CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late father, Richard Mubaiwa Chawira and my late sisters, Mary and Eunice, who bequeathed to me a legacy of hard work.

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SUMMARY

This study was initiated with the primary aim to provide history classroom practitioners and history curriculum designers with a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This undertaking was prompted by the realisation that although the history curriculum in Zimbabwe espouses the skills based approach in history teaching like in many other countries, constructing an enabling learning environment has proved to be elusive for history teachers.

In the endeavour to suggest the guidelines for constructing an enabling learning environment, the Marxist theories of critical theory and critical pedagogy, the neo-Marxist theory of constructivism in its various strands, the challenges encountered in history teaching and the developments in history curriculum in Zimbabwe since 1980 were eclectically fused. This was done in order to respond to both the literature study and the empirical study findings which suggested that approach.

The research design adopted for this study is the multiple case study design as guided by critical theory as the theoretical framework couching the study. This was done to allow the use of naturalistic data collection suitable in a qualitative study of this nature. The sample which was chosen through purposive sampling included three secondary schools in Gweru Urban District in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. One history teacher was selected for detailed study at each of the three schools since the aim was for depth rather than breadth. The empirical study involved the collection of data using document analysis, interviews and lessons observations.

Data was analysed using interpretive qualitative data analysis. This was done to ensure that 'thick description' which is commensurate with qualitative study findings' reporting would be realised. Excerpts from document analyses, interviews and lessons observations have been used generously to report the findings of the study.

The major finding of the study is that there is need to develop a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of

critical thinking skills in history teaching. This is based on the findings of the challenges that history teachers encounter in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills from both the literature study and the empirical study (see 5.3). There is very limited capacity of the participating history teachers to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as revealed by the plethora of challenges they encounter.

The findings on the current practices by history teachers suggested that there is very little exposure of the history learners to enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This is anchored on the findings that history teachers continue to use the traditional methods of teaching history, use the traditional resources and traditional assessment procedures (see 5.4) which do not augur well for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

There is an urgent need to revamp history teacher training in order to incorporate the world view of critical theory and its associated corollaries of critical pedagogy and constructivism. Critical theory will help to equip history teachers with the necessary philosophy of teaching history which in this study is viewed as the need to develop critical thinking skills. Critical pedagogy and constructivism will assist history teachers with the relevant pedagogy for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. History teachers need to improve on all the four components of enabling learning environment suggested in the framework and these are the process oriented learning environment (POLE 1), participatory oriented learning environment (POLE 2), context oriented learning environment (COLE) and continuous improvement oriented learning environment (CIOLE). This proposed framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment is taken to be the main indication of the achievement of the aim of this study. The envisaged Zimbabwe curriculum for 2017 which seeks to make critical thinking the kingpin of the expected learner outcomes will be served best in history teaching with

the eclectic construction of an enabling learning environment from these four components of an enabling learning environment.

Key terms: *critical theory; critical pedagogy; constructivism; critical thinking skills; curriculum; curriculum change and transformation; history teaching and learning; learning environment; enabling learning environment*

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

'O' Level- Ordinary Level

AE- Assistant Examiner

ALD- Actual Level of Development

BA- Bachelor of Arts

BSC- British Schools Council

BSPZ- Better Schools Programme in Zimbabwe

CAPS- Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement

CBD- Central Business District

CD-ROMS- Compact Disc Read Only Memory Storage

CDU- Curriculum Development Unit

CIE- Cambridge international Examinations

CIET- Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training

CIOLE- Continuous Improvement Oriented Learning Environment

COLE- Context Oriented Learning Environment

DoBE- Department of Black Education

GCE- General Certificate of Education

GUD- Gweru Urban District

HTA- History Teachers' Association

ICTs- Information Communication Technologies

MDGs- Millennium Development Goals

MoPSE- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

NACZ- National Aids Council of Zimbabwe

NCHWG- National Council History Working Group

OECD- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PED- Provincial Education Director

PGDE- Post Graduate Diploma in Education

PLD- Potential Level of Development

POLE 2- Participatory Oriented Learning Environment

POLE 1- Process Oriented Learning Environment

SDA- School Development Association

SDGs- Sustainable Millennium Development Goals

UFS- University of the Free State

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Children's Organisation

ZANU- Zimbabwe African National Union

ZAPU- Zimbabwe African People's Union

ZIMASSET- Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation

ZIMSEC- Zimbabwe School Examinations Council

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING

*"The roots of critical thinking can be detected in
the 'Socratic Method'. The answering of a Socratic
question requires the use of critical thought---."*
(Kokkidou, 2013:2).

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The last quarter of the twentieth and dawn of the twenty-first centuries saw novel demands such as sustainable development, improved products, alternative sources of energy, creating new business and technological solutions and finding quicker and efficient ways to communicate (Thompson 2011:1 and Thomas 2009:256). These challenges have a centrifugal magnitude of bewildering governments, industries and societies alike. These are challenges which are associated with globalisation as a prerequisite for the sustenance of humanity which is under the threat of its own making such as ozone depletion and wanton destruction of vegetation for short-term benefits. In order to mitigate these challenges governments, industries and societies always promote education reform to put education in tandem with the new challenges and needs.

Education reform by nature implies the change and transformation of the curriculum which is the vehicle of education reform. It is against this background that schools, the world over, have been charged to implement curricula that can produce critical thinking human capital which is seen as the panacea to the challenges (Thompson, 2011:1). This is so in view of the contention that the challenges highlighted above require 'knowledge workers' in order to take them head on. Critical thinking skills are viewed by Thompson (2011:4) as the intellectual processes of actively conceptualising, applying, analysing, synthesising and evaluating information gathered from, or generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication as a guide to belief or action.

This drive towards the development of critical thinking skills resulted in most countries reforming or transforming their curricula to produce critical thinking learners. Moreeng & Du Toit (2013:45) say as part of curriculum transformation South Africa introduced the outcomes-based education which emphasised the development of skills. They say the focus on the development of skills was captured in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document which espoused the specific skills for each subject including history. Other countries such as Lithuania and Zimbabwe also crafted their curricula in a manner that provided for general standards of education which emphasise the importance of critical thinking through the state education strategies. In some cases critical thinking is presented as one of the main learning outcomes to be attended to in their curriculum policy (Penkauskiene, 2010:3; Mapetere 2013:134).

The impact of this was also visible in the teaching of History as there was an emphasis on the shift towards the skills orientated approaches from teacher centred, content orientated and rote learning ways of teaching history. Teaching and learning was envisaged to be learner-centred and skills-based (Aktekin 2013; Moyo and Modiba 2013 and Klein 2010) as it was the case in England where history teaching evolved to introduce what was referred to as the 'new history' concept that focused on 'doing history' (Lekgoathi 2010:106). Turkey in 1993 and South Africa after 1994, also embarked on history teaching that moved beyond cramming dates and names of people and places, to the one that focused on high order thinking skills including critical thinking (Aktekin 2013:468). Zimbabwe attempted the development of critical thinking skills through history teaching after independence, albeit not as intensely as it was espoused or intended (Moyo and Modiba 2013:5).

The transition to a skills-based approach has not always been an easy one as it has been confronted with challenges. In Turkey, lack of teacher expertise, lack of relevant resources for use in teaching and learning and poor planning (Aktekin 2013:469) were identified as factors that impact negatively on the envisaged change. Penkauskiene (2010:6) identified challenges with assessment that still remained

content focused, unavailability of teaching and learning support materials that encourages critical thinking, poor teacher training and lack of support from school community in Lithuania. The efforts in the curriculum transformation in Zimbabwe and South Africa were hampered by inadequate orientation, training and development for teachers, learning support material often unavailable in schools and not sufficiently used in classrooms, large sizes of the classes and the continuation of the traditional examination for assessment (Chisholm 2003:3, Jansen 1998:2-9 and Mapetere, 2013:134).

These challenges militating against the skills-based approach confirm the evidence available on the incorporation of critical thinking skills that appropriate teaching and learning environment plays an important part in encouraging critical thinking among students (Chee Choy and Kin Cheah, 2009:203). Therefore, history teachers need to provide a learning environment conducive to encourage the students to develop critical thinking skills.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The researcher was motivated to undertake the study following the barrage of criticism levelled against the education system in Zimbabwe in recent years in the wake of the high levels of graduate unemployment. The education system has been criticised for churning out graduates who are academics who can regurgitate information learnt at school, but cannot think critically. The criticism has zeroed at the lack of critical skills among the graduates which makes them highly unemployable in a global economy that requires critical skills due to its competitiveness. Moreover, the global economy requires innovativeness which is hinged on the application of critical thinking skills. The best place to nurture critical thinking skills is the school system and schools seem to be failing to nurture that critical learner outcome in Zimbabwe no wonder why this barrage of criticism has come about.

The researcher was also motivated by the fact that he has experience of teaching both the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) and Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) History Syllabuses. Both syllabuses emphasise the skills-based approach to history teaching and learning. The researcher wanted to find out the learning environments that the history teachers constructed in order to develop critical thinking skills.

The researcher was also motivated to do the study following comments by colleagues in history teaching that learners struggled with critical thinking when required to do so in homework, group work, discussions, debates, tests and examinations. The colleagues highlighted that the learners tended to narrate or describe even when tasks require higher order thinking. This was said with the conviction that the learners are failing to do what they should naturally be doing rightly. The researcher turned this accusation against the teachers and decided to find out what learning environments history teachers were creating in order to inculcate critical thinking skills in their learners which they in turn could use in answering homework and examination questions as expected by their teachers.

The researcher was also motivated by the fact that at the time of the research, the school which was the work place had a creed, part of which reads, "I am a critical thinker". The research was undertaken to establish the extent to which history teaching in the school contributed towards the development of critical thinking in the learners as espoused in the school creed.

1.3 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Critical theory is a paradigm which focuses on critiquing and recommending the breaking of traditions in institutions (Breuing 2011:4). The challenges of ensuring the development of critical thinking are the traditions this study seeks to critique and suggest ways to break. Critical theory was chosen in order to generate critical questions to collect data to use in the construction of an enabling learning environment (Taylor-Powell and Renner 2003:1). The chosen theoretical framework further enabled the researcher to use critical pedagogy and constructivism as conceptual frameworks for the study. Critical pedagogy is the practice of critical

theory in teaching as it relies on cognitive and rational activity involving actions like inquiry, analysis, and discourse action based on the assumption that society can be changed through critical action, dialogue and education (Taylor-Powell and Renner 2003:3) and that critical pedagogy is against structural determinism and therefore focuses on the lived experiences of the people thereby representing self-realisation and self-expression. The type of learning environment that would support the development of critical thinking skills requires an in-depth critique of the current *status quo*, that is, the current practices used by history teachers in creating an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Constructivism was chosen as a complementary conceptual framework because the construction of meaning (learning) is a social activity and an enabling learning environment must incorporate the social components of dialogue, discussion and interaction in general.

The frameworks helped with ontological and epistemological assumptions which can help shape the envisaged enabling learning environment. The ontological assumptions which guided this study are that reality is subjective and that knowledge is a social construct and the epistemological assumptions are that knowledge is relative and socially constructed (Namasasu 2012:89). The conceptual frameworks also helped in the propagation of the main research question and sub-questions to direct data collection to address the aim and objectives of the study.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A plethora of evidence from a literature survey is convincing that there was history curriculum change and transformation beginning in the 1960s and 1970s towards teaching history for skills rather than content mastery. In Britain, the British Schools' Council (BSC) started in the 1960s and 1970s to expose learners to a variety of historical sources of evidence as a way of developing skills in history teaching and learning. For the Netherlands, Klein (2010:616) says the history curriculum in the Netherlands since 1993 required history to be taught through second order conceptual ideas in tandem with the "new history" movement from England.

According to Klein (2010:616), these second order skills are the critical thinking skills. Aktekin (2013:469) says since 2005, the history curriculum in Turkey was written according to the constructivist approach requiring the learners to construct their own historical meanings from different sources of historical evidence. Bertram (2012:9) says school history education after 1994 in South Africa has been and continues to be influenced by the curriculum changes which took place in Britain as directed by the BSC in the 1960s and 1970s which exposed the learners to a variety of historical sources of evidence. Even though it is not noted in the case of Turkey, the fact that they undertook history curriculum reform after the 1960s and 1970s suggests that they were also influenced by the "new history" approach of Britain.

The "new history" approach correspondingly required a change towards a more learner-centred approach that emphasises the development of critical thinking skills. This has been shown to be a problem in countries such as Turkey (Aktekin 2013:469), Lithuania (Penkauskiene 2010:6) and South Africa (Jansen 1998:2-9 and Chisholm 2003:3). Teachers seem to struggle with this transition because in all the countries, the learning environment is not conducive enough to enable the learner centred, critical thinking skills-based approach. The challenges that the teachers grapple with include the inadequate preparation for the skills-based approach, the lack of adequate teaching and learning materials, the lack of school community support, the methodological constraints and the assessment approaches which have remained traditional summative examination which is content biased.

The influence of the BSC in the teaching and learning of secondary school history was also experienced in Zimbabwe starting in the 1990s. According to Chitate (2005:1) and Moyo and Modiba (2013:5), the first secondary school history syllabus reform in Zimbabwe was Syllabus 2166 which began in 1990. Given the concerns by the Zimbabwean historians and teachers that the Rhodesian history was not in tandem with the "new history" approach, it meant that the new syllabus had to concern itself with both the 'substantive' and 'procedural' knowledge in almost equal measure as argued by Moyo and Modiba (2013:5). They further suggest that this

was a result of drawing lessons from the "new history" as it had developed in England in the 1960s and 1970s. Given the fact that England was the former colonial influence, it is not surprising that there was this borrowing because the education system of the country still relied heavily on the developments in England at least for the early years of independence.

The NCHWG helped to ensure that the methodology of the new syllabus in Zimbabwe was designed to foster historical skills among the learners (Tendi, 2009:28). According to Tendi (2009:28), the new syllabus promoted diverse methodology to history teaching like problem solving, problem posing, role play and discussions thus putting the learner at the centre of teaching and learning of history. These methods in teaching and learning were meant to encourage the historical skills of critical thinking.

The ZIMSEC History syllabus 2167 (2013:5) which is the successor to syllabus 2166 recommends the skills based approach in history teaching and learning in secondary schools. As defined in the curriculum documents, the skills based approach will involve the selection of a wide variety of sources, including extracts from both primary and secondary sources for analysis by pupils (ZIMSEC History syllabus 2167, 2013:5). Syllabus 2167 also promotes diverse methodology to history teaching like problem solving, problem posing, role play and discussions thus putting the learner at the centre of teaching and learning of history in a learner-centred environment.

Unfortunately, the skills based approach is derailed by what Mapetere (2013:136) calls the 'power of narrative' as dictated by syllabus 2167 and the teacher centred learning environment (Moyo and Modiba 2013, Chitate 2005 and Tendi 2009) it unobtrusively creates. The content heaviness of the syllabus fosters teacher and learner reliance on history textbooks which stifles the development of critical thinking skills. Moreover, assessment at the exit level is biased towards content reproduction

as a study by Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:86) suggests that in the current Ordinary Level History Syllabus 2167, pupils may pass with at least a B grade without attempting the part C questions which apply critical thinking skills enshrined in the "new history" concept. Teacher and learner focus in history teaching and learning is therefore, on covering enough content (ZIMSEC 'O' Level History Syllabus, 2013:6) for the exit level examination suggesting limited time for the development of critical thinking skills as the skills component is relegated to the periphery of assessment. From the preceding discussion it is evident that history teachers in Zimbabwe and other countries seem to be struggling to design an enabling learning environment that will cater for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study aims to develop a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish the need for a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

2. To elucidate current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

3. To provide a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

1.7 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STIUDY

In undertaking this study, the following assumptions were considered:

1 There exist critical thinking skills which can be clearly identified and defined.

2 All people can be taught to think in a critical way.

3 History learners can deliberately be taught to recognise and apply critical thinking skills in appropriate ways.

4 History learners can become critical thinkers if they recognise and apply critical thinking skills.

5 History is a subject which promotes the development of critical thinking skills by its approaches and methods.

6 History teachers have a mandate to create enabling learning environments for the development of critical thinking skills.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design was adopted based on a careful consideration of the principles of the theoretical framework of critical theory and conceptual frameworks of critical pedagogy and constructivism. These seem to promote studies which collect qualitative data in natural settings, using methods that encourage dialogue and validation of the participants' views (Mertens 2005:12). This approach enabled the use of interpretive and constructivist paradigms (Scotland 2012:12).

The study adopted a form of multiple case studies. Purposive sampling was used in order to choose three secondary schools and one history teacher per school to be part of the study since they were considered as participants rich in information (Draper 2004:645; Lauckner, Paterson and Krupa 2012:6) The teachers were selected on the basis that they have experience in teaching both Syllabi 2166 which was skills-based and Syllabi 2167 which is mainly content-based although it advocates a skills-based approach. Data collection methods for the study included open-ended interviews with history teachers in the selected schools, classroom observations and document analysis of scheme-cum-plans, syllabus document, assessment papers and pupils exercises books (Bhattacherjee 2012:78, Bowen

2009:27, Walliman 2011:100, Hussein 2009:3). Data analysis followed the qualitative interpretive analysis (Sargeant 2012:2). Data from interviews, observations and document analysis was coded, categorised and thematised (Kawulich 2010:5) case by case and then cross-case to reveal the major and minor concepts of the findings (Moriaty 2011:7) for purposes of generating a conceptual framework in the construction of an enabling learning environment. Data analysis was done in the context of the credibility, transferability, dependability (Shanton 2004:64-71), confirmability (Loh 2013:5) and trustworthiness (Tuli 2010:101) of the findings.

1.9 THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to history teachers at secondary schools in Gweru Urban District (GUD) in the Midlands Province in Zimbabwe. Three secondary schools, and one history teacher per secondary school, were involved in this study. The researcher was interested in obtaining depth for understanding of the phenomenon which is under study rather than breadth for generalisability of the findings.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A case study was undertaken and being so, it has limitations. The greatest limitation is that the findings of a case study cannot be generalised to a wider population. Since the researcher did not aim at generalisability of the findings, qualitative study was chosen. The case study was confined to the GUD only which may not cater for all different contexts in which History is taught. This was done because the researcher was constrained by resources to fund the study since it was self-funded. However, the study should be considered and interpreted in the context of its dependability, credibility, validity, reliability, conformability and transferability.

1.11 PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was done with non-participating schools and teachers. The purpose of the pilot study was to have a trial run of the data collection instruments which are

interview, observation and document analysis schedules. The feasibility of the use of the instruments was strengthened as a result of the comments and suggestions that were made by the history teachers involved.

1.12 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

History teachers will benefit from the critical approach that this study seeks to foster in teaching because critical thinking requires teachers to be critical teachers. The teachers will be encouraged to reflect on their role in the teaching and learning of history as it is envisaged that the learning environment will transform them into planners or designers of, and researchers into, curriculum methodology of situated learning and continuous assessment. The learners will benefit from the liberation and democracy that they will be given in the history classroom as their voice will be put at the centre of the teaching and learning process. The community will benefit in that their participation in the teaching and learning of history will be enhanced as they will be given opportunities to be involved as mentors for teachers and their children outside the classroom, as facilitators at history workshops and as well as providers of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) which the learning environment envisages to adopt. Researchers will benefit from the effort to converge both theoretical and conceptual frameworks in a single study and the strengths of using qualitative research methodology independent of quantitative research methodology.

1.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics is defined by Marshall (1998:566) as the application of moral rules and professional codes of conduct to the collection, analysis, reporting and publication of information about research [participants], in particular active acceptance of [participants'] right to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent. Gallagher (2005:4) says ethical principles are essential to ensure that conclusions drawn from research are valid and that the integrity of the methodology used in arriving at these conclusions is beyond reproach.

The researcher sought clearance from the Faculty of Education Ethics Office of the University of the Free State (UFS). The Ethical Clearance Certificate enabled the researcher to apply to the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) for permission to do research in secondary schools. The Provincial Education Director (P. E. D) of Midlands Province in Zimbabwe was liaised with to conduct research in the secondary schools in GUD. Permission to collect data was sought from school heads and history teachers by way of personal visits to sampled schools.

On the ethical principles that are recommended by Halai (2006:5) which are informed and voluntary consent; confidentiality of information shared; anonymity of research participants; beneficence or no harm to participants and reciprocity, the researcher chose informed consent; confidentiality; protection against harm. The researcher also added issues of power relations as derived from the theories guiding this study which concern with power relations in teaching and learning.

1.13.1 Informed and voluntary consent

The researcher got the informed and voluntary consent of the participants by giving them consent forms to sign and date as *prima facie* evidence that they voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The University Degrees Research Committee (2008:63) states that human subjects in a study need to be informed about the nature of the study. The participants were also informed that their participation remained open to cessation if they felt they no longer needed to continue with the participation.

The researcher needed to ensure that the participants were informed about the information relating to the study in particular. The information that the participants were given included the purpose of the research by explaining the research topic, detailed description of the processes involved, time of engagement, the potential risk of inconvenience, the likely outcomes of the study which are beneficial to the participants and the nature of participation which was voluntary.

1.13.2 Confidentiality

The participants were also informed of their confidentiality in terms of remaining anonymous in the collection of data through the use of pseudonyms for interviews and observations, the storage of collected data in lockable room and drawers to ensure that no-one except the researcher had access to the data, as well as in the reporting of findings unless they choose to be overtly quoted in the reporting of the findings. The researcher informed the participants that the findings of the research will be communicated to their school heads and the MoPSE in order to allay any suspicions on the use that could be made of the research findings. The participants were allowed to ask any questions concerning the research and get clarification from the researcher in order to enable them to participate from an informed point of view. The researcher also attached a portion of the CTR form signed by the supervisor to assure the participants that the research was for academic purposes only. This was done to enhance the chances of volunteering to participate in the research process.

1.13.3 Protection against harm

The researcher had to take steps to protect the participants against any form of harm that was likely to emanate from their participation. This was in view of the call by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:64) that participants need to be safeguarded from any mental or physical harm that might befall them consequent to their participation. The researcher ensured that the venues selected for the interviews and their offices were away from non-participants to avoid being put under pressure by the presence of their colleagues. I also ensured that the information that they proffered could not be linked to them directly by promising to use alphabet letters to refer to their schools in the data as well as in the reporting of the findings. I made sure that there would be no mental harm by just focusing on the information the participants were prepared to provide without putting undue pressure on them.

1.13.4 Issues of power relations

In a study driven by critical theory which speaks to the issues of power relations there was the need to consider the levels of power that could be given to the participants. The University Research Degrees Committee (2008:4) warns that the power imbalance tendency that obtains between the researcher and the researched has to be taken into consideration. The participants were given power to decide when they could be interviewed, observed and which documents to supply to the researcher. Fortunately, they exercised that power to the satisfaction and advantage of the researcher since all documents needed for analysis were supplied.

1.14 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS OF THE THESIS

The thesis is organised as follows:

Chapter One- **Background and orientation to the study** outlined the background to the study and explained why there is the need to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The motivation of the study was explained. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study were elucidated. The problem statement which is the driver of the study was articulated clearly. The purpose, objectives and assumptions underlying the research were dealt with. The qualitative research design and case study methodology of the study were outlined. The scope and limitations of the study were proffered. The value of the study to stakeholders in education and academia was expatiated. An elaboration of the relevant ethical considerations of the study was presented.

Chapter Two- **Theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the construction of enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching** discussed the critical theory as the theoretical framework of the study on the basis of the conceptualisation, principles, relevance of the theory to the study, role of the researcher using the theory and the value of the theory in the study. It also discussed critical pedagogy and constructivism as the underpinning

conceptual frameworks in light of conceptualisation, principles, relevance of the theory to the study, role of the researcher and the value to the study.

Chapter Three- **Literature study on the construction of enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching** gave a detailed study of the literature study on curriculum, curriculum transformation and change and the factors which impact on curriculum to change and transform it. Issues of curriculum theory and curriculum development in Zimbabwe with particular reference on the history curriculum were thoroughly discussed. The aims, assessment objectives and the scheme of assessment of the ZIMSEC History syllabus 2167 were also presented. The chapter also considered the critical thinking skills that are envisaged for development, the approaches in the development of critical thinking skills, learning environment and conceptualisation of enabling learning environment, the components of an enabling learning environment and the challenges faced in implementing the skills-based approach in history teaching.

Chapter Four- **Research design and methodology** discussed the qualitative research design adopted in the study. The ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning the study as derived from the theoretical framework of critical theory were also discussed. The purposive sampling technique was discussed in great detail. This was followed by a presentation of the site selection and situation analysis of the cases that were chosen for study. The methods of data collection commensurate with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and qualitative research design which are interviews, observations and document analysis were explained and the data collection schedules were presented. The data analysis approach of interpretative qualitative analysis was presented on each method that was used in the collection of data. The criteria for judging the trustworthiness of the findings which are reliability, validity, credibility, conformability, transferability and triangulation were highlighted and explained. Ethical issues of voluntary and informed consent, confidentiality, protection from harm and issues of power relations were explained. A synopsis of the pilot study that was done to

anticipate any challenges in data collection was finally explained.

Chapter Five- **Presentation, analysis and interpretation of research findings** focused on the findings of the literature study and, empirical study case by case, method by method, cross case and cross method in order to derive patterns in the data. Categories, sub-categories and themes were used to make the presentation, analysis and interpretation malleable. The chapter focused on the first and second objectives of the study which are the need for a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment and, the current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The categories used in the presentation are teacher training, development and support, managing curriculum change, teaching methodology, resources, assessment and classroom environment.

Chapter Six- **A framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching: Summary, findings and conclusions** gives a synopsis of the research, a summary of the qualitative research, a summary of the main research findings discussed in Chapter Five. A framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching was suggested. The conclusions based on the findings were also presented. The new areas for further research opened up by this research are highlighted. The chapter concludes with a personal reflection on the study and its benefits.

1.15 Conclusion

This chapter gives an overview of the main components of the thesis. The purpose is to provide the reader with the sign posts of what to expect in the exposition. The researcher concedes that the discussion in the chapter sets the stage for the discussion of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study which constitute the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A study of this magnitude and value in the context of secondary school history teaching in Zimbabwe demands that it be guided by both theoretical and conceptual frameworks as the foundations for making informed decisions on undertaking the study. This chapter will address critical theory as the *bona fide* theoretical framework couching the study and critical pedagogy and constructivism as the conceptual frameworks that have been used in the study to conceptualise a framework of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks have been adopted on the justification that they suit the nature of the study which is qualitative and interpretive.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

Quality academic writing demands that a plan has to be made before putting pen to paper or hand to computer. This requirement pertains to the conduct of research as well. The plan that is made in academic writing is the equivalent of the theoretical framework in conducting research for a thesis. A theoretical framework is defined by Grant and Osanloo (2014:12) as the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed for a research study and this foundation serves as the "blueprint" for, or the structure that guides the entire research inquiry. It follows that a theoretical framework has strong implications for every decision that the researcher makes in the conduct of research. The authors say that a theoretical framework consists of a selected theory, which is critical theory in this study, that influences the researcher's thinking with regards to the understanding of the research topic, the plan of how to conduct the research, including the key concepts and definitions that emerge from the theory and are relevant to the research topic. Anfara and Mertz (2006:1 of 4) say that a theoretical framework provides an anchor or grounding base for the problem of

investigation/statement, literature study, research questions and methodology. Grant and Osanloo (2014:12) say that a theoretical framework is relevant in a study as it serves as the structure and support for the rationale, the purpose and the significance, of the study. It is also the base on which the data analysis tool rides.

It can be said that critical theory was chosen as a theoretical framework mainly as a guide to the selection of the conceptual frameworks (see sections 2.3.1 and 2.4.1) which the researcher used in the development of a framework in the construction of an enabling learning environment which is the main aim of the study. Critical theory was also chosen in order to guide in the choice of the research design which is naturalistic (see 4.3.1), the selection of data gathering methods which empower the participants (see 4.4.3) and the adoption of a data analysis tool which is interpretive (see 4.4.4) as critical theory makes use of critique which is interpretive.

2.2.1 Conceptualisation of the theory- its founders, foundations, origins

The study is underpinned by the critical theory whose origins are with the Frankfurt School or Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt in Germany (Corradetti 2014:1 of 36) and the founders of the critical theory are Max Horkheimer (1895-1973), Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Eric Fromm (1900-1980). The same author says the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory is a social and political philosophical movement of thought which emerged after 1933 when the Nazi regime in Germany forced the school to close and move to the United States. This was because the Frankfurt School's critical approach to social and political issues was anathema to the Nazi regime's authoritarian rule. This is in so far as Cohen, Morrison and Manion (2011:31) say that critical theory is explicitly prescriptive and normative, entailing a view of what behaviour in a social democracy should entail. The critical approach is understood in this study as the valuing of what are strengths in the existing history teaching and learning environments and using the weaknesses therein to suggest alternative ways of constructing the environments. The basis of this is the view by Cohen *et al.* (2011:31) that the purpose of critical theory is not merely to understand situations and phenomena, but to change them. This study

borrows the critical approach to curriculum as both a social and political issue in education, in particular, learning environments.

According to Breuing (2011:4), the critical theoretical tradition developed by the Frankfurt School was greatly influenced by the work of Karl Marx, and particularly his views about labour. The views by Marx on labour were related to schools and education by the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School in that the hierarchical nature of labour is congruent to the hierarchical structure in schools and this extends to the classrooms. The hierarchical structure renders teaching and learning environments authoritarian and not democratic. This study seeks to tease the hierarchy in the classrooms in a bid to suggest non-hierarchy in the classrooms, that is, to dismantle authoritarianism in both the knowledge of the curriculum and the curriculum methodology.

Breuing (2011:4) says the founders of critical theory, and perhaps most significantly, Herbert Marcuse, argue that the process of schooling withholds opportunities for students to formulate their own aims and goals, and eventually serves to de-skill students. Students can formulate their aims and goals if the learning approaches are inquiry based and collaborative or constructivist. Thus, critical theory advocates the empowerment of the learners in the teaching and learning process if the development of skills is given prominence in schooling. This makes reference to the fact that the process of schooling is supposed to provide the conditions conducive for the development of skills which for the purposes of this study are the critical thinking skills.

This first generation of critical theorists rejected the notion of objectivity in knowledge by pointing, among other things, to the fact that the object of knowledge is itself embedded into an historical and social process (Corradetti 2014:18 of 36). This implies that critical theory has its focus on the critical analysis of historical and social facets of life which are taken as unquestioned realities which are designed mainly to

limit the freedom of learners. This is further echoed by Breuing (2011:4) who says the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School argued that schools encourage dependency and a hierarchical understanding of authority and provide a distorted view of history and other taken-for granted truths that in turn undermine the kind of social consciousness needed to bring about change and social transformation. Social consciousness is developed in a scenario which cultivates the ability to think about how one thinks over an issue. The encouragement of dependence and hierarchical understanding of authority makes reference to the teacher-centred learning environment which is not conducive for the development of critical thought which assists in the development of social consciousness.

2.2.2 Principles of critical theory

Critical theory is guided by principles which relate to its application in the interpretive paradigm in social research.

2.2.2.1 Subjectivity of knowledge

Critical theory is directly opposed to the positivist paradigm of social research which views knowledge as objective and based on the universality of truth. According to Corradetti (2014:18 of 36), critical theory firmly refuses the idea of an objective world where knowledge is viewed as simply a mirror of reality. Thus, with this notion, critical theory suggests that there is no real knowledge except tentative knowledge which can be extended to say that knowledge is in a state of flux or fluidity. Going by these tenets of critical theory with regards to knowledge, it is pertinent that a study of enabling learning environments for the development of critical thinking skills be empirical so as to understand what actually happens in the learning spaces. Social processes like collaborative learning are deemed to guide in the development of critical thinking skills which result in knowledge construction. If that is the case, it is folly to focus on teaching what is deemed knowledge, but to focus on teaching how to create knowledge which is definitely in need of constant creation. This justifies the

need to create an enabling learning environment which augurs well for the teaching of the mastery of skills for knowledge creation.

2.2.2.2 The democratisation of learning

The curriculum, as an embodiment of the society, should aim to give freedom to the learners so that they can practice freedom in their learning which they can subsequently apply in transforming their lives and societies. The freedom that learners can enjoy in their learning is only possible if the learning environment is democratic. Critical theory becomes handy in this search for learner freedom as Cohen, *et al*. (2011:31) say critical theory seeks to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society. Democratic environments enable learners to feel safe and they can be in a position to try out their thinking abilities in envisaging possibilities and that way they can be developing their critical thinking. This is greatly supported by Du Preez (2013:63) who says that the curriculum is one of the most powerful instruments in the transformation of the society. The transformation of society in the 21st century is towards the democratisation of society and schools as secondary agents of socialisation must take a deliberate effort to nurture democracy which allows for learner participation in thinking about new ways of solving problems in their learning.

2.2.2.3 Experiential learning

Ledlow (2014: 1 of 3) says critical theorists say curriculum should focus on student experiences which enable them to take action on real problems that confront them. These student experiences are what Ndawi and Maravanyika (2011:69) refer to as the 'experienced curriculum' by the learner in the four phases of the curriculum, and in this study, learners must experience critical thinking as they learn. A history teacher must create a learning environment which enables a history learner to experience critical thinking. The focus on the remedy of the societal problems through the experience of the curriculum points to the requirement of a pedagogy which allows for the students to be able to identify their problems, deliberate on them

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and seek alternative ways to deal with them. This pedagogy is what constitutes the conceptual framework of this study and will be elucidated separately. If students focus on real problems then they will be in a position to transform their lives and society in general.

2.2.3 The relevance of critical theory to the study

One aspect of importance of critical theory in this study is that referred to by Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91) when they say it is a theory which enables the use of naturalistic designs. They say naturalistic designs allow the researcher to engage in the daily life of the participants. Multiple case studies will be undertaken as part of the research methodology for this study to enable a thorough engagement with the activities of history teachers of the chosen schools. There will be no use of control groups as part of the research process in order to enable the gathering of data in the natural settings which are schools and classrooms. Critical theory becomes a valuable tool to use in this study because the participants will be visited, observed and interviewed in their natural environments which are the classrooms in the secondary schools. The natural engagement enhances the researcher's deeper understanding of the learning environments in the secondary schools. This deeper understanding helps in envisioning an alternative learning environment for the development of critical thought among the learners.

There is also the suggestion that critical theory has relevance in this study because it allows for the triangulation of methods in research (Spencer, Pryce and Walsh 2009:91) which is one of the hallmarks of qualitative research like this. In this study, there is triangulation of data collection methods using interviews, observations and document analyses; triangulation of data sources; triangulation of sampling procedures and theoretical and conceptual frameworks' triangulation.

According to Johnson and Duberley (2000:139), the way of eliciting data from the participants makes the participants feel causally responsible for the data. This is the

case as Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91) say that naturalistic designs applicable when dealing with critical theory, tend to rely on dialogic methods (use of open-ended questions in interviews) which enable the active participation of the participants in the process of research instead of them assuming a passive role. The dialogic method crucial in the research process whose theoretical framework is critical theory should also form a foundation of the enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The implication is that theory informs practice suggesting that secondary school history teachers should reflect on theory in preparing their lessons' objectives, learning tasks and assessment procedures.

This makes critical theory a relevant tool to use because any qualitative study should empower the participants so that they reveal what they think and what they feel about their everyday life situations. What the history teachers think and feel about their everyday experiences will be captured through the interviews as method of data collection. This is supported by Johnson and Duberley (2000:139) when they say critical theory seeks as much as possible to minimise the researcher's control over the study. The lack of control by the researcher in the critical tradition in research translates into lack of control in practice and in the context of this study the enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills must be control-free. By control-free it does not mean the history teacher should renege of his or her duties, but rather that he or she should become more of a mentor than an authority in the teaching-learning process for the development of critical thinking skills. The participants should clearly articulate their everyday practices so that the researcher can be in a position to suggest a framework of an enabling learning environment to foster critical thinking skills.

Moreover, Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91) suggest that critical theory welcomes opportunities for alternative paradigms to be considered as part of the teaching and learning process. This is relevant in this study because the focus is on the search for an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in secondary school history teaching. Since critical theory is about

questioning the status quo, in this study, the questions are directed at the way of teaching and learning history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe with a view to suggest a new paradigm which can enable the skills-based approach rather than the narrative-based approach.

Critical theory is also relevant in this study because the findings of this study can be of value to the practice of teaching and learning history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. This is in so far as Jermier (1998, in Johnson and Duberley 2000:139) says that research results of a study based on critical theory have great potential to be used in the service of teaching and learning. It is the desired hope of this study to suggest an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in secondary school history teaching in Zimbabwe.

Critical theory will give insight into the current practice in the enactment of the history curriculum in Zimbabwe. This is in so far as critical theory has as one of its criteria as the ability to explain what is deficient (*sic*) with the current social reality (Bohman 2009:3 of 5), and in this study, the social reality is the teaching and learning of history that is still teacher centred and based on cramming in the information. Thus, critical theory serves the purpose of enunciating the strengths and weaknesses of the practices in the teaching and learning of history through interviews, observations and document analysis. These strengths and weaknesses should form the basis upon which suggestions can be made on the way forward for an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.

Furthermore, critical theory in this study serves the practical relevance. This practical relevance is that referred to by Bohman (2009:5 of 5) who says that a critical theory's practical purpose is to identify those actors who must be involved in the discourse to change what is deficient with the current social reality. In the context of this study, the possible actors who can change the current social reality of the history teaching and learning in Zimbabwe are the history educators, community members including

parents and traditional leaders, history curriculum experts, experts in law, policy makers and newspaper editors.

Moreover, critical theory has the relevance to highlight the importance of putting the learners at the centre of the learning process (Bohman 2009:4 of 5), and in the case of this study, the secondary school history learning process. This is in accordance with the suggestion by the same author that critical theory has human beings as the self-creating producers of their own knowledge. At this point, it has to be pre-empted that critical theory co-opts the ideas of constructivism based on the theory of knowledge. According to Andrews (2012:39), there is construction of knowledge in the constructivist classroom. These are the sentiments shared by Major and Mangope (2012:139) about constructivism when they say that there is no deposit of knowledge into the learners' minds, but the construction of knowledge by the learners. This goes to suggest that critical theory is an embodiment of the theory of constructivism.

2.2.4 The role of the researcher when using the theory

Critical theory is an invaluable theory in the field of social research in education institutions and specifically in the discipline of the curriculum. This is so because the theory clearly defines the roles that a researcher must play during research whose driving theoretical framework is critical theory.

According to Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91), the relationship between a researcher and the participant is transactional, subjective and dialectic. The researcher gets into a transaction with the participants that imply that there is exchange of information and sharing of ideas. The researcher is not an authority to gather information and disappear. What can be known is inextricably tied to the interaction between the researcher and the participants.

The role of the individual is given prominence in the use of critical theory because subjectivity is the key to an understanding of the individual's problems and feelings. This is supported by Polit and Beck (2008:238) who say that critical researchers typically interact with study participants in ways that emphasise participants' expertise not the researcher's expertise. The participants are the ones directly experiencing the phenomenon and any study of their experiences requires that they be given the opportunity to tell their story rather than it being told by second or third parties. That is why the researcher chose to work with the teachers who are the ones who are responsible for creating the enabling learning environments for the achievement of the objectives of the lessons they teach in history.

In addition, Polit and Beck (2008:238) say that a critical researcher should orient toward a transformation process. This calls for both the transformation of the roles of the teachers and learners in the endeavour to create enabling learning environments for the development of critical thinking skills. This is further echoed by Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91) who say that critical researchers place themselves in the position to use results of their research in some way to advocate for the improvement of the examined group. The improvement that is envisaged as a result of the findings of this study is the creation of enabling learning environments that history teachers can utilise to develop critical thinking skills in their learners. The researcher takes the role of a critic of the existing order of things in a group under study. This implies that the researcher should use suitable analysis tools that can help to direct the researcher to suggest novel ways of doing things in the classrooms. This means that critical theory helps the researcher in selecting a suitable data analysis procedure and in this case, the researcher chose the interpretive analysis tool for the analysis of the data from the empirical research.

The researcher takes a higher step and, according to Polit and Beck (2008:238), the critical researcher would take the role of the visionary of new possibilities for ways of doing things. These new possibilities touch on the empowerment of the participants who are the teachers in this study. Their empowerment is in the form of changing

their roles from being fountains of knowledge to facilitators of learning for the development of critical thinking skills through their creation of enabling learning environments. This implies that instead of the teachers just waiting to receive directives from the superiors as to what knowledge to teach by way of curriculum prescriptions, they are the ones who take the initiative to choose what content and activities are suitable for the inculcation of the critical thinking skills that the learners need to develop.

Polit and Beck (2008:238) also say that the researcher's role in the use of critical theory is that of triangulating multiple methodologies in the collection of data. This is done for the purposes of the validation of the data collected which is especially critical in qualitative research as the one directing this study. Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91) suggest that the methods which can be triangulated when applying critical theory in research are storytelling, individual and focus group interviews and observation. This study used both individual interview and observation since when used corroboratively these methods can yield significant data in a study. Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2009:91) say that critical researchers can be influenced by the value biases they possess. A researcher involved with critical theory has to guard against the value biases to influence the research process and outcome. An authentic research should strive as much as possible to limit the value bias in both the process and the outcome.

2.2.5 Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be said that critical theory spells out the nature of the research which is undertaken. In this case, the study is qualitative and relies heavily on descriptive presentation of the findings of the research. In the context of this study, critical theory is a powerful compass to give the direction to this qualitative research. Critical theory focuses on envisioning new possibilities and this is in line with this study which focuses on the possibility of an enabling learning environment for the teaching and learning of history in Zimbabwean secondary schools for the development of critical thinking skills. The framework for the enabling learning

environment which the study seeks to suggest is hinged on the conceptual frameworks of critical pedagogy, and constructivism drawing largely on social constructivism which forms the next section of this study.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Namasasu (2012:89) says that Miles and Huberman (1994) describe a conceptual framework as "the researcher's map of the territory being investigated" (p.20) that "explains, either graphically or in narrative form the main things to be studied --- and the presumed relationships between them" (p.18). From this description of a conceptual framework, the entire study is put into perspective under the framework as it acts as a model of undertaking the study. As a model, it should be noted that a conceptual framework carries with it concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that support and inform research (Miles and Huberman, 1994 in Namasasu 2012:89).

Overall, a conceptual framework is a construct which helps to justify the research (Namasasu 2012:89). This is possible since it helps to assess and refine the aims of the study because the rationale for any study is to achieve an aim or aims of the study; to develop realistic and relevant research questions which are designed to gather data for the achievement of the research objectives; to select appropriate methods for use in the collection of data, and to identify potential validity threats to conclusions (Namasasu 2012:90). At this juncture, it is significant to inform the reader of the main research question to be answered by this study which is: **What framework can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?** This research question is used to direct the gathering of data in order to address the main aim of the research which is: **To develop a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.**

Critical pedagogy and constructivism are both philosophies of education arising from critical theory. What it means is that critical pedagogy and constructivism are the practice of critical theory in education. Critical pedagogy puts emphasis on the pedagogic element, and constructivism puts emphasis on the social element of critical theory. This is to suggest that both pedagogy and community are key components in the construction of enabling learning environments in the teaching of secondary school history for the development of critical thinking skills.

Critical pedagogy and constructivism which guide this study were chosen on the basis that they have assumptions that underpin qualitative research; the importance of understanding people and programmes in context, in this case, the context of secondary school history teaching and learning involving teachers and how they construct history learning environments; a commitment to study naturally occurring phenomena without introducing external controls or manipulation where history teachers were interviewed and observed without any conditions attached to the interviews and observations; and the assumption that understanding emerges most meaningfully from an inductive analysis of open-ended, detailed, descriptive, and quotive data gathered through direct contact with the programme and its participants (Patton 1987:25 in Namasasu 2012:90).

Critical pedagogy can be viewed as a transformative framework and constructivism as an interactive framework and both are important in the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills. An eclectic approach to critical pedagogy and constructivism thus culminates in what the researcher would term a **'transformative-interactive' framework**. This framework has the power to meet the purposes of a conceptual framework in this study which have already been highlighted in a preceding discussion. Earlier researchers on the development of critical thinking skills have put emphasis on either critical pedagogy or constructivism, but no attempt has been explicitly made to combine the basic tenets of the two to suggest an alternative framework. This study is unique in that it combines the complementary frameworks to come up with an alternative framework. In order to elucidate this alternative framework, reference has been made to the

basic principles of critical pedagogy and constructivism which subsumes social constructivism which are the pillars of the transformative-interactive framework suggested for this study.

2.3.1 Conceptualisation of critical pedagogy-its founders, foundations and origins

By way of conceptualisation, critical pedagogy is viewed by Wink (2005:26) as a prism that reflects the complexities between teaching and learning and this prism sheds light on the hidden subtleties that might have escaped our view previously. The prism has a tendency to focus on shades of social, cultural, political, and even economic conditions which are the conditions this study seeks to propose in the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

Burbules and Berk (1999) say that critical pedagogy has shaped much of the writing in the educational foundations over the last two decades of the twentieth century and there are many proponents of critical pedagogy such as Wofgang Klafki, Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren (Salehi 2013:49), Michael Apple (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:77), Iran Shor and Stanley Aronowitz (Kincheloe 2008:3). Among the most celebrated of these philosophers of critical pedagogy is Paulo Freire whom Breuing (2011:4) says is regarded as the inaugural philosopher of critical pedagogy. Paulo Freire was the originator of the Latin American liberation movement starting in Brazil, his home country. Paulo Freire (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:77) recommended the task of the educator to be a liberating one, liberating both the educator and the educated. According to Kincheloe (2004) cited in Breuing (2011:4), he understood schools to be impediments to the education of the poor, and thus sought to find strategies for students to intervene in what he considered to be a dehumanising process. This enabled him to coin his most celebrated educative process which is known as liberatory action or praxis where people need to engage in a praxis that incorporates theory, action and reflection as a means to work toward social change and justice (Breuing 2011:4). This suggests that teachers of history must base

decisions they make in teaching and learning on theory and in this study, it is critical pedagogy and constructivism and reflect on ways of teaching and learning to assist learners to be critical thinkers.

Moreeng and Twala (2014:495) say that critical pedagogy is part of the transformative pedagogies associated with Giroux and fundamentally linked and buttressed by the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory. Breuing (2011:4-5) supports the above view by saying in the late 1970s and 1980s, Henry Giroux (1981) began to formulate a critical pedagogy that synthesised the more progressive elements of John Dewey's philosophy and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. Giroux and others, including Peter McLaren, focused their efforts on examining and better understanding the role that schools play in transmitting certain messages about political, social and economic life believing that a revolutionary critical pedagogy will allow educators to realise the possibilities of democratic social values within their classroom (Breuing 2011:5). Democratic dispensation in the classroom is a vital tool for the learners to express their views which encourages the development of critical thinking skills.

This is further elaborated by Hudson (1999: 2 of 9) who says Giroux elaborated the philosophical foundations for a theory and practice of education that would be not only critical to established institutions and practices but also capable of transforming those institutions and practices, with the ultimate goal of transforming society itself. In this regard, Moreeng and Twala (2014:495) say that Giroux appealed to educators to become "*transformative intellectuals*" because they have the knowledge and skills to transform society. For example, Sandretto, *et al.* (2006, in Wink 2005:165) says at any time, educators can create classroom practices that help students understand that texts are social constructions; texts are not neutral; authors make certain conscious and unconscious choices when constructing texts; and texts have consequences for how we make sense of ourselves, others and the world.

According to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:77), critical pedagogy emerged as an educational response to the inequalities and oppressive power relations which exist in educational institutions or schools. This is corroborated by Ledlow (2014:1 of 3) who says that critical pedagogy is 'radical pedagogy'. Breuing (2011:11) says that critical pedagogy provides a framework for teaching and learning that focuses on power, hegemony and social justice.

What emerges from the views of these authors is that critical pedagogy is applicable in schools and schools are representative of power relations in the society. Critical pedagogy therefore, posits a paradigm shift in the manner in which what happens in schools should be valued by the society. It is the contention by Ledlow (2014:2 of 3) that critical pedagogy is therefore concerned with the transformation of relations of power that are oppressive as manifested in the schools with the *raison d'etre* to empower the learners. According to Wink (2005:165), critical pedagogy gives voice to the voiceless; gives power to the powerless. Certainly, oppressive relations of power in the schools are not conducive to the existence of enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills and critical pedagogy may seem to offer a means for the creation of enabling learning environment for the inculcation of critical thinking skills in the teaching of secondary school history.

In view of this study, the enabling learning environment that is envisaged hopes to provide space for the learners to be the creators of their own knowledge through the development and application of critical thinking skills. This is what is meant by giving power to the powerless and voice to the voiceless in critical pedagogy. Kincheloe (2008:3) says that critical pedagogy is defined by what it does. This implies that critical pedagogy is not theory but practice. This is supported by Wink (2005:1) who says that critical involves thinking, critiquing and analysing what one encounters. In the secondary school history lessons the learners encounter the historical facts which have to be interrogated critically which helps to develop critical thinking among the learners.

Pedagogy involves how to teach as well as the invisible and hidden interactions between the teacher and the learner, whether in the classroom, or in the wider community (Kincheloe 2008:4). Effective teaching and learning of secondary school history is best illustrated by the level of interaction between the learner and the teacher. Wink (2005:178) suggests three models of pedagogy which are transformative, generative and transmission (oriented). The ongoing discussion highlights most specifically the transformative pedagogy which is the pedagogy emanating from critical pedagogy which characterises the current teaching of secondary school history as opposed to the transmission pedagogy of the twentieth century.

Wink (2005:165) further says 'although change is difficult, critical pedagogy is all about change from coercive to collaborative; from transmission to transformative; from inert to catalytic; from passive to active' . This implies that educators are a mirror of the society because these suggested changes that arise from critical pedagogy depict what society demands in order to function harmoniously. Critical pedagogy centres on the collaborative, transformative, catalytic and active pedagogies. Fahim and Nazari (2012:86) say transformative pedagogy assists students to examine the deep meanings, personal implications, and social consequences of any knowledge, technique, text, or material. The critical thought that needs emphasis here is the activity to examine on the part of learners which gives reference to critical thinking skills. This examination is possible with the application of critical thinking skills which makes critical pedagogy a relevant concept in the discussion of the development of critical thinking skills.

Wink (2005:165) further says that critical pedagogy challenges our long-held assumptions and leads us to ask new questions about the way we do things. In the context of secondary school history teaching and learning, learners can be empowered to be critical about the selection of the content of secondary school history, the methodology in use and the assessment procedures as these are the key components of history teaching and learning in secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

The questions we ask will determine the answers we get and the answers we get determine the level of thinking by the learner. Higher order questions in the teaching and learning of secondary school history require higher order thinking which is synonymous with critical thinking which is the focus of this study.

It is the contention of this researcher that critical pedagogy can help secondary school history teachers to appreciate that many other critical thinking skills can be developed by the teaching of secondary school history in Zimbabwe and can therefore mobilise for their consideration in the assessment procedures for history. It is highly likely that if the assessment of critical thought is given prominence in assessment, it follows that the teaching and learning of secondary school history in Zimbabwe will change from the memorisation of facts to an approach that facilitates the development of more of these critical thinking skills.

2. 3. 2 The principles of critical pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is governed by several pertinent principles for which a researcher guided by it must familiarise (himself/herself) with in order to apply them meaningfully. These principles are classified by Salehi (2013:51) as anti-authority and hegemony; the emphasis on critique and criticism; the emphasis on discourse and dialogue and the relativity of knowledge principle. However, other authors like Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:81) add the principle of praxis in critical pedagogy.

2.3.2.1 Radical pedagogy

According to Hudson (1999:3 of 9), Freire refers to critical pedagogy as a radical pedagogy which is unlike the 'banking education' concept. This is a pedagogy which requires non-authoritarian social relationships. In such relationships, Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:79) say the learners are closely equal to the teachers in developing knowledge and the learners exercise freedom and together with the teacher they control the educational process. The main point here is that critical pedagogy

advocates for the dismantling of the authoritarian teacher and a passive learner concept. Such paradigm shift would imply an enabling learning environment for the creation of knowledge through critical thought processes and not the mere absorption of knowledge by the learners. In the case of this study, the enabling learning environment that is envisaged to be constructed is going to be partly guided by the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy and it is envisaged that the learning environment is liberating.

2.3.2.2 Diversity of curriculum methodology

One of the defining principles of critical pedagogy is diversity of curriculum methodology according to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:79). Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:79) concur with Degener (2001:72) who says there is no one methodology that can work for all populations in critical pedagogy. That being the case, Giroux and McLaren (1992, in Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:79) say that the multiplicity of methodologies in critical pedagogy renders possible a transformative curriculum which enables the learners to acquire the necessary skills that help them to become social critics who make decisions which affect their social, political and economic realities. It is the hope of this researcher to propose a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment which can enable the acquisition of such necessary skills by learners so as to become social, political and economic transformers of their society.

2.3.2.3 Dialogism

The other major principle of critical pedagogy which has relevance in the guidance of the study is that of dialogism. According to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:80), a critical teacher should set up a classroom that is involved in dialogic interaction. Dialogic interaction implies that each learner is given an opportunity to apply their thought processes by contributing in the dialogue. The views of the different learners are welcome in the dialogue and incorrect views are corrected. Dialogue also involves the teacher who should interact with the learners as a facilitator of learning and

moderator of peer assessment of learners' work. This is a hallmark of critical pedagogy because Micheletti (2010, in Ledlow 2014: 2 of 3) says, comprehension comes from conversation, questioning, and sharing of one's interpretations by all persons in the classroom. The author argues that this helps the learners to think critically and develop a critical consciousness which helps them to improve their life condition. This is supported by Freire (1970, in Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:82) who says that only dialogue which requires critical thinking is also capable of generating critical theory. Since the focus of this study is on developing a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for developing critical thinking skills, this principle of critical pedagogy becomes handy.

2.3.2.4 Praxis

Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:81) say that one of the major principles of critical pedagogy is praxis. Kessing-Styles (2003, in Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:81) say praxis is critical reflection and action the purpose of which is to implement a range of educational practices and processes with a goal of creating a better learning environment. Moreeng and Twala (2014:495) say praxis is taken to be an educational tool which strives for conditions which are emancipatory, liberatory and revolutionary. In other words, it can be said that praxis is a call for the democratisation of pedagogy. What emerges from these explanations of praxis is that educational discourse should allow conditions for critical reflection. The conditions for critical reflection refer to the enabling learning environment which is the focus of this study and critical reflection is one component of critical thinking skills.

2.3.2.5 Relativity of epistemology and axiology

Last, but not least with regard to the principles of critical pedagogy is that of the relativity of knowledge and values. According to Salehi (2013:52), knowledge is relative and knowledge changes as do values and insights. Values and insights can be taken to be the sources of knowledge and if they are in constant flux, there is no way knowledge can be taken to be stagnant. This is why Aliakbari and Faraji

(2011:81) say that knowledge cannot be received by learners, but the learners create knowledge which is pointing to the relativity of knowledge. Greene (2007, in Muro 2012:4) says that rather than passively receiving information, learners should be actively engaged with it in order to conceptualise new ideas (think critically) which is partly the creation of knowledge. The conceptualisation of new ideas is only possible when the learners are exposed to learning which promotes mechanisms to be creative in ideas and this is learning which focuses on the development of critical thinking skills which justifies the value of critical pedagogy in this study. If that is the case, there is the need to create an enabling learning environment in the teaching of secondary school history in order to enable the learners to be involved in the conceptualisation of new ideas and in the process, acquire critical thinking skills which are acquired by practice.

2.3.3. Purpose of critical pedagogy in the study

In this study, critical pedagogy serves multi-faceted purposes. This is hinged on the purpose for which the study is being undertaken which is to construct an enabling learning environment for the fostering of critical thinking skills in the teaching and learning of secondary school history. Critical pedagogy considers schooling conditions suitable for the empowerment of the learner as well as the envisaged outcomes on the part of the learner. These conditions are what are implied by the enabling learning environment and the outcomes are the critical thinking skills in the context of this study.

According to Salehi (2013:50), critical pedagogy helps in defining new roles for the teachers and learners. This is significant in a study like this because in constructing an enabling learning environment it means that the roles of the teachers and learners change. Without the change in the roles of these two players in classroom discourse, the development of envisaged outcomes might remain a dream. The change in the roles of teachers and learners make the learners to become truly participatory members of the society who not only belong to that society, but who can and do create and recreate that society. Critical pedagogy is therefore depicted

as an educational tool which transforms learners into active participants in the learning process and that active participation fosters knowledge creation and not knowledge absorption. This study is aimed at fostering the active participation of the learners and so, critical pedagogy serves a pertinent purpose in this study because it simply does provide for active participation of the learners.

Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:86) offer a purpose which critical pedagogy can serve in this study when they say critical pedagogy helps learners to learn from each other and understand how to question the authoritarian power of the classroom. This is again a pointer to the changing roles of the learners and the teachers. The learners are no longer looking up to the teacher for knowledge, but teach each other which is another way of empowering the learners. According to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:81), critical pedagogy helps to show how the learners can regain their lost voices which they can use to resist unjust reproduction of knowledge which turns them into active agents for social change.

Critical pedagogy's central purpose is to empower the learners to think and act critically with the aim of transforming their life situations (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:77). This is the major envisaged outcome of a critical pedagogy being applied in the school situation. This tends to be a crucial purpose of critical pedagogy in this study because the construction of an enabling learning environment is aimed at fostering critical thinking skills and so, critical pedagogy can shed light as to the background that can be provided to strengthen critical thinking in society (Salehi 2013:50).

2.3.4 The value of critical pedagogy in the study

As a guiding conceptual framework, critical pedagogy is valuable in this study for several reasons. Critical pedagogy is action-oriented. This allows the concept to be translated into practice. This is in so far as Muro (2012:9) says critical pedagogy allows the students to acquire the academic tools and other skills to bring about

change in society. This is in line with Giroux's contention that critical pedagogy not only provides a language of critique, but also a language of possibility which translates into action.

Moreover, critical pedagogy is valuable in this study because it makes reference to the nature of learning environments which engage the students rather than making students passive. According to Muro (2012:13), critical pedagogy enables additive, empowering and consciousness raising environment where students are invited to negotiate multiple forms of knowledge and arrive at their own conclusions. This is relevant in this study because it focuses on the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.

Thus, critical pedagogy has a potential to inform teaching in terms of methodology. This is what Ledlow (2014:2 of 3) refers to by saying that the methodology of critical pedagogy is inquiry, dialogue, multiple perspectives and community-based learning. This is supported by Degener (1996, in Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:79) who says curriculum in critical pedagogy is based on the idea that there is no one methodology that can work for all populations. The methodology of critical pedagogy puts the student at the centre of learning which is emancipatory and liberatory for the student. This ties in very well with critical theory which is the driving theory of this study. This endeavours to bring the world into the classroom which is pointing in the direction of the enabling learning environment which this study is intended to construct. Such an environment is poised to engender critical thinking among the students as they engage in inquiry, dialogue and community-based learning.

