used as introduction to curriculum official knowledge and the reference to the local context is confined within the introductory part of the lesson. This is the main possibility that teachers see for the interplay between children's everyday knowledge and curriculum knowledge. The focus remains on teaching facts and information written in the textbooks; rather than sustaining children's co-construction of knowledge, it serves the purpose of "*making children feel comfortable*" (Zé). It remains at the surface of the lesson, or at the "boundaries of the field" (Wacquant, 1989, p.39). It is limited to some questions that can create a link between 'objects' surrounding children's experiences and the content of the lesson "*We all know domestic animals, what are the small animals living in our yard?*" (Zé). Children, by answering teachers' questions, produce a list of words or objects, with some words in Emakhuwa then translated in Portuguese by the teachers. It could be seen as a 'preparatory' exercise before moving into the assimilation of curriculum content. Emakhuwa as LoLT and the integration of community knowledge into the curriculum are *missing discourses* in teachers' practices and renegotiation of curriculum changes.

For Bourdieu (1998) social spaces are "structures of differences that can only be understood by constructing the generative principle which objectively grounds those differences" (p.32). In any social space distinct positions coexist and they are "defined in relation to one another through [...] relations of proximity [...] as well as through relations of order" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.6). That is, none of teachers' ideas and values can be really understood and explained unless they are understood in relation to one another and positioned in relation to the structures from which they originate. This also means to view education as a field, which is "a structure of objective relations of force between positions" (Wacquant, 1989, p.40). Teachers', parents' and students' beliefs and values "occupy *relative positions* in a space of relations" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.31, original emphasis). These positions, their relations, their principles of construction are the objects of the following chapter.

Chapter 6 – THE LOGIC OF THE FIELD

This chapter explores dialectical relations (Bourdieu, 1977) among structures and practices, among principles of constructions of the field of education and the ‘politics of legitimations’ of what has been described in the previous chapter. It begins with the presentation of two interrelated principles of construction of the educational field in the context under study. From these principles are generated a series of positions that will be regarded as the socio-cultural variables used by teachers to make sense of the teaching and learning process. Principles and positions emerged from the analysis of teachers’, parents’, and students’ views presented in the previous chapter. They are regarded as *structured structures* internalised by all agents and as *structuring structures* that will orient teachers’ practices and their dispositions towards the implementation of the new curriculum. Additional data are introduced to strengthen the argument. Hence, the aims of this chapter are to investigate the socio-cultural variables of this field, which have been internalised by teachers, parents and students, and how they are retranslated by teachers *into a space of position-takings* (Bourdieu, 1998) in relation to the *pro-positions* of the PCEB. Finally, a postcolonial critique re-constructs how hegemonic discourses embedded in socio-cultural variables might work to “make the consensus on the existence and meaning of things, the common sense, the *doxa* accepted by all as self-evident” (Bourdieu, 1998, p.67, original emphasis) and challenge teachers’ appropriation of curriculum changes.

6.2 Field Structures: principles of construction of the education field

The first principle of legitimation of the field deals with the construction of the school-community divide; the second principle shows the construction of asymmetric power relations that regulate possible forms of interaction among the agents and their systems of representation. They both deal with the co-construction of differentiation between school and community socialisation, and the consequent depreciation of the latter in the teaching and learning process. The first principle: the world of the school and the world of the community are constructed through *counterproductive compartmentalisations* (Serpell, 1993) that separate the domains that pertain to school from those of the community. School and community are perceived as parallel spaces that serve different purposes in children’s personal growth and cognitive development. As observed in Chapter 5, the family and the community prepare children “*to live together in the community*” (Father), “*to obey the rules of the elders*” (Father), but also “*to gain independence*” (Mother) in domestic tasks – for instance, fetching water or taking care of younger brothers and sisters – and in economic practices of the family and the community, such as fishing, farming, or selling home-made food at the market. Parents do not expect that the knowledge learned in school would be useful for their children’s everyday life. What parents expect is that their children will acquire literacy and numeracy skills. For parents, the school and what it represents – the acquisition of Portuguese

language, literacy and numeracy – will give their children the possibly of *“not depend[ing] on the sea, on rainy or dry seasons or occasional work”* (Mother). To learn *“a huge language”* (Student, grade 6) like Portuguese is what attracts children to school and its acquisition is seen as an instrument to become teachers, doctors or electronic engineers. These professions are perceived as doing something different from what their parents do. *“My father is a fisherman, I like his work, but I do not want to be a fisherman”* (Student, grade 6). *“I help my mother to sell mandase in the market, I enjoy it, my friends also do it. But, I want to be a teacher”* (Student, grade 7).

For teachers, while *“the community should educate children”* (Jamal) *“...to respect the elders [...] to understand that they are part of a community”* (Abel), the aim of primary education is to prepare them for further education with the ultimate goal of *“achieving better living conditions”* (Bernardo). However, in this context in which *“children grow up really bad”* (Zé), and *“the majority of parents are illiterate”* (Abel) or *“have limited knowledge”* (Ornila), teachers attach to their profession a role model that is seen as lacking in *“parents’ unresponsive behaviours”* (Latifo) in relation to the value given to formal education. A teacher *“prepare[s] children to be part of a society”* (Abel), *the [teacher] is a father, a brother, he is everything, but everything good”* (Latifo), who *“sits in friendship and chats with them, about diseases and hygiene”* (Americo), who *“gives advice[s] about life [...] if you study you will fight poverty, if you do not, your family automatically will remain in the same condition”* (Damir), who *“educate[s] the youngest in order to change their behaviours from bad to good”* (Salimo).

Students in grade 6 regarded as important the role of the teacher as *“a conselheiro”* (a mentor). In their ‘informal’ scale of favourite teachers Damir was seen as their favourite teacher because *“he talks with us, he asks about us”*. This characteristic was ‘adding’ value to their understanding of a ‘good teacher’ as someone who *“...comes to school”, “...teaches all subjects...”* and *“...does not send us back home”*.

Some teachers perceive their role as *“the wiser”* (Latifo) or *“the knowledgeable”* (Salimo); for this reason, they have to show themselves as *“spotless”* (Abiba), they have to dress well and be on time as examples of good role models. However, there was a general understanding that *“back in time, the teacher was considered to be the mirror of the Mozambican society, but now he is nothing”* (Jamal).

Box 9: Drawings of grade 6 students' understanding of a 'good teacher'

In this context, what legitimises the pedagogical action of the school is the expectation of acquiring a higher position in society, or as framed in students' words, of becoming a doctor or a teacher. Schooling represents opportunities for social mobility and possibilities of transformation by preparing children to move out of the community and its conditions of poverty into a superior territory. Within this framework that attaches to schooling an 'extractive' (Serpell, 1993) symbolic value, teachers' role can be seen as socially conferred and culturally constructed. Teachers as agents of change possess the knowledge, the skills and language that children will need to master to be successful in school and in their society. Whereas elders initiate children into a set of activities, behaviours, and moral norms that have to be respected and valued as important by children at community level, teachers 'initiate' children into the pedagogic discourse as a new set of principles and rules that belong to an institution and to those who take part of this institution.

Similar findings were reported in a study conducted among the Chewa rural community in Zambia by Serpell (1993) who observed that "teachers, parents, students unselfconsciously 'conspire' to compartmentalise the domains of school and home socialisation, and to align them counterproductively with a series of contrasts" (p.293). Emakhuwa dialect versus Portuguese language, unscientific traditional knowledge versus scientific curriculum official knowledge, literacy skills versus *o saber-fazer* (the know-how) of the community are some of the contrasts found in this study, that are not only organised according to a counterproductive compartmentalisation, but also "according to the logic of difference, of differential distance" (Bourdieu, 1989, p.20) through views of divisions: what belongs to school domains is constructed, in particular by teachers, as worthier for children's future than what belongs to community domains. Hence, one side of the contrast is

perceived as superior to the other. This leads to the second principle: the differential distance between school and community, established through those binary contrasts, is reproduced in school through a hierarchical structure of interactions and symbolic systems of representation of this hierarchy. That is to say that, once the divider between school and community has been established and recognised as legitimate at local level, the process of differentiation between school and community acts internally in school, based on dominant beliefs and ideologies on language, culture, and knowledge (Bourdieu, 1998). For instance, on the one hand, the socio-culturally constructed belief that schooling means to move out of the community generates the *collective expectation* (Bourdieu, 1998) that school knowledge does not need to be relevant to children's everyday life: *"[formal] education serves the needs of the future, children learn in school and they leave it there"* (Mother). On the other hand, the worthiness of students' prior knowledge is measured against *"whether what children know supports learning objectives"* (Bernardo) and *"it fits with the content planned to be delivered"* (Abel). In these terms, differential distance produces asymmetric power relations that regulate not only possible forms of interactions – among teachers and students or teachers and parents – and expectations towards each other's roles, but also what counts as knowledge, what should be taught, what are the competences and skills that should be prioritised, how should they be taught and in what language and, therefore, makes any attempt to localise the curriculum similarly counterproductive, as introducing a false link. It is important to underline that while teachers emphasise the cultural superiority of the school, parents separate schooling from home socialisation as a taken-for-granted division, without necessarily implying a less important function in children's personal growth.

6.2.1 School and Community relations: similarities beyond differences

Teachers do recognise that *"school and community are far away from each other"* (Bernardo) and *"there is no correlation between what children learn in school and what the father says to his son"* (David). This correlation, according to teachers, should begin by bringing the community closer to school and it should be established *"to find a way to value the school"* (Zé). However, it is interesting to observe that the relation of proximity (Bourdieu, 1998) with the community does not begin in terms of what the community could bring into the teaching and learning process in terms of knowledge or language. It begins with a *regulative discourse* (Bernstein, 2000) based on the moral responsibility of parents to *"impose schooling on their children"* (Abel). Teachers' accounts of their meetings with parents can highlight this point.

Parents are not required to have an opinion in relation to the content of the curriculum or teaching practices. They are summoned individually in school to discuss the lack of discipline of their children such as punctuality or absenteeism, or bad behaviours such as losing their textbooks or coming to school without pens or pencils. Interviews with parents reveal that meetings were

perceived mainly as *“to talk about a problem”* (Mother, grade 3 student). As seen in the previous chapter, parents did not feel in the position to discuss the school’s curriculum or to question teachers’ decisions on their children’s achievements. *“Students have to [...] obey the rules of teaching, arrive on time, wear the uniform”* (Latifo). They cannot *“come to school just to seat, without textbooks, pencils, pens”* (Abiba); cannot *“arrive late”* (Jamal); cannot *“disappear for months and then come back”* (Ornilda). Teachers count on families to support their work by encouraging children’s good behaviour. Instead of marginalising school by saying *“religion is more important, school will not feed you”* (Ornilda), the community should come closer to school transmitting those values that would support students’ attendance, discipline and punctuality, because as a sign of respect *“children have to do what adults tell them to do”* (Abel). To obey (*wiiwelela*) in Emakhuwa is synonymous of ‘to listen to someone’. In these terms, understanding traditional education as a way to teach to the youngest *“to obey the rules of the elders”* (Father) could be seen as retranslated into teachers’ expectations of students’ roles in the teaching and learning process *“[they] have to listen first”* (Jamal).

Beyond the differences, there are interesting parallelisms on how to teach about respect or good behaviour in school and in the community. Community members, teachers and students made reference, either directly or indirectly, to the discourse of ‘having fear of someone or something’ as part of the formal and informal education process. Elders underlined that storytelling shows indirectly to children *“good behaviours through bad ones”* (Awaje). Through traditional stories *“children get scared to the point that they will not forget, first you scare them, and then you guide them to the right path”* (Awaje). An adult pointed out that during storytelling bad behaviours are emphasised by an external voice calling everyone’s attention saying *‘wopiha’* (it is dangerous, be scared). In some occasions, during my classroom observations, teachers signal those ‘bad behaviours’ in a theatrical way. For instance, Abiba (Extract 4) delegitimises children’s code switching through faking laughs and calls for the class’s attention. What I perceived as a humiliation for the child can be read under this other point of view: to remind the child how he/she has to behave properly. Moreover, the interaction in storytelling between the narrator and the audience might resemble the dynamics of teachers’ rhetorical questions requiring collective answers – *“Is it clear?”/“It is”, “Are we together?”/“we are”* – through which teachers control pupils’ participation during their explanation. The narrator begins the tale with *‘Tjamprantani!’* (Once upon a time!), the audience replies *‘Shampatteke’* (Go ahead) and accompanies the narrator throughout the tales by saying *‘Shaminhia’* (so, we are listening), at times after each sentence. The storyteller ends the story by saying: *“And the moral of this story is [for instance] who does not want to listen suffers because of their behaviours”* (Zé). The meaning of the story was not left to the interpretation or construction of the audience. It was made explicit and it was not ‘further’ developed. Abiba often introduced her lesson with the traditional interaction of storytelling between narrator and audience.

The audience-children replied after each sentence (Extract 2). Abiba does not reflect with children about the implications of the story in the terms of the 'rules' of behaviours, the only possible interpretation of the story is *"To study is really good"*, which was repeated at unison by the class.

