THEORIZING CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF LITERACY DEVELOPMENT FROM CLASSROOM PRACTICE: AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' THEORY REVISION

By

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this mini-dissertation to my family and friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, Joseph and Catherine, whose words of encouragement have carried me throughout my education. To the Mashatole Family; my sisters, Pholi, Maria, Masape, Mumsy, Lebo,Thato and my brother Oupa, who have never left my side, and are indeed very special. I give you all honour and adoration!

DECLARATION

I, Mogakabane Abram Mashatole, hereby declare that the dissertation; **THEORIZING CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF LITERACY DEVELOPMENT FROM CLASSROOM PRACTICE: AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHERS' THEORY REVISION** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been duly acknowledged and indicated by means of complete references. This mini-dissertation has not been previously submitted in part or in full for any other degree to any other university.

_______________________ _________________________

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ABSTRACT

This research was a case study of teachers' conceptualizations and theories that underpin their classroom practices in a primary school in the Mankweng Township, Limpopo Province. The study sought to explore what these conceptualizations are, and what theoretical paradigms (or mix of paradigms) underpin them. However, rather than attempt to get teachers to articulate their conceptions (which may be too abstract and difficult an undertaking), teachers were required to engage with classroom practices different from their own and in the context of this engagement, confront their own beliefs about literacy and literacy development.

The study also aimed to explore whether encounters by teachers with classroom practices based on sets of principles different to their own will lead them to revise their theories or principles underpinning their teaching practices. The empirical data was in the form of seven lessons by the regular teachers alongside six intervention lessons taught by the academic researchers. Key to the research design was to get teachers to critically and reflectively engage with their teaching and the teaching of others. Through the use of actual transcripts of teachers' classroom practices and responses to the two sets of lessons as evidence, teachers' classroom practices, actions and beliefs were made visible in this research.

The data from regular lessons show a consistent yet disconcerting pattern in teachers' classroom practices as learners were found to be writing far too little, and much of learning and teaching was predominantly oral. Teachers also seemed to lack theories of literacy teaching, and thus could not meaningfully engage their learners in academic discourse enabling them to cross the bridge between everyday knowledge and academic knowledge. Overall, the study suggests that pedagogic and content knowledge are key, in order to empower teachers with both knowledge of their disciplinary content and meaningful strategies of communicating the knowledge they have to their learners. Further current models of teacher professionalization through

short training workshop do not seem to be very effective and alternative approaches need to be developed.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANA	Annual National Assessments
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Staement
DoBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EFAL	English First additional Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
HL	Home Language
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
L1	Language1 (Mother tongue) Sepedi
L2	Language 2 (Second language) English
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PRAESA	Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa
NPC	National Planning Commission
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ii

DECLARATION iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

ABSTRACT v

ABBREVIATIONS vi

TABLE OF CONTENTS vii

1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION **1**

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Background to the study 1

1.3 Setting the scence: The national educational picture 2

1.4 Socio-economic factors impacting on learner outcomes 4

1.5 Problem statement and rationale for the study 7

1.6 Purpose of the study 8

1.7 Organization of the dessertation **9**

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW **11**

2.1 Introduction 11

2.2 Teacher beliefs and the process of change 11

2.3 Conceptualizing ‘teacher professional development’ 13

2.4 Notions of teacher professionalization 15

2.5 Centrality of classroom centred research 17

2.6 Researching teachers’ beliefs and practices 18

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN 21

3.1 Introduction 21
3.2 Research design 21
3.3 Research sample 22
3.4 Research validity 23
3.5 Defining the kinds of data for the study 24
3.6 Planning the intervention lessons 24
3.6.1 The motivation for the intervention lesons 25
3.6.2 Paradigmatic orientatation of the intervention 26
3.6.3 Nature of the intervention 26
3.6.4 Linking the interventions with teacher practice 27
3. 7 Data collection procedures 28
3.7.1 Observational data 28
3.7.2 Field Notes 28
3.7.3 Video data 29
3.7.4 Interveiew data 29
3.8 Data analysis procedures 30
3.8.1 Introduction 30
3.8.2 Transcription 30
3.8.3 Analytical frameworks 31
3.8.3.1 Socio-constructivism 31
3.8.3.2 Interactional analysis 32
3.8.3.3 Socio cultural Discourse analysis 33
3.8.3.4 Prabhu's three types of task 35

4 CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION 36

4.1 Introduction 36

4.2 Location of school 36
4.3 Socio-economic and demographic review of the school 36
4.4 Description of the school and resources availlable 37
4.5 Teachers 38
4.6 Lessons observed 38
4.7 Description of data collection procedures 39
4.7.1 Acess to the school 39
4.7.2 Kinds of data collected 39
4.7.2.1 Observation data 39
4.7.2.2 Teacher interviews and focus groups 42
4.7.2.3 Joint video review session with teachers 43
4.8 Ethical issues relating to data collection 43
4.8.1 Importance of informed consent in research 44
4.8.2 Maintaining anonymity and confiedntiality 44
4.8.3 Maintaining research credibility 45

5 CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 46
5.1 Introduction 46
5.2 Findings related to teachers' profiles 46
5.3 Analysis of regular lessons 48
5.3.1 Analysis of Sepedi HL lessons 48
5.3.2 Analysis of the Engligh FAL lessons 56
5.3.2.1 Teacher practices 56
5.3.2.2 Concept development during English FAL lessons 61
5.3.3 Analysis of the Numeracy lesson: Learning Numeracy through mother-tongue, Sepedi 63
5.4 Analysis of intervention lessons 64
5.4.1 Introduction 64
5.4.2 Analysis of the Sepedi intervention lessons 64
5.4.2.1 Analysis of the Sepedi intevention lessons in Grade 1 64

5.4.2.2 Analysis of the Sepedi intervention lessons in Grade 3 69
5.4.3 Analyisis of the English (FAL) intervention lessons 74
5.4.4 Analysis of interview data 80
5.4.4.1 Introduction 80
5.4.4.2 Teacher reflections on both regular and demonstrations lessons 81
5.4.4.3 Teacher experience in the use of classroom materials 84
5.4.4.4 Teachers' beliefs about the pedagogic significance of code switching 85
5.4.4.5 Teachers' understanding of assessment 86
5.4.4.6 Teacher's views about current teacher training models 87
5.4.4.7 Language proficiency mismatch between learners and teachers 88

6 CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION 90
6.1 Introduction 90
6.2 Summary of findings 90
6.2.1 Findings related to regular lessons 90
6.2.1.1 Epistemological impoverishment of classroom engagements 91
6.2.1.2 Predorminance of 'safe-talk' in classroom 92
6.2.1.3 Low order cognition 93
6.2.1.4 Dorminance of low order oracy (writing) 93
6.2.1.5 Teacher's inflexible interpretation of CAPS 94
6.2.1.6 Teachers' inability to contextualise learning 95
6.2.1.7 Ineffective use of learner workbooks 95
6.2.2 Findings related to the intervention lessons 96
6.2.2.1 Activating learner agency 96
6.2.2.2 Crossing thebridge between oracy and literacy 97
6.2.2.3 Teachers' reponse to change when confronted with alternative practices 97

6.3 Limitations of this study 99
6.4 Implication of the study 100
6.5 Recommendations 103
6.5.1 The need for CAPS-based support 103
6.5.2 Writing practices 103
6.5.3 Professional development 103
6.5.4 Professional netwroks for teacher development 104
7 References 105

8 APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1: Teacher questionaire protocol

8.2 Appendix 2: Principal consents

8.3 Appendix 3:Limpopo DoE approval

8.4 Appendix 4:Teacher- consent sheet

8.5 Appendix 5:Parents and Gurdians consent sheet

8.6 Appendix 6: Learner- consent sheet

8.7 Appendix 7: The Research Ethics Committee of the HSRC clearence

8.8 Transcripts

8.8.1 Transcript 1 (Teacher questions by Teacher C)

8.8.2 Transcript 2 (Focus on form by Teacher A)

8.8.3 Transcript 3 (Joint co-construction of text by Teacher E)

8.8.4 Transcript 4 (Teacher-learner talk with Teacher E)

8.8.5 Transcript 5 (ABCD rhyme with Teracher D)

8.8.6 Transcript 6 (Home language as a resource for EFAL learning with Teacher D)

8.8.7 Transcript 7 (Negotiating the meaning of 'sort' by Teacher D)

9 LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Learner 1 spelling with tree, street and three wronglfully spelt 60

