*5.3 Data collection*

Data was collected through individual semi-structured interviews over the course of two months. In order to gain informed participant consent, written details of the study were provided prior to each interview and each participant was briefed about the specific details and aims of the research being conducted. Participants were also assured that the information collected would remain completely anonymous, and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were then asked to provide written consent of their participation in the study before data collection could begin.

As Kvale (2008) states " In common interview studies, the amount of interviews tends to be around 15 ± 10" (p.64), thus interviews were initially scheduled with a total of 15 participants; however an additional 5 interviews were conducted in order to reach a point of saturation where responses became repetitive (Kvale, 2008; Seidman, 2013). A semi-structured interview format was chosen to allow for freedom and flexibility within responses (Berg, 2001) and provide the opportunity for the researchers to go beyond the answers to prepared questions by encouraging participants to “elaborate on issues raised in an exploratory manner." (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 136). The semi-structured format also enabled the researchers to clarify participants’ answers and request further detail into salient points instantaneously, which contributed to a richer data set.

The following questions provided the framework for the semi-structured interviews:

1. When you think of a good leader (famous person, friend, parent, teacher, etc.) who comes to mind? What makes/made them a good leader?

1. Do you think of language teachers as leaders?
2. If yes, in what ways?
3. If no, why not?
4. Can you tell me about a language teacher who you felt was a good leader?
5. What made them a good leader?
6. Personal traits: describe
7. Teaching traits: describe
8. Other: describe
9. Can you think of a specific lesson where you really felt a teacher showed good leadership? Or hypothetically; what could a teacher do during a lesson that would impress you in terms of leadership.

1. What advice would you give to language teachers to help them be better leaders in the classroom - especially for new teachers?

1. Is there anything else you would like to share or that you would like me to know?

The first interview question aimed to activate learners’ general thinking about leadership and leadership qualities in order to create a reference point from which they could discuss teacher leadership in the English language teaching context. Question 2 focused on examining whether learners viewed language teachers as leaders and their reasons behind their response. Question 3 aimed to elicit the specific qualities of language teachers that participants associated with good leadership, focusing on the descriptions of both personal and teaching traits. Question 4 was intended to gather participants' perspectives on how good leadership manifests itself in classroom practices with concrete examples of instances where learners felt a teacher displayed good leadership skills. Question 5 allowed for participants to give their own thoughts on how teachers could be better leaders and permitted them to go beyond their experiences in the classroom. Question 6 asked participants to add their final thoughts on the issue and to clarify any of their previous responses.