Hence, in the community children must listen to their older family members and to their *mwene* and *pwyiamwene*, whose authority cannot be questioned. The school system reproduces and maintains this system by changing the person to whom children have to listen to and show respect. However, teacher-students interaction should not be regarded only as the reproduction of the hierarchical relationship between adults and children in a Makhuwa society. Students' perceived rules of how to show respect in school add an interesting point of view to explore specific expectations on each other's behaviours: *"if you do not speak Portuguese, it is better to remain silent"* (Student, grade 6, Fatima). Students believe that *"to speak Portuguese is to show respect to the teacher"* (Student, grade 7, Claudia), *"We speak Emakhuwa when we do not respect the teacher, because he does not teach, he does not come"* (Fatima). In these terms, in upper grades beyond students' objective difficulties to formulate full sentences in Portuguese – while in lower grades they were mainly requested to repeat single words – and besides students' lack of confidence in using Portuguese to avoid losing face (Chick, 1996), teachers' concerns about students becoming silent throughout the grades could be seen as the progressive assimilation/inculcation of a regulative discourse on language use. Children themselves through schooling grow up separating formal and informal education, they naturalise differences and hierarchies. In the previous chapter, we have seen how teachers use sentences as *"The dialect stays at home"* (Abiba) to remind children that they have to speak Portuguese in class. These sentences mark the boundaries of in-school and out-of-school languages. At the same time, the same boundaries are established in other domains and they are often constructed in negative ways *"Dressed like this, it is better to go and be a fisherman"* (Ornilda), *"Are you selling octopus? Who walks without shoes is selling octopus"* (Ornilda), *"Here, it is not the market! Raise your hands, one-by-one! Order!"* (Jamal).

When students use Portuguese in the playground, it shows authority: *"you there, go away"*, *"Barulho-Barulho!"* ("Noise-Noise!" is an invitation to be quiet, which was often used by teachers in class). However, as Stroud (2004) observed in relation to the use of code switching in informal market contexts among women sellers, it is an "ironic form of authority, where all present are aware of the parodying undertones carried in what is said" (p.153). One student-storyteller in grade 6 used these *parodying undertones* in the tale of the rabbit (mentioned in the previous chapter) provoking her colleagues' giggles. The 'irony' was perceived by children in the paradox of the rabbit that masked itself into someone else to participate in communities' ceremonies, but then its use of Portuguese 'un-masked' the rabbit and remarked its already inappropriate behaviour *"he asked for food, when it was time to listen to the elders"* (Student, grade 6). Children knew different versions

of this tale and disrespectful behaviours. However, it is interesting to observe the 'ambiguous' role of Portuguese and its hidden relations of power. While in school students perceive Portuguese as a sign of respect towards their teachers, in the tale it was used specifically to show an arrogant (*wikhonah*) attitude towards the elders. It embodies metaphorically the language of someone who pretended to be someone else, and who did not want to listen to elders. Claudia (grade 7) giggled at me when I asked her if she used Portuguese after school with her colleagues: "*here nobody speaks Portuguese after school*". Her experience was quite unique; she moved from Maputo when she was 8 (now she was 15), "*the first thing I had to do to survive here was to learn Emakhuwa.*"

Within the above quotations there is a whole network of relations between positions and *positions of opposition*, that formalise and legitimise the circumstances in which teaching takes place and define its "boundaries of the field" (Wacquant, 1989, p.39). 'School as an extractive process' and 'school as a superior realm' are two *structuring structures* of the field, produced within the school-community divide, that create a differential relationship between school and community cultural capitals. For Bourdieu a capital "confers a power over the field [...] over the regularities and rules which define the ordinary functioning of the field" (Wacquant, 1989, p.39). Specifically, cultural capital takes the form of symbolic resources transmitted, in first instance by pedagogic actions of family. The value and power of these resources are dependent upon their relation (of proximity) with "the cultural arbitrary imposed by the dominant Pedagogic Action" in school (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.30). The above discussion focused on a *regulative discourse* (Bernstein, 2000) that regulates moral norms, good manners, values and relations between what is acceptable, valuable and possible – and what is not – in the teaching and learning process as well as in the interaction between the school and the community, and among parents, students and teachers. However, it begins to delineate an in-school most appropriate cultural capital, the skills that have to be acquired in order to be successful, and how cultural values and experiences brought by children in school will be valued and judged in the teaching and learning process. The following section moves into the relations between field structures and field practices. It looks at the socio-cultural variables internalised by teachers' habitus through which teachers make sense of 'possible' competing discourses of curriculum innovations.

6.3 Teachers' internalised socio-cultural variables

6.3.1 Hierarchies of languages

Students' poor knowledge of Portuguese is the most recurrent feature used by teachers to explain students' limited participation during lessons. At the same time, the use of a foreign language to mediate the teaching and learning process is the least questioned aspect of the teaching and learning process. According to teachers the exposure to Portuguese in school has to be maximised as a response to the fact that students do not have access to it in their everyday lives.

Recitation maintains the appearance of monolingual communication (Arthur, 1996) and the illusion of using what teachers regard as the legitimate language of the teaching and learning process. The recitation mode of pedagogic practices can be perceived as one of the strategies that teachers encounter to overcome the barriers of teaching in a language that children, at least in early grades, do not understand at all. However, recitation can be also explored as a “strategy of condescension” (Bourdieu, 1989, p.16). That is, teachers’ deficit view of their students could be seen as a way to deny the challenges created in the teaching and learning process by the use of Portuguese as LoLT which is not questionable. Rather than changing the LoLT, teachers believed that school should begin at age 7. Their concerns focus on the socio-cultural background in which children are born and raised. This background does not prioritise school, it does not allow their students to use Portuguese outside school or to be supported at home because of their parents’ lack of interest in what happens in schools. As pointed out by Bunyi (2005) during recitation practices “learners ‘imitate’ sounds and focus on fragments of language [...] recitation [is] a game that is unrelated to meaning” (p.136). In this study, we have seen that recitation supports teachers in covering content according to the belief that through recitation and repetition ‘slow’ and ‘lazy’ learners will eventually ‘retain’ some fragments of language and knowledge. Chapter 5 illustrated a limited use of learners’ L1. At the beginning of the lesson children’s code switching was ‘tolerated’ in questions such as ‘*What do you see in the textbook?*’ and it was officially allowed only when prompted by teachers, ‘*How do you say it in Emakhuwa?*’ It was used to initiate or repair the flow of recitation by naming words both in Emakhuwa and in Portuguese that might be unknown to the children. Then the word would be repeated various times in Portuguese through collective answers. Hence, the linguistic exchange through repetition and recitation enters “the game of fictitious communication” (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.112).

The illusion of being understood and the illusion of understanding can reinforce each other by serving as each other’s alibi because they have their foundation in the institution. (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.112)

Within the principles of differential distance between in school and out-school domains, this illusion finds its foundation in the social and cultural construction of schooling as a superior realm, reinforced at the institutional level by an “ideological residue” (Chimbutane, 2013, p.323) of previous language policies. The practice of maintaining a Portuguese-only discourse is relational to the fact that Portuguese is the language of higher education and it is still the language required to get access to the labour market. Portuguese has never lost its status of official language of the country and it has always been the language of official and public domains such as schooling, political, and media campaigns, whereas Emakhuwa is mainly limited to informal domains and settings.

Coe (2005, p.53) suggests that “the more successful the dominant ideology is, the more it will disappear into the domain of the hegemonic”. This conception highlights a double movement: “the movement of the emergence of the ideological from the hegemonic and the disappearance of the ideological into the hegemonic” (Coe, 2005, p.53). The emergence of the ideological behind Portuguese as LoLT is framed within FRELIMO political discourse of Portuguese as the language of national unity to overcome regionalisms after the country’s independence in 1975. This discourse preserved the supremacy of Portuguese and the post-independence ideology led towards the “normalisation of the absurd” (Thiong'o, 2010, p.2), that is the acceptance of divisions created by ex-colonizers’ language spoken by a little percentage of the population in the name of national unity, and the construction of African languages as “inherently divisive” (p.2). The ideology that conferred to Portuguese its structuring power disappears into the hegemony of Portuguese as the sole possible language for fulfilling the aim of schooling as an extractive process.

Thiong'o (2010) underlines that the historical and political roots of this ideology is normalised “in seeing the relationship between languages in terms of hierarchy” (p.2). Thiong'o (2010) discusses hierarchies between European and African languages in terms of “linguistic feudalism” (p.2), that is “languages [are] arranged in order of the nobility of being, the noblest occupying the higher realm and the lesser ones occupying lower positions in a descending order down to the menial/barbaric languages” (p.2).

Hierarchically, Emakhuwa occupies a lower status compared to Portuguese:

(Smiling) The official Language in Mozambique is Portuguese. Every other language in the country stays behind it. Every mother tongue is a dialect. That's my point of view! (Latifo)

In this study, teachers do not qualify Emakhuwa as a language. To my provocative question during interviews “*Emakhuwa, language or dialect?*” based on the fact that throughout the school year teachers constructed and labelled Emakhuwa as ‘dialect’ in their discourses, Abiba answers:

It is a dialect because it belongs to us, it identifies us. Well, hum...In some cases I could say that also Portuguese, hum... No Portuguese cannot be a dialect. According to my definition, Portuguese should be the dialect of Portuguese people, but clearly it is not.

Other answers highlighted that it is a dialect because “*it is not common to all country*” (Ornilda). Moreover, “*If it were a language, it would have been common for all Emakhuwa-speakers, but Emakhuwa in Nampula belongs to a different ramification*” (Ornilda). Behind the judgemental label of ‘dialect’ there are at least two positions embedded in teachers’ views. The first one resembles the FRELIMO political discourse after the country’s independence as observed above. However,

there is also the legacy of a colonial discourse affecting teachers' ideas "*When I was a student, Emakhuwa was regarded as 'a lingua dos Macacos' (the Monkeys' language)*" (Salimo).

My generation has studied during colonialism, we did not want to be considered Makhuwa, Makhuwa was the person next to you, she/he was not you, we do not want to talk Emakhuwa anymore, and we do not want our children to talk Emakhuwa. (Bernardo)

The construction of Emakhuwa as dialect and Portuguese as the language of formal domains are socio-cultural variables internalised by teachers, which confers to Portuguese its structuring power. While school is still the main social context where Portuguese is acquired, home socialisation remains the realm of Mozambican languages. In these terms, Portuguese represents the most important symbolic cultural capital which is acquired through the teaching and learning process. To construct language as symbolic cultural capital means that language is not a means of communication between teachers and students, but it becomes a tool that naturalises the separation between in-school and out-of-school languages. Thiong'o (2010) highlights that the linguistic feudalism "extend[s] to culture produced by the languages" (p.2). The following sub-section extends the discussion to the hierarchies of knowledges and the incorporation of community traditions and cultures in the school curriculum.

6.3.2 Hierarchies among subjects and *knowledges*

Subjects to be taught "can be set in a hierarchy according to their modal degree of legitimacy" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.14). In the previous chapter, I observed how teachers constructed subjects such as Life Skills, Visual Education, and Music Education as "*stealing precious time*" (Latifo) to both teachers and children "*with things that do not help them at all, instead of teaching Portuguese and Maths*" (Bernardo). This factor has been presented in relation to the priority assigned by teachers to teach numeracy and literacy skills. Overall, at EP1 when there is just one teacher managing all subjects, Life Skills, Visual Education, and Music Education are not taught as often as planned in teachers' timetable. This happens not only because materials are missing, and teachers do not feel confident in teaching these subjects or are not trained for teaching them, but also and in particular, because teachers do not perceive them as priorities for students who still lack at the end of primary education the 'basics' of education. Indirectly, teachers' practices seem also to suggest that the level of legitimacy of a subject is *relational* to the assessment process. Portuguese, Maths, Social Science and Natural Science are the subjects that will be assessed at the end of the fifth and seventh grade and count to proceed into secondary education. Based on assessment results, "*our work is judged*" (David). Hence, the assessment process can be regarded as a measure to assign priority to those subjects that will be assessed and, as a consequence, to establish hierarchies among subjects.

However, there are other important elements to be considered for the co-construction of a more complex picture. In Emakhuwa, there are two words to differentiate formal and informal learning: 'ofuntha' and 'wixutha'. 'Ofuntha' means to learn but as synonymous of "*being already able to do something*" (Salimo). It was related to the out-of-school practical knowledge and skills that children learn at home and to the *saber fazer* (knowing-how-to-do) of the community. 'Wixutha' is linked to school knowledge, it means to learn but as synonymous of "coming to be known". Either parents or teachers referred to 'wixutha' as "*the highest level of knowledge*" (Father and Bernardo), meaning the knowledge associated with schooling and mastered by teachers. It is equally interesting to observe that for some teachers (Jamal, Ornilda, Zé, Abiba for instance), "*Life skills, Music Education or Civic and Moral Education are those subjects in which children's mother tongue can be used more*" (Abiba). These subjects are seen as "*going into the local things*" (Ornilda) and "*it would be appropriate to use Emakhuwa, even in upper grades*" (Abiba). Hence, for some teachers there seems to be a correlation between subjects fitting into a lower hierarchical position and the language that could be used to 'transmit' the knowledge related to these subjects.

During interviews, teachers referred to the content of Life Skills as the "*practical knowledge that [children] bring from home*" (Zé). "*They are more active in everything that is practical, but here everything is scientific*" (David). It is interesting to observe that besides practical knowledge and skills, which however were not seen as particularly relevant by teachers for children's learning, the majority of teachers mentioned "*some basic mathematics concepts*" as the only competences brought by students on which they could draw on during their lessons. "*When children are not in school, they have a lot of creativity, but in school they become shy*" (Zé). Creativity was associated with children's ability to make their own *brinqueidos* (toys), such as cards to play, little cars made out of metallic wires and cans, or footballs made of balloons, plastic bags and pieces of old cloths to play soccer. In commenting on the loss of children's creativity in classroom, teachers did not reflect on their teaching methods or the challenges posed by the LoLT. Creativity belonged to the world of 'playing' that is not suitable for the school-context: "*here everything has to be formal*" (Jamal). Teachers attached to curriculum official knowledge adjectives such as 'scientific', 'true', and 'correct' while children's prior knowledge and skills were associated to the 'un-scientific' and 'practical':

[In-school] they come to verify whether what they know is true or not. They cannot come to school [and say] 'this is like this, like this and like this', first they have to learn if what they know is scientific. (David)

We should build on what children bring to school, but first we have to do a selection to understand whether what students bring is worth teaching or not. If it is not, it should not be taken into account. (Abel)

Semali (1999a, p.306) observed "teachers [...] often harbour an intellectual authority that invalidates the indigenous knowledge that young learners bring to the classroom". In this study, the

legitimation of the process of invalidation begins with teachers' understanding of school knowledge as true and scientific while learners' knowledges and competences go unrecognised because they respond to other evaluation criteria (Bernstein, 2000).