Figure 2:Learner 2 spelling with tree and street accurately spelt and three wrongfully spelt 60

Figure 3:Learner 3 spelling with tree and street accurately spelt 61

Figure 4:Learner 4 spelling with street missing 't' 61

Figure 5: Learner 5 spelling with tree,three and keeps accurately spelt 62

Figure 6: Learner who mispelt the word street as 'sreet' 70

Figure 7: Picture story 65

Figure 8: Picture capturing an instance of peer-correction 73

10 LIST OF TABLES

xii

Table 1: Breakdown of regular lessions 40

Table 2: Breakdown of intervention lessons 41

Table 3: Teacher profiles 47

Table 4: Cognitive effort of learners in the EFAL lessons 62

Table 4: Break-down of conceptual processes during the lesson 76

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This dissertation reports on findings from a research investigation on the theories and conceptualizations underlying teacher's pedagogic practices in a Mankweng-based school. The study of teacher's beliefs forms part of the process of understanding how teachers conceptualise their work and the principles they operate with.

Several educationalists and researchers including Taylor & Vinjevold (1999); Mamokgethi (2004); Ntuli & Pretorius (2005); Fleisch (2008) and Ramphele (2012) have reiterated that South African schooling is in a state of crisis. While the response of the South African government has been to acknowledge the crisis in the form of strategic plans, major policy conferences, and statements on the part of the Department of Education, these broad policy positions and interventions have to date shown little impact (Jansen & Taylor 2003, Metcalfe 2008 & Taylor et al. 2013). There is also sufficient evidence to suggest that regular teacher training initiatives by government continue to have little impact on classroom practice.

The current study sought to explore what teachers' conceptualizations of literacy are and what theoretical paradigms (or beliefs) underpin these conceptualizations. This involved observing teachers in their classrooms, recording of lessons, gathering of impressionistic data and teacher beliefs about change, and curricular innovation. However, rather than attempt to get teachers to articulate their conceptions (which may be too abstract and difficult an undertaking), teachers were exposed to classroom practices different from their own and in the context of this engagement, confront their own beliefs about language and literacy development. The study was also interested in finding out whether such an engagement would lead to any kind of theory revision.

1.2 Background to the study

The study is part of a national NRF-funded research project involving a consortium formed by the University of Limpopo (where the current researcher is based), the University of Pretoria and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). The research project was initiated in 2011 and will run until 2013. The objective of the

research was to undertake an investigation into the effectiveness of different literacy teaching approaches, methodologies and classroom practices in rural-township schools in the Limpopo and Gauteng provinces. The anticipated findings were then expected to inform recommendations on a wide range of issues impacting learning and teaching, including training of teachers, methodologies, pedagogy and didactics, and the kind of teacher support required to enable them to transform their current classroom practices.

The current study reports on one aspect of the national research project, that is, to explore what kind of professional support is required to enable teachers to radically change the principles underpinning their teaching which would then lead to change in their current pedagogic practices. The findings of this study may therefore meaningfully inform education authorities and researchers about the environment, approach and nature of engagements and interventions that give rise to professional growth and the empowerment of teachers.

1.3 Setting the scene: The national educational picture

There is an overwhelming consensus that the state of education in South Africa has been deteriorating over time, and has reached a state of crisis. In recent times, the ruling party, the African National Congress, has admitted to the 'serious failure' by government and the Department of Education to deliver learning materials and books to foundation phase classrooms in many Limpopo schools (Areff 2012), and to the general decline in the quality of education in South Africa (Sowetan 2012). This educational crisis is again clearly evident in the test scores of South African learners in numerous studies as compared to learners of equivalent age from other educational systems. In fact, educational achievement and competency tests carried out in the past 10 years have unequivocally shown that the overall level of achievement amongst South African children is 'extremely low' (Taylor 2011). Van der Berg (2007: 857) goes as far as saying poor South African children in government schools are performing worse than equally poor children in other African countries, despite somewhat more favourable learning conditions in South Africa, in terms of pupil-teacher ratios, the availability of textbooks and teacher qualifications.

According to Spaull (2011), the country's education system is unable to get the basics right, and as a result, far too many children in South Africa cannot read, write

and compute at even the most basic levels. Many proceed beyond 6 years of formal full-time schooling without having mastered basic literacy and numeracy. Such critical reviews about the country's education system have profound implications for teaching, and early literacy development, and overtly questions 'what actually takes' place in the classrooms during learning and teaching.

To put this into perspective, a report on the Annual National Assessments (2011), released by the Department of Basic Education, revealed that grade 3 learners scored an average of 35% in literacy tests and 28% in numeracy tests, while grade 6 learners scored 28% in languages and 30% in mathematics. Similar national and international performance tests reinforce this pattern of non-performance and poor quality of education in most public schools. The main examples of these are systemic evaluations, the Trends in International Maths and Science Surveys (TIMSS – 1995, 1999 & 2003) as seen in Martin et al. (2004); the surveys of the Southern and East African Consortium for the Monitoring of Education Quality (SACMEQ I, II and III) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2006).

In an analysis of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2006), a study to test learners' reading literacy, Howie et al. (2007) state that South African learners with at least 5 to 6 years of formal education performed the worst compared to 44 other countries. The PIRLS study further shows that learners are struggling to develop literacy competencies needed to succeed in their grades compared to children of their age elsewhere. This finding also reveals that these learners are far from achieving standard benchmarks, as set out by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) for Grades R-9. The RNCS (in DoE 2002) states among others, the ability to read and write, comprehension and creative thinking skills as key learning outcomes.

In addition, South Africa's grade 6 learners from poor backgrounds are reported to be the 'second worst readers' from a group of 15 countries in Southern and Eastern Africa, according to Kruger (2011). This has emerged in a report by Moloi & Straus (2005), summarising findings from the Southern and East Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ II,1994-2004), a study which was commissioned to assess the conditions of schooling and quality of education

provided by primary education systems in 14 countries, including South Africa, involving 2 300 schools and 42 000 learners. Furthermore, in 2003, the Department of Education investigated literacy in grade 3 learners and found that 61% of them were not achieving grade level outcomes (also in Howie et al. 2007)

Moloi & Chetty (2011) attribute poor pupil achievement levels in South Africa between 2000 and 2007 to a combination of several factors ranging from the impoverishment of teaching practices, and inappropriate approaches to teacher development, including the lack of material resources in many rural-township schools.

While it must be recognised that a wide variety of factors interact to impact on the quality of the education system in South Africa, poor subject and pedagogical content knowledge contributes significantly to the worsening state of teaching and education in the country. Teachers do not seem to be able to identify effective ways of mediating curricular knowledge (De Clerq 2008) and many seem unable to progress beyond traditional methodologies of teaching. This is further complicated by the fact that there is a pervasive poor culture of teaching and learning in many largely dysfunctional township schools (Fleisch 2008).

1.4. Socio-economic factors that impact on learner outcomes

There are a variety of factors that impact on learner's performance and eventual outcomes. They range from the health of the learners, pervasive poverty, availability of resources and material essentials, to teaching and learning practices in classroom. In fact, the wealth of research in sociology, educational psychology, applied linguistics and educational linguistics has demonstrated the complexity of factors that contribute to poor learning outcomes. Van Der Berg et al. (2011) through a specialist report for the National Planning Commission (NPC) cite Lee & Burkham (2002), Feinstein (2003) & Heckman (2006) to support international research on early cognitive development showing that by the time children enter formal schooling, considerable gaps in cognitive ability already exist on the basis of socio-economic status, and therefore impact significantly on their educational progress.

In South Africa, this is further complicated by the pervasive inequalities, and the prevailing dual economic systems that have come to define the country's education

system. In essence, poor children in public schools are more likely (than their middle-class counterparts in resource-rich private schools) to suffer from wide range of health problems, such as nutrition, and micronutrient deficiency which may affect their ability to learn and develop efficiently. Fleisch (2011) adds that common most health complications such as seasonal ear infection and fetal alcohol syndrome which are reminiscent of social ills in rural-township communities are some of the underlying factors contributing to poor performance of many learners from public schools scattered in South Africa.