Critical pedagogy is also of relevance in this study because it helps to spell out the roles that teachers and students play in teaching and learning. According to Aliakbari and Faraji (2011:81), both teachers and students are learners and this creates a fluid relationship between the two groups. The creation of a fluid relationship between the

teachers and the learners alludes to the social context of teaching and learning which deals with the social constructivist framework.

2.3.5 The role of the researcher in critical pedagogy

The role of the researcher in critical pedagogy which is critical theory in practice, according to Steinberg (2014:5), is to work in partnership with the people being studied. This is a confirmation of the role of the researcher in critical theory (see section 2.2.5) suggesting that critical pedagogy is a branch of critical theory. Steinberg (2014:5) says this is done so as to understand their ways of thinking and modes of perception of the phenomenon being studied. Moreover, the researcher is there to encourage the participants to think about their own thinking (metacognition). The researcher should also help to create an empowering qualitative research which focuses on the practice being examined.

2.4 CONSTRUCTIVISM

2.4.1 Conceptualisation of constructivism-its founders, foundations and origins

This section gives a conceptual framework of constructivism in order to guide the reader and user of the findings of this study in capturing its place in the study. Yilmaz (2008:165) says constructivism is an adaptive activity that requires the building of conceptual structures and self-regulation through reflective abstraction. This is indicative of the role of adaptation rather than assimilation in the learning process which points to the opposition to behaviourism by constructivism. This is echoed by Pandey (2007:23) who says learning in the constructivist theory is an adaptive process based on the experiences of the individual learner.

It is the contention by Yilmaz (2008:161) that constructivism evolved from the dissatisfaction with the traditional Western theories of education like behaviourism and its genesis can be traced as far back as the eighteenth-century philosophers

Vico and Kant. The same author says constructivism was especially influenced by the ideas of John Dewey, William James; the later work of Jean Piaget, and the socio-historical work of Lev Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner and Ernst Glasersfield. These influences by different philosophers gave a plethora of principles of constructivism which are discussed in the next section.

2.4.2 Principles of constructivism

Principles are defined as the building blocks of a theory of education. The principles of constructivism are many as suggested by Mogashoa (2014), Warnich and Meyer (2013), Andrews (2012), Major and Mangope (2012), Eggan and Kauchik (1999, in Moreeng, 2009), Yilmaz (2008) and Pandey (2007). Those principles that are of relevance to this study are given space in order to focus the discussion.

2.4.2.1 Active learning

The principle of active learning implies that there should be learner engagement with the world. This is supported by Mogashoa (2014:53) who says learning is an active process which implies that learners need to do something to engage with the world which enables the learner to extract meaning from the experience. The importance of the role of active learning in constructivism is further echoed by Eggan and Kauchik (1999, in Moreeng 2009:74) who say that learners' development of new knowledge is through the active construction processes. This role of active learning is corroborated by Yilmaz (2008:162) who says knowledge is not passively received from an authoritative source, but is constructed by individuals and groups through making sense of their experiential world. This suggests that the learner has to be actively involved if learning has to take place. This principle of constructivism has important implications for developing a framework for the construction of an enabling learning environment. The framework has to ensure that the learner is engaged and must be 'actively' engaged.

2.4.2.2 Learner centred-ness

All learning theories that are progressive like constructivism emphasise the principle of learner centred-ness. This finds exoneration in that Major and Mangope (2012:139) say that constructivism is of the view that there is no deposit of knowledge into the learners' minds, but the construction of knowledge by the learners. This is further vindicated by Simon (1995:115) who posits that learners construct knowledge of their world from their perceptions and experiences and Pandey (2007:23) who contends that learning is based on the experiences, goals, curiosities and beliefs of the individual learner. This implies that the teacher must of necessity recognise the learners' backgrounds, beliefs, assumptions and prior knowledge in order to make the educative process learner centred.

2.4.2.3 Collaborative learning

Learning or meaning making is always regarded as a collaborative or social process. Mogashoa (2014:53) says learning is a social activity since it connects a learner with other human beings (community members), teachers, peers and family for purposes of conversation in meaning making. Constructivism encourages the use of collaborative techniques like discussion, jurisprudential models (applicable in courts of law) (Pandey 2007:25) and dialogue both with teacher and with one another (Mogashoa 2014:54 and Yilmaz 2008:168) to clarify concepts and facilitate learning of higher order skills. This implies that there must be opportunity for discourse if meaningful learning which constructs knowledge is to take place in the learning space as Yilmaz (2008:163) says the locus of intellectual authority resides in the discourse facilitated by both teachers and learners.

2.4.2.4 Contextual learning

There is clear consensus in the literature on constructivism that learning is contextual and this is vindicated by Mogashoa (2014:53) who says that we cannot forge a dichotomy between our learning and our lived experiences and so, learning is always an activity that is done in context. In order to contextualise learning, it is

prudent to consider the language that is used in the discourse. Mogashoa (2014:53) is of the view that learning involves language and the language we use influences learning. This means that in the development of critical thinking skills, the teacher is encouraged to use language or words which denote the intention to influence the learners to develop critical thinking skills. For example, teachers should use cognitive terminology like classify, analyse, predict and create (Mogashoa 2014:54) which is depictive of critical thinking skills. Language aside, Pandey (2007:25) says the socio-cultural experiences of the learners should be given space in the learning process since they are the foundations upon which meaningful learning is anchored which extends to saying that learning obtains in authentic learning tasks. These are tasks which make sense in the socio-cultural context of the learners.

2.4.2.5 Authentic assessment

Assessment is a significant corollary of learning. It is always a measure of the quantity and quality of learning that has accrued to the learner from the learning process. Authentic assessment is defined by Pandey (2007:25) and Yilmaz (2008:170) as that assessment of student learning that is done in the context of teaching. It is ongoing or formative assessment not terminal or summative assessment. This involves assessing the student's work which is referred to as portfolio assessment. This is also referred to as coursework assessment which considers what the learner has managed to achieve in terms of skills expected as determined by both the learner and the teacher in the spirit of collaboration. The learner is given the assessment standards so that the work that is done is geared towards the achievement of the standards in the spirit of autonomy for the learner. This is unlike the summative assessment where the learners do not even know the standards that are used to assess them during the marking of their examination scripts. That is really trivialised assessment which constructivists see as anathema to meaningful learning.

2.4.3 Relevance of constructivism to the study

Constructivism is of great relevance in this study. A major relevance of constructivism in this study is that it sheds light on the roles that must be adopted by the teacher. According to Yilmaz (2008:169), the teacher's role should be that of a facilitator and guide rather than an autocrat. This means that the teacher must ensure that there is autonomy, mutual reciprocity of social relations and the empowerment of the learner. This is supported by Pandey (2007:23) who says that the facilitator role that the teacher adopts should ensure conditions conducive to help the learner in the process of learning.

Moreover, constructivism has relevance in this study in that it illuminates on the nature of assessment that can help to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The nature of assessment advocated is authentic assessment or portfolio assessment (Yilmaz 2008:170).

It is quite clear that constructivism is also relevant to this study in so far as it gives direction on the importance of language as key determinant of context learning (Mogashoa 2014:53). The language of a critical thinker has to be discerned from the language of the ordinary thinker. The teacher must use the critical thinking skills language in order to create a context of critical thinking in the learning space. The words that can be used in the context of developing critical thinking skills have been provided elsewhere in this study.

2.4.4 The value of constructivism to the study

Constructivism has great value in the achievement of the aim of this study which is to develop a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. One of the values of constructivism is its insistence on activity oriented learning as suggested by (Mogashoa 2008; Yilmaz 2008 and Pandey 2007). Activity oriented

learning engages the learner which results in meaningful learning as Warnich and Meyer (2013:16) say that constructivism is of the belief that learners should be guided to construct knowledge that is meaningful which puts emphasis on how learners learn not what they learn. Activity oriented learning refers to how learners learn.

Constructivism also has the value to inform on the methodology that can be used in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. There are many methods that constructivism recommends for use in teaching and learning which can be pertinent in developing critical thinking skills. Mogashoa (2014:52), Yilmaz (2008:170) and Pandey (2007:25) highlight the use of interactive and collaborative methods such as discovery, inquiry, interviewing, problem solving, debating, discussing, dialoguing, reflective learning, cognitive or concept mapping and smart questioning which allows wait time after posing a question. In all these methods, the emphasis is on the process of learning which makes a process-oriented learning environment a key component of an enabling learning environment in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The other important value of constructivism in this study is that it gives direction as to the resources that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment. Major and Mangope (2012:144) are of the view that constructivism envisages the provision of a variety of resources for use in teaching and learning. These are meant to cater for the different learning styles that learners bring to the learning space. Mogashoa (2014:54) says the resources for use in the lesson can include raw data and primary sources. Moreover, manipulative, interactive and physical materials can be used as resources in teaching and learning. Yilmaz (2008:170) adds that technological tools can also be used in the teaching and learning process.

2.4.5   The   role   of   the   researcher   in   using   constructivism

The role of the researcher when using constructivism to guide research, is to sample the participants who have had the authentic experiences of the phenomenon being

studied. This was done by selecting secondary schools and history teachers who are involved in teaching history for the development of critical thinking skills.

The other role of the researcher when using constructivism is to ensure that the construction of the meaning of the data collected is done together with the participants. This was achieved by allowing member checking of the interpretation of the data that the researcher made in order to authenticate the interpretations. This speaks to the ethical issues of data collection and interpretation.

The researcher in dealing with constructivism also has to make an effort to understand the contexts in which the participants operate so that data interpretation is done with due regard to the contexts which may differ from the researcher's context. This was achieved by undertaking a situation analysis of the cases for study before the actual data collection was commenced.

2.4.6 Theories of constructivism

There are different theorists that subscribe to the concept of constructivism. They differ with regard to their epistemologies and the importance of the different elements in knowledge construction.

2.4.6.1 Radical constructivism

Boudourides (1998:1 0f 14) says radical constructivism was originated by Von Glasersfield. For the radical constructivists, all communication and understanding are a matter of interpretive construction on the part of the experiencing subject (von Glasersfield 1984:18). Boudourides (1998:1 of 14) says radical constructivism considers cognition as adaptive in the sense that it is based on and constantly modified by a learner's experience. Thus, according to von Glasersfield (1984:25), for radical constructivism, knowledge cannot be the result of a passive receiving but originates as the product of an active subject's activity. This definitely has strong

implications in the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills because these have to develop in the learner not in the teacher. Radical constructivism adopts the relativist position that knowledge is something which is personally constructed by individuals in an active way as they try to give meaning to socially accepted and shared notions. This is supported by Wiersma (2008:112) who says radical constructivism is based on Piaget's model and suggests that students learn when they must reconstruct their understanding based on new knowledge that conflicts with previously held beliefs.

2.4.6.2 Dialectical constructivism

According to Wu, Shih and Carroll (2013:1) dialectical constructivism considers that the source of knowledge comes from constant and complex interactions between the evolving individual and the developing environment. They say dialectical constructivists believe that only by constant interacting with the environment or context of where learning happens can one obtain knowledge. This suggests that the enabling learning environment should consider the element of interaction both within and outside the classroom in order to develop critical thinking skills. This is echoed by Dalgarno (2001:183) who says dialectical constructivism emphasises the role of interaction between learners, their peers and teachers.

It is the view of Dalgarno (2001:185) that dialectical constructivism is the view that learning occurs through realistic experience, but that learners require scaffolding provided by teachers or experts as well as collaboration with peers. This point to the idea that the enabling learning environment envisaged should consider tapping the contribution of experts in the subject history and related disciplines like law and philosophy. Moreover, Dalgarno (2001:190) says dialectical constructivism's emphasis on social interaction in the learner's knowledge construction process culminates in an emphasis on co-operative and collaborative learning strategies and the provision of scaffolding for learners as they carry out tasks at the edge of capabilities, for example, by means of teachers, peers, experts and software tools. It is the contention by Dalgarno (2001:191) that scaffolding is consistent with Vygotsky's emphasis on the learners' Zone of Proximal Development (see 2.4.6.3).

Wu, Shih and Carroll (2013:8) are of the view that dialectical learning allows learners to collaboratively analyse, criticise and synthesise information from multiple perspectives. These three authors have suggested the principles for organising dialectical learning activities which this researcher can tap into in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills. The principles are as follows:

- knowledge is actively constructed by learners themselves rather than passed along by instructors;
- active interactions among students are important; and
- learning requires a suitable context and environment.

2.4.6.3 Social constructivism

This study also draws insights from social constructivism. The origin of social constructivism is closely associated with the Russian psychologist, Vygotsky (1962, 1978, in Human-Vogel and Bouwer 2005:230). This is confirmed by Ndlovu and Muthivhi (2013:54) who say that more recent research in developmental psychology seeking to understand the relationship between learning and cognitive development elaborated in the Vygotskian socio-cultural framework, argues that socio-cultural context has a significant impact on a child's cognitive development. According to Human-Vogel and Bouwer (2005:230), Vygotsky (1978) says the development of higher mental processes takes place in social and cultural contexts. Social and cultural contexts are the real world contexts in which the construction of both meaning and knowledge take place. There can be no dichotomy between the socio-cultural context and the meaning of what is termed knowledge because the meaning of concepts which is what constitutes knowledge is a product of consensus by members of a society. This translates into suggesting that real learning should take place in a context which equates to what transpires in the real world setting.

According to Naroth (2010:24), Vygotsky further placed emphasis on the contribution of social interaction on mental development. They say that Vygotsky argued that

social interaction plays a formative and constructive function in the child's development. It is the contention by social interaction theorists like Talcott Parsons that it is through interaction that meanings of concepts are constructed and in the process there is development of knowledge. Haralambos, Holborn and Heald (2008:12) suggest, in support of Vygotsky's proposition that the construction of meaning is embedded in interaction processes.

The interaction process cannot be oblivious of the cultural and social context because meaning is a negotiated product of a group not an individual. It is the contention by Ivich (2000, in Naroth 2010:24) that certain types of higher mental functions cannot be developed without social interaction. This is because in interaction, there is the determination to clarify concepts and this is only possible through the application of higher mental processes like analysis, interpretation and evaluation. These are the critical thinking skills which this study seeks to postulate how they can be developed in the teaching of secondary school history. Yeh (2012:1319) says Vygotsky hails the process of internalisation as a key process in the development of higher order thinking skills. This process, as Santvock (2005, in Yeh 2012:1319) argues, is usually realised within social interactions as it is through social interactions that individuals gradually develop their tools of thought and construct their knowledge base. The role of social interactions in the construction of knowledge is also emphasised by Wiersma (2008:112) who says the social learning theory of Vygotsky suggests that groups of students along with their teacher construct knowledge and must come to an agreement about what is correct and incorrect. This is a mark of collaboration between the students and the teacher in the construction of meaning and knowledge. The idea of agreeing to what is correct and incorrect means that higher order thinking processes should be exercised and that in itself is critical thinking in the construction of knowledge.

Similar sentiments on the role of collaboration is echoed by Naroth (2010:24) who says that in a social constructivist learning environment, the teacher needs to facilitate group and whole class discussion in which the learners are expected to

explain their understanding in their own way and justify their answers. This is a clear application of the critical thinking skills because construction of meaning is levelled against the individual first and then, against the group since knowledge is knowledge in social and cultural context. This according to Naroth (2010:24) is the sociological perspective of the constructivist epistemology which emphasises the critical role that social interaction and the negotiation of meaning, involving explanation and justification, play in learning. This, however, is not to downplay the critical role of the active participation of learners in the construction of their own knowledge. The point is that the individual role should complement the social role in the construction of meaning and knowledge through the exercise of critical thinking skills.

Ndlovu and Muthivhi (2013:63), Naroth (2010:25) and Human-Vogel and Bouwer (2005:228) agree that social constructivism is based mainly on Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Ndlovu and Muthivhi (2013:63) say the ZPD is the distance between the actual level of development (ALD) as determined by individual problem-solving and the potential level of development (PLD) as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. They say this is the point where learning takes place according to Vygotsky. Some key points to note in these elaborations of the ZPD are the central point of problem solving in determining the level of cognitive development which the researcher thinks points to the fact that the mental processes required in solving problems depend on the nature of the problem and these should increase with the level of difficulty of the problem, that is, critical thinking skills for critical problems. The reference to adult guidance suggests the role of teachers and older peers in the context of school learning and collaboration with more capable peers refers to social interaction.

Vygotsky argued that learning precedes cognitive development and cognitive development only occurs after learning of which the reason and rationale for this lies with the ZPD (Naroth 2010:11). The point the researcher needs to stress here is that if learning precedes cognitive development then, there should be an enabling learning environment that is conducive for cognitive development to take place. In

this study, the purpose is to construct an enabling learning environment that is conducive for the development of critical thinking skills which are a component of cognitive development. The idea of development is captured in the fact that learning can be for basic skills, but this study aims at fostering the development of critical thinking skills through learning.

Ndlovu and Mathivhi (2013:66) say that classroom practitioners can use the ZPD to inform the organisation of their classrooms. This enables them to target those functions that have not yet matured, but are ready to and this can be utilised to develop critical thinking skills in the learners through teaching and learning. It is possible for teachers to utilise the concept of ZPD in their teaching to facilitate learning that is oriented towards the cognitive development process of learners because they are targeting the process of learning at the level where development takes place in the learner. Surely, if teaching and learning is to foster the development of critical thinking skills in the learners, it should target the ZPD. This means that secondary school history teachers should ascertain the knowledge that the learners bring to school in order to establish the level of cognitive development so that the use of the ZPD can assist to foster the cognitive development of the learners.

In the circumstances of cognitive development, Hudson (1999:2 of 3) says Giroux agrees with Freire who urges us to develop a pedagogy designed to help students to generate their own meanings. According to Hudson (1999:2 of 3), Freire says a radical pedagogy requires non-authoritarian relationships that support dialogue and communication as indispensible for questioning the meaning and nature of knowledge.

The key message from the above statement is that there is the relevance of social relationships in the production of knowledge and this is demonstrated by the involvement of students in dialogue. It is in dialogue that meaning is generated and cognitive skills are developed as suggested by Fahim and Masouleh (2012, in Fahim

and Nazari 2012:87) who argue that critical thinking is in line with critical pedagogy as they are both featured with criticality and dialogicality. These cognitive skills are the critical thinking skills which are the focus of this study. The theoretical framework and conceptual frameworks elucidated above culminated in the literature study on the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history which forms the next section of this presentation. They are summarised in diagrammatic form below.

Critical thinking skills

Transformative wave   Interactive wave

Teaching theory   Learning theory

Critical pedagogy ←——————→ Critical theory ←——————→ Constructivism
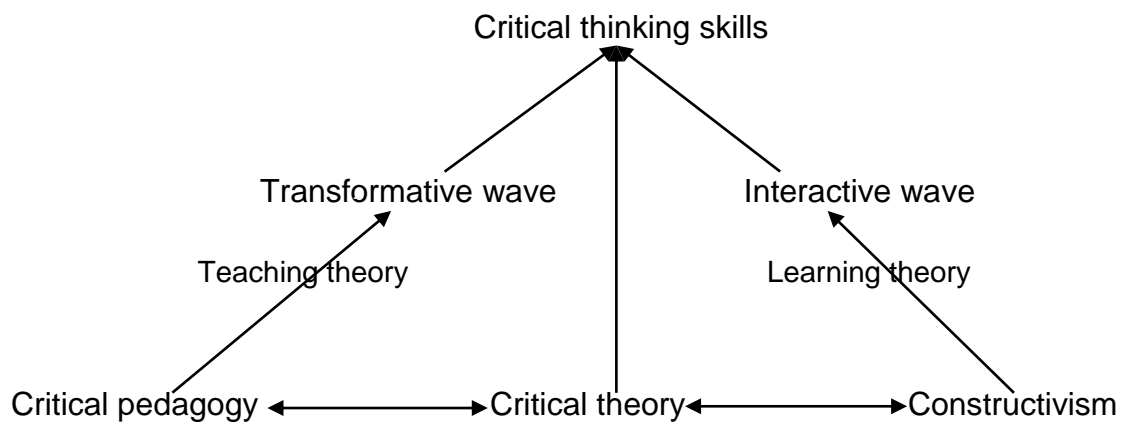
Fig 2.1: Perspectives on critical thinking (*Adapted from Kahlke and White, 2013, p.22*).

2.5 Conclusion

The discussion of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks highlights significant symbiotic relationship between the two flag posts couching this study. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks chosen for this study focus on learning rather than on teaching which is in line with current trends in education. The theoretical framework of critical theory falls within the research paradigm to guide the process of conducting research, that is, research methodology *per se.* As it rightly says, it is a theory and not a practice. The conceptual framework of critical pedagogy and constructivism are the practice of critical theory as they derive directly from critical theory. The conceptual framework deals with the components of the research. In this study the key components are the aims, objectives, research questions, and literature study which form the next section of this study.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE STUDY ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a literature study on the construction of enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills. The chapter starts by illuminating the concept of curriculum change in order to foreground the study of the critical appraisal of the teaching of history internationally and in Zimbabwe. This is done intentionally to lay a solid base for the justification of presenting the literature study on the enabling learning environments which are the focus of this study. The chapter proceeds by an appraisal of the different approaches that can be used to construct an enabling learning environment with the focus to borrow from these approaches in the development of a framework for the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. It winds up with a critical discussion of the components of the framework of enabling learning environment within which history can be taught with the intention to develop critical thinking skills.

3.2 CURRICULUM AND CURRICULUM CHANGE

3.2.1 Curriculum

Curriculum is a field for contestation the world over because of the power to influence society that is embedded in education and consequently, in the curriculum which is the 'engine that drives the car'- education. This contestation has given rise to many definitions of the term curriculum to the extent that Steinberg (2014:112) says that by 1987, there were more than 130 definitions of curriculum in the educational literature. In this literature study, some of the definitions will be considered to pin the discussion of curriculum change and transformation as factors that influence classroom practice.

According to Steinberg (2014:112), Ellis (2004) says curriculum comes from the Latin verb, *currere,* meaning "to run" and in the Middle Ages, the term took on the idea of a "course of study" with a beginning and an end as if running a course/ race. This is the same idea expressed by Posner (2004:5) when he refers to curriculum as the end itself in which case, curriculum is taken as the subject matter and objectives for which the educational institution holds students accountable.

Steinberg (2014:119) says in 1918 Bobbit defined curriculum as "the entire range of experiences, directed and undirected, concerned with the unfolding of the abilities of the individual or the series of consciously directed training experiences that the schools use for completing and perfecting unfoldment".

The Glossary of Education Reform (2015:1 of 5) says curriculum refers to knowledge and skills students are expected to learn which includes learning objectives they are expected to meet; the lessons that teachers teach; the assignments and projects given to students; the books, materials, videos, presentations and readings used in a course; the tests and assignments, and other methods used to evaluate student learning. This is echoed by Luke, Woods, Weir (2013:7) who say curriculum is the sum total of resources- intellectual and scientific, cognitive and linguistic, textbook and adjunct resources and materials, official and unofficial- that are brought together for teaching and learning by teachers, students and in the best case community, in the classrooms and other learning environments. These views of curriculum are bolstered by Dillion (2009:343) who says curriculum is defined as "what is successfully conveyed in differing degrees to different students, by committed teachers using appropriate materials and actions, of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skills, taste, and propensity to act and react, which are chosen for instruction after serious reflection and communal decision by representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students who are known to the decision makers".

Clearly, the definitions of curriculum presented above suggest important components of what constitutes the curriculum. Curriculum involves prescription of what has to be learnt which is the subject matter or bodies of knowledge and skills (Ebert, Ebert and Bentley 2013:1 of 6), of which the latter are the focus of this study. Curriculum also involves planning of what should transpire in the places of learning which might include the aims, objectives, learning experiences and evaluation to mention a few (The Glossary of Education Reform 2015:1 of 5). It also comes out clear that curriculum implies learning which takes place in a particular place which is called a school (Ebert, *et al* 2013:1 of 6). This means that curriculum implies institutionalised learning (Waks 2003:386). It is also clear that curriculum is directed at the certification of those who would have 'run the course' which means that curriculum has objectives which should be measurable (The Glossary of Education Reform 2015:1 of 5).

For the purposes of this study, curriculum is defined as the series of planned learning experiences in the school with the purpose of unfolding particular outcomes in the learners. The planned learning experiences are the conditions that are created so that an enabling learning environment for fostering critical thinking skills is possible. The outcomes in the learners are the critical thinking skills. This means that curriculum defined this way captures the key concepts of a curriculum which are planning, prescription, institutionalisation of learning, aims or objectives and the assessment of the institutionalisation of learning. The issues of planning and learning experiences are given particular attention in this study because critical theory and, critical pedagogy and constructivism, which are respectively the driving theoretical and conceptual frameworks , giving prominence to the role of the teacher in planning learning experiences rather than planning of subject matter to teach. The two frameworks also suggest that institutionalised learning is goal-directed and the goal in this study is the fostering of critical thinking skills.

3.2.2 Curriculum transformation and change

The construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills constitutes an important element of the curriculum transformation and change. By way of definition, curriculum transformation can be viewed as the informal and formal procedures through which knowledge within the curriculum is continually produced, created, and expanded by a wide range of stakeholders acting within a broader social and historical context (Weaver 2011:46). Curriculum transformation deals with the knowledge element of the curriculum which can be referred to as the structural component of the curriculum. The implication is that knowledge is not static and the curriculum has to be fed with new and relevant knowledge in the form of subject matter, skills or technologies. In the context of this study, the focus is on the knowledge of critical thinking skills. It is clear from the definition that stakeholders are a key factor in curriculum transformation as the producers of knowledge that has to be infused into the curriculum. Stakeholders could be the government, industrialists, students, teachers and the community (Luke, *et al* 2013:7).

Curriculum transformation can be aligned with the theoretical framework of critical theory on the basis that transformation emerges from a critique and questioning of an existing curriculum with the aim to make it respond to the needs of society. This is where there is the use of informal and formal procedures which culminate in curriculum transformation. Moreover, curriculum transformation is about enactment not intention which is theoretical and real transformation comes about through transformative pedagogies as espoused by critical pedagogy and constructivism (Parkes, 2007 in Moyo 2013:416) which constitute the conceptual framework of this study.

Curriculum change has been depicted as an ongoing international trend which invariably mirrors change in the society at large (Makhwathana 2007:12). Waks (2003:388) borrows from Cuban (1992) who makes a distinction between incremental and fundamental change in the curriculum. Incremental change is

designed to correct deficiencies or imbalances in existing practice, making it more effective without altering its basic organisational features, its "standard grammar" (p.388). Institutional 'grammar' is defined by Cuban in Waks (2003:388) as the rules for how physical space is organised, time is allocated to tasks, and subject matter is translated into teachable topics. Fundamental change seeks to alter the grammar, the standard organisational ways of doing things. It is concerned with introducing new institutional rules that establish new organisational patterns, new configurations of space and time utilisation, new roles and authority relations in the curriculum (p.388). Both curriculum change and transformation are pertinent in this study in so far as constructing an enabling learning environment requires altering the current practices and learning spaces in the teaching of secondary school history and the acquisition of critical thinking skills speaks of curriculum transformation. The next section analyses the causes of curriculum change and transformation in general and how these causes drive the focus on skills development in teaching and learning.

3.2.3 Curriculum change and transformation drivers

Theories or concepts that drive curriculum change and transformation are varied and are derived from the principles of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism. This is in so far as all three configure towards change and transformation. According to Kennedy (2013:4) and Weaver (2011:46-48), these forces which transform the curriculum can be classified as the contemporary context and the knowledge claims. They argue that broad societal changes like changing economic, social and political situations (contexts) act as powerful informing forces on curriculum change and transformation. The Glossary of Education Reform (2015: 4 of 5) agrees with Kennedy (2013:6) that curriculum change can be driven by the availability of resources. The Glossary of Education Reform (2015: 2 of 5) adds that the assessment requirements also influence curriculum change.

3.2.3.1 Political contexts and curriculum change

Changing political contexts are a powerful force in curriculum transformation as suggested by Weaver (2011:46). The suggestion put forward is that independence from the colonial administrators from the late 1950s to the 1970s led to curriculum transformations in the newly independent countries like Nigeria, Zimbabwe and South Africa to mention just a few. This is in so far as revolutions do not merely make educational change possible they require it in order to bring education into harmony with a new institutional and ideological framework (Weaver 2011:46). The curriculum is considered as an instrument of state rather than personal development and this was the case with countries like China where Kennedy (2013:4) says when China became socialist or communist, there was need to change the curriculum in pursuit of nation building. The education system had to be transformed in order to serve the purposes of the new ideology. This is also reported by Weaver (2011:46) who says Tanzania changed its curriculum in order to pursue a national agenda.

Zimbabwe became a nation state in 1980 after a protracted war of liberation which took close to two decades of resisting the colonial regime led by Ian Douglas Smith of the Rhodesia Front Party which came to power in 1962 which is indicative of political transformation. It is against this historical antecedent that a study of curriculum development in Zimbabwe since 1980 should be understood just like the norm in other countries at a global level. As a newly independent state, Zimbabwe needed to craft a national curriculum that would definitely reflect the interests of the people of Zimbabwe and especially the African component of the population as suggested by Mavhunga (2008:30) who says there was the Africanising of the school curriculum. Given the background of colonial rule, it was pertinent for the government of Zimbabwe to pursue curriculum reform in order to address the colonial imbalances in the education system. The promises that had been made to the people concerning equality in education by the liberation political parties like the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) also propelled curriculum reform after independence (Moyo 2008:30).

Mavhunga (2008, in Moyo and Modiba 2013:5) says there was the Africanising of the curriculum in Zimbabwe in order to address the colonial imbalances in the education system. Of particular importance in this journey of Africanising the curriculum in Zimbabwe after independence is the attention that was given to the Geography and History syllabuses. Africanising the curriculum meant producing new syllabi and new textbooks written by Zimbabwean Africans to give the learners an African flavor in the subjects that were on offer in the schools (Moyo and Modiba 2013:5). These books presented Geography and History from an Afro-centric perspective rather than a Euro-centric perspective.

Woza (2010:3) says that there was a change from a segmented race-based curriculum to the national academic curriculum from 1981. This was designed to meet the educational demands of the majority blacks who had been marginalised in education provision during the colonial era. Woza (2010:3) says the F-2 schools which had been created by the colonial government to provide practical skills to the Africans who did not qualify for academic education were closed because they were a symbol of the colonial system and practical skills denied those Africans who were in the F-2 schools the opportunity to acquire critical thinking skills. This goes to suggest that political transformations or revolutions are a powerful concept in curriculum transformation.

3.2.3.2 Social transformation and curriculum change

Curriculum change is also driven by social transformation (Luo 2011:42 and Weaver 2011:48). Luo (2011:42) says that curriculum reform in China since 1996 has been driven by the social transformation of China and Weaver (2011:48) says the introduction of "African socialism" or Ujamaa by Nyerere in Tanzania necessitated curriculum change. Luo (2011:14) says the economic demands and the social concerns demanded "reforming students' ways to learn" which formed the core of the curriculum reform. The economic demands which propelled the curriculum reform in China were the critical shortage of the human capital of China in preparation for the increasingly fierce competition of the global knowledge-based economy (Kennedy

2013:6). A knowledge-based economy is one which requires the workforce to be able to gather information, analyse the information, evaluate the information and reach reasoned conclusions which are critical to the development of business in the world of competition (Waks 2003:388). The workforce which is the product of the school system needed to have been exposed to these critical thinking skills required in the business world during their tenure in school.

3.2.3.3 Economic-cum-technological transformation and curriculum change

Moreover, economic and technological transformations are also powerful forces which drive curriculum change and transformation. According to Waks (2003:384), globalisation will cause fundamental rather than incremental curriculum change. Globalisation with its technological demands requires what Waks (2003:397) referred to as the "knowledge worker". This is a worker who in globalisation terms has (the) capabilities (of) knowing how to access information, interpret and apply new knowledge and information to add value to an organisation; are time sensitive, work to deadlines on specific projects (Waks 2003:397). According to Castels (1996, in Waks 2003:399), these workers are able to apply knowledge to create knowledge and information that can be combined and permuted to create new products or services. It is definite that these demands will put pressure on the education system to engender curriculum change and transformation because the existing curriculum will obviously be deficient in meeting these requirements of the knowledge worker.

Zimbabwe has not been spared this globalisation scare and His Excellency, President R. G. Mugabe, in 1998 appointed a Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET) in Zimbabwe (Woza 2010:3). According to Woza (2010:3), the report of the commission was kept secret for the government's fear of being criticised for closing the F-2 schools which were seen by the report as the panacea to the escalating unemployment problem. It is reckoned by Woza (2010:3) that the report made a scathing attack on the lack of the focus on teaching methods which focus on skills including, among others, critical thinking skills in the schools in Zimbabwe. It therefore, recommended the use of teaching methods which focus on skills and

particularly critical thinking skills. This seems to be a call that fell in tandem with the global call for the education which should produce critical thinkers who are the "knowledge workers". This call came at a time when the teaching and learning of history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe was already grappling with the challenges associated with the skills-oriented approach to the teaching and learning of secondary school history in the late 1990s which was encapsulated in Syllabus 2166.

3.2.3.4 Epistemology and curriculum change

Kennedy (2013:4) says that the internal conflict over epistemologies and modes of inquiry drive curriculum transformation. The suggestion is that epistemologies as curriculum transformation determinants can be classified as the academic (traditionalist epistemology) and liberal (knowledge as a social construct epistemology). The traditionalist agenda for curriculum reform advocates for the knowledge of the national heritage which knowledge is called logical positivism (Haworth and Conrad 1990:7). In this case, knowledge is assumed to exist "out there" and can be discovered through objective and empirical means which in turn guide the purpose and content and to a lesser extent, the pedagogy within the curriculum.

Considering the view by Maluleka (2015:1 of 5) that curriculum is a contextualised social process, it can be said that knowledge as a social construct sees the role of the teachers as that of 'midwives' rather than 'bankers'. This goes to suggest that teachers should play the role of drawing knowledge out from the students pointing out that knowledge is a product of the interaction between the student and the teacher where both equally participate in the pedagogic struggle to expose the underpinning of that which is learnt. The implication is that of dialogism envisaged by critical theory and social interactionism espoused by critical pedagogy. It is certainly clear from the ongoing discussion on curriculum change and transformation that curriculum change and transformation have an impact on what is taught and learnt in

the schools and so, these should be ongoing processes if education is to keep pace with changes in society.

3.2.3.5 Resources and curriculum change

The availability of new resources has the power to influence the direction of curriculum change. The Glossary of Education Reform (2015:4 of 5) says the availability of new resources like textbooks and the provision of laptops to learners and interactive whiteboards in the classrooms will lead to change in the way of teaching and learning. If these physical resources are complemented by financial resources in order to invest in professional development of the teachers in the use of the new resources, they result effective curriculum change (Kennedy 2013:6). Professional development is needed because simply providing new resources without investing in teacher education and training may completely fail to bring about the envisaged curriculum change.

3.2.3.6 Assessment and curriculum change

Assessment procedure largely determines the quality of teaching and learning of the curriculum. According to the Glossary of Education Reform (2015:2 of 5), assessment requirements, that is, the methods used to measure student learning compel teachers to teach in a particular manner. The focus will be on the content and skills that will be evaluated in the assessment. If standardised testing is used, it results in teaching to pass the test for fear of poor performance which may result in negative publicity of the teachers and the schools.

It is against this background of the curriculum change drivers that a study of this nature should find its place in the current curriculum review which the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Doctor Lazarus Dokora, announced in 2013. According to Nyamanhindi (2013:4), the Minister said the curriculum review is undertaken as part of efforts to strengthen a needs-based education system to make education contribute to the empowerment vision of the Zimbabwe Agenda for

Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET). It is the intention of this study to make a contribution to the development of critical thinking skills to the country through the teaching of history in secondary schools. This will act as a complement to the effort to revamp the secondary school curriculum which is largely academic in order to make it largely skills-based. This study focuses on the critical thinking skills dimension of the skills development in the envisaged curriculum review. This background on curriculum change serves to set the stage for the exposition of the curriculum theory which has driven the curriculum developments in Zimbabwe.

What emerges from the discussion of the curriculum change drivers is that there are political, economic, social, technological, resource and assessment considerations at stake. It can be said that these factors which spurn curriculum change may turn out to be the barriers to effective curriculum change if they are not handled with due care in pursuing curriculum change. The militating nature against curriculum change of these factors will be dealt with in a later section of this chapter (see 3.3.8)

3.2.4 Curriculum theory and curriculum development in Zimbabwe

Given the evolving nature of the Zimbabwe state, it is not surprising that the curriculum has evolved to its present state. The evolution of the curriculum in Zimbabwe manifests itself in the fusion of diverse models of curriculum designing as evident in the express tenets of Hirstian's seven 'forms of knowledge', Lawton's selection from culture model, the process model of Stenhouse, the objectives model of Tyler, the Marxist and neo-Marxist models of curriculum theorising. It is no secret that a careful look at these models suggests that some like the Hirstian's seven "forms of knowledge" and Lawton's selection from culture model deal with the content of the curriculum. The other models like the process model, the objectives model and the Marxist and neo-Marxist theories emphasise the methodology and skills of the curriculum. Thus, there is a symbiotic relationship in the application of these models in curriculum development in Zimbabwe. It is commended that Zimbabwe has done well to craft its curriculum out of a hotch-potch of curriculum

theories since none of the models can suffice on its own. The way to go for many countries is eclecticism in curriculum planning as each of the models has its own strengths and weaknesses.

The ensuing discussion on the curriculum theory that spurned the curriculum development in Zimbabwe will be based on the work of Moyo (2013:418). He asserts that curriculum development in Zimbabwe has evolved along the British tradition of curriculum theorising. Moyo (2013:418) says curriculum development in Zimbabwe is therefore dominated by traditional curriculum theorising associated with the Hirstian (1970) notion of the seven 'forms of knowledge' as the basis of the selection of valid knowledge. This is evident in the selection of subjects like the natural sciences (physics, biology, chemistry); the arts (history, geography, literature, art); languages (English, Shona, French, Venda, Ndebele); and religion for inclusion in the curriculum. This is the foundation of history as a stand-alone subject in secondary schools in Zimbabwe because it is one of the Arts subjects.

Moyo (2013:418) also says that curriculum development in Zimbabwe has also been influenced by the notion by Lawton (1974) that curriculum is a selection from the culture of a society. This is postulated to have influenced both the colonial and post-colonial curriculum development in Zimbabwe. The content of history as a subject in secondary schools has a significant portion of the social and economic aspects which are selected from the culture of the Zimbabwean society. The social and economic organisation of pre-colonial Zimbabwe states is given prominence in the secondary school history curriculum which is evidence of the selection from culture as suggested by Lawton.

Moreover, Moyo (2013:418) says curriculum development in Zimbabwe has also been driven by Tyler's objectives model. This model relies on the setting out of educational goals which the curriculum is then planned to achieve. This is echoed by McKimm (2007:10) who says the major premise of the objectives model is the idea

that all learning should be defined in terms of what students should be able to do after studying the programme, in terms of learning outcomes or learning objectives. This is why the secondary school history syllabus in Zimbabwe has aims and objectives which are the expected learner outcomes (Syllabus 2167 2013:3). Therefore, a teacher is supposed to create an environment to address the objectives and in the case of this study, the teacher is mandated to create an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills as the critical learning outcomes in history teaching.

There are four steps in the designing of a curriculum using the objectives model. These steps are:

- Reach agreement on the broad aims and specific objectives of the course;
- Construct the course to achieve these objectives;
- Define the curriculum in practice by testing capacity to achieve the objectives;
- Communicate the curriculum to teachers (McKimm, 2009:10).

This is the practice applied to the curriculum in general in Zimbabwe and in secondary school history in particular. Teachers are given a curriculum blueprint to implement from the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) of the MoPSE. The use of the objectives model enables the construction of assessments which can be designed against the learning objectives. This study favours the objectives model in so far as the critical thinking skills can be clearly stated as the objectives of a secondary school history lesson. For example, learners can be asked to analyse the causes of the First Chimurenga in Zimbabwe or to assess the significance of the same to the Africans in the country at the time and after.

McKimm (2009:11) says Stenhouse suggested an alternative to the objectives model of Tyler which is the process model of curriculum designing. The process model assumes that content and learning activities have an intrinsic value and they are not just a means of achieving learning objectives and that translating behavioural

objectives is trivialising the whole purpose of education (McKimm 2009:11). Stenhouse (1975, says there are four fundamental processes of education:

- Training (skills acquisition);
- Instruction (information acquisition);
- Initiation (socialisation and familiarisation with norms and values);
- Induction (thinking and problem solving).

For Stenhouse (1975, in Moyo 2013:418)), the behavioural objectives were only important in the first two processes and that in initiation and induction it would not be possible to use objectives. The emphasis placed on activities in the process model suggests the learning environment as a key component of the teaching and learning process which makes it pertinent to undertake research on learning environments in Zimbabwe.

Moreover, the component of induction in the process model deals with thinking and this study is about the development of critical thinking. An eclectic approach to the objectives model and the process model in curriculum development can guide in the construction of enabling learning environments for the development of critical thinking skills in the teaching of secondary school history in Zimbabwe. It is the contention of the researcher that both objectives and activities are important components of an enabling learning environment. Critical theory, critical pedagogy and social constructivism focus on objectives to be achieved and on activities to achieve the objectives. Therefore, the envisaged enabling learning environment should consider characteristics comprising both objectives and activities since both are relevant in the development of critical thought.

According to Chung and Ngara (1985, in Moyo 2013:418), independence in Zimbabwe ushered in radical forms of curriculum theorising that drew from Marxist and neo-Marxist philosophy with calls for an emancipatory education founded on praxis as both a pedagogical and political weapon to challenge the inherited traditions of the colonial system. The Marxist philosophy is the one that gave birth to

critical theory and critical pedagogy which are helping to drive this research. The neo-Marxist philosophy is the constructivist philosophy which is also helping to drive this research. Both the Marxist and neo-Marxist philosophies of curriculum theorising find expression in the Zimbabwe history curriculum as seen in in the methodologies that are recommended for use in the teaching and learning of history which include inquiry, emancipatory, liberatory and collaborative approaches (Syllabus 2167:6).

The preceding curriculum discussion has indicated that the globalisation of the world economy will require the survival of the fittest in the world. The climax of globalisation puts serious demands on the human capital required in the social, economic and political realms of life. The different world realms look up to the education system to provide the panacea to the demands placed on the human capital needed in the service of globalisation. In globalisation terms, the human capital has to be 'knowledge workers' who can compete at par for the survival of businesses. These knowledge workers should have the critical thinking skills which are developed in the school system. The school system is propelled by the curriculum in order to achieve its goals and objectives.

The hope for the development of critical thinking skills in the secondary school system in Zimbabwe was given a new lease of life in 2013 and confirmed in the curriculum review of 2014-2015. This was done in the wake of the crafted development blueprint called (ZIMASSET) which runs from October 2013 to December 2018 (Government of Zimbabwe 2013:1). ZIMASSET is envisaged to consolidate the gains of the empowerment of the communities which have been achieved through land redistribution, community share ownership schemes and employee share ownership schemes initiated by the government between 2009 and 2013. ZIMASSET seeks to sustain these programmes as part of the global call for sustainable development which is an improvement on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which translates into Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) beyond 2015 (Ki-moon 2015:72). ZIMASSET taps into the SDGs since the latter are designed to create an environment that is conducive for development and the former

focuses on development as well as highlighted in the summary of the MDGs which are to: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Achieve universal primary education; Promote gender equality and empower women; Reduce by two thirds the mortality of children under five, Improve maternal health; Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; Ensure environmental sustainability; Develop a global partnership for development (Ki-moon 2015:72).

The MDGs numbers 1-6 are the focus of the ZIMASSET clusters 7.1 and 7.2 which are:

- Food security and nutrition cluster'
- Social services and poverty eradication cluster (Government of Zimbabwe 2013: 50-70).

There is clear evidence from the clusters that the MDGs have a great influence on the crafting of the ZIMASSET. It becomes a development agenda that is designed to enhance the achievement of the MDGs which could have eluded the government of Zimbabwe as the country progressed towards the twilight of the MDGs era which ended in 2015. Within the SDGs framework, one sees a possibility of education to foster the achievement of the other goals because education has an influence on poverty reduction, health improvement and empowerment and fighting gender disparities in society.

In its mission statement ZIMASSET will provide an enabling environment for sustainable economic empowerment and social transformation to the people of Zimbabwe and education is captured as one of the major social services in the cluster of social services and poverty eradication (Government of Zimbabwe 2013:10). It is noted with concern in the blueprint that the curriculum does not match the developmental needs of the country and so, there is a drive to fully implement the recommendations of the NCIET of 1999. In the blueprint, the government envisages to continuously improve the quality of education to enhance, among other things, skills development. The envisaged Zimbabwe curriculum blueprint is focusing

on knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to be inculcated in the learners (Government of Zimbabwe 2013:10). This study is handy on the issue of skills since it focuses on the critical thinking skills which should find their place in the new Zimbabwe curriculum to make it correspond with global trends in education.

Rafemoyo (2014:6) says the curriculum review in Zimbabwe should make the development of critical thinking skills the foundation of quality education. It is against such calls that it should be noted that meaningful empowerment considers the sphere of critical thinking skills in its education system as suggested by Davis (2003, in Fahim and Nazari 2012:86) who believes that developing critical thinking skills results in student empowerment. This is further echoed by Facione (1992, in Fahim and Nazari 2012:386) who says if people are taught to make good decisions they are equipped to improve their own futures and become contributing members of society rather than burdens on society. The ability to make good decisions is premised on the ability to think critically.

It is the contention of the researcher that education can be a powerful driver of ZIMASSET as the programme is intended to achieve sustainable development. This is possible since UNESCO (2012:3) says that education is a key lever or catalyst of sustainable development through the transmission, acquisition, creation and adaptation of information, knowledge, skills and values. UNESCO (2012:10) says the global agenda beyond 2015 suggests that for sustainable development, which is also the thrust of ZIMASSET, there should be a shift from the focus on teaching to an increased focus on learning. This study is aimed at constructing an enabling learning environment and so, it can help to drive ZIMASSET by emphasising the importance of learning which will sustain the development agenda of the programme. All the improvements in the provision of goods and services which the programme envisages are only possible with the education system shifting from transmission of knowledge and skills (current state in Zimbabwe) to facilitation of the learning of knowledge and skills for transfer in the world of work.

In the spirit of ZIMASSET, the MoPSE in Zimbabwe completed its curriculum review process in 2015 which resulted in curriculum change and transformation. According to the Extra Contributor (2015:4), the curriculum review has critical thinking as the main exit profile of the learners in the primary and secondary levels of education and history teaching and learning is no exception. This outcome of the curriculum review in Zimbabwe justifies more than ever before, the need to craft an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. What the MoPSE did is to propose policy to guide the educational programme. This study seeks to contribute ideas towards the development of the critical exit profile through the construction of a framework for an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. This can only be achieved by first of all teasing the current History syllabus with a focus on its aims and objectives in order to establish areas of strengths and weaknesses. Areas of strength can be strengthened and areas of weakness revamped in order to craft a learning environment conducive for the development of critical thinking skills as demanded by the curriculum review outcome.

3.2.5 Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) History Syllabus 2167

The syllabus 2167 was first offered in 2003 to replace syllabi 2158, 2160 and 2166. In its preamble, the syllabus states that it endeavours to help learners to acquire a critical understanding of social, economic and political issues as required by Syllabus 2167 (2013:2). The key issue is the 'critical understanding' which calls for the emphasis on critical thinking in the teaching and learning of history.

3.2.5.1 Aims of the syllabus

While the syllabus has several aims, those central to this study have been selected for mention and discussion.

- Pupils should be able to acquire an understanding of the similarities, differences and the common experiences of the peoples of Africa and the

world (Syllabus 2167 2013:3). This is making reference to the critical skills of comparing and contrasting so as to be able to make evaluative judgments.

- Pupils have to develop skills and appropriate tools of analysing historical events (Syllabus 2167 2013:3). The aim is focusing on the development of skills and one of the skills is that of analysis which is a critical thinking skill.
- Pupils should be able to carry out research (Syllabus 2167 2013:3).

This research should be into aspects of local and national history. This research should be carried out using primary and secondary sources which are the key resources for the skills-based approach which is at the centre of the pedagogical approaches for the teaching and learning of the syllabus content. The use of both primary and secondary sources in learning history implies that the learners have to interpret the sources and evaluate the evidence in the different sources and reach their own conclusions. In doing so, they will be constructing their own history from the sources which is exactly what the historians do and this is in line with the conceptual frameworks of critical pedagogy and social constructivism, and the theoretical framework of critical theory which apply in the use of the skills of interpretation and evaluation of historical evidence.

3.2.5.2 Assessment objectives of the syllabus

Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:101) are of the view that assessment has several functions. These include assessing learning, to diagnose and to establish the quality of teaching and learning in schools and by the learners. Assessment also serves the key purpose of developing student learning when it is corroborated with feedback after the assessment. The assessment objectives of the History Syllabus 2167 (2013:4) are that pupils should be able to:

- recall, select and describe historical events in their context;
- describe human activities and beliefs and their effects on resources, environment and other people;
- explain concepts and issues that relate to history, population, gender, democracy and human rights in a relevant and coherent manner;

- analyse, interpret and evaluate historical evidence, points of view, opinions, value judgments and detect bias;

- assess the significance and relevance of information and draw reasoned conclusions; and

- empathise with the past and interpret events and make decisions on a particular period in light of the information and conditions prevailing at that time.

It can be said that the first three assessment objectives focus on the learning of lower order skills which are not critical thinking skills. The last three assessment objectives focus on the learning of higher order skills which are considered to be the critical thinking skills. The higher order skills are analysing, interpreting, evaluating, drawing reasoned conclusions and assessing evidence. This goes to suggest that syllabus 2167 has a clear focus on the development of critical thinking skills in the teaching and learning of history.

3.2.5.3 Scheme of assessment for syllabus 2167

The assessment is set to be through an examination comprising of two, two-hour papers (Syllabus 2167 2013:4). Section 4.1.1 of the scheme of assessment refers to Paper One of the examination which consists of twenty-two questions, one being source based and the rest being structured questions in three parts. The first part will be on recall of relevant factual knowledge and carries six marks. The second part will be descriptive and carries eleven marks. The third part will require interpretation and analysis and carries eight marks. This implies that sixty-eight per cent of the total marks allocated for each structured question are for lower order skills and only thirty percent is for higher order thinking skills. Candidates are required to answer any four questions which give them the opportunity to shun the source-based question.

Section 4.1.2 of the scheme of assessment (Syllabus 2167 2013:5) refers to Paper Two of the examination which consists of fifteen structured questions where candidates will be required to answer any four questions. The structure of the questions will be as in Paper One consisting of recall, description and interpretation

and analysis with mark allocation as five, twelve and eight respectively. These examination requirements have critical implications on how the subject history has to be taught.

Recall and description imply that there is emphasis on memorisation of content in order for the learners to do well on examination questions requiring recall and description. This spells a scenario of teacher centredness in the teaching of history where the teacher has to give information to the learners. It also implies that there should be the use of prescribed textbooks which contain the history facts so that the learners can memorise what the examination requires as history facts. Interpretation and analysis imply that the learner should be given a central place in the teaching and learning of history. This is because both interpretation and analysis should be done by the learner. This interpretation and analysis has to be enhanced by the use of multiple sources of historical evidence so that interpretation and analysis are not biased due to limited sources.

3.3 ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

3.3.1 Introduction

The discussion of curriculum change and transformation and changes in history teaching and learning shows that there are heavy demands that are placed on the context that has to be in existence in the learning spaces in order to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning. The end product of these changes has been shown to be critical thinking skills and this implies that the learning environment must be conducive for the development of the critical thinking skills. The key concept of critical thinking skills is explained in order to understand the demands placed on the component of learning environment in learning for critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the conceptualisation of an enabling learning environment is elaborated as the basis for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills. This section also focuses on the literature

study on the theoretical framework for the construction of learning environment as a key component in the learning process which results in the development of critical thinking skills.

3.3.2 Critical thinking skills

A gleaning of literature on critical thinking skills suggests that critical thinking skills are an invaluable cognitive asset in the world that is in a state of flux in which school graduates live and contribute towards. That being the case, an understanding of curriculum theory which is the root cause of curriculum change and transformation empowers teachers to become transformative intellectuals, the net effect being to improve the quality of education (Moyo 2013:420) becomes a necessity. The improvement of the quality of education can be viewed in the context of change from being focus on behaviours as learners' outcomes to skills of learners as critical outcomes. The reference to skills as critical outcomes speaks to the development of critical thinking skills.

According to Lambard (2008:1029), critical thinking is needed because globally, solutions have to be found for deep-rooted problems, it is a prerequisite in the modern working environment to allow employees to cope with their daily tasks and it helps learners with opportunities to develop as independent thinkers who can contribute to the development of society in general. These reasons suggest that critical thinking constitutes one of the main skills which educational programmes must endeavour to facilitate to develop. This facilitation is through the processes of teaching and learning. In the context of this study, the processes of teaching and learning are envisaged to lead to the cognitive outcomes of critical thinking skills.

Several working definitions have been suggested concerning critical thinking. This is due to the fact that there are three divergent academic strands dealing with the definition of critical thinking which are analytic philosophy, cognitive psychology and educational psychology (Lai 2013:4).

3.3.2.1 The analytic philosophical approach

Duron, Limbach and Waugh (2006:160) say critical thinking can be simply defined as the ability to analyse and evaluate information which is a branch of analytic philosophy, for example, analysis and evaluation. The analytic philosophical approach to the understanding of critical thinking is based on the writings of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Richard Paul and it focuses on enumerating the qualities and characteristics of a critical thinker rather than the behaviours or actions of a critical thinker (Lai 2013:5).

This is corroborated by Paul (1992:9) who says critical thinking refers to the perfections of thought again emphasising qualities or standards of thought. Facione (1990:2) defines critical thinking in the analytic philosophy approach as purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based.

This is supported by Halpern (2000:23) who proceeds to say critical thinking is purposeful, reasoned and goal-directed. It is the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods and making decisions, which is, analytic philosophy. Willingham (2007:8) defines critical thinking as seeing both sides of an issue, being open to new evidence that disconfirms your ideas, reasoning dispassionately, demanding that claims be backed by evidence, deducing and inferring conclusions from available facts, solving problems, and so forth. The key tenets of these definitions of critical thinking are reasoning, evaluation and judgment.

3.3.2.2 The cognitive psychological approach

This approach to the conceptualisation of critical thinking defines critical thinking by the types of actions or behaviours critical thinkers can do. According to Lai (2013:7),

this approach includes the skills or procedures performed by critical thinkers such as analysis, interpretation, making inferences and formulating good questions. This finds confirmation from Kahlke and White (2013:23) who say the Delphi Report also indicates a set of six critical thinking skills required to make judgments including interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation.

This is corroborated by Lambard (2008:1032) who says critical thinking is a construct which entails the deliberate direction of one's own thinking by including higher order thinking skills to arrive at rational justifiable inferences. To add voice, Papastephanou and Angeli (2007:606) cite Kalman (2002:84) who says critical thinking has been given as the use of those skills that increase the probability of a desirable outcome which speaks to cognitive psychology, for example, inference and interpretation. These skills constitute the reasoning process because in order to think through a problem, the thinker goes through a process of interpreting, analysing and evaluating information, making inferences and generating an explanation or decision based on that information.

These definitions suggest that critical thinking skills is the application of higher order thinking skills in a critical sense, that is, a sense which does not accept information as given but with a view to get the deeper nuances of information so that it can be of relevance to the one experiencing the information. Critical thinking is taken to be essential as a tool of inquiry. This highlights the view that in developing critical thinking skills, there should be the application of inquiry-based approaches and activities such as the Socratic technique, problem solving and project-based learning.

3.3.2.3 The educational psychology approach

The theory of critical thinking began primarily with the works of Benjamin Bloom (1956) who according to Duron, *et al* (2006:160), was a member of the Eight-Year Study in the 1930s which was commissioned by the Progressive Education

Association. According to Coetzer (2001, in Warnich and Meyer 2013:14), this study led to the replacement of the traditional teacher-centred with more learner-centred approaches to teaching which were aimed at promoting independent creative thinking. However, it was not clear what the independent creative thinking entailed until Bloom's (1956) taxonomy identified six levels within the cognitive domain (information processing skills), each of which related to a different level of cognitive ability including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Warnich and Meyer 2013:14).

According to Lai (2013:8), the highest three levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation are frequently said to represent critical thinking. This taxonomy gave instructional objectives which advance in difficulty with the lower levels requiring less thinking skills while the higher levels require more thinking skills. This is illustrated in the table below for the different cognitive abilities suggesting this study focuses on the cognitive psychology approach to critical thinking skills.

Table 3.1 Summary of cognitive abilities according to Bloom (1956)'s taxonomy

Skill	Definition	Key verbs to be used in developing the skill	What is a learner able to do	Example of activities that can enhance that
Evaluation	Expressing personal value in defending or opposing a concept or idea	Justify, verify, appraise, assess, argue, support, determine, debate	Giving own opinions, critiquing, passing reasoned judgment	Self-evaluation of learner performance, report writing
Synthesis	Developing new information from	Create, invent,	Giving own feelings or	Dramatise, report writing,

	existing information	compose, construct, imagine, formulate	opinions, Role playing, Singing, poetry	modelling
Analysis	Distinguishing different parts of a whole and explaining each separately	Analyse, distinguish, examine, compare, contrast	Summarising, drafting a plan for an answer, conduct investigation, design questionnaire	Concept mapping, drafting a questionnaire, carrying out a survey
Application	Using learnt information in new ways	Classify, demonstrate, show, solve, illustrate, examine	Role playing, simulation, modelling	Presentation, student interviewing, dramatising
Comprehension	Explaining information or concepts in own words	Compare, describe, identify, interpret, outline	Paraphrasing, summarising	Drawing, peer teaching, retell in own words
Knowledge	Knowing isolated information	List, tell, locate, name, describe	Defining terms, listing names, make a timeline	Drawing or making charts, recitations,

In the context of this study, critical thinking skills are taken to mean higher order thinking skills which from the table are analysis, synthesis and evaluation, which are consciously teachable in the secondary school. These are the reasoning processes which culminate in judgment over a problem or an issue. This is in agreement with the view by Moore and Parker (2009:3) that critical thinking is the careful application of reason in the determination of whether a claim is true. Critical thinking skills are the tools of the critical thinker that are the manifestation of the process of thinking

just as the tools of a hunter are the spears, bows, arrows and axes. Critical thinking skills are mental processes which are difficult to observe, but whose measurement is judged by the outcome of the reasoning process.