Sim-Sim (2010) highlighted how subjects such as Visual Education and Music Education might be used in early grades to familiarise learners with the LoLT through activities encouraging use of songs, riddles, descriptions of images, and oral and visual games. Moreover, Sim-Sim (2010) argues that a less fragmented curriculum, that is a weaker classification of curriculum knowledge into subjects, as observed in the previous chapter, might support teachers in promoting these activities in a more articulated way. However, I argue that in order to use songs – and other elements of oral tradition – with a real pedagogic function instead of as a ritualistic routine (Extract 1, Extract 2) teachers should critically engage with the role of the 'world of playing' and children's learning experiences in the teaching and learning process and re-construct them as meaningful learning experiences. Ornilda's mental structure of a daily lesson frame the strategy and the 'boundaries' through which teachers build on learners' prior knowledge:

I write what we are going to study on the chalkboard, after this I begin with local things, as we have learned to do in the local curriculum, then I ask do 'you have any plant at home?' [they answer] 'yessssss', [I ask] 'What kind of plant do you have?', they answer, when they are done, I present the content.

As seen in the previous chapter, students' prior knowledge is confined within the introductory part of the lesson and responds to the need of making them feel comfortable for the assimilation of knowledge. There were few examples in the whole sample of lessons observed, in which children's experiences were used to create linkages with new concepts (rather than words) introduced by Natural Science lessons during teachers' explanation. In one instance, Americo through the concept of disappearing approached the water evaporation process. Americo in order to attract pupils' attention made out a story in which pupils' grandmothers were warming up a few pots to cook, *"to understand if our clay pot was warm enough, our grandmothers would throw a drop of water into the pots. What is then happening to this water?"* This example and Jamal's strategy to use a riddle to introduce new vocabulary are 'openings' on how children's prior knowledge could be used as a vehicle for learning by making teaching less 'abstract' and avoid falling into the use oral literature – songs, stories, riddles – as practices without any relevant function for constructing meanings and learning. As observed during the literature review "the crucial difference in the way teachers practice is not what is done, but how it is done" (Westbrook et al., 2013, p.38).

However, the possibility of developing a LC as enunciated in the new curriculum, that is a curriculum developed locally in which school and community decide the topics to be investigated and integrated in the national curriculum, becomes for teachers an "abdicated responsibility for

exercising agency over what they taught, to whom, how, and for what reason" (Jessop and Penny, 1998, p.398). From Bernardo's point of view provincial and district education authorities should collect traditional knowledge, systematise it and integrate it in the curriculum. Similarly, Zé believed that *"if the Government collected this information, it would be helpful for teachers"* (Zé), and also *"it should be defined by head teachers, it does not involve the community"* (Abiba). As previously pointed out teachers did not consider the LC among the innovations of the new curriculum. Moreover, the above quotations common among all teachers show how teachers do not recognise their role in this process, neither the role of the community in its development. Teachers place knowledge production about the localisation of the curriculum in a realm 'external' to the community itself and their responsibilities as teachers. This shows an understanding of 'curriculum as given': teachers constructed their role as implementers of a nationally planned curriculum, rather than as researchers into community's traditional knowledge and practices or as co-developers with community members to design teaching experiences that take into account who their learners are and what the community has to offer to the learning process in terms of knowledge. Teachers' *accountability* is towards the official curriculum and its knowledge. Placing knowledges and languages according to a hierarchical scale contributes to teachers' position in relation to 'official curriculum knowledge': they 'cannot' draw on children's experiences as long as they believe that what they know is not appropriate to enter the school ground. Hence, this understanding embodies assumptions about what knowledge is the most valuable and appropriate for children's learning.

How teachers differentiated themselves from the *"Muslim culture of this complex community"* (Damir) is another element in the construction of this position. Teachers seemed to be unwilling to look beyond the religious identity of the community or to identify common cultural features linked to the Makuwa culture and society and they positioned themselves as individuals who are not experts on community culture and traditions. The construction of culture as religion and religion as a negative interference within the teaching and learning process gives to teachers the legitimacy for distancing themselves from communities' worldviews and dismissing the possibilities to design a LC that builds on community knowledge and practices. In this way, a collaborative relation between teachers and parents, which goes beyond the role that teachers have attributed to parents in the teaching and learning, does not seem to be a competing possible. If school is perceived as an extractive process, and Portuguese language is still the main language to get access to the formal job-market, if the legitimisation of school knowledge is related to the fact that it is the *"highest level of knowledge"* (Abel) as opposite of being practical and unscientific as community knowledge, pedagogy does not need to be connected to the reality of children's life. This analysis shows how the disconnection between the realms of school and community is translated in school into a series of hierarchies in terms of good manners to be acquired, language to be used, subjects to be taught, and knowledge to be transmitted. Or in other words, the compartmentalisation between home and

community is by teachers reframed into a compartmentalisation of knowledge, languages, subject contents, manners and behaviours. At the same time, teachers are part of a social order constructing school as a vehicle for improving children's and families' future living conditions.

"A greater sense of the political" (London, 2006, p.37) of curriculum changes emerged in this discussion within the hierarchies and differential relationships between school and community identified in the socio-cultural construction of the teaching and learning process. These differential relationships, however, move into an opposite direction compared to the discourses of the new curriculum. The theoretical framework of this study underlined how curriculum reforms can be explored as new discourses (Hornberger, 2000; Jessop and Penny, 1998) entering the field of education to redefine its practices. However, this study shows how the PCEB legitimises and formalises new 'strategies' that do not encounter legitimacy in the field of practices. Teachers in the construction of their field positions build on a system of assumptions, values, beliefs and relationships that do not resonate with these changes. While Bourdieu supported an understanding of "the mode of generation of practices" (de Certeau, 1988, p.58) to explore the 'whys' hidden in teachers' classroom practices by applying a relational mode of thinking (Bourdieu, 1989), the following concluding section of this discussion reflects on Bernstein's (2000) notions of classification and framing to support an understanding of internal and external boundaries and rules that regulate the circulation of the 'whats' and 'hows' of different forms of knowledges and cultural capitals in teachers' classroom pedagogies. Finally, the discussion explores under a postcolonial critique how the construction of a Mozambican national identity – the signs of distinction and relations of differences ascribed to this identity – is closely associated to the aim of schooling and it challenges the redefinition of relationships between what belongs to the world of schooling and what remains 'out'.

6.4 The 'hows' of changes: boundaries of the field

While classification refers to "the limits of any discourse" (Bernstein, 2000, p.12), "framing is concerned with *how* meanings are put together [...] [it] is about *who* controls *what*" (Bernstein, 2000, p.12, original emphasis). As observed by Sriprakash (2010, p.299):

the concept of classification and framing can be used to analyse the introduction of competence modes of pedagogy into the performance-based systems [...] to examine where and how competence principles of pedagogy are used in policy and practice.

While the premises of the curriculum focus on weakening boundaries between everyday experiences and curricular content knowledge – that is a stronger integration of the language and experiences that children bring from home – teachers maintain a compartmentalised approach to "what is to be counted in and what counted out" (Atkinson P., 1985, p.133) based on the beliefs that in-school knowledge has to be prioritised and the use of Portuguese has to be maximised in

order to fulfil the task of 'transforming' children's behaviours "*from bad to good*" (Salimo). The previous chapter showed how classification and framing remained strong in teachers' classroom pedagogies, while at the same time teachers expressed the belief that this encouraged children's participation. When classification is strong, clear boundaries among subjects are maintained, "where we have strong classification things must be kept apart" (Bernstein, 2000, p.11). What emerges from the above discussion is that the maintenance of internal boundaries among subjects, despite the thematic and integrated approach enunciated by the new curriculum, is aligned with teachers' understanding of a hierarchy of knowledges and competences that have to be prioritised for the development and acquisition of the 'basics' of teaching and learning process: linguistic, literacy and numeracy skills. "*To gain at least something*" (David) out of the teaching and learning process means to gain the 'basics' of education that will empower children and will have a value to support the economic activities of their parents "*I always tell them, what is the worth of being carpenters if you do not read or write?*" (Latifo). However, teachers' voices suggest that the strength of the curriculum has been already weakened with an increased number of subjects – linked to the practical realm of children's knowledges – that do not matter and do not help students based on teachers' perceptions of the 'rules of the game' of the teaching and learning process. Moreover, as observed by Atkinson P. (1985), in Bernstein the relationship between everyday knowledge and school knowledge "seems equally a matter of classification and frame, since it is often related directly to the relative purity and strength of the membrane of curriculum contents" (Atkinson P., 1985, p.136). What the data of this study clearly show is that in a situation in which learners' socio-cultural identities and their cultural capitals are constructed by teachers as elements negatively interfering with the teaching and learning process, learners' local knowledges, competencies and literacies – their social and cultural experiences – should remain in their horizontal discourse (Bernstein, 2000) to marginalise their negative impact for the acquisition "of specialised symbolic structures" (Bernstein, 2000, p.160) of the vertical discourse of school knowledge. Teachers do not co-construct knowledge with their students, community does not count for the production of knowledge in school, and students' prior knowledge is 'inserted' in a vertical discourse, only if it is functional to the 'segment' of curriculum knowledge to be transmitted, on a day-to-day basis. Moreover, data suggest that the 'segment' of curriculum knowledge does not need to be "contextually specific and context dependent embedded in on-going practices" (Bernstein, 2000, p.159) or it does not need to be relevant outside school in children's daily lives based on the belief that "*[formal] education serves the needs of the future*" (Mother).

According to Bernstein (1975, p.39, original emphasis) "[s]trong classification and frames celebrate the *reproduction* of the past". In this study, the past is represented by the colonial legacy of schooling. A postcolonial critique involves challenging the structures embedded in teachers' action and thinking and reframing the representations that all agents have in relation to formal education.

These structures and their representations construct the school system as a vehicle of dominant discourses and practices based on differential relationships, manifested for instance in views about hierarchies of knowledges and languages. In the name of improving children's social status, transforming their behaviours, transmitting literacy, numeracy and linguistic competences, these views maintain the doxa of the field by re-ascribing to Portuguese language and official curriculum knowledge their prestigious status, while marginalising students' and community's *funds of knowledge and pedagogy*. "What is taken for granted when the rule is 'things must be kept apart' is *relationships* which themselves are made explicit when the rule is 'things must be put together'" (Bernstein, 1975, p.39, original emphasis). Teachers' discourses and practices are examples of how teachers' socio-cultural and ideological understandings of changes dethrone a technicist understanding of the new pedagogic relationships made explicit in the new curriculum.

At the level of classroom pedagogies, teachers regarded some of the relationships of the new curriculum as inappropriate, whereas others are not even taken into account. The clearest example of inappropriateness is to be sought in the semi-automatic promotion. Teachers believed that the combination of learner-centred methods and semi-automatic promotion put them in a disempowering position. Hence, the inappropriateness relates to the redefinition of power relations, rather than on the 'substance' of changes. Teachers did not underline how the assessment process changed in terms of the introduction of formative and continuous assessment. They focused on aspects related to expectations towards their roles and responsibilities. Moreover, LCP was mainly constructed as a type of teaching encouraging students' independence and autonomous work – through debates, beginning from what students do not know, or group work – that would be best suited for "*university students*" (David) rather than for "*children of this nature*" (Latifo). Teachers see their authority, previously constructed through the possibility to decide the future progression of their students, questioned by parents and students. Through semi-automatic promotion they believe they have lost their power to influence parents' decisions on sending their children to school and to put pressure on students. Whereas semi-automatic promotion is perceived as a 'real' competing discourse, the integration of local knowledge in school and the use of Emakhuwa are constructed as 'non-existent' competing possibilities. I draw on Santos' (2012) logics of his sociology of absences to reconstruct the creation of absences of curriculum innovations in teachers' discourses and practices. According to Santos (2012, p.52):

what does not exist is actually actively produced as non-existent, that is to say, as an unbelievable alternative to what exists [...] Non-existence is produced whenever a certain entity is discredited and considered invisible, [...] or discardable. Thus there is no sole, rather several ways to produce absences.