The poor performance of learners in South Africa can also be attributed to the fact that 40% of children in South Africa come from extremely impoverished backgrounds with limited access to learner support materials in their homes (Louw & Wium 2011).

In reality, schooling conditions for middle-class children is largely favourable; hence these learners perform relatively better when compared to learners from many rural-township schools. This point is captured by Jansen (2012:7), who noted that:

“The academic results of learners in the privileged schools remain consistently high, with top students routinely achieving six or seven distinctions among their top candidates and with 90-100% pass rates every year; the learners in poor schools consistently underperform with high failure rates across the grades.”

With regard to township schooling, Jansen (2010) remarked many at times learners proceed to higher grades without having mastered basic skills, something which is reflected in the low attainment of numeracy and literacy, and later their performances in science, mathematics and languages.

It is imperative to state that the educational crisis in South Africa cannot be understood as an isolated dysfunctional system, as such, but rather as a crisis with its origin in the country’s sociohistorical and economic systems. Kathard et al. (2011) conceive of the present education system and apparent systemic weaknesses as created by the combined influences of colonialism and racism, which were deliberately and legislatively constituted to empower white minority under apartheid through the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which deliberately sought to systematically provide inferior educational services to a large part of the black population. As a

result, the fragmented and inequitable education system adversely affected the professional training of teachers, especially in the Bantu Education system.

It is significant to point out that many of the teachers trained during apartheid education continue to teach in post-apartheid South Africa (Wium et al. 2010). Failure to bring such teachers in line with current thinking about teaching and pedagogic practices has the potential to create intergenerational cycles of disparity, characterized by little improvement and a dual education system, in which mostly white and black middle class children continue to perform within and above the 'required curriculum proficiency level' (Fleisch 2011). In stark contrast, the vast majority of children in poor township and rural schools are clustered in a huge group at the low end of the achievement scale.

In his study Rammala (2009) points to the effects of the existing disjuncture between home and school, and notes that there is sufficient evidence to show that the home environment of many rural learners is not 'educationally supportive' due to poverty, which includes factors such as parents' low-level of education, high unemployment rate, child-headed families, unpredictable home environment, emotional problems and issues relating to gender roles. In fact, low income and unemployed parents and grandparents often feel inadequate and insecure to be their children's educational champions and supportive of school and homework.

Within the school environment, Rammala's (2009) study points to key causative factors contributing to poor learner performance, and equally negatively affecting learner excellence in many South African rural-townships. These include lack of facilities, unavailable learner support materials, lack of discipline, English as a medium of instruction, heavy workload due to rationalisation and redeployment of educators, and confusion with regard to the application and transition from Outcomes Based Education (OBE) to Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

However, as important as they are, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to sufficiently examine the socio-economic factors impacting learner performance, teacher development in South Africa and their historical basis. Therefore, the focus will be on the potential benefits of using classroom data as a resource for teacher

development, and how teachers' understanding of their roles in relation to literacy and language development can be refined and strengthened.

1.5 Problem statement and rationale for the study

As seen from the discussion above, there is an overwhelming desire by researchers, educators, civil societies and government to improve the state of education, nationally. Teachers, parents, administrators, and policy makers all want higher levels of literacy, and better performing schools. These aspirations feed into both educational and social discourses, manifesting through political, social and economic arguments. Yet we do not how much about the everyday realities of schools, particularly how actors in the education process carry out their roles. To use Jansen's words, 'we know relatively little about what actually takes place in classrooms' (Jansen 1995:197). This suggests that a need exists for educational qualitative research to take as its starting point, the complexities of 'what happens inside classrooms.' In fact, many assumptions have largely been unquestioned about how to teach reading and writing, and which languages to use and what counts as high-quality practices in classrooms as opposed to ineffective ones (Bloch 1999:55-56).

At the same time however, there seems to be very limited scholarship available on the impact of teachers' perceptions about literacy and learning on the effectiveness of classroom practices. Very little is actually known about teachers' own experiences of literacy and how these may have shaped their own conceptualisations of literacy and theories of how literacy may best be taught. There is however a proliferation of studies with greater emphasis on the 'performance' (as seen in PIRLS, TIMMS, ANA and SACMEQ series of studies) of learners than on some of the reasons contributing to the general decline in the quality of education and literacy levels. The studies mentioned above are useful in that they provide a comparison of the South African education system with other countries and provide a macro-view of South African children's performance. Unfortunately, such studies also create a feeling of hopelessness and negativity and can lead to paralysis.

In the light of the discussion above, the research problem may be summarised as the need to uncover the beliefs that teachers operate with and to more deeply understand the impact of these beliefs on their practice. It would also be important to

investigate whether in fact these theories are susceptible to revision, and to find out what kinds of stimuli may trigger this change. Gains (2010:13) asserts that the more we know about everyday practices in typical South African classrooms, and varying conceptualizations of teachers about their 'roles as teachers', the more informed and focused will be our strategies as educators, as teachers and as policy-makers for the enhancement and support of those practices. The underlying rationale for this research is the belief that the research findings of this study will contribute to the improvement of literacy teaching and greater refinement of teacher professional development strategies.

Furthermore, the findings of this study will contribute to current understanding and thinking around the central issue of teacher professionalization, which is key for quality education.

1.6 Purpose of study

The study aimed to document the pedagogic practices of foundation phase teachers in a local school in a predominantly Northern Sotho-speaking township in order to explore teachers' beliefs and principles underpinning their practices, and to investigate the relationship between beliefs and practices, and based on the findings infer what kind of interventions are required to significantly influence and alter teachers' current teaching practices. The overarching question of the study was therefore:

- What activities and forms of engagements (or interventions) enable teachers' to radically transform their beliefs, principles and conceptualizations behind the teaching of literacy?

In addition, there are two underlying research questions pertinent to the study, which are:

- How do teachers conceptualise literacy as seen in their teaching practices, their theoretical understanding and responses to teaching practices of others?

- What are the processes through which teachers' pedagogic beliefs and practices evolve?

1.7 Organisation of the dissertation

This dissertation is organised into six chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces and contextualises the current study within the educational crisis in South Africa that several scholars have commented upon. This outline will thus draw from the wealth of literature in South Africa, and based on the gaps inherent in the literature, make the case for the current study by articulating the rationale, objectives and research questions of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

In this chapter, an important distinction being made in the literature on teacher professionalization is articulated, as it is important to the kind of interventions required. This comparison is based on the distinction between two models of teacher professional development, that is, the teacher training model and the teacher development model. This comparison will demonstrate that the most effective forms of teacher empowerment occur when the teacher is seen as an autonomous professional, rather than subordinate to external authority and the expertise (of scholars and academics).

Chapter 3: Research design

This chapter spells out the design for this study and will thus describe the research approach, site and location of research, the sampling procedures and the kind of data collected, including the data collection procedures. The theoretical and analytical frameworks to be used to analyse the data will presented.

Chapter 4: Data collection

In this study, different kinds of data were collected, namely; the observational data (in the form of video and field notes), interview data including focus group and joint review discussion sessions based on selected snippets of the recorded data. This chapter describes the processes undertaken to collect all the kinds of data outlined above.

In order to contextualise the study, this chapter will set the scene by describing the research site, resources available and the socioeconomic profile of the school, and other considerations that have impacted on the process of data collection.

Chapter 5: Presentation and analysis of data

This chapter presents and analyses data from both the regular and intervention lessons, and also comparatively explores the data in terms of concept development, interactive patterns between the teachers and learners, and among learners themselves in the two types of lessons; and in terms of the cognitive demand that the regular and intervention lessons make on learners.