In summary it can be said that there are many points of agreement of the three approaches to understanding critical thinking. These areas of agreement are analysing arguments, claims or evidence; making inferences using inductive or deductive reasoning; judging or evaluating; solving problems; asking and answering questions for clarification; defining terms; interpreting and explaining; reasoning verbally; predicting and seeing both sides of an issue (Lai 2013:9-10).

3.3.3. Critical thinking and forms of knowledge

Positivism and interpretivism in the field of social research are found on the opposite ends of the epistemological pendulum. Their divergence is demarcated by the way they view reality and consequently, knowledge. The two paradigms have given rise to two divergent epistemological positions which are the 'substantive knowledge' and the 'procedural knowledge' (Moyo and Modiba 2013:6). According to Takayama (2013:69), this had a bearing on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s proposal from the late 1990s onward to have curricular reforms that would promote new forms of knowledge which are the kind of the 'procedural knowledge' such as 'knowledge-why, knowledge-how and knowledge-who'. This posits a radical shift from the memorisation of facts to the level of knowledge creation through critical thought, couched in a corresponding radical shift in the learning environment.

According to Chitate (2005:4), 'substantive knowledge' or knowledge that/what is the content in a subject area, for example, the content in history as the study of the past. The encouragement is for the learners to master the content and reproduce it when required by the teacher. 'Knowledge what' calls for the mindless memorisation of facts. Learners have no space to construct their own meanings by critically

interrogating the content which is a weakness that critical pedagogy endeavours to address. This is a criticism which is levelled against the situation in Zimbabwe in the teaching and learning of secondary school history.

According to Chitate (2005:4), 'procedural knowledge' is the process of doing a discipline area such as history. Procedural knowledge is what is referred to by many authors on the subject as 'knowledge how' and Moyo and Modiba (2013:7) say that 'procedural knowledge' is aligned with the development of critical thinking skills. This is supported by Chitate (2005:6) and Warnich and Meyer (2013:14). who say that 'procedural knowledge' engenders critical thinking in learners as it replaces the traditional teacher-centred approach with the learner-centred approach which relies on the hands-on activities of the learner This is in tandem with the OECD's proposal for curriculum reform which focuses on 'knowledge how'.

What emerges from these two divergent dispositions on the forms of knowledge is that they require different approaches to their teaching and learning. This is where it becomes critical to suggest the teaching and learning approaches that would cater for the 'procedural knowledge'. The different approaches of teaching certainly fit in different learning environments and this study aims to construct an enabling learning environment for the enunciation of 'knowledge how' which is the development of critical thinking skills. The following discussion deals with the different approaches deemed pertinent in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching and learning.

3.3.4 Approaches in the development of critical thinking skills

Approach can be defined as the broader way of tackling a problem or issue. This makes it differ from a method in that method is the step-by-step procedure of how exactly the problem is resolved. For example, in the teaching and learning of history, a teacher might use the inquiry approach and within that approach, apply the Socratic or problem solving method. This section considers the approaches and the

methods thereof that can be implemented to develop critical thinking skills in the teaching and learning of history as deduced from the characteristics of critical thinking skills highlighted above.

3.3.4.1 Concept mapping approach

According to Albrecht and Sack (2000, in Duron, *et al* 2006:161), most teachers believe that developing critical thinking in their students is of primary importance, but few have an idea of what it is, how it should be taught, or how it should be assessed. These challenges have resulted in a framework called concept mapping (Atay and Karabacak 2012 and Maneval, Filburn, Deringer and Lum 2012).

According to Atay and Karabacak (2012:234), the theory of learning by Ausubel led to the development of the theory of concept mapping by Novak and Gown. They say it is a strategy that facilitates the attainment, organisation and the presentation of knowledge and helps a student to understand the placement of concepts in a hierarchy of concepts and to perceive the relationships between them. This is supported by King and Shell (2003, in Maneval, *et al* 2012:229) who say that concept mapping is an approach which encourages whole brain thinking and the elimination of compartmentalisation which implies that the student must have a mental grasp on the situation rather than relying on rote learning. Mental grasp on the situation refers to the information processing skills which are the critical thinking skills.

By definition, concept maps are graphical tools for organising and representing relationships between concepts indicated by a connecting line linking two or more concepts (Novak and Canas 2007:29). The connecting lines are an indication of the processes of thinking that the learner undergoes in trying to identify the relationships which are synonymous with critical thinking skills. They suggest that it is best to construct concept maps with reference to some particular question we seek to answer, which is called a focus question. An example of a focus question is: Why

was Zimbabwe colonised by the British in 1890? Damils, Braaf and Fourie (2013:1) say they are tools that are useful for learning and teaching for generating ideas, communicating complex ideas, assessing understanding and diagnosing misunderstanding. This is based on their contention that all knowledge is built from concepts and propositions (p.3).

From the above, it can be said that in order to construct concept maps, the learners have to be able to interpret the question and relevant concepts; classify broad concepts relevant to the question; summarise the key concepts, and create relationships. The verbs that have been used to show the steps the learner has to take in order to create a concept map to respond to the question indicate what level of critical thinking the question endeavours to foster. These are verbs which enhance the development of critical thinking skills at the levels of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. Below is a diagrammatic representation of a concept map in a history lesson on the reasons for the colonisation of Zimbabwe by the British in 1890 which illustrates interpreting, classifying, summarising and creating as what learners are able to do in constructing concept maps which enhances the development of critical thinking skills.
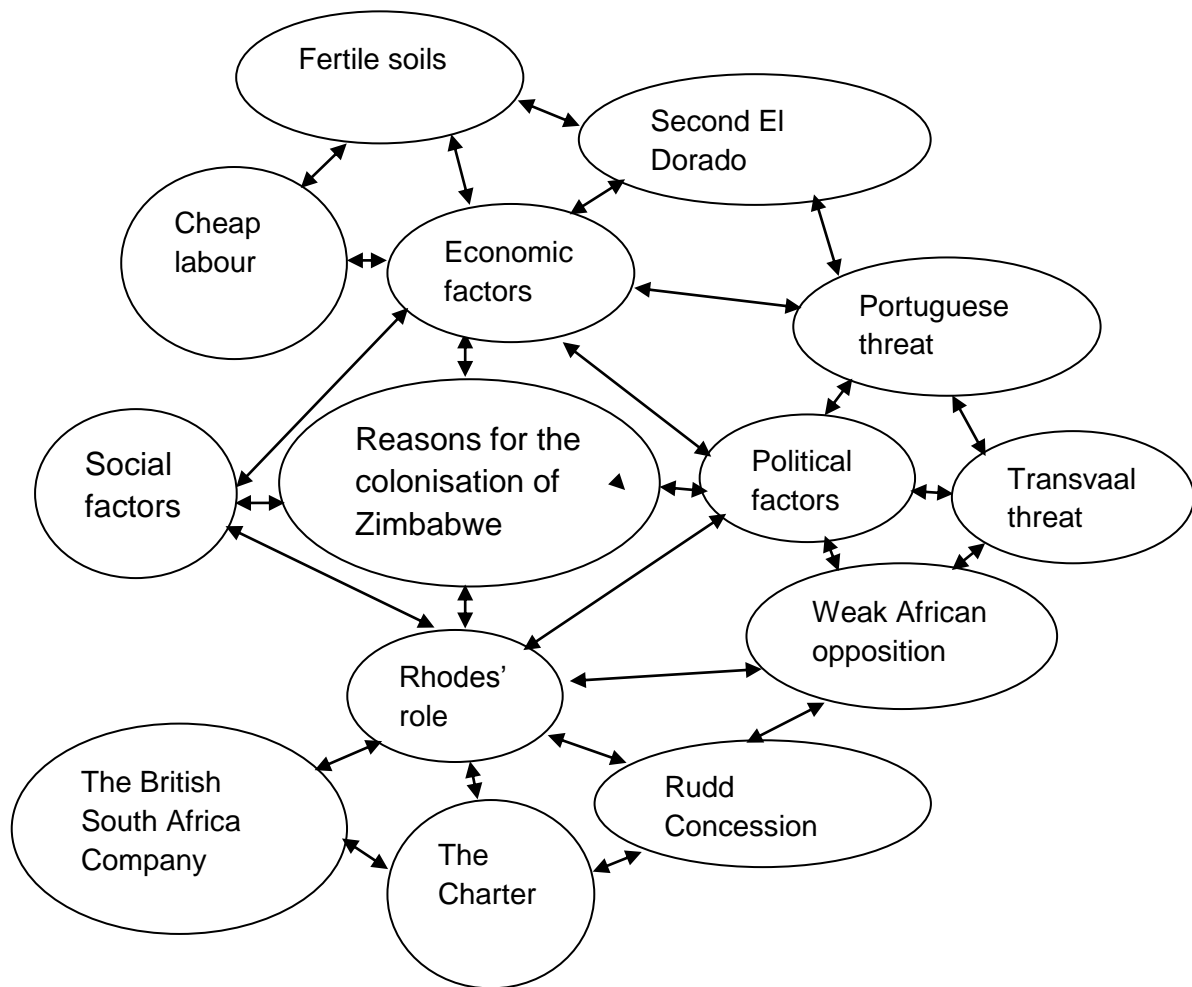
Figure 3.1 Representation of concept mapping in a history lesson.

In the diagram above, concept mapping helps to develop critical thinking skills as learners deduce the relationships in the concepts involved in the reasons for the colonisation of Zimbabwe by the British in 1890. These relationships are indicated by drawing the double-edged arrows to show that the concepts are interrelated. The realisation of the interrelationships is an indication of reasoning processes which are indicative of the development of critical thinking or the application of critical thinking skills.

Van Gelder (2011:44) adds voice to the benefits of concept maps as promoting critical thinking through argument structure by saying that a core part of critical thinking is handling arguments. A brief synopsis of the steps in constructing an argument may help to show how critical thinking develops through the skill of argumentation. An argument is developed by stating a proposition or claim, giving

evidence or reasons to support the claim, explaining the evidence and reaching a conclusion or judgment based on the evidence (Van Gelder 2011:44). In the development of an argument, it can be seen that the critical thinking skills highlighted in the previous section are involved.

According to Halpern (2000:27), argument analysis skills greatly help with the development of critical thinking skills. The use of arguments helps to nurture the skills of identifying conclusions, rating the quality of reasons and determining the overall strength of an argument. This is supported by Moore and Parker (2006, in Papastephanou and Angeli 2007:1319) who say that argumentation is a key process in critical thinking. Argument is constitutive of a body of evidence in relation to some proposition or conclusion which is expressed in some claim and the evidence is expressed in some reasons (Halpern 2000:27). This is pointing to a complex hierarchical structure which is the idea of a concept map. Argumentation therefore depicts a form of higher order thinking.

3.3.4.2 Collaborative/constructivist approaches

According to Spiro, Feltovitch and Coulson (2014:3), the constructivist theory gave rise to a collaborative or constructivist learning approach. Lai (2013:2) says the use of collaborative learning approaches in the development of critical thinking skills is rooted in the Piagetian and Vygotskyan traditions that emphasise the value of social interactions for promoting cognitive development which in this study is critical thinking skills. Piaget touted the instructional value of cognitive conflict for catalysing the cognitive growth, typically achieved by interacting with another person at a higher developmental stage (Lai 2013:2; see 2.3.2.4). According to Naroth (2010:24), Vygotsky identified the zone of proximal development as the distance between what an individual can accomplish alone and what he/she can accomplish with the help of a more capable other, that is, peer or adult (see 2.3.2.4). Both highlight the power of students' collaboration and interaction with one another in their cognitive improvement.

Karagiorgic and Symeou (2005:21) are of the view that collaborative approaches enhance the critical thinking skills of comparing multiple perspectives on an issue, evaluating arguments, explaining and justifying thinking and interpreting information. This is achieved through the collaborative or constructivist processes or activities of theory building, negotiation and articulation as suggested by the two authors. Both Piaget and Vygotsky highlight the potential for cognitive development when students interact with one another through think-pair-share, round-robin discussions, students' interviews and jig-sawing (Lai 2013:2). Learners get involved in collaborative learning by way of projects and they develop higher order thinking skills of analysis as they research a problem, develop a project plan and timeline, draw conclusions from research results and defend opinions using facts (Ferrara 2012:17 of 79).

Moreover, social interaction goes beyond the confines of the classroom and refers to parental and community involvement in learning through projects. Parents' involvement in learning is by engaging with the learners and serving as audience members for public exhibitions of student learning. The community can also form partnerships in collaborative learning by providing adult mentors, workshop organisers and content experts. This way, it can be said that the classroom goes out in the world and also the world comes to the classroom and the enabling learning environment envisaged in this study is poised to cater for both scenarios.

The study supports the involvement of other stakeholders in the development of critical thinking skills because critical thinking skills development happens even in the community outside the classroom. For example, in the law courts, a lot of critical thinking takes place in giving evidence, evaluating evidence and making judgments and even in the legislative assembly during law debates. Newspaper editors do a lot of critical thinking in editing news before publication so these out of classroom experts can be co-opted to assist with the development of critical thinking skills which is giving voice to the voiceless which is one of the tenets of critical pedagogy (see 2.3.1).

Moreover, it values the transformed role of the teacher who becomes a colleague, shepherd, collaborator, planner and forecaster of questions to be answered and the tasks to be implemented in order to achieve the intended results or products. Lai (2013:35) says the teacher becomes a learning co-ordinator rather than a content provider and less time is spent on lecturing and leading and more on planning, observing, listening, coaching and facilitating of learning. There is the transformation of the role of the teacher to that of a planner who interacts with the community for the interaction of the learners with the wider community in the search for critical thinking skills development. Through collaboration with peers, parents and the community, there can be the development of critical thinking skills by creating opportunities for disagreements and misconceptions to surface and to be corrected (Lai 2013:35).

It can be further argued that collaboration should also focus on the component of assessment of the learners' work. The learners should be provided opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment so that they can make judgments of their own learning and evaluate their own decision-making (Thomas 2011:31). This enables the learners to be aware of their own thinking and how they apply different thinking skills which in turn put them in a better position to control and improve their critical thinking (Thomas 2011:28). The teacher's role in assessment becomes that of a moderator of the learners' evaluations rather than an assessor or a judge.

3.3.4.3 Questioning method

The students' belief in their capabilities in developing critical thinking can be known if they are engaged in teaching and learning strategies which assist in the development of the capabilities. One strategy that history teachers can use to instil student capabilities in the development of critical thinking skills is the use of the open-ended questions in teaching and learning of history. This is because Thompson (2011:5) says that instruction that supports critical thinking uses good questions that encourage learners to interpret, analyse, synthesise, critique, reflect and evaluate information to solve problems and make decisions rather than merely repeat information (see 3.4.2.2). They further suggest that the critical thinking of

learners is best supported when teachers and learners use critical questioning techniques to engage the learners actively in the learning process (see 2.2.1 and 2.3.2). Examples of critical questions which history teachers and learners can use are: What do you think? Why do you think? Should it be viewed differently? What explains it? This is corroborated by Duron, *et al* (2006:162) who say the level of student thinking is proportional to the level of questions asked and the questions presented above challenge the learner to think critically which makes questioning a vital part of the teaching and learning process for the development of critical thinking skills.

According to Jonassen (1999:219), this method in the development of critical thinking skills begins with a question with uncertain or controversial answers. This is in agreement with the view by Lai (2013:36) that in assessments, test questions should require students to go beyond the available information in the task to draw inferences and make evaluations which are two important critical thinking skills as already highlighted in the previous section. It is the contention of the researcher that controversial questions will foster higher order thinking of the learners as the answers are not straight-forward. This is the argument by Fogo (2014:154) that the use of higher order questions in the teaching of history develops analytical thinking skills.

A number of questioning techniques and strategies can be used to enhance the development of critical thinking skills. Snyder and Snyder (2008:95) say that teachers should wait for the student responses rather than rewording the question or asking a different student for a response. Enough wait time should be allowed in order to allow students to process and formulate responses which enhance critical thinking skills. Probing questions can be used to scaffold the students into articulating their responses to higher order questions (Snyder and Snyder 2008:95).

According to Duron, *et al* (2006:162), questioning is a vital part of the teaching and learning process which helps to stimulate interaction between the teacher and

learner and challenge the learner to defend his or her position, that is, to think critically. They say that the level of student thinking is proportional to the level of questions asked.

The questioning method places the learners in real-life situations and helps them to construct their own knowledge. It is the role of the teacher to facilitate the choice of questions which enable the learners to interact with the environment and by themselves in search of possible answers. The answers to such questions may generate multiple realities which is the contention by critical theorists, critical pedagogies and social constructivists that knowledge is not objective, but rather subjective. Wiersma (2008:116) says questions that require deeper thinking by the students are an essential part of constructivism.

The use of questioning which is referred to as the Socratic Method is one of the methods that the Zimbabwe History Syllabus 2167(2013:6) cherishes in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The Socratic Method is seen as engaging the learner to endeavor to perfect thinking in responding to open-ended questions thereby enhancing critical thinking skills.

3.3.4.4 Case analysis

Jonassen (1999:219) says case analysis can be used to foster the development of critical thinking skills. By this method, learners acquire knowledge and requisite thinking skills by interrogating cases and preparing case summaries. It could be a single case or multiple cases linked together. Case-based learning is anchored in authentic contexts and learners must manage complexity and think like practitioners (Williams, 1992 in Jonassen 1999:219).

According to Spiro, *et al* (2014:3) and Aamodt and Plaza (1994:43) case-based learning results in richer and more meaningful learning experiences because there is

social negotiation of knowledge, a process by which learners form and test their constructs in a dialogue with other individuals. They say case-based reasoning requires the identification of the current problem situation, finding a past case similar to the new one, using that case to suggest a solution to the current problem, evaluating the proposed solution and updating the system by learning from this experience. In the case of secondary school history, learners could study the case of the land reform in Zimbabwe. Learners have to retrieve similar cases of land reform in Zimbabwe in the past or research for similar cases of land reform from other countries. The evidence from the retrieved cases has to be analysed and that helps to propose solutions to the problem of land reform in Zimbabwe. The proposed solutions have to be evaluated for their strengths and weaknesses. That way, case analysis helps in developing the critical thinking skills of inference, analysis and evaluation.

To give another example, in a history lesson, learners can be dealing with the case of a mock-trial of a political activist charged with treason and in that case, the learners have to think like lawyers. That may greatly help to develop critical thinking skills of the learners because they have to manage a complex case which demands the application of critical thinking skills like formulating the charge (claim), interpreting the law, presenting evidence for and against, evaluating the evidence and making a judgment. This suggests that in the envisaged enabling learning environment, primary sources of past cases have to be used in order to assist in the development of critical thinking skills. Moreover, mock-trials can be used to foster critical thinking skills and law experts or visits to courts may be required to assist with the development of critical thinking skills.

3.3.4.5 Problem solving method

According to McMahon (2012:2 of 9), the process of problem solving helps to develop critical thinking skills. This is in so far as a problem identified has to be analysed by way of collecting and analysing data related to the problem in order to establish the root cause of the problem. McMahon (2012:2 of 9) says once the

solution to a problem has been developed and implemented, its results in solving the problem have to be evaluated by way of gathering data on the solution and analysing the data on the findings. The processes of evaluation or judgment, analysis and synthesis speak of critical thinking skills that are developed through problem solving.

Many activities can be employed by teachers in order to enhance critical thinking skills. Thompson (2011:5) is of the view that activities like role playing, simulations, inquiry, devising plans for finding solutions, individual or collaborative research, writing plays or scripts and field trips can greatly enhance the critical thinking skills of the learners. This is possible because the learners will be engaged in critical steps of planning, gathering of relevant data, debating alternatives by posing searching questions and questioning and challenging assertions they encounter in the research process (Thompson 2011:1) in order to solve a problem. It means that the learners will have to locate, analyse, interpret and evaluate the data that would have emerged from the process.

Jonassen (1999:219) says problem-based learning in the development of critical thinking skills requires learners to self-direct their learning while solving numerous problems across the curriculum. He says the problem(s) should not be overly circumscribed, but rather ill-defined or ill-structured so that some aspects of the problem(s) are emergent and definable by the learners. However, Jonassen (1999:219) cautions that there is need to provide interesting, relevant and engaging problems to solve since the key to meaningful learning is ownership of the problem or learning goal by the learners.

Jonassen (1997 in Jonassen 1999:219) says that ill-structured problems possess multiple solutions, solution paths, or no solution at all; possess multiple criteria for evaluating solutions and require learners to make judgments about the problem and to defend their judgments by expressing personal opinions or beliefs. These characteristics of ill-structured problems render them effective tools in fostering

higher order thinking skills if used in the learning of secondary school history. According to Jonassen (1999:223), when engaging learners in problem-solving, it is necessary to require that learners articulate their solutions to problems and then to develop a coherent argument to support that solution. The articulation of solutions to the problem is based on the gathering of, and evaluation of, information surrounding the problem and to develop a coherent argument involves interpretation or inference, analysis, synthesis and judgment of the information.

One key issue in the development of critical thinking skills is assessment procedure. In light of problem solving in the development of critical thinking skills, Lai (2013:41) says students can be presented with a task and a variety of written materials on the topic which typically represents a real-world problem. Students can then be asked to make judgments and formulate solutions which should be assessed on the basis of the quality of their arguments not the correctness of the answer. Moreover, Lai (2013:41) says assessment for the development of critical thinking skills can be done by providing stimulus material which embeds contradictions and inconsistencies on a problem and these are likely to activate critical thinking in trying to reconcile the contradictions and inconsistencies.

3.3.4.6 The 'doing history' approach

A survey of literature on the teaching and learning of critical thinking skills in history shows that it cannot be possible using the traditional approach of teacher-and-chalk. There is evidence to suggest that innovative methods have to be employed in order to foster critical thinking skills in the teaching of secondary school history. There is agreement that the 'doing history' approach is the way to go if this goal is to be achieved (Legkoathi 2010; Moreeng and Du Toit 2012; Aktekin 2013). The 'doing history' approach hinges on the procedure of doing history rather than the mastery of historical content and it is the procedure which deals with the critical thinking skills. In order to be involved with the procedure of doing history, it means that there should be a paradigm shift in the classroom discourse as well as the resources which are used in the teaching and learning of history in secondary schools. In the case of

paradigm shift in terms of resources, researcher specifically means that the history textbook should not be the only source, but one of the many sources to be used in the teaching and learning of history. This is a call for the creation of an enabling learning environment for the fostering of critical thinking skills which is the focus of this study.

According to Moreeng and Du Toit (2012:40), the 'doing history' approach makes use of various primary sources in constructing knowledge that can be communicated to the learners and the teachers. These sources could be print, objects, and electronic sources. Print sources can be derived from the textbooks, newspapers and magazines. The electronic sources could be in form of videos, films, CD-ROMS and internet. Aktekin (2013:469) says the common approach in history lessons in many European schools today is for students to examine a number of sources on a particular historical topic. The exercises with which learners will be involved will focus on identifying bias, opinions and value judgements, corroborating evidence and comparing different versions of the same events and issues. This is what is referred to as active learning because the learners have the opportunity to engage with primary sources which helps them to explain why accounts in secondary sources differ on the same historical event.

This is supported by Aktekin (2013:471) who say critical thinking activities require teachers to incorporate a number of primary and secondary sources. These primary sources enable the learners to ask questions about the past and in asking questions about the past, they acquire critical thinking skills (Fogo 2014:178) like inquiry, interpretation and evaluation. Wiersma (2008:116) says questions which require deeper thinking by the students are an essential part of constructivism. It is the contention by Reisman (2012, in Fogo 2014:155) that the use of primary sources align with the gaining of analytical thinking skills by the learners. This is corroborated by Aktekin (2013:471) who says current textbooks have sidebars that focus on critical thinking requiring the use of modes of reasoning as well as excerpts of primary and secondary sources. These characteristics of the modern approach to

history teaching and learning in secondary schools is what is missing in the Zimbabwean context and this confirms the need for developing a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills through the enactment of the secondary school history curriculum.

It can be concluded that the approaches that can be used to enhance critical thinking skills that have emerged from this literature study all centre around the existence of a problem. This goes to show that all learning is problem based and in order to unpack the problems, there is need to use approaches that enhance critical thinking skills which are the known panacea to problems. These approaches have their associated learner activities and these learner activities promote the development of particular critical thinking skills when implemented properly in history teaching.

3.3.5 Learning environment

The teaching and learning approaches useful in the development of critical thinking skills that have been discussed so far are effective when they obtain in a teaching and learning environment that allows for their implementation. For a learning environment to enable the implementation of approaches necessary for critical thinking skills development, it has to have certain conditions of learning embedded in it.

This section defines learning environment, enabling learning environment and discusses the conditions of enabling learning environment that are conducive to the utilisation of the different approaches which are deemed suitable for the development of critical thinking skills. It has to be borne in mind that these characteristics of the learning environments are greatly influenced by the critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism as theoretical and conceptual frameworks respectively in undertaking this study.

UNESCO (2012:12) defines the learning environment as the complete physical, social and pedagogical context in which learning is intended to occur and OECD (2009:103) says Greemers and Rezigt (1996) define the classroom environment as the setting (physical, social and emotional) in which student learning takes place.

Warger and Dobbin (2009:3 of 14) say learning environment encompasses learning resources and technology, means of teaching, modes of learning, connections to societal and global contexts and human behavioural and cultural dimensions, including the vital role of emotion in learning. They view learning environment as a composite of human practices (interactions and activities), and material systems, much as ecology is the combination of living things and the physical environment.

From the above definitions of learning environment, it can be deduced that learning environment is the 'midwife' that facilitates the delivery of the outcome which is the intended learning by the learner. Learning environment must be purposefully planned by the teacher in order to provide a specific learning environment for specific intended learning. The history teacher must provide a learning environment that enables the achievement of the learning outcomes. In this study, the history teacher must create an enabling learning environment which culminates in the development of critical thinking skills.

3.3.6 Conceptualisaton of enabling learning environment

Enabling can be viewed as the ability to cause something to happen or to be produced. Ability to cause speaks of the existence of conditions which are conducive to cause the occurrence. The lack of suitable conditions is a stumbling block to the achievement of the intended objectives. Any learning environment must of necessity have the conditions to enable the intended learning to take place otherwise, the intended learning does not occur. In view of this study, the intended learning outcomes are the critical thinking skills which require a specific teaching and learning environment to be available for their development. These conditions must be physical, social, pedagogical, psychological, assessment and communitarian. These

conditions have to be infused into the learning environment components in order to create an enabling learning environment which this study envisages as shown in section 3.4.6.1.

Enabling learning environment is thus defined as the conditions suitable for learning to take place (OECD 2012:12). These are learning conditions, that is, the tone, ambience or atmosphere created by a teacher through the relationships developed within and without (*sic)* the classroom and the way in which interaction is delivered (pedagogy) (Aldridge, Fraser and Ntuli 2009:148). Kyriacou (1991 in Moreeng 2009:97) refer to the conditions of learning that foster learning in being purposeful, task-oriented, relaxed, warm, having a sense of order and supportive.

Purposeful means that there must be the manifest intention to enable the learners to learn. Task-oriented means that there must be the domination of learner activities rather than teacher activities. Relaxed means that the learners must feel at home in the learning space. Warm means that the physical/emotional temperature must be of the right degree to enable learners to be active during learning. A sense of order means that there must be clear rules which enable the smooth running of the learning processes. Supportive means that the learners must be tolerated and motivated in their learning by their peers as well as the teacher.

OECD (2012:12) says these conditions influence learning processes and include health and safety issues like availability of toilets and clinics in the school and the absence of bullying and fighting respectively. These are conditions which have a psychological effect on the learner and may affect the process of learning when the learner is worried about health and safety. It can be inferred that the availability of opportunities for interactions and collaboration by learners is a key ingredient in developing enabling learning environment (Mogashoa 2014:52) and these conditions include time at task, activities by learners, space, furniture and access to resources (Yilmaz 2008:169).

3.3.7 The transformative-interactive framework for constructing an enabling learning environment

A literature study of critical theory, critical pedagogy, constructivism, curriculum change and transformation, approaches to critical thinking skills development and learning environments enabled the derivation of the transformative-interactive framework in the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Key components that are considered under the transformative-interactive framework are a participatory-oriented learning environment; process-oriented learning environment; context-oriented learning environment and continuous improvement-oriented learning environment (the 2P-2C framework).

3.3.7.1 The participatory-oriented learning environment

According to Warnich and Meyer (2013:14), the participatory approach to learning emerged over two thousand years ago with Plato and in the eighteenth century by Rousseau who emphasized self-activity and discovery. This implies that the participatory approach transforms the learning process of instruction to learning. The enabling learning environment of this nature borrows from critical pedagogy as applied by Freire where the peasants of Brazil actively participated in learning to transform their own life conditions (see 2.3.1). The enabling learning environment envisaged in this study transforms the history learners in Zimbabwe's secondary schools into active participants in learning for the development of critical thinking skills.

The participatory-oriented learning environment focuses on the action by the student as an enabling learning environment emphasises the activities by the learners not the teacher. This is the view by Dillion (2009:346) who says it is by the learner action or active involvement of the learner that the intended development of critical thinking skills by the learner can be achieved (see 2.3.1; 2.3.2; 2.3.3 and 2.4.6.2). Enabling learning environment considers the space for learning and so, the physical learning

spaces should allow for small and large group discussion (Wiersma 2008:111), debates and questioning, which are crucial participatory techniques for the development of critical thinking skills (see 3.4.2.2). Learner action in learning can be by way of projects where learners are active, debate ideas and share learning experiences in the projects which fosters critical thinking as enabling learning environment considers task orientation in learning. This is in agreement with the view by Fullan, Luke and West (2012:2) that the physical learning environment should cultivate discovery and reflection.

Tiwari, Chan, Sullivan, Diaon and Tang (1999:76) say learner action can be through engagement in meaningful discussion and negotiation of meaning (see 2.4.6.3). This is supported by Cross (2009:906) who says the social space aspect of the learning environment considers activities like discussion and negotiation of meaning. Cross (2009:906) says discussion is a two-way path with one speaker leading the discussion and the other responding to the lead speaker after processing the information. This implies that discussion and negotiation speaks to the engagement of the learners which is a social activity. The social activity involves the sharing of ideas and engaging with ideas which helps in the development of critical thinking as enabling learning environment requires relational interactions among learners. Since learners are primarily social beings, their social environment is critical in determining their behaviour. This means that if there is purposefulness in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching and learning, this social aspect of the learning environment must be cultivated in the physical spaces where learning takes place. It is the contention by Fullan, *et al.* (2012:1) that the social environment is the 'third teacher' that can either enhance or detract from learning, especially the development of critical thinking skills.

An enabling learning environment is supportive and this is captured in the envisaged framework when Donovan and Bransford (2005:12) say the participatory-oriented approach values the learner's experience in the form of ideas, knowledge, skills and attitudes which provide the foundation on which new learning begins as suggested

by social constructivism (see 2.4.6.4). This new learning emanating from experience is mediated by the nature of the learning tasks (Human-Vogel and Bouwer 2005:229) which according to Smith (2013:260) influence the nature of the learning environment. The learning tasks are provided by the teacher whose role is transformed in due course from provider of knowledge to provider of learning tasks from which the learner can learn (see 3.4.2).

In the context of this study, learning tasks are provided so that learners can develop critical thinking skills. This means that learning tasks are centred on the learners' activities rather than on the teachers' activities which is corroborated by Fraser (2012:67) who say ways of teaching and learning should emphasise student responsibility and activity in learning rather than content or what the teachers do. This implies that the physical learning spaces like classrooms, science laboratories, libraries, museums, archives, natural environment and online platforms (Fraser 2012:67) should be used for learner tasks or activities not teacher activities (Smith 2013:260). In terms of learner activities, there should be greater emphasis on problem solving, debates, students' interviews, Olympiads, historical sites visit, television and radio talk shows. The activities that teachers organise for students have to include the use of physical resources like books, primary sources, newspapers, computers, audio tapes, videos, Internet and so on, in order to make the activities successful as an enabling learning environment requires learners to have access to resources. These physical material resources would help to transform the sources of information from mere textbooks which usually represent the interpretation of the author. This is a transformative role espoused by critical pedagogy (see 2.3.3) which the history teacher in Zimbabwe can play in the learning of history which may enhance the development of critical thinking skills.

The Centre for Instructional Development and Research (2008:3 of 7) gives several ways which can be used to ensure there is a participatory-oriented approach in teaching and learning. These ways constitute the rules that are critical in the construction of an enabling learning environment. These ways are as follows:

- The teacher has to acknowledge all contributions even if they are not what the teacher was looking for;

- The teacher should remind students that questions are welcome and that a person who is asking a question is doing a favour for all the other students who are silently wondering the same thing;

- The teacher should give students time to formulate questions and responses;

- The teacher should look for opportunities to interact with individual students in addition to the interactions with the groups;

- The teacher should consider calling students by name provided that students have had the chance to prepare in order to avoid embarrassing students;

- The teacher should provide feedback on the levels of participation by individual students in order to motivate them;

- The teacher should seek feedback from students on their perceptions about the opportunities for participation in class;

- The teacher should follow through with the students if they are given tasks to do in groups or pair work in order to ensure that there is participation.

History teachers can ensure that there is a participatory-oriented learning environment conducive for the development of critical thinking skills by making use of the suggestions offered above. From the above suggestions, it can be said that a participatory-oriented learning environment depends on the expectations that history teachers set for classroom behaviours as an enabling learning environment is about the tone and atmosphere created by the teacher. The teaching strategies that they employ are also important as enabling learning environment considers task orientation, support, time at task, learner activities, access to resources and arrangement of working space and furniture. The ways student interactions are structured during the lessons also matter as an enabling learning environment depends on order by way of rules in the learning space and collaboration in learning.

3.3.7.2 The process-oriented learning environment

The process-oriented learning environment as a component of the enabling learning environment focuses on how students learn. Fullan, *et al* (2012:2) say the process of learning should empower learners through collaboration as an enabling learning environment requires the application of collaborative approaches in how learners learn. This collaboration is manifested in the social interactions between learner-learner, teacher-learner and community-learner as suggested by critical pedagogy and social constructivism (see 2.3.2 and 2.4.6.3 respectively). This enables the learners to explore new ideas within a community of learners (see 2.3.3) as one of the principles of critical pedagogy which improves critical thinking skills. This is because enabling learning environment requires support from other members involved in a similar endeavor. Collins, Brown and Newman (1987:2 of 6) say exploration involves giving students room to problem solve on their own and teaching exploration strategies. According to Tay (2007:1 of 2), the exploration of new ideas is stifled if teachers give content to learners, but it is enhanced if they focus on the process of learning critical thinking skills.

It is the contention by Fullan, *et al.* (2012:2) that if teachers want to foster the process of exploration which is a process for the development of rigorous thought (critical thinking), the physical aspects of the learning environment should be characterised by;

- A large gathering space for whole group work and class discussion;
- Flexible and reconfigurable space for small group collaborative work and inquiry (see 2.4.6.3);
- Desks and tables configured to facilitate discussion by allowing especially contact with peers and teacher and enough space for students to write collaboratively (see 2.3.1 and 2.4.6.3);
- Active areas for inquiry, investigation and wonder and quiet areas for thinking and exploring technology (see 3.2.5);
- Instructional materials organised in such a way as to provide easy selection and access for all students.

These aspects are pointers to the features of an enabling learning environment which are space availability, furniture provision and access to resources for use in learning. By focusing on the process of learning, the teachers enable the learners to reflect on their learning.

An enabling learning environment that is process-oriented has to give priority to the social aspect of time. This is supported by Meyer, Haywood, Sachidev and Faraday (2008:22) who say time is a crucial aspect in the learning environment and the OECD (2009:103) which says an additional measure of the classroom environment is an index for "time on task". Time is a central aspect of instructional effectiveness of a task because it provides students with a maximum opportunity to learn. The implication is that tasks which require lower level thinking should be given less time than those which require higher order thinking (see 3.4.2.2). Process-oriented learning is bound on the time factor because processes take time to complete unlike events of learning. History teachers should not focus on syllabus coverage, but on the development of critical thinking skills as envisaged in the syllabus.

In addition, the process of learning which can foster the development of critical thinking takes the approach of articulation (Collins *et al* 1987:2 of 6). Articulation is defined as verbalising or demonstrating the thinking process in order to expose and clarify it by thinking aloud. Jonassen (1999:219) says learners should articulate their solutions to problems and then develop a coherent argument to support that solution. Developing a coherent argument involves interpretation, inference, analysis, synthesis and judgment which are critical thinking skills. Articulation can take a co-operative process of articulating knowledge whereby one student interviews another regarding their approach to solving a problem and both interviewee and interviewer are put in critical roles which require critical thinking.

Since an enabling learning environment has purposefulness and intentionality as key ingredients, Fullan *et al.* (2012:3) are of the view that collaborative processes in the

process-oriented learning environment encourage dialogue as one of the basic tenets of critical pedagogy (see 2.3.2) and social constructivism (see 2.4.6.3). Dialogue constitutes a major social aspect of enabling learning environment (Cross 2009:960) and learners should be allowed to dialogue in the process of developing critical thinking skills. This is why Lai (2013:2) argues that dialogue enables the shift to focusing on processes and strategies which are dialogic in finding solutions to problems such as pair-work, roundtable discussions, students' interviews, gallery walks and jig-sawing which help to develop critical thinking skills (see table 3.1). These strategies and processes are in tandem with the tenet of an enabling learning environment to focus on learner activities. Developing critical thinking skills is possible in dialogue because incorrect answers are questioned and misconceptions clarified. Fullan, *et al.* (2012:5) support this by saying that in dialogue, weight is given to the student voice since an enabling learning environment should have an atmosphere which values student voices (see 2.3.1). Dialogic engagement allows learners to justify and synthesise their ideas.

In dialogue, there is need to respond to other learners' ideas, sometimes in agreement, but sometimes in disagreement. In the agreements and disagreements, there is the development of critical thinking as misconceptions surface and are clarified (Lai 2013:35). This agreement and disagreement discourse is constitutive of argumentation which is a key process in learning for the development of critical thinking skills (Parker, 2006 in Papastephanou and Angeli 2007:1319). This is vindicated by Van Gelder (2011:44) who says that a core part of critical thinking is handling arguments. As a way of articulation of arguments, history teachers can ask the students to explain their reasons for the claims they make and giving evidence to support their claims in the arguments.

Smith (2013:160) says that the affective attitudes are also key ingredients of interaction in the learning process. These affective attitudes speak to the psychological aspects of the learning environment. According to Human-Vogel and Bouwer (2005:229), the psychological aspects that are crucial in a learning environment are purposefulness (task orientation) and a relaxed, warm, supportive

atmosphere which are also critical in the participatory oriented learning environment as they encourage learner participation. Purposefulness refers to the use of tasks and activities that inspire the learners to learn and in the context of this study, developing critical thinking skills. Smith (2013:260) says a relaxed, warm and supportive atmosphere in a learning space as in the participatory oriented learning environment allows learners to take the initiative in sharing ideas and this is critical in the development of critical thinking skills. This relaxed, warm and supportive atmosphere is possible when teachers develop norms for the learning spaces conducive for the safety and security of the learners just like with the participatory oriented learning environment. Safety and security thus act as ingredients for the provision of quality education like developing critical thinking skills. For example, learners are not allowed to laugh at those learners who try and then make mistakes since their mistakes should be taken as opportunities to learn thereby developing their critical thinking abilities. It means that the learning spaces' norms should encourage a tolerance of learners for who they are and their opinions should be accepted (see 2.4.6.3).

Fullan *et al. (2012*:5) say in such an environment, the focus is also on building self-efficacy. Self-efficacy (Droit 2015:47) refers to students' beliefs in their capabilities to regulate their own learning and this could determine students' motivation and academic achievement and, therefore, is significant in the learning process. In the context of this study, history teachers need to develop the self-efficacy of the learners in developing critical thinking skills.

3.3.7.3 The context-oriented learning environment

Hernandez-Ramos and De la Paz (2009:152) say the constructivist theory gave rise to the idea of context dependent learning (see 2.4.6.3). This context dependent learning is anchored in authentic activities such as the question based technique (Duron, *et al. 2006*), the project based technique (Hernandez-Ramos and De la Paz 2009) and problem solving technique (Ferrara 2012:91) which ties in well with the

requirement of an enabling learning environment that there should be focus on the activities by the learners.

Learning is therefore greatly influenced by the context in which it takes place and this is what Dennen (2004:814) refers to as the concept of situated-ness (see section 2.4.6.4). Dennen (2004:814) says that core to developing cognitive skills is the concept of situated-ness and situated learning occurs in an authentic setting founded on the belief that engagement which speaks of task orientation in an enabling learning environment (see 2.4.1) fosters transferrable learning much more than the traditional dissemination methods of learning. This is supported by Oriol, Tumulty and Snyder (2010:2 of 8) who say learning is situated in the actual subculture in which the student is a member, making it easy for the student to transfer knowledge to the real world.

The approaches and strategies of teaching and learning should approximate the real world settings. In the real world settings, people learn from each other which is in tandem with the enabling learning environment that is a prerequisite of relationship creation in learning. In situated learning, the students should be allowed to learn from each other through observation and imitation as suggested by Collins, *et al* (1987:1 of 6). If students are to learn from each other through observation and imitation, it means that students have to practise new ways of thinking or cognitive skills as practice makes perfect as a way of tapping into the enabling learning environment tenet of intentionality in developing critical thinking skills. Cognitive skills should be practised in the real world setting in line with the concept of situated-ness.

A number of context-oriented approaches can be used to develop the critical thinking skills of history learners. Duron, *et al,* (2006:162) are of the view that learners can develop their mental faculties when teachers adopt the question-based approach in teaching and learning. Miller (2012:1 of 10) says through the project-based approach, students are involved in in-depth inquiry requiring investigation,

questioning, interpreting and creating new knowledge which leads to repeated moments of critical thinking. The project-based approach enables teachers to foster critical thinking because the teacher can define the skills for use in the project and model them for the students and giving the students the practice they need to develop critical thinking skills.

Fullan, *et al.* (2012:5) say when students are given opportunities to solve real-world problems that are important and relevant to them as enabling learning environment means that there is purposefulness in whatever the learners are exposed to. The learners should see the significance of the real world to their school learning environment (see 2.4.6.3). This is a challenge for teachers to transform their role from that of content provider to a learning co-ordinator and less time is spent on lecturing and leading and more on planning, observing, listening and facilitating learning in the teaching and learning of history (see 2.4.1). Both the teacher and students get involved in interaction with the parents and the community as an enabling learning environment encourages the building of these synergies between learners and the community (see 2.4.6.2) in search of student learning which is indicative of the collaborative aspect of the enabling learning environment.

Parents and the community at large can provide adult mentors, workshop organisers and content experts. The teachers and learners can also become members of the virtual communities and history teachers should take the lead in subscribing to the virtual communities which may motivate their learners to do so too. In that case, the classroom goes out into the world and the world comes to the classroom. Accordingly, relevant real-world context (see 2.4.6.2) enables the learners to be intellectually engaged as an enabling learning environment promotes learner activities and tasks which develop their higher order thinking skills and habits of mind which lead to deep learning (see 2.2.3). In that respect, the teacher becomes a colleague and shepherd to the learners rather than a repository of knowledge (see 3.2.5).

3.3.7.4 Continuous improvement-oriented learning environment

Continuous improvement is the driving theme that runs in all organisations and especially in schools (see 3.2.2; 3.2.3 and 3.2.4). Continuous improvement is also an organising concept in the teaching and learning of the subject history and especially with reference to this study, the continuous improvement in the development of critical thinking skills (see 2.3.3 and 2.4.6.2). According to Moreeng (2009:113), assessment should be used as a teaching and learning opportunity to improve learning rather than solely to evaluate learners which augurs well with an enabling learning environment requirement of purposefulness and intentionality in teaching and learning. Assessment should be used to gather information for feedback to the learners on the learners' progress (Young 2013:106) and what needs to be done. This is a sign of interaction between the teacher and learners or peer-to-peer interaction as suggested in social constructivism (see 2.4.6.3). Interaction could be teacher-learner, learner-learner, learner-community and learner-physical environment which are also critical in the participatory and process-oriented learning environments as already highlighted in previous sections.

There is a need to move away from the objectives model of assessment which uses summative assessment which is applicable in Zimbabwe to what Mapetere, Makaye and Muguti (2012:102) in concurrence with Moreeng (2009:113) call a learner-friendly assessment which provides learners with opportunities to revise and improve their thinking (see 3.2.4). Assessment should rather be continuous and formative as a way of providing feedback to the learners at the opportune time. Formative assessment and feedback engenders critical thinking and so, learners should be provided opportunities for self-assessment, peer assessment and teacher assessment. For example, peer assessment can be done if students produce concept maps (see 3.4.4.1) in solving a problem and such assessment can help the learners to reflect on their thinking which is part of a strategy to develop critical thinking (King and Shell in Maneval, *et al* 2012: 229). Continuous improvement operates on the basis of continuous feedback which can be given by learners to other learners and by the teacher to the learners thereby fostering relationships and interactions which are key features in an enabling learning environment.

According to Dennen (2004:814), feedback should allow the learner the opportunity for reflection where the learner assesses and analyses his or her own performance in solving a problem in a discipline such as history. Reflection is an instrumental component of continuous improvement through which learners are enabled to correct flaws in thinking (Thomas 2011:31). In order to assist the learner with reflection, Snyder and Snyder (2008:94) say that questions can be used to assist the learner with a framework for thinking about how they think about solving a problem, that is, meta-cognition which is necessary for the development of critical thinking skills. Identifying the flaws in thinking and correcting them is characteristic of critical thinking. History teachers can apply reflection as part of feedback so that learners discover new ways of thinking about the problem.

Moreover, learners need to be exposed to different higher order instruction words that are used in history such as "analyse", "evaluate", "synthesise", "compare", "extract", "extrapolate", "contrast", "infer", and so on (Moreeng 2009:74) as an enabling learning environment puts heavy emphasis on intentional and purposeful teaching. The pedagogical expertise of a history teacher is called for in this regard since the tools of the job that the teacher brings to the learning space will determine the use of lower order or higher order instruction words. For the purposes of a continuous improvement-oriented learning environment, resources that could be included are primary and secondary sources of history (see 3.2.3; 3.2.5) as an enabling learning environment also calls for the provision of resources as in the participatory-oriented learning environment. The thinking behind the provision of resources is that learners can use them to articulate their analytical, interpretive and evaluative skills. Journaling can also be used in order to enable the learners to record their self-assessment in the development of critical thinking (History Syllabus 2167 2013:5). If the teacher is highly resourceful in the tools of the job which are put at the disposal of the learners for exploration then, the use of higher order instruction words is possible and development of critical thinking skills is enabled. This calls for the history teacher to be a researcher-planner of teaching and learning resources

(tools), tasks and activities for the learners in order to develop critical thinking skills (see 3.2.5).

In addition, Ku (2009:75) says teachers should use writing exercises that are designed for the continuous improvement so that students self-construct answers which help them to develop critical thinking. Moreover, the assignments should be tailor-made to facilitate the practice of strategic use of critical thinking skills so that feedback can be tailored toward scaffolding critical thinking skills in the learner. This is corroborated by Lai (2013:41) who says assessment should focus on the use of stimulus source materials which embeds contradictions and inconsistencies on a problem and these are likely to stimulate critical thinking in trying to reconcile the contradictions and inconsistencies. This is what social constructivism refers to as the promotion of multiple perspectives (see 2.4.6.3) in the construction of knowledge which fosters the development of critical thinking skills.

From the explanation of the envisaged theoretical transformative-interactive framework above, it can be said that there are great demands that are placed on the history teacher. The teacher has to spend more time on planning for the resources to use and the critical skills to be achieved through the use of the resources (see 2.3.3; 2.4.1; 3.2.3; 3.4.2). The teacher also has to plan the approach and the corroborative methods, strategies and techniques to use to achieve the critical thinking skills, for example, use of questions or project method. The teacher is therefore, expected to be a 'midwife' in the process of learning for the development of critical thinking skills by directing instead of doing.

The other great demand that is placed on the teacher is that of increased interaction with the learners to facilitate their learning (see 2.3.1; 2.3.3; 2.4.1; 2.4.6.2; 2.4.6.3; 3.2.3; 3.4.2) and especially the development of critical thinking skills. Some of the approaches (see 3.4.4) to develop critical thinking skills also demand that the

teacher interacts more with the stakeholders, such as parents in order to get support, for example, in terms of project-based study.

The teacher is also called upon to be very resourceful in order to provide projects (see 3.4.4.2), problems (see 3.4.4.3.3) and questions (see 3.4.4.3.1) for the learners to work on in order to develop critical thinking. The resources that the teacher has to avail also include ICT resources which may not be accessible to the learners (see 3.4.2). The teacher has to have the knowledge of how to use the ICTs in teaching and learning otherwise facilitating their use becomes a nightmare for the teacher. Both primary and secondary sources (see 3.2.5) have to be availed to the learners so that they develop critical thinking skills by constructing their own meanings.

In terms of assessment, the teacher has to focus on continuous assessment which helps to measure the development of critical thinking skills. This kind of assessment enables the teacher to give feedback to the learners in order to help them improve their critical thought processes (see 2.3.2 and 2.4.6.2). Critical theory is significant on assessment in so far as it may help to tease the assessment procedures in use in the history curriculum (see 2.2.2). The purpose of assessment in the critical sense should be aimed at revising objectives-based assessment where learners are compared to an assessment approach where learners benefit from feedback that follows assessment. That being the case, there should be an effort to create an enabling learning environment that pays greater attention to the critical power of assessment in the development of critical thinking skills. The diagrammatic representation of the transformative-interactive framework is shown below.
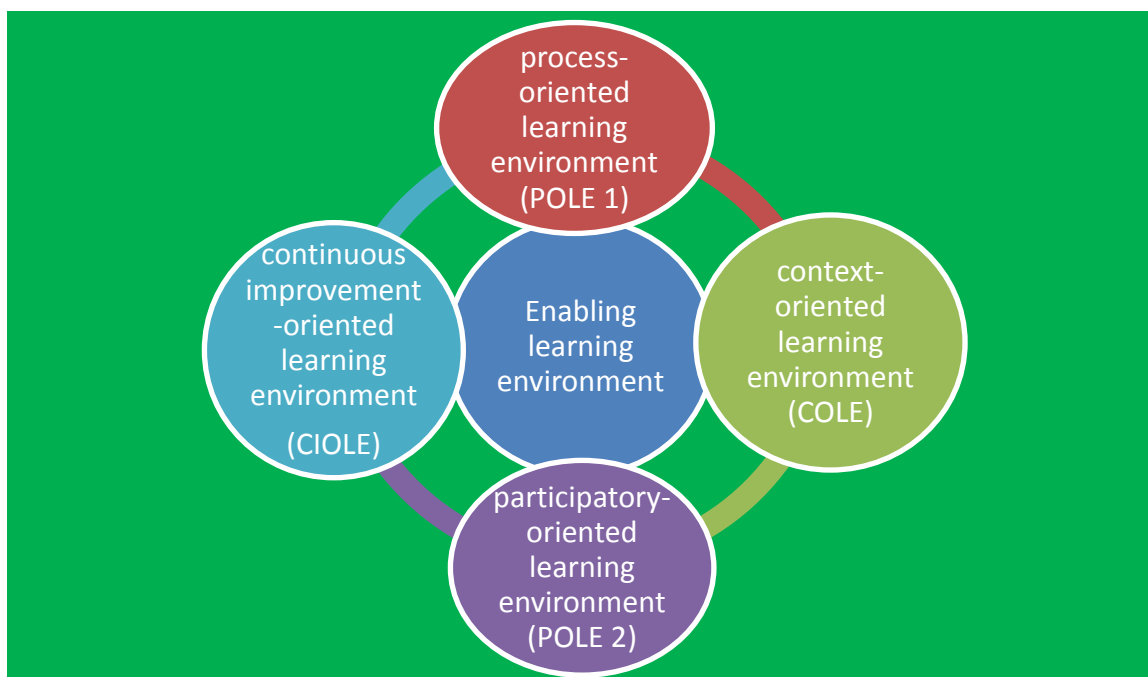
Fig 3.2 Transformative-interactive framework of enabling learning environments

3.3.8 Challenges experienced in the teaching of history

The curriculum changes and changes in history teaching discussed above have been associated with a number of challenges that serve as the basis upon which to suggest an enabling learning environment that augurs well for the development of critical thinking skills. It is the contention of the researcher that these challenges are addressed by eclectically synchronising (see 3.4.5) the tenets of critical theory (see 2.2.2), critical pedagogy (see 2.3.2) and constructivism (see 2.4.2.) which are the serving theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

3.3.8.1 Teacher training, development and support

3.3.8.1.1 Initial teacher training

One of the challenges which militate against the curriculum and history teaching changes towards the focus on critical thinking skills development is the lack of proper pre-service training of teachers. This is not surprising as Manyumwa (2016:199) found out in his study that the very teacher educators who are supposed to train

teachers in teaching for developing critical thinking skills do not possess any formal critical thinking or critical pedagogy skill, one of the key pedagogies for critical thinking skills.

In the case of Zimbabwe, while the syllabus for history requires that teaching of the subject should also contribute to the development of critical thinking skills, the pre-service training of teachers does not specifically have modules which train teachers to teach in such a way as to develop critical thinking. Manyumwa (2016:9) says student teachers in Zimbabwe's teacher education institutions complete their training with little or no critical thinking skills. He says this is due to the lack of a requirement for this knowledge in teacher education programmes blueprints. Westbrook, Durrani, Brown, Orr, Pryor, Boddy and Salvi (2013:29) complement this by saying teacher educators incessantly use lectures, teacher-led question and answer sessions and basic group work rather than the pedagogic approaches promoted in schools. It is assumed that the student teachers will acquire the skills as they write essays in other modules of their studies.

Literature study from other countries also reveals that there is poor pre-service training of history teachers. Aktekin (2013:469) says there is poor pre-service training of university graduates such that they cannot effectively implement activity-based history teaching in Turkey. Stoffels (2008:32) says there is lack of specialised teacher training on teaching for critical thinking skills development in South Africa which results in the use of textbooks and teacher talk even in trying to develop critical thinking skills. Cole and Barsalou (2006:10) say that due to conflict in countries like Rwanda, history teachers were trained in a rigid and passive pedagogy that made them authoritarian teachers. Cole and Barsalou (2006:10) also say that secondary school history teachers in Lebanon and South Africa often are not well-trained compared to teachers of other subjects because the focus is mainly on university teaching in academic history, but not in history pedagogy. Their argument is that in those circumstances, even the best history curricula materials might be

wasted in the hands of history teachers unprepared to use them well in the classroom.

3.3.8.1.2 Type and quality of in-service training

The lack of in-service training is also another challenge that history teaching faces in many countries that espouse the incorporation of changes in history curriculum. In the case of Zimbabwe, there is a huge call by the MoPSE to incorporate the use of ICTs in education, including History teaching and learning. However, there is very little effort by the same Ministry to in-service teachers in the use of ICTs as teaching and learning resources. Most of the teachers who are supposed to use these resources were trained in the twentieth century when e-learning was in its very infancy in the developed world. Many computers which were donated by His Excellency, President Robert Mugabe, in many schools have not been made use of to enable the revamping of teaching and learning. The financial constraints that the Ministry faces explain this situation. Worse still, as the findings by Takafakare (2015:31) show, the history teacher is not motivated enough to think of innovative ways to enable the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching and learning.

The problem of lack of in-service training of history teachers is confirmed by Lekgoathi (2010:109) who says the outcome-based assessment of the new curriculum in South Africa rendered a number of experienced educators redundant since they had not been trained in service and they had not been given pedagogic training to implement the outcomes-based assessment which focuses on the skills that the learner has to acquire in the processes of teaching and learning. This was against the backdrop of the objectives-based assessment which had characterized the apartheid regime (Legkgoathi 2010:109) educational system where the focus was on learner behaviour arising from teaching and learning at the expense of skills as critical outcomes of the learner. Ruto and Ndola (2013:87) say the secondary school teachers in the Western District of Kenya lacked adequate in-service training and that devastated their morale in the teaching of the subject.

3.3.8.1.3 Support to history departments

The transition to a skills-based approach in history teaching reveals the lack of adequate support to history. A study by Van Hoover and Yeager (2014:51) revealed that the history teacher receives little-to-no support in the "doing history" approach. In most cases, there is no assistance from the department with the exception of a few observations which are more judgmental rather than supportive or mentoring. Van Hoover and Yeager (2014:51) further say that the school management does not offer much needed support to history teachers as no classrooms are allocated to history unlike other subjects which have specialist rooms allocated to them. This results in the history teacher having to traverse the whole school to conduct lessons in different classrooms. By its critical nature, history leads to isolation of the teacher by the school heads because history teachers are viewed as critical of the policies of the schools even when that is not the case.

In a study by Takafakare (2015:19), the study by Tendi in 2009 recommended the need to create a History Teachers' Association (HTA) to enhance and promote good and relevant history teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. This recommendation has remained on paper as there are no such associations of history teachers at all levels like clusters, districts, provincial and national. The NCHWG which was operational in the 1980s immediately after independence has since ceased to work and nothing has been founded on its grave. This means that there is no platform where history practitioners can meet and share their experiences in history teaching so as to enhance their pedagogic content knowledge especially with regards the teaching and learning of history for the development of critical thinking skills.

There is no nationally organised history teachers' association in Zimbabwe. The history teachers' professional growth is enhanced by the birth of clusters of schools where history teachers come together to discuss and share experiences. This is done under the Better Schools Programme in Zimbabwe (BSPZ) which co-ordinates schools at cluster and district levels for history teachers to share experiences and discuss approaches to the teaching of history. However, due to the withdrawal of

donor funds which helped to kick-start the BSPZ programme, the meetings are held infrequently as schools have to finance the programme through contributions.

3.3.8.1.3 Further study opportunities for teachers

History teachers constantly need to upgrade their pedagogic content knowledge in order to keep abreast with trends in history teaching. However, this seems not to be the case as Ruto and Ndola (2013:87) say that history teachers are not involved in research activities that could enhance the teaching and learning of history since research helps history teachers to keep abreast with trends in pedagogical developments in the subject. Westbrook, *et al,* (2013:29) argue that there is a blurring between initial teacher training and continuing professional development. Due to the lack of continuing professional development, Manyumwa (2016:9) contends that the same worldviews and transmission models of teaching that the trainee teachers receive during training are what they pass on when they teach in schools. This automatically stifles the development of critical thinking skills.