The first logic is the "monoculture of knowledge" (Santos, 2012, p.52), which is perceived as "the most powerful mode of production of non-existence" (p.52). According to this logic knowledge

production in school responds to the canon of a scientific and western paradigm; what does not belong to this canon is perceived “in the form of ignorance or lack of culture” (p.52). The “monoculture of knowledge” can be analysed at two different levels. On the side of the education system, as perceived by participants, schooling symbolises an extractive process. This ideology constructs students and communities as ‘the Other’, whose language, knowledge and culture have been silenced in school by dominant discourses. On the side of classroom practices, the daily teaching routines and practices empower teachers to speak, not community, not children, which are constructed as ‘the Other’. The “monoculture of knowledge” is, then, constructed through the “non-existence” in school of what has been regarded as ‘the Other’. What counts as knowledge, what and how should be taught, and in what language should follow a scientific and western paradigm. It means to acquire signs of distinction through the teaching and learning process. Within different from relationships (Bernstein, 2000), teachers fail to see “how ‘school’ knowledge intersects with ‘indigenous’ (local) knowledge” (Semali, 1999b, p.97). The potentiality of local knowledge for children’s learning becomes invisible by invalidating children’s and community’s knowledge as valuable in-school cultural capital. Teachers discharged ideologically a stronger integration between these forms of knowledges under the taken-for-granted belief that by maintaining strong classification and framing of knowledges, children will be initiated into a discourse that is

intended to establish for, and imposing on, the Other a particular view of the world and a concept of self and community through the production, representation and dissemination of school knowledge. (Kanu, 2006, p.9)

The integration of local knowledge in the curriculum implies an opportunity for teachers to fill the gap between children’s worldviews, values, beliefs and the ‘institutionalised’ knowledge of the school system. After centuries of marginalisation in the school system, Mozambican languages and traditional knowledge as well as children’s informal learning experiences should be re-imagined as alternative *funds of knowledge and pedagogy* that bring into the field of education new frames of references to facilitate learners’ meaningful learning activities. However, this brings into the field of education new patterns of relations between the two sides of those dichotomous contrasts previously identified by teachers – for instance, Emakhuwa dialect versus Portuguese language, and practical and unscientific traditional knowledge versus official and ‘correct’ curriculum knowledge. This links to another logic in the creation of absences of curriculum innovations in teachers’ discourses, that is:

the logic of social classification, based on the monoculture of ‘naturalisation of differences’. It consists in distributing populations according to categories that naturalise hierarchies [...] non-existence is produced as a form of inferiority, insuperable inferiority because natural. (Santos, 2012, p.53)

In this chapter, we have seen how there seems to be a general agreement on the process of

alienation between school and home socialisation process. Within the construction of schooling as a superior domain compared to community informal education domains, the idea that school becomes an alien place for children is normalised and legitimated. However, this position masks the idea that being part of the school system represents the process of creation of a Mozambican national identity, which is naturally 'superior' in relation to a prior-to-schooling identity. Differences and hierarchies are naturalised in the social messages that teachers send constantly to their students during the teaching and learning process. Hence, students by being successful in the teaching and learning process will progressively develop a national identity, which is actually based on a distinctive type of knowledge and language acquired through schooling. It means that in the process of making sense of the PCEB, there is not only the question of a new definition of teacher professional identities, but also of the new definition of the distinctive features that a Mozambican national identity should possess.

Schooling becomes a process of homogenisation through the acquisition of a Mozambican national identity based on a set of multiple differential relations. For instance, a Mozambican national identity endorses Portuguese language as a constitutive element of this identity. This element is actively constructed in opposition to the vision of Emakhuwa 'dialect' as "inherently divisive" (Thiong'o, 2010, p.2) because "*not common to all country*" (Ornilda) or to "*all Mozambican*" (Latifo). Moreover, "*Makhuwa was a slave. During colonialism, after independence, until '90s, to be called Makhuwa was an offence*" (Bernardo); "*Prejudice cannot be erased totally but gradually*" (Americo). The prejudice is on both sides, for teachers to consider Makhuwa culture as something to be valued and taught in school, and for community to understand that their knowledges and traditions have a role to play in the teaching and learning process. This logic 'naturalises' the inferiority of Makhuwa identities, while at the same time it constructs the superiority of Portuguese language as the doxa of the field "accepted by all as self-evident" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.67).

This also implies that there is the need to understand the representations that teachers have of their professional roles. It is about how teachers think of themselves and of their responsibilities. Teachers' recurrent discourses focus on what they should represent for community and students, how they should behave to represent "*everything good*" (Latifo), and what they should do to 'cover' all programmes and to "*prepare children to be part of a society*" (Abel), based on a utilitarian view of schooling. As observed by Welmond (2002) if policy discourse reconstructs a new definition of teacher identity, it "will inevitably compete with these historically grounded and widely accepted notions of teacher rights and responsibilities" (p.60). At social level, the construction of school as the 'legitimate culture' offers to the education system "the recognition of the authority of its action" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p.124), and of the authority of its main agents, the teachers. Portuguese language and school knowledge become symbols of this authority manifested in

teachers' discourses and classroom practices and reproducing a system of differences and distances.

In this context, the knowledge of Portuguese marks a social differentiation between teachers and community as a sign of teachers' distinctiveness from the community in which the school was located. Around these symbols the teaching and learning process is constructed and through these symbols teachers' "contextualised sense of self" (Akyeampong and Stephens, 2002, p.262) is challenged in the new curriculum. Teachers' understanding of their role rests on the premises of what they do not share with their students. In these terms, teachers' religious and cultural identities were dismissed behind their professional identities. As teachers and as educators, they have to transmit the value that *Madrassa* cannot be a parallel education system and should not interfere with the school. Teachers distanced themselves from communities' worldviews and positioned themselves as people who are not expert on community culture and traditions. The distance that teachers keep from the community can be seen as a reflection of the fact that the field of formal education acquires meanings of distinction *in opposition to* the realm of community. This opposition is operationalised in school through the roles assigned to and expected by each agent in order to fulfil the aims of the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, the distance they keep from Makhuwa traditional culture can be also seen as a question of identity in which differences are transformed in values (Mignolo, 2000). It supports teachers in maintaining their status and dignity in an education system perceived as poor, late, behind the lowest, and within a reform that has already compromised their role. At the same time, in a context in which teachers perceive their level of education as "humble" (Salimo), their economic conditions as precarious, their profession as one of the easiest to pursue a career as Civil Servants – seen as the possibility to get access to a national elite even without any specific training – teachers' strategy to maintain their distinction and dignity in the system is built around their 'Portugueseness'. Their knowledge of Portuguese is still a principle of social distinction in a hypothetical hierarchical status of social positions. Being a teacher is a position that cannot be occupied unless a person masters Portuguese. Some teachers perceive their role as "*the wiser*" (Latifo) or "*the knowledgeable*" (Salimo); for this reason they have to show themselves as "spotless" (Abiba), they have to dress well and be on time as examples of good role models. However, there was a general understanding that "*the teachers are not any more the mirror of this society*" (Jamal). Their authority is questioned, the symbols of this authority are 'changing', and the credibility of their profession is lost in the understanding that even if their students are not learning "*they progress no matter what*" (Zé), or "*either they come or do not come to school, they will pass anyway*" (Jamal) and "*we cannot say anything to them, we have to let them do what they want*" (Jamal). Hence, according to teachers an enactment of learner-centred pedagogies would further reduce their

authority.

Finally, I argue that the creation of absences operates at school level through teachers' *complicity of compliance* as a result of a technicist view of curriculum changes and teachers' understanding of their role as technicians implementing changes, rather than as agents renegotiating curriculum changes based on new pedagogic relationships and their social and cultural implications. In a culture that respects a hierarchical construction of authority, teachers feel legitimised by the Government to act the way they do. Teachers are indirectly saying that if local knowledge and Mozambican languages were important, they would have been already integrated in the textbooks by district educational authorities, there would be textbooks to teach them, the school would have already adopted a bilingual programme, and supervisors from local district and provincial authorities would check on their formal integration in the teaching and learning process. However, according to teachers the Government is not focusing on the implementation of these aspects, and they as "*the employees of the Government*" (Jamal) ignore their agency behind the need to "*close [our] eyes and obey*" (Salimo). Hence, the *complicity of compliance* is an ambiguous position used by teachers to 'take distance' from what is not consistent with their field positions and covering this distance under the hierarchical structure of a system in which teachers "*follow prescription*" (Bernardo).

Teachers' discourses about the new curriculum can be seen as a "mechanism of power functions" (Cannella and Viruru, 2004, p.61) towards the maintenance of their field positions and the reproduction of a pre-existing social order (Bourdieu, 1998), preceding the introduction of the new curriculum. Teachers *undergo* and *exercise* power (Foucault, 1980) in their 'struggle' to make sense of the curriculum. They feel forced to implement the semi-automatic promotion, but they also exercise their power by refusing to adopt a new system of values that does not make sense within the understandings and meanings attributed to the teaching and learning process. This study shows how teachers' subject positions are embedded in competing epistemological and ontological assumptions compared to the new curriculum-discourse. However, by constructing themselves as receivers of curriculum changes, teachers are denying or taking for granted the influence of their subjectivities in the re-construction of rules of inclusion and exclusion of the new curriculum. For instance, this is the case of the rules about when teachers should resort the use of Emakhuwa in class, the idea that children need 'an introduction' through 'local things' to go into the content, otherwise they will not understand anything, and still the idea that independent work cannot work with these students as they are only "good at copying" (David). Their teaching practices and strategies are seen by teachers as the best possible 'technical' matches within the constraints of their education system, the marginal identities that they attach to their students, as well as the role attributed to the aim of schooling and its unquestionable signs of distinction at society level. The

'external' production of the official knowledge of the curriculum legitimises on its own what has to be transmitted. Teachers understand knowledge as fixed in textbooks and it cannot be negotiated with children unless it is framed within an introduction of the lesson to "*obtain curriculum objectives*" (Abel). They do not see themselves as responsible for adapting the national curriculum to local realities or for designing 'new' instructional contents to create a bridge between school and community. These ideas, values, and attitudes emerged in the analyses of teachers' discourses and practices normalise the reproduction of the cultural coloniality of schooling, of its knowledge and language.

At the same time, thinking with Bourdieu's theory to investigate teachers' practices in response to curriculum innovations brings attention to the layers of constructions of the field of practices and the *illusio* that binds together structures, agents' dispositions and practices. Bourdieu (1998, p.77) adopts the term *illusio* to mean the "enchanted relation to the game that is the product of a relation of ontological complicity" between the objective structures of the field and teachers' dispositions. An enchanted relation means that teachers do not recognise the arbitrariness of their thinking and action because their classroom pedagogies are aligned with what is perceived as legitimised in the field of practice. In these terms, this study showed the process through which the discourses of the new curriculum enter the field of education to redefine its structures and practices with a different set of relationships that are not recognised as true and have not the 'power' to redefine the structuring structures of the field. However, as observed by Grenfell (1996, p.291) "complicity is always expressed in the tension between the 'legitimate' ways of acting or thinking defined by the field and the individual's habitus-specific predispositions to conform, or not, to these legitimate ways". The 'tension' amongst teachers goes hand-in-hand with the cultural arbitrariness of schooling and the necessities of the field of practices constructed by the participants and the new external pressure put on them by the need to conform their practices to the requirements of the new curriculum. That is, teachers' pedagogies are constructed around cultural dominant perspectives which go misrecognised under the *illusio* that the cultural capital structuring schooling and gained through schooling is seen as the only possible true path through which children are initiated with the aim of improving students' living conditions.

On the other hand, this also means recognising that through their classroom pedagogies, teachers are trying to maintain their field positions as well as the distinctive signs (Bourdieu, 1998) linked to these positions as a "tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and as practical mastery of its rules" (Wacquant, 1989, p.42). In these terms, *illusio* in Bourdieu's terms is "at the same time the condition and the product of the field's functioning" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.78). However, the positions that teachers are trying to maintain "are in themselves 'empty'. They have meaning only relationally" (Moore, 2004, p.447). The symbolic relationships of the new curriculum disrupt a

bi-polarisation between in-school and out-of-school knowledge, European and Mozambican languages, school and community values and worldviews, and amongst the co-constructors of these knowledges or the 'owners' of these languages and values. However, through the constructs of the hierarchies of knowledges and languages, these relationships do not encounter legitimacy in the field and do not respond to the stakes and 'rules of the game' of teaching.

How teachers accessed the contents and aims of the new curriculum and they are still guided through them are complementary points of these discussion. Teachers' misrecognition of curriculum innovations is further exacerbated by the fact that they did not really have an 'opportunity' to become familiar with the curriculum, before its implementation. At the same time, from their words it emerges that while the orientation they receive is focused on technical matters with a focus on lesson structuring and planning, it does not pay attention to the LoLT and the development of the LC. It can be said that preparation for the majority of teachers has never focused specifically on a re-conceptualisation of the new curriculum. Salimo, who was attending the first pre-service teacher-training programme aligned with the new curriculum, had the impression that training was still not answering his questions. The *Jornadas Pedagógicas*, established with the introduction of the PCEB, should be used at the end of each term as days dedicated to teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) and to discuss about the pedagogic challenges of the new curriculum. However, during my fieldwork these days were used for individual or peer 'administrative work', as for instance planning lessons for the following term, writing students' results, preparing the documents to fill statistics on the number of students still on the roll. My proposal to use one of these days to discuss the new curriculum was never taken into account.

6.5 Concluding remarks

According to Bernstein (1975, p.39) "[w]hen the rule is 'things must be put together' we have an *interruption* of a previous order, and what is of issue is the authority (power relationships) which underpin it". The interruption of the previous order brought by the PCEB is understood in terms of renegotiation of a competency-based mode of pedagogy within a performance-based system and the new relationships that this renegotiation implies. The findings of this study pay attention to the processes that brings teachers either to resist curriculum innovations or to adapt them to the extent that innovations would resonate with what teachers, parents, and students co-construct as the logic of the field. An exploration of the 'whys' and 'hows' of teachers' classroom pedagogies revealed that teachers reconstructed the pedagogic 'how' of curriculum innovations through a socio-cultural understanding of changes. Teachers' resistance is against the new 'social order' that the PCEB has established in the teaching and learning process. The new order does not resonate with the

aim of schooling, their perceived roles and responsibilities as teachers, or the 'unproblematic' symbols of a Mozambican national identity, which are linked to the institution of schooling. Data show that rather than a technicist understanding of change, the foundation of teachers' resistance is social: their authority is questioned and it is embedded in the micro-politics of teachers' and learners' identities. Hence, the pedagogic technicism of changes gets lost in the network of relations, interactions and connections that emerged in the analysis of teachers', parents' and students' discourses. On the one side, teachers dismissed their responsibility to transform and integrate local knowledges into the official curriculum by constructing themselves as receivers and implementers of an educational policy that they did not fully grasp. Similarly, they did not acknowledge the flexibility of the new language policies and described their language choices as their responses to enact a monolingual policy. On the other side, in the process of making sense of the new curriculum the socio-cultural values that teachers attached to Portuguese language and the distance they kept from community's worldviews and religious identities do not allow teachers to re-imagine a different system of social interactions between parents, students and teachers and a redefinition of internal and external boundaries between 'major' and 'minor' subjects as well as between local and official knowledge. In this study, the overall perception of school as an extractive process and as a superior realm underpins a differential relationship and the naturalisation of differences between in-school and out-of-school cultural capitals. The following chapter summarises the main findings of this study in relation to its initial research questions and discusses the implications of this study.