This chapter reports on the findings and the key insights that emerged from the focus groups and joint video review sessions capturing teachers' reflections about the regular and intervention lessons, as well as other contextual factors impacting on their classroom practices.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter presents an overview of the research's central findings, and reflects on some of the key insights generated from both the regular and intervention lessons, and teacher interview data. The chapter also address the limitations of the research emanating from the methodological design of the study. Based on the implications and findings of the study, key recommendations are presented addressing various aspects impacting learning and teaching in the context of teacher professional development.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

A literature review involves researching, reading, understanding and forming conclusions from the reading materials or sources with regard to the topic or problem being studied (Brink et al. 2006:67). In this section, an important distinction being made in the literature on teacher professionalization is articulated, as it is central to the kind of interventions required. This comparison is based on a current paradigmatic shift from a 'teacher training' model towards a 'teacher development' view of teacher professionalization. This discussion will demonstrate that the most effective forms of teacher empowerment occur when the teacher is seen as an autonomous professional, rather than subordinate to external authority and to the expertise of specialists.

2.2. Teacher beliefs and the process of change

Richards et al. (2001) has argued that studying teachers' beliefs is essential, and forms part of the process of understanding how teachers conceptualise their work. According to Harvey (1986), teacher beliefs represent teachers' individualized representation of reality that has enough validity, truth, or credibility to guide them through practice and behaviours in classroom. This assertion suggests that teachers' classroom practices are informed by conceptualizations and beliefs they hold about aspects of their teaching. This also suggests that one cannot fully understand teachers' classroom behaviours without understanding contextual factors influencing their practices, including their beliefs and conceptualizations of literacy. This view is shared by Nespor (1987), who asserts that in order to understand teaching from teachers' perspectives, one has to understand the beliefs and principles that underlie their teaching.

Researchers such as Pajares (1992) and Gains (2010) have shown that most teachers are largely unable to articulate the theories underpinning their practice. The work of Pajares also shows that the difficulty in studying teacher's beliefs is largely caused by 'definitional problems, and/or poor conceptualizations, and differing understandings of beliefs and belief structures' (1992:307), as many such beliefs

seem to be embedded in what Kagan (1992:66) refers to as 'personal epistemologies'.

Another aspect which is equally important to this issue is well captured by Gains (2010) in her doctoral work where she makes a significant point on teacher conceptualization of theory, and reports that teachers generally find it difficult to articulate the theories behind their literacy teaching practices. This combination of unarticulated conceptualizations and ineffective practices are largely due to a limited theoretical understanding of literacy. This further reiterates that teachers are yet to fully own and appropriate curricular ideas and communicate them using their own voices.

The work of Gains and Pajares has shown that researchers may still be able to recover teachers' principles and beliefs behind their practices despite teachers' inability to articulate the own theories they operate with, by inferring them from their instructional practices and their views about the teaching practices of others. When teachers engage in critical reflections about practice, they (by default) draw upon their subjective positions and notions of what constitute good practice, and their personalised interpretation of curricular ideas.

According to Singh et al. (2007), teachers' beliefs originate from their personal experiences of schooling and to some extent from their initial teacher training. In the context of change, Zeichner (1989) warns that teachers are generally reluctant to change, and rather maintain their initial belief systems virtually intact even after years of formal education. This assertion has overwhelming implications on how teachers (as practitioners) can best be supported to carry out their classroom responsibilities in line with curricular ideas.

Shulman (1987) also argues that teachers' understanding and knowledge of practice mostly develops from experience, and through years of accumulated 'wisdom of practice', which is partly to do with why teachers are seldom able (and unwilling) to adopt expert theories. Current research also shows that when teachers are engaged in the process of sharing their beliefs and insights with others, they begin to increase their opportunities of improving their own teaching. Critical reflections are believed to give rise to clarity and understanding.

In teacher development, change is regarded as a major dimension of teachers' professional lives. According to Freeman (1989; 29-30), who deals with varying notions of change:

- Change in teachers does not immediately necessitate radical shift in teaching, but rather can essentially mean change in awareness, or reaffirmations of teachers' current practices
- Some changes may occur over time, and not necessarily immediate or complete
- Some changes are directly observable and quantifiable while others are not

The kind of change being advocated here is the one driven by a desire for improvement, which is in contrast to the ubiquitous top-down approach of policy makers, which often leads to discomfort, deskilling and panic among teachers. This view is well captured by Morimoto, who as far back as 1973, observed that:

"When change is advocated or demanded by another person, (as teachers) we feel threatened, defensive, and perhaps rushed. We are then without the freedom and the time to understand and to affirm the new learning as something desirable, and as something of our own choosing. Pressure to change, without an opportunity for exploration and choice, seldom results in experiences of joy and excitement in learning". (Morimoto 1973:255).

2.3 Conceptualizing 'teacher professional development'

This section explores some of the current understandings of concepts used within the area of professional development in order to mark a path which the current study seeks to explore.

The comparison of the two models of teacher professionalization, 'teacher training' and 'teacher development' is central to the study, in the context of what kind of interventions are likely to have a greater impact on teachers, in South Africa and beyond.

According to Glatthorn (1995:41), "teacher development is the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically". Glatthorn's notion puts the emphasis on teachers

themselves, both as ‘agent’ and ‘object’ of change, as having the power to transform their pedagogic practices and the eventual improvement of their practices. Guskey (2000:17) provides a more practical conception of teacher professional development, by defining it as “means, activities and processes by means of which teachers enhance their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes, so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of their students.” As will be seen, the broader importance of teacher professional development is to ensure that there is eventual improvement in learners’ learning experiences through teacher enhancement of their knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

Mahlaela (2012) cites Steyn & Van Niekerk (2002) to argue that the most effective forms of teacher professional development occur when the programmes are formal and systematic, and more importantly (when) designed to promote personal and professional growth of practitioners. Wood & McQuarrie (1999) argue for an informal learning approach where practitioners collegially collaborate on their own, in which learning opportunities are increased through ‘on-the-job learning’ activities such as study groups, and through research-driven collaborations between researchers and teachers, as in action research.

The importance of collaboration in teacher development is also articulated by Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995), who conceive of teacher development as a collaborative process, though noting that there may be some opportunities for isolated work and reflection. Clement & Vanderbeghe (2000) (in Villegas-Reimers 2003) however mention that the most effective professional development occurs when there are meaningful interactions among teachers themselves.

According to Ball & Cohen (1999), (in Cohen & Hill 2000), professional development for teachers is a key mechanism for improving classroom instruction and student achievement. In their view, professional development refers to the participation of teachers in development opportunities, in order for them to become better equipped as teachers and educational leaders. The importance of teachers’ professionalization is also affirmed by Gusky (2000:4), who notes that studies have shown that notable improvements in education cannot occur without professional development.

Du Plessis et al. (2007) view professional development as involving the acquisition of skills, concepts and attitudes to enhance the performance of practitioners. This

position is also held by Moletsane (2004) who noted that professional development should be seen as more than the mere learning of knowledge and skills. In retrospect, professional development has to take into consideration the need for personal development and grounded understanding of disciplinary knowledge, thus enabling teachers to grow in character and maturity. The cumulative effect of both will enable teachers to cope with multiple challenges placed on them on a daily basis during teaching and learning.

As it has been highlighted in this section, there are disagreements in the literature about whether teacher development initiatives are best designed and implemented under either formal/ informal contexts, on a smaller scale, or are more effective (and have a higher educational impact) when implemented on a larger scale. However, there is broad agreement, as captured by Du Plessis et al. (2007), that teacher professional development is not an event, but is rather a continuous and career-long process. What appears as self-evident is that teachers require professional support at varying levels of their teaching, in order to reconceptualise their professional practices.

2.4 Notions of teacher professionalization

Marais and Meier (2004:223) indicate that since South Africa embarked on the implementation of the new curriculum, new schools and classroom realities have been created that require educators to reconsider their existing teaching practices. This change at the level of the classroom calls for change in the way the country trains and develops its own teachers, underpinning the reality that teacher need to be equipped with refined understandings of curricular ideas for their classrooms.

Many researchers concur that conventional forms of teacher professional development have been under attack by teachers, educational researchers and teacher educators who regard them as irrelevant and ineffective. Mizell (2000) goes so far as to say that current approaches by districts and schools lack a ‘theory of change’, that is, though many are dissatisfied with the quality of education, they seem unable to accurately diagnose, nor remedy the prevailing situation.