3.3.8.2 Changed curriculum and its demands

There is clear evidence from the literature survey that there was history curriculum change and transformation in the Netherlands (Klein 2010:616), Turkey (Aktekin 2013:469) and South Africa (Bertram 2012:9). Klein (2010:616) says the history curriculum in the Netherlands since 1993 required history to be taught through second order conceptual ideas in tandem with the "new history" movement from England. According to Klein (2010:616), these second order skills are the critical thinking skills. Aktekin (2013:469) says since 2005, the history curriculum in Turkey was written according to the constructivist approach requiring the learners to construct their own historical meanings from different sources of historical evidence. Bertram (2012:9) says school history education after 1994 in South Africa has been and continues to be influenced by the curriculum changes which took place in Britain as directed by the British Schools' Council (BSC) in the 1960s and 1970s which exposed the learners to a variety of historical sources of evidence. Even though it is

not noted in the case of Turkey, the fact that they undertook history curriculum reform after the 1960s and 1970s suggest that they were also influenced by the same council.

The NCHWG helped to ensure that the methodology of teaching history in Zimbabwe was also designed to foster historical skills among the learners. According to Tendi (2009:28), the new syllabus promoted diverse methodology to history teaching like problem-solving, problem-posing, role play and discussions thus putting the learner at the centre of teaching and learning of history. These methods in teaching and learning were meant to encourage the historical skills of critical thinking. Chitate (2005:3) adds that the new syllabus was mostly innovative as it was focusing on the development of skills. However, the curriculum changes and the new trends envisaged in the teaching and learning of history were hampered by the abuse of history for nationalistic gains and the poor management of the curriculum changes as discussed below.

3.3.8.2.1 Abuse of history for nationalistic gains.

Aktekin (2013), Lekgoathi (2010) and Klein (2010) concur that for many generations history teaching and learning has been directed towards national identities by the political leadership. In the case of African states there is no dichotomy between the colonial and the independence leadership in this abuse of history towards nationalistic goals. Lekgoathi (2010:118) says during the apartheid regime, Afrikaner historiography was turned into a history of South Africa in order to entrench Afrikaner ideology. Maluleka (2015:3 of 5) says that abuse of history has not disappeared under the current leadership of South Africa as Curriculum 2005 and it's amendments is seen heavily as being a tool for nation building not for achieving critical learner outcomes. The scenario for South Africa is symmetric to the one in Turkey where Aktekin (2013:468) says the content of history education in Turkey reveals that history has been taught with a national oriented narrative so as to build a national identity.

Zimbabwe has not been spared from the abuse of history for nationalistic goals since the colonial era. Tendi (2009:28) says the Rhodesian history syllabus gave priority to western politics and culture in order to serve the needs of the colonial master. Moyo and Modiba (2013:5) go on to say that the content of the history syllabus 2166 which was introduced in 1990 after independence was a grand narrative of doctrinaire Marxism-Leninism. According to Chitate (2005:3), this was done in order to replace capitalism with scientific socialism which the political leadership adopted as its guiding philosophy. The content was meant to make history learners celebrate what the political elite felt needed to be celebrated in history (Tendi 2009:81). Barnes (2007 in Moyo and Modiba 2013:5) says the history syllabus 2167 which replaced syllabus 2166 in 2003 is an extreme version of nationalist history which stifles the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

3.3.8.2.2 Poor management of curriculum change

The narrative or historiographical nature of history teaching and learning made it difficult for history teachers to manage the change towards skills development in history teaching and learning. Most history teachers had not been trained in the skills based approach (Moyo and Modiba 2013:5 and Chitate 2005:3). Tendi (2009:28) says the nationalistic goals of the history content meant that the methodology and assessment of history remained that of the colonial master which were characterised by rote learning and examinations respectively. Manyumwa (2016:202) sees a highly tenacious characteristic of the colonial education system as he says the objectives and structure of the curriculum has not been changed to suit the skills based approach in teaching and learning. Methodological and assessment structures of summative examinations that denied the learners the opportunity to ask critical questions about the past (Aktekin 2013:468 and Lekgoathi, 2010:118) continue to enjoy the day in the curriculum under the new establishments. Moreover, Stoffels (2008:31) contends that the persistent Ministerial and departmental expectations on the quantity of work output and not on the quality of learning militates against the development of critical thinking skills. These external expectations can be said to influence the methods of teaching which then tend to be teacher-talk. It is in order to argue that the colonial legacy still has a tight grip on the post-colonial education

system which shows high levels of poor management of curriculum change and transformation which therefore stifles the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

3.3.8.3 Methodology

3.3.8.3.1 Lack of learner-focused and learner-centred approaches

It can be noted that the history curriculum changes in the different countries under consideration resulted in changes in the methodology of history teaching and learning. The major change in the methodology is that the learner was put at the centre of the learning process which Moreeng and Du Toit (2012:45) refer to as the 'doing history' approach and Aktekin (2013:469) calls the activity-based innovative approach. Both approaches are said to be responsible for engaging the learner with primary sources of history which help the learners in constructing knowledge. According to Bertram (2012:10), the teacher only acts as a facilitator which is the role that the teacher plays in the perspectives of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism. Lekgoathi (2010:119) says such a methodology in the study of history fosters critical thinking through source study.

The learner's involvement in learning is considered to be central in the approaches to the teaching and learning of history (Syllabus 2167 2013:6). Since the involvement of the learner is central, the Syllabus 2167 (2013:6) recommends the use of learner-centred teaching methods which are problem-posing, problem-solving, role-playing, simulation, dramatisation, discussion, research, discovery, Socratic Method, debate, process folios, project work, field trips and surveys.

However, the findings by Takafakare (2015:31) show that history pupils complained of monotony and boredom due to their confinement in the classrooms. This is evidence that the recommended methodologies like role playing, field trips, surveys, dramatisation, discovery, research and project work are not implemented by the

history teachers. This is a reflection of the way the teachers were trained which did not emphasise the application of the learner-focused and learner-centred methodologies and therefore, their failure to facilitate the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills.

3.3.8.3.2 Poor/Lack of source-based teaching

The literature study has shown that even where pre-service teachers have been taught the instructional approaches of source based teaching, these tended to fall by the wayside due to the focus on the textbook (Van Hoover and Yeager 2013:5 of 13). Moreover, these approaches are thrown in the dust bin due to the focus on the examination which emphasises content mastery and therefore, rote learning and memorisation.

This was confirmed in a study by Mapetere, *et al,* (2012:101-102) which revealed that examiners' reports have indicated that students are shunning the source-based question because history teachers are no longer teaching the source-based question in spite of its critical role in the development of critical thinking skills. In the same study by Mapetere, *et al,* (2012:102) some of the teachers revealed that the source-based questions are more challenging and making it compulsory in the examination will be punishing candidates for what most teachers do not know. This is an admission by the teachers who should teach history for the development of critical thinking skills that they are not knowledgeable of how to teach for critical thinking skills development which speaks of the poor training they have received during teacher training.

3.3.8.4 Assessment

3.3.8.4.1 Content-based assessment

The current assessment policy for secondary school history in Zimbabwe for syllabus 2167 is divided into two two-hour papers that are written at the exit level of

secondary education. Paper One is on the history of Southern Africa and Paper Two is on International Affairs. Both papers make use of the structured essay (recall, description and analysis) in the summative evaluation. This is supported by Mapetere, *et al,* (2012:86) who say secondary school history assessment in Zimbabwe is based on content mastery and is summative. Jansen (1998:8) argued that the most important factor that militates against curriculum innovation in schools is the system of assessment which is summative in nature by way of examinations and this has not changed much today.

Paper One has twenty-two questions of which one of them is source based and is optional just like any of the other questions. Paper Two has fifteen questions with no source based question. In a study by Takafakare (2015:31), the questioning technique at Ordinary Level is considered to be more narrative and requires more of the recall of facts which stifles the development of critical thinking skills. In a study by Mapetere, *et al,* (2012:101), the structured essay provides history students with opportunities to score distinctions without developing requisite skills of higher order thinking. So, Mapetere (2013:136) argues that the power of narrative has a grip on the assessment of history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. The same study has highlighted that examiners' reports have indicated every year that students are shunning the source-based question. This is against the backdrop of the question's critical role in the development of critical thinking skills as it focuses on the assessment objectives of analysis, interpretation and evaluation as required history learner outcomes.

Assessment of the learners focuses mainly on the recall of facts as shown by the fact that sixty-eight per cent of the mark allocation for each Ordinary Level history question is for the recall of facts (History Paper 2167/2, 2014). The other thirty-two per cent is for the analysis of historical facts which is far too low if we consider the current state in the teaching of secondary school history the world over which is focusing on the mastery of critical thinking skills.

3.3.8.4.2 Assessment for learning

William (2011:10) defines assessment for learning as any assessment which serves the purpose of promoting students' learning. It is taken as an essential part of learning where teachers share learning goals with learners. This kind of assessment helps learners to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for and therefore, involve the learners in self-assessment (William 2011:10). It is assessment which provides feedback to guide learners in their next steps and how to take them. Both the teacher and the learner review and reflect on assessment data. This type of assessment is what is missing in the teaching and learning of history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. The history teacher determines what to assess the learners on, the assessment standards for any piece of assessment and when to assess. Learners are not even considered a crucial component in their own assessment. The type of assessment is therefore authoritarian.

3.3.8.5 Resources

3.3.8.5.1 Textbook-based teaching

History teaching and learning is generally challenged by use of the textbook as the only source of history. Bertram (2012:9) says the use of a prescribed textbook by the authorities characterised the teaching and learning of history under apartheid. Stoffels (2008:26) says this continued under the Government of National Unity (GNU) as there was a prescribed resource book for outcome-based assessment which simply replaced the traditional textbook. Consequently, there was the use of the prescribed resource book in a mechanical and imitative manner.

Tendi (2009:28) and Moyo and Modiba (2013:5) concur that a few new textbooks of the African Heritage Series that were approved by the authorities were introduced in Zimbabwe in 1982 to promote the African perspective of history. The use of the approved textbooks continues in Zimbabwe today with the introduction of the Step Ahead and Total History Series. Stoffels (2008:30) says the approval of textbooks by the Ministry makes them compulsorily useable in schools and as such, history

teachers teach according to the textbooks as they believe that what is in the textbooks is what is expected of them. Since there is the reliance on approved textbooks, it means that there is no promotion of multiple voices in the history with which learners can engage.

In a study by Takafakare (2015:30), there is a scarcity of resources for history teachers in the secondary schools. Textbooks are shared by many students and most of those available are obsolete to the extent that they do not promote the development of critical thinking skills in the learners since they were written without an emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills.

These resource challenges are not peculiar to Zimbabwe only. Ruto and Ndola (2013:89) says there is a shortage of textbooks and other history teaching and learning materials in most secondary schools in Kenya and this is worsened by the shortage of the basic resource, that is, funds to procure the other resources. Due to the shortage of funds, history teachers are not supported to attend refresher courses in order to enhance their skills in the teaching and learning of history (Ruto and Ndola 2013:89). The implication is that there is no emphasis in Kenya on the need to in-service history teachers in order to acquire the pedagogy for teaching the subject in the event of curriculum reform.

Cole and Barsalou (2006:1-2) say history teachers face the problem of poor resource allocation if they want to use the critical inquiry approaches in history teaching and learning and it is always the case that new pedagogical reforms in history usually lack enough resources to implement them. Ruto and Ndola (2013:88) say the other important resource which is very minimal for history teachers is that of time. Inadequate time is allocated to the teaching and learning of history which make the history teachers focus on covering the content and not on the development of critical thinking skills. The history syllabus for Zimbabwe (Syllabus 2167 2013:6) emphasises the coverage of the syllabus and thus at least four periods a week of 35-

40 minutes are recommended. Given this limited time, teacher-centred teaching and learning processes dominate the classroom.

3.3.8.5.2 Use of ICTs

A study by Takafakare (2015:31) showed that there is either no access or very limited access to the internet by both the teachers and the students. The same study revealed that where there is modern technology in schools, there is no creative use of technology by the history teachers in order to make the lessons interesting. There is lack of creativity and innovativeness by the history teachers in the use of technology in the teaching and learning of history as Westbrook, *et al,* (2013:30) say most teachers often use power point presentations rather than any other ICT platforms. For example, very few history teachers are familiar with the use of the interactive boards in the teaching and learning of history as the latest technological innovations in teaching and learning because they have not been trained to use them in teaching and learning. This is against the desire by the history learners to make use of the online or internet resources to access updated information.

The history syllabus recommends the use of instructional media in the teaching and learning of history (Syllabus 2167 2013:6). The use of the term instructional media leaves it unclear as to what exactly the history teacher has to consider as instructional media. The twentieth century trained teacher might think of the textbooks, maps, charts and chalkboards. The non-electronic resources mentioned in the syllabus document include the use of job cards and process folios (Syllabus 2167 2013:6). The syllabus is totally silent on what electronic instructional media to use in the teaching and learning of history which is surprising in the 21st century.

3.3.8.6 Classroom environment

The multifarious challenges that have been elucidated in the preceding sections indicate that history teachers are unable to create an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills. Teacher-centred and not learner-centred methodologies dominate the teaching and learning of history. This is supported by Manyumwa (2016:9) who says the transmission models of teaching that are used by most teachers history teachers included preclude the development of critical thinking skills. The challenges and problems encountered mean that history learners do not experience learning well and that militates against the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter on the literature study has highlighted the importance of curriculum transformation and change as drivers in the secondary school history curriculum in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980. The changes culminated in the skills-based approach to history teaching and learning which is in tandem with global trends in history teaching and learning. A proposal for a framework that endeavours to help history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills has been proffered. This proposed framework encapsulates the views from critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism in its various strands, curriculum change and approaches to the development of critical thinking skills. The chapter finally considered the challenges in implementing the skills based approach. The next chapter deals with the research design and methodology that was used in collecting data to address the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the processes and procedures undertaken by the researcher to lay the basis for the empirical work of this study. Key issues addressed in this chapter are the aim of the empirical study, research design, qualitative research, research methodology, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, triangulation and ethical considerations in the collection of data. The aim of the study drives it and the next section deals with the aim of the empirical study undertaken in this research.

4.2 AIM OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

By empirical study it means that any conclusions drawn are based upon hard evidence gathered from data collected from real life experiences or observations (Mertens 2005:4). The empirical or field study that the researcher executed had the purpose of gathering information in order to provide answers to the following main research question:

- What framework can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?

The main research question was addressed by answering the following research questions:

- Is there a need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?
- What are the current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?
- What are the components of a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?

Consequent to the findings of these questions, the researcher was able to identify the need for constructing an enabling learning environment, the measures that are pertinent in overcoming the challenges history teachers face and the components of the framework that can be used in the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Bhattacherjee (2012:35) says research design is a comprehensive plan for data collection in an empirical research project. It is a 'blueprint' for empirical research aimed at answering specific research questions. The implication of the preceding statement is that research design has to do with the making of critical choices on the part of the researcher.

4.3.1 Qualitative research

This is a qualitative research effort. This was chosen in keeping with the view of Walliman (2011:71) that qualitative research aims to collect qualitative data which is a record of the qualities concerning people's judgments, feelings, emotions, ideas, beliefs and attitudes described in words (see section 4.3.4). This data is descriptive in character and this justifies the descriptive brand of research. The researcher sought to get a deeper understanding of the research problem which is the aridity of an enabling learning environment in history teaching in Zimbabwe which poses a predicament to the development of critical thinking skills.

Qualitative data rely on human interpretation and evaluation which derives from the interpretivist paradigm in which this qualitative study is situated (see section 4.3.1). This point to the process of analytic induction which according to Draper (2004:643) means that the researcher moves from interviews, observation and document analysis to conceptual generalisation and inferences are made from specific observations to more general rules in order to construct a model or framework. This

is in tandem with this study as it sought to develop a framework for the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The envisaged framework was developed by making inferences on the data collected in order to explain the objectives of the study which are:

1. To establish the need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

2. To elucidate the current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.

3. To provide a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

Tuli (2010:102) says researchers using qualitative research immerse themselves in a group by observing their interactions as advocated for by critical pedagogy and social constructivism (see 2.3.2.3; 2.4.2.1; 4.3.1 and 4.3.2), interviewing key people or participants and analysing existing documents. Tuli (2010:100) argues that these methods enable the participants to make meaning of their own realities and come to appreciate their own construction of knowledge through practice. This enables or empowers the participants to freely express their views as suggested for the role of the researcher in critical theory which is to empower the participants (see 2.2.3).

The findings of the study were reported descriptively in accordance with Tuli (2010:101)'s view that the research findings in qualitative research are usually reported descriptively using words because the data gathering methods which are used enable rich and detailed description of social phenomena. This is supported by Draper (2004:643) who says the reporting or explanation should arise from the findings of the research. This is to suggest that the qualitative researcher has to avoid personal biases in reporting the findings and so, it should be truthful reporting according to Tuli (2010:101). In order to meet this truthful reporting which avoids researcher biases, the researcher used actual quotations from interviews, observations and document analysis (see 4.3.2). This is what is often referred to as 'thick description' of the research findings. The researcher in this study used

descriptive reporting in presenting the findings of the study which is commensurate with qualitative research methodology.

It should be noted though that qualitative research has both weaknesses and strengths and the researcher highlights them here. This is important because readers of this study are cautioned to understand the findings in light of these strengths and weaknesses although great care was taken to minimise the weaknesses. Draper (2004:645) says one of the greatest criticisms against qualitative research is that its findings express little more than the investigator's subjective impressions. However, the avenue to go around this criticism is to increase the rigour of the study by selecting appropriate methodology (see 4.4), a small sample size for in-depth study and purposive sampling to tap on the expertise of the people knowledgeable about the research problem who are the certificated history teachers (see 4.4.1 and 4.4.2).

Draper (2004:645) also says the lack of generalisability is seen to be one of the shortcomings of qualitative research and this is often attributed to the small sample sizes and lack of statistical significance levels. However, this criticism is faulty on the grounds that it only applies to lack of empirical generalisability, yet there are many kinds of generalisability. Draper (2004:645) says generalisability is still possible with qualitative research despite the small sample sizes and this concerns conceptual generalisability where the findings of qualitative research can be used to draw different kinds of inference that are of a conceptual nature. In this regard, qualitative research is more concerned with developing concepts from the understanding of phenomena, concepts that are relevant to other settings and other groups of individuals. This study focuses on conceptual generalisability since the framework envisaged for the construction of an enabling learning environment is a conceptual framework rather than an empirical framework. This is the reason why the researcher chose to include a conceptual framework (transformative-interactive) to guide the study as it would be important in the development of the framework.

Moreover, the emphasis on context by researchers themselves militates against generalising on the basis of qualitative research findings (Draper 2004:644). However, context must be seen to be very crucial in the development of concepts that can be generalised to other contexts.

Qualitative research has strength in that it is linked to different strategies for sampling, usually theoretical or purposive, that are not seeking to be representative in a statistical sense, but to select units of study that are theoretically meaningful and relate back to the original research question (Draper 2004:645). This study used purposive sampling to select the units of study.

4.3.2 The interpretive research paradigm

Paradigm is defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1998:22) as "a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research. Scotland (2012:9) says paradigm consists of ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods. This study is situated within the interpretive and constructivist (Cohen and Manion 1994:36 and Tuli 2010:100) research paradigms which are commensurate with both critical theory as theoretical framework and, critical pedagogy and social constructivism as conceptual frameworks of this study. The interpretive paradigm was chosen for this study because its assumptions give direction on the attributes of successful qualitative research. According to Ahmed (2008:4), the assumptions of interpretive paradigm are that people are deliberate and creative in their actions meaning that they act intentionally and make meaning in and through their activity. History teachers are deliberate in the teaching of critical thinking skills and the learning activities they prepare should result in meaning making in the development of critical thinking skills. Moreover, Ahmed (2008:4) says that interpretivism assumes that people actively construct their social worlds and the social world is studied in its natural state without the intervention of, or the manipulation by the researcher (see 2.2.3; 4.4.3).

Cohen (2002:22) encourages the use of the interpretive paradigm stating that individuals are unique and largely non-genearalisable; their multiple interpretations of, and perspectives on single events or situations, and situations need to be examined through the eyes of the participants rather than the researcher (see 2.2.3; 4.4.4). This is supported by Cohen, Morrison and Manion (2007:19) who say that the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of individuals who are participating in it. This research sought to understand the situation of the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching by interviewing history teachers about their interpretations of their experiences.

Creswell (2009:8) says interpretive methodology is directed at understanding a phenomenon from an individual's perspective, investigating interaction among individuals as well as the historical and cultural contexts which people inhabit. The study sought to investigate the interaction between history teachers and learners in their endeavour to develop critical thinking skills. Scotland (2012:12) says the interpretive paradigm uses, for example, case studies for in-depth study of events or processes over a prolonged period. This study applied the multiple case studies over a period of two months. Over such a prolonged period of engagement, individual constructs are elicited and understood through the interaction between researchers and participants with participants being relied on as much as possible (Creswell 2009:8). The study used interviews and observations to elicit the constructs (see 4.4.3). Scotland (2012:12) says interpretive methods yield insight and understanding of behaviour, explain actions from the participant's point of view and do not dominate the participants (see 2.2.5). This was done using interviews, observations and document analysis (see 4.4.3). Moreover, the research questions that are used are broad so as to generate much data for analysis and interpretation and in view of this, seven open-ended questions were constructed to guide in collecting data from the participants.

Furthermore, Scotland (2012:12) says in the interpretive paradigm, research is deemed good if it provides rich evidence and offers credible and justifiable accounts

(internal validity or credibility); can be made use of by someone in another situation (external validity or transferability), and the research process and findings can be replicated (reliability or dependability). It is this, and other criteria (see 4.4.5- 4.4.8) on which the researcher proposes that this study be evaluated. The interpretive paradigm hinges on the role of the individual which means it is subjective yet meaning making is a collective responsibility. That being the case, this study also rides on the constructivist paradigm which the researcher turns to in the next section. These two complement each other to give a holistic approach to the construction of social realities- the individual and the society.

4.3.3 The constructivist research paradigm

Cohen and Manion (1994:36) are of the view that the constructivist paradigm in research serves the purpose of understanding "the world of human experience" suggesting that "reality is socially constructed" as posed by Mertens (2005:12). This is bolstered by Tuli (2010:100) who says that the constructivist paradigm sees the world as constructed, interpreted and experienced by people in their interactions with each other and with the wider social systems. In that case, the purpose of inquiry is to understand a particular phenomenon, not to generalise to a population. This is in tandem with this study because it aimed to understand the learning environment in the current history teaching with a view to propose a framework for the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.

Creswell (2003:8) says a researcher operating in the constructivist paradigm tends to rely upon the participants' views of the situation being studied. This is supported by Tuli (2010:100) who says that researchers within this paradigm are naturalistic since they apply to real-world situations as they unfold naturally, more specifically, they tend to be non-manipulative, unobtrusive and non-controlling. The researcher fulfilled these characteristics by visiting the schools which are the natural settings of the teachers and did non-participant observation of their teaching in these natural settings. The study did not seek to use control groups since the observation was pinned on naturally unfolding processes of teaching and learning. The researcher

also did not intend to go for empirical generalisability, but for conceptual generalisability. Tuli (2010:101) says that researchers in this paradigm use qualitative research methodologies to investigate and describe social realities. This study adopted qualitative research methodology as will be shown. This study is guided by a conceptual framework which is a carrier of the assumptions that the researcher takes into cognisance in undertaking this study (see 2.3.1). The assumptions of the interpretive paradigm are of significance to the study as they give direction as to how to interact with the participants in the study. In adhering to the assumptions of the interpretative paradigm as suggested by Lauckner, *et al* (2012:16) the researcher allowed the participants to construct meaning of their experiences and events by asking them questions which made them reflect on their experiences and lesson events. Moreover, the researcher allowed them to contribute towards the interpretation of the data by discussing with them and determining the meaning of their responses during interviews and member checking of the findings.

A constructivist paradigm further requires the use of more personal and interactive methods of data collection as suggested by Lauckner, *et al* (2012:18). In this study the researcher used interviews and observations that allowed him to interact and engage with the participants during data collection. This interaction and engagement made the participants causally responsible for the data that formed the basis of the findings of this study.

Since validity is enhanced by the multiple sources of data as posited by (Lauckner, *et al* 2012:19), the researhcer used multiple sources of data which are interviewees, classrooms and documents in order to enhance validity in this study. Moreover, in pursuit of validity in the constructivist paradigm, the researcher provided information about the backgrounds of the participants and the contexts in which they were being studied (Lauckner *et al* 2012:19)). In addition, validity was enhanced by the provision of direct quotations from the participants, who in this study are the history teachers, to support the inferences drawn from the data.

Lauckner, *et al,* (2012:20) say the constructivist paradigm also gives direction as to the sampling process for the research study. They say that the constructivist paradigm aligns with sampling which is not random because it does not seek to represent a wider population. In view of this, the researcher used non-probability, purposive sampling which is specifically convenience, criterion, expert, and of maximum variation. In considering Lauckner, *et al,* (2012:20)'s recommendation for member-checking of the data, analysis and interpretation of the data in order to allow them an opportunity to comment on their accuracy, the researcher used individual participant checking of the findings of the study (see 4.4.7; 4.4.6; 4.4.7.3). This was done in order to enhance validity and trustworthiness which are key criteria for assessing qualitative research.

4.3.4 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

Assumptions are propositions that are held to be true for certain situations provided *ceteris paribus*. According to Scotland (2012:9), every paradigm is based upon its own ontological and epistemological assumptions. It follows that both the constructivist and interpretive paradigms have their assumptions which are explained in this section. However, some few definitions will serve to set the tone for the discussion of these assumptions in the context of this study.

Ahmed (2008:2) says ontology is the nature of reality while Scotland (2012:9) says it is the study of being. This is a question of semantics because being is being real. The researcher is a being because he is real. Scotland (2012:9) says ontological assumptions are concerned with what constitutes reality, in other words, what is. A more applicable view in the context of this study is that by Ahmed (2008:2) who says, ontological assumptions are those that respond to the question: 'what is there that can be known?' The empirical study of this research aimed to find out what is there in the history classrooms that can be known so as to suggest a framework for the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills through history teaching. The suggestion by Ahmed (2008:2) is that researchers guided by ontology have to assume that the world they investigate is a

world populated by human beings who have their own thoughts, interpretations and meanings (see 2.2.4).

Epistemology, according to Cohen, *et al* (2007:8), is concerned with the nature and forms of knowledge and Ahmed (2008:3) says it is a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know. Epistemologically, the researcher concerned himself with the "procedural" knowledge rather than the "substantive" knowledge. Procedural knowledge deals with the procedures in the development of critical thinking skills while substantive knowledge deals with the content or subject matter.

Scotland (2012:11) says the ontological position or assumption of interpretivism is relativism which is the view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person. This is why in this study, the researcher collected data from three different teachers who have different views of what constitutes reality in the teaching and learning of history for the development of critical thinking skills. Reality is individually constructed so there are many realities as individuals. Perceptions of reality may change throughout the process of study so this study was done over a two-month period to avoid the effect of change of perceptions over a longer time. Furthermore, there is no objective reality that can be known and the researcher's goal is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge.

4.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Walters (2006:35) says methodology is the frame of reference for the researcher which is influenced by the paradigm in which the researcher's theoretical perspective is placed or developed. Somekh and Lewin (2005:346) define methodology as both the collection of methods or rules by which a particular piece of research is undertaken and the principles, theories and values that underpin a particular approach to research. Tuli (2010:102) says methodology is a research strategy that translates ontological and epistemological principles into guidelines that show how research is to be conducted, and principles, procedures, and practices that govern

research. The research methodology of this study draws on the theoretical perspectives of interpretivism and constructivism.

Multiple case studies of three secondary schools in GUD was chosen for in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study which is teaching and learning history for the development of critical thinking skills. This draws from the suggestion by Lauckner, *et al* (2012:6) that multiple case studies promote the richness, depth, and completeness that is drawn from multiple events that help one to understand the phenomenon of interest that is shared among the diverse cases. Three cases were chosen in view of the recommendation by Creswell (1998, in Lauckner, *et al* 2012:6) that no more than four cases be examined to allow individual cases to be adequately explored. The three secondary schools were chosen in order to ensure relevance to GUD in particular and to Zimbabwe in general.

4.4.1 Population

Population is a collective term used to describe the total quantity of things or cases of the type which are the subject of a study (Walliman 2011:94). For purposes of this study, the population comprised of all secondary schools and all secondary school history teachers in GUD. The teachers were selected on the basis of their qualifications, years of teaching and classes taught.

4.4.2 Sampling

Sampling is the statistical process of selecting a subset of a population of interest for purposes of making observations and inferences about that population (Bhattacherjee 2012:65). Sampling frame is the list from where the sample can be drawn (Bhattacherjee 2012:65) or the selected category of interest to the study (Walliman 2011:94). In the context of this study, the sampling frame involved the secondary schools offering history as a subject in their curriculum as well as the secondary school history teachers. Sample is defined by Bhattacherjee (2012:65) as the actual units selected for study. For purposes of this study, the sample consisted

of three secondary schools in GUD that offer history as a subject in their curriculum. Three secondary school history teachers were also sampled with one teacher chosen from each of the three schools. The number three for both schools and teachers is small, but this is due to the requirements for qualitative sampling as suggested by Moriaty (2011:7) that qualitative research sampling typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples selected purposefully.

Bhattacherjee (2012:66) says sampling technique is the method used to select a sample from the sampling frame and the researcher used non-probability sampling technique which is commensurate with qualitative research. Bhattacherjee (2012:69) says non-probability sampling means that some units of the population have zero chance of selection or where the probability of selection cannot be accurately determined. The type of non-probability sampling chosen for this study is purposive sampling which according to Draper (2004:645), is suitable for qualitative research because it seeks not to be representative in a statistical sense, but to select units of study such as individuals that are theoretically meaningful and relate back to the original research question. The units of study for this research were individual schools and history teachers who were believed to provide data to answer the main research question which is: **What framework can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?**

According to Plays (2008:697-698), there are many kinds of purposive sampling from which a researcher can choose the most suitable for a particular study. For this study, the following were chosen for reasons explained as follows: convenience sampling, criterion sampling, expert sampling and maximum variation sampling.

This study approaches sampling from the perspective of sampling triangulation. This will see the convergence of four kinds of purposive sampling which are convenience sampling, criterion sampling, expert sampling and maximum variation sampling

which the researcher collectively terms **"context sampling"** because all of them apply to sampling which is determined by the peculiar circumstances of the research. This eclecticism in the sampling procedures is depictive of the dialectical constructivism of the conceptual framework underpinning this study.

Convenience sampling is defined by Bhattacherjee (2012:69) as one in which a sample is drawn from that part of the population that is close to hand, readily available or convenient. In this study, the researcher chose schools that are in the vicinity of at most two kilometres from the researcher's work station and less than two kilometers apart in order to reduce travelling expenses and to have more time to visit the schools to collect data. Convenience was also considered regarding those history teachers who were willing to participate in the study at the chosen schools.

Plays (2008:698) defines criterion sampling as searching for cases or individuals who meet a certain criterion, for example, that they have a particular life experience. In this case, the researcher involved history teachers who had the experience of teaching both syllabus 2166 and syllabus 2167 because the former has a skills bias while the latter has a content bias. These are teachers who know the challenges they faced in enacting syllabus 2166 and what challenges they still face in teaching the skills component of syllabus 2167.

Expert sampling is defined by Plays (2008:698) as one in which the researcher looks for individuals who have particular expertise that is most likely to be able to advance the researcher's interests and potentially open new doors. The history teachers are the experts in the subject and using them as data sources was expected to yield relevant and meaningful data to answer to the research questions unlike if non-experts like learners were used to collect data. This is supported by Bhattacherjee (2012:69-70) who says experts tend to be more familiar with the subject matter than non-experts and opinions from a sample of experts are more credible than a sample that includes both experts and non-experts. Consequently, this sampling procedure

was intended to help to increase the trustworthiness of the study which is one of the major measures of the quality of qualitative research.

According to Patton (1990:172), maximum variation sampling aims at capturing and describing the central themes or principal outcomes that cut across a great deal of participant variation and it is suitable for small samples where a great deal of heterogeneity can be a problem because individual cases are so different from each other. The maximum variation sampling strategy turns that apparent weakness into strength by applying the following logic: Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central shared aspects of a phenomenon (Bhattercherjee 2012:70). Maximum variation sampling can yield detailed descriptions of each case, in addition to identifying shared patterns that cut across cases (Bhattercherjee 2012:70). This study had the characteristics that suit maximum variation sampling as the sample was very small, that is, three secondary schools and three history teachers, the schools and teachers were highly heterogeneous, but it was hoped that despite this heterogeneity, they would yield some common patterns which were important sources of data for this study. In fact, the cross-case analysis enabled conceptual generalisability as expected to emerge from the findings of the study.

4.4.2.1 Site selection and situation analysis

Curtis, Gesler, Smith and Washburn (2000:1002) say site selection is the choice that is made of the cases to be studied when undertaking research. They say that case or site selection is conceptually driven by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks which underpin the research question. They say there should be a rationale for the selection of particular sites or cases of study because there are ethical and theoretical implications arising from the choices which are made to include a particular case and exclude others.

The authors offer criteria that have to be considered when selecting study sites or cases. The researcher chose cases that were likely to generate rich information on the type of phenomenon that was studied. The cases were expected to enhance the analytic generalisability of the findings and to produce believable descriptions or explanations which were sensibly true to history teaching and learning environment. The cases yielded participants who voluntarily chose to participate in the study. Moreover, in view of the fact that the cases should be ones which are feasible for study on the part of the researcher, the researcher chose secondary schools to capitalise on the experience of teaching history in secondary schools.

Situation analysis is defined by the Business Dictionary (2015:1) as a systematic collection of past and present economic, political, social and technological data aimed at the identification of the internal and external factors or forces that may influence the organisation (in this case school)'s performance and choice of strategies and the assessment of the organisation's current and future strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

4.4.2.1.1 School A: school background and teacher profile

The school is a private school run by a Board of Trustees. It is located two kilometres outside the Central Business District (CBD) of Gweru City in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. Recruitment for secondary education is not selective. The school offers history as a subject at the secondary school level of education. Both CIE and ZIMSEC examinations are offered in history at the secondary school exit levels. The performance has been on average sixty-five per cent for CIE examinations for the past five years and fifty per cent for ZIMSEC for the past two years. The greatest challenge over these years in the CIE examinations has been in the Paper 2 component of the examination which is the purely critical thinking skills paper. The school is adequately resourced with modern technologies in the classrooms including computers and smart-boards to aid teaching and learning. In terms of textbooks and furniture, the state is highly satisfactory. Textbooks used are recommended by CIE for CIE examinations and the MoPSE for ZIMSEC

examinations. The school sponsors teaching staff to attend workshops that are organised by the CIE on teaching and assessment strategies. There is great open communication between the school and the community through the school's marketing department and parents are prepared to assist the school programmes by way of financial resources, material resources and personnel.

The history teacher is male and aged forty-seven. He has twenty-three years of teaching experience. He is a holder of a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in history and a Graduate Certificate in Education (GCE). He has taught both Syllabi 2166 and 2167 for ZIMSEC and syllabus 0470 for CIE. He is an Assistant Examiner (AE) with ZIMSEC and accredited with CIE. The teacher lacks proficiency in the use of ICTs in teaching and learning.

4.4.2.1.2 School B: school background and teacher profile

The school is a Catholic-run school located four kilometres from the CBD of Gweru city in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. The school offers history as a subject at the secondary school level because it is a compulsory subject according to MoPSE. Recruitment for secondary education is very selective using ZIMSEC grade seven (primary school) results. The performance in history at the exit level of the secondary school has been on average eighty per cent for the past five years. The most challenging component to prepare candidates for examinations has been the analysis section of the assessment questions. The school offers ZIMSEC examinations only at the exit level of secondary school. The school is furnished with modern technologies for use in teaching and learning like computers and the internet but has no smart-boards. The school uses textbooks approved by the MoPSE in the teaching and learning of history. There is good interaction with the parents' board of the school and the community at large. Both are prepared to assist financially, materially and with personnel. However, the enrolment at the school is large with classes averaging forty five and the teachers are overwhelmed by the large numbers.

The history teacher is male and aged thirty-nine. The teacher holds a BA degree with history as a major and a GCE. His teaching experience is twenty-one years. He is an AE with ZIMSEC and has experience in teaching both syllabi 2166 and 2167 for ZIMSEC examinations. The teacher lacks proficiency in the use of ICTs as teaching and learning resources. The teacher rarely attends workshops organised by the subject officers on teaching and assessment practices.

4.4.2.1.3 School C: school background and teacher profile

The school is a government school run by the School Development Association (SDA). The school is located in the vicinity of the CBD of Gweru city. The school offers history as a subject at the secondary level because it is a compulsory subject according to the MoPSE. Recruitment for secondary education is not selective. The performance in the subject for the past five years is an average of fifty per cent. The most challenging component in preparing the candidates for the examination has been the analysis section of the assessment papers. The school struggles to get resources for use in teaching and learning because of the constraints imposed by the government on tuition fees for government schools. The school does not have ICTs as educational resources. The parents who send their children to the school are also of the low income bracket so their contribution to the school programmes is minimal. The enrolment at the school is very high due to the low tuition fees. Teachers are overwhelmed by the numbers in the classrooms which average fifty-five.

The teacher is male and aged forty-six. He holds a BA and PGDE specialising with history. He is an AE with ZIMSEC and has taught both syllabi 2166 and 2167 for ZIMSEC examinations. The teacher lacks proficiency in the use of ICTs as teaching and learning resources.

4.4.3 Data collection

Walliman (2011:65) says data refers to bits of information which research uses as the raw material in order to come to conclusions about some issue. Rouse (2013:1 of 5) says data collection is a systematic approach to gathering information from a variety of sources to get a complete and accurate picture of an area of interest. This information could be in written or visual form. Qualitative data collection is therefore, the collection of information on the participants' ideas, opinions, beliefs and perceptions about the phenomenon under study (Walliman 2011:65). In other words, qualitative data collection is a collection of information of how the participants in a study such as this one, understand the phenomenon being investigated. Rouse (2013:1 of 5) says in order to get this information on the participants' understanding of the phenomenon multiple sources of data must be used.

The methods of collecting data that are relevant for qualitative research are interviews, observation and document analysis (Sharma 2010:4). This section seeks to explain these data collection techniques highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and showing how the researcher will try to minimise their limitations in order to collect credible and trustworthy data.

4.4.3.1 Interview as data collection method

Sharma (2010:4) says the interview method takes the form of a dialogue in which the researcher seeks to elicit information from the participant about how the latter thinks. This dialogic tradition of the interview is what makes Bhattacherjee (2012:78) call the interview a more personalised form of data collection method because the researcher can record the actual words said by the respondent, observe and record the behaviour displayed by the respondent and even the attitudes of the respondent in answering questions. This implies that the interview method is suitable for questions which give the researcher an opportunity to probe the responses by the respondent to obtain adequate information based on the actual words spoken, and

behaviour and attitudes displayed. For the purposes of this study, both pre-observation and post-observation interviews will be done as part of data gathering.

According to Walliman (2011:96), there are different types of interview which according to Sharma (2010:4) are classified on the basis of the nature of questions which are dependent on the purpose of the interview and these are the structured, unstructured and semi-structured interview. This study used the unstructured interview which uses open-ended questions relevant in the collection of data on the need for a framework the history teachers can use to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills, the current practices used by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for developing critical thinking skills and the components of a framework of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The questions derived from these components of the research questions were guided by critical theory as the theoretical framework guiding this study. Critical theory envisages that the researcher should ask questions which deal with the current practices and the deficiencies of the current practices of the phenomenon under study; the explanation of the place of the learner in the classroom practices; the proposition of possibilities or alternatives in dealing with the challenges in the current practice; the teasing of the assessment procedures in the current practices and the identification of the agents of change in the direction of alternative practices.

The questions asked during interviews are also influenced by the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy as they demand that teachers reflect (think, critique and analyse) on their current practices. This way, teachers are empowered to seek transformation of their practices to fall in tandem with global trends in the teaching and learning of history in secondary schools. With the empowerment of teachers, there also results the empowerment of the learners as teachers realise the importance of cascading that empowerment to the learners. This puts the teachers in the context of transformative intellectuals as suggested by Giroux. The questions also direct teachers to suggest alternative practices which are democratically

oriented which is a search for classroom transformation as critical pedagogy says teachers are "transformative intellectuals". The questions also focus on the place that the teachers give to the learners and community members in their classroom discourses and the place teachers are given in curriculum decisions since critical pedagogy dictates that the voiceless be given a voice in the teaching and learning processes. This will constitute the post-observation component of the interview.

The questions that will be used to find answers to the issues raised in the preceding paragraph will be captured in an interview guide. Lofland and Lofland (1984) in Hoepfl (1997:5 of 12) say an interview guide or schedule is a list of general topics or questions that the interviewer wants to explore during an interview. The general topics that were put forward for investigation to answer the research questions are: teacher training, development and support; managing curriculum change; teaching methodology; resources availability and use; assessment and classroom environment. The researcher then came up with the following questions for the interview guide as Creswell and Clark (2003:29) say a researcher should ask open-ended questions:

a. Teacher training, development and support

- How have you prepared yourself to teach this new curriculum which aims to develop critical thinking skills?
- Were you adequately trained to use the skills-based approach in history teaching?
- Have you attended any workshop that exposed you to the requirements of the skills-based approach?
- What support challenges do you face in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills?

b. Managing curriculum change

- What are the challenges that you face in trying to meet the demands brought about by the change in the history curriculum?

- What is being done to ensure that that there is a successful transition to focus on skills development in history teaching?

c. Teaching methodology

- How do you address critical thinking skills during your lessons?
- What teaching methods/approaches are you using in an attempt to develop critical thinking skills?
- Do you teach your learners about the source-based question?

d. Resources availability and use

- What resource challenges do you encounter in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills during your history lessons?
- What resources do you use during your lessons to develop your learners' critical thinking skills?

e. Assessment

- Do you think that current assessment procedure is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?
- How do you ensure that assessment is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?

f. Classroom environment

How would you describe the atmosphere that prevails during your lesson and what impact does that have on the learning process?

These questions were designed bearing in mind that a learning environment must of necessity comprise of the physical, social and emotional aspects (see 3.3.5).

Hoepfl (1997:5 of 12) says interview guides ensure good use of limited interview time and the researcher adhered to this by coming up with an interview schedule with the open-ended questions given above; they make interviewing multiple participants more systematic and comprehensive and this was achieved in this study by asking the same questions to different participants which kept the interactions focused.

In order to ensure the creditworthiness of the interviews through its flexibility as data gathering instrument as coined by Sharma (2010:4), the participants were visited at their work place to have face-to-face interviews in the right context of teaching and learning. This was done in view of the fact that the theoretical framework guiding this study, that is critical theory, demands that data collection be done in the natural settings of the phenomenon being studied. The natural setting of the teaching and learning of history are the schools.

Interviews have greater potential to provide greater depth of information (Wilmot 2006:4). The greater depth of information was collected by having a total of thirty interviews with three secondary school history teachers and this is in line with the recommendation by Wilmot (2006:4) that to provide some depth of qualitative investigation, one might expect to achieve between twenty and fifty interviews for one-to-one investigation.

Personal perspectives of the respondent are provided since meanings and feelings can be quite detailed (Sharma 2010:3). The researcher ensured that the participants were given voice in the interviews in order to express their meanings and feelings as guided by the theoretical framework of critical theory which calls for researchers to give voice to the participants and also to make the interviews dialogical, subjective and dialectical. Critical theory also demands that in the process of interviewing the participants, the researcher must not present an authoritative attitude in what is being researched on because the participants have their expertise in the phenomenon under study. The teachers were allowed to express their thoughts and beliefs about the teaching and learning of history for the development of critical thinking skills by way of being asked open-ended questions.

The researcher had the opportunity to clarify questions and issues to the respondents which enhanced better quality responses. This was done in view of the theoretical framework guiding this study which is critical theory which calls for a dialogic discourse between the researcher and the participant. That being the case,

the participants were allowed to ask questions for the clarification of unclear questions and issues pertaining to the research.

True to the fact that the researcher has the opportunity to probe or follow-up by asking for clarification and examples from the respondent (Sharma 2010:4 and Bhattacherjee 2012:78), the researcher made follow-ups on the responses by the participants to reduce the researcher biases in the interpretation of the responses as in agreement with critical theory's expectation that the researcher must guard against own value biases in doing research. In asking for further clarifications, the researcher was able to get the meaning of the responses by the participants without having to assume what the participants meant by their responses.

The demerits of interview as a data collection method are that interviews are time-consuming both in terms of travelling time to the venue of the interview, transcription and interpretation time of the collected data (Bhattacherjee 2012:79). Travelling time was minimised by selecting sites for the collection of data that are within a two-kilometre radius of the work station of the researcher but taking into consideration the criteria for sampling. The researcher sought the assistance of an English Language teacher to transcribe the interview recordings. In order to address the resource intensiveness of interviews, the researcher undertook the interviews personally over a period of two months visiting the schools. Interview schedules were produced and printed using the researcher's own printer.

In enhancing the interview requirements of great skill and expertise of the interviewer, the researcher did a thorough study of the interview as a data collection technique before carrying out the interview. This enabled the researcher to be equipped with relevant interview techniques of posing one question at a time, listening carefully to the response for notes and voice recording of the responses for future transcription. The researcher also attended the Research Training Programme organised by the University of the Free State (UFS) in the first semester of 2014.

The researcher also used previous experience acquired when undertaking research for the Master of Education Degree programme and Post Graduate Diploma in Education programme in 2009 and 2003 respectively.

As a way of addressing possible abuse of the interview by the respondent which could result in collecting false or distorted data leading to false findings and conclusions (Sharma 2010:4), the researcher asked open-ended questions and used other methods of data collection which confirmed and disconfirmed the responses to the interview questions.

Although both the interviewer and respondent are sources of bias, the former through the questions asked or perceived role or presence of the interviewer and the latter through the conception of the interview, ability to answer questions and the motivation in taking part in the interview (Bhattacherjee 2012:78), the problem of asking biased questions was addressed by exposing the interview questions to a pilot study for moderation before the collection of data. The problem of the perception of the interviewer was dealt with by explaining to the participants the purpose of the research which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the PhD being pursued with the UFS. The problem of the conception of the interview by the interviewers was addressed by explaining to them that the purpose of the study was not to find their faults or weaknesses in teaching history for the development of critical thinking skills but to fulfill an academic purpose and to come up with recommendations which can be used to improve their classroom discourses. The participants were informed of the freedom to ask clarifications of questions which they did not understand in order to get responses based on clear question understanding so as to be sure of relevant data. The participants were promised that the results of the study would be given to their school heads and the District Education Officer for consideration for adoption as a framework for improving the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills.

It is recommended by Sharma (2010:4) that in order for the researcher to minimise these limitations in the use of the interview as a research method, the researcher has to first of all, build trust and respect in the research context. Similar sentiments are echoed by Tuli (2010:100) who says building a partnership with study participants can lead to deeper insight into the context under study, adding richness and depth to the data. This researcher built trust and respect (partnership) in the research contexts (schools) by presenting to school heads with a letter of permission to undertake research in the schools from the MoPSE and the P. E. D of the Midlands Province in Zimbabwe, presenting to the school heads the Ethical Clearance letter from UFS, visiting the schools to know the history teachers, sharing knowledge in history teaching with them, pioneering the formation of the Gweru Urban History Association (GUHA) and volunteering to teach their classes for one lesson for each of the three teachers. The pre-observation interview is meant to set the stage for observation of lessons by the researcher and so, observation is explained next as the other data collection method.

4.4.3.2 Observation as data collection method

In order to meet the requirements of triangulation in qualitative research, the researcher also used observation in addition to interviews as Walliman (2011:100) says observation is gathering data through observation rather than asking questions. The researcher directly observed the history teachers during their lessons in order to capture their words, actions and the situations they operate in. The further understanding of the observations was done by holding post-observation interviews with the teachers. The post-observation interviews were held to suggest possible solutions to the challenges the teachers face in teaching history for the development of critical thinking skills.

Degu and Yigzaw (2006:63) also say that observation strengthens case study research because the researcher can observe not only the participants, but also the environment. This was very significant for the purposes of this study because the researcher was interested to understand more about the learning environment of

secondary school history with particular reference to the environment for the development of critical thinking skills. The researcher came up with the following four main organising concepts of the observation schedule:

- Managing curriculum change, where the researcher was concerned with the critical thinking skills history teachers were developing in their lessons, layout of desks and chairs, the seating arrangements in the classrooms and the class sizes.
- Teaching methodology, where the focus was on the approaches, methods, strategies, activities and assessment tasks that history teachers used to develop critical thinking skills.
- Resources, with regard to their availability (textbooks, newspapers, artifacts, electronic resources, community members and historical sites) and use during lessons.
- Classroom environment, with focus on the physical environment, the emotional/psychological environment and the social environment.
- Assessment procedures in use, where the researcher focused on homework tasks given to learners at the end of the lessons.

The researcher used non-participant observation in collecting data during lessons in view of the suggestion by Daniel (2011: 1 of 2) that it can be used to collect data which can be used to analyse social interaction in a wide variety of contexts. This suited the researcher well because the study seeks to analyse the social interactions between learners and teachers and learners and learners in the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills. Walliman (2011:101) says observation can yield information which the participants are normally unwilling to provide through interviews.

In had to minimise on the limitations of observations noted by Daniel (2011: 1 of 2) that it relies heavily on the researcher's interpretation of what is going on; the researcher can select the actions they deem significant; and the researcher has background bias in the interpretation of what is observed. The researcher used audio recordings of the live lessons for future transcriptions and member checking of the interpretations. Walliman (2011:101) says one other limitation of observation is that it

can be time-consuming and worse still observation cannot capture beliefs, feelings and attitudes that motivate behavior. These limitations were catered for through triangulation of observation with interviews to capture beliefs, feelings and attitudes.

4.4.3.3 Document analysis as data collection method

Bowen (2009:27) says document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents which could be both electronic and printed. Atkinson and Coffey (1997:47) refer to documents as 'social facts' which are produced, shared and used in socially organised ways, in this study, teaching and learning of history in secondary schools. This study seeks to review and evaluate printed and written documents which are used by the history teachers such as the Ordinary Level ZIMSEC history syllabus, policy documents on the subject history, schemes-cum-plans and assessment papers as Merriam (1988:118) says different documents can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding and discover insights relevant to the research. These documents are the embodiment of what history teaching and learning seek to achieve as they express the ideas, feelings, perceptions and opinions of both the government and the teachers on the aim of teaching and learning secondary school history.

In the document analysis, the syllabus document was used to identify the critical thinking skills that history teaching and learning must foster in students and the methodologies that are recommended for use in achieving the same as well as assessment procedures in history. The policy documents in the teaching of history were used to determine the status of history in the school curriculum in Zimbabwe, the assessment procedures and time allocation in the school curriculum for the teaching and learning of history. The scheme-cum-plans were scrutinised for the determination of the level of objectives that the teachers set in history lessons, the activities they prepare for the learners, the evaluations they make on the lessons' processes and the homework they prepare for the learners. The assessment papers that were analysed are teacher-made assessments for formative evaluation. Learner exercise books were analysed to corroborate the findings on critical thinking skills

that learners are exposed to and the questions on which they do well and find challenges with.

The analytic procedure entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising data contained in documents (Bowen 2009:28). Document analysis yielded data in form of excerpts, quotations and entire passages that were then organised into major themes specifically through content analysis (see section 4.9). The excerpts, quotations and entire passages enabled 'thick description' which is the hallmark of qualitative reporting of the research findings.

For the purposes of this study, document analysis was done together with interviews and observations to achieve convergence and corroboration of data through the use of different data sources and methods. This was done in order to provide what Eisner (1991:110) calls a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility of the qualitative research findings. The researcher strove to achieve this confluence by using interviews, observations and document analysis.

In pursuit of what Bowen (2009:31) says is one of the advantages of document analysis which is less time consuming, a document analysis schedule was drawn up in advance of data collection from the documents. The researcher found it easy to select the relevant data from the relevant documents guided by the document analysis schedule. The availability of the teachers who provided the required documents for analysis like the schemes-cum-plans and assessment papers made it less time consuming as well. The researcher used cost-effectiveness measures in document analysis as the documents used were the ones the teachers already had and other than the production of the document analysis schedule, no other direct cost was incurred. In order to enhance the lack of obtrusiveness and reactivity in documents, the researcher collected the documents and analysed them away from the vicinity of the participants. The researcher did this to make sure that he felt comfortable to go through the documents at his own pace. The researcher used the

documents in order to provide a wide coverage of the activities which take place in the teaching and learning process.

According to Bowen (2009:31), despite the several advantages of document analysis as data collection method, it nevertheless has its own limitation that it is insufficient in detail as the documents are produced for some purpose other than research; they are created independent of a research design. Consequently, they usually do not provide sufficient detail to answer the research question.

It is encouraging on the part of the researcher in this study that the weaknesses of one data collection method are absolved by the strengths of the other data collection methods. The triangulation of data collection methods in this study serves a very important role of improving the trustworthiness of the findings of this study. This trustworthiness would otherwise be discredited if a single data collection method is used given the limitations in the different methods as has been elucidated in the above discussion on data collection methods pertaining to this study.

4.4.4 Data analysis

The approach to data analysis the researcher used for this study is interpretive analysis of qualitative data. The discussion focuses on the definition and the principles to be observed in the analysis process. Furthermore, the analysis procedure for the data collected through interviews, observations and document analysis is presented. This method-by-method data analysis was designed to discover the patterns emerging from different data collection methods for each case (school) which were then compared and contrasted to formulate a bigger picture of themes (major and minor concepts) which constitute the findings of the study.

In analysing the data, the researcher used the interpretive qualitative data analysis which is defined by Bogdan and Biklen (1982:145) as "working with data, organising

it, breaking it into manageable units (deconstruction of data), synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned (interpretation of data), and deciding what you will tell others (reconstruction of data)". The organising concepts or units that the researcher derived from working with the data are managing curriculum change, teaching methodology, resources, classroom environment and teacher training, development and support.

In order to achieve deconstruction which Sargeant (2012:2) refers to as the first step in the qualitative analysis the researcher re-read the text data from the interviews, observations and document analyses in order to get an understanding of the data. This process enabled the researcher to know the data by reading it repeatedly to achieve immersion and to obtain a sense of the whole (Hsieh and Shannon 2005:1279; Taylor-Powell and Reimer 2003:2 and Creswell and Clark 2003:35). This was done in order to allow new insights to emerge from the data.

Creswell and Clark (2003:43) say interpretation is stepping back to ask what the analysed (deconstructed) data means. This is not a neutral activity because it is a personal reflection based on experience and history. This depicts the constructivist nature of interpretation of the findings of this research. Taylor-Powell and Reimer (2003:5) say interpretation is done using themes and connections to explain the findings. The data codes developed in the content analysis stage were compared within and across the different manuscripts from interviews, observations and document analysis. The researcher co-opted the advice of the participants, supervisor and co-supervisors to discuss and compare the codes in search of similarities and differences among themes and exploring theories which might explain relationships among themes. Since the interpretation was based on the personal reflection of the researcher, an effort was made to raise the limitations in terms of the interpretation of the findings.

According to Sargeant (2012:2) the last stage in the interpretive analysis of qualitative data is the reconstruction stage which involves creating and repackaging

the prominent codes and themes. Issues that were addressed in the deconstruction are the major lessons learnt, new things learnt, issues of interest to those who use the results of the research and what has application to other settings, programmes and studies because the purpose is conceptual generalisability not empirical generalisability. Exact quotations are used to illustrate the findings.

The deconstruction, interpretation and reconstruction processes of the interpretive analysis were done on the findings of each secondary school first. The findings of each secondary school were validated using a cross-secondary school analysis of the findings. The codes and themes of one secondary school were compared and contrasted with the codes and themes of the other secondary schools. This was done to enable the emergence of major and minor concepts of the study's findings.

4.4.4.1 Analysis of data from the interviews

The researcher used a question by question analysis to show how all the teachers who participated in the interviews responded to each question. The researcher read text data word by word in order to derive codes. This was done in view of the suggestion by Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1279) that there is need to highlight the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts from which codes can be derived. Key phrases in the text data were used as the coding frame in agreement with Creswell and Clark (2003:35) who say a coding frame can be a sentence, paragraph or phrase. The codes derived from the rereading of the text data were sorted into categories, a process called "open coding" by Strauss and Corbin (1990:56), based on how different codes were related and linked (Hsieh and Shannon 2005: 1279). Text data was understood following the three research questions and the three research objectives which the empirical study seek to answer and explain respectively.

Draper (2004:644) and Creswell and Clark (2003:36) agree that categories are the themes or concepts that emerge from the text data themselves rather than an

imposition of predefined coding categories. This shows the constructivist nature of text data analysis which is in tandem with the conceptual framework that drives this study. According to Draper (2004:644) the emergent categories enable "thick description" in which phenomena are not only described but also explained dependent on the context in which they occur.

The researcher also compared and combined in new ways the discrete categories identified in open coding to assemble the big picture which is constructivist in nature. This is what Strauss and Corbin (1990:56) refer to as 'axial coding' which was done in order to describe, but more importantly, to acquire new understanding of phenomenon under study. It was during this stage of 'axial coding' that the researcher built a conceptual model which is in line with the idea of conceptual generalisability which this study seeks to achieve. However, to add quality to the study findings, the researcher also used preset categories derived from the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy and constructivism, and the literature study on challenges that are encountered by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills. The following interview questions were meant to solicit data that was used to support the categories that were derived from the components of the conceptual framework and the literature study.

a. Teacher training, development and support

- How have you prepared yourself to teach this new curriculum which aims to develop critical thinking skills?
- Were you adequately trained to use the skills based approach in history teaching?
- Have you attended any workshop that exposed you to the requirements of the skills based approach?
- What support challenges do you face in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills?

b. Managing curriculum change

- What are the challenges that you face in trying to meet the demands brought about by the change in the history curriculum?

- What is being done to ensure that that there is a successful transition to focus on skills development in history teaching?

c. Teaching methodology

- How do you address critical thinking skills during your lessons?

- What teaching methods/approaches are you using in an attempt to develop critical thinking skills?

- Do you teach your learners to look for the source-based question?

d. Resources availability and use

- What resource challenges do you encounter in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills during your history lessons?

- What resources do you use during your lessons to develop your learners' critical thinking skills?

e. Assessment

- Do you think that current assessment procedure is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?

- How do you ensure that assessment is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?

f. Classroom environment

How would you describe the atmosphere that prevails during your lesson and what impact does that have on the learning process?

4.4.4.2 Analysis of data from observations

Analysis of observational data is guided by the study question and this is supported by Prosser (2014:15) who says data coding in the analysis should be done in terms of relevance to the research questions so as to answer the main research question (see section 4.2). The coding is done to achieve Prosser (2014:13)'s suggestion that

observation data is essentially analysed for patterns (themes) in order to build up a picture of the phenomenon observed.