Chapter 7 – CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This final chapter presents a summary of findings, a reflection on the methodology of the study, and implications of findings for the broader discussion on curriculum reforms and the active role of teachers in the process of appropriation of curriculum changes.

7.2 Summary of the findings

The findings of this study deal with what is happening in school at classroom level in one suburban primary school; the reasons involved in the distance that teachers keep from the PCEB and what is overtly manifested, covertly masked or even ignored in the process of reconceptualising curriculum changes. In relation to the first research question – “*What understandings do teachers in one Mozambican primary school have of the teaching and learning process?*” – the findings of this study call for problematising a one-dimensional understanding of teachers’ classroom pedagogies. The study applied a relational mode of thinking (Bourdieu, 1989) to explore how social and cultural contexts influenced teachers’ understandings of the teaching and learning process. Findings revealed differential relations between school and community and their funds of knowledges, languages and pedagogies. At classroom level, teachers move across predictable lesson structures and build on whole-class format, ritualised patterns of teacher-students interaction and quite homogenous sets of learning tasks and activities, repeated across subjects and grades. At times, teachers regarded their teaching strategies – extensive copy-work, for instance – as the one and only possible way to facilitate learning within the pressure dictated by factors internal to the system – such as preparing students for the assessment process and covering subject content knowledge – and within their classroom realities in which the majority of students did not speak the LoLT and reached grades 6 and 7 without acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills. A deficit construction of students, and their families, combined with teachers’ beliefs that they have to maximise the use of Portuguese in their classroom routines, even if this excludes the majority of children, seem to legitimise a performance model of pedagogy. However, teachers’ *attendant discourses* echo learner-centred dispositions. The idea of Market-Maths or the use of community oral tradition – riddle, storytelling and songs – emerges as teachers’ examples of ‘good practices’ to take into account students’ needs to contextualise learning. Even if in the majority of cases these practices are used as a ritualistic lesson introduction, they can be regarded as ‘openings’ towards the re-definition of ‘possible alternative discourses’ in the teaching and learning process. In this study, the use of songs or storytelling for teachers responds to the social needs of students coming from poor backgrounds, rather than the learning needs. However, it is interesting to observe that findings suggest that when teachers do not perceive children’s prior knowledge as a negative interference in the teaching and learning process, teachers are more flexible to renegotiate the role

of, for instance, Market-Maths in school. Moreover, rigid patterns of classroom interaction are seen as a response to the fact that “*the class is silent*” (Abel), rather than as teachers’ unwillingness to allow children “more apparent control” (Bernstein, 2000, p.13). Structured interactions allow participation not only of those few who are more confident to speak Portuguese. Teachers always relate their practice to the LoLT as a language that children do not master, do not feel confident in using and it challenges their understanding of basic instruction. Hence, teachers did their best to bring all the resources they had to facilitate learning within the limits set by the boundaries of a field that responds not only to the perceived order and gains of schooling as an extractive process – in terms of linguistic, numeracy and literacy skills – but also to its implications for identities, responsibilities and mutual expectations of each other’s roles among parents, students and teachers.

According to Bourdieu (1989, p.16), however, “[i]nteractions [...] mask the structures that are realized in them [...] [T]he visible [...] which is immediately given, hides the invisible which determines it”. Findings showed that the conception of schooling as instrumental to better living conditions, and the construction of Portuguese as the most important symbolic cultural capital legitimised the process of disconnection between schooling and home socialisation. This also sustained the consequent hierarchical structure of interactions among parents, teachers and students, and the symbolic systems of representation of this hierarchy. The community, according to teachers had the role of imposing on their children the need to go to school. How their knowledges, competences and literacies could interact with school knowledge and promote meaningful learning activities were not taken into account either by teachers or parents. In these terms, the aim of schooling generated *collective expectations* (Bourdieu, 1998) among all actors influencing not only teachers’, learners’, parents’ roles and forms of interactions in the teaching and learning process, but also hierarchical values attributed to the knowledge to be transmitted, the language to be used as LoLT, and the competences (literacy and numeracy) to be prioritised. Teachers’ authority was legitimised and naturalised, at community level, based on their familiarity with the ‘legitimate school culture’. Children’s ‘linguistic and cultural capital’ was perceived in-school as ‘out-of-context’. Hence, Bourdieu supported us to explore how the socio-cultural construction of power in the field of education is dependent upon multi-relational and co-existing apparently incongruent positions, that can however be explained by understanding the principles of construction of a given field.

This leads me to answer the second research question of this study – “*How do these understandings articulate with curriculum changes that aim to facilitate a dialogue between in-school and out-of-school knowledge?*” The findings of the study show that the pedagogic discourse of the new curriculum does not resonate with teachers’ understanding of their role, practices and

professional identities. The discourse of the new curriculum is also not consistent with the images that teachers attached to their students and their families. Teachers' understanding of curriculum innovations reveal ideologies situated within dominant cultural perspectives that do not articulate with curriculum changes aiming at facilitating a dialogue between in-school and out-of-school knowledges and languages. Teachers' thinking and actions masked clear binary oppositions: the prestigious position of Portuguese as the language of all Mozambicans versus the inferior status of Emakhuwa as one of the 'dialects' of the country, and the official curriculum knowledge versus the world of 'unscientific and religious knowledge' of the community. These oppositions represented the colonial legacy of schooling limiting what was thinkable, valuable, and possible, while maintaining the prestigious status of curriculum knowledge and Portuguese language in the teaching and process.

The PCEB is seen as "an unbelievable alternative to what exists" (Santos, 2012, p.52). This understanding contributed to the creation of absences of curriculum innovations in the teaching and learning process that "discredited, disqualified, marginalized" (Santos, 2012, p.52) those innovations misaligned with teachers' epistemological and ontological positions, but also with the logic of the field as perceived by all agents. Teachers' classroom practices tried to maintain (at least) the appearance of a monolingual system and the "monoculture of knowledge" based on the "naturalisation of differences" (Santos, 2002, p.53) between school and community. Teachers distanced themselves from community worldviews and maintained unquestioned the supremacy of Portuguese. Under teachers' views, in implementing the innovations they felt obligated to apply the policy of the semi-automatic promotion that, in combination with LCP, had already played a role in degrading their profession and compromising their authority among community members and students. In these terms, Portuguese language and curriculum knowledge are the *distinctive signs* (Bourdieu, 1998) of their status and profession. Teachers maintained their distinction through their 'Portugueseness' and the Portuguese-only discourse was the most dominant doxa, taken-for-granted by teachers in their practices, despite the fact that Portuguese as LoLT was perceived as one of the main challenges for student learning. Hence, retaining a colonial language as a symbol of a Mozambican national identity becomes the way that teachers maintain their field positions to retain their sense of identity and respect.

7.3 Methodological considerations

The use of a Ethnography as a methodology allowed me to focus on the socio-cultural construction of the teaching and learning process, to make visible and expose the structures that produce and reproduce the doxa (Bourdieu, 1977) of the field of education, and to explore how dominant or the complicity of dominated voices compete in displacing alternative 'heterodox' constructions of the teaching and learning process. To deal with these issues was perceived as a strategy "to reveal

agentive spaces in which local actors implement, interpret, and perhaps resist policy initiatives in varying and unique ways” (Hornberger and Johnson, 2007, p.509). Interrogating teachers’ perceptions on curriculum innovations raised issues about the marginalisation of traditional knowledge and local language as well as about the counterproductive compartmentalised between school and community socialisation. It also raised issues about my position and its dilemmas in the construction of knowledge represented in this study. As observed by Smith (1999, p.44):

Theories about research are underpinned by a cultural system of classification and representation, by views about human nature [...] by conceptions of space and time. Ideas about these things help to determinate what counts as real.

My understanding on *what counts as reality* was different from the teachers’ account. Teachers located themselves and myself in different locations of discourses on the teaching and learning process and in the field of education. The knowledge in this study is co-constructed in terms that different ‘locations’ were recognised and were part of our on-going relation. My intention was to move beyond the discussions on deficit or technicist views of teachers’ responses to the failures of implementing curriculum changes. The purpose of this study was to co-construct knowledge with teachers about their conceptions of teaching and learning as a first step to understand their positions towards changes that included, among others, the integration of traditional knowledge and the use of a Mozambican language in the teaching and learning process. I had the ‘double interest’ of understanding teachers’ reasoning behind their practices, but also of understanding how to valorise local language and the use of traditional culture in school, starting from teachers’ views. But this opened dilemmas on how to give voice to *subjugated knowledges* in school. The role of community in the teaching and learning process, as well as Portuguese as LoLT, were the two most discussed issues by teachers. However, teachers constructed these issues as ‘barriers’ and ‘negative interferences’. The idea of adopting a postcolonial stance was related to the effort of showing “how alternative, suppressed discourses and realities may emerge” (Crossley and Tikly, 2004, p.149) in the teaching and learning process beginning by teachers’ understanding of the teaching and learning process, their views on curriculum knowledge, the LoLT. However, I ended up with stronger binary oppositions between school and community, than those I would have expected at the beginning of this research. The postcolonial stance as an aspiration “to see beyond [...] the dominance of Western knowledge, cultural production, representation, and dissemination” (Kanu, 2006, p.8) was my construction. It was my assumption that teachers would have been interested in discussing the use of a local language and the integration of traditional knowledge in terms ‘opening up’ new spaces for the re-construction of new alternative teaching and learning realities. This was my ‘dominant position’. To a certain extent to reflect on the role of subjugated knowledges in the teaching and learning process was to raise my voice and authority. During my fieldwork, I ‘abdicated’ from the idea to reflect with participants on practical aspects on how local knowledge or some aspects of this knowledge could interact with official curriculum knowledge.

Teachers did not consider this discussion relevant and parents did not feel in the position to discuss about it. I often wondered if by leaving local knowledges at the boundaries of the field of formal education, I was reproducing their subjugation. Or, even if I was authorising teachers to speak about curriculum knowledge, while silencing parents, or making their voices less authoritative (Usher and Edwards, 1994). However, my attempt to decolonise research is linked to the use of traditional tales, riddles and proverbs as tools to get access to participants' culture-based co-constructions. These tools supported me in understanding how community members learnt about values, morals, and appropriate behaviours and to explore how the domains of schooling and home socialisation intersect or might intersect. This was also my own attempt to search for meanings (Arnfred, 2011) and to approach under another perspective a reflection on community funds of knowledge and pedagogy, which otherwise would have remained 'seen' only as constructed by teachers, that is as negative interferences.

7.4 Implications of the study

The implications of the study relate to the cultural micro-politics of teachers' identities. It means that to attend to the introduction of curriculum changes as a technical matter fails to address the power-relations embedded in the teaching and learning process and in the relations among its actors. The new pedagogic possibilities fostered by the curriculum are not succeeding, and without the re-narrativisation of how teachers think about themselves and their role, the reform seems unlikely to succeed. In a social constructivism approach to learning, learning is the result of social interaction mediated by language, culture, beliefs, and interaction with others. "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people [...] and then inside the child" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.57). This means that knowledge is first constructed through social interaction with adults, parents, teachers, or family members, and then as an individual activity to internalise meanings. However, for teachers what belongs to the outside-school domain – mediated by a local language, religious beliefs, and children's independence at home – challenges children's achievements and progression in the system and clashes with the social messages sent by teachers to their students during the teaching and learning process. In order to construct new pedagogic relationships based on a social constructivism approach to learning, there is the need to re-construct the socio-cultural relationships embedded in teachers' field positions. In the socio-cultural construction of the teaching and learning process, pre-existing principles, values, and rules, internalised by teachers through habitus, have generated certain socially and culturally constructed 'rules of the game'. In turn, these rules of the game were actively involved in the co-construction of teachers' classroom pedagogies and influenced teachers' interpretations of changes.

Hence, the implications of this study deal with the fact that the new pedagogic approach of the

PCEB even if desirable and well intended is not succeeding, and it does not have many possibilities to be translated into something that makes sense to teachers under these premises. One of the reasons for not succeeding relates to the language issue. On the one hand, the majority of children begin school without knowing Portuguese, yet Portuguese as LoLT is not questioned either by parents or students. It has been constructed ideologically as the only possible language of the teaching and learning process. On the other hand, Portuguese as LoLT is one of the reasons that children are not learning basic literacy and numeracy skills. At the same time, in a social hierarchical scale of the education system, teachers place themselves above community members and below local and national educational authorities. However, the position that teachers are trying to maintain through their 'Portugueseness' is not a privileged position, because children are not learning. According to teachers, this aspect leads both education authorities and community members to question their roles and competences. Also, it contributes to the construction of the lack of recognition of a profession that in this society has lost its value.

In this study, teachers' creation of absences is regarded as the space in which teachers marginalised changes based on their worldviews as well as "*closed their eyes and obeyed*" (Salimo) within the constraints and boundaries of their perceived *field of action*. However, teachers' creation of absences can also be regarded as the circle of reproduction of the social order (Bourdieu, 1998). That is, within the socio-cultural conception of 'schooling' there is an explicit description (among teachers, parents and learners) of what 'good practices' or 'good learning activities' mean, but within this description there is also an implicit prescription "which is not perceived as such because it is (more or less) universally accepted and goes without saying" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.66). To use the example of the LoLT, the findings of this study have shown that the transformative value attributed to schooling, by the visions embedded in the new curriculum, clashes with the real possibilities given to Emakhuwa as one of the languages that could represent this transformation. On the other side, the use of local languages in school as legitimate linguistic cultural capital would, potentially, represent an important step to confer social authority to local languages, by beginning to acknowledge their transformative power (Stroud, 2003). The same argument is relevant for the integration of *community funds of knowledge* in school. This integration would also, potentially, redefine hierarchies among knowledges and languages at social level as well as social hierarchies among all actors (Palme, 1999). Teachers perceived this redefinition of social hierarchies as one of the threats to their status and authority. Therefore, the validation of knowledge and language is political. It would be "a change not only in activity but more fundamentally in discourse" (Spillane et al., 2002, p.417). At the same time, the reconstruction of legitimacy of local languages, but also local knowledges, has to go hand-in-hand with the creation of a new social order that goes beyond reforming pedagogy, education and profession and involves the participation of a society as a whole. It is important to create a dialogue *beyond* and *about*

education that “involves the ability to question, listen, reflect, reason, explain, speculate and explore ideas; to analyse problems, frame hypotheses and develop solutions” (Alexander, 2008, p.122).