Put differently, the teacher training paradigm has been heavily criticised largely because it has been proven to be unproductive in South Africa and beyond. Despite

regular curriculum rationalization and simplification, coupled with one-shot training efforts by districts, little has been achieved in radically transforming teacher's classroom practices (Msila 2008). Instead, many have argued for collaborative approaches whereby researchers engage the pedagogic practices of practitioners for the betterment of education, as in Barnes (1975), Allwright (1983), Stern (1983), and Ramani (1987).

Richards (1991) observed that there are conceptual and operational differences between the teacher training model and teacher development model, in the context of teacher professionalization. Teacher training is based on a transmission model in which the trainer informs, models and advises (practitioners), and the practitioners, as trainees, take on board the information and skills they are taught. This model seems to reflect what Wallace (1991) referred to as a 'craft model', which is informed by the perception that teachers learn the same way apprentices learn craft, i.e., by imitating an expert and following directions from training workshops, which approach he noted was fundamentally flawed. This view of learning is conceptually and operationally different to the teacher development paradigm, because in the teacher development model, the starting point is the teachers' own experiences. Teacher's experiences are gathered and reviewed, and based on those insights, possible areas of intervention are established.

In recent times, the 'teacher development' paradigm has evolved to capture the notion of constructivism, reinforcing the notion that learning is an active process of constructing knowledge. Paradigmatically, the concept challenges the 'teacher training' model of teacher professionalization, and its establishment was in reaction to over-rigid, over-behaviouristic models of teacher training. More importantly, in teacher development, learning is seen as an active process of engagement whereby practitioners learn by reflecting on their current practices and the practices of others, leading to 'trying out new things'. The new experiences are processed in terms of the personal experiences of practitioners and finally 'owned' by the teachers in whatever form they find appropriate, and in whatever way is relevant to their classrooms.

Key researchers like Richards (1990) established from observations of global trends that teacher training is simply not effective for teacher learning, and to some extent lack intensity, content and follow up, and has proven to be having little effect on

teacher practice. While the teacher training model has been the subject of criticism from teachers and researchers, it seems to enjoy the support of literacy specialists in South Africa, teacher trainers and authorities in education administration.

The traditional forms of professionalization available to teachers still remain the most prevalent and widely used approach (Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1999, Garet et al. 2001). The continued reliance on traditional approaches in professionalizing the work of teachers can be conceptualized as lack of theoretical understanding of the learning process, and to some extent, limited understanding of current literature on cognitive constructivism.

To challenge the dominance of expert-driven approaches to teacher development, Ganser (2000) argues that the most effective forms of professional development are those that are based in schools and related to the daily activities of teachers and learners. Alternatives are also found and well demonstrated in Barnes (1975), Allwright (1983) and Richards (1991). Embedded in their argument is the view that any intervention that seeks to radically transform classroom practices has to be directly linked with the classroom complexities that many teachers confront daily in the classrooms. This model also rejects the mandatory one-shot workshops that have come to define the government's approach to teacher professionalization, an approach which has little impact on teachers.

The rejection of the teacher training model also seems to reflect the rejection of imposition of expert theory upon teachers. Many scholars have called for the review of the current top-down policy positions that view teachers as mere policy implementers, with little or no role in shaping curriculum. As noted from the discussions, teacher training leaves no scope for the teacher's own reflection and initiative. It is also contrary to the fairly widely accepted social constructivist, or Vygotskian conception of the nature of learning, according to which we learn by constructing our own understanding of reality through interaction with others.

2.5 Centrality of classroom-centred research

While the professionalization of teachers is a key factor in quality education, a series of small-and large-scale studies in South Africa and globally have clearly demonstrated the importance of classroom interventions in the context of teacher

professional development. Scholars like Allwright (1983) have demonstrated through practice and theory that researchers can have greater influence on how teachers understand their roles and practices in classroom. They argued for professional activism among researchers wherein interests in classroom-centred research goes beyond the need to study language pedagogy, but to work with teachers' beliefs and practices in order to generate localised understanding of learning and teaching in those classrooms. This research model supports a growing body of South African research showing that what happens inside South African classrooms is an important part of why South African children are not learning effectively. This research agenda is also asserted by Gains (2010:13) who argued that the more we know about the everyday practices of typical South Africa teachers, the more informed and focused will our strategies be as educators, teachers and policy-makers for the enhancement and support of those practices.

2.6 Researching teachers' beliefs and practices

The work of Heath (1983), Street (1984), Barton and Hamilton (1998), Purcell-Gates (1995) and others have demonstrated the importance of researching the 'literate events and practices' and behaviours of their own and other communities, as ethnographers. The usefulness of such research enquiries lies in developing localised understanding of conceptual and contextual factors impacting practitioners in the field of language and literacy learning.

Teachers' beliefs are thought to have a profound influence on their classroom practices. For the purposes of this study we use Eisenhart et al.'s (1988) definition of a belief as: "An attitude consistently applied to an activity" (p.54). This suggests that beliefs affect the way in which teachers perceive reality, and guides both their thoughts and their behaviours. As such, an understanding of this relationship is important for the improvement of teachers' professional growth and the eventual successful implementation of curricular innovations.

According to Spillane (2006), teachers' prior beliefs and practices have varying effects on teachers' ability to make sense of curricular innovations or to radically transform their practice. This is not only because teachers are sometimes unwilling to adapt to new policies, but also because their existing subjective knowledge may interfere with their ability to interpret and implement reforms in ways consistent with

policymakers' intentions. This unwillingness to adapt to changing knowledge frameworks has direct implications for how teachers can be best trained and developed professionally. Key scholars such as Carrim (2003) and Jansen (2001) explored how teachers identify themselves in relation to their educational roles, and note that there is a gap between what curricular texts and training programmes project teachers as being, and the ways in which they actually own their identities as teachers. This disjuncture is further expanded by teachers' loyalty to their beliefs and existing knowledge frameworks about literacy, which are both resistant to change.

Teacher's theoretical beliefs have been defined by Harste & Burke (1977) as the philosophical principles, or belief systems that guide teacher's expectations about learner behaviour, and the decisions they make during learning and teaching. Harste and Burke (1977) postulate that teachers make decisions and possess assumptions about language and language learning, and that these provide the basis for a particular approach to language instruction.

These insights are also shared by Ramani (1987:3), who following Stern (1983), believes that all teachers operate with a theory. She suggests that teacher theory may be hidden, sometimes even from teachers themselves. In her article she suggests the use of video data or actual classroom lessons as stimuli to get teachers to engage with their hidden theories and principles underpinning their thinking processes behind their teaching practices. Her perspective is very much within the teacher development paradigm, as she believes that teachers develop when they become aware of the implicit beliefs they work with and are willing to engage with beliefs different from their own.

It is therefore intuitive that teacher's beliefs influence their goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, including their roles and behaviour in classroom. This is also very much in line with the view that teacher professionalization is about harnessing teachers' knowledge and making them aware of how they can view 'knowledge as a valuable resource' (Gebhard 2005), in order activate change in attitudes, values and approaches to literacy.

It should be noted however that the notion of change in the 'training' perspective is quite different from the change that the 'development' approach entails. In the teacher development perspective, changes are not necessarily limited to classroom

practice or behavioural change. Changes occurring at an attitudinal level and increased awareness may lead to a deeper understanding of the teaching practice, which could even lead to an affirmation of teachers' current practice as pointed out by Freeman (1989) and Bailey (1991). It also entails that teachers (as practitioners) ought to start thinking about their own thinking processes in order to advance from their naïve and unreflecting realism to a more conscious understanding of the principles and concepts underlying their actions (Stern 1983: 27).

In conclusion, as has been demonstrated, much of teacher professionalization in South Africa is still within the traditional notion of teacher training, whereby teacher empowerment is predominantly driven by experts outside the schooling environment who determine the process, the content, and method to be implemented in classrooms with little consideration of locale-specific systems and complexities attributable to each learning environment. Sparks & Loucks-Horsley (1990) identified a number of important assumptions inherent in the training model. Two of these assumptions are 1) that teachers are able to replicate the methods being proposed by experts in classroom, and 2) teachers can learn or change their behaviours to replicate these techniques in their classrooms (p. 241). As the literature has shown, there are mismatches between what teachers find relevant and doable in classrooms, and what experts consider essential and methodologically appropriate. Inevitably, the cumulative effect of such persistent teacher-unfriendly education system, and inappropriate models of professional development for teachers result in paralysis, undue pressure, and eventual de-skilling of teachers.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter spells out the design for this study and will thus describe the research approach, site and location of research, the sampling procedures and the kind of data collected, including the data collection procedures. The analytical frameworks to be used to make sense of the data will also be presented.