The data from observations was analysed on a daily basis in order to help in the funnelling of the study. Each data set collected was read three times continuously without disturbance in order to code the data into meaningful categories which helped in discovering the patterns. The category codes that were used for this study are adapted from Bogdan and Biklen (1998:53) which are the setting codes (background information on the classrooms), process codes (sequences of events and changes over time), activity codes (recurring informal and formal behaviours), event codes (infrequent happenings), strategy codes (how people accomplish goals) and relationship codes (formally defined relations). These codes are consistent with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding this study and the transformative-interactive framework for constructing an enabling learning environment. The following constitutes the observation schedule that was used to collect data to respond to the issues related to critical pedagogy, constructivism, critical thinking skills and curriculum changes in history teaching in Zimbabwe.

a. Managing curriculum change
Purposeful teaching of critical thinking skills; class sizes; layout of desks and chairs; the seating arrangement of the students

b. Methodology
Projects; problem solving; dialogue; negotiation; discussion; questioning by learners and teacher; teacher questions; student questions; probing technique; scaffolding techniques; wait time for responses to higher order questions; feedback on student responses to higher order questions; debates; team work; group work; quizzes; virtual learning; role play; dramatisation; think-pair-share; jig-sawing; round-robins; concept mapping; argument diagrams

c. Resources in the lesson
Textbooks; primary documents; newspaper cuttings; artefacts; electronic gadgets; availability of web-platforms in classrooms; resource persons; charts; maps; external experts; parental involvement; use of learning spaces outside the classroom

d. Classroom environment

Supportive atmosphere; safety of the learners; continuous feedback; reflection by students; learner participation during feedback; resources used in giving feedback; pupil-pupil interaction; teacher-pupil interaction; the paraphernalia in the classroom walls and corners; the number of students per classroom.

e. Assessment procedures

Homework tasks given to learners at the end of the lessons.

4.4.4.3 Analysis of data from document analysis

According to Bowen (2009:32), the analysis process of data from document analysis involves skimming (artificial examination), reading (thorough examination) and interpretation. This iterative process combines elements of content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis was done to organise information into categories related to the central questions of the research (see section 4.4). The thematic analysis process was done to form patterns within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis. To achieve this, the researcher was involved in a careful, more focused re-reading and reflection of the data. The following document analysis schedule is designed to give data that is based on critical pedagogy, constructivism, critical thinking and curriculum change in history teaching and Zimbabwe.

1 History syllabus document

Syllabus aims; assessment objectives; critical thinking skills envisaged by the history syllabus; teaching and learning strategies (learner tasks and activities); scheme of assessment; approaches in history teaching and learning; amount of content to be covered

2. Policy documents in history teaching and learning

Assessment procedures in secondary school history; time allocated to history teaching and learning in the school curriculum; ministry and departments' expectations for the history teacher

3. The scheme-cum-plans

Teaching and learning objectives; learner activities; resources; lesson evaluations teachers make; assessment tasks for the learners

4. Assessment papers

Types of assessments
a. Formative assessment papers
Verbs used to ask questions; variation of levels of verbs in questions

b. Summative assessment papers
Verbs used to ask questions; variation of levels of verbs in questions

4.4.5 Reliability

The same interview guide, observation schedule and document analysis schedule were used with the three participants at the three different schools to enhance Drost (2012:106)'s view that there should be consistency of measurement over a variety of conditions in which basically the same results should be obtained. This study also applied inter-rater reliability where the interview, observation and document analysis schedules were judged by the pilot study participants, the supervisor and the co-supervisor for a check of their reliability. This was in view of the suggestion by Drost (2012:106) that reliability is the extent to which measurements are repeatable when different persons perform the measurements, on different occasions, under different conditions, with supposedly alternative instruments which measure the same thing.

Reliability is threatened in research by threats such as subject, observer, situational, instrument and data processing reliability (Weiner and Hopkins 2007:9). In order to deal with the subject reliability threat, the researcher got the trust of the participants by adequately explaining to them the purpose of the research. The situational reliability threat was dealt with by asking teachers to have interviews at their most convenient opportunities and places. The instrument reliability threat was circumvented by having the interview, observation and document analysis schedules approved by the supervisor and conducting a pilot study before they were used for data collection. Data processing reliability threat was addressed by having the data

analysis process confirmed by the participants in the pilot study and member checking of the interpretation of the findings of the study.

4.4.6 Validity

Drost (2012:114) says validity is concerned with the meaningfulness of research components. Weiner and Hopkins (2007:20) say validity is the degree to which any instrument succeeds in describing what it is designed to measure. This study considered content validity in coming up with the items for the interview schedule (see 4.4.3.1), the observation schedule (see 4.4.3.2) and the document analysis schedule (see 4.4.3.3). The items were prepared with reference to the research questions and the objectives of the study so as to ensure that the data collected helped to answer the research questions and to explain the objectives. The items on the schedules were piloted first and then presented to the supervisor for approval before their use in the collection of data in the field study. This is in so far as Weiner and Hopkins (2007:22) say content validity deals with whether the items included in the instrument adequately represent the universe of questions that could have been asked.

4.4.7 Trustworthiness

Tuli (2010:101) says the fundamental criterion for qualitative research findings is trustworthiness which deals with how a researcher can be certain that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to and taking account of. Lauckner, *et al* (2012:14) say trustworthiness is the soundness of a study. They say the criteria for trustworthiness are credibility (see 4.4.7.1), transferability (see 4.4.7.2) and confirmability (see 4.4.7.3).

4.4.7.1 Credibility

Shanton (2004:64) says credibility deals with the question of how congruent the findings of qualitative research are with reality. In order to ensure credibility, certain

techniques are necessary according to Loh (2013:5) and Shanton (2004:64-69). They say that these include adoption of research methods well established in qualitative investigation in general and in information science in particular (interview, observation and document analysis); prolonged engagement between the investigator and the participants which was achieved by having interviews, observations and document analysis over a period of two months in order to establish a relationship of trust between the researcher and the participants; triangulation using different sampling procedures (see 4.7.4.1- 4.7.4.3), data sources (see 4.4), and methods (4.4.3.1-4.4.3.3), member checks that were done by taking back the analysis and interpretations of the findings to the participants to enable them to approve or disprove for purposes of further analysis and interpretation; frequent peer debriefing sessions with the supervisor and other history teachers in the same schools and thick description of the phenomenon under scrutiny. It is also notable that the techniques explained above are of a constructivist nature which is congruent with the conceptual framework of constructivism. Credibility of the findings is increased if the findings can be transferred to other contexts.

4.4.7.2 Transferability

Shanton (2004:69) says since the findings of a qualitative study are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other populations. Rather, there is need to focus on the criterion of the transferability of the findings which is possible by providing sufficient contextual information about the fieldwork sites so that readers of the findings can make a transfer to their own situations (see 4.4.2.1). This makes a clear distinction between empirical generalisability and conceptual generalisability and this study is concerned with the latter since concepts developed in one context can be transferred to other contexts. Loh (2013:5) says this is possible through the provision of a thick description of the phenomenon under investigation (see 4.4.7.2) to allow readers to have a proper understanding of it, thereby enabling them to compare the instances of the described phenomenon with those that they experience in their own situations. This was done by providing a thick description of the findings of the study by presenting a descriptive analysis which

included quotations of actual words spoken by the participants during interviews and observations. This enabled the readers to experience the findings in their live form which augurs well for transfer to their own contexts. Transferability is enhanced if the findings are seen to be dependable for use in the readers' own contexts.

4.4.7.3 Confirmability

Shanton (2004:72) says steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible that the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants rather than the characteristic preferences of the researcher. Voice-recording of interviews was done in order to capture the actual experiences and ideas of the participants. The transcripts with the data that was used as quotations from the participants were made available for anyone to scrutinise. Following the recommendation by Loh (2013:5) that a confirmability audit trail must be possible in order to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative research an audit trail of the interviews was done.

4.4.8 Triangulation

In light of the view by Hussein (2009:3) that triangulation is the use of multiple methods in studying phenomenon for the purpose of increasing study credibility the researcher used interviews, observations and document analysis to study the learning environment in history teaching. To enhance the contention by Sargeant (2012:3) that triangulation is using multiple data sources to produce a comprehensive view of the phenomenon being studied, the researcher used documents used in history teaching, interviewees and live lessons to collect data. Yeasmin (2012:156) combines the views by Hussein and Sargeant and says triangulation is a process of verification that increases validity by incorporating several viewpoints and methods. In pursuit of the concurrence by Hussein (2009:3) and Yeasmin (2012:156) that triangulation implies the combination of two or more theoretical perspectives in a study, the researcher used interpretivist and constructivist theories in the interpretation of the data that was collected.

In order to enhance what Denzin (1970, in Hussein 2009:3) calls time triangulation data for this study was collected over a period of two months to ensure that the views of teachers are kept within minimum range of change to affect the reliability of the findings (see 4.4.5) as the robustness of data can vary based on the time data were collected. With regard to space triangulation, data was retrieved from interviews with secondary school history teachers, observations of live lessons taught by secondary school history teachers, documents analyses of secondary school history syllabus, secondary school history teachers' scheme-cum-lessons plans, secondary school history formative and summative assessment papers and secondary school history pupils' exercise books (see 4.4.3). This study used critical theory (see 2.2.1-2.2.4.), critical pedagogy (see 2.3.1-2.3.4) and constructivism (see 2.4) as theoretical triangulation in interpreting the data to support the findings.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Research ethics is defined by Marshall (1998:566) as the application of moral rules and professional codes of conduct to the collection, analysis, reporting and publication of information about research [participants], in particular active acceptance of [participants'] right to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent. Gallagher (2005:4) says ethical principles are essential to ensure that conclusions drawn from research are valid and that the integrity of the methodology used in arriving at these conclusions is beyond reproach. Halai (2006:5) says the ethical principles that guide research are: informed and voluntary consent; confidentiality of information shared; anonymity of research participants; beneficence or no harm to participants and reciprocity.

In order to ensure that student researchers meet these ethical principles in conducting research, Halai (2006:5) says universities lay down principles and guidelines for conducting research in an ethically appropriate manner and require the researcher to obtain approval from Ethics Committees before doing the research. In the spirit of conducting this research in an ethically appropriate manner, the

researcher sought approval to conduct research from the University of the Free State's Ethics Committee. Equipped with the Ethics Approval Letter, the researcher sought permission from the MoPSE and the Midlands P. E. D to do research in the three secondary schools. Letters of approval from these authorities were attached to the informed consent forms that were distributed to the teachers who were the participants in the research.

4.5.1 Informed and voluntary consent

The researcher got the informed and voluntary consent of the participants by giving them consent forms to sign and date as *prima facie* evidence that they voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. The University Degrees Research Committee (2008:63) states that human subjects in a study need to be informed about the nature of the study. The participants were also informed that their participation remained open to cession if they felt they no longer needed to continue with the participation.

The researcher needed to ensure that the participants were informed about the information relating to the study in particular. The information that the participants were given included the purpose of the research by explaining the research topic, a detailed description of the processes involved, time of engagement, the potential risk of inconvenience, the likely outcomes of the study which are beneficial to the participants and the nature of participation which was voluntary.

4.5.2 Confidentiality

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:63) say participants must be informed of their confidentiality. The participants were informed of their confidentiality in terms of remaining anonymous in the collection of data through the use of pseudonyms for interviews and observations, the storage of collected data in lockable room and drawers to ensure that no-one except the researcher had access to the data, as well

as in the reporting of findings unless they choose to be overtly quoted in the reporting of the findings. The researcher informed the participants that the findings of the research will be communicated to their school heads and the MoPSE in order to allay any suspicions on the use that could be made of the research findings. The participants were allowed to ask any questions concerning the research and get clarification from the researcher in order to enable them to participate from an informed point of view. The researcher also attached a portion of the CTR form signed by the supervisor to assure the participants that the research was for academic purposes only. This was done to enhance the chances of volunteering to participate in the research process.

4.5.3 Protection against harm

The researcher had to take steps to protect the participants against any form of harm that was likely to emanate from their participation. This was in view of the call by Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:64) that participants need to be safeguarded from any mental or physical harm that might befall them consequent to their participation. The researcher made sure that the venues selected for the interviews in their offices were away from the non-participants to avoid being put under pressure by the presence of their colleagues. The researcher also ensured that the information that they proffered could not be linked to them directly by promising to use alphabet letters to refer to their schools in the data as well as in the reporting of the findings. The researcher made sure that there would be no mental harm by just focusing on the information the participants were prepared to provide without putting undue pressure on them.

4.5.4 Issues of power relations

In a study driven by critical theory which speaks to the issues of power relations there was the need to consider the levels of power that could be given to the participants. The University Research Degrees Committee (2008:4) warns that the power imbalance tendency that obtains between the researcher and the researched

has to be taken into consideration. The participants were given power to decide when they could be interviewed, observed and which documents to supply to the researcher. Fortunately, they exercised that power to the satisfaction and advantage of the researcher since all documents needed for analysis were supplied.

4.6 PILOT STUDY

In order to test the feasibility of the study, a pilot study or a trial run was done at two secondary schools using one history teacher at each school. This was done in view of the contention by Leon, Davis and Kraemer (2011:626) that it is a "feasibility" study whose purpose is to examine the feasibility of an approach that is intended to be used in a larger scale study. In other words, it is used to test out the research methods, instruments and data analysis plan to see if they are obtaining the result required by the study.

Since the pilot study involved going into the field to collect sample data, the researcher prepared for relevant documentation that introduced the researcher to the institutions and the teachers who took part in the mini-study. A Letter of Title Approval was acquired through the UFS and it was presented to the school heads and the teachers for permission to do the mini-study. A Letter of Approval from the MoPSE and the P. E. D, Midlands Province in Zimbabwe, granting permission for the study accompanied the interview and observation protocols. An Ethics Approval Letter from the UFS was also presented to the same for complementing the letter of introduction.

In this study, the researcher randomly selected two secondary school history teachers to hold mini-interviews with in order to test the interview protocol. The teachers were asked to read through the interview protocols and identify any ambiguities which the researcher had not noticed. They were asked to make comments on the length, structure and wording of the interview protocol and the

researcher made alterations on the interview protocol accordingly before the full-scale study.

The same teachers were observed during their teaching in order to test the observation protocol. The teachers were asked to read through the observation protocols and point out any ambiguities for the researcher's attention. They made comments on the length, structure and wording of the observation protocol and alterations were made accordingly before the main study was commenced.

The pilot study was significant in that it highlighted the need to change some of the interview questions so that they became more general in order to avoid chances of getting yes/no answers which are not suitable for qualitative study. In addition, corrections were done on the questions to remove some language ambiguities. The pilot study helped the researcher to streamline the questions of the interview so that two main questions are asked per interview session in order to minimise fatigue on the part of the participants and to keep them focused. Participants greatly value their time and the researcher took great care to judge when to end an interview in order to insure that responses given are relevant not just done to complete the interview. The pilot study also opened to the researcher the importance of appreciating the participants as key players in any study and the need to value their voices, feelings and beliefs.

The researcher also discovered that he needed to be a very good listener during both interviews and observations. Observation highlighted that several processes happen at the same time in each lesson which could be relevant to the study. The difficulty is how to capture everything as a single observer. This helped in suggesting focused observation per each lesson in line with the observation schedule. The pilot study helped the researcher to know the importance of being particular about what to search for when dealing with documents because they can be overwhelming to the extent that unnecessary data can be collected. This resulted in a thorough

preparation of the document analysis schedule with a clear focus on the research questions and objectives.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The focus of this chapter was to elucidate the research design and methodology. The key aspects discussed in the chapter are qualitative research and qualitative methodology, the purpose of the empirical study, pilot study, the data collection methods, the sampling procedure and the analysis and interpretation of data. The following chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings of the empirical study.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS TOWARDS PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK FOR CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of undertaking this study was to provide a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This was pursued as a way of addressing the challenges that history teachers encounter in teaching history for the development of critical thinking skills. The skills-based approach in history teaching has proven to be elusive for the majority of the history teachers. As a build up to the achievement of the overall aim of the study three objectives were suggested to guide in the achievement of the main aim.

Data was collected in order to address the objectives of the study as stipulated in section 1.6:

- The first objective was to establish the need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.
- The second objective was to elucidate the current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.
- The third objective was to provide a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research findings were done on the basis of the objectives of the study, diligently fusing the findings from theory, literature study, interviews, observations and document analysis. Data on objectives 1 and 2 are presented, analysed and interpreted on the basis of the themes and

constructs that emerged from the literature study. The findings of the empirical study were used to confirm or disconfirm the literature study in order to build towards a framework in constructing an enabling learning environment. Critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism were used as the cornerstones in the interpretation of the research findings. This is in so far as the theories help to suggest a paradigm shift in the construction of learning environments which are amenable to the development of critical thinking skills. A cross-case presentation, analysis and interpretation was done in order to unveil the themes of the research findings with the hope to establish the need for a framework, the current practices in addressing the challenges and the suggestion of a framework of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

5.2 Research participants' profiles

In pursuit of the participants' level of preparedness to teach the new curriculum which aims to develop critical thinking skills the key question asked was: **How have you prepared yourself to teach this new history curriculum which aims to develop critical thinking skills?** The data was collected from one history teacher at each of the three participating secondary schools in GUD. The following table shows the profiles of the history teachers involved in the study.

Table 5.1: Participating teachers' profiles

Teacher	Age	Qualifications	Year professional qualification obtained	Subject Taught	Major	Current Study
A	47	B.A. Gen; Grad. CE	1999	History	History	None
B	39	B.A. Gen; Grad. CE	2010	History	History	None
C	46	B.A. Gen; PGDE	2007	History	History	None

From the profiles of the history teachers who participated in the study, it is clear that they are all qualified to teach history as they majored in history at both degree and professional qualification levels. The fact that they became professionally qualified history teachers between 1999 and 2010 suggests that they should have been exposed to the requirement to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills since curriculum change and history teaching in Zimbabwe revealed that from 1990 there was the thrust towards the "doing history" approach (see 3.3.4.6). It can be said that the history teachers who participated in the research were reliable; credible and dependable sources of data. It can also be said that the purposive sampling that was done for the study suited the research very well (see 4.4.2). However, at the time of the research, none of them was pursuing a study to keep abreast with the current trends in the teaching of history.

5.3 Data addressing the first objective: Establish the need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

This section deals with the first objective which is to establish the need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The study sought to achieve this objective by finding out the challenges encountered by history teachers in developing critical thinking skills. These challenges are presented as inadequate teacher training, development and support (see 3.3.8.1; 5.3.1), poor management of the history curriculum change (see 3.3.8.2; 5.3.2), ineffective teaching methodology (see 3.3.8.3; 5.3.3), prevalence of traditional assessment (see 3.3.8.4; 5.3.4), the lack of relevant resources (see 3.3.8.5; 5.3.5), classroom environment (see 3.3.8.6; 5.3.6). The challenges impact negatively on the learning experiences and so, the learners' development of critical thinking skills is stifled. This justifies the need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

5.3.1 Inadequate teacher training, development and support

This challenge in the shift towards a skills-based approach in history teaching is presented, analysed and interpreted in view of the categories of inadequate pre-service teacher training, inadequate in-service teacher training, inadequate further studying opportunities and lack of adequate support for history teachers.

5.3.1.1 Inadequate pre-service history teacher training

A careful scrutinisation of the literature on the challenges which militate against the curriculum and history teaching changes towards the focus on critical thinking skills development revealed the lack of proper pre-service training of history teachers (Aktekin 2013:469; Stoffels 2008:32 and Cole and Barsalou 2006:10). This is supported by Manyumwa (2016:199) who says the very teacher educators who are supposed to train teachers in teaching for developing critical thinking skills do not possess any formal critical thinking or critical pedagogy which is one of the key pedagogies for critical thinking skills. Manyumwa (2016:9) says, consequently, student teachers in Zimbabwe's teacher education institutions complete their training with little or no critical thinking skills. This is corroborated by Westbrook, *et al* (2013:29) who say teacher educators incessantly use lectures, teacher-led question and answer and basic group work rather than the pedagogic approaches promoted in schools. This is contrary to the radical pedagogy which is unlike the "banking education" concept (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:79) which is advocated by critical pedagogy. Aktekin (2013:469) says there is poor pre-service training of university graduates such that they cannot effectively implement activity-based history teaching in Turkey. Stoffels (2008:32) says there is lack of specialised teacher training on teaching for critical thinking skills development in South Africa which results in the use of textbooks and teacher talk even in trying to develop critical thinking skills. Cole and Barsalou (2006:10) say that due to conflict in countries like Rwanda, history teachers were trained in a rigid and passive pedagogy that made them authoritarian teachers.

There is general agreement between the literature study and the responses that were given by the participants with regard to the level of pre-service training in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The interviewees were asked the question: **Were you adequately trained to use the skills-based approach in history teaching?** The history teacher at School A retorted:

"*The training I got is faulty and I think it needs revisiting. The focus was on content rather than critical thinking. There is no module that was targeted at enhancing critical thinking skills among the trainee teachers. No wonder why some of the history teachers even fail to correctly interpret the syllabus which shows lack of bare critical thinking skills*".

This was supported by the teacher at School C who responded to the same question by beaming:

"*I do not have a clear understanding of teaching history for developing critical thinking skills so I do not teach much of critical thinking skills*".

However, these sentiments were rebutted by the teacher at school B who said:

"*As a student in high school in the 1990s, I did syllabus 2166 which had a component which assisted in developing critical thinking skills which was the source based study. At college, I was taught how to handle types of questions requiring analysis, evaluation, assessment and synthesis*".

It is clear from the responses by the teachers at schools A and C that there is inadequate pre-service training of history teachers in order to equip them for developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The same can be said of the response by the teacher at school B as being a student exposed to components of critical thinking skills is not the same as teacher training. Moreover, exposure to handling questions which require analysis, evaluation, assessment and synthesis is not synonymous with training to be able to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The least that the response posits is the ignorance on the part of the teacher as to what exactly is involved in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The bottom line is that the responses reveal that there is inadequate pre-service training of history teachers for the development of critical thinking skills in

history teaching. If these responses are anything to go by it follows that there is an urgent need to provide a framework for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The researcher was also convinced that there is inadequate pre-service training of history teachers for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching during lessons observations. The methods that the teachers regularly used during the lessons could be traced to the training that they had received. The regularly used method was teacher talk. This was not surprising given the contention by Stoffels (2008:32) that the lack of specialised teacher training on teaching for critical thinking skills development results in the use of teacher talk even in trying to develop critical thinking skills.

The lessons were punctuated by the use of questions which required learners to provide either one word answers or a short phrase or a sentence. These were mainly questions of the what-is-type, when-type, why-type and who-type. This compromised the contention by Thompson (2011:5) on questioning that the use of open-ended questions enhances the development of critical thinking skills. However, this was in tandem with the view by Ledlow (2014:2 of 3) that critical pedagogy advocates the use of methodology which involves inquiry and question and answer was evidence of inquiry by the teachers.

The activities that the teachers used during the group work also left much to be desired in trying to enhance the development of critical thinking skills. Group activities were characterised by textbook reading, writing of key points of the content read in the textbook and an oral presentation of the group findings. This was always followed by a few questions asked by the learners to try and consolidate the content of the presentations. This passive engagement with information ran contrary to what is posited by critical pedagogy (Green in Muro 2012:4) and constructivism (Mogashoa 2014:53) that learners should be actively engaged with information in

order to conceptualise new ideas which enhances the development of critical thinking skills.

The observations also revealed that the participants used the traditional methods in the teaching and learning of history. There was a clear indication that all the three teachers struggled to break from Westbrook, *et al.* (2013:29)'s contention that teacher educators continue to use lectures, teacher-led question and answer and basic group work rather than the pedagogic approaches recommended in schools. These are the pedagogic approaches to the development of critical thinking skills highlighted in the literature study such as concept mapping (Atay and Karabacak 2012:234), questioning (Thompson 2011:5), collaborative/constructivist (Spiro, et al 2014:3; Karagiorgic and Symeou 2005:21); case analysis (Jonassen 1999:219); problem solving (McMahon 2012:2 of 9) and "doing history" (Aktekin 2013:469) as advocated by critical pedagogy and constructivism. By using the traditional methods highlighted the teachers did not live up to the expectations of a learning environment guided by constructivism which requires active learning which engages the learner through the relevant approaches (Mogashoa 2014:53) and critical theory which requires putting the learners at the centre of learning (Bohman 2009:4 of 5) in order to avoid the depositing of knowledge into the learners (Major and Mangope 2012:139). This misfiring by the teachers in terms of approaches makes it quite clear that there is a need to provide a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The scheme-cum-plans that the participants used also confirmed the inadequate pre-service teacher training for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as shown by the reference to the traditional resources in history teaching shown in the figures that follow for schools B and C respectively.
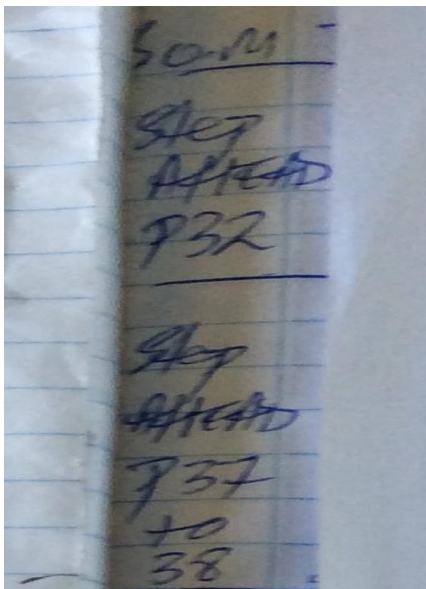
School B

School C

The uniformity of the resources that the teachers at the schools planned to use in their lessons is clearly striking. The reader needs to be reminded that these participants trained as history teachers at different institutions. The uniformity serves to show that the type of training for history teachers is uniform and at the same time very inadequate in view of the requirement to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills.

The textbook, teacher's notes and charts were best used to provide content rather than to develop critical thinking skills. This was made clear in one lesson by the teacher at school A where a chart was used to consolidate textbook material on why the League of Nations failed in the 1930s.
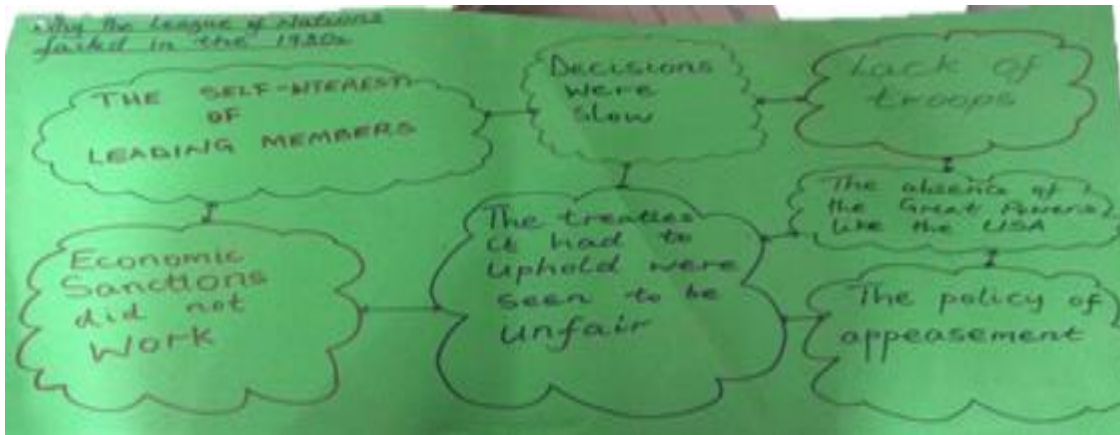
It was the same scenario with one of the lessons at school C where a chart was used to consolidate content rather than to stimulate the development of critical thinking skills.

Since neither of these resources was primary so as to enable engagement with history by the learners, this did not enhance the "doing history" approach in the development of critical thinking skills which according to Moreeng and Du Toit (2012:40) makes use of various primary sources which students must be allowed to examine. The planned use of this limited range of resources contradicts the call of the constructivists that there should be a provision of a variety of resources for use in teaching and learning.

5.3.1.2 Inadequate in-service training of history teachers

The lack of in-service training is also another challenge that history teaching faces in many countries that espouse the incorporation of changes in history curriculum towards the skills-based approach. It can be said that Takafakare (2015:31) has indicated this by saying that the history teacher in Zimbabwe is not in-serviced enough to grasp innovative ways to enable the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching and learning. The problem of lack of in-service training of history teachers is confirmed by Lekgoathi (2010:109) who says the outcome-based assessment of the new curriculum in South Africa rendered a number of experienced educators redundant since they had not been in-serviced. Ruto and Ndola (2013:87) says the secondary school history teachers in Warren District of Kenya lacked adequate in-service training and that devastated their morale in the teaching of the subject.

All the participants seem to agree with the view by Takafakare (2015:31) that the history teacher is not adequately in-serviced to be able to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The question asked in this regard was: **Have you attended any workshop that exposed you to the requirements of the skills-based approach?** The teacher at school A remarked:

"I attended one workshop, but it was more to do with marking learners' work requiring application of critical thinking rather than how to develop critical thinking skills. Many issues needed to be covered and time was a challenge".

Similar sentiments were echoed by the teacher at school B who said:

"I attended a workshop at the cluster level, but it was more about marking of learners' work not on how I should help the learners to develop critical thinking skills in my lessons. You see the challenge is that we are worried more with good results rather than the process of achieving the results. The Ministry is now demanding action research based teaching, but I am not familiar with that".

The teacher at school C capped it all by hinting that even though he had attended workshops, he had not benefited much from the workshops with regard to the

development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This is what he said in response to the question:

"I have been attending workshops this time around on how to implement the new curriculum requirement of developing critical thinking skills. I am yet to see how that is implementable. Moreover, the time limit scuttles the benevolent programmes".

These responses point to the inadequacies of the in-servicing of history teachers in order to equip them for developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The workshops which are viewed as the panacea to the inadequacies are failing to give the necessary tools to the extent that the history teachers still remain incapacitated. Critical pedagogy (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:79) requires a teacher who is non-authoritarian, facilitator of learning, emancipator and engages in praxis for the improvement of the learning environment. In-service training is not doing enough to equip history teachers with these critical skills for use in history teaching therefore, it is concluded that there is a need to provide a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.

5.3.1.3 Lack of further study opportunities for history teachers

Literature study has indicated that the skills-based approach in history teaching is further stifled by the lack of further study opportunities for history teachers. Westbrook, *et al,* (2013:29) agree with this observation as they say that there is a blurring between initial teacher training and continuing professional development. Due to this lack of continuing professional development, Manyumwa (2016:9) contends that the same worldviews and transmission models of teaching that the trainee teachers in Zimbabwe receive during training are what they pass on when they teach in schools. This automatically stifles the development of critical thinking skills. Ruto and Ndola (2013:87) say that history teachers are not involved in research activities that could enhance the teaching and learning of history since research helps history teachers to keep abreast with trends in pedagogical developments in the subject.

In responding to the question: **How have you prepared yourself to teach this new curriculum which aims to develop critical thinking skills,** that was asked to gauge the participants' views on their level of preparedness to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills, the teacher at school A said:

"I did personal research on how to teach for the development of critical thinking skills".

The teacher at school B said:

"I use the experience I got from my high school days and my training at the college".

The sentiments of the teachers at schools A and B were contradicted by the teacher at school C who also said:

"None"

What emerges from these responses is that each history teacher is doing what suits their circumstances in order to prepare for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. There is no common strategy which history teachers can refer to in their quest to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. This means that there is lack of opportunity for further study for history teachers directly related to the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills.

The lack of further studies for history teachers flies past the firm refusal of the idea of an objective world by the critical theorists (Corradetti 2014:18 of 36) who see the world as in a state of flux thereby requiring lifelong learning or continuous development of knowledge. This also compromises the idea of praxis, that is, critical reflection and action, as means to initiate and implement better learning environments as suggested in critical pedagogy (Kessin-Styles 2003 in Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:81). In addition this lack of opportunities for further studies for history teachers compromises the continuous improvement advocated for in the enabling learning environment framework discussed in section 3.3.7.4.   The information in table 5.1 which was derived from the information provided on the teacher profiles (see 4.4.2.1.1-4.4.2.1.3) and tear off of the consent form attests to this reality as

none of the history teachers who participated in the study was studying anything to enhance their pedagogical content knowledge in history teaching. If that is the scenario, then it makes sense to suggest a framework that history teachers can use to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The lesson observations helped to confirm what the literature study and interviews revealed that there were no opportunities for history teachers to further their pedagogic content knowledge. The resources and the methods indicated that the same old resources and methods were still dominating history teaching in spite of the paradigm shift from content mastery towards a skills-based approach. This suggests that even the little research that the teacher at school A claimed to do did not improve the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills.

5.3.1.4 Lack of adequate support to history teachers in schools

A search in the existing literature of the challenges hindering the transition to a skills-based approach in history teaching revealed the lack of adequate support to history. A study by Van Hoover and Yeager (2014:51) revealed that the history teacher receives little-to-no support in the "doing history" approach. In most cases, there is no assistance from the department with the exception of a few observations which are more judgmental rather than supportive or mentoring. They further say that the school management does not offer much needed support to history teachers as no classrooms are allocated to history unlike other subjects which have specialist rooms allocated to them. This results in the history teacher having to traverse the whole school to conduct lessons in different classrooms. By its critical nature, history leads to isolation of the teacher by the school heads because history teachers are viewed as being critical of the policies of the schools even in cases where that is not the case.

Takafakare (2015:19) beckons the view by saying that in Zimbabwe, the recommendation by Tendi in 2009 for the creation of a History Teachers' Association (HTA) to enhance and promote good and relevant history teachers' pedagogical content knowledge has remained on paper. There are no such associations of history teachers at all levels like clusters, districts, provincial and national. The NCHWG which was operational in the 1980s immediately after independence has since ceased to work and nothing has been founded on its grave. This means that there is no platform at which history practitioners can meet and support each other by sharing their experiences in history teaching so as to enhance their pedagogic content knowledge especially with regard to the teaching and learning of history for the development of critical thinking skills. Although there is no nationally organised history teachers' association, history teachers' professional growth is enhanced by the birth of clusters of schools where history teachers come together to discuss and share experiences. This is done under the Better Schools Programme in Zimbabwe (BSPZ) which co-ordinates schools at cluster and district levels for history teachers to share experiences and discuss approaches to the teaching of history. However, due to the withdrawal of donor funds which helped to kick-start the BSPZ programme, the meetings are held infrequently as schools have to finance the programme through contributions.

The participants were asked to express their views on the level of support they received in their quest to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The question they were asked is: **What support challenges do you face in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills?** In response to the question, the teacher at school A said:

"*The school parents' assembly is very supportive in terms of both print and electronic resources even though primary resources are lacking. The workshops I made to attend are useful in helping me with how to mark the learners' work not how to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills. While there are such kinds of workshops, they are not attended by every teacher except a selected few. The school head makes it very complicated to teach because local illustrations make contextualised teaching impossible yet history is best taught for the development of*

critical thinking skills in context. Generally, trips are not supported by the authorities at this school".

The support of the parents' assembly was also echoed by the teacher at school B who said:

"*The parents support the learners with the necessary reading material. However, more could be done in light of trips with 'O' Level learners. I receive very little support from my Head of department because his area of specialisation is another subject not history. The school does not promote the hiring of resource persons or experts to assist with the development of critical thinking skills. The Ministry does not come out very clear on supporting the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching maybe because of the politicisation of the teaching of history in secondary schools".*

The teacher at school C said:

"*The support of the parents is minimal in so far as the textbooks issue is concerned. There is also no internet for the Form 3s and 4s which stifles research by the learners. We have never gone for a trip with these classes as well. My head of department is more concerned with my fulfillment of the quantitative requirements of the Results Based Management System (RBMS) that is used to evaluate me at the end of the year. The school administration does not allow the use of cellphones in the lessons and even at school which means that I cannot give tasks to learners which require the use of the cellphones and the internet during the lessons".*

These responses by the teachers suggest that generally the parents support the learning of their children in history which is in agreement with requirement of critical pedagogy that there should be collaboration of different stakeholders (Wink 2005:165, Mogashoa 2014:53). Although they need to improve on the support for trips and the provision of the internet since critical pedagogy encourages open classrooms (Ledlow 2014:2 of 3) where the classroom goes out to the world and the world comes to the classroom.

The history teachers receive very little or no support from the department heads and the school leaders as observed by Van Hoover and Yeager (2014:51). The school

and political environments are hindrances in opposition to the democratisation of teaching and learning as envisaged in critical pedagogy (Moreeng and Twala 2014:495). For any curriculum change in history to be successful it requires the unwavering support of the parents, department heads, school heads, ministry and the political leadership. It is noteworthy that the teachers did not mention the existence of outright isolation as suggested by Van Hoover and Yeager. Also they did not make reference to the issue of the allocation of classrooms. The exclusion of the issue of subject specific classrooms was interpreted by the researcher to mean that the teachers did not realise how difficult it is to have relevant paraphernalia for history in classrooms that are open to use by all other subjects. There is lack of critical reflection as in critical pedagogy (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:81) by the teachers on what may enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The lack of meaningful support for the history teachers at the schools became evident when the researcher did document analysis and lesson observations at schools B and C. The scheme-cum-plans did not make any mention of the use of the ICTs in the teaching of history suggesting that they were non-existent in the two schools. The lessons observations confirmed why they did not mention these devices in their lesson planning documents. The classrooms did not have ICTs for use in delivering lessons. The images of the classrooms are given here.

School B

School C

The situation was not even helped at school A where there were smart boards, interactive boards and projectors in the classrooms as the image of the classroom shows.

In spite of the fact that the teacher was versatile with the use of ICTs in history teaching, the lessons resembled the dull ones observed at the other two schools, B and C. The teacher was using the smart board portions instead of using the interactive board and the projector in order to stimulate the learners' critical thinking skills. This implies that the history teacher at the school is not motivated enough to take the initiative to use ICTs in history teaching for the development of critical thinking skills. There is need for initiatives that will motivate the teachers to use ICTs in their history lessons in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

5.3.2 Poor management of history curriculum change

Tendi (2009:29) says the third phase in the development of the secondary school history curriculum in Zimbabwe runs from 2002. He agrees with Moyo and Modiba (2013:7) that there was the introduction of a new syllabus 2167 in 2002. The poor management of the history curriculum change was evident in that the new syllabus was never put up for debate or assessment by history experts and teachers (Tendi, 2009:29). Moreover, it was rushed in its introduction as Chitate (2005:80) says there was no preparation of relevant textbooks and history kits for use in the teaching of the new syllabus and history teachers were not given in-service training before the introduction of the new syllabus. This is also clearly evident in the scheme of assessment of the new syllabus which focuses on recall, description of historical events, interpretation and analysis (Syllabus 2167 2013:1). These priorities in the scheme of assessment indicate that the secondary school history learners are required to memorise more of the historical narratives rather than construct their own meanings of historical events.

History as a subject in the secondary school curriculum in Zimbabwe is a compulsory subject for all secondary school learners. This was promulgated by Circular Number 3 of 2002 by the then Secretary of Education, Doctor T. K. Tsodzo. Given this scenario, there are many students who do history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

Jansen (1998:8) argued that the most important factor that militates against curriculum innovation in schools is the system of assessment which is summative in nature by way of examinations. Mapetere, *et al* (2012:86) say secondary school history assessment in Zimbabwe is summative and based on content mastery. Assessment of the learners focuses mainly on the recall of facts as shown by the fact that sixty-eight per cent of the mark allocation for each Ordinary Level history question is for the recall of facts (History Paper 2167/2, 2014). The other thirty-two per cent is for the analysis of historical facts which is far too low if we consider the current state in the teaching of secondary school history the world over which is

focusing on the mastery of critical thinking skills. So, Mapetere (2013:136) argues that the power of narrative has a grip on the assessment of history in secondary schools in Zimbabwe. This translates into teacher-centred approaches in the teaching and learning of history as the focus is on the coverage of the syllabus and not the inculcation of skills. Assessment is not continuous, but mainly summative with the writing of public examinations for the grading of the learners

The interview responses on the management of curriculum change towards the shift to the skills based approach in history teaching highlighted similar challenges. The participants were asked the question: **what are the challenges that you face in trying to meet the demands brought about by the change in history curriculum?** The teacher at school A said:

"I have not been in-serviced to teach for the source based question which was a challenge for me with syllabus 2166 you see. After all, the textbooks that are on offer do not assist me in teaching for the source based question. I do not know how they expect me to do it now when then it was a challenge?"

This was confirmed by the teacher at school B who also added:

"I still avoid question one of the examination which is source based because I have not been given in-service training as to how to prepare the learners for the document based question which was my challenge with syllabus 2166".

The teacher at school C retorted that the situation with regard to the teaching of the source based question has not changed since the introduction of the new syllabus which requires its teaching because of lack of in-service training.

The same question also raised the issue of the number of learners who do history who are said to put a cap on with regard to the teaching methods that history teachers can use. The greater the numbers the more difficult it becomes to use learner-centred approaches. There is evidence of failure to manage the numbers of learners doing history in order to promote learner-centred approaches as the table below shows the average class sizes and workloads of the participants.

Table 5.2: Average class sizes and average workloads by participant

School	Average number of pupils per class at 'O' Level	Number of periods per week
A	35	30
B	45	32
C	55	28

The statistics reveal that history teachers are teaching large classes of learners. The participant at school B said that it is difficult to plan to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills because marking work for these large classes consumes all the planning time.

"Proper planning is difficult because of the classes which average 32 pupils and the workload".

Given that the participant has a total of thirty-two periods of history a week it means on average the teacher has eight classes of such sizes. In order to meet the departmental expectations, it means that the work that is given for assessment is that which is easy to mark. That leads to the avoidance of homework tasks that require the use of critical thinking skills which will take more time marking. This was confirmed by the participant at school A by categorically stating that:

"The number of learners per class negatively impacts on the quality of work for assessment".

The same sentiments were shared by the participant at school C who said:

"The average class size of 55 pupils does not tally with the expectation of one exercise each week. I am forced to give work which is easy to mark".

These views by the participants suggest that history teachers find huge class sizes a barrier in their efforts to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The huge class sizes compromise the quality of work in history teaching which means that there is lack of development of critical thinking skills as a process, but as an event for the history learners to pass the external summative examination.

During the interviews, all the participants had misgivings about ministerial and departmental expectations in the teaching of history as a subject. They all concurred that the expectations from the Ministry to departmental level at schools is that a history teacher must give one exercise a week and one test a fortnight. This is a one size fits all rule which they said does not take into cognisance the number of learners in a class. They also complained that the regulation does not consider the size of the teaching load that the history teacher has to carry which is on average thirty two periods a week. The participant at school A said:

"The expectation is more of quantity than quality of teaching".

The other participant at school B said:

"Why bother about other things when what is expected is quantity?"

The quantity expectation is given more emphasis by school history departments as they are eager to have their teachers meet Ministerial expectations. The focus on the quantity of work administered, marked and recorded smacks of the quality teaching of history which is in tandem with the development of critical thinking skills as envisaged by the history syllabus (see 3.3.2.1). This was proven by the document analyses of school department policies which did not make reference to the expectation of the quality of teaching or the development of critical thinking skills. While history teachers are quite aware of the need to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching as required by the syllabus, the quantity requirement by their departments hampers the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The participant at school C said:

"I rush to cover the syllabus content so that I can meet the quantity requirement. How can you manage to cover 21 topics for Paper 1 and 15 topics for Paper 2 which gives a total of 37 wide topics".

This is one challenge that this study seeks to resolve in suggesting an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The focus should be on the quality of history teaching not on the quantity of written exercises that are produced at the end of a term or year. History teachers are turned into production machines instead of quality managers in the education system.

Assessment of student learning is one of the master keys in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching (see 2.3.4; 2.4.6.3; 3.2.5.2; 3.2.5.3). It is no wonder that the participants concurred that the assessment procedures currently in use in the teaching of history is counter-productive when it is considered in the light of developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The participant at school A said the following with regard to the assessment procedure:
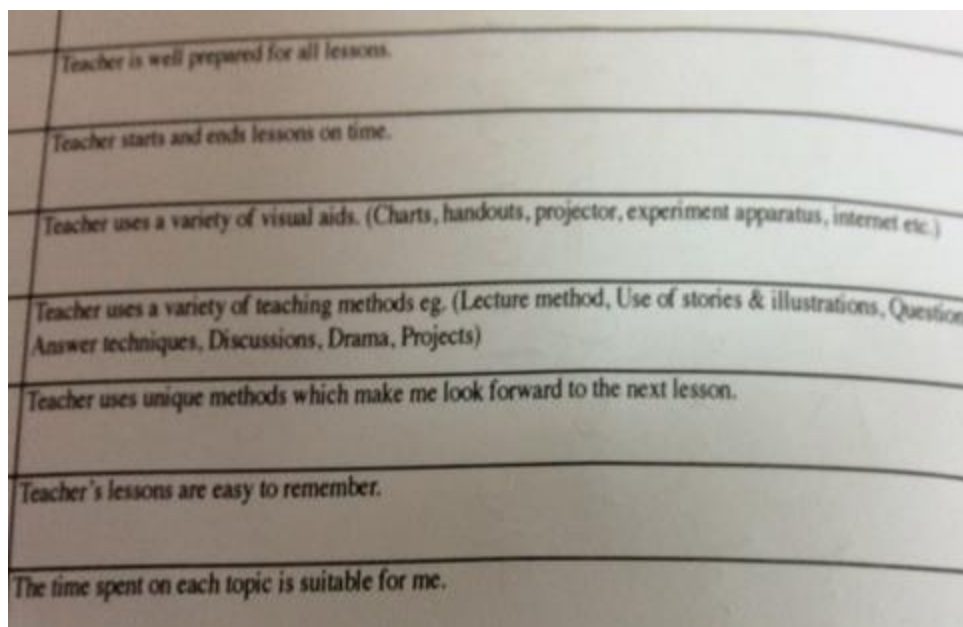
"The current assessment is not really focused on the development of critical thinking skills. It is content-heavy as shown by recall and description which is dominant. Even the analysis part of the question borders around the recall of facts. The analysis question has low mark allocation".

This response goes to show that the assessment procedure in history in Zimbabwe is minimally designed to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. This was corroborated by the participant at school B who said:

"Assessment in history teaching at the moment is a kind of injustice if the mind is to be a critical mind. There is an avoidance of Question 1 in Paper 1, that is, History of Southern Africa, which is source based and very relevant in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The fact that it is not compulsory tells you a lot".

The researcher was not surprised by the response of the participant at school C when it was said the assessment currently in use is directed towards the examination grades not the student as a product of history learning (3.3.8.4). The participant further said that there is little effort, but no focus in the assessment procedure to develop critical thinking skills. The focus on examination grades really militates against the development of critical thinking skills. The participants were of the view that the grades-mania and the lack of relevant resources to use in teaching history for the source-based question prevented them from doing so (see 3.3.8.4). The researcher, having experience in the teaching of history for the source-based question, was left without doubt that these were genuine complaints. The researcher found it a nightmare in teaching history for the source-based paper in the late 1990s before it was replaced by syllabus 2167 in 2003. This is to imply that history learning must focus on the learner acquiring critical thinking skills rather than rote learning in order to pass the examination.

There is also a type of teacher evaluation that is undertaken by the employer or the authority to which history teachers involved in the study were answerable. The participant at school A highlighted that the evaluation instrument focuses on what the teacher does, not on the central role that should be given to the learner as the requirements on the extract of the evaluation form shown below shows.

 According to the participant, this militates against the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching because there is a lack of democracy on the part of the teacher which compromises the individual freedoms that are promoted in a learning environment that is influenced by critical theory (Cohen, *et al* 2011:31). The participant retorted:

"There is some form of prescriptive teaching and learning environment. The evaluation instrument sort of prescribes teaching methods. This often prevents me from using methods which will make me appear like I am not teaching. The learners are quick to fixing the teacher in evaluations if they do not get the notes from me".

What this response by the participant suggests is that teacher evaluations by the learners pose a danger of limiting the teacher's level of operation. The evaluation of the teacher by the learners force the teacher to be in 'charge' of learning which translates to teacher-centred learning which is detrimental to the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The participants at school B and C did not challenge this government teacher evaluation instrument that they use in their schools. This is referred to as the Results Based Management System (RBMS) as shown by the section of the document in the table that follows.

Table 5.3 Quantity expectations of the RBMS for history teachers

				Weight	Agreed Target	Actual Performance	Allowance Variance	Actual Variance	Rating	Weighted Score
Out put No	1	Output Descrip tion	Supervision, Monitoring and evaluation reports	30%						
Qua ntity Des cripti on	29 lessons per week and 8 exercises per term	Standard	90%	15%	846	838	±10	-8	4	0.6
Qua lity Des cripti on	As per Ministry policy	Standard	90%	10%	90	90	±10	0	4	0.4
Tiim elin ess Des cripti on	3 terms	Standard	3 terms	5%	3	3	±10	0	4	0.2
									TOTAL	1.2

As can be discerned in the extract of the RBMS form shown above, it can be said that the sections of the form which are weight, agreed target, actual performance, variance allowance, the rating and weighted score are all expressed in quantitative terms. What is even more surprising is that even the quality description and timeliness description are also in quantity terms. The researcher finds this emphasis on quantity contrary to the constructivist view that the emphasis should be on how learners learn not what they learn (Major and Mangope 2013:16). The researcher is of the view that the evaluation instrument is also teacher-centred which runs parallel to the critical pedagogic tenet suggested by Ledlow (2014: 2 of 3) that teaching and learning should be learner-centred. It can be said that the focus of RBMS is on the work rate of the teacher in the history classroom not on the quality of teaching and learning that goes on in the classroom. The development of critical thinking skills in

history teaching will suffer a still birth if the focus remains on what the teacher does not what the learner does in the teaching and learning of history. This silence about the influence that the teacher evaluation instrument puts on the nature of their teaching suggests that they are not critically reflecting on what they are doing as history teachers. This study is expected to open avenues for the history practitioners to start reflecting about their invaluable roles in teaching history for the development of critical thinking skills. The quantity expectation of the evaluations is authenticated by the Director's Circular Number 36 of 2006 shown.
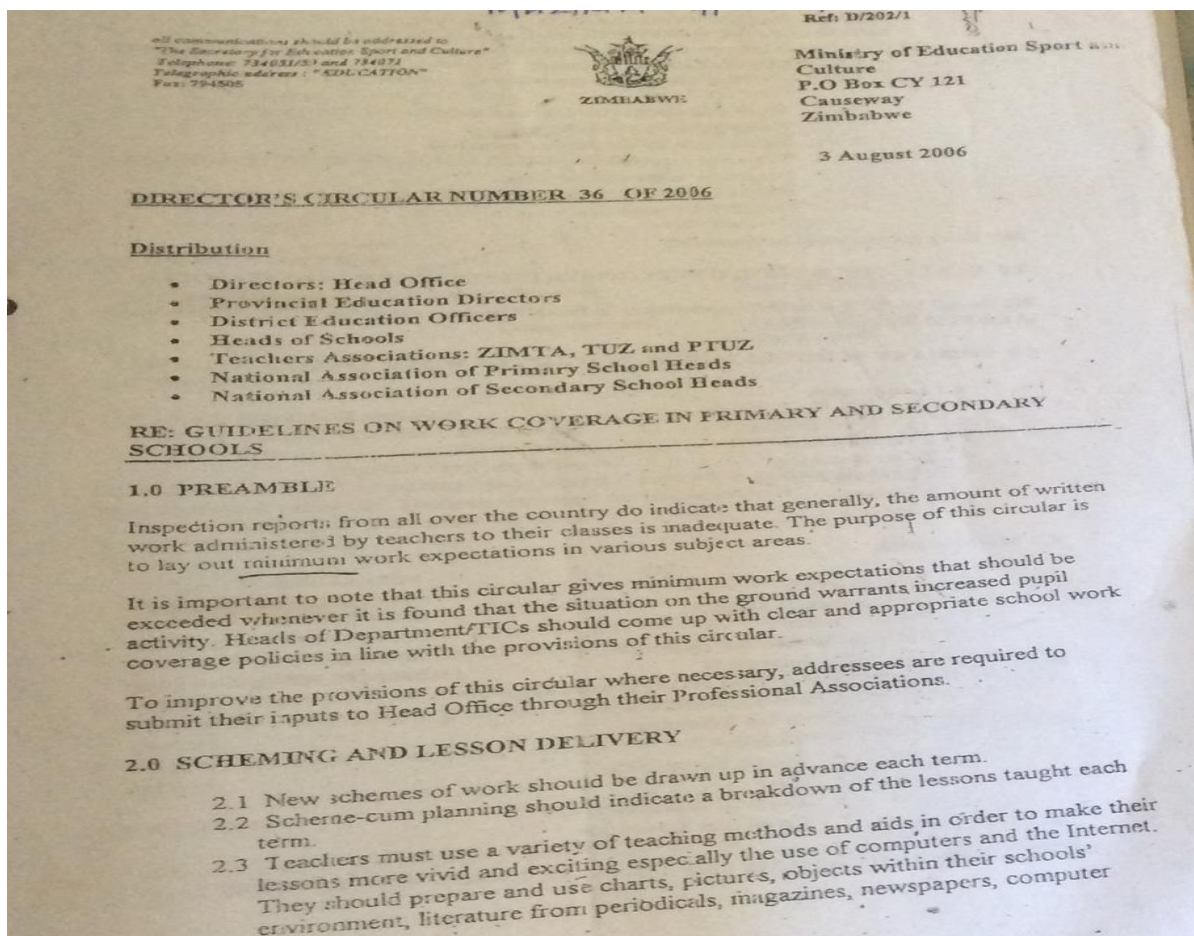
There was confirmation of failure to effectively manage curriculum change by the findings of the lesson observations. The researcher was interested in gauging the tone that the teachers set for the development of critical thinking skills at the beginning of their lessons. The familiar lesson introductions always required the learners to show the teacher that they remembered what was learnt in the previous lessons. The common opening statements of the lessons are:

"Who can tell me what we did yesterday? Who remembers what we learnt about yesterday? We want to start with a recap of what we learnt yesterday.

These lesson introductions did not set the right tone for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Rather, the researcher expected the teachers to give a critical thinking stimulating introduction even on what was learnt in the previous lessons by asking the learners what they learnt, and the challenges, from the content of the previous lessons.

The seating arrangements of rows and columns in the classrooms that were visited by the researcher during lesson observations compromised the principle of constructivism that learning is a social activity which connects learners with others (Pandey 2007:251 and Mogashoa 2014:53). In the case of the classrooms shown in the extracts below, the learners sat in pairs which limited the socialisation element during learning. This arrangement was also seen to deny the learners liberation to freely interact during the lesson as required by critical pedagogy (Moreeng and Twala 2014:495) and active participation (Yilmaz 2008:162). It was also clear that the seating arrangement of pairs was disconfirming one of the expectations of an enabling learning environment which allows for space for large group work and group collaborative writing (Fullan, *et al* 2012:2). The images given show the seating arrangements in the history classrooms which the researcher felt compromised the principles of constructivism, critical pedagogy and an enabling learning environment.

In all the three schools, the learners are made to sit in pairs, arranged in straight rows and columns for an orderly classroom with the teacher's work station in the front in the centre. This arrangement is reminiscent of the colonial past which was based on the authority of the teacher in the classroom. The observations made during the lessons are that it was only easy for one learner to converse with the learner by their side. It was very difficult for learners to converse with those in front or behind the other pair. It was even worse when the teachers wanted to get the learners into groups for group work. Some learners who did not want to lift their chairs had to turn their necks backwards in order to be part of the group which was very disturbing. Where they were patient enough, the learners had to turn their desks so that they would form a round table to make it possible for eye-to-eye contact.

The arrangement of the chairs and desks was made very difficult at schools B and C where there are large class sizes averaging 45 and 55 respectively. While the participants favoured group discussion, the researcher felt pity for the lack of space to manoeuvre for the learners. The following figures are samples of the seating arrangements at schools B and C respectively.

School B

School C

If discussion which is a key strategy for developing critical thinking skills is to be furthered in history lessons then something has to be done with regard to working space in the classrooms as an enabling learning environment requires a large working space for both small and large groups (Weirsma 2008:111). This is where this study will be handy in suggesting a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment.

Document analysis also revealed the stark reality of the failure to make a successful transition to the skills-based approach in history teaching. It is quite clear that the cognitive domain of synthesis is conspicuously non-existent on the continuum of critical thinking skills that the ZIMSEC history syllabus endeavours to be inculcated

in the history learners (see 3.2.5.1; 3.2.5.2; 3.2.5.3). The extract of the assessment objectives from a copy of the syllabus reveals the observation the researcher made in the analysis of the document.

3.0 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, pupils should be able to:

3.1 recall, select and describe historical events in their context;

3.2 describe human activities and beliefs and their effects on resources, environment and other people;

3.3 analyse, interpret and evaluate historical evidence, points of view opinions and value judgements and detect bias;

3.4 assess the significance and relevance of information and draw reasoned conclusions;

3.5 empathise with the past and interpret events and make decision on a particular period in light of the information and conditions prevailing at that time;

3.6 explain concepts and issues that relate to history, population, gender democracy and human rights in a relevant and coherent manner.

It is due to the fact that this critical thinking skill is difficult to translate into history teaching and assessment since history teaching is directed towards assessment by way of written examination.

The scheme-cum-plans of the participants showed a gloomy picture of managing curriculum change with regard to the focus on developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The teacher-pupil activities section of the scheme-cum-plans of the teachers showed the failure to include the activities that can enhance the development of critical thinking skills as highlighted in table 3.1. The examples of what the teachers at schools B and C included as teacher-pupil activities are given for illustration of poor curriculum change management.