It also involves the ability to re-think the meaning of *differences* and question their process of exclusion in society and in the teaching and learning process. Hence, overall, the implications of this study deal with what could be done to break the circle of reproduction of the social order and move beyond the *monoculture* of language and knowledge in school. In this study, to paraphrase Freire and Ramos (1996, p.54), teachers confuse the authority of knowledge and language with their own professional authority. Innovative pedagogical strategies intended by curriculum reforms are unlikely to be adopted by teachers unless teachers reconceptualise the meanings of changes. The new curriculum implies a deep rethinking and reconceptualisation of almost every recurring theme emerged in this study. Hence, teachers’ professional development should engage with the local realities of teachers’ pedagogies, and unmask hegemonic and ideological discourses manifested in teachers’ practices in the attempt to reshape the boundaries of discourses and practices. Among all themes, how teachers, but also parents and students, think about the role of a Mozambican language in the teaching and learning process is a change not only in “the activity” of using children’s mother tongue as LoLT, but also and in particular in the discursive formation of their practices and the role that Portuguese language assumes in teachers’ practices. If teachers see Emakhuwa as degrading their profession and relinquishing the most symbolic cultural capital of the field and, perhaps, the only capital they believe to possess, the language issue in the reform cannot be approached just as a technical level. Teachers have to understand that the use of Emakhuwa will not degrade their position. They should be able to perceive how their practices and their students’ learning will actually benefit from the use of local languages and localisation of the curriculum. In these terms, to renegotiate a less restrictive Portuguese-only discourse might be advantageous to their field positions and it might reinstate credibility and ‘authority’ in their practices and profession by fulfilling learners’ and parents’ expectations about the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills and the most symbolic capital power of the field, the Portuguese language. Hence, teachers need also to understand the ‘pragmatism’ behind the use of Emakhuwa, as well as behind the use of ‘local knowledge’ and learner-centred pedagogies.

In Bourdieu’s (1998) terms this means to look at the *interest* that teachers might have in redefining their classroom pedagogies and their professional identities. Under a postcolonial critique, this implies that Emakhuwa and traditional knowledge cannot play an active part in the teaching and learning process, unless attention is paid to reconstructing the order of dominant discourses in the education system and re-shaping the ‘boundaries’ of the field to reveal new possibilities. Merging these two perspectives calls for a “cultural conscientization” of teachers (Gerdes, 1988 p.141).

However, this conscientisation should be seen also as an “*instrument of rupture*” (Bourdieu, 1998, p.75, original emphasis) with an ‘idealistic’ way to give value to ‘the local’ and begin with “a rational evaluation” (Bourdieu, 1998, p.76) of teachers’ chances for improving or restoring the prestige of their profession through a re-imagination of practices. Hence, teachers should be able to re-negotiate curriculum innovations in ways that a new assessment system, learner-centred pedagogy, the integration of children’s funds of knowledge, but also and in particular, the use of local languages are not perceived as threats for their authority, but as instrumental alternatives or reasonable possibilities to promote learning. At the same time, this implies a process of re-narrativisation and re-imagination to “re-think the production, representation, and circulation of knowledge” (Kanu, 2003, p.77) in the curriculum and to re-articulate the basis of participation and dialogue among teachers and students, school and community. Hence, it involves a renegotiation of forms of representations related to agents’ roles, responsibilities and expectations. Teachers need to question their assumptions in the field of practices and critically engage with their teaching practices and strategies. This also implies shifting teachers’ focus from what counts as official curriculum knowledge and as legitimate LoLT to the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ the new curriculum redefines relationships and their associated and naturalised systems of power relations. Hence, the re-narrativisation of the teaching and learning process as a space to re-think practices and reconstruct relationships could begin with teachers’ possibility to problematise and question their own teaching experiences by building on “cultural diversity and epistemological diversity” (Santos et al., 2008, p.xx) as an approach to reinvent pedagogies and assign “equality of opportunity” (Santos et al., 2008, p.xx) to different types of knowledges, languages, and teaching and learning methods. This should be seen as a process to renegotiate the ‘realities’ underpinning the teaching and learning process and open new pedagogical possibilities in which out-of-school knowledge, languages, and culture can be reconceptualised and experienced as sites of inclusion in the teaching and learning process. Hence, to change how teachers think about it, can be seen as an instrumental way for supporting teachers in improving their field positions by paying attention to the interest that teachers have in the field, while at the same time re-negotiating the social order of the field. process.

On a more practical level, the findings of this study have implications for the ‘higher levels’ of the education system, that is for the institutions and professionals (*Técnicos da Educação*) responsible for teachers’ CPD. CPD should recognise the micro-politics of change, the interests and expectations that formalise and legitimise teaching and pay a double attention to the socio-cultural variables underpinning teaching as well as to the technical side of changes. This means addressing pedagogic, but also cultural, ideological and political perspectives on curriculum innovations. In these terms, the contribution to knowledge of this ethnographic study lies in the thick descriptions underpinning teachers’ classroom practices that bring to life the complexity of

teachers' thinking and the multiple networks of relations and linkages between practices and the socio-cultural realities in which they work. In these terms, the 'how' of re-narrativisation through CPD would need to acknowledge a relational mode of thinking (Bourdieu, 1989): that is teachers' versions of teaching (Alexander, 2008) go hand-in-hand with versions of realities. Teaching as transmission, teaching as initiation for children from a 'marginalised' background, teaching as negotiation and facilitation to recover 'slower students' (Alexander, 2008) interact with teachers' versions of reality and understanding of who are their learners and what are their responsibilities towards them.

This study explored where and how teachers are located in relation to curriculum innovations, to their learners' socio-cultural backgrounds, the context surrounding their experiences, and the processes and principles shaping their positions. Further research in this area could address how to support teachers in re-imagining their positions and to develop counter-hegemonic practices by bridging the gap between school and community domains. In order to address this, it would need to begin by acknowledging where and how teachers are located in "a continuum in practice" (Croft, 2002, p.322) between LCP and more formalistic traditional teaching. Re-narrativisation implies tackling the complexity revealed in teachers' discourses and practices in the process of unmasking where relations of power lie and how the naturalisation of the absurd was constructed. Hence, to deal with changes as technical aspects would only risk maintaining the subjugation of local knowledges and languages under a specific logic of the field, which gives coherence to apparently ambiguous and contradictory positions embedded in teachers' understandings. Hence, teacher professional development should address simultaneously the socio-cultural as well as the pedagogical dimensions of change as a critical, practical and reflexive space to challenge, in this specific field of action, at least three taken-for-granted assumptions of teachers' practices and their embedded relations of power: *"it has to be Portuguese"* (Abiba), *"children are mentally not ready"* (Zé), *"I cannot defend the culture of this community. They are different"* (Jamal). In this way, teachers could reconstruct existing power relations by making visible how dominant cultural perspectives work.

Moreover, according to the results of this research, one of the priorities of the pedagogical dimension of professional development is, without any doubt, on how to integrate bilingual teaching methodologies and how to use code switching to scaffold children's knowledge and promote understanding and interaction, rather than repairing the flows of a challenging communication. Beginning with the language, a new transition from home culture to school culture can be also readdressed and teachers' deficit view of their learners renegotiated by switching the focus on considering Emakhuwa as a resource for both teachers and students. However, while recognising the importance of local languages as LoLT, the introduction of local knowledge should not be seen

as merely a consequence. It has been observed that the culture of the school still remains unfamiliar to the learners, even when a local language is employed, if for example textbooks have been translated from colonial to local languages without drawing on the local culture (Brock-Utne, 2009).

Finally, if re-narrativisation means to re-construct a new logic of the field with new relationships, this could begin from where teachers do not feel threatened and are more willing to renegotiate their positions. In this study, this space is the Maths subject. However, teachers were looking for 'references', for knowledge that should be already 'organised'. Hence for instance, the ethnomathematics Paulus Gerdes investigated in the everyday activities of Makhuwa people to (re)discover the social and cultural foundation of mathematical concepts '*hidden*' or '*frozen*' in the production of traditional objects, such as baskets, pots, mats (Gerdes, 1988). This work could be adapted for primary teachers and used as a starting point and a reference for "unfreezing [...] culturally frozen mathematics" (Gerdes, 1988, p.153). This would construct for children activities including their 'out-of-school' production techniques as a way to begin to re-imagine the boundaries of the field of education. In this process of re-imagination, local knowledge and language might reciprocally legitimise themselves in school as strategies to bridge the gap between learners' home socialisation, community *funds of knowledge and pedagogy* and what they learn in school, through the promotion of culturally relevant teaching and learning approaches.

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APPENDIX 1: University of Sussex ethical approval



Social Sciences & Arts Cross-School Research Ethics Committee	
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL	
Reference Number:	1213/09/04
School:	ESW
Title of Project	Culture, Language and Pedagogy: teachers' conceptualisation of the teaching and learning process in two primary schools in Pemba (Mozambique)
Principal Investigator: (Supervisor)	Michela Chiara Alderuccio (Dr J Pryor)
Expected Start Date:*	01/11/12
<p>*NB. If the <u>actual</u> project start date is delayed beyond 12 months of the <u>expected</u> start date, this Certificate of Approval will lapse and the project will need to be reviewed again to take account of changed circumstances such as legislation, sponsor requirements and University procedures</p>	
<p>This project has been given ethical approval by the Social Sciences/Arts Research Ethics Committee (C-REC). Please note the following requirements for approved submissions:</p> <p>Amendments to research proposal - Any changes or amendments to the approved proposal, which have ethical implications, must be submitted to the committee for authorisation prior to implementation.</p> <p>Feedback regarding any adverse and unexpected events - Any adverse (undesirable and unintended) and unexpected events that occur during the implementation of the project must be reported to the Chair of the Social Sciences C-REC. In the event of a serious adverse event, research must be stopped immediately and the Chair alerted within 24 hours of the occurrence.</p>	
Authorised Signature	
Name of Authorised Signatory (C-REC Chair or nominated deputy)	Professor Stephen Shute 05/11/12

APPENDIX 2: DPEC approval for conducting the study



REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE
GOVERNO DA PROVÍNCIA DE CABO DELGADO
DIRECÇÃO PROVINCIAL DE EDUCAÇÃO E CULTURA
PEMBA

CREDENCIAL

De acordo com o despacho do Exmo Senhor Director Provincial Adjunto dia 01.02.013 recaído sobre o Pedido da Senhora **Michela Alderuccio**, ficou autorizada pela presente credencial a realizar pesquisa de Douramento nas Escolas de [REDACTED] da Cidade de Pemba.

Pemba, aos 05 de Fevereiro de 2013

O Chefe do DDP


Alberto Silvestre Maguni
(Docente de N1)



C.C.-SDEJT da Cidade

APPENDIX 3: Document to introduce the study at school level



Visão geral do estudo

Titulo do estudo: Cultura, Língua e Pedagogia: as percepções dos professores sobre processo de ensino e aprendizagem em duas escolas primárias em Pemba (Moçambique)

Quem sou eu?

Sou Michela, uma estudante da *University of Sussex*, no Reino Unido. Como parte dos meus estudos, irei conduzir uma pesquisa a nível de ensino primário na cidade Pemba para os próximos 10 meses. Contudo, eu não cheguei agora em Moçambique. Morei em Maputo entre os anos 2008-2011. Trabalhei na *Universidade Pedagógica* no desenvolvimento de cursos de licenciatura a distância para professores em serviço no Ensino Secundário. Desde Novembro de 2011 vivo em Pemba e trabalho com uma ONG italiana num projeto educacional que visa criar um diálogo entre escolas primárias, comunidades e autoridades locais na implementação de políticas educacionais. Embora esteja a coordenar as atividades do projeto em duas escolas primárias da cidade de Pemba, as escolas escolhidas para a pesquisa não serão as mesmas onde estou atualmente a trabalhar para garantir que os meus papéis e responsabilidades como coordenadora do projeto e pesquisadora permaneçam claramente separados. A decisão visa garantir a anonimidade dos participantes na pesquisa e manter a confidencialidade das informações recolhidas.

Qual é a permissão que eu tenho para conduzir esta pesquisa?

O conteúdo da pesquisa foi aprovado pelo Comitê de revisão Ética (C-REC) da University of Sussex (ver anexo). Esta permissão foi apresentada à Direção Provincial e Educação e Cultura na semana passada. Estou a espera da credencial da DPEC para conduzir esta pesquisa nas escolas do ensino primário em Pemba. No entanto quero apresentar-me e apresentar o conteúdo da pesquisa.

Qual é o conteúdo da pesquisa?

O foco desta pesquisa é relacionado com as práticas e abordagens usadas pelos professores no processo de ensino e aprendizagem e a relação entre este processo e os valores culturais que as crianças trazem na escola. Embora a pesquisa seja centrada nas opiniões, nos valores e nas perspetivas dos professores, a pesquisa visa explorar as múltiplas perspetivas que são atribuídas ao processo de ensino e aprendizagem pelos professores, pais e membros da comunidade. Portanto, gostaria também de envolver as pessoas ao redor da escola. Isso me ajudaria na contextualização das perspetivas dos professores na base da realidade socioeconómica que rodeia as experiências dos professores e da escola.

Qual é o desenho da pesquisa?