3.2 Research design

In the study, a collaborative model of field-based research was employed in the form of case study. Research-based collaborations between universities and schools are proving to be key in addressing some of challenges facing public schooling and education administration in South Africa. The importance of research-based collaborations is articulated by Javorsky et al. (2000:1), with particular emphasis on field-based research, by noting that "field-based research practices foster cooperation between public schools and university communities, as well as promote an effective means to translate educational research into educational practices". This suggests that researchers can meaningfully act as drivers of change in education, by contributing to the way teachers make sense of their professional work.

Methodologically, the study draws from Yin's concept of a qualitative case-study approach, whose objective, in this instance, is to uncover the micro detail of classroom interactions and relevant contextual factors (Yin 2003) impacting on literacy learning and teaching.

The use of a case-study approach presents to the researcher a methodological vantage point for gaining insights into teachers' 'situational dynamics' (Cohen et al. 2000). According to Crowe et al. (2011), a case-study approach allows in-depth, multi-faceted explorations of complex issues in their real-life settings. The use of 'real-life contexts' here is to highlight that the point of departure in case studies is the natural setting in which research subjects reside and operate within, therefore making data collected in such settings situational and naturalistic. The advantage of this research design is articulated by Henning (2004) who cites Merriam (1999) to make the point that case-study research design is employed to gain an in-depth

understanding of situations and meanings of complex social conditions from the perspective of those involved.

Herman (2004: 41) notes that:

“Case studies are distinguished from other types of qualitative research in that they are intensive descriptions and analyses, of a single unit or bounded system such as an individual, program, event, group, intervention or community”

There are three reasons why a qualitative case-study approach is suitable for this kind of research: firstly, such a research design will enable the researcher to gain an understanding of classroom events as they occur in real time and to gain insights into the complexities of classroom encounters. Secondly, a qualitative study will enable teachers to articulate deeply their views and reflect on their complex linguistic encounters and classrooms experiences, and their beliefs about how literacy is best learned. Thirdly, over extended interviews the researcher will be able to track and monitor changes in attitudes, views of teachers and their general receptivity to innovation in literacy classrooms.

3.3 Research sample

According to Vermeulen (1998), sampling involves using a part of a population as representative of that population, or community. In the study, classroom lessons from the selected school were used as samples, with the main role-players in the study being the teachers.

In the study, various sampling strategies were utilised to select schools to be part of this study. Students at the University of Limpopo were recruited to undertake a survey to locate innovative public schools around Limpopo. A list was generated, from which schools in Mankweng, a township accessible to the University, were shortlisted.

The shortlisted schools were approached and narrowed down to two schools, of which one was later dropped. Eventually only one school remained in the sample as it was only one that met the stringent ethical obligations of the study. The reason why one of the schools was dropped from the data sample was because parental consent forms were not returned in time; either because the majority of the learners

returned no parental consents or returned them unsigned rendering the data recorded from such lessons unusable for research. This meant that the only usable data for the study were from the school were the maximum number of parental consents was obtained, and the learners without signed consent forms could easily be placed in other classrooms of the same grade.

The scope of the study was only limited to public schools, largely because of the complex socioeconomic dynamics in many rural-township schools. It is for this reason that the findings of the study may be somewhat characteristic of many rural-township schools in South Africa.

3.4 Research validity

In research, the construct ‘validity’ of a procedure refers to the extent to which a study investigates what it claims to investigate, i.e. to the extent to which a procedure leads to an accurate observation of reality (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). In order to obtain relevant and usable data which comes close to naturalistic data, the following undertakings were put in place:

- All the classroom teachers observed were actual teachers of the classrooms, not ‘make shift’ arrangements
- Teachers were requested to start new lessons on the day of observations to avoid observing revision lessons
- Multiple sessions of observations were organised in order to reliably capture teachers’ classroom practices.

The cumulative effect of these undertakings ensured that the data emerging from the lessons met the criterion of validity.

In South Africa, because of historical reasons, much of the older generation of teachers have been trained under Bantu Education, and such teachers are still operating within the system. Their ideologies, approaches and classroom behaviours are not aligned with current understandings as are those teachers who have recently graduated from tertiary institutions. One can speculate that recent entrants to the teaching profession are more in tune with current understandings of theory and pedagogic practice. So, to fairly represent these differences, teacher inclusion was spread across age groups and length of experience.

3.5 Defining the kinds of data for the study

The subjects of the research were the teachers and learners of grade 1 and grade 3 in the school. Overall, the study consisted of 5 teachers from this school in Mankweng, Limpopo Province. The data were based on classroom observations and interviews of the teachers. The observational data were drawn from both the regular lessons and the intervention lessons. In the study, data from the regular lessons refers to the routine lessons taught by the regular teachers recorded within the naturalistic setting of their own classrooms. In the intervention lessons, the teachers were the researchers, and hence the approach to teaching, the use of materials and the teaching practices were different but within the constraints of the classroom, that is, with no material change to the set-up of classroom. The learners, classroom materials and the physical setting remained unaltered. The data from both the regular lessons and the intervention lessons will therefore be analysed.

3.6 Planning the intervention lessons

Based on observations of the regular lessons, an analysis was undertaken to review the lessons in terms of teachers' teaching methods, range of strategies, and the use of materials. Drawing from the analysis of the regular teachers' pedagogic practices, the researcher designed intervention lessons based on a different set of assumptions about teaching and learning, to present to teachers a different way of engaging learners and using materials. The intervention lessons were based on three considerations: firstly, to maximise classroom interactions to facilitate the learning process; secondly to tap into learners' higher order thinking skills, and lastly, and most importantly, to ensure that new concepts and skills are being learned, which is the ultimate goal of formal education.

As one would see from above, the focus of the intervention was rather on the transformative impact of the interventions, than on immediate change on the part of teachers. This was in line with the design of the study which was to present teachers with a different set of teaching practices so that their own beliefs could be recovered.

3.6.1 Motivation for the intervention lessons

In South Africa, the wealth of studies into classroom practices and the schooling condition has unequivocally shown that school education is in crisis. As a result, the assumptions underlying the need for intervention lessons is that current teaching practices have been over-researched, and that continued research into over-researched areas may not yield new insights. One may go so far as to say that it is unethical to publish findings that only duplicate what is already known: namely that teacher talk dominates in most South African classrooms, that there is a predominance of rote learning and that learners are mostly engaged in lower-order thinking. To avoid the proliferation of such studies, there is a need to experiment with possible models of change, and to research changed practices that might hold more promise for addressing the country's education crisis.

The work of Spillane (2006), Yeo (2007) and Gains (2010) has already established that teachers as practitioners find it very difficult to shift their thinking and their practices. This inability to adapt to changing knowledge frameworks has direct implications for how teachers can be best trained and developed professionally. The reality is that there is very limited scholarship available on the impact of teachers' perceptions about literacy and learning on the effectiveness of classroom practices. In fact, very little is actually known about teachers' own experiences of literacy and how these may have shaped their conceptualisations of literacy and theories of how literacy may best be taught. The current study will, through the intervention lessons, provide teachers with an alternative perspective on teaching and learning, and through an engagement with these lessons, the teachers might be able to confront their conceptualizations. The potential usefulness of this model is that it might provide entry into teacher's beliefs, their values and the theories underpinning their teaching, which would be far more difficult to access through the usual training models.

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the current teacher training paradigm is certainly not effective, and there is a dire need for alternative models of teacher development that start from where teachers are, as opposed to the current approach of imposing 'expert theory' on teachers. The cumulative effects of a teacher-unfriendly training regime, coupled with frequent curricular reform have had varying

impacts on teachers and how they perform their roles. Metcalfe (2008:94) goes so far as to say “recent curriculum changes have effectively ‘de-skilled’ teachers, with serious consequences for quality.” The intervention research may therefore be useful, to show how collaborative approaches to teacher development can be designed within the confines of the curriculum, the material limitations of classrooms and school constraints in order to have a greater impact on teaching and learning.