School B
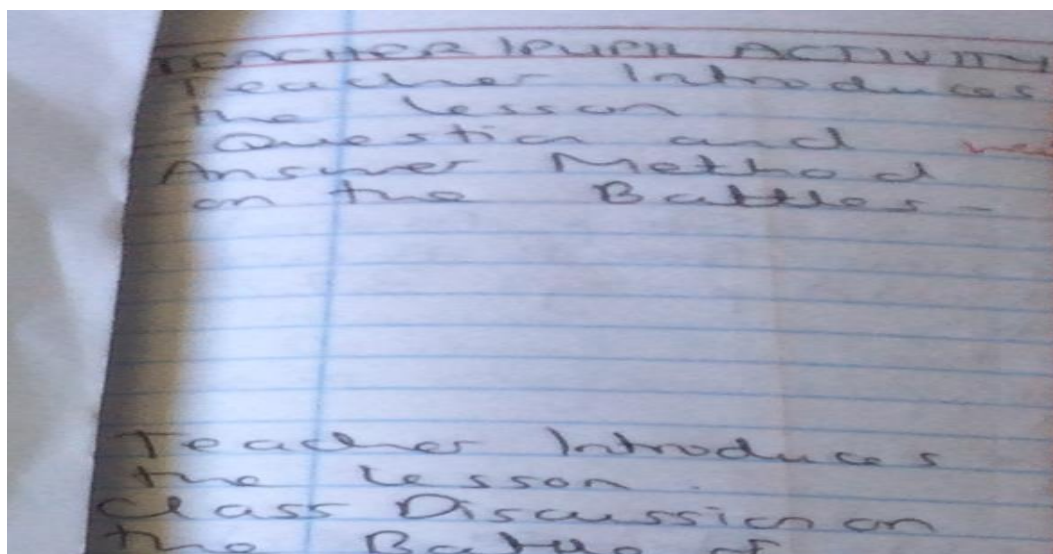
School C
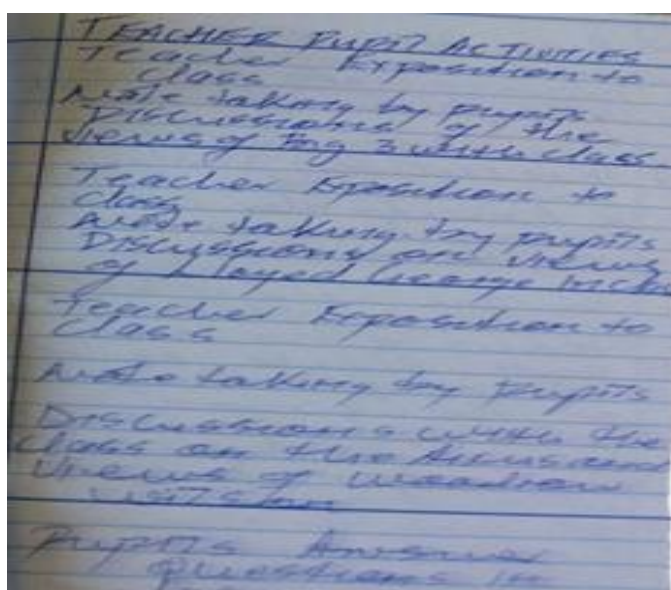
These are clearly not teacher-pupil activities, but rather teaching methods in history teaching. This shows that the teachers did not enhance the engagement of the learners in the history lessons as they did not include any of the 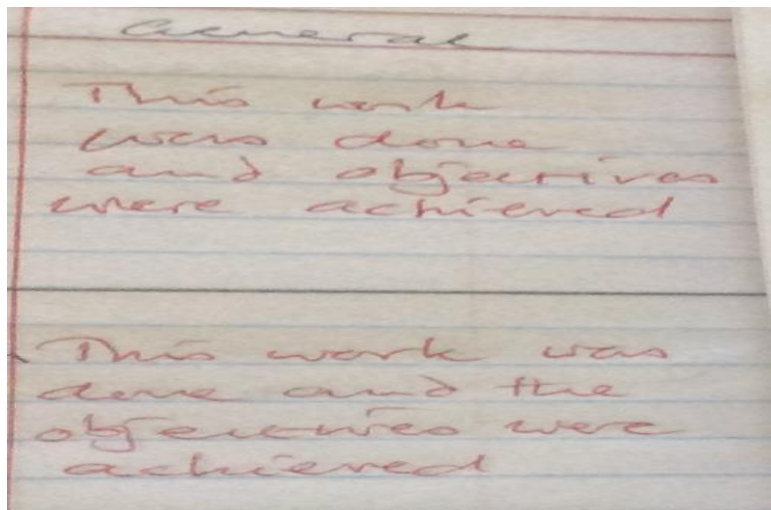learner activities as highlighted in table 3.1. It is glaringly clear that there is a challenge with regard to the planning of history lessons for the development of critical thinking skills.

Moreover, the following evaluations statements were noted in the general comments section of the scheme-cum-plans of the different participants:

School B
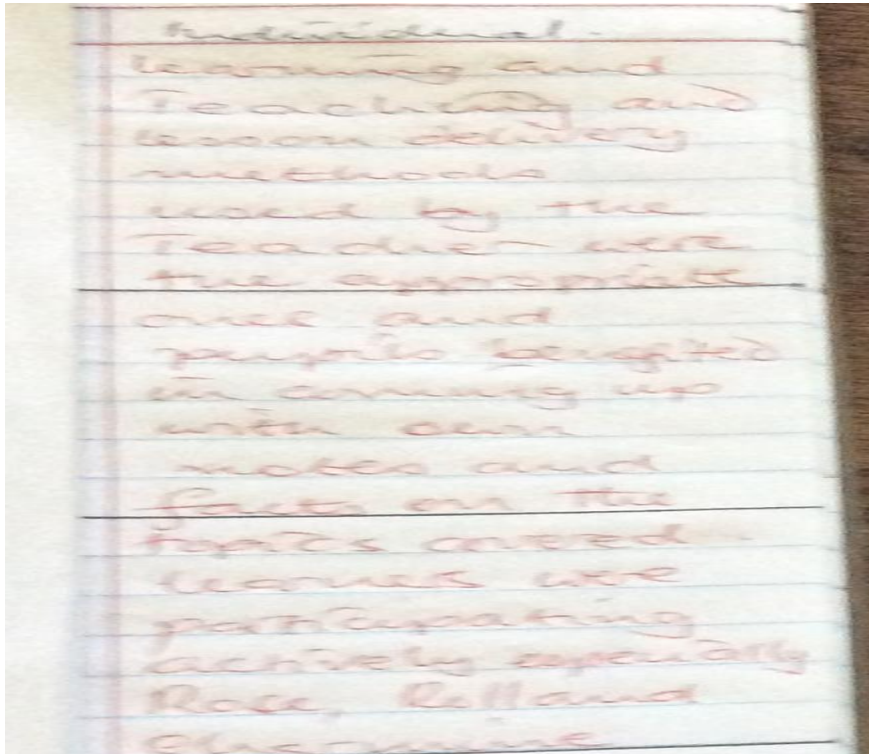
School C
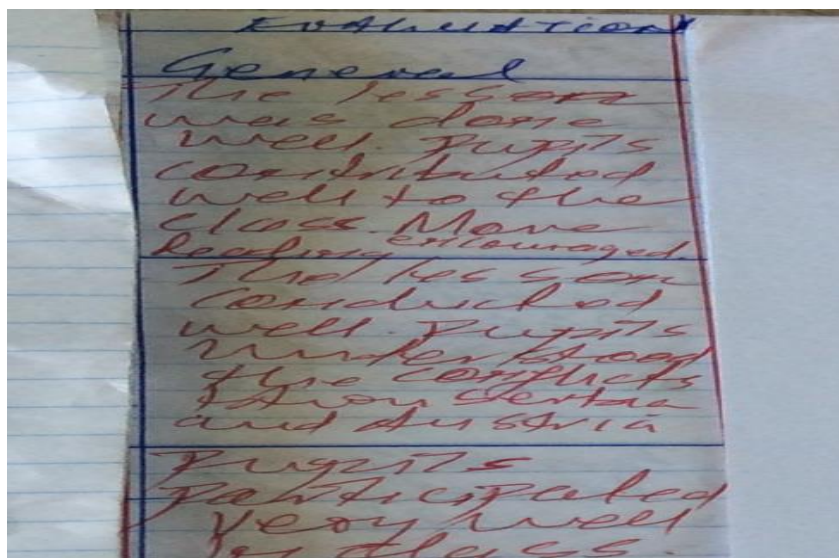
A superficial glance at such comments would suggest that even the objectives of developing critical thinking skills had been achieved. However, the stark reality of the challenges of developing critical thinking skills in history teaching became evident in the individual comments section of the scheme-cum-plans. There was no reference to what the individual learners were able to do to show that the suggested critical thinking skills had been inculcated in the learners (see table 3.1) for what learners should be able to do to enhance the development of critical thinking skills. Some
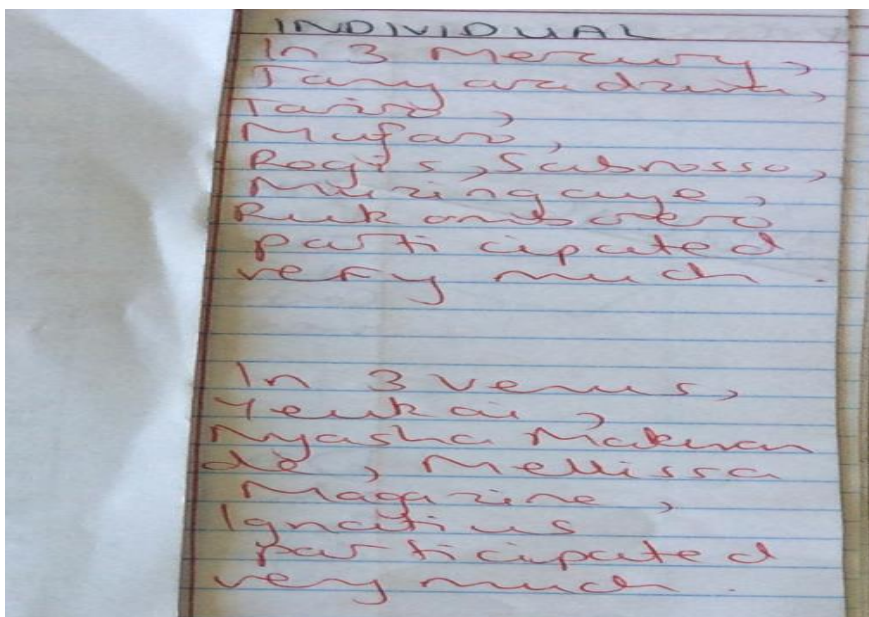
extracts from the scheme-cum-plans of the evaluations made on individual learners are shown below.

School A

School B

School C
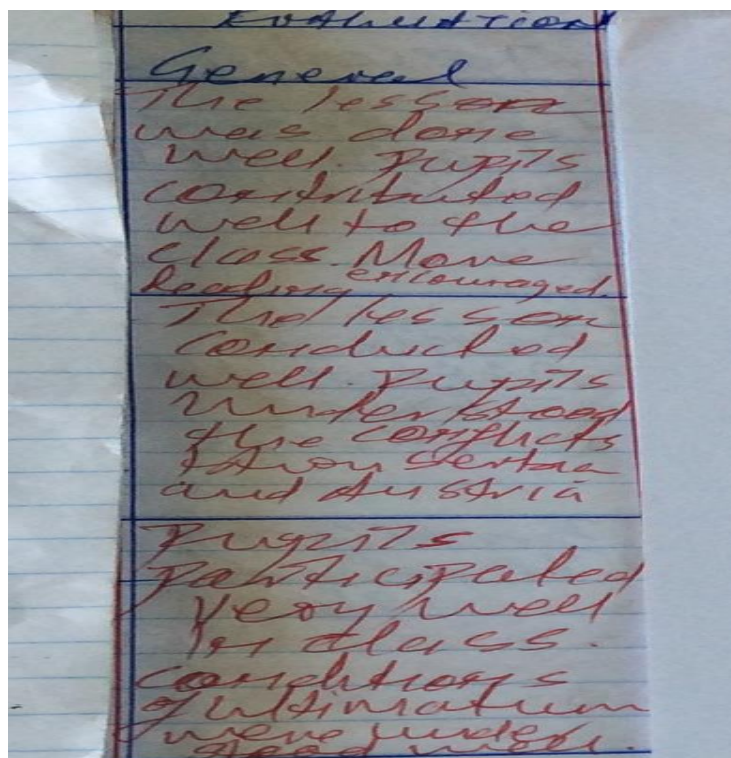
These evaluations show that the participants are aware that the teaching of history requires learner participation if developing critical thinking skills is to be the focus in history teaching. However, what is disturbing is that there is no mention of what the learners were actually able to do in the active participation. In addition, there was no mention of the activities in which the learners actively participated. It should be vehemently stated that what is crucial in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is what the learners are able to do and the activities they engage in as the means to the end (see table 3.1). This is in so far as action by the participant is at the centre of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding this study (see 2.3.4; 2.4.6.3). The participants showed that they did not place much value on the central role of the learner in developing critical thinking skills.

A review of policy statements of the MoPSE revealed that a history teacher must give and mark one exercise a week and one test a fortnight as evidenced by the following extract from the Director's Circular Number 34 of 2006. This is what history departments in the schools that participated in this research also adopt as their

policies. The surprising thing is that all the participants did not include projects in the homework tasks of their learners even though the MoPSE policy document highlighted that projects should be made part of the learners' tasks according to the Director's Circular Number 34 of August 2006 shown here.
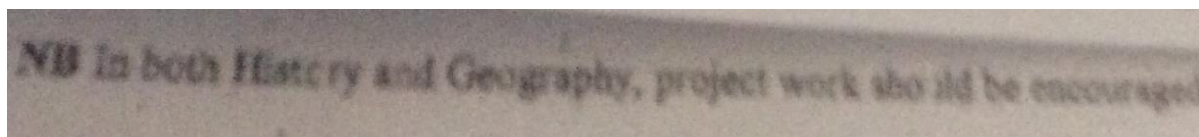
This suggests the poor management of the curriculum change challenge that history teachers face in the delivery of assessment to develop critical thinking skills as the traditional content heavy assessment is prevalent.

5.3.3 Ineffective teaching methodology

The purpose of this section is to further justify the need for a framework to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching by presenting, analysing and interpreting the categories of ineffective methodology that act as impediments. These are lack of learner-centred approaches, teacher-centred methodologies and poor/lack of, source-based teaching.

5.3.3.1 Lack of learner-centred approaches

A survey of critical theory (Bohman 2009:4 of 5), critical pedagogy (Ledlow 2014:2 of 3), constructivism (Major and Mangope 2012:139; Pandey 2007:23) and literature study on the approaches to the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching reveals that the use of learner-centred approaches is critical. However, findings by Takafakare (2015:31) show that history pupils complained of monotony and boredom due to their confinement in the classrooms with the teacher at the centre of teaching. This is evidence that the recommended activities based methodologies conducive to the development of critical thinking skills like role playing, field trips, surveys, dramatisation, discovery, research and project work are not implemented by the history teachers.

The teachers' views on use of learner-centred approaches in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching attested to the paucity of learner-centred approaches. In responding to the question: **How do you address critical thinking skills during your lessons**, the teacher at school A said:

"*I use presentations, both individual and group, debates, group work and assignments, that is, individual and group*" while the teacher at school B weighed in and said, "*I use group work, presentations by learners, homework, eish what else can I say- agonisingly*", and the teacher at school C capped it all by saying, *"I use the Socratic Method, presentations, group work and demonstrations."*

The interview response suggests that there is the use of some learner-centred approaches in history teaching contrary to the literature. What can be said is that the methods mentioned actually confirm the finding by Takafakare (2015:31) that the learners complained of boredom and monotony because the methods lack enough diversity which is against the diversity of methodology advocated by critical theory and critical pedagogy, and are best implemented in the classroom situation.

It was evident during the lessons observations that the Socratic Method dominated the classroom discourse at the expense of group work, debates, demonstration and presentations which had been identified in the interviews suggesting that history teachers only claim that they use certain methods. However, the questions that were asked by both teachers and learners in all the lessons were mainly of lower order levels of thinking involving recall, knowledge and comprehension. A sample of the lower order questions that dominated the lessons at the schools is given below:

What did we learn about yesterday? Who can tell me what we did yesterday? What do you remember about the causes of the First World War? What was the role of religion in the rise of the Mutapa state? What were the features of the Great Zimbabwe economy? Describe the social organisation of the Ndebele state. Who were the Rozvi kings of the 18th and 19th centuries? What were the cultural achievements of the Weimar Republic?

It is clear that there was the glaring absence of the type of questions that would assist the learners to develop critical thinking skills of analysis, comparison and

contrasting, synthesis and evaluation during the lessons. This practice by history teachers who participated in the research did not measure up to the suggestion by Fogo (2014:154) that the use of higher order questions in the teaching of history develops critical thinking skills. To the researcher it appeared that the higher order questions were reserved for homework tasks without having been practised during the lessons. On using homework tasks that required some critical thinking there was good practice by the participating history teachers as this aligned well with the contention by Lai (2013:36) that assessment test questions should enhance higher order thinking skills. The researcher concluded that this was due to the bond that exists between history learning and the summative examination which requires mainly the recall, knowledge and comprehension of the history facts.

It was realised that the participating history teachers were failing to capitalise on what could be clear opportunities during the lessons to ask questions that could prompt critical thinking among the learners yet questioning is one of the critical methods that enhances the development of critical thinking skills according to Thompson (2011:5) and Duron, *et al* (2006:162). This was revealed in one very glaring case at school A where the lesson was on the economic measures introduced by Stresemann to solve the economic crisis in Weimar Germany. The researcher thought that the history teacher would use a question requiring the learners to suggest the measures he could use which could have enhanced the development of critical thinking skills, but instead the teacher gave group work for learners to get the information in the textbook. The following is the task that the learners were asked to work on in groups.

The Weimar government response

There was a clear danger in the summer of 1923 that the economy and political system of the Weimar Republic would collapse. Germany was saved from this outcome by the actions of Gustav Stresemann, who became Chancellor and Foreign Minister in August 1923. The key features of Stresemann's rescue plan were as follows:

- passive resistance in the Ruhr was ended
- the currency was stabilised with the introduction of the provisional Rentenmark
- reparation payments to the Allies were resumed.

These initiatives, though highly unpopular at the time, laid the foundations for a period of economic and political recovery between 1924 and 1929.

To what extent did the Republic recover after 1923?

If the period 1919 to 1923 was defined by economic crisis and attempts to overthrow the Weimar Republic, the next six years were characterised by economic recovery and political stability. After steering Germany away from disaster during the last five months of 1923, Stresemann continued to use his influence to bring about a full return to normality (at least it appeared that way at the time).

It was clear from the lessons observations that while the question and answer method could be very useful in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching, the participant at school A failed to utilise the method effectively.

In the event that a teacher asked a higher order question which seemed to be by accident in most lessons, the lack of the key questioning techniques that assist in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching became evident. The questioning techniques of probing, learner scaffolding, wait time for higher order questions and feedback on learner responses to higher order questions were rarely practised yet the questioning approach in the development of critical thinking skills advocates the practice of these questioning techniques (Snyder and Snyder 2008:95). This may be due to the challenge of time resource as the history teachers quickly shifted the question from one learner to another, quickly gave opportunity to answer higher order questions to those who quickly indicated intention to answer. It was also noted that the participants were not giving feedback to the weak answers of the learners. Rather, questions were quickly shifted to the next respondent in order to cover as much ground as possible during the lessons.

The document analysis that was undertaken seems to confirm the findings from the interviews and lessons observations as the methods planned for use by teacher at school A show.
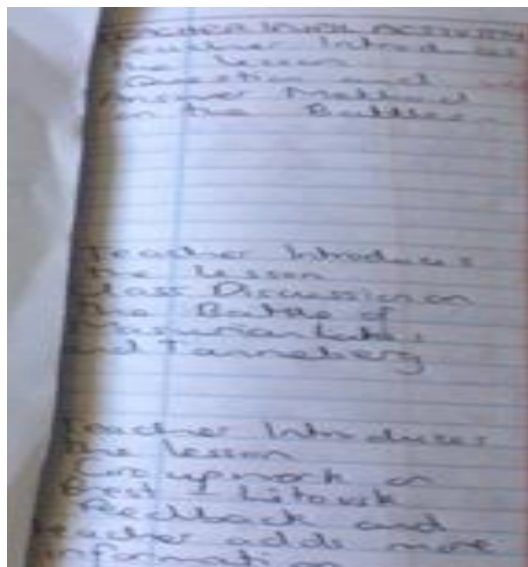
The teacher at school B planned for the following methods:

The teacher at school C planned for similar methods which are shown in the following extract of the scheme-cum-plan.
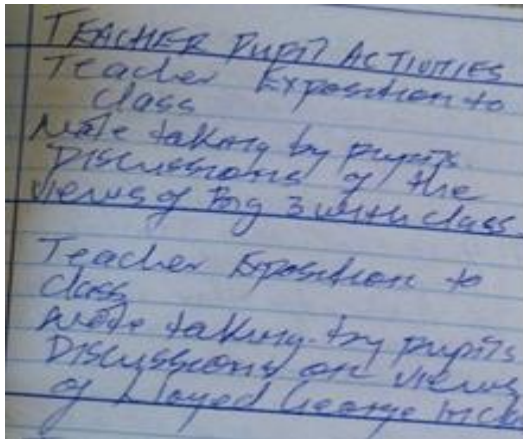
While there is lack of meaningful variation of teaching methods by the teachers, they also tended to be the traditional methods which are in contrast to the more progressive learner-centred methodologies advocated by critical pedagogy (Green, 2007 in Muro 2012:4) and constructivism (Major and Mangope 2012:139). For example, the scheme-cum-plans did not mention graphic organisers on the methods section as shown by the extract of the scheme-cum-plan of the teacher at school A.
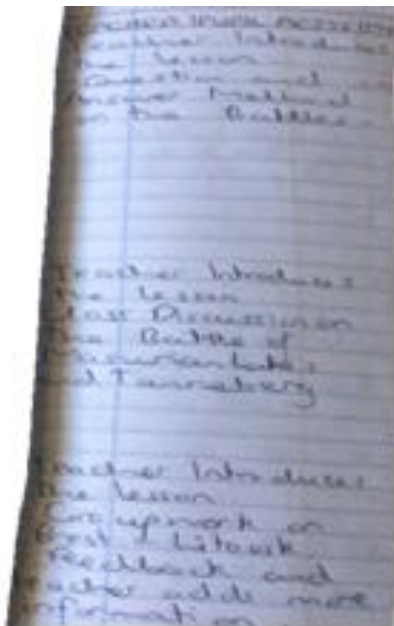
This was confirmed by the extract from the scheme-cum-plan of the teacher at the school B.
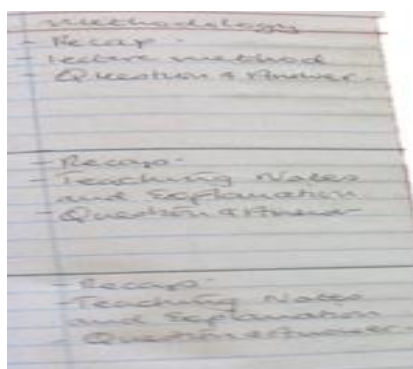
The scenario of the scheme-cum-plan of the teacher at school C further reinforced the lack of the use of graphic organisers in the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills as revealed by the extract below.
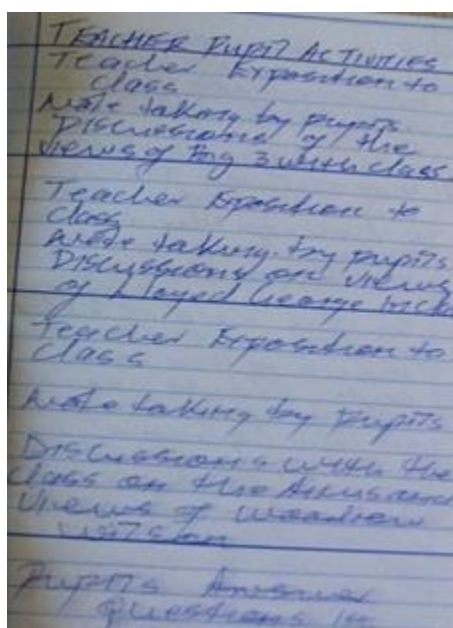
Even the homework books of the learners showed that the participants did not encourage the learners to make use of graphic organisers in answering higher order questions. Samples of the type of answers that the teachers at the three schools required from the learners are given here as evidence of the lack of the use of graphic organisers in the answers.

School A

...put under war guilty clause was ...man enough because they had to s... ...parations and disarmament. Treaty of Ver... ...would not have taken any fishing fleets ... ...from them. Taking all colonies from Germany ...were out of Africa was a little too much. ...oraine and the Saar Basin were retur... ...rance which wasn't necessary even though ... ...lemenceau's country. The Hutschin being ret... ...Lithunia had nothing to do with th... ...all. I strongly agree as well because th... ...reder German's economy and I also think ... ...rmany's opinion should have been present...
One-sided answer

School B

a. The league was successful in resolving conflicts because it succeed to look after the welfare of the minorities. It refused to repatriate while Russian refugees. The economic and finance committees looked after needy countries economically. On the other bad hand it was not successful because there was Spanish Civil war whereby it did not punish Russia for assisting for Spanish Government. The league had given instructions that other countries should not get involved in these problem. To a greater extent the League was successful in resolving conflicts. *Irrelevant!*

School C

e. To what extent where these terms unfair... Lobengula

These terms was unfair to Lobengula ... guns which Lobengula was promised ...find out ...Lobengula still considers some ...the missionaries at his mission... at his part his part as trusted friend's. The ...sent by Rhodes was cheating, bribery to get the documents signed. Instead of bringing only ten men, the ...brought in 500 ...(builders) or ...500 policemen, Lobengula was simply asked to put ...in the ...was signing his ...and ...process ...annoyed ...chief ...tables ...end ...

If history teachers are serious about developing critical thinking skills they can effectively make use of the graphic organisers thereby freeing valuable time for planning to teach history for developing critical thinking skills.

5.3.3.2 Lack of source-based teaching

The literature study has shown that even where pre-service teachers have been taught the instructional approaches of source-based teaching, these tended to fall by the wayside due to the focus on the textbook (Van Hoover and Yeager 2013:5 of 13). Moreover, these approaches are thrown in the dust bin due to the focus on the examination which emphasises content mastery and therefore, rote learning and memorisation. The use of primary sources in source-based teaching enables the learners to ask questions about the past and in asking questions about the past, they acquire critical thinking skills (Fogo 2014:178) like inquiry, interpretation and evaluation. Wiersma (2008:116) says questions which require deeper thinking by the students are an essential part of constructivism. It is the contention by Reisman (2012) cited in Fogo (2014:155) that the use of primary sources aligns with the gaining of analytical thinking skills by the learners. These primary sources enable the learners to ask questions about the past and in asking questions about the past, they acquire critical thinking skills (Fogo 2014:178) like inquiry, interpretation and evaluation. Wiersma (2008:116) says questions which require deeper thinking by the students are an essential part of constructivism. It is the contention by Reisman (2012) cited in Fogo (2014:155) that the use of primary sources align with the gaining of analytical thinking skills by the learners. Literature evidence has also shown that there is no source- based teaching of history in Zimbabwe although the Syllabus 2167 requires this teaching for the source-based question in Paper 1 of the examination. Mapetere, *et al* (2012:101-102) agree with this when they say examiners' reports have indicated that students are shunning the source-based question because history teachers are no longer teaching the source-based question in spite of its critical role in the development of critical thinking skills.

The teacher from school A seems to be in agreement with Mapetere, *et al* (2012:102) because in responding to the question: **Do you teach your learners about the source-based question**, he said:

"I do not teach the source based question for the ZIMSEC examination because there are questions which require more content in Paper 1 of the examination". This response is supported by the teacher at school B who also said:

"I avoid question 1 in Paper 1 of the examination". When asked why there was this avoidance, the teacher explained:

"The aspect of critical thinking is a skill that has to be instilled over a long period. Late exposure hinders efforts to teach the source-based question. My focus is on covering the syllabus without delays as I teach the learners to pass the examination".

It is clear that the teaching of the source-based question is shunned by the history teachers. The explanation that can be given is that the examination system allows the non-teaching of the source-based question. The structure of the examination exonerates the history teachers who according to Mapetere, *et al* (2013:31) confessed ignorance on how to teach for the source-based question.

The fact that there is no teaching of the source-based question which is handy in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching became evident when the lessons observations were undertaken. The teaching focused on the content of the syllabus. Out of all the lessons that were observed, there was no single lesson during which the researcher witnessed the teaching of the source-based question.

The same scenario of the non-teaching of the source-based question was abundantly clear in the lesson planning of the teachers. The scheme-cum-plans planned for the coverage of content without the planning for teaching the source based question as shown in the images below on the objectives of the lessons by the teacher at schools B and C.

School B
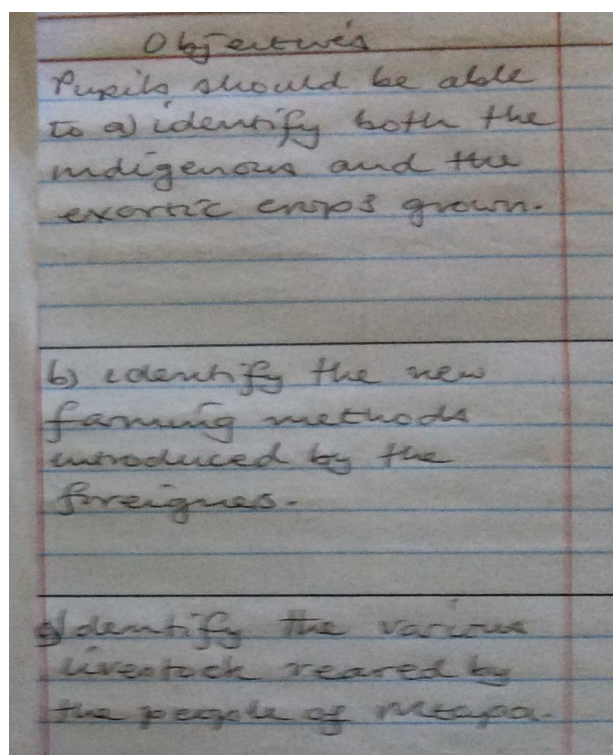
School C
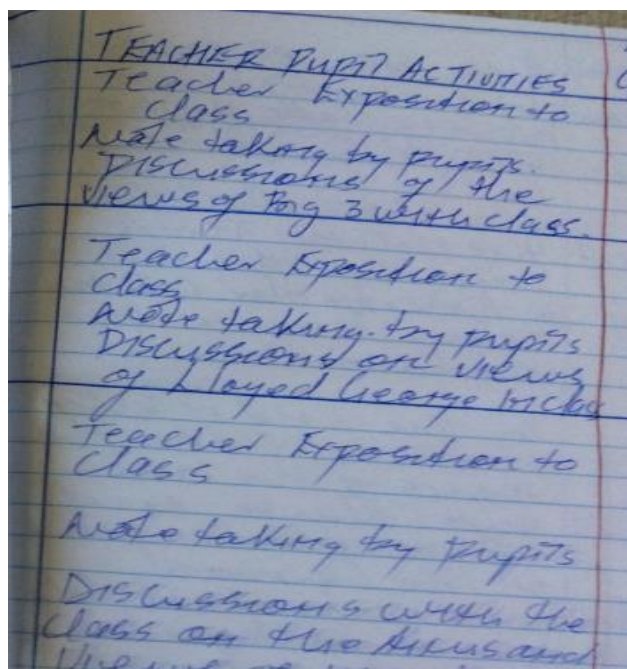
The objectives are coined in the language of not developing critical thinking skills but content which is the focus of the lessons. The lack of use of critical thinking skills in the construction of lesson objectives evident in the scheme-cum-plans calls for a

paradigm shift in the existing history teaching environment. This paradigm shift should result in an enabling learning environment that will cater for critical thinking skills being included, in particular, the synthesis domain of critical thinking skills. The paradigm shift should also enable the history teachers to realise that their emphasis should not be on the critical outcome, but on how to achieve the critical outcome by using lesser skills to buttress the critical outcome which is the critical thinking skill.

As shown above, the objectives which guided the teachers in the development of their lessons did not indicate the intention to 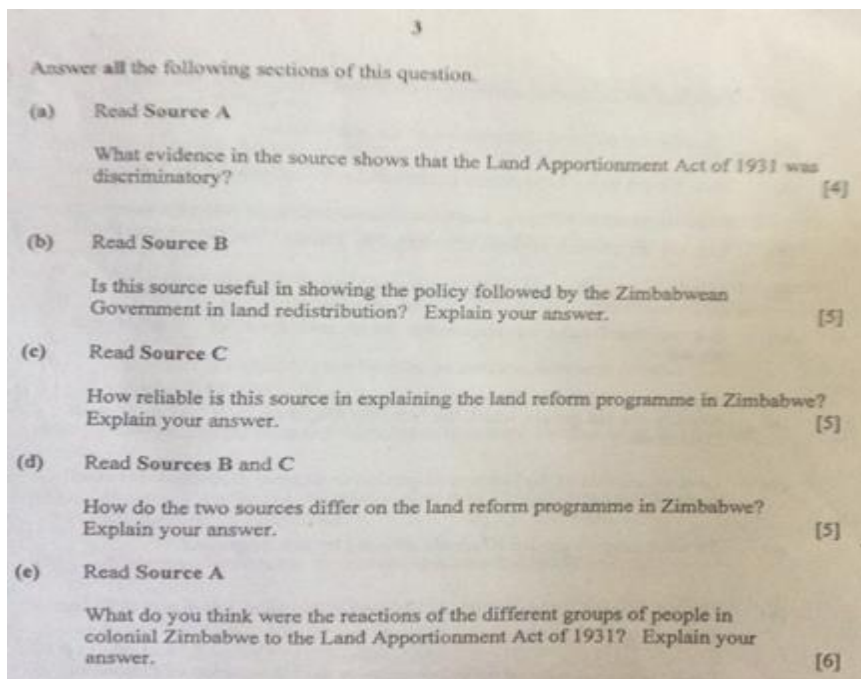teach for the source-based question. This is quite surprising given that the syllabus 2167 recommends the teaching of the source-based question. The development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is greatly aided by the teaching of the source-based question as the extract of the source-based question shows.

3

Answer **all** the following sections of this question.

(a)   Read Source A

        What evidence in the source shows that the Land Apportionment Act of 1931 was
        discriminatory?   [4]

(b)   Read Source B

        Is this source useful in showing the policy followed by the Zimbabwean
        Government in land redistribution?   Explain your answer.   [5]

(c)   Read Source C

        How reliable is this source in explaining the land reform programme in Zimbabwe?
        Explain your answer.   [5]

(d)   Read Sources B and C

        How do the two sources differ on the land reform programme in Zimbabwe?
        Explain your answer.   [5]

(e)   Read Source A

        What do you think were the reactions of the different groups of people in
        colonial Zimbabwe to the Land Apportionment Act of 1931?   Explain your
        answer.   [6]

This justifies the need for a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

5.3.4 Prevalence of traditional content-based assessment

Assessment is the key ingredient in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Assessment should be geared towards assessment for learning in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills. The assessment challenges that are encountered stifle the effort to develop critical thinking skills and these justify the need to provide a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

There is adequate evidence from the literature study to suggest that one of the major stumbling blocks in the shift towards a skills-based approach in history teaching is the continuation of the summative examination system as the assessment model (Jansen, 1998:8). This is a problem since a review of the current assessment policy for secondary school history in Zimbabwe for syllabus 2167 by Takafakare (2015:31) suggests that the questioning technique at Ordinary level is considered to be mainly in the form of narrative and requires mainly the recall of facts which stifles the development of critical thinking skills. This is supported by Mapetere, *et al* (2012:86) who say secondary school history assessment in Zimbabwe is based on content mastery and is summative.

The literature study is given ample support to judge by the responses given by the teachers to the question wanting to find out the challenge of current assessment as a barrier to the transition to a skills based approach in history teaching. The question that was asked is: **Do you think the current assessment procedure is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?** The participants concurred that the assessment procedures currently in use in the teaching of history is counter-productive when considered in light of developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The participant at school A said the following with regard to the assessment procedure:

"The current assessment is not really focused on the development of critical thinking skills. It is content-heavy as shown by recall and description which is dominant. Even the analysis part of the question borders around the recall of facts. The analysis question has low mark allocation".

This response goes to show that the assessment procedure in history in Zimbabwe is not designed to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. This was corroborated by the participant at school B who said:

"Assessment in history teaching at the moment is a kind of injustice if the mind is to be a critical mind. There is an avoidance of Question 1 in Paper 1, that is, History of Southern Africa, which is source-based and very relevant in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The fact that it is not compulsory tells you a lot".

The researcher was not surprised by the response of the participant at school C when it was said the assessment currently in use is directed towards the examination grades not the student as a product of history learning (see 3.3.8.4.1). The participant further said that there is little effort, but not focus in the assessment procedure to develop critical thinking skills. The focus on the examination grades really militates against the development of critical thinking skills. This is to imply that history learning must focus on the learner acquiring critical thinking skills rather than rote learning in order to pass the examination.

The document analysis of assessment papers and learners' exercise books showed that the formative assessment by history teachers came close to emulating the assessment standard set by the examining body which is ZIMSEC (see 3.2.5-3.2.6). The following is a Paper 1 ZIMSEC summative assessment extract which the teachers used to formulate their own school-based assessment papers.
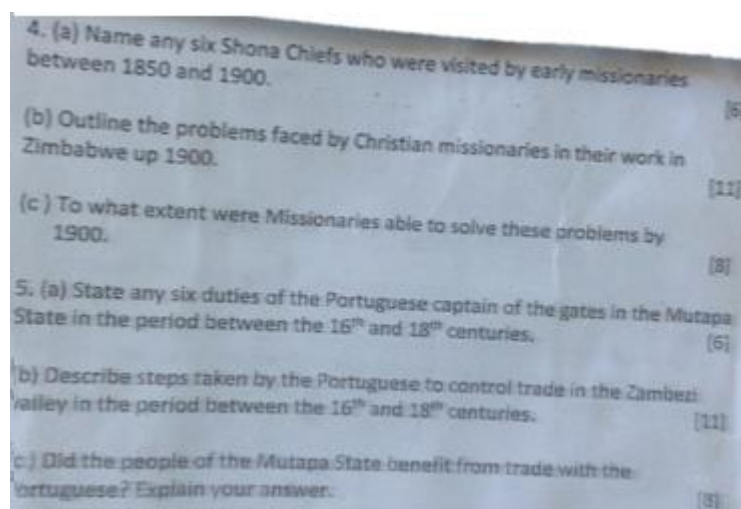
8	(a)	Name any **six** African kingdoms colonised by Europeans in Southern Africa during the 19th century.	[6]
	(b)	Describe the various methods used by the Europeans to colonise Southern Africa.	[11]
	(c)	How effective were the methods used by Europeans in the colonisation of Southern Africa?	[8]
9	(a)	List any **six** problems faced by Africans during the colonisation of Southern Africa.	[6]
	(b)	Describe the methods used by African states in Southern Africa to resist colonisation up to 1900.	[11]
	(c)	How successful were the Africans in resisting colonisation in this period?	[8]
10	(a)	Name any **six** British nationals, other than Rhodes, who assisted in the colonisation of Zimbabwe.	[6]
	(b)	What steps were taken by Rhodes to colonise Zimbabwe?	[11]
	(c)	Is it true that Rhodes contributed the most to the colonisation of Zimbabwe? Explain your answer.	[8]

This is assessment which uses a structured essay with recall, knowledge and analysis which was also used in the school-based assessment papers at the three secondary schools. These verbs used in the assessment papers suggest the skills that history teachers develop in the learners.

School A

3. a) Name any five treaties that were signed with the defeated powers after the First World War. [5]

b) Describe the non-territorial terms of the Treaty of Versailles. [12]

c) Were the terms of the Treaty of Versailles fair to Germany? Explain your answer. [8]

4. a) Name the five permanent members of the Council of the League of Nations before 1930. [5]

b) Outline the functions of the Assembly, the Council and the Secretariat of the League of Nations. [12]

c) To what extent was the League of Nations successful in resolving conflicts in the 1920s? [8]

5. a) List any five economic problems faced by Italy after the First World War. [5]

b) Describe Mussolini's rise to power in Italy. [12]

c) How far did political problems help Mussolini to rise to power? [8]

School B

4. (a) Name any six Shona Chiefs who were visited by early missionaries between 1850 and 1900.
[6]

(b) Outline the problems faced by Christian missionaries in their work in Zimbabwe up 1900.
[11]

(c) To what extent were Missionaries able to solve these problems by 1900.
[8]

5. (a) State any six duties of the Portuguese captain of the gates in the Mutapa State in the period between the 16ᵗʰ and 18ᵗʰ centuries.
[6]

(b) Describe steps taken by the Portuguese to control trade in the Zambezi valley in the period between the 16ᵗʰ and 18ᵗʰ centuries.
[11]

(c) Did the people of the Mutapa State benefit from trade with the Portuguese? Explain your answer.
[8]

The verbs and phrases that are used in the school based assessment papers are summarised in the table below for easier interpretation.

Table 5.4: Verbs and phrases used in school based assessment history papers

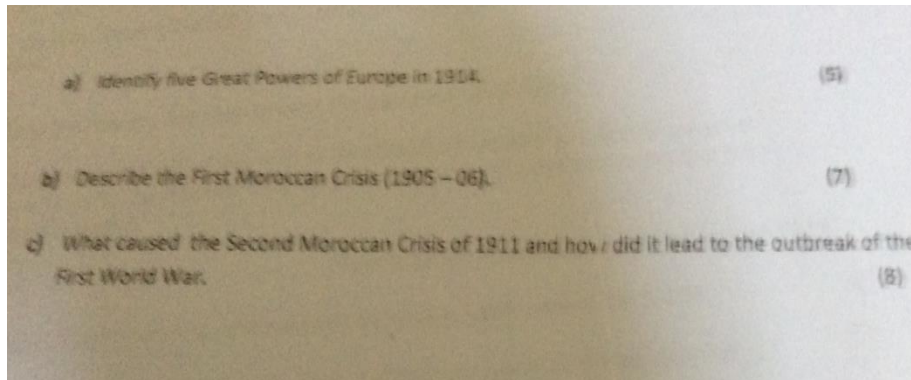| SCHOOL	VERBS
School A	Describe, why, to what extent, how far
School B	List, name, identify, state, explain, how far, outline, how successful, how important.
School C	List, name, identify, state, explain, how far, outline, how successful, how important

The information in the table shows that the school-based assessment papers that history teachers administer to their learners have a heavy bias towards the lower levels of Bloom (1956)'s taxonomy of cognitive abilities (see table 3.1). The higher levels of the taxonomy which speak to critical thinking skills are represented by evaluation only as indicated by the phrases: to what extent; how far; how successful and how important. This is compromising the call for a continuous improvement-oriented learning environment that learners should be constantly exposed to higher order thinking words (Moreeng 2009:75). It is interesting to note that the participants did not to a large extent match the verbs they used in their scheme-cum-plans with

the verbs used in the school-based assessment papers. Assessment procedure in the history teachers' assessment papers is not strictly aligned with the objectives of the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.
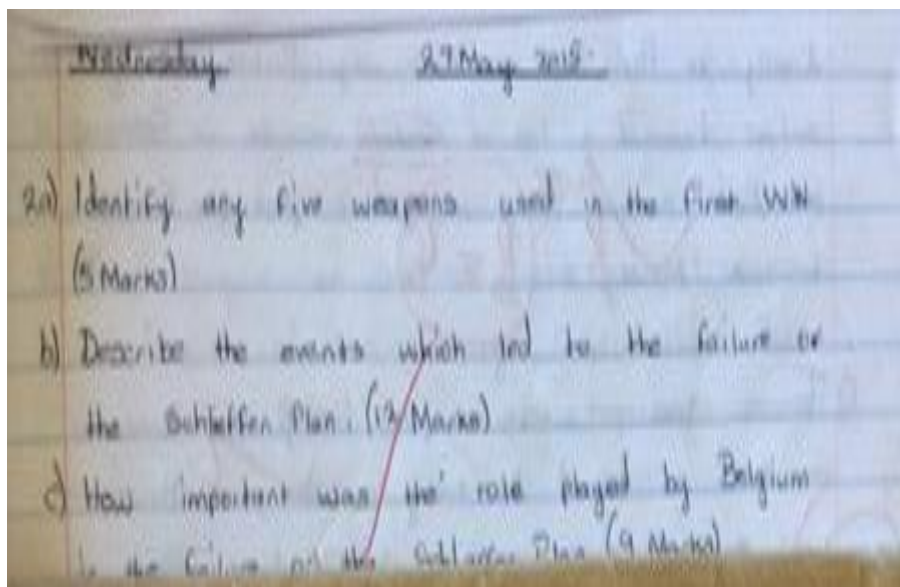
It is also interesting to note that all the participants were focusing on the critical thinking skill of evaluation to the detriment of analysis and synthesis as shown by the phrases they used in their assessment questions. This goes to suggest that there is a dichotomy between critical thinking skills the history teachers espouse to develop and what they actually develop by way of assessment. This is contrary to the view that assessment should be considered as part of learning (William 2011:10) and in this context, learning the critical thinking skills that history teachers espouse in their scheme-cum-plans. The dichotomy can be explained by the fact that school-based assessment is tailored to prepare for the summative assessment which is content heavy.

The verbs and phrases that are in the table indicate that the participants use verbs and phrases which are mainly related to lower order skills of knowledge and comprehension. There is emphasis on the critical thinking skill of evaluation at the expense of the critical thinking skills of analysis and synthesis. It was discovered that the homework tasks that the participants administered to the history learners comprised of three structured questions in most cases as required by the ZIMSEC History syllabus 2167. The first two questions were on the lower continuum of Bloom's taxonomy and the last question always required a higher level of thinking according to Bloom's taxonomy, that is, evaluation and requiring an evaluative judgment to answer it (see table 3.1). Samples of homework tasks given to learners at schools A, B and C are given.

School A

a) Identify five Great Powers of Europe in 1914. (5)

b) Describe the First Moroccan Crisis (1905 – 06). (7)

c) What caused the Second Moroccan Crisis of 1911 and how did it lead to the outbreak of the First World War. (8)

School B

Wednesday 23 May 2018

2a) Identify any five weapons used in the first WW. (5 Marks)

b) Describe the events which led to the failure of the Schlieffen Plan. (12 Marks)

c) How important was the role played by Belgium in the failure of the Schlieffen Plan. (9 Marks)

School C

Thursday 19 September 2016

Revision

List 6 ethnic groups that were defeated and absorbed by Mzilikazi in Zimbabwe

Describe the social organisation of the Ndebele state

To what extent did the social organisation contribute to the unity of the Ndebele state
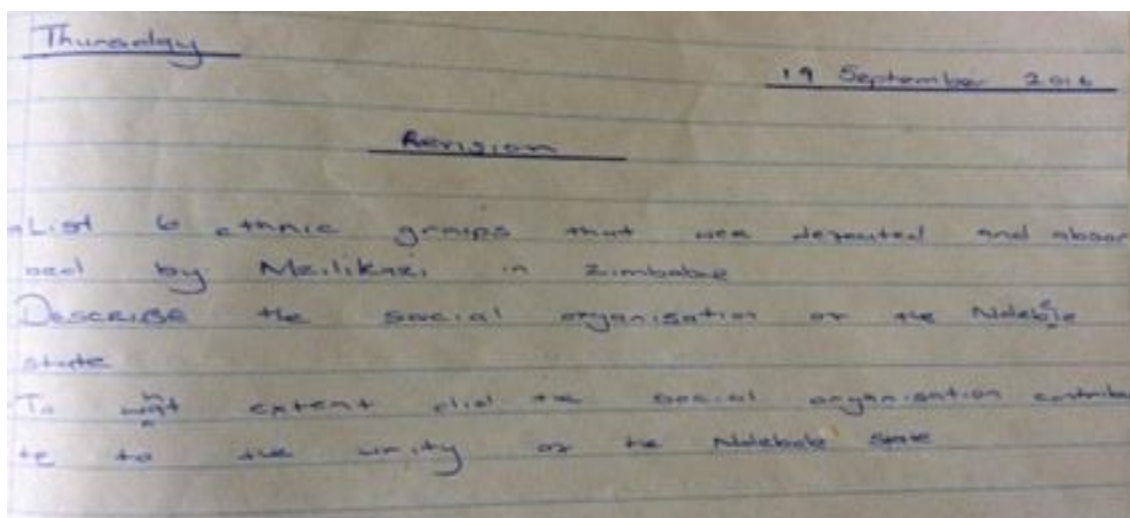
The questions required mainly recall and memorisation of facts and critical thinking is peripheral as indicated by the number of marks allocated to question c which is eight marks. Most surprising is that all the participants did not include the source-based question in the homework tasks of their learners even though the examining body's summative assessment included the question in Paper 1.
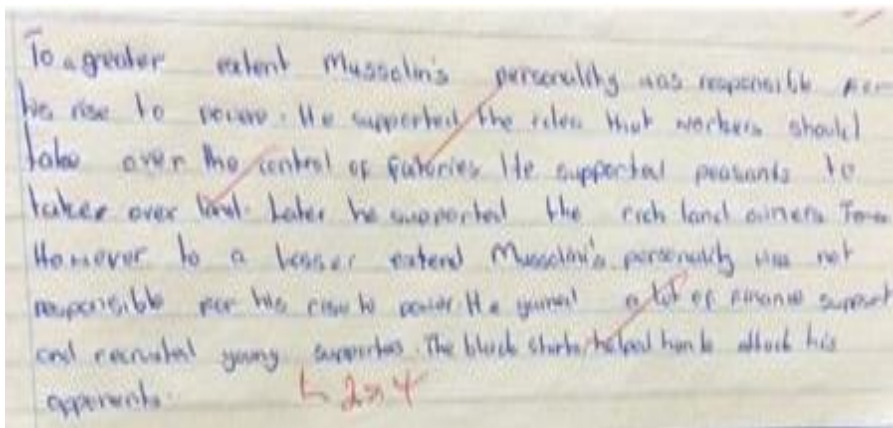
Moreover, it should also be noted that these verbs that history teachers use to construct lesson objectives that strive to develop critical thinking do not address all the critical thinking skills that the syllabus espouses. The verbs do not cater for the critical thinking skills of comparison and drawing reasoned conclusions as espoused in the syllabus. This is evidence that history teachers are not doing enough to interpret the syllabus requirements in terms of the critical thinking skills that history teaching has to develop among the history learners. This also suggests that they have challenges on how to construct objectives which use such verbs and they therefore, ignore them in their teaching of history. The critical thinking skills of comparison and drawing reasoned conclusions are further stifled by the nature of assessment at the summative level which focuses on interpretation and analysis. The synthesis domain of critical thinking skills is also ignored completely in the verbs that are used in constructing the lesson objectives. It is the contention of the researcher that the synthesis domain is totally ignored because history teachers find it challenging to apply the skill in constructing lesson objectives.

It is really pertinent to categorically highlight that the use of these verbs in the objectives of the lessons is not the key issue when it comes to the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills. The main issue that history teachers should be focusing on is what the history learner should be able to do so as to acquire the critical thinking skill of analysis or evaluation or synthesis. This is because the acquisition of critical thinking skills by history learners depends on what the learner should be able to do not what the teacher says the history learner should do on paper. What the learner should be able to do relates to the complementary skills which culminate in the critical thinking skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

It was also discovered that the approach to answering the evaluation questions was like a formula which started with the phrase: to a greater extent on one hand and, to a lesser extent, on the other hand. This is illustrated by the extracts from the learners' homework books at the three schools.
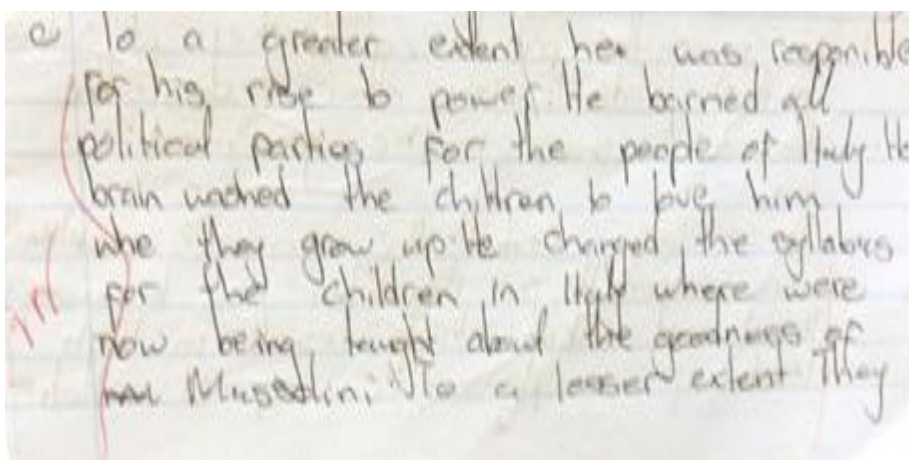
School A

School B

School C

Even when there was no evidence to support the judgments, these phrases were always included in the answers. This suggests that history teachers give their learners a formula to answer the questions without developing the skills to sustain the argument or judgment which shows that the teaching of history is doing very little in the development of critical thinking skills. This seem to disagree with the principle of critical pedagogy which is that there must be some negotiation of multiple forms of knowledge (Muro 2012:13) which the teachers could enhance by allowing the learners to devise their own ways of presenting arguments in their answers to questions requiring higher levels of thinking. This demands a paradigm shift in the way history teachers are doing their work in order to allow for the development of critical thinking skills rather than the ability to answer questions. History learners should be exposed to learning environment that fosters argumentation rather than eventful answering of critical questions as a process-oriented learning environment advocates argumentation (Lai 2013:35).

Even the critical thinking skill of evaluation that the homework tasks endeavour to develop is poorly done by the majority of the pupils. Most of the answers to the questions requiring critical thinking skills were awarded very low levels of performance and therefore, marks by the history teachers who participated in this research. The comments that the participating teachers assigned to the answers of the learners showed the challenges the learners have in answering questions requiring critical thinking skills. The following is an example of the comment that was made by the teacher at school A which is used to illustrate the level of challenges learners have.

The other example of the comment by the teacher at school B confirms the challenge of the learner.

The comment by the teacher at school C further confirms the failure by the learner to measure upto the critical thinking needed in responding to questions requiring higher levels of thinking.

These comments by history teachers suggest that the learners fail to sustain the arguments in their answers. This can be interpreted to mean that the learners have not been exposed to learning which develops argumentation (see 3.3.4.1) which they are then expected to develop in answering questions which demand critical thinking skills. History teachers might be failing to intentionally develop the skills of argumentation as they teach history which results in such poor performance by learners on questions which require the skills of argumentation. This poor performance by the learners on such questions raises the need for a framework to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

It was noted with great concern in the learners' exercise books that there was paucity in terms of evidence of feedback being given on the questions requiring critical thinking skills. This observation revealed the extent to which the teachers did not consider the history curriculum requirement that teachers should give feedback (ZIMSEC Syllabus 2167, 2013:4) and the enabling learning environment expectation that continuous improvement relies heavily on the provision of feedback (Young 2013:106). It was deduced that the history teacher at School B was giving feedback on questions requiring critical thinking skills which agreed with the requirement of continuous improvement in the enabling learning environment that feedback engenders critical thinking. This is shown by this extract of corrections that learners wrote in their exercise books at the school.
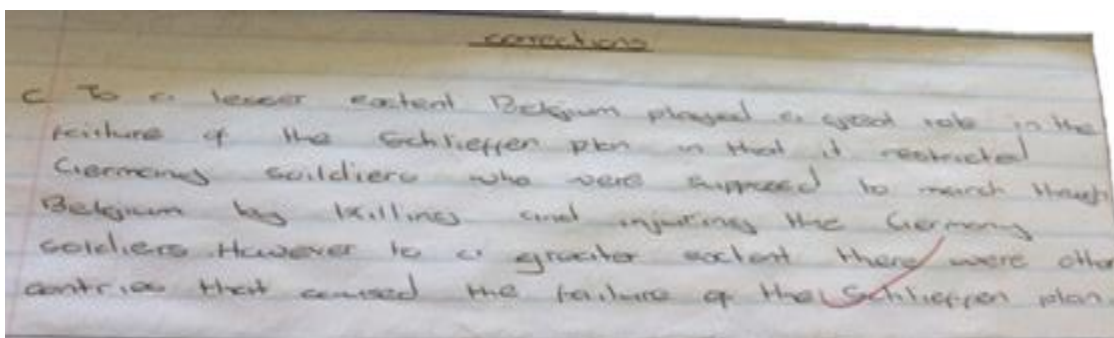
This was interpreted to mean that the teacher valued the role of feedback in teaching history for the development of critical thinking skills (see 3.3.7.4). The history teachers at School A and School C either did not value the role of feedback in the

development of critical thinking skills or the learners did not value that feedback (see 3.3.7.1.). This is due to the fact that the learners at the two schools did not have corrections done on the questions requiring critical thinking skills as shown by the extracts from two learners' homework books at schools A and C respectively.

School A
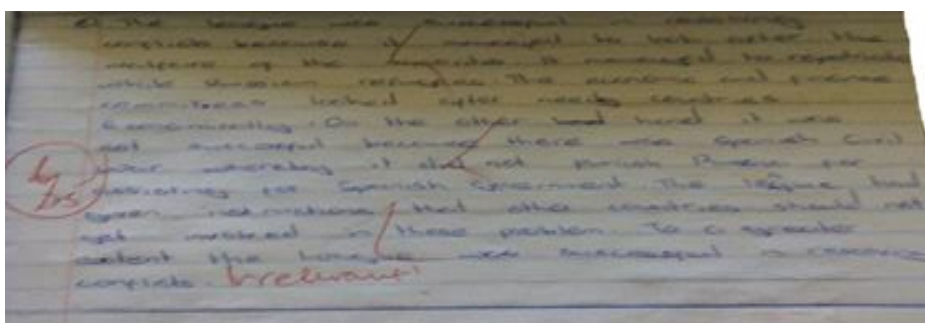
School B
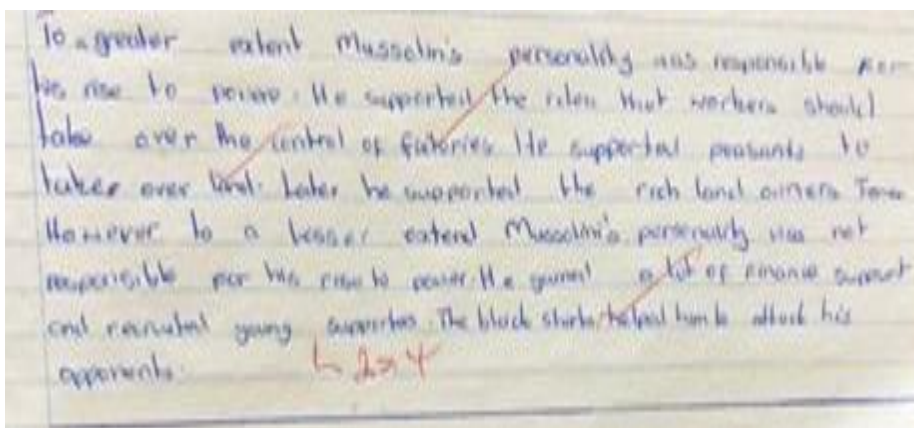
Both extracts from schools B and C indicate that there are no corrections to the question requiring critical thinking skills to be developed which shows that there is no valuing of the role of feedback in history teaching by the teachers.

5.3.5 Resources shortage as a challenge in constructing enabling learning environment

One of the key challenges that history teachers face in their efforts to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching revealed in this study is the shortage of material, financial and time resources. These are the key resources which determine the

quality of teaching that any teacher can think about in their subject. This section makes a presentation, analysis and interpretation of the challenges of the paucity of resources discovered during the data collection.