O método de pesquisa que vou usar é chamado de etnografia. A etnografia visa investigar aquilo que está valorizado, percebido, apreciado ou não considerado, entre algumas pessoas, sobre um determinado argumento e num contexto específico. No caso concreto desta pesquisa, usar um

método etnográfico significa que gostaria de apreender sobre a vida cotidiana da escola e tentar de perceber os valores e as perspectivas que os professores atribuem ao processo de ensino e de aprendizagem, assim como a visão deles sobre a interação entre professor e aluno, adultos e crianças, escola e comunidade e sobre a inclusão dos saberes tradicionais e das línguas locais na escola. Ao mesmo tempo estou interessada em perceber as opiniões dos pais e os membros da comunidade sobre a experiência de aprendizagem das crianças. Por esta razão, uma abordagem etnográfica é caracterizada por uma variedade de métodos que têm de ser suficientemente flexíveis para permitirem a inclusão de diferentes opiniões. Isso também implica que a duração de um estudo etnográfico é maior em relação aos outros métodos de pesquisa. Esta pesquisa terá, portanto, a duração de um ano letivo.

Em geral, os métodos de recolha de dados incluem: observações na escola e dos professores durante as práticas pedagógicas, conversas informais com os professores, com as crianças e os seus pais, entrevistas com professores, discussões em grupo com membros das comunidades ou com o Conselho Escolar.

...E se uma escola convidada não quisesse participar?

A participação da escola é inteiramente voluntária. Cabe a você decidir se quer ou não que a escola participe. Se você decidir que a sua escola pode participar nesta pesquisa, você pode também decidir ao longo do estudo de abandonar a pesquisa se achar que a minha presença não seja bem-vinda pelos professores, as crianças e os pais das crianças. Isso não comportaria nenhuma dificuldade para a sua escola.

... O que é que acontece se você decidir que a sua escola pode participar na pesquisa?

Irei solicitar o seu apoio e/ou apoio do Diretor Pedagógico da escola para explicar aos professores desta escola, aos alunos e os pais deles a razão do meu interesse nas atividades da escola. Para além disso irei clarificar todas as dúvidas apresentadas e formalizar o envolvimento da escola na pesquisa através de consenso oral.

Ao concordar em participar na pesquisa você irá dar-me a permissão para:

- Passar tempo (previamente concordado consigo e com os professores) na escola durante as atividades da escola no ano letivo 2013;
- Conversar com os professores, as crianças e os seus pais sobre as experiências deles, visões e percepções do processo de ensino e aprendizagem;
- Entrevistar os professores em relação à experiência profissional deles, incluindo opiniões sobre o uso de línguas locais na escola, o desenvolvimento do currículo local e perspectivas sobre as mudanças curriculares;
- Observar as práticas da sala de aula para perceber as abordagens de ensino preferidas pelos professores, o conteúdo das lições, e a interação entre professor-aluno;
- Organizar discussões em grupo com membros da comunidade relacionados a escola sobre os significados atribuídos à experiência educacional.

No entanto, a participação dos professores e alunos da sua escola é também voluntária. Todos têm o direito de recusarem a participação neste estudo ou podem retirar-se em qualquer fase da pesquisa, sem ser penalizado ou prejudicado de alguma forma. Se alguns professores não quisessem ser observados durante as aulas, podem falar comigo ou expressar esta preocupação consigo e não irão ser envolvidos. Se você achar que os pais de algumas crianças não gostariam a minha presença nas aulas, aquelas turmas não serão envolvidas. Para além disso, os professores não têm que participar em todos os métodos de pesquisa acima mencionados. São livres de decidirem, por exemplo, se serem entrevistados sem serem observados, e assim por diante.

Irei preparar cartas específicas para dar maiores informações aos professores, aos pais e às crianças sobre qual método de pesquisa irei usar, como usarei os dados, etc... Você irá receber

uma cópia de cada carta. Para os futuros participantes no estudo irei ler uma carta para formalizar o envolvimento deles nesta pesquisa.

O que é que irei fazer com as informações obtidas?

Se a escola, os professores e os participantes irão permitir, os dados recolhidos serão usados como material para a tese do meu doutoramento, em futuras publicações e/ou futuros estudos. Todas as informações obtidas serão estritamente confidenciais. Embora as pessoas ao redor da escola e do bairro possam identificar ou perceber qual é a escola onde a pesquisa está a ser desenvolvida, eu não irei divulgar os nomes reais das pessoas envolvidas. O nome da escola e das pessoas envolvidas será anonimizado. Irei tentar garantir que nenhuma informação que eu divulgue possa identificar uma pessoa, a menos que a mesma pessoa deseje compartilhá-la abertamente com os seus colegas e/ou outras pessoas envolvidas. Os participantes terão a possibilidade de oferecer um feedback nas transcrições das entrevistas e nas interpretações preliminares dos resultados da pesquisa, perguntar para clarificações e providenciar mais detalhes. Se escola quisesse abandonar a pesquisa, eu terei a permissão para usar os dados recolhidos até aquele momento no meu estudo e em publicações futuras. Mas se a escola não quisesse que eu use as informações, deverá somente expressar esta decisão e as informações não serão usadas.

Os meus contatos

O meu nome é Michela Alderuccio. Se você precisar de mais informações, não hesite em contatar-me, estou disponível. O meu número de telefone é 842004104.

APPENDIX 4: Selected Interview Transcript

In the following Portuguese Interview Transcript with one of the most quoted teacher (Jamal), I underline Jamal's words and ideas, which have been directly quoted and mentioned in the text, followed by footnotes with English translation of the parts underlined.

Michela Jamal, bom dia. Mais uma vez muito obrigada para dedicar-me o seu tempo e participar nessa entrevista. A nossa entrevista está dividida em três partes, mais uma final para recapitular alguns pontos das nossas conversas durante o ano. Tentei de juntar todas as informações que recolhi trabalhando consigo. Primeiro de começar gostaria de fazer uma recapitulação de algumas informações básicas. Você ensina há 14 anos...

Jamal Sim, sim 14!

Michela É Macua e originário de Ancuabe e ensina nesta escola deste o 2010.

Jamal Está certo!

Michela Durante as nossas conversas, falamos que você gosta da sua profissão, mas não foi a sua primeira escolha aquela de ser professor, é isso?

Jamal Sim! bem, bem não foi a minha escolha. Não queria ser professor, não foi meu desejo de ser professor, mas segundo a realidade daquele tempo se você tinha bom resultados como estudante tinha facilidade de ter emprego como professor. Por influencia do um meu irmão entrei no sistema e depois recebi a minha formação. Ele disse que não havia outra alternativa, para entrar na saúde havia problema, era normal concluir e ficar em casa na altura, então tinha que concluir a sétima classe para ser professor. Agora já passei a gostar da carreira.¹ Cada dia que passa estou apreendendo, primeiro eu fui aluno então já tinha visto e agora que estou a fazer a mesma atividade de ensino-aprendizagem, estou a lembrar-me o que aprendi ou estou a apreender aquilo que estou ensinar.

Michela Por exemplo, o que é que está apreendendo?

Jamal Tinha que rever muitas coisas que tinha-me esquecido. Como ensinar Ciências, se eu também não me lembro dos conceitos?² Com esta coisa do acompanhamento do aluno você pega da primeira, segunda até quinta, então aí você começa a rever tanta matéria que você já tinha-se esquecido. Então este é um processo um pouco positivo de acompanhar os alunos porque você não pode se limitar em dar primeira todos os anos, sempre deve acompanhar. Na medida que acompanha os alunos sempre há uma inovação.

Michela Percebi. Obrigada. Após dessa recapitulação, gostaria de começar com uma sua avaliação do ano letivo. Chegamos ao fim! O que é que lhe deu mais satisfação nesse ano?

¹ Translated and quoted on p.65,

I did not want to be a teacher. It was not my dream, but at that time [after the civil war] if you had good results as student, it was easy to be placed as teacher. I entered the system because my brother insisted and then I received my training. [...] I ended up enjoying this work. (Jamal)

² Translated and quoted on p.64,

I had to review many things I had forgotten. How can you teach science concepts if you do not remember yourself? (Jamal)

Jamal Para mim nesta escola, primeiro vou atacar na parte dos alunos, porque é a minha matéria prima. Nos alunos estou muito bem posicionado na disciplina de Matemática, Ofícios e Educação Física. Refiro-me destas disciplinas porque primeiro esta zona é uma zona que tem influencia da língua Macua e quando há introdução da língua portuguesa o um conteúdo da língua portuguesa há problemas sempre, porque primeiro não constitui uma primeira língua. Os alunos só ouvem pelos medias ou pelas pessoas que estão falando aí, conversando, mas não estão entender o que é, e se limitam em falarem macua.

E se você ouvir falar uma aluna em Portuguese é talvez por influencia aí em casa ou porque brincam com crianças próximas e também em casa se usa esta língua, então, se for o caso de Ofícios e Educação Física é uma atividade livre, Ofícios você diz 'vamos fazer tal coisa', o aluno faz com toda a vontade porque não se sente impedido como é uma coisa que não articula na boca, tratando-se de uma nova língua, ele faz à vontade.

A matemática desde que nos nascemos, basta que uma pessoa ganha juízo, logo começa a alimentar-se a matemática, eu tenho duas mangas aqui. Os alunos só falam de duas mangas, eles só não sabem como se escreve, então quando vêm aqui na escola aprendem a escrever o numero e não só, mas já eles sabe. Uma criança de 2 anos você lhe entrega 5 meticais, 'vai aí e compra 2 pães', ele até pode lhe trazer o troco.

Michela Obrigada Jamal, e quais foram os principais desafios que encontrou esse ano na sala de aula?

Jamal Esta escola é particular porque o aluno vive aqui localmente e muito perto da escola mas é normal chegar 8 horas mesmo. O calendário, o aquilo que as normas estabelecem, é de vir aqui até 7 horas, 7 em ponto aluno e o professores devem estar na sala de aluna. Então aqui nesta zona isso não existe. Razões, primeiro, não posso saber dizer precisamente... Esta zona aqui por natureza, as pessoas só seguem a escola porque o governo a trouxe aqui mesmo! A intenção principal aqui é de apreender o alcorão, eles respeitam mais o alcorão que a escola mas nesses ultimo dia, estão a ver o desenvolvimento, pessoas trabalham no sito 'x', então precisam daquele nível do ensino e vem aqui. O aluno aqui começa a vir as 7 horas, lá para 7:30, há vezes que nos mesmos entramos as 8 horas... Tentamos, pelo menos, não entramos na sala, ficamos a espera de alunos. Começamos as aulas tarde. Estás a ver o numero de crianças aqui ao lado? Não podia ser este numero que está a ver, mas essa é a realidade. É por falta de controlo dos pais³, porque muitas mães e muitos pais saem daqui muito cedo, vão trabalhar na cidade e outras mães saem daqui vão trabalhar nos quintais de certos e, então, a criança sente-se autónoma. O pai não está a mãe não está, ninguém lhe incomoda, há vezes que saem cedo para chamar o companheiro, afinal aqui vem à hora que quer porque não há nenhuma pessoa que lhe pressiona para poder vir na escola!

Michela E quais foram as suas estratégias de adaptação ao contexto?

Jamal Eu posso lhe garantir uma coisa, eu já lhe disse de que esse é o meu 14 ano a seguir o processo de ensino e aprendizagem, é a minha sexta escola e é o meu terceiro distrito, meus primeiros alunos hoje são meu colegas professores, outros são no Ministério, era professor antes de se transformar para o novo currículo, onde o professor era o professor! Na altura, então eu aqui talvez posso dizer os anos de experiência que tenho aqui na escola são diferentes dos restantes colegas que estão na escola, eu é que só um pouco mais velho na educação. Eu tentei incutir nos alunos determinadas politicas para puder inverter o cenário Eu impôs, porque na ficha de

³ Translated and quoted on p.89,

We begin class late. It's already 8 a.m. do you see the number of pupils around us? It should not be like this but that's the reality. It is due to lack of parents' control (Jamal);

classificação do pessoal docente vem '*educa e impõe a disciplina*'. Eu chegava muito cedo aqui, antes dos outros colegas, mandava formar os alunos, intonar o hino nacional e entrava-se na sala de aula, quem atrasar devia empunhar este papéis aqui, ir deitar e entrar na sala. Então muitos deles... para não se sujar alguns deles sentiam-se que deviam vir muito cedo, então havia escala de funcionamento em que cada professor devia velar a sua própria semana. Na semana em que o alunos sabiam que era eu a trabalhar aqui a pontualidade quase que não estava dúvida. Os outros tudo deixam andar.... Ninguém agora pode dizer ao outro o que deve fazer porque o colega perderia prestígio.⁴ Não há nada que não ser possível, mas é preciso impor a disciplina. Se não pressionarmos o aluno para entrar na sala de aula ficamos sem tempo suficiente para ensinar.

Michela Então, a sua estratégia se percebi nesse novo sistema é não deixar ir as coisas, manter a pontualidade e a disciplina?

Jamal Sim isso mesmo! Sem isso a nossa profissão vai embora. As mudanças não nos facilitam, trazem prejuízos.

Michela Esse é um pensamento que vocês todos partilham. Mas qual foi para si a razão dessa mudanças? Acho que talvez não foram introduzidas para trazerem prejuízos, não é?.

Jamal Eu na posso aprofundar tanto mas é esta política que o governo adotou. Agora o aluno deve-se sentir livre, deve fazer tudo aquele que quer na sala, então o professor como é empregado do governo segue aquilo só para ganhar o pão de cada dia, por isso muita coisa hoje está a se passar mal, porque ele não pode pressionar o aluno a aprender algo! Se pressionar o aluno, o pai chega '*Você! O que é essa coisa de mandar o meu filho embora*'. Enquanto na altura quando éramos alunos, tínhamos medo do professor, mas hoje o professor quase não é nada para os alunos. Eles são independentes, fazem o que quiserem.⁵ Na altura definia-se que o professor é espelho da sociedade moçambicana, mas agora é nada!⁶ O professor não é espelho da sociedade, só que a estrutura governamental não está a ver isso que o professor já não é nada, então por causa disso o professor. já não se sente nada e tudo caem em nada mesmo!⁷

Michela Percebo. No meio dessa mudança qual é o significado de ensinar que você gostaria de dar-me?