The intervention will therefore go beyond current teacher development research, by exploring what kind of changes are required in pedagogy to enable teachers to radically transform their understanding of language and literacy learning, and most importantly, explore how teachers can develop their own practice through reflection on their teaching and the teaching of others.

3.6.2 Paradigmatic orientation of the intervention

The intervention challenges the teacher training paradigm, in part for its lack of a plausible theory of change, and its inability to address the need for continual support for existing practitioners. The principle underlying the approach to this intervention was the need to transform how in-service teachers engage practice in their classrooms. As a result, the study starts where teachers are, in order to understand the contextual factors impacting their teaching and their conceptualizations of language and literacy in order to effectively to develop what they already have. This kind of research will facilitate greater understanding of teachers’ literacy practices, leading to greater understanding of how teacher’s practices may be strengthened and affirmed, or be transformed.

At another level, there is a need for empathy towards teachers’ current situation, emanating from frequent curriculum change, large classes and the ubiquitous lack of resources. There is therefore a need for a paradigm shift in how researchers, as drivers of theory, and teachers (as practitioners) collaboratively engage classroom practices with the aim of exploring models of change, modification and innovation.

3.6.3 Nature of the intervention

During the intervention lessons, the researchers (who are lecturers at a local university) will take over the teaching responsibility for a few lessons, but will use the same materials prescribed by the curriculum. The regular classroom teacher and

other teachers of the same grade would be invited to observe the lessons, and give feedback on the intervention lessons, a practice which is the opposite of what normally happens, where classroom researchers give feedback to practising teachers.

The intervention lessons were to be implemented on a small scale, in contrast to mass-based teacher-training approaches characteristic of district-level initiatives. The current researcher opted for a small group of teachers working closely together and collegially, with the possibility for forming an embryonic 'community of practice' (Wenger 1998), where they can reflect on and theorize their teaching practices. A 'community of practice' is defined by Wenger & Snyder (2000) as a group of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion in their area of practice. The underlying belief is that when teachers are engaged in a process of sharing their beliefs, and teaching experiences, they begin to re-examine their own theories and principles behind their teaching practices.

Methodologically, the starting point of the intervention phase was to invite teachers to observe the learning and teaching in grade 1 and grade 3 Sepedi Home Language (HL) and English First Additional Language (EFAL) classrooms. This classroom data would then be made available for teachers to review and deconstruct, and their subjective views collected through a focus group discussion. Their subjective views would then be the basis for a follow-up interview to further elicit teachers' underlying beliefs and theories about literacy, and to explore whether teacher beliefs change when they are confronted with teaching experiences different to their own.

Both the data from regular and intervention lessons would be collected in the form of video and audio recordings and field notes.

3.6.4 Linking interventions with teacher practice

Making the interventions relevant to the teachers was an essential consideration for the research design, because as already stated, there is reluctance by teachers to adopt expert theories, and their accompanying curricular innovations. The underlying reason for this reluctance has to do with the fact that expert theories are seldom context-specific, are demanding to apply, and at times, are culturally insensitive to the learning environment of many rural-township schools.

This suggests that for any intervention to have a meaningful impact on teachers, it has to be linked to practice, and deal with the common complexities encountered by teachers. Interventions therefore have to pedagogically demonstrate that alternative teaching practices are possible within the constraints of normal teaching environments, and locale-specific limitations. This principle is captured by Richardson (1994) who asserts that when teachers try new activities, they assess them on the basis of whether they work, and/or whether they fit within their set of beliefs about teaching and learning.

The practices being proposed may also be reviewed by the teachers in terms of how they enable them to engage learners, or on the basis of how they allow the teacher the degree of classroom control that they deem necessary. If the practices being proposed are deemed not feasible or valuable for learning as perceived by the teacher, they are quickly dropped or radically altered.

3.7 Data collection procedures

3.7.1 Observational data

Direct observations are usable, effective and feasible methods of data gathering, enabling the researcher to place him/herself in the classroom to develop and gather grounded insights about the learning environment. Direct observations are also desirable as they overcome some of the methodological limitations of established methods like questionnaire completion (Kawulich 2005). Direct observations will allow researchers to immerse themselves in the teacher’s daily environment, which is key to the understanding of the contextual factors affecting teaching and learning. In addition, field notes taken during the observations would enable a richer analysis of the audio and video recordings.

3.7.2 Field-notes

Field notes are defined by DeMunck and Sobo (1998) as referring to notes created by the researcher during the act of qualitative fieldwork in order to remember and record the behaviours, activities, events, and other features about the site of research. The usefulness of field notes lies in complementing both the video and interview data, by recording key moments and situations emerging during the lessons.

3.7.3 Video data

Fitzgerald et al. (2013) find video data essential in research because they provide a permanent and detailed record which can be analysed from multiple perspectives. Video data enable the slow and multiple viewing of classroom events and allow secondary analysis (by researchers who were not part of the primary research and data collection). The viewing of data by many people with diverging perspectives will inevitably enrich the analytical process. It for this reason that in this study, video recordings formed the core of the data collected in both the lessons and the interviews. Video recordings play an important role in data gathering, and effectively provide the researcher with a definitive tool to investigate how educational processes and practises are co-constructed by the teacher and the students.

3.7.4 Interview data

Interviews are a rich tool in research, and can allow researchers to gather complex, subjective data from research subjects. In the current study, semi-structured interviews will be used to provide space and time for teachers (as subjects of the study) to reflect on their conceptualizations of literacy. The teacher questionnaire protocol used for the interviews is attached as **Appendix 1**. The questions explore demographic information about the school, questions based on language and literacy learning and lastly, reflective questions based on the intervention lessons. The emerging dialogue during the interviews will therefore enable the researcher to probe what teachers consider essential to the learning process, such as the availability and use of resources in the school. Semi-structured questions are key to the interviews, as they would offer a measure of planning but also enable a line of questioning that emerges from teachers' responses to questions.

The semi-structured nature of the interviews will also allow time and space for issues to be raised by the interviewees that had not been anticipated or planned for. It is expected that teachers' responses will provide interesting and persuasive pieces of evidence linking the conceptualization of literacy with their current practices.

3.8 Data analysis procedures

3.8.1 Introduction

This section deals with how the data is will be analysed in order to address the research questions articulated in the introductory chapter.

According to McMillan & Schumacher (2001:462), in qualitative research, data analysis is a systematic process of selecting, categorizing, comparing, synthesising as well as interpreting so as to provide explanations of a single phenomenon. The qualitative paradigm enables researchers to methodologically transform large amounts of data into succinct statements and other analytical tools such as transcripts to be able to describe, explain or generate predictions about what the researcher has studied (also in Le Compte & Schensul 1999)

In order to analyse the data, the study will make use of qualitative data strategies, which are based on an 'interpretive philosophy' (Maree 2007). In qualitative analysis, researchers make meaning of a phenomenon by analysing the participant's 'attitudes, perceptions, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences' (Shank 2002) which they attach to social practices in order to approximate their construction of the phenomenon.

For the interview data, the researcher will make use of content analysis. According to Hancock (2002:17), "content analysis is a procedure for the categorisation of verbal or behavioural data, for purposes of classification, summarisation and tabulation." The content analysis will focus on the common themes that emerge in the responses of the teachers and the differences between them. The responses from all the teachers on each of the interview questions will be closely examined to establish these similarities and differences

With regard to the classroom lessons, the data will be transcribed and further analysed. This process will thus involve making sense of the raw data, by establishing patterns and routines embedded in teachers' pedagogic practices.

3.8.2 Transcription

Due to the number of lessons recorded in both regular and intervention lessons, not all the data could be transcribed. Hence there was a deliberate process to review the

video data and select specific episodes for transcription. Repeated viewing of the video data enabled the selection of a few key episodes from both the regular lessons and the intervention lessons. These key episodes captured the predominant routines typical of the two types of lessons.