5.3.5.1 Textbook-based teaching

Close analysis of literature on the challenge of resources in the transition to a skills based approach in history teaching reveals the use of the textbook as the only source of history information to be the main resource challenge. Bertram (2012:9) says the use of a prescribed textbook by the authorities characterised the teaching and learning of history under apartheid. Stoffels (2008:26) says this continued under the Government of National Unity (GNU) as there was a prescribed resource book for outcome-based assessment which simply replaced the traditional textbook. Consequently, there was the use of the prescribed resource book in a mechanical and imitative manner. Tendi (2009:28) and Moyo and Modiba (2013:5) concur that a few new textbooks of the African Heritage Series that were approved by the authorities were introduced in Zimbabwe in 1982 to promote the African perspective of history. The use of the approved textbooks continues in Zimbabwe today with the introduction of the Step Ahead and Total History Series. Since there is the reliance on approved textbooks, it means that there is no promotion of multiple voices in the history with which learners can engage. The findings in a study by Takafakare (2015:30) supports this by revealing that most of the textbooks available are obsolete to the extent that they do not promote the development of critical thinking skills in the learners since they were written without an emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills.

The teacher at school A seemed to agree that the use of the textbook is a handicap in the development of critical thinking skills as shown by the response to the question: **What are the challenges that you face in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills?**

"*The materials we have in the school are textbooks which are secondary sources of history. They are written from the narrative perspective of history. We do not have primary sources to use in the development of critical thinking skills as required by the syllabus 2167. Materials like magazines and e-books are lacking greatly*".

This was supported by both teachers at schools B and C as the teacher at school B said:

"*The textbooks that I use do not offer opportunities to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills as there are no primary sources in the textbooks*", and the teacher at school C weighed in saying:

"*The textbooks that I use like the Step Ahead and 'O' Level Focus on History, African Heritage and Dynamics of History series do not encourage the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as they do not often carry extracts of primary sources. The textbooks are also written in the narrative manner*".

It is clear from these responses that history teachers at the schools use the textbook as the main resource in the teaching of history. This militates against the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as the textbooks are written in a narrative manner which encourages rote learning. This is in contradiction with the tenet of constructivism as posited by Major and Mangope (2012:144) who say constructivism envisages the provision of a variety of resources, including raw data and primary sources (Mogashoa 2014:54) in teaching.

The use of the textbook as the main source of information in history teaching was also made clear in the lesson observations. The teachers brought a single textbook to the lessons. This was always put at the work station of the teacher. Pupils were always encouraged to bring their textbooks for the next lesson. The teacher at a school in one lesson taught about the role of Stresemann in the economic recovery of Germany and asked the learners to open the textbook on page 232.

The Weimar government response

There was a clear danger in the summer of 1923 that the economy and political system of the Weimar Republic would collapse. Germany was saved from this outcome by the actions of Gustav Stresemann, who became Chancellor and Foreign Minister in August 1923. The key features of Stresemann's rescue plan were as follows:

* passive resistance in the Ruhr was ended

* the currency was stabilised with the introduction of the provisional Rentenmark

* reparation payments to the Allies were resumed.

These initiatives, though highly unpopular at the time, laid the foundations for a period of economic and political recovery between 1924 and 1929.

The learners were then asked to find out what the economic measures were that were introduced. This encouraged learner engagement with the information which is good practice in history teaching as suggested in critical pedagogy (Muro 2014:4). However, the teacher did not attempt to contextualise the lesson topic as advocated by constructivism (Pandey 2007:25) that learning should be in context in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills.

The religious adherence to the use of the textbook was also noticeable in the scheme-cum-plans of the teachers. The teachers at the three schools identified the textbook as the main source of information in their lesson plans. The sources of materials section in the scheme-cum-plans made mention of the textbook to show the sacredness of the textbook in the teaching of history. The extracts from the scheme-cum-plans of the teachers who participated in the research are shown below for confirmation.

School B
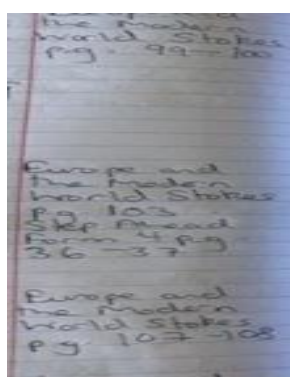
School C
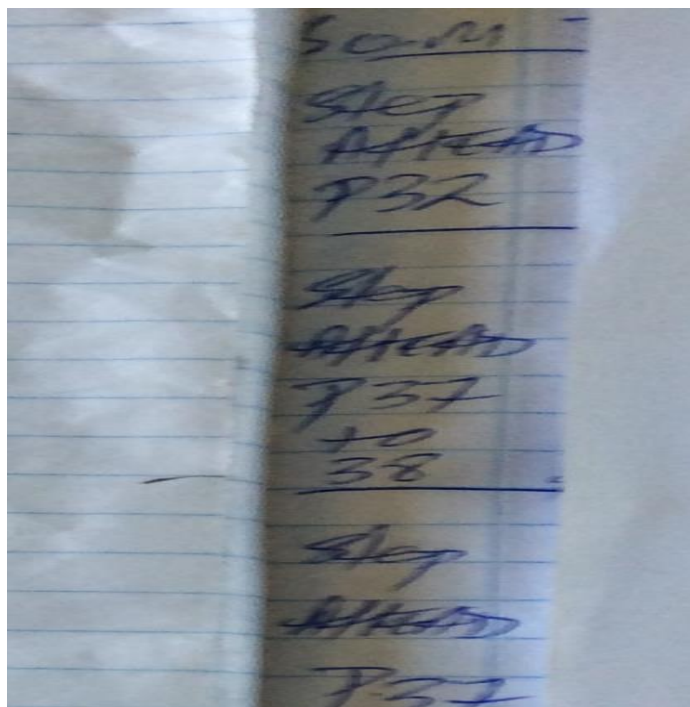
The evidence suggests that there is over-reliance on the use of the textbook in the teaching of history. The source of material for the lessons is the textbook which stifles the aspect of different voices or multi-perspective approach in history teaching which enhances the development of critical thinking skills as learners compare and contrast different sources of history information. This has been shown to stifle the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The participating teachers were not seeking alternative sources of history information which can be used to interrogate the historical facts in the textbooks which may enhance the development of critical thinking skills.

5.3.5.2 Ineffective use of ICTs

History teaching using the skills based approach requires the use of ICTs as resources that allow learner participation and active engagement with knowledge. A study by Takafakare (2015:31) has shown this to be a problem since there is either no access or very limited access to the internet by both the teachers and the students. The same study revealed that where there is modern technology in schools, there is no creative use of technology by the history teachers in order to

make the lessons interesting. There is a lack of creativity and innovativeness by the history teachers in the use of technology in the teaching and learning of history as Westbrook, *et al,* (2013:30) say most teachers use power point presentations more often than any other ICT platforms. For example, very few history teachers are familiar with the use of the interactive boards in the teaching and learning of history as the latest technological innovations in teaching and learning because they have not been trained to use them in teaching and learning. This is against the desire by history learners to make use of the online or internet resources to access updated information.

The interview responses seem to confirm and disconfirm the view by Westbrook, *et al* (2013:30) that most teachers use power point presentations more often than any other ICT platforms. When asked the question: How do you use ICTs to address critical thinking skills in your lessons, the teacher at school A responded:

"*I use power point for my history lessons in order to show content pertaining to a topic".*

The responses by the teachers at schools B and C were clear that they did not even use power point as the teacher at school B said:

"There is no projector for use in the school so I do not use ICTs in my lessons".

The response by the teacher at school C was the same who said:

"I do not have ICTs for use in the classrooms so I do not use any of these in my lessons".

The lesson observations reinforced the ineffective use of ICTs in order to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The ICTs were used by the history teacher at school A to show content to the learners rather than to use it to stimulate critical thinking skills. A scenario which depicts the absence of ICTs in history teaching actually pertained at school B where the teacher did not make an effort to use ICTs in history teaching. This was vindicated by the fact that he lacked proficiency in the use ICTs in history teaching (see 4.4.2.1.2). The situation of the participant at school

C was not much different from the other two participating schools in terms of the use of ICTs in the history lessons.

It is quite clear from the presentation of the use of the ICTs in the teaching of history that there is a general lack of its use to develop critical thinking skills. The critical role of the ICTs in the framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills is undermined in the history lessons. This justifies the need to provide such a framework for an enabling learning environment.

The lack of the use of the ICTs in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching was also made clear in the document analysis that was done as part of this study. The researcher made particular reference to the teaching aids column of the scheme-cum-plans of the teachers who participated in this study. Only the teacher at school A mentioned the use of videos in some of his lessons, but the teachers at schools B and C were silent on the use of ICTs. The use of the traditional teaching aids which are reminiscent of the traditional teacher-centred methodologies which foster recall and memorisation which stifles the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching has been discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

Moreover, a careful survey of the History Syllabus 2167 that is the official document that history teachers are required to use for their teaching only recommends the use of instructional media (see 3.2.5). However, it does not specify what instructional media history teachers must use to teach history for the development of critical thinking skills. It shows that the syllabus leaves it to chance for the history teachers. This is a dangerous assumption which should not be discerned in a crucial document which guides history teaching for the development of critical thinking skills at a national level. The evidence here suggests that the use of ICTs in history teaching by the teachers is still a long way to come. The teachers need to be appraised about the value of using ICTs in the development of critical thinking in history teaching.

5.3.5.3 Poor resourcing of history departments

In a study by Takafakare (2015:30), there is a scarcity of resources for history teachers in the secondary schools in Zimbabwe. Textbooks are shared by many students and most of those available are obsolete to the extent that they do not promote the development of critical thinking skills in the learners since they were written without an emphasis on the development of critical thinking skills. Ruto and Ndola (2013:89) say there is a shortage of textbooks and other history teaching and learning materials in most secondary schools in Kenya. This is worsened by the shortage of the basic resource, that is, funds to procure the other resources. Ruto and Ndola (2013:89) are of the view that due to the shortage of funds, history teachers are not supported to attend refresher courses in order to enhance their skills in the teaching and learning of history. The implication is that there is no emphasis in Kenya on the need to provide in-service training for history teachers in order to acquire the pedagogy for teaching the subject in the event of curriculum reform.

Cole and Barsalou (2006:1-2) say history teachers face the problem of poor resource allocation if they want to use the critical inquiry approaches in history teaching and learning and it is always the case that new pedagogical reforms in history usually lack enough resources to be implemented. Ruto and Ndola (2013:88) say the other important resource which is very minimal for history teachers is that of time. Inadequate time is allocated to the teaching and learning of history which makes history teachers focus on covering the content and not on the development of critical thinking skills. The history syllabus for Zimbabwe (Syllabus 2167:6) emphasises the coverage of the syllabus and thus at least four periods a week of 35-40 minutes are recommended. Given this limited time, teacher-centred teaching and learning processes dominate the classroom.

The responses that the teachers at schools A, B and C gave to the question: What are the challenges you face in trying to develop critical thinking skills, showed that

the participants are of the view that resource constraints derail the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The history teacher at school A said:

"The materials are mainly secondary, but there are no primary sources in the library. History magazines are lacking. There is lack of access to e-books although there is internet".

The reference that is made to history magazines and lack of other primary sources was blamed on the lack of adequate funding for the procurement of primary sources which are the cornerstone of the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This was seen not to be aligning with the suggestion by Major and Mangope (2012:144) that constructivism envisages the provision of a variety of resources for use in teaching and learning. The history teacher at school B took an interesting stance when talking about the limitation imposed on history teaching by lack of resources at the school. He had the following to say:

"It is difficult to go on field trips with the learners. It is difficult to hire resource persons or even experts in the subject due to finance constraints".

It can be said that the history teacher realises the value of learning environments outside the classroom in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching by his reference to field trips. Moreover, the participant takes cognisance of the importance of resource persons and other experts in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The paucity of financial resources acts as a strong barrier against the provision of key history teaching and learning resources for the development of critical thinking skills.

The participant at school C also added his voice on the resource constraints and said:
"There is no internet access for Forms Three and Four. This makes giving them work to research on the internet impossible".

The lack of access to the internet was blamed on the lack of adequate financial resources in the school. Given that the current crop of history learners is the net-generation, absence of internet facilities stifles the culture of research by learners yet it is the basis upon which history teachers can build in their quest to develop critical

thinking skills in history teaching based on the ZPD by Vygotsky (see 2.4.6.3). Research will help to increase the knowledge that history learners bring to class and the history teacher then can concentrate on gaps in knowledge which gives the time to scaffold the learner to a higher level of thinking.

The poor resourcing of the history departments was revealed in the lesson observations at schools B and C. The history classrooms at both schools did not have ICTs. The teachers also did not bring with them any primary resources which show poor resourcing of the history departments. The issue of poor resourcing of the history departments was, however, disconfirmed by the scenario of classrooms at school A where there were ICTs in the classrooms. Unfortunately, the teacher at the school did not effectively use the ICTs to develop critical thinking skills as already highlighted that it was used to show content not to stimulate critical thinking among the learners.

Document analysis showed that there is poor resourcing of history departments. The scheme-cum-plans did not show that there was any planning to use ICTs by the teachers at schools B and C. The following extracts of the scheme-cum-plans sections on teaching aids reveal that.

School B
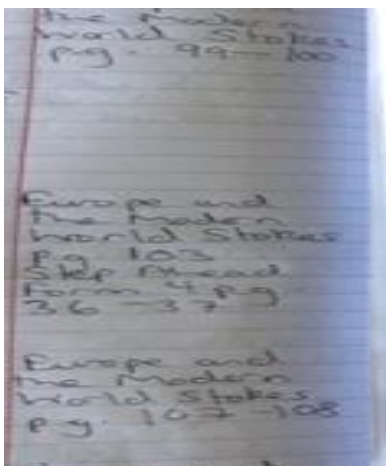
School C
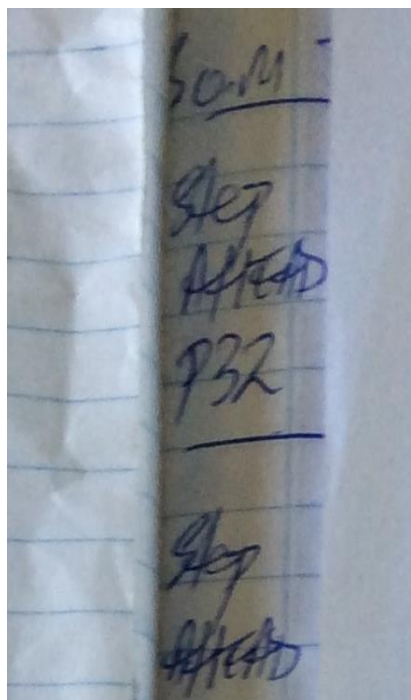
However, this was disconfirmed by the extract from the scheme-cum-plan of the teacher at school A which showed that the teacher intended to use ICTs in the delivery of the lesson.

A power point video presentation is played showing how Hitler rose to power.
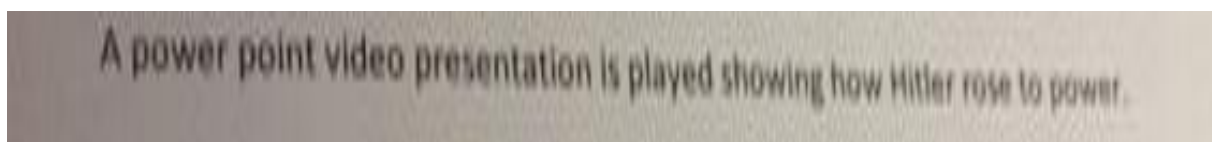
The lack of planning for the use of ICTs in the lessons to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching by the teachers at schools B and C could suggest that there is poor resourcing in terms of ICTs in the history departments at the schools. It could also be interpreted to mean that the teachers have not been trained at departmental and school levels to be able to use the ICTs as teaching and learning tools. This lack of adequate resourcing could be extended to school A as the use of power point as the only platform for using ICTs in history teaching and learning might be an indication that not enough resources have been allocated to the in-service training of the history teacher in order to enhance the use of the ICTs in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching.

5.3.6 Ineffective classroom environment

Enabling learning environment is defined as the conditions suitable for learning to take place (OECD 2012:12). These are learning conditions, that is, the tone, ambience or atmosphere created by a teacher through the relationships developed within and without (*sic)* the classroom and the way in which interaction is delivered (pedagogy) (Aldridge, *et al* 2009:148). Kyriacou (1991 in Moreeng 2009:97) refers to the conditions of learning that foster learning in being purposeful, task-oriented, relaxed, warm, having a sense of order and supportive.

Purposeful means that there must be the manifest intention to enable the learners to learn. Task-oriented means that there must be the domination of learner activities rather than teacher activities. Relaxed means that the learners must feel at home in the learning space. Warm means that temperatures (both physical and emotional) must be of the right degree to enable learners to be active during learning. A sense of order means that there must be clear rules which enable the smooth running of the learning processes. Supportive means that the learners must be tolerated and motivated in their learning by their peers as well as the teacher.

OECD (2012:12) says these conditions influence learning processes and include the absence of bullying and fighting respectively. These are conditions which have a psychological effect on the learner and may affect the process of learning when the learner is worried about health and safety. It can be inferred that the availability of opportunities for interactions and collaboration by learners is a key ingredient in developing an enabling learning environment (Mogashoa 2014:52) and these conditions include time at task, activities by learners, space, furniture and access to resources (Yilmaz 2008:169).

Learning resources are the physical resources that are used directly for teaching and learning by the history teachers. These are the resources that either the history teachers or learners bring to the classroom in order to enhance the development of

critical thinking skills in history teaching. A careful examination of the syllabus revealed that the skills-based approach expects history teachers to use both primary and secondary sources (see 3.3.1.1). The primary sources of history could be extracts from history textbooks and history magazines, newspapers, political party manifestos and parliamentary debates. These enable the learners to tease the so-called facts in history and thereby developing critical thinking skills.

It was, however, disturbing from the interviews and lesson observations to note that the use of primary sources to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching is almost non-existent. The participants were of the view that there are no primary sources in the schools to use in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The participating teachers were asked the question: **What resource challenges did you encounter in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills during your history lessons?** To quote the actual words will help strengthen the feeling of the participants. The participant at school A said:

"There is a lack of materials that are relevant. Magazines, for example, are totally lacking".

This was confirmed by the participant at school B who said:

"*The textbooks are powerfully narrative, with extracts meant to support the narrative".*

The participant at school C echoed the same sentiments by saying,

"Rarely do the textbooks include extracts from primary sources. I rarely bother to consider them in my teaching for critical thinking skills development".

These sentiments by the participants indicate that the use of primary sources is critical in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The above conclusion was unequivocally confirmed by the findings of the lessons observations. Apart from the textbooks and teaching notes, the participants did not bring any newspaper cuttings, extracts from political manifestos or parliamentary debates or artifacts in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

It was noted that the participants always brought the textbook to the lesson which is a secondary source of history. This was in keeping with one of the expectations of the syllabus that secondary sources should be used in the skills-based approach to history teaching. However, the secondary source proved useless in developing critical thinking skills because there were no primary sources used to tease the secondary source.

The researcher came to the conclusion that the print resources that are brought to the history lessons are not used to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching, but to deliver what is deemed to be history knowledge which did not augur well with the principle of critical pedagogy that rather than passively receive information, learners should be engaged with it in order to conceptualise new ideas. With the corroborative use of primary and secondary sources in history teaching, history teachers can help to develop critical thinking skills of interpretation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation as learners get engaged in comparing and contrasting the primary sources themselves on one hand and the primary sources and secondary source on the other hand and making their own judgments (see table 3.2).

At school A, the classrooms were adorned with charts on the walls with different historical figures, events and narratives. There were no artifacts in any part of the classrooms in which history lessons were conducted. Of all the lessons observed at the school, there was not even a single reference that was made to the charts on the walls in order to stimulate critical thinking skills. It was concluded that the charts that were adorning the classrooms walls were for decoration rather than for use in learning. If none of the charts could be used even in the general learning of history, how could one expect them to be used to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching?

The scenarios at schools B and C were even deafening. The researcher was left wondering what would stimulate critical thinking skills in those classrooms as there

were empty walls and corners that beckoned for some history teacher's attention at least. The physical classroom environment would at best be described as dull and demanding the attention of the learners to be on the teacher and nothing else. It was concluded that the participants did not consider the physical classroom environment as a 'second teacher' in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

Critical thinking skills develop in the mind of an individual, yet this development happens in collaboration with others. There is evidence in the documents analysed in this study to show that there are collaborative conditions which assist in the development of critical thinking skills. The syllabus document highlights the use of discussion and debate as methods which enhance collaboration among the learners. It was, however, disturbing when it came to lesson observations where only discussion was the collaborative method commonly in use. The syllabus gave learner activities that are collaborative in nature which can be useful in developing critical thinking skills. These are learner activities like dramatisation, role playing, surveying, classifying, and researching.

The development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is deemed to thrive when the atmosphere in the classroom is supportive. The lessons observations revealed that at school A, the classroom environment is very supportive of learners who make efforts to think outside the box by way of asking questions and responding to higher order questions. The learners did not laugh when one learner's response was turned down by the teacher. The teacher would even thank the learner for making an effort when others were not making the effort. The teacher and the learners expressed gratitude to those learners who asked critical questions which helped to clarify misunderstanding by other learners as well.

It was the same scenario at school B with the learners trying to uplift each other when the teacher turned down the response by a learner. The teacher made positive comments about the learners who were continuously asking questions in order to get

further clarification of concepts. There was evidence during the lesson observations that the learners felt appreciated as they were free to ask questions and to respond to questions of a higher order. It can be deduced that at schools A and B, there is the supportive atmosphere which enhances the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

However, the researcher was confronted with a disturbing classroom atmosphere at school C. The learners did not try to support each other, but rather to pull down each other by laughing when a teacher turned down a response by a learner. There was chorus of disapproval by the learners when one learner asked a question for clarification as if to suggest that asking such questions was time wasting. The teacher constantly reprimanded the learners, but it was a real challenge. Learners who received such chorus of disapproval immediately kept quiet without pursuing their questions. While the researcher observed that such learners were asking real critical questions, the classmates stifled the development of critical thinking by their uncouth behaviour.

It is concluded that the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is served in schools where both learners and teachers support those learners who respond to challenging questions and ask critical questions. This helps to build self-esteem which promotes continued effort by learners to think critically. In those schools where there is no supportive atmosphere, the development of critical thinking skills is stifled.

The researcher was interested in capturing the tone of the lessons observed from the very beginning of the lessons. This is because one of the psychological/emotional conditions that determine the learning that goes on during a lesson is the tone that the teacher sets for the lesson. In most of the lessons that were observed, the introduction of the lessons was a recap of the previous lesson. A teacher always started by saying: "who can tell us what we learnt yesterday?" or who

remembers what we did in yesterday's lesson? One of the participants constantly referred to lesson recap in the scheme-cum-plan as the introduction of the lesson. This was viewed as a check on the learners as to how much of the learnt content was retained in their minds. There was no incident during which the learners were asked a question like: what do you think about what we learnt yesterday? This would have suggested that learners are supposed to think about learnt information which helps to develop critical thinking skills.

The experiences of the researcher in the lessons prove that the history teachers face challenges in setting the tone for their lessons in order to prepare their learners right from the start of the lesson for critical thinking skills. This explains why most history lessons observed turned out to be dull and not stimulating active learner participation for the development of critical thinking skills. The participants proved to the researcher that the setting of the tone eludes them yet it determines whether the lesson will result in the development of critical thinking skills or the mastery of content. This study should help to appraise history teachers of the ways in which they can set a tone for a history lesson that will stimulate critical thinking skills.

5.4 CURRENT PRACTICES IN CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING.

5.4.1 Introduction

In an attempt to provide a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching, there is need to overcome the challenges which derail history teachers. The practices in this section emanated from the literature study and empirical data. The practices are aligned with the challenges highlighted in the whole of section 5.3 and these are: management of curriculum change (see 3.3.8.2; 5.3.2; 5.4.2), teaching methodology (see 3.3.8.3; 5.3.3; 5.4.3), assessment practices (see 3.3.8.4; 5.3.4;

5.4.4), availability and use of resources (see 3.3.8.5; 5.3.5; 5.4.5), classroom environment (see 3.3.8.6; 5.3.6; 5.4.6).

5.4.2 Management of curriculum change

The ZIMSEC Syllabus 2167 requires the teaching for the source-based question in Paper 1 of the examination in order to ensure that assessment enhances the transition to the skills-based approach in history teaching. History Syllabus 2167 that is the official document that history teachers are required to use for their teaching only recommends the use of instructional media. It also recommends research into aspects of local and national history. This research should be carried out using primary and secondary sources which are the key resources for the skills-based approach.

The interview sought to solicit information on how the history teachers who participated in the study experienced the management of the change to a skills-based approach in history teaching as envisaged in the syllabus 2167. The question asked was: What is being done to ensure that there is a successful transition to focus on skills development in history teaching? The response by the teacher at school A was:

"*The syllabus includes a requirement for a source based question like with syllabus 2166 which preceded the current syllabus. Moreover, the syllabus recommends the use of primary sources in history teaching. The methods that are recommended for use by the syllabus and the Ministry actually promote the development of skills in history. I think quite a lot is being done to assist with the transition".*

The teacher at school B added his voice to complement what the teacher at school A said by saying:

"*The requirement of teaching for the source based question which I do not do is aimed at assisting with the transition to skills teaching. I see the teaching methods recommendations by both the Ministry and the syllabus as doing enough to enhance*

the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The inclusion of the source-based question in Paper 1 of the examination is a sure case of doing something to ensure the teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills".

The teacher at school C responded:

"*I feel like there is not much that is being done to assist with the transition. The little that is being done I would say is that the assessment for Paper 1 of the examination has a question on source-based study although it is not compulsory".*

These responses by the teachers reveal that there is clear policy on what has to be done in order to make the transition to a skills-based approach in history teaching achievable.

The document analysis of the syllabus confirmed what the teachers said about teaching methodologies as a way of enhancing the transition to a skills-based approach in history teaching. The extract of the syllabus on the teaching methodologies is given below.

5.0 APPROACHES / METHODOLOGIES

This syllabus encourages a variety of approaches to the teaching of History and discourages mere reproduction of facts. The recommended approaches for this syllabus are the thematic, concentric and skill-based approaches. Methods used should develop empathy and understanding in pupils.

The thematic approach demands that issues, events, developments and ideas be related to their wider theme. This avoids the danger to History lessons being taught as isolated narratives divorced from the significance implied in the theme to which the topic relates. Cases studied to illustrate themes are encouraged.

The concentric approach involves covering historical events starting from the known to the unknown.

The skill-based approach will involve the selection of a wide variety of sources including extracts from both primary and secondary sources for analysis by pupils. Exercises will involve identifying bias, opinions and value judgements.

The following extract from the examination paper showed that there was a policy on assessment to assist with the transition to the skills-based approach.

Going by the questions of the source-based question in the extract, it is clear that history teachers would enhance the development of critical thinking skills in their learners as question (a) requires learners to seek for evidence to support an argument. Questions (b), (c) and (d) require that learners make reasoned judgements on the issues raised in the questions and making reasoned judgements is one of the critical thinking skills. The last question (e) actually requires the learners to think rather than simply to remember what they would have learnt and this is a mark of the development of critical thinking skills which the source-based question endeavours to develop in history learners. Generally, all the questions require that learners sustain their arguments with evidence which is a prerequisite for the development of critical thinking skills.

The extracts show that there is a curriculum policy to provide guidance in what the teachers must do in order to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The teachers choose not to do it showing that there is a problem of creating an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

5.4.3 Teaching methodologies

5.4.3.1 Learner centred methodologies

Teaching methodologies are at the core of the transition to the skills-based approach in history teaching. This is so since the experiences of the learners are captured in the teaching methods**.** Altekin (2013:469) says the government of Turkey introduced activity-based innovative methodology in the teaching and learning of history in pursuit of skills development in history teaching. The methodology required that history teachers planned and organised activities for the learners to be at the centre of learning and the teachers to be the facilitators of the learning as critical pedagogy advocates the use of learner activities in developing critical thinking skills (Muro 2012:4). This was done with the assistance of the Council of Europe which is a depiction of the value of collaboration between history teachers and the wider community in the development of pedagogical reforms. Aktekin (2013:469) says the suggested activities were in an Exemplar book which the history teachers had to use in their lessons for the development of critical thinking with other expected outcomes.

The interview question that was asked to solicit data on methodology measures was: **What teaching methods/approaches are you using in an attempt to develop critical thinking skills?**

The teacher at school A said;

"I use presentations, which are both individual and group, debates where I always normally present a problem following a topic covered in class, group work where I normally allocate topics for discussion, but I sometimes allow choice of topics by learners and guess what, the level of participation increases. I also use assignments which are targeted at individuals or groups".

It can be said that the teacher is living up to the principles of critical theory of individual freedoms within a democratic society by allowing the learners to sometimes choose the topics for presentations, debates, group work and assignments (Cohen, *et al.* 2011:31) and critical pedagogy and constructivism of putting the learners at the centre of learning and advocating collaborative learning by

using presentations, debates, group work, and group assignments (Major and Mangope 2012:139 and Pandey 2007:23). However, by sometimes choosing the topics for debates, presentations and assignments for learners the teacher goes against the principle of critical pedagogy of the need for non-authoritarian relationships in teaching and learning.

The participant at school B also said:

"I use group work, presentations by learners and homework tasks requiring analysis".

The teacher at school B takes cognisance of the principles of critical pedagogy and social constructivism like the teacher at school A by using group work, presentations and assignments. However, it is not clear whether the learners are allowed freedom in the process of learning, but could be interpreted to mean that the teacher is authoritarian and the enabling learning environment poised to be suggested will emphasise learner freedom in order to dismantle authoritarianism in the classroom.

The teacher at school C had similar and expanded sentiments on the teaching methods that he uses to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. This is what the teacher said:

"I use the Socratic Method, simulation, presentations where learners do research, lecture method and group work".

It is clear that the teacher uses methods which are mainly in tandem with the principles of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism just like teachers at schools A and B. Learners are put at the centre of learning as required by the "doing history" approach. However, it should be noted that the teacher at school C uses the lecture method which does not in any way enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching, but is suitable for the rote learning which compromises the principles of learner freedom and learner centredness as advocated by critical pedagogy and constructivism.

From the interview responses by the teachers, it can be concluded that the teachers who participated in the study use some collaborative and inquiry methods or approaches that enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The teachers are able to practice to some extent the critical pedagogic principle of the diversification of teaching methodology (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:79). These methods and approaches are in tandem with some of the principles of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism, but there is still need to improve in order to fully capitalise on the theories in order to enhance an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The observations also revealed the collaborative methods often used by the history teachers in their lessons as shown in the table.

Table 5.5: Collaborative and inquiry methods in history teaching from lesson observations.

School	Lesson observation
A	Group work, group presentation, discussion
B	Group work, presentation, discussion, homework
C	Socratic Method, presentation, group work, pair work

The researcher observed that the most popular collaborative method was group work as all three teachers made use of it in their lessons. While the teachers adhered to some of the tenets of group work there was failure to uphold some of the requirements that would necessary for group work to be effective in developing critical thinking skills. Learners were put into groups of their choice which allowed learner freedom as required by critical theory (Cohen, *et al.* 2011:31) and the groups were either small at school A, but large at schools B and C depending on the class sizes and learning spaces as required by the process-oriented learning environment (Fullan, *et al.* 2012:2). However, the group work was made difficult in all the lessons because of the arrangements of the desks which did not allow for eye contact by the learners. Moreover, the teachers did not live up to the expectation of effective group work in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills since they did not

take it as an opportunity to move around to scaffold learners to think at higher levels. Group work was used mainly to retrieve content form the textbooks rather than for the learners to engage with the information in order to conceive new ideas as required by critical pedagogy (Green, in Muro 2012:4).

The use of discussion in the lessons was seen to be in agreement with the critical pedagogy in that it says a critical teacher must set up a classroom that is involved in dialogue and the teacher must facilitate dialogic interaction (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:80). This was also seen to be aligning with the constructivist experience where learning is viewed as a social activity which connects a learner to other human beings like peers for conversation (Mogashoa 2014:53). However, the discussion was seen to be falling short in being effective in enhancing the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as the time allowed was limited due to the rush to cover content and the arrangement of desks did not allow eye contact by the learners. Learners did not allow each other the opportunity to articulate their ideas as there were interjections in the process of speaking.

The Socratic Method was the dominating inquiry method that the teachers used in their endeavor to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The questions were emanating from both the learners and the teachers which allowed dialogue and interaction as required by constructivism (Pandey 2007:25) and critical pedagogy (Ledlow 2014:2 0f 3). However, the key strategies of questioning which enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching were found to be ignored by the teachers. These are the strategies of using open-ended questions as suggested by Thompson (2011:5), enough wait time by Snyder and Snyder (2008:95), use of probing questions to scaffold learners to higher levels of thinking by Duron, *et al* (2006:162) and contextualising learning through questioning by Wiersma (2008:116). It can be said that by not contextualising learning through the use of questioning, the teachers were compromising the constructivist view that learning should be done in context (Major and Mangope 2012:139) so that there can be the transfer of skills.

Moreover, questioning was not effectively used as a strategy to enhance the development of critical thinking skills in the lessons as there was use of lower order questions mainly with accidental use of the higher order questions. This was evidence that the teachers did not adequately plan their lessons in order to craft higher order questions that could assist the learners to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. This was confirmed in the interviews when the teachers highlighted that there was poor planning of lessons due to the lack of adequate time as reported elsewhere in this study.

The document analysis of the scheme-cum-plans went further and gave evidence that the teachers really use some collaborative approaches and inquiry methods in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The extracts from the scheme-cum-plans of the teachers shown here give evidence of this use.

School A

School B
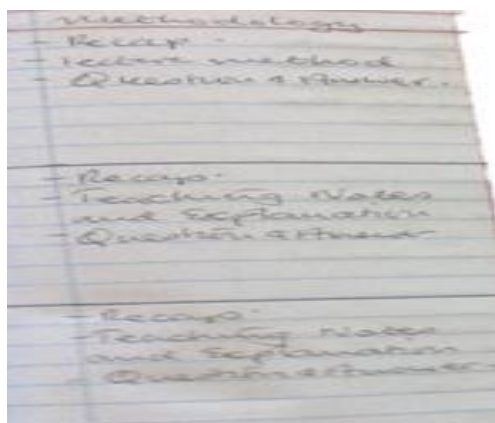
School C
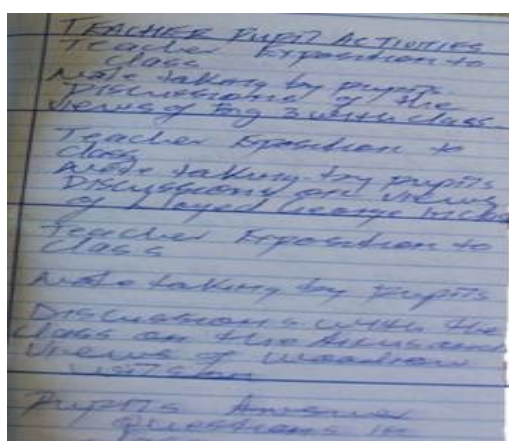
The teacher at school A used question and answer, class discussion and group work which are both inquiry and collaborative methods. The teacher at school B used the inquiry method of group work. This shows that the teachers responded well to the principles of constructivism which advocates collaboration in teaching and learning (Pandey 2007:25) and critical pedagogy which advocates dialogue (Ledlow 2014:2 of 3). The use of questioning is also known to be one of the key methods that enhance the development of critical thinking skills if well handled by the teachers (Fullan, *et al.* 2012:2).

It is concluded on the effective teaching methods that the teachers use some methods and strategies that enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. However, there are some critical methods and strategies that

enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching which they need to greatly employ and improve

5.4.3.2 Source-based teaching

Source-based teaching has been shown to have the power to enhance the development of critical thinking skills of the learners. According to Moreeng and Du Toit (2012:40), the 'doing history' approach makes use of various primary sources in constructing knowledge that can be communicated to the learners and the teachers. These sources could be print, objects, and electronic sources. Print sources can be derived from the textbooks, newspapers and magazines. The electronic sources could be in form of videos, films, CD-ROMS and internet. Aktekin (2013:469) says the common approach in history lessons in many European schools today is for students to examine a number of sources on a particular historical topic. The exercises that learners will be involved in would focus on identifying bias, opinions and value judgements, corroborating evidence and comparing different versions of the same events and issues. This is what is referred to as active learning because the learners have the opportunity to engage with primary sources which helps them to explain why accounts in secondary sources differ on the same historical event.

This is supported by Aktekin (2013:471) who says critical thinking activities require teachers to incorporate a number of primary and secondary sources. These primary sources enable the learners to ask questions about the past and in asking questions about the past, they acquire critical thinking skills (Fogo 2014:178) like inquiry, interpretation and evaluation. Wiersma (2008:116) says questions which require deeper thinking by the students are an essential part of constructivism. It is the contention by Reisman (2012, in Fogo 2014:155) that the use of primary sources align with the gaining of analytical thinking skills by the learners. This is corroborated by Aktekin (2013:471) who say current textbooks have sidebars that focus on critical thinking requiring the use of modes of reasoning as well as excerpts of primary and secondary sources.

On the basis of the literature evidence, the researcher wanted to establish the extent to which the teachers were doing the "doing history" approach in their teaching for the development of critical thinking skills. The question they were asked was: **Do you practise source-based teaching in your lessons?** The answer from teacher at school A was:

"*I rarely use the extracts in the textbook to teach in my lessons. The questions that the extracts require learners to answer actually help me to develop critical thinking skills among the learners. But take note, I said rarely because there is the requirement for content by the examination".*

The teacher at school B was very clear about the issue of source-based teaching and said:

"*To say the truth, I do not do any source-based teaching in my lessons. The textbook and my notes do the job for me. I feel that the content in the textbook is the requirement of the syllabus and the examination".*

The teacher at school C was just as forthright as the teacher at school B and said:
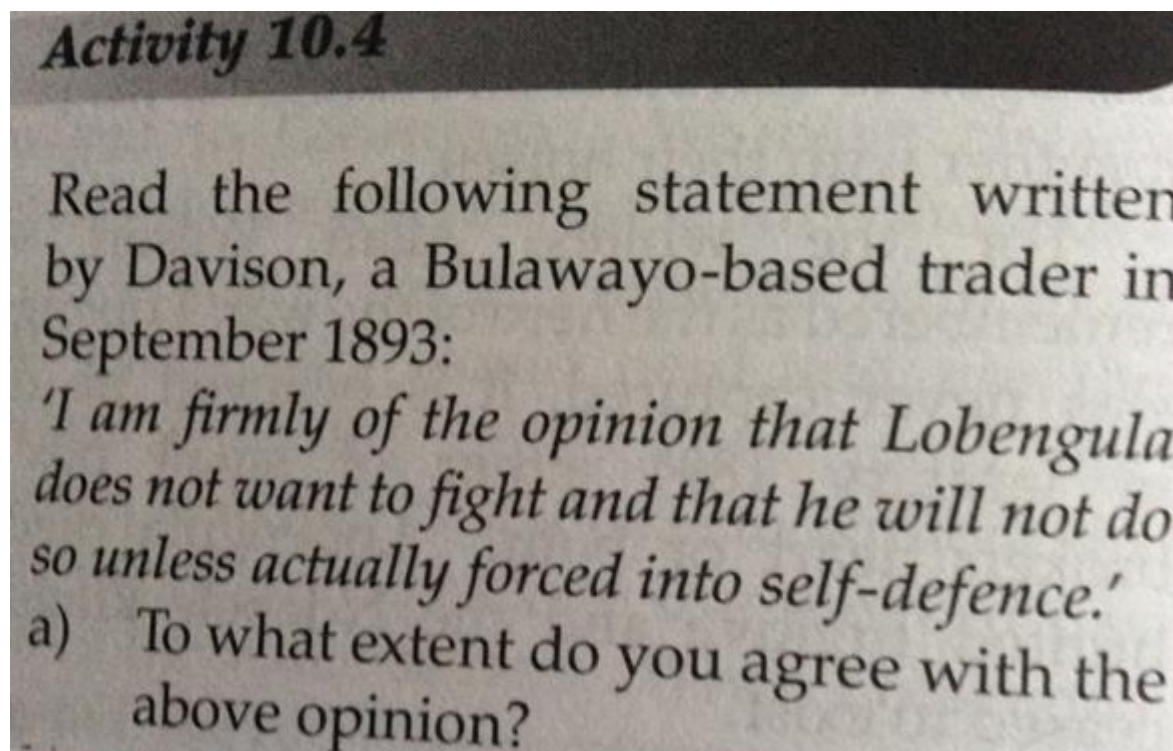
"*I do not do source-based teaching because that is a waste of time in the face of wanting to cover the syllabus".*

The responses by the teachers show that there is largely no source-based teaching that happens in the history lessons. This agrees with the findings in a study by Mapetere, *et al* (2012:102) that examiners' reports have indicated that students are shunning the source-based question because history teachers are no longer teaching the source-based question in spite of its critical role in the development of critical thinking skills. This lack of the practice of source-based teaching by the participants goes contrary to the principle of constructivism that there should be a provision of a variety of sources in teaching and learning for learners to engage with so as to conceptualise new ideas.

The interview responses were confirmed by the lessons observations. The teachers did not bring any additional sources to the lessons except the textbook and teaching

notes. The teacher at school A used an extract of a primary source in one of his lessons only to give a class task not to do source-based teaching. The extract that was used is shown.

> ## Activity 10.4
>
> Read the following statement written by Davison, a Bulawayo-based trader in September 1893:
>
> 'I am firmly of the opinion that Lobengula does not want to fight and that he will not do so unless actually forced into self-defence.'
>
> a) To what extent do you agree with the above opinion?

The document analysis of scheme-cum-plans which is the source of information of what teachers plan to do in their lessons revealed that there was no planning for source-based teaching as reported elsewhere about teacher-pupil activities (see 5.3.3.1).

5.4.4 Skills based assessment

Assessment procedure has been shown from the literature study to be assessment for learning which serves the purpose of promoting students' learning (William 2011:10). This kind of assessment helps learners to know and recognise the standards for which they are aiming. It is assessment which provides feedback to guide learners in their next steps and how to take them. Both the teacher and the learner review and reflect on assessment data. In order to improve on the assessment of the learners, Lekgoathi (2010:107) says South Africa introduced the outcomes-based assessment which focuses on the skills by the learner and one of

the critical outcomes is critical thinking. Outcomes-based assessment enables the inclusion of continuous assessment in the evaluation of learner progress in achieving the objectives of the history course.

The interview sought to establish the current practices of the participants with regard to the types of assessment they were using in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The question which was used to guide the gathering of the views of the participants was: **How do you ensure that assessment is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?** The participant at school A had this to say:

"I use structured essay questions which always include an analysis question. I sometimes give projects to individual learners".

The participant at school B also said:

"Oh yes. I give homework tasks with a higher order question and especially an analysis question always".

The same sentiments were echoed by the participant at school C when he said:

"I use the ZIMSEC standard when I give my homework tasks where there is always a part (c) question which requires analysis".

The responses by the teachers reveal that there is almost always one type of assessment that history learners are exposed to which enhances the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This is clearly influenced by the nature of the summative assessment that the learners get exposed to by the examining body (ZIMSEC History syllabus 2167:4) and constructivism which calls for authentic assessment which is formative assessment (Yilmaz 2008:170) although this sounds contrary to the non-authoritarianism advocated by critical pedagogy (Aliakbari and Faraji 2011:789) in the sense that the teachers say they give, not that learners decide the homework tasks requiring analysis. This use of a question requiring analysis is tantamount to enhancing the development of critical thinking skills as the teachers claim as the learners have to interpret the question, write a balanced answer and pass a judgement based on evidence. It is motivating to realise that all the teachers referred to the word analysis in the responses which may be taken to

imply that they tell their learners that they need to analyse in their responses to the questions. This is in agreement with the view of constructivism that the language we use influences learning (Mogashoa 2014:53) and that the teacher must use language which denotes the intention to influence learners to develop critical thinking skills.

The lesson observations confirmed what the interview responses had indicated about the type of assessment that the teachers say they are using to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. The following homework tasks with an analysis question were given by the teachers at the end of some of their lessons.

School A
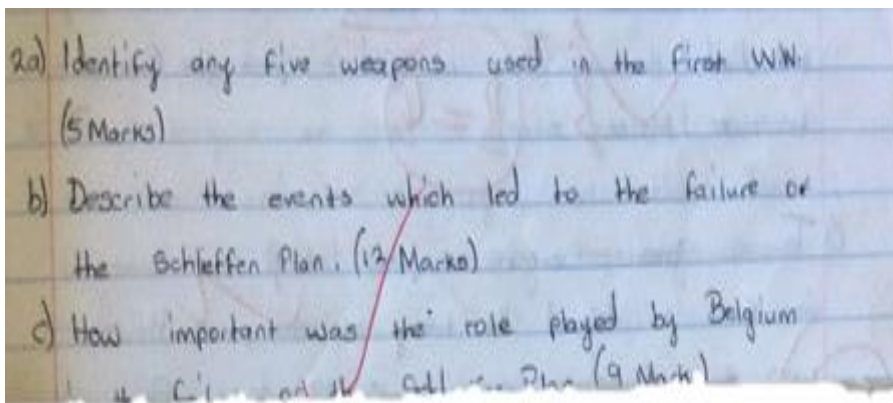
School B
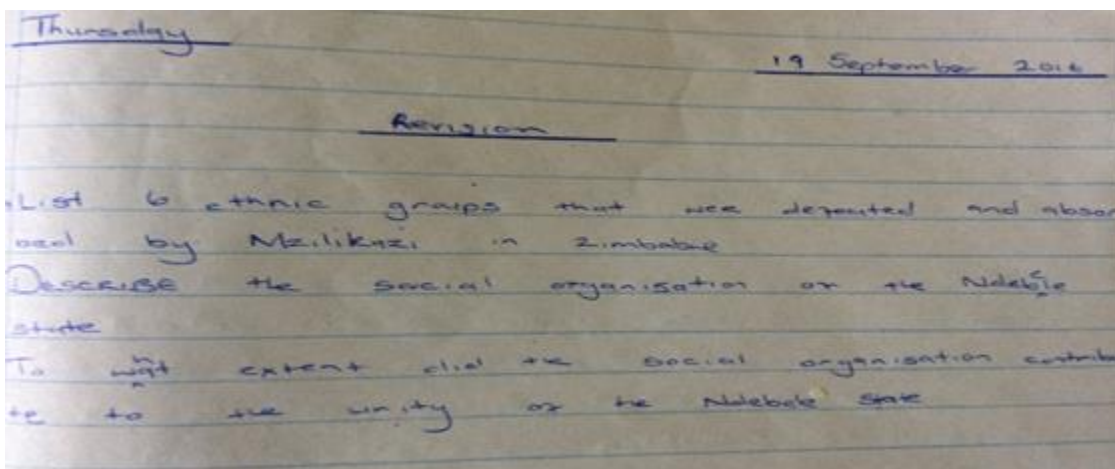
School C
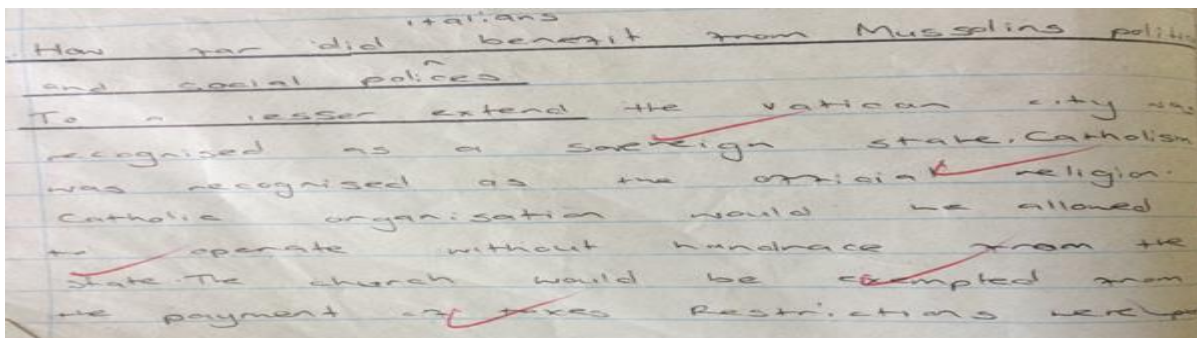
It should be noted that the use of these homework tasks is important in developing the critical thinking skill of analysis by individual learners yet critical pedagogy is about group development rather than individual development which emanates from negotiation of multiple forms of knowledge (Muro 2012:13). However, it should be stressed that this is just one of the many other forms of assessment which the teachers can use in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching and this study aims to highlight the other assessment types.

School based assessment papers that were analysed for the purpose of data collection of this study showed a picture which was not different from the interviews and homework tasks. The teachers always included a question on analysis as part (c) of the structured essays. The following is an example of the school-based assessment papers which is representative of the scenario at all three schools.

4. (a) Name any six Shona Chiefs who were visited by early missionaries between 1850 and 1900.

[6]

(b) Outline the problems faced by Christian missionaries in their work in Zimbabwe up 1900.

[11]

(c) To what extent were Missionaries able to solve these problems by 1900.

[8]

5. (a) State any six duties of the Portuguese captain of the gates in the Mutapa State in the period between the 16th and 18th centuries.

[6]

(b) Describe steps taken by the Portuguese to control trade in the Zambezi valley in the period between the 16th and 18th centuries.

[11]

(c) Did the people of the Mutapa State benefit from trade with the Portuguese? Explain your answer.

[8]

Thus, it can be concluded that the development of critical thinking skills is done by administering homework and school-based assessment which is limited to the analysis question only. This does not allow for the diversity of assessment which culminates in the democratisation of assessment as the teachers are the ones who decide on what learners do.

5.4.5 Availability and use of resources

The importance of resources in providing a framework for constructing of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills has been emphasised in literature. In order to overcome challenges of resource scarcity, Ruto and Ndola (2013:93) say history teachers in Kenya embarked on field trips to have first-hand experience of the events they were teaching in the subject. Moreover, they tried to overcome teacher-centred-ness in the teaching of history by organising for role play by the learners assuming that learners can be used as resources in teaching and learning. Cole and Parsalou (2006:11) say that one history teacher in Colombia used news clippings and political manifestos of the different political parties, photographs, documentaries and primary accounts to pose critical questions for developing critical thinking among the learners. This can be viewed as a way of striving to meet the requirement of constructivism of the provision of a variety of resources for use in teaching and learning in order to cater for different learning outcomes which in this study constitute critical thinking skills.

The teachers were asked a question to gather the resources that they use during their lessons in order to develop critical thinking skills. The question posed was: **What resources do you use during your lessons to develop your learners' critical thinking skills?** The participant at school A's response ran as follows:

"I use charts, extracts of primary sources in textbooks and videos to help my learners to develop critical thinking skills during my lessons. Oh! I also use the marking guides that are provided by our examining board to assist my learners with developing the analysis skill".

The participant at school B was very frank and said:

"Let me be very frank with you, I do not use any resources to help my learners to develop critical thinking skills during my lessons. In fact what I do is that I teach my learners what to do in order to write an analytical answer. If anything, I use the marking guides that are provided by ZIMSEC to assist my learners with analysis in their answers".

The participant at school C shared similar sentiments with the teacher at school B by saying:

"Resources to develop critical thinking during the lesson are not part of my lesson repertoire. I see them as a waste of time. The only thing that I would call a resource in the lesson to do with the development of critical thinking skills is the marking guide that I get from ZIMSEC green book".

The responses show that the teacher at school A is the only one who appreciates the use of other resources during lessons to develop critical thinking skills. The reference that is made to the use of the marking guide by all three teachers suggests that there is a mechanical way of developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. This goes contrary to the principle of critical pedagogy that learners must engage with information so that they can conceptualise new ideas which is critical thinking (Muro 2012:4). This also flies in the face of the requirement of the "doing history" approach that learners must engage with primary sources (Aktekin 2013:469 and Moreeng and Du Toit 2012:40) so that they can construct their own meanings and this construction of own meanings enhances the development of critical thinking skills.

The interview sentiment of the teacher at school A, was confirmed by the lesson observations findings. The classroom was adorned with charts on the walls with different historical figures, events and narratives as the images on one of the walls shows.
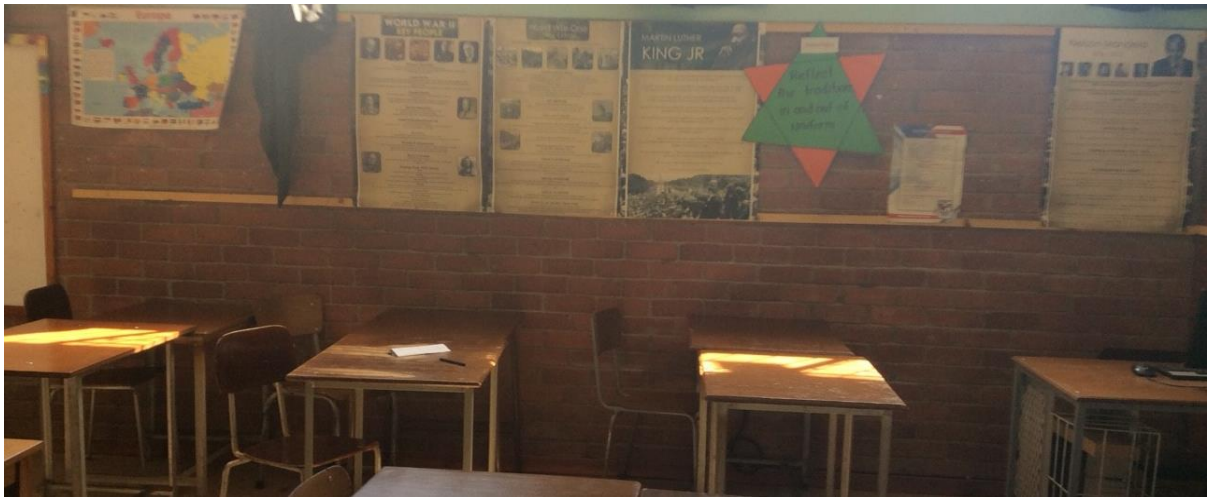
I took it to mean that charts are a useful resource that can be used to stimulate critical thinking skills in the learners in history teaching. However, of all the lessons observed at the school, there was not even a single reference that was made to the charts on the walls in order to stimulate critical thinking skills. It was concluded that the charts that were adorning the classrooms walls were for decoration rather than for use in learning. If none of the charts could be used even in the general learning of history, how could one expect them to be used to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching? The situation at schools B and C was dull as there were no charts on the walls and even paraphernalia in the classrooms where the teaching of history was taking place.

Lesson observations also confirmed the use of the textbook extracts by the teacher at school A in developing critical thinking skills. Learners were asked to read the following extract and answer the question related to the extract in groups.

Activity 10.4

Read the following statement written by Davison, a Bulawayo-based trader in September 1893:
'I am firmly of the opinion that Lobengula does not want to fight and that he will not do so unless actually forced into self-defence.'
a) To what extent do you agree with the above opinion?
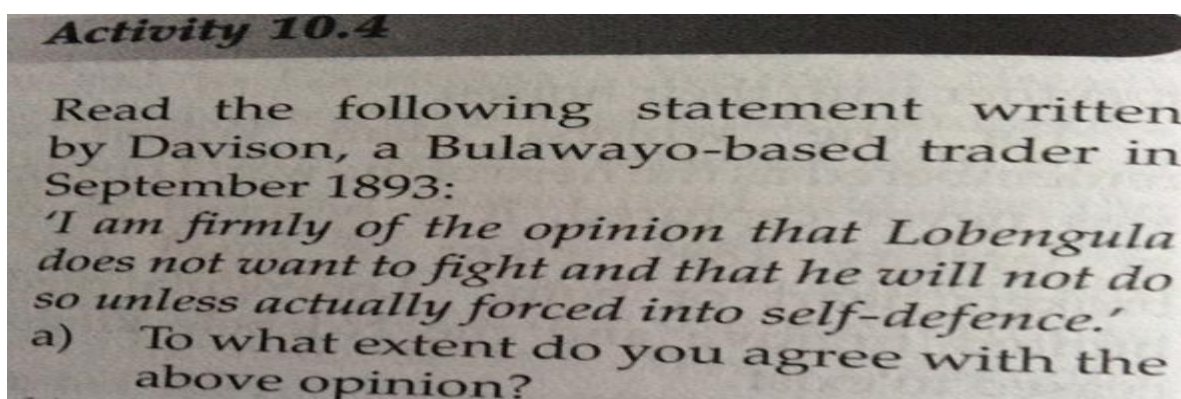
It was noted that the participants always brought the textbook which is a secondary source of history to the lesson. This was in keeping with one of the expectations of the syllabus that secondary sources should be used in the skills-based approach to history teaching.

5.4.6 Classroom environment

Literature study on measures on classroom environment has shown that the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching thrives when the atmosphere in the classroom is supportive (see 3.3.7.1; Fullan, *et al.* 2012:2). According to the OECD (2012:12), a classroom environment that fosters meaningful learning is characterised by relationships developed within the classroom which foster interaction among the learners. This is a confirmation of the constructivist principle that interactive methods of teaching and learning should be promoted (Pandey 2007:25). Warger and Dobbin (2009:3 of 14) weigh in and say that a learning environment that fosters meaningful learning is constituted by both human practices and material systems.

The interview question that guided the data collection on the classroom environment created to ensure the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching was the following: **How would you describe the atmosphere that prevails during your lesson and what impact does that have on the learning process?** The response by the teacher at school A was:

"The learners at this school are generally taught to be tolerant of individual differences in and out of the classroom and so, I do not have a problem with how they treat each other during lessons. They always try to motivate each other to try out new ideas in learning. However, the learners somehow do not respect the teacher and that impacts negatively on the inculcation of critical thinking skills".

The same sentiments were echoed by the teacher at school B who had this to say:

"I find the classroom environment very encouraging and motivating to teach the learners. The learners really appreciate that they are not the same and they tolerate others who make mistakes in responding to questions. While the learners are competitive in their approach to academic issues, they are quite aware that they are not all of the same capability. I feel I am given the respect that I deserve by the learners and it makes it easy to teach even for developing critical thinking skills".

The teacher at school C appeared to be greatly disturbed by the classroom atmosphere that obtains in the history lessons. The response that he gave sums it all:

"I think the large class size makes it difficult to have an atmosphere that I would cherish. The learners do not tolerate each other and they interject when one learner is presenting his/her ideas. This makes it difficult for learners with genuine issues requiring clarification to be heard and I have to constantly tell the learners to keep quiet which retards progress during the lesson. In fact there is some sort of bullying of some learners during the lesson".