Jamal No sentido resumido ensinar é fazer saber uma determinada coisa⁸ ou, então aprendizagem é participação, participar no processo de ensinamento significa que você primeiro tem que ouvir⁹ a pessoa que esta a lhe ensinar, quem está ensinado ouve e se não entende bem retorna a perguntar para ouvir bem.

⁴ Translated and quoted on p.66,

Jamal presents the belief that in the new system a senior teacher like him "cannot anymore tell to other teachers what they should do"

⁵ Translated and quoted on p.96,

Now, the child has to feel free, he has to do everything he wants in class... the teacher cannot put pressure on the child to learn [...] when we were students, we had feared the teacher, but today the teacher is almost nothing for his/her students. They are independent; they do what they want.

⁶ Translated and quoted on p.100,

...back in time, the teacher was considered to be the mirror of the Mozambican society, but now he is nothing

⁷ Translated and quoted on p.96,

The Government does not see it, but because of it [semi-automatic promotion], the teacher feels that he is worth nothing, and everything falls into nothing at all!

⁸ Translated and quoted on p.80,

Jamal's definition of teaching as "making someone know about a specific thing".

⁹ Translated and quoted on p.80,

According to teachers, in order to 'participate' in the teaching and learning process students "have to listen first"

Michela E como é que levamos o aluno a saber uma determinada cosa?

Jamal É aquilo que eu dizia quando estávamos a referência à Matemática, então o aluno sabe de que esse é um caderno, pergunta aí em casa, quantos cadernos tem aí, é um caderno, aqui são quantos lápis, aqui são três, são quatro lápis, eles automaticamente sabe dizer, mas cientificamente não sabe, então quando vem aqui como é um processo de ensino e de aprendizagem ele vem sabendo que isso aqui é tal coisa, então o professor no então que está a dar aula daquele conteúdos dos números naturais, diz que *'este é 1 e escreve-se assim'*, logo o aluno sabe dizer 1 como vinha sabendo e já sabe escrever...

Michela A lição que teve mais sucesso?

Jamal Introdução das letras do alfabeto no caso da língua portuguesa, os alunos ganharam mais velocidade para aquele sistema de eu introduzir o alfabeto com as canções e aqueles truques aí, também eu já fiz a preparação antecipado do aluno. Fotocópias podem ser usada em casa do pai, tio, irmão que pode ensinar em casa. Por o caso da Matemática, não têm problemas na escrita de números.

Michela Durante uma das minhas observações da sua aula, eu vi que você usou o estilo de advinhas para introduzir uma vogal...

Jamal Sim, viu! (sorrindo) Gosto muito de advinhas. Uso as canções também! Aprendemos num seminário, "Crescer", da DANIDA, sobre o novo currículo¹⁰. Podemos introduzir as vogais e as consoantes até o fim do ano¹¹ Até muitas vezes nos se não cantamos as canções tradicionais em língua macua é para o aluno perfeioar a língua portuguesa ou até mesmo para acostumar-se à mesma¹². O aluno assim ganha vontade de falar. Contos também não podem faltar.

Michela Qual é a função do uso das canções?

Jamal A canção tem dois objectivos principais, primeiro quietar o aluno. Por exemplo o professor está a passar no quadro, o corrigir, o aluno fica distraído, então é para o aluno prestar atenção. Segundo fazer recordar o aluno uma determinada letra, *"INDO EU, INDO EU À CAMINHO DA ESCOLA ENCONTREI O ANTONIO, SO PARA DIZER A!" (cantando).*

Michela Como e quando usa a língua macua na sala de aula?

Jamal Neste novo currículo 75% devemos usar a língua portuguesa e 25% podemos usar macua. Eu traduzo palavras, coloco os alunos com algumas perguntas. É preciso usar.

Michela E o que mudou na forma de ensinar no novo currículo?

¹⁰ Mentioned on p.69,

Jamal reported how teachers learned about the use of songs in the teaching and learning process.

¹¹ Translated and quoted on p.69,

we can introduce vowels and consonants, until the end of the year

¹² Translated and quoted on p.69,

Jamal's idea that through songs children *"...get used to it [Portuguese language]"*

Jamal Com a introdução em 2004 desde currículo houve muita mudança, primeiro de referir que houve mudança com a introdução de uma nova unidade, agora ali usa-se aquele método... o método... Você sabe!¹³ Tem um nome específico, começa do difícil para o fácil¹⁴...

Michela Estamos a falar da pedagogia centrada no aluno, não é?

Jamal Sim. Aqui estamos. Esta mudança traz prejuízos, a mia opinião é esta. Eu quero introduzir a letra G, mas primeiro tenho que conversar com o aluno, e depois escrever toda aquela frase para introduzir a letra G. O aluno da primeira classe, tratando-se que é uma novidade para ele, só houve, na consegue descodificar. O nosso desenvolvimento psíquico ainda não está bem-maturo, passamos por varias mudanças em conflito, o colonialismo, a guerra... o desenvolvimento está a começar a renascer agora, o aluno fica destruído, só imita aquilo que o professor diz. A língua portuguesa não é a nossa língua, apreendemos muito mais na escola. Na altura em que nos estudávamos havia cartazes, onde haviam imagens, então o aluno era normal entrar na escola a saber ler aquelas imagens, por causa do que? Dos irmãos que estudavam naquela classe, o aluno sentia o gosto pela leitura das imagens, então antes de iniciar a pegar o lápis para os grafismos, ele conseguia abrir a sua boca usando termos em língua portuguesa, quando estava na escola fazia o reforço daquele que estava a ouvir do irmão, existia uma canção das riquezas do Moçambique... Então tendo em conta que saímos de comunidades que não falam a língua portuguesa, só assistimos na rádio, vizinho, televisão mas não ficamos ligados a isso porque só ouvimos, então o novo Currículo não é fácil.

Michela Ok. Jamal, mas para além da questão da língua portuguesa que as crianças não falam e isso complica o vosso trabalho. O que é que mudou? O que é que não é fácil?

Jamal Com a introdução de muitas disciplinas, este todo é complicado, é pena, nos somos negros moçambicano, estamos a crescer agora, nascemos ontem¹⁵, o desenvolvimento em nos aparecer agora, então com a introdução destas varias disciplinas o aluno já não há-de-saber o que tem fazer¹⁶, embora há outros que acatam, e não só a idade de ingresso também é prejuízo do próprio aluno porque nos, muito de nos vivemos em família diversas, onde as condições também não são como outras famílias. Pelo menos se a idade de ingresso na primeira classe fosse de 7 porque a criança de 7 anos sabem ouvir mesmo. Agora o que acontece? A criança que está a completar agora 6 anos lá para Outubro, já com 5 e alguns meses deve-se inscrever na escola, vai completar os 6 anos enquanto está na escola, não pode! Aquelas crianças não sabem ouvir, os pais não as acompanham, vêm aqui sentam-se, até dormem, vêm nem escrevem, nem nada, não sabem porque estão aqui na escola¹⁷, com os 7 anos é normal saber o que vêm fazerem aqui na escola.

¹³ Translated and quoted on p.94,

Jamal makes reference to LCP: *"That approach... You know it!"*

¹⁴ Translated and quoted on p.95,

It begins "from difficult to easy"

¹⁵ Translated and quoted on p.66,

Mozambican reality to underline the inappropriateness of the new curriculum was described as a country *"born yesterday"*

¹⁶ Translated and quoted on p.95,

Jamal's ideas related to the fact that with the introduction of many subjects such as Life skills, Music Education and Visual Education *"children will end up by not understanding what they have to do"*

¹⁷ Translated and quoted on p.89,

Jamal's idea that younger students *"... do not know why they are in school"*

Michela Têm outras mudanças que gostaria de sublinhar?

Jamal Bom, a autoridade do professor coincidiu num momento em que o poder é democrático, não vou culpar o governo, mas a política de dizer deixa o aluno estudar a vontade, deixa o aluno passar, estraga tudo. Você viu. O aluno faz o que é que quer. Não tem medo, não tem respeito. Eles aqui sabem que se vier ou não, ele deve passar¹⁸. O aluno não pode ser impedido em nenhuma coisa, mesmo que atrase, deixar ele entrar na sala, nem que venha as 9 horas, deve deixar entrar na sala, o que nos aprendemos naquele tempo, você atrasou, ficava preocupado, 'será que hei-de-entrar o não?'. Então logo o aluno ganhava a coragem de acordar cedo que era para chegar na escola cedo, enquanto que agora o aluno entendeu que é liberdade completa, deu mal, isso não é só aqui na primeira, também ensino secundário, porque não há medo de nada.

Michela Mais algo?

Jamal Não acho que é isso! Já tivemos muitas oportunidades de abordar esses assuntos todos.

Michela Sim tem razão! Portanto, Jamal, você já sabe, aqui voltamos para a minha questão de sempre. Nunca falamos do currículo local, e na existe na pratica um currículo local. Gostaria de refletir consigo sobre o desenvolvimento desse currículo, começando pela definição que você gostaria de dar de 'cultura'.

Jamal Eu não posso defender a cultura dessa comunidade. Eles são diferentes, os Árabe influenciaram a cultura dessa zona durante muitos séculos. Os Árabe incutiam as formas de como vivem eles, primeiro inculcavam na religião muçulmana, depois, a forma do traz, principalmente aqui a raparigas com esta inovação que existia aqui de poder se por lenço, as meninas se sentem livre, até entram de lenço na sala de aula, e quando graduam vão se matricular numa escola islâmica da comunidade por causa do lenço, é um traz delas. Aqui as tradições são diferentes. Eu sou Macua... temos hábitos e costumes diferentes, passados pelos nossos progenitores. Aqui eu não sei, eu não chego de aprofundar, é uma comunidade complexa.¹⁹

Muitas delas vão na Madraça, a Madraça como tal primeiro procura saber a que hora o aluno estuda, os que estudam no período da tarde talvez 7 horas vão a Madraça, então até lá para 10, 9, 11 regressam e depois vão para escola. Temos um pequeno caso nas sextas feiras, muitos alunos quase que não vem para cá, para eles é domingo, faz de conta um domingo do cristão.

Michela Falamos de conhecimento tradicional. O que é para si e como poderíamos usa-lo na escola, qual que seria a finalidade?

Jamal Usando o currículo local, eu pelo menos estava a ver que devia-se introduzir nesta zona uma vez que há problemas sérios dos alunos encarrarem a língua portuguesa, principalmente a leitura e a escrita. Deveria se introduzir o ensino bilingue, que é a própria língua macua, assim como o português. Como o aluno entende mais macua, e a luta do processo de ensino e aprendizagem é para que o aluno saiba ler e escrever, sendo assim se fosse introduzido o ensino bilingue, o aluno como adere mais à língua local macua, o aluno deveria saber como se escreve na língua local e daí ganhava a vontade de escrever na língua portuguesa. Se houvesse esta introdução deveria ser uma parte integrante do CL.

¹⁸ Translated and quoted on p.117,

...either they come or do not come to school, they will pass anyway

¹⁹ Translated and quoted on p.88,

I cannot defend the culture of this community. They are different; Arabs influenced this area for many centuries... Here traditions are different. I am Makhuwa, we have different habits and costumes passed through generations, and they belonged to our ancestors [...] Here, I do not know, I never tried to deepen my knowledge; it is a complex community.

Michela Jamal, não percebi. Você acha que deveríamos introduzir nessa escola o ensino bilingue, não é?

Jamal Sim, como parte do currículo local.

Michela Ok, estou a ver. Então temos a língua macua como língua do currículo local, mas o que é que no concreto que vamos ensinar com o currículo local?

Jamal Noções básicas, como se escreve, como se faz uma adição, introduzir as letras da língua macua. Vamos usar o mesmo conteúdo da disciplina de português mas o ensinamos em macua.

Michela Jamal, e se você tivesse a possibilidade de mudar o Sistema da Educação por onde começaria e porquê?

Jamal Começaria com o ingresso aos 7 anos. As crianças daqui precisam tempo para si familiarizar com a língua portuguesa, se passassem todos para a escolinha isso facilitaria. Eles não sabem o porque de estar na escola. Então, aos seis anos vão na escolinhas, aos 7 vem para cá, não para brincar.

Michela Ok. Portanto, se percebi o seu pensamento, o ensino bilingue do que falávamos ficaria só e somente no tempo do curriculum local. Mas, você não gostaria que esta escola fosse bilingue 'de vez'?

Jamal Não, não deve ser Portuguesa. Só tem a escola para aprender. Vai ajuda-los para ter emprego. A comunidade também quer isso.

Michela Jamal, gostaria de fechar a entrevista com um provérbio, conto ou advinha que você gostaria de me contar...

Jamal Uhm. Essa é boa. Então, uhm.... *'Uma planta num tempo seco quando você não enrega, não cresce, ou não desenvolve'*. Isso está relacionado com os pais. A minha interpretação é quando o pai leva a sua criança para a escola, é mesma coisa semear uma planta, então, enquanto o pai não regar aquela planta, é a mesma coisa se não faz o acompanhamento normal do seu educando, acaba murchando, porque não tem controlo em casa, assim a criança não tem interesse porque o pai não se importa. Muitos pais não fazem acompanhamento do filho.

Michela (sorrindo) então voltamos aos desafios de ensinar aqui e ao discurso que a comunidade não leva à escola à sério e ficam convosco todas as responsabilidades..?

Jamal Sim, é isso.

Michela Jamal, muito obrigada!