The responses by the teachers at schools A and B truly reflect the classroom atmosphere that enables the learners to experience freedom as advocated by critical theory (Cohen, *et al* 2011:31). The responses also depict the characteristics of an enabling learning environment that a supportive atmosphere builds self-efficacy among the learners (Fullan, *et al* 2012:5; Droit 2015:47) and so, learners can try out new ideas which enhances the development of critical thinking skills. However, the classroom atmosphere at school C was disturbing and was seen not to be conducive for the enhancing of learning. The learners are not safe and this goes parallel to the democratic principle of critical theory.

The lesson observations revealed that at school A, the classroom environment is very supportive of learners who make efforts to think outside the box by way of asking questions and responding to higher order questions. This closely resonates with the requirement of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills that the environment must be supportive (Fullan, *et al* 2012:2).The learners did not laugh when one learner's response was turned down by

the teacher. The teacher even would thank the learner for making an effort when others were not making the effort. The teacher and the learners expressed gratitude to those learners who asked questions which helped to clarify misunderstanding by other learners as well. The classroom environment came close to equate the democratic society that is advocated by critical theory and critical pedagogy (Cohen, *et al* 2011:31 and Moreeng and Twala 2014:495). Supportive environments enhance the development of critical thinking skills as learners are able to try out new thinking with the knowledge that their opinions are always welcome.

It was the same scenario at school B with the learners trying to uplift each other when the teacher turned down the response by a learner. The teacher made positive comments about the learners who were continuously asking questions in order to get further clarification of concepts. There was evidence during the lesson observations that the learners felt appreciated as they were free to ask questions and to respond to questions of higher order. It can be deduced that at schools A and B, there is the supportive atmosphere which enhances the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

However, the researcher was confronted with a disturbing classroom atmosphere at school C. The learners did not try to support each other, but rather to put each other down by laughing when the teacher turned down a response by a learner. There was a chorus of disapproval by the learners when one learner asked a question for clarification as if to suggest that asking such questions was a waste of time. The teacher constantly reprimanded the learners, but it was a real challenge. Learners who received such a chorus of disapproval immediately kept quiet without pursuing their questions. While the researcher observed that such learners were asking real critical questions, the classmates stifled the development of critical thinking by their uncouth behaviour.

It is concluded that the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is served in schools where both learners and teachers support those learners who respond to challenging questions and ask critical questions. This helps to build self-esteem which promotes continued effort by learners to think critically. In those schools where there is no supportive atmosphere, the development of critical thinking skills is stifled.

5.5 Summary

The chapter presented, analysed and interpreted the findings of the study. The need to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching was unravelled by showing the challenges that history teachers encounter in trying to create such an environment. The challenges were discussed as managing curriculum change, teaching methodology, resources, classroom environment, assessment and teacher training, development and support. It was shown from the literature and the empirical studies that there are some practices that are in use in addressing the challenges. The challenges discussed and the strengths and limitations of the practices in use provide the basis on which the aim of the study is achieved which is: **To develop a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.** The next chapter focuses on the synopsis of the study, a summary of the literature study and the findings and the framework to be considered by the concerned stakeholders in order to put the findings of this study into practice since the findings of a study guided by critical theory have the potential of practical implementation (Bohman 2009:5 of 5).

CHAPTER 6

A FRAMEWORK FOR CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS.

6.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to suggest a framework to be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This was driven by the problem identified with regard to the creation of an enabling learning environment for the skills-based approach in history teaching in general and in Zimbabwe in particular (see 1.4). The learning of critical thinking skills in history teaching cannot be an exception in requiring an enabling learning environment to achieve it.

This chapter gives a synopsis of the research methodology focusing on achieving the aim (6.2.1) and the qualitative research (6.2.2) which was undertaken during the study. It proceeds by discussing the findings of the study (6.3.1; 6.3.2) and the components of the framework for constructing an enabling learning environment (6.3.3). The proposed framework is presented and discussed (6.4) and the conclusions of the findings are highlighted (6.5) before areas for further research arising from the study are presented (6.6). The chapter ends with a personal reflection on the study (6.7)

The study was driven by the following research questions:

- Is there a need for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?
- What are the current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills?
- What framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching?

These research questions enabled data collection which culminated in the achievement of the objectives of the study presented thereof.

- The first objective of the study was to establish the need for a framework in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.
- The second objective was to elucidate current practices by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills.
- The third objective was to provide a framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

6.2 Synopsis of the research methodology

6.2.1 Achieving the aim and objectives of the study

This research was grounded in a thorough study of literature on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are reported in Chapter Two of this presentation. This was done in order to define the parameters of operation in conducting the research and to foreground the research design and methodology. It was also used as the bedrock on which the envisaged enabling learning environment is founded. An extensive literature study also focused on the issues of curriculum change, changes in history teaching, approaches in history teaching and challenges in history teaching which are reported in detail in Chapter Three of this collection. The literature study presented in Chapters Two and Three provided the basis for drafting the data collection instruments needed for the empirical study. The data collection methods were the interview (Appendix 2), lesson observation (Appendix 3) and document analysis (Appendix 4). The data gathered using these methods was presented, analysed and interpreted in Chapter Five of this work.

6.2.2 Qualitative Research

This work is a product of a qualitative research which was undertaken based on the theoretical framework of critical theory which esteems naturalistic designs in research. This is well reported in sections 1.8 and 4.3.1. Purposive sampling was used to define the sample for the study which comprised of three secondary schools in GUD and three history teachers where one teacher was chosen from each school (see 4.4.2).

6.3 Findings from the literature study and the empirical research

6.3.1 Objective 1: The need for a framework that can be used in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching

The need for a framework in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is clear on the basis of the challenges emerging from the literature and empirical study findings. These challenges are classified as teacher training, development and support; managing curriculum change; teaching methodology; resources; assessment and classroom environment.

6.3.1.1 Teacher training, development and support

6.3.1.1.1 Inadequate pre-service history teacher training

There is a plethora of literature evidence to suggest that there is a lack of proper pre-service training of history teachers (Aktekin 2008:469; Cole and Barsalou 2006:10). This is elaborated by Stoffels (2008:32) who says there is lack of specialised teacher training on the teaching of critical thinking skills development and Manyumwa (2016:199) who says even teacher educators do not possess any formal critical thinking or critical pedagogy which is the key pedagogy for critical thinking skills.

The empirical study seems to confirm the literature study on the lack of proper pre-service training of history teachers. The teachers who participated in the study rated their training as inadequate to have equipped them for the skills based approach in history teaching. The traditional teaching methods and learner activities of teacher talk, group work, presentations and question and answer they planned in their scheme-cum-plans and used in the lessons are testimony of the lack of proper pre-service training. This was further revealed by the use of the traditional resources of textbooks, charts and teaching notes even where the modern teaching resources like ICTs were available (see 5.3.1.1).

It can be said that history teacher training is lagging behind in terms of exposing the history trainee teachers to pedagogic approaches that enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Initial history teacher training has to connect with the value of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism as theories which facilitate the training of history teachers towards a skills-based approach in history teaching. The history teacher trainers need to emphasise the critical role of the principles of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism at the lesson planning stage as everything else in history teaching rises and falls with lesson planning. This suggestion emanates from the poor lesson planning that was evident in the scheme-cum-plans of the teachers in terms of sources of materials, methodology or teacher-learner activities and lesson objectives which were traditional and not progressive.

6.3.1.1.2 Inadequate in-service training of history teachers

There is glaring evidence that there is lack of proper in-service training of history teachers. Lekgoathi (2010:109) and Ruto and Ndola (2013:87) are of the view that history teachers are not given proper in-service training to grasp the innovative ways to enable the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching and learning. This leads to devastation of morale and redundancy.

This was confirmed by the findings of the empirical study which showed that history teachers who participated in the study were not exposed to in-service training that enabled them to focus on critical thinking skills development in history teaching. They were of the view that workshops are organised in order to enhance history teachers' pedagogic knowledge, but they were focusing on how to mark the learners' work in preparation for the examinations rather than to assist them in developing the critical thinking skills of the history learners. The workshops were seen as necessitated by the schools' desire to raise the pass rates not to develop critical thinking skills (see 5.3.1.2). This suggests that single-day workshops as a means to provide in-service training to history teachers fall short of equipping them for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

6.3.1.1.3 Lack of further study opportunities for history teachers

The synthesis of literature on further studying opportunities for history teachers in order to keep abreast with trends in the teaching of the subject show a gloomy picture. Westbrook, *et al*. 2013:29) says there is a gap that exists between initial teacher training and continuous professional development and history teachers are not involved in research activities which help them to keep abreast with trends in pedagogical developments in the subject.

This view finds vindication in the findings of the empirical study on further studying opportunities which revealed that there is no programme that is designed to specifically help history teachers with further study on the teaching of history to develop critical thinking skills. This was confirmed by the fact that the history teachers who participated in the study were at the time not pursuing any professional development course in history teaching years after completing their initial teacher training (see table 5.1). This left the researcher wondering how the teachers could be abreast with theories like critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism which are critical in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Two of the teachers highlighted that they do not do any research on the current trends in the teaching of history (see 5.3.1.3).

History teachers need to be offered further study opportunities in order to keep abreast with the trends in history teaching and in the context of this study it is the skills-based approach. The focus of such opportunities should be on the pedagogy of history aligned with critical pedagogy and constructivism as they can be handy in facilitating the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

6.3.1.1.4 Lack of adequate support to history teachers in schools

The history teachers seem to grapple with the problem of lack of adequate support from stakeholders in history teaching. Van Hoover and Yeager (2014:51) say that there is little-to-no support on the "doing history" approach in schools. There are no specialised history classrooms in schools to show lack of adequate support as history requires base rooms to display paraphernalia. In Zimbabwe there are no history associations which are useful in enhancing the pedagogical content knowledge of the history teachers and the NCHWG ceased its operations in the 1990s and nothing has been founded on its grave (Tendi 2009:30).

However, the literature study was partially disconfirmed by the findings from the field which showed that parents mainly support the history teachers with resources like textbooks and the payment of school fees. In spite of this support by the parents, the teachers revealed that the school management systems did not support out-of-school teaching and learning involving field trips due to cost factors. Moreover, department heads were seen to be more concerned with the quantity of work not the quality of work which stifled the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The Ministry was also deemed to be silent on the requirement to focus on the development of critical thinking skills which meant that there was not much support at the highest level of the system (see 5.3.1.4).

6.3.1.2 Managing history curriculum change

The findings of the literature on managing history curriculum change paints the same gloomy picture as with the challenges noted above. Tendi (2009:29) says there was

poor management of curriculum change as the syllabus 2167 was never put up for debate or assessment by history experts and teachers. Jansen (1998:8) says assessment that remains summative is not commensurate with the skills-based approach of outcome-based education. Mapetere, et al. (2012:86) say the assessment is still content based which stifles the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Moreover, ministerial expectations remain those of quantity not quality showing poor management of curriculum change.

The history teachers who participated in the study seem to concur with the literature study findings that there has been poor management of curriculum change in history teaching since it has reverted back to the focus on content rather than skills. Their observation was that the lack of training of history teachers to teach the source-based question meant that assessment remained content based. They argued that the expectations of the Ministry on quantity remained a hindrance to the focus on developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. Large class sizes were also seen as an indication of the failure to manage the curriculum change as they derailed proper planning for the development of critical thinking skills (see 5.3.2).

Evaluation instruments that are used to evaluate teachers' performance were seen to be backward looking in terms of enhancing curriculum change in history teaching towards the skills-based approach. The evaluations were seen to be focusing on the role of the teacher in history teaching and learning rather than putting the learner at the centre of learning. These evaluations demand to know what the teacher has done and what amount of work has been produced out of the teacher's effort (see 5.3.2).

6.3.1.3 Teaching methodology

6.3.1.3.1 Lack of learner-centred approaches

There is serious confinement of the history learners to the classrooms due to the prevalence of teacher-centred approaches and lack of learner-centred approaches

(Takafakare 2015:31). However, the findings from the field show history teachers' attempts to use the learner-centred approaches of presentations, group work, debates, assignments and the Socratic Method. What has to be emphasised about the findings from the field is that the learner-centred approaches are the traditional methods and their use did not seek to develop critical thinking skills, but rather to provide historical facts, What was even more perplexing about the methods used was the absence of progressive teaching methods (see 5.3.3.1) which align well with the development of critical thinking skills which this study will elucidate in a later section.

6.3.1.3.2 Lack of source based teaching

The evidence gathered through the literature to guide the analysis of empirical data showed that there is lack of source-based study in a meaningful way to enhance the development of critical thinking skills. Van Hoover and Yeager (2013:5 of 13) say even where pre-service teachers have been trained instructional approaches of source-based teaching these tend to fall by the wayside in the classroom. This is due to the focus on the textbook as the source of information and the examination which demands content. This was supported by Mapetere*, et al. (*2012:88) who said students were shown by the examiners' reports that they avoid the source-based question because history teachers in Zimbabwe are no longer teaching the source-based question in spite of its critical role in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

The teachers who participated in the study indicated as well that they were not teaching the source-based question in their history lessons. This was blamed on the lack of primary resources to use for the source-based question. The class sizes and time limit imposed by the chase to cover the syllabus were also identified as militating factors. It was observed that the teachers did not even attempt to plan for the teaching of the source-based question in spite of its critical role in the development of critical thinking skills. The homework tasks did not even show that the teachers were doing the source-based question in their teaching (see 5.3.3.2).

6.3.1.4 Prevalence of content-based assessment

The continuation of summative assessment is seen by Jansen (1998:8) as the greatest barrier to the transition to any curriculum reform towards the skills-based approach. Takafakare (2015:31) says the questioning technique of the Ordinary Level history examination in Zimbabwe is narrative requiring more of the recall of facts, an observation which was made by Mapetere, *et al.* (2012:86) that secondary school history assessment in Zimbabwe is based on content mastery and is summative.

The views above on the nature of assessment were corroborated by the views of the teachers who participated in this study. The assessment structure of structured essay was largely seen as counter-productive to the quest to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching as it was said to be content heavy. It was seen to be an injustice type of assessment if the focus was on developing a critical thinking mind among the history learners. It was seen as focusing on examination grades and not history learning for the development of critical thinking skills. It was also discovered that due to the focus on the examination in the teaching of history, the teachers had developed a certain formula that they expected their learners to adopt in responding to the questions requiring analysis in homework tasks. This formulaic answering of the analysis question in homework tasks was viewed as detrimental to the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as it denied the learners the opportunity to conceptualise new ideas (see 5.3.4.2).

6.3.1.5 Resources

6.3.1.5.1 Textbook-based teaching

The textbook use in teaching and learning is not characteristic to history teaching and learning only. The use of the textbook as the only source of history information is the main resource challenge that the development of critical thinking skills encounters as revealed in the literature. According to Bertram (2012:9) and Stoffels (2008:26), there is the use of the prescribed textbook or resource book. The

fascinating element is the fact that the textbooks or resource books are used in a mechanical manner to cover the content of the syllabus not to develop critical thinking skills.

The findings of the empirical study reveal that the textbook is the resource that the teachers have. These are textbooks like the 'O' Level Focus on History, The African Heritage, Step Ahead and Dynamics of History. These were seen to be the sources of material in their scheme-cum-plans. The textbooks were used to cover content during the lessons and were religiously believed to be correct as there was no interrogation of the textbook information (see 5.3.5.1).

6.3.1.5.2 Ineffective use of ICTs

The finding by Takafakare (2015:31) showed that either there is no access or very limited access to the internet by both teachers and learners. If ICTs are available, there is very little or no creative way of using ICTs in history teaching and learning. This is confirmed by Westbrook, *et al.* (2013:30) who says most often teachers use power point presentations rather than any other ICT platform. This is exacerbated by the lack of training of teachers in the use of ICTs as teaching and learning tools. History teachers are no exception in this regard as they have been trained at the same training centres as other teachers.

It was found out from the observations, interviews and document analysis that one of the teachers rarely used power point presentation to display content. That was not used to stimulate critical thinking during the lesson. The other two teachers who participated in the study never planned to use and never used ICTs in scheme-cum-plans and their lessons respectively. The use of ICTs in history teaching for the development of critical thinking skills is yet to find its avenue of expression in history classrooms in most schools in Zimbabwe (see 5.3.5.2).

6.3.1.5.3 Poor resourcing of history departments

The transition to a skills-based approach in history teaching is shown to be bedeviled by the poor resourcing of history departments. Ruto and Ndola (2013:89) say there is a shortage of history teaching and learning materials and time in most secondary schools in Kenya. The shortage of funds also prevents history teachers from attending workshops. The same sentiments are shared by Cole and Barsalou (2006:1-2) who say history teachers face the problem of poor resource allocation if they want to use the critical inquiry approach in history teaching and learning and it is a fact that new pedagogical reforms in history teaching usually lack enough resources to be implemented.

It was clear from the interviews, lesson observations and document analysis that there is generally poor resource allocation and availability in history departments. Primary resources were lacking as shown by the reliance on textbooks and teaching notes by the teachers. It was highlighted that there were no access to electronic books, no access to internet for all learners at two schools except one. However, the scenario at one of the schools disconfirmed the lack of resources as there was internet access for every learner and the teacher. The availability or non-availability of resources was seen to be dependent on the support the parents in particular gave to the schools (5.3.5.3).

6.3.2 Objective 2 – Current strategies used by history teachers to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching

This section presents the findings of the strategies that history teachers use in their endeavours to develop critical thinking skills in history teachers. The presentation takes on the findings on the challenges highlighted above as the frame within which this section is entrenched.

6.3.2.1 Managing curriculum change

The management of curriculum change in history to the skills-based approach has been shown in the literature to be enhanced by the use of the source-based question in history assessment and the use of extended essay writing of the analysis nature (Syllabus 2167:4). There is also the need to do research-based teaching and learning. The use of a variety of instructional media that enhance the development of critical thinking skills has also been recommended.

However, it was clear from the findings from the field that there is no use of source-based questions in assessment by history teachers. The teachers rarely do any research in order to enhance their teaching of history in the skills based mode. There is need to find measures that can be implemented so that this envisaged curriculum change in assessment and research-based history teaching can happen (see 5.4.3.1).

6.3.2.2 Teaching methodology

6.3.2.2.1 Learner-centred methodologies

The evidence from the literature study revealed that activity-based history teaching is the heart of learner centred-ness (Aktekin 2013:469; Muro 2012:4). Collaborative and inquiry methods also ensure learner centred-ness in history teaching for developing critical thinking skills.

It was found out that the history teachers use learner-centred methods in history teaching to develop critical thinking skills. These are methods like group work, presentations, discussions, group assignments and the Socratic Method. These are both collaborative and inquiry methods. Nevertheless, the use of these methods during the history lessons leaves a lot to be meaningful in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. There is need to improve on the use of the methods in order to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills (see 5.4.4.1).

6.3.2.2.2 Source-based teaching

Effective source-based teaching is done by using primary sources in history (Moreeng and Du Toit 2012:40). The learners examine a number of primary and secondary sources on a particular history topic there is also the use of textbooks which have sidebars that focus on developing critical thinking skills (Aktekin 2013:469).

The history teachers who participated in this study very rarely use the extracts of primary sources in the textbooks in order to assist learners with developing critical thinking skills. At best the history teachers do not practice source-based teaching although there is a source-based question in Paper 1 of the history examination. This implies that history learners are deprived of the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills by this practice. There is need to suggest ways to ensure that source-based teaching happens in the history lessons (see 5.4.4.2).

6.3.2.3 Skills-based assessment

Assessment for learning is the cornerstone of developing critical thinking skills in teaching (William 2011:10). South Africa introduced OBE which incorporates continuous assessment as assessment for learning. This evaluates learner progress in achieving the objectives of the history course. The use of the analysis question in the summative assessment by ZIMSEC strives to develop critical thinking skills.

The history teachers who participated in this study highlighted that they use the structured essay which includes an analysis question as assessment method to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. It is clear that the focus is on analysis to the detriment of the development of other critical thinking skills. There is also the lack of other assessment methods that are pertinent in enhancing the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. These need attention in

history assessment if the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is to fully materialise (see 5.4.5).

6.3.2.4 Availability and use of resources

Resource challenges in history teaching in Kenya were overcome by embarking on field trips for the hands-on experience (Ruto and Ndola 2013:93). In Colombia, one history teacher used news clippings, manifestos of political parties, photographs and documentaries to stimulate critical thinking by asking critical questions (Cole and Barsalou 2006:11).

Generally there is very limited use of any resources by the history teachers to develop critical thinking skills. The history teachers use the ZIMSEC history marking guide as the main source that guides the history learners in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. This is used to coach the learners on how to answer the analysis question of the summative examination. The chart is one of the resources that history teachers use but its use is useless in light of the skills-based approach in history teaching. It can be said that the "doing history" approach is stifled by the practice in the use of resources by history teachers. Given the use of the marking guide and the chart, it can be said that there is a paucity of resources for use in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching and suggestions have to be made on how to minimise the problems of resources shortage and ineffective use (see 5.4.6).

6.3.2.5 Classroom environment

The development of critical thinking skills is enhanced in a learning environment that is supportive (Fullan, *et al.* 2012:2). OECD (2012:12) says the learning environment that supports the development of critical thinking skills is interactive. Material systems of the learning environment also promote the development of critical thinking skills (Warger and Dobbin 2009:3 of 14).

The teachers who participated in the study indicated that the atmosphere in their classrooms can be described as supportive at most. This atmosphere was seen to contribute towards the motivation of the learners to actively engage in interactions. The school rules helped to develop a culture of support even in the classrooms. History teachers are encouraged to maintain a supportive atmosphere in their classrooms in order to enhance the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching (see 5.4.7).

6.3.3 Objective 3 – Components of the framework for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching-

6.3.3.1 Teacher training, development and support.

The quality of teaching and learning lies squarely with the quality of training, professional development and support that the teachers receive. This study has revealed beyond a grain of doubt that history teachers lack proper initial and in-service training, development and support in order to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching. To that end, a framework for an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is deemed to thrive on the following aspects of teacher training, development and support.

- There should be initiatives at teacher initial training levels to include critical theory, critical pedagogy, constructivism and critical thinking skills teaching in order to fully equip the history trainee teachers (see 2.2.1; 2.3.1; 2.4.1; 3.2.5.2; 5.4.2.1). This can be done by introducing modules on critical thinking skills in the history departments of teacher education at colleges and universities. Any educational endeavour towards developing critical thinking skills must make it intentional during teacher training to infuse critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism in the training of the history teachers.
- Conducting of prolonged workshops by the MoPSE in order to apprise practising history teachers about the meaning of teaching for developing critical thinking skills since the literature and empirical study have shown that there is lack of adequate in-service training of history teachers in developing

critical thinking skills in history teaching (see 2.3.2; 2.4.2.2; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.8.3.1; 3.3.8.3.2; 5.4.2.2).

- There should be intentional collaboration between teachers of history at the departmental, cluster, district, provincial and national level in order to appraise each other on the best practices in terms of methods, learner activities and assessment strategies since it has been shown that there is lack of further opportunities for professional development and lack of support at department, school and ministry levels (see 3.3.8.3.1; 5.4.2.2).

- The formation of cluster, district, provincial and national History Teachers' Associations in order to enhance platforms where history teachers can share their experiences so as to improve their practices in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching.

- History departments in secondary schools should affiliate to university departments of education which specialise in history education so that practicing history teachers are constantly appraised with current trends in the teaching and learning of the subject (see 5.4.2.1).

- Ensuring that all teachers are furnished with the official and school syllabi so that lesson and assessment planning is done based on correct syllabus interpretation (see 3.2.5.2; 5.4.3). This originates from the observation that curriculum policies to guide what the history teachers must do seem to be available, but implementation is problematic and it lies squarely on the failure to adhere to the curriculum policy expectations.

- The MoPSE should liaise with the history teacher training colleges and universities in order to appraise them with the curriculum standards expected of a history teacher because I sense a gulf between history teacher training and history curriculum teacher expectations.

- Introduction of history base rooms in schools so that relevant history paraphernalia is kept in the base rooms. This creates a stimulating learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills as learners actively engage and interact with the paraphernalia (see 5.4.3). The desks in the classrooms can then be arranged in ways which promote roundtable discussions and group work which allows eye conduct between the learners.

- The MoPSE must work with the CDU to incorporate a worldviews/philosophy component in history teaching and learning (see 2.3.2). This component will assist in initiating the history learners into multiple views of understanding the world and that can be infused in the understanding of multiple views in history. This will culminate in the development of critical thinking skills by developing a multi-perspective approach to history learning.

6.3.3.2 Managing curriculum change and its demands

Curriculum change has been depicted as an ongoing international trend which invariably mirrors change in the society at large (Makhwathana 2007:12). Waks (2003:388) borrows from Cuban (1992) who makes a distinction between incremental and fundamental change in the curriculum. Incremental change is designed to correct deficiencies or imbalances in existing practice, making it more effective without altering its basic organisational features, its "standard grammar" (p.388). Institutional 'grammar' is defined by Cuban in Waks (2003:388) as the rules for how physical space is organised, time is allocated to tasks, and subject matter are translated into teachable topics. Fundamental change seeks to alter the grammar, the standard organisational ways of doing things. It is concerned with introducing new institutional rules that establish new organisational patterns, new configurations of space and time utilisation, new roles and authority relations in the curriculum (p.388).

The class sizes for history are large which means that the history teacher's planning time is consumed by marking exercises and tests of the learners. Consequently, there is little time that can be used to plan the resources for use in developing critical thinking skills. In the words of one of the participants, it results in eventful teaching rather than process teaching of critical thinking skills so that learners can only pass the final examination.

Ministerial expectations coupled with departmental expectations have also been shown to be barriers in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The expectations focus on quantity of work output not on quality of work output. That has seen history teachers rushing to cover the syllabus so that they can meet the quantitative expectations. That has also resulted in the selectivity regarding the methods that are used in history lessons and the activities that the history learners engage in which are deemed not to delay the coverage of the syllabus.

A framework for an enabling learning environment is deemed in this study to be hinged on these aspects of curriculum change and management:

- Introducing a worldviews or philosophy component in the history curriculum so that learners are exposed to contesting perspectives in the explanation of history (see 2.3.2). As a researcher, the researcher had opportunity to be asked by his subject manager to preview a Religious Studies Ordinary level syllabus proposed by C.I.E which envisages a philosophy component so as to inculcate critical thinking skills in the learners. The components of worldviews that could be of help are positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and constructivism albeit at an elementary level in cognisance of Bruner's theory that any concept can be taught at any level provided it is adjusted to the cognitive level of the learner. The components of philosophy would be logic, argument diagrams and analytic philosophy again at an elementary level.

- There should be the empowerment of the learners by allowing them to contribute towards the activities they should engage in during lessons, how they want to be assessed, setting up the assessment standards; the teachers to enable them to choose the topics they want to use to develop critical thinking skills and the communities by allowing active participation in the learning and teaching of history (see 2.2.2; 2.3.2; 2.4.1; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.4.1-3.3.4.6; 5.3.4.1- 5.4.4.1).

- The value of democracy in history teaching needs to be taken seriously (see 2.2.1-2.2.2; 2.3.1- 2.3.3; 5.4.4.1). The teacher should create a democratic learning environment where learners decide how they want to learn, what they want to know about the topic for the lesson and how they want to be

assessed. Democracy encourages learners to ask critical questions which require critical thinking to respond. That democratic dispensation should not be in the classroom only, but should extend to the whole school, home, community and the nation.

- Introduce learner evaluation of the teaching and learning environment to assess the extent to which teaching and learning of history involves collaborative approaches, inquiry approaches and graphic organisation. The evaluation of the teaching and learning environment should also assess the extent to which learners perceive the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. There should be a measuring instrument to ensure that the methods, learner activities and assessment procedures do not revert back to the traditional teacher-centred approaches. The researcher is of the view that some form of quality rather than quantity assurance is what is lacking to ensure the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching in Zimbabwe.

- The MoPSE to reduce the teacher-learner ratio to manageable levels in order to enhance critical lesson planning and critical marking of homework tasks and tests (see 3.3.8.2.2; table 5.3)

6.3.3.3 Teaching methods

Critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism as the driving forces of this study recommend teaching methods/strategies that put the learner at the centre of learning. That implies that the actions or activities of the learner are more important than the activities of the teacher. The development of critical thinking skills in history requires teaching approaches, methods and strategies that ensure participatory, process- and context-oriented teaching and learning like group discussion, questioning and group work were found to be in use albeit ineffectively used.

The pedagogic practices in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching are:

- Research-based teaching and learning of history so that the learners bring useful knowledge and issues for discussion to the lessons. The teacher's role will be to guide the learners and to plan critical questions that scaffold learners to higher order thinking using the concept of the ZPD by Vygotsky (see 2.4.6.3; 5.4.4.1). The teacher's focus should be on the gaps that exist in the learner's knowledge and that should be not by providing content, but by using probing questions that challenge the learner to seek for more content (see 2.3.3; 2.4.6.2; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.4.3.1).

- History teachers should focus on critical lesson planning of the methods to use, the activities learners engage in, resources for use in the lesson, assessment and feedback (see 2.3.2; 2.4.1; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.8.4; 5.4.4.1). All these aspects are central in the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

- There is need to pay particular attention to the learner activities like concept mapping, case analysis, drafting critical questionnaires, learner interviewing, carrying out surveys, argument diagrams, singing, role playing, dramatising, dialogue, jig-sawing and report writing (see table 3.1) since they determine the extent to which developing critical thinking skills takes place in history lessons.

- The use of quizzes, Olympiads and competitions on aspects of history learning that foster critical thinking skills (see 2.3.3). Instead of relegating the organisation of such activities to the non-governmental organisations like the Arts Council of Zimbabwe, it is recommended that they be organised at the classroom, form, school, cluster, district, and provincial levels. This will enhance development of critical thinking skills as learners strive to achieve the best results.

- Creating symbiotic relationships with experts in other fields related to history like lawyers, singers, poets and journalists (see 2.3.3; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.8.3.2). These can be asked to make presentations on how they execute their tasks as they are known to require a lot of critical thinking skills in order to achieve their goals. War veterans of the Second Chimurenga in Zimbabwe can also be useful given the critical tactical decisions they had to make under the war conditions which required critical thinking skills. This is when the researcher

can submit that the classroom goes to the world and the world comes to the classroom (see 2.3.2; 2.4.6.3). At the time of the research, the researcher was privy to information that one school in the country had a parent lawyer who had volunteered to teach history at Advanced level and the results were always good due to the focus on developing critical thinking skills in history teaching rather than content. The starting point could be to extend the gesture to volunteers like the one mentioned and, especially parents whose children are learners at the school. It was mentioned in sections 4.4.2.1.1 and 4.4.2.1.2 that the communities are very supportive of schools' initiatives and this cannot be an exception.

- It is also suggested that the teaching methods include indigenous knowledge systems like singing and poems in order to inculcate the skills of evaluation and synthesis which were seen to be elusive in history teaching. There is an untapped wealth of critical thinking skills that goes with singing and poetry.

- Field trips to places of historical significance like museums, monuments, shrines and archives should be promoted at all schools (see 2.3.2; 2.3.3; 3.2.5.2; 5.4.4.1). However, it needs to be emphasised that much planning has to be done in advance so that they do not turn out to be mere excursions. This is where I would suggest that teachers plan the learner activity of drafting a questionnaire that will be used to direct the asking of critical questions to the guides rather than having the guides narrating their stories to the learners which is reminiscent of what the learners always get in the textbooks and lessons. Field trips can be real opportunities for developing critical thinking skills in history teaching if well planned with that as the focus.

- A framework of an enabling learning environment is greatly enriched by the pedagogic skills of increased time on tasks requiring critical thinking, enough wait time on higher order questions, encouraging learner articulation of responses, student interviewing, constructing argument diagrams, probing learners' responses, scaffolding learners to higher thinking levels.

- In addition to the problem-based Socratic Method, there is need to factor in other problem-based methods such as the use of projects, problem solving, inquiry, modelling and case analysis. These problem-based methods will

result in the learner engagement which helps to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching.

6.3.3.4 Resources access and meaningful use

The study also highlighted that there is a shortage of the material, financial and time resources which are critical resources in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. The shortage of material, financial and time resources limit the activities that history learners can engage in in order to stimulate critical thinking skills yet engagement is the maxim in the development of critical thinking skills as advocated by critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism. The limited time in history teaching, for example, was shown to hamper proper planning of lessons for the development of critical thinking skills. Consequently, it emerged that the textbook and teaching notes are the instructional media that are common in use in history teaching.

The aspect that needs to be addressed is the critical role of planning for history teaching so that the necessary teaching resources are prepared in advance so that learner participation can be enhanced. There is great need for the teacher's role as a researcher to be enhanced since with research-oriented teaching, teaching resources can be made available and their use enhanced. The following resources aspects are needed in constructing an enabling learning environment for development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

- Give more time to history lessons instead of the thirty-five to forty minutes currently obtaining. Blocked lesson periods will allow more time on learner tasks requiring the critical thinking skills to accomplish as time on task is a critical resource in the development of critical thinking skills (see 3.3.8.5; 3.3.8.3.1; 5.4.6). One participant recommended one hour for each history lesson so that both content and skills can be addressed.
- Libraries should be staffed with primary resources and should have access to e-books if the hard copy primary resources cannot be acquired due to

financial constraints. For schools with huge financial burdens, newspapers need to be the main primary resources in history lessons (see 3.3.2.2; 5.4.6).

- The schools need to have base classrooms for history teaching and learning so that the classroom paraphernalia in the classrooms can be used to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching.

- The desks should be arranged so that there is easy organisation of collaborative tasks. The desks can be arranged to resemble tables so that learners sit in groups even though these groups may not be fixed so as to match to the principles of democracy and emancipation advocated in this study (see 2.3.1; 2.3.2; 5.4.6). This will allow roundtable discussions which are reminiscent of the indigenous knowledge systems.

- History teachers should make available to the learners a variety of sources of information so that they can compare and contrast the different views in the sources which develop critical thinking skills. History teachers should research and bring to class a number of resources to use in the lesson like cartoons, newspaper and magazine extracts, videos, experts in other fields related to history and resource persons so that learners can interrogate the different sources of information (see 2.4.6.3; 3.2.5.1; 3.3.4.4; 5.4.6).

- The use of ICTs in history teaching needs to be addressed as these enhance collaboration among the learners (see 2.3.3; 3.3.8.5.2; 5.4.6). There should be a relaxation of school policies with regard to the use of cellphones in learning as they are cheaper and carry many social media platforms which assist learners with research. These social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, face book, twitter and blogs can be used to pose problems and learners exchange critical ideas about solving the problem. Peer assessment can also be enhanced by the use of the social media platforms which reduces the pressure of marking from the teacher. The teacher's role will only become that of a moderator of the peer assessment which bolsters critical thinking skills.

- Initiatives to incentivise history teachers through the evaluation of their use of ICTs in their lessons to develop critical thinking skills need to be considered as a matter of urgency. This can be done at both school and national levels. A points system needs to be devised to measure the level of use of the ICTs in

history teaching. This evaluation should find space in the RBMS evaluation model and contribute towards the overall evaluation of the history teachers in the RBMS evaluation model that is currently in use in the schools in Zimbabwe. This is envisaged to motivate history teachers to use ICTs for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

- Encourage community-based learning, that is, learning mediated by a physical community, that is, its members and its heritage and the virtual community located on the internet. The community-based learning aspects which need to be factored are field trips to heritage sites (museums and monuments) and local historical sites, simulations, case analysis, inviting mentors and experts in related fields, subscribing to virtual communities such as those provided by blogs, WhatsApp, face book and twitter for both teachers and learners. This helps to promote context-oriented learning which is currently scarcely constructed in order to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching.

6.3.3.5 Assessment

It was found out that the assessment procedure in history teaching at the national level is vehemently counter-productive when it comes to the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The formative assessment by history teachers is measuring squarely to the assessment standard of the examining board, ZIMSEC, where structured questions with an evaluation component are used. It emerged that history teachers avoid the source and skills-based question in Paper 1 of the examination as there are challenges already highlighted in preparing candidates for that question. Generally assessment is not geared towards assessment for learning, but for grading and certification.

Both critical pedagogy and constructivism with its various strands posit assessment as a critical aspect of learning (see 2.3.4; 2.4.6.3). The construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching can be enhanced by the implementation of the following assessment aspects:

- Include assessment of analysis and synthesis domains as critical thinking skills in the homework tasks, tests and summative assessment (see 3.2.5.1; 3.2.5.2).

- There is need to expose the learners to other higher order instruction words such as analyse, synthesise, compare, extrapolate, contrast, infer, compose, examine and assess in homework tasks and school-based assessments (see table 3.1; 3.3.7.4).

- Consideration should be given to the use of concept mapping and argument diagrams as critical ways of presenting answers that develop critical thinking skills in history teaching by history teachers and the examining board (see 3.2.5.2; 3.3.4.1). The use of concept mapping and argument diagrams saves the history teacher marking time and peer assessment can actually be employed which can be difficult to use with extended writing.

- Critical planning of feedback by the teacher to ensure that it is reflective feedback not teacher-centred feedback (see 2.2.2; 2.3.2; 3.3.8.1.3; 5.4.5.1).

- Teacher evaluations of lessons should focus on learner progress in developing critical thinking skills (see 2.4.6.3).

- Emphasis on corrections on questions requiring critical thinking skills.

- Introduce a complete skills-based component of the history examination that makes it compulsory for both history teachers and learners to focus on developing critical thinking skills. The Paper 1 and Paper 2 components of syllabus 2166 had critical thinking skills undertones in the questions and that developed critical thinking skills. The source-based question in Paper 1 of the current assessment should be made compulsory to begin with while plans are put in place to transform it into a full component of the summative assessment (see 2.3.2; 2.3.3; 3.2.5.3; 3.3.8.4.1; 5.4.5.1).

- Since the syllabus 2167 already takes the approach of themes substantiated by topics in its content, assessment should consider the introduction of case analysis (see 2.3.2; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.4.4). Case analysis focuses on the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching as the approach implies analysis. This is a component in economics assessment and can easily be applied to history assessment.

- Adoption of coursework as a compulsory component of the assessment of history learners (see 2.4.6.3; 3.3.1.3; 3.8.4.2; 5.4.5.1). This allows learners' journaling of their progress in developing critical thinking skills by way of setting critical thinking skills development goals at the beginning of a term as a percentage (see 3.2.5.1; 3.3.8.4.2). The level of development of critical thinking skills should then be assessed by the learner, peers and the teacher at the end of the term. In order to encourage the development of critical thinking skills the achievement should be integrated to the coursework mark for that term. Learners make great efforts to achieve goals if they know that there is a reward attached to the effort. They value extrinsic motivation more than intrinsic motivation.

- Contemporise or contextualise assessment through problem posing and problem solving.

- Introduction of self-assessment and peer assessment of homework tasks and tests (see 2.2.2; 2.4.1; 5.3.6.2; 3.3.7.4).

- Using reflective feedback on homework tasks and tests (see 2.3.2; 2.4.6.2; 3.3.8.4.2; 5.4.5.1).

- Allowing reflection by learners, scaffolding learners' responses to higher order thinking skills and allowing peer feedback.

- The Ministerial and departmental expectations should focus on the quality of teaching rather than the quantity of work output (see 5.4.4.1)

- Projects that are assessed by self, peers and teacher as part of continuous assessment have to be introduced in history assessment as they have the potential to develop critical thinking skills (see 2.3.2; 2.4.6.3; 3.2.5.2). This is a component of assessment that is current in practical subjects like art, agriculture, design and technology, to mention just a few. The concept is that of learning the skills of the subject by doing the subject. This conjecture is the "doing history" approach which is crucial to the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The assessment should focus more on assessment for learning than for grading and certification.

6.3.3.6 Classroom environment

Classroom environment plays a critical role in ensuring that the intended learning takes place. In the context of this study it is the learning of critical thinking skills. The following aspects of the classroom environment need attention in order to complete the puzzle in creating an enabling learning environment in the development of critical thinking skills.

- Democratisation of the classroom environment by setting rules which allow learners to make decisions on key issues which influence development of critical thinking skills like approaches, methods, activities, assessment and feedback (see 2.3.3; 2.4.6.2; 2.4.6.3).
- Place value on the knowledge, skills, ideas and attitudes that the learners bring to class (see 2.4.6.3).
- History classrooms to be adorned with stimulating classroom paraphernalia which must be constantly upgraded to correspond with the content coverage at any one time (see 2.2.1; 2.2.2; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.7.1; 5.3.3).
- Setting the critical tone of the lesson by the use of critical thinking invoking introductions like storytelling, singing, showing cartoons and a video snap (see 5.4.7).
- Structuring of lessons to ensure interaction at the three levels of learner-learner, teacher-learner and learner-community (see 2.3.2; 2.3.3; 2.4.1; 2.4.6.3; 3.3.4.2; 3.3.7.1; 3.3.7.2; 3.3.7.3).
- Creating classroom etiquette that ensures a supportive atmosphere which promotes self-efficacy and consequently, the development of critical thinking skills (see 2.2.1; 2.2.2; 3.3.7.1; 5.4.7). In this regard, the classroom environment must be welcoming and not intimidating. When learners feel welcome and safe in the learning environment they eagerly try out new ways of thinking since they know that their opinions will be appreciated and not ridiculed. History teachers must act like the "good shepherds" to their learners in order to promote self-efficacy. That way, the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching is enhanced more than stifled.

- Bringing to the class indigenous knowledge systems like poetry, storytelling, singing and gaming (see 2.4.1; 2.4.6.3).
- Introduction of the evaluation of learning environment by the learners. A learning environment evaluation instrument which determines the teaching approaches, methods, learner activities and the critical thinking skills developed in history lessons needs to be seriously considered.

6.4 The emergent framework of an enabling learning environment

The aim of the study was to suggest guidelines of a framework that can be used for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. Figure 6.1 is a representation of the guidelines of a framework suggested for constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.
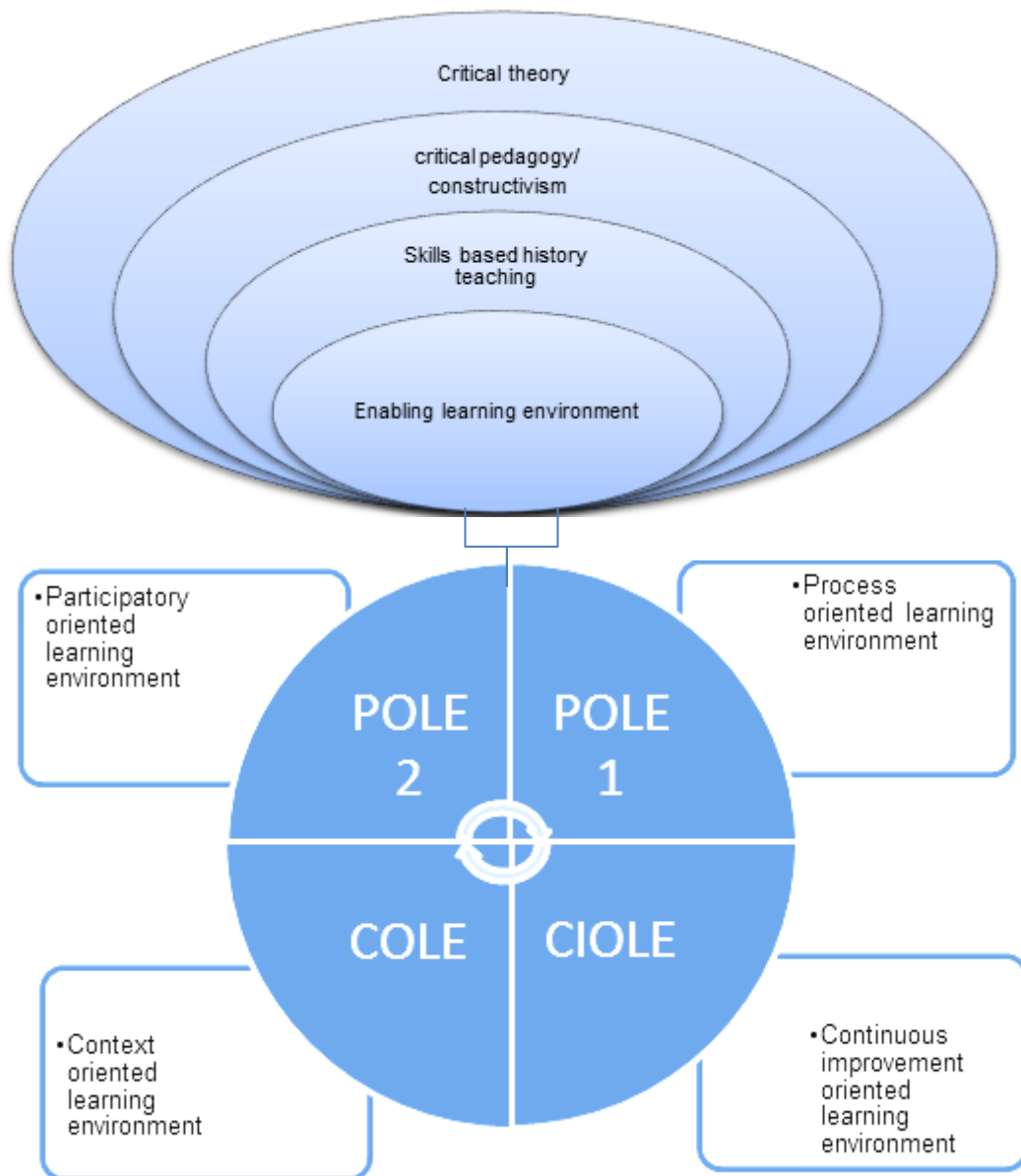
Fig 6.1: The 2P-2C transformative-interactive framework of constructing an enabling learning environment

Curriculum theorising in Zimbabwe after independence followed the Marxist and neo-Marxist traditions which are depicted in this framework by critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism which are the theoretical and conceptual frameworks driving this study (see 2.2.1; 2.3.1; 2.4.1). The criticality tradition in curriculum theorising has witnessed its application in the classroom situation in general and the history classroom in particular through the emergence of critical pedagogy as a practical translation of critical theory in curriculum circles (see 2.3.1). Critical pedagogy emphasised much on transformation which was advocating for the

oppressed to turn the tables completely against the oppressor (see 2.3.2). This was tantamount to relinquishing the teacher of his/her roles in the classroom to make the learners the masters. This weakness of critical pedagogy has been countered in this proposed framework by the strength of constructivism which advocates for interaction between the oppressor and oppressed (see 2.4.1). By extension, it advocates for an interactive classroom where there is social dialogue among the participants.

This proposed framework therefore adopts an eclectic approach in the construction of an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The influence of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism on curriculum theorising in Zimbabwe saw the move towards a skills-based approach in history teaching. The skills-based approach focuses on the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. The circular section of the framework depicts what should happen at the level of teacher training, development and support and managing curriculum change and its demands. Through pre-service and in-service training, the trainee and practising history teachers must be exposed to the principles of critical theory, critical pedagogy and constructivism and the application of the principles in history teaching and learning. The same will apply to the aspects under curriculum change management towards a skills-based approach in history teaching. The principles offer a complete package of the pedagogic knowledge that history teachers can use in developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. These principles are:

- subjectivity of knowledge (see 2.2.2.1: 2.3.2.5)
- democratisation of learning (see 2.2.2.2)
- experiential learning (see 2.2.2.3)
- radical pedagogy (see 2.3.2.1)
- diversity of curriculum methodology (see 2.3.2.2)
- dialogism (see 2.3.2.3)
- praxis (2.3.2.4)
- active learning (2.4.2.1)
- learner centred-ness (see 2.4.2.2)

- collaborative learning (2.4.2.3)
- contextual learning (2.4.2.4)
- authentic assessment (2.4.2.5)

The sectorial section of the framework depicts what the actual teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills must involve and these are borrowed from the principles highlighted above. This suggests that there is a powerful bond between history teachers' training and what they implement in their teaching of history. This study was undertaken to suggest a framework to assist history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching (see 3.3.7) after realising that it has been elusive to a large extent (see 3.3.8.1- 3.3.8.6). The 2P-2C framework suggested in the construction of enabling learning environment seeks transformation which is interactive not revolutionary in nature as Paulo Freire suggested (see 2.3.2; 2.4.6.2; 2.4.6.3).

In the framework, the cyclical arrows joining the four sectors represent the enabling learning environment that is created by eclectically fusing the concepts derived from critical pedagogy and constructivism as the conceptual frameworks guiding the study (see 2.3.2; 2.4.6). This is the total orientation or environment that generally describes the daily experiences of the learners in their learning situations. This is the core determinant of learning as it is certain that without an enabling learning environment the intended learning does not happen.

The four sectors of the circle represent the four learning environment components which constitute the enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching (see 3.3.7.1- 3.3.7.4). These learning environment components are participatory oriented learning environment (POLE 2); process oriented learning environment (POLE 1); context oriented learning environment (COLE) and continuous improvement oriented learning environment (CIOLE).

6.5 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions submitted here emanate from the findings that have been presented in the preceding sections (see 6.3.1; 6.3.2). The conclusions have been referenced to the objectives of the study which are hereby labelled objective 1 and 2 for easy of presentation (see 1.6). The third objective is the main focus of this whole Chapter Six which explains why there is no conclusion attached to the objective in the preceding exposition.

On the first objective, **it is concluded that there is need to develop a framework to use in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.** This is based on the findings of the challenges that history teachers encounter in constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills from both the literature study and the empirical study (see 5.3).

In view of the second objective which is to elucidate the current practices used by history teachers in constructing an enabling learning environment, **it is concluded that there is very little exposure of the history learners to an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.** This is anchored on the findings that history teachers continue to use the traditional methods of teaching history, use the traditional resources and traditional assessment procedures (see 5.4) which do not augur well for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

6.6 ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH TO CORROBORATE THE STUDY

The researcher understands that the design that was adopted for this study which is that of a case study has its limitations, but these were minimised by the multiple cases nature of the data sources. With the nature of the study, it is difficult to generalise the findings to a wider population. It is against this realisation that the

following issues are suggested for further research in order to corroborate the findings:

1 To establish the learners' perceptions of the practices that enable them to develop critical thinking skills in history teaching as this study focused on history teachers;

2 Suggesting critical ways in which the communities can become fully engaged as key components of the history teaching and learning environment to develop critical thinking skills;

3 Finding out what practices can be used to overcome the challenges encountered in incorporating ICTs in the history teaching and learning environment;

4 Suggesting measures which can be instituted to ensure meaningful self-assessment and peer-assessment in the history teaching and learning environment;

5 Suggesting ways of incorporating indigenous knowledge systems in the history teaching and learning environment;

6 Suggesting critical measures to introduce the worldviews or philosophy component in history teaching and learning; and

7 Investigating the history teachers' perceptions on the challenges they encounter in using the inquiry methods and graphic organisers in the history teaching and learning environment.

6.7 PERSONAL REFLECTION ON THE STUDY

Undertaking this study has been a long journey that had its own vicissitudes. These were overcome by the unwavering academic and moral persuasion of the supervisor. The understanding of the roles of the theoretical framework of critical theory and conceptual frameworks of critical pedagogy and constructivism in the study were achieved through constant reflection. It was critical for this researcher to discover how critical theory formed the basis of the skills-based approach in the teaching and learning of history. Furthermore, it dawned on the researcher that critical pedagogy is the traditional *modus operandi* of developing critical thinking skills and it is transformative or revolutionary. This study sought to tone down the

revolutionary nature of critical pedagogy by eclectically borrowing from the interactive tenets of constructivism to suggest with success a framework that can be used to construct an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching. A fusion of the two culminated in the suggestion of a framework which in this study is termed the **transformative-interactive framework.**

It was with great satisfaction that the participants were taken into a field of their experiences which allowed them to share their joys and disappointments. They admitted quite frankly that there is a deep gulf between the syllabus' intentions on critical thinking skills and the reality on the ground in view of developing critical thinking skills in history teaching. Discussions at informal level with the participants told the researcher that this was really a starting point of a critical reflection of how they have been delivering lessons which required developing critical thinking skills. The measures that they suggested could be implemented for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching convinced the researcher that they realised their shortfalls in creating an enabling learning environment. This gave the researcher the satisfaction that undertaking a study whose aim was to suggest a framework to assist history teachers in constructing enabling learning environment was worthwhile. Such a study, being the first of its kind in Zimbabwe's education system, is believed to have broken the ground for research into learning environments at school, college and university levels.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary
Education"
Telephone: 799914 and 705153
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"
Fax: 791923

ZIMBABWE

Reference: C/426/3 Midlands
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
Harare

20 July 2016

Michael Chawira
Midlands Christian College
P.O.Box 1242
Gweru

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE:
GWERU DISTRICT**

Reference is made to your application to carry out a research at the above mentioned schools in Midlands Province on the research title:

**"CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING."**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Midlands, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school. You are required to seek consent of the parents/guardians of all learners who will be involved in the research.

You are required to provide a copy of your presentation and a report of what transpired to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education by December 2016.

E. Chinyowa
Acting Director: Policy Planning, Research and Development
For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**
cc: PED – Midlands Province
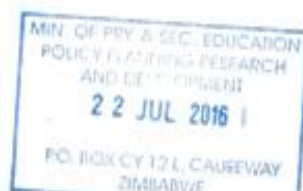
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

a. Teacher training, development and support

- How have you prepared yourself to teach this new curriculum which aims to develop critical thinking skills?
- Were you adequately trained to use the skills-based approach in history teaching?
- Have you attended any workshop that exposed you to the requirements of the skills-based approach?
- What support challenges do you face in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills?

b. Managing curriculum change

- What are the challenges that you face in trying to meet the demands brought about by the change in the history curriculum?
- What is being done to ensure that that there is a successful transition to focus on skills development in history teaching?

c. Teaching methodology

- How do you address critical thinking skills during your lessons?
- What teaching methods/approaches are you using in an attempt to develop critical thinking skills?
- Do you teach your learners about the source-based question?

d. Resources availability and use

- What resource challenges do you encounter in trying to address the development of critical thinking skills during your history lessons?
- What resources do you use during your lessons to develop your learners' critical thinking skills?

e. Assessment

- Do you think that current assessment procedure is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?

- How do you ensure that assessment is geared towards the development of critical thinking skills?

f. Classroom environment

- How would you describe the atmosphere that prevails during your lesson and what impact does that have on the learning process?

APPENDIX 3: LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

a. Managing curriculum change

Purposeful teaching of critical thinking skills; layout of desks and chairs; the position of the teacher's working station; the seating arrangement of the students

b. Methodology

Projects; problem solving; questioning by learners and teacher; teacher questions; student questions; probing technique; scaffolding techniques; wait time for responses to higher order questions; feedback on student responses to higher order questions; debates; team work; group work; quizzes; virtual learning; role-play; dramatisation; think-pair-share; jig-sawing; round-robins; concept mapping; argument diagrams

c. Resources in the lesson

Textbooks; primary documents; newspaper cuttings; artefacts; electronic gadgets; availability of web platforms in classrooms; resource persons; charts; maps; resource persons; external experts; parental involvement; use of learning spaces outside the classroom

d. Classroom environment

Supportive atmosphere; safety of the learners; continuous feedback; reflection by students; learner participation during feedback; resources used in giving feedback; pupil-pupil interaction; teacher-pupil interaction; dialogue; negotiation; discussion; the paraphernalia in the classroom walls and corners; the number of students per classroom.

e. Assessment

Teacher assessment; self-assessment; peer assessment and feedback.

APPENDIX 4: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE

1 History syllabus document
Syllabus objectives
Assessment objectives
Critical thinking skills envisaged by the history syllabus
Teaching and learning strategies (learner tasks and activities)
Scheme of assessment
Approaches in history teaching and learning

2. Policy documents in history teaching and learning
Assessment procedures in secondary school history
Time allocated to history teaching and learning in the school curriculum
Departmental expectations for the history teacher

3. The scheme-cum-plans
Teaching and learning objectives
Learner activities
Lesson evaluations teachers make
Homework tasks for the learners

4. Assessment papers
Types of assessments
a. Formative assessment papers
Verbs used to ask questions
Variation of levels of verbs in questions
b. Summative assessment papers
Verbs used to ask questions
Variation of levels of verbs in questions

APPENDIX 5: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Researcher: MICHAEL CHAWIRA
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Study Leader: DR BOITUMELO MOREENG
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INFORMED CONSENT
Dear Participant

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project: **Constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.** This study is about developing a framework that history teachers can use in order to assist their learners in developing critical thinking skills.

I would like you to participate in this research because you have taught history for a number of years and I believe you are the suitable participant to provide relevant data for the research. The reason we are doing this study is to encourage the learning and teaching of history for the development of critical thinking skills.

The possible risk to you in taking part in this study is loss of teaching time and I have taken the following steps to protect you from the risk: conducting interviews out of your normal teaching schedule and promising to teach some of your lessons.

I am sure you will benefit from this study as you will be able to reflect on your own teaching for the development of critical thinking skills and the findings will be availed to you through the Ministry.

While I greatly appreciate your participation in this important study and the valuable contribution you can make, your participation is entirely voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part in this study. If you do choose to take part, and an issue arises which makes you uncomfortable, you may at any time stop your participation with no further repercussions. Your identity will remain anonymous during data collection and when reporting the findings.

If you experience any discomfort or unhappiness with the way the research is being conducted, please feel free to contact me directly to discuss it, and also note that you are free to contact my study supervisor (indicated above).

Should any difficult personal issues arise during the course of this research, I will endeavour to see that a qualified expert is contacted and able to assist you.
Yours sincerely,

_____
MICHAEL CHAWIRA

Please fill in and return this page. Keep the letter above for future reference

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Study: Constructing an enabling learning environment for the development of critical thinking skills in history teaching.

Researcher: Michael Chawira

Name and Surname: _____

Age: _____

Qualifications and dates acquired: _____
 (Enter inclusion criteria type here): _____

Contact number: _____

I hereby give free and informed consent to participate in the abovementioned research study.
I understand what the study is about, why I am participating and what the risks and benefits are.
I give the researcher permission to make use of the data gathered from my participation, subject to the stipulations he/she has indicated in the above letter.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 6: EDUCATION ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER

UFS·UV

Faculty of Education

10-Jun-2016

Dear **Mr Michael Chawira**
Ethics Clearance: **CONSTRUCTING AN ENABLING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY TEACHING**

Principal Investigator: **Mr Michael Chawira**

Department: **School of Education Studies (Bloemfontein Campus)**

APPLICATION APPROVED

With reference to your application for ethical clearance with the Faculty of Education, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Ethics Board of the faculty that you have been granted ethical clearance for your research.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: **UFS-HSD2015/0692.**
This ethical clearance number is valid for research conducted for one year from issuance. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension.
We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting this proposal for ethical clearance and we wish you every success with your research.

Yours faithfully

Dr. Juliet Ramohai
Chairperson: Ethics Committee

Education Ethics Committee
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