The selected episodes from both the regular and intervention lessons were transcribed, with the transcripts incorporating both verbal and non-verbal aspects and notes to capture the use of materials, movements and actions and other contextual information. In the case of Sepedi lessons, English translations were included in the transcripts. The transcriptions were cross-checked and verified in the light of the video data.

Lapadat & Linday (1998) view transcription as a theory-laden theoretical process, suggesting the choices researchers make about the design of transcript enact the theories they hold, and the kind of analysis one may engage in. For the purpose of this study, it was essential for the transcripts to reflect both verbal and non-verbal communications, as they are essential to kind of classroom engagement and interactions impacting learning and teaching. Working from the transcript, the researcher would then be able to study patterns of turn taking and distribution of classroom talk, and to be able to establish types of classroom engagements and corresponding treatments that followed, which will inform the researcher about teachers' classroom repertoire, and their approach to teaching.

3.8.3. Analytical frameworks

Dörnyei (2007) observed that studying naturally-occurring language usage is a somewhat 'eclectic' field that accommodates diverse theoretical approaches, and its interdisciplinary scope includes linguistic, psychological and educational topics. This enables researchers to draw from various theoretical frameworks in their analysis. This inevitably enables the field to provide theoretical and empirical foundations for investigating and solving language-related problems in the 'real world' (Davies 2007), like literacy learning in classrooms.

3.8.3.1 Socioconstructivism

This study has it theoretical foundation in socioconstructivism, according to which much of the important learning by children occurs through social interactions with

experienced adults (or more capable peers) (Vygotsky 1978). Teachers are therefore in a better position to model behaviours and/or provide verbal instructions to their learners, and also negotiate patterns of checking, clarifying and extending meaning during talk (Dorn 1996). Vygotsky refers to this as co-operative or collaborative dialogue (Vygotsky 1978), and articulated by McLeod (2007).

A Vygotskian view of learning involves children seeking to understand the actions or instructions of their teachers, leading to the internalization of this information in order to use it to guide or regulate their own performance.

Drawing from Vygotsky's central concept of mediation, the researcher is interested in how the teachers use classroom discourse to facilitate meaningful learning and advance learners' cognitive thinking skills. This is essential, because within socioconstructivism, teaching is as an act of extending a child's natural abilities; teaching that is unable to make learners move beyond their everyday knowledge mostly results in epistemological impoverishment and contributes little towards learners' cognition. It would thus be worthwhile to explore how teachers progressively direct classroom discourse to cross the bridge between everyday knowledge to scientific/academic knowledge.

In order to engage in such an exploration, the study will make use of established analytical frameworks to analyse classroom discourse; and this includes Cummins' Four Quadrants, interaction and discourse analysis and Prabhu's three types of tasks, which are established tools of analysing data from naturally-occurring communications.

The three approaches to the analysis of classroom data are briefly discussed below:

3.8.3.2 Interactional Analysis

In the classroom, the process of teaching and learning is made up of patterns of interaction between teachers and learners (and among learners themselves), in the form of asking questions, responding and reacting. The kind of engagements and interactions taking place in the classroom therefore shapes learning in profound ways. Kumpulainen & Wray (2002) thus view interaction analysis as intended to

provide evidence of the differences in teaching patterns, which distinguish one teaching style from another.

The usefulness of interactional analysis in research is spelt out by Jordan & Henderson (1994) as investigating human activities such as talk, non-verbal interactions, the use of artefacts and technologies, identifying routine practices and problems, in naturally-occurring settings of language use. In this study, interactional analysis is valuable tool of analysis in order to understand how teachers maintain a classroom climate conducive for learning.

It is also vital to the understanding of interactional patterns of classrooms, and for in-depth study of turn-taking and distribution of talk.

3.8.3.3 Cummins' Four Quadrants

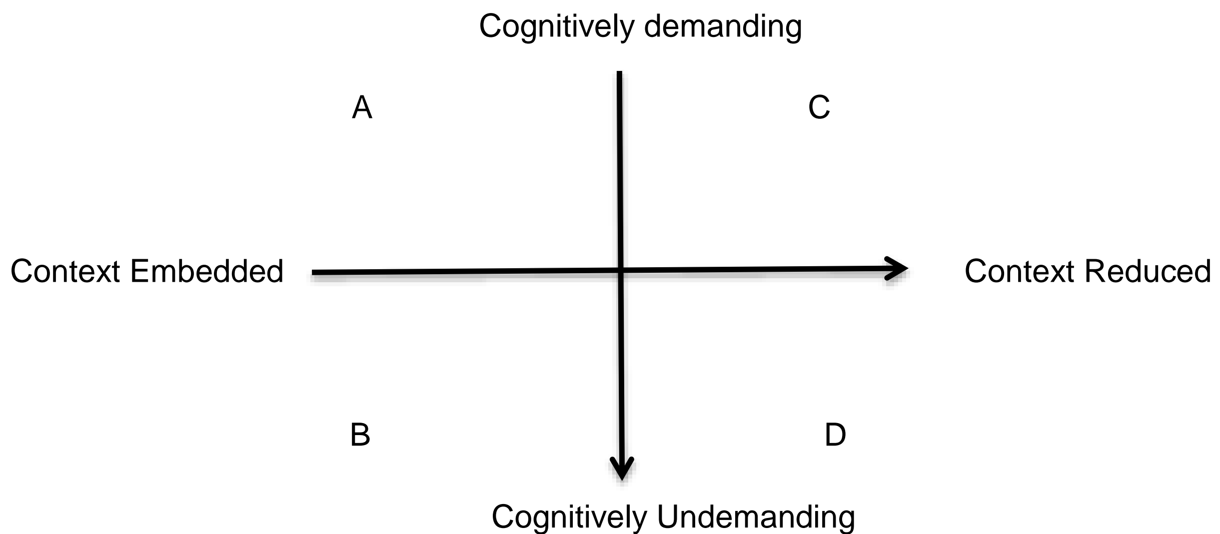
According to Wegerif & Mercer (1997), a sociocultural analysis of discourse focusses on the use of 'language as a social mode of thinking', that is, as a tool for teaching-and-learning, constructing knowledge, creating joint understanding and tackling problems collaboratively. This assertion suggests that dialogic processes in classrooms are crucial to understanding how discourse facilitates meaningful learning, and how different types of talk facilitate concept development and cognitive development.

Cummins' distinction between BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALP (Cognitive and Academic Proficiency) is central to this discussion. BICS refers to conversational fluency in a language while CALP refers to students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school (Cummins 2008:77).

This initial BICS/CALP distinction was further elaborated by Cummins into two intersecting continua (in Cummins 1982) that highlighted the range of cognitive demands and contextual support involved in particular language tasks or activities during learning. In the Cummins' (1982) framework, context is represented on the horizontal axis of the framework while the cognitive effort required by learners to engage in the learning process is represented on the vertical axis. Context is used here to refer to the contextual support present in the communication that would

support expression and reception of meaning. This framework has been adopted in figure 1.

Figure 1: Cummins (1982) Framework for the Development of Language Proficiency



The first two quadrants (A and C) represent BICS; ranging from situations in which learners draw upon contextual features of the learning environment, such as facial gestures, real objects and pictorial representation to enable understanding. Quadrant B is an important transitional quadrant as learners shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn', and learners draw upon texts to attempt to negotiate meaning.

Inherent in Quadrant D are skills learners draw upon to makes sense of abstract academic and scientific knowledge - this includes abstraction, inference and comprehension and other application skills. According to the matrix, in both quadrants B and D, the kind language and communication demand are higher and also require a significant level of cognitive energy to fully participate in the communication.

Through the Four quadrants framework, Cummins collated the conceptual processes learners undergo during language and literacy learning, thereby reconciling the language learning and thinking processes involved. Through the framework, the researcher will be able to comparatively analyse both the regular and intervention

lessons, in terms of the kind of cognitive demand the two kinds of teaching makes on learners and to ascertain how teachers facilitate the learning of abstract and academic skills.

3.8.3.4 Prahbu's three types of task

Moving on to how the study conceptualizes cognition, Prahbu's (1987) distinction between task types can be used to represent three kinds of thinking.

The first of the three is 'information-gap', which refers to the cognitive efforts required by children in any activity involving a transfer of given information from one person to another, or from one form to another, or from one place to another – generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from or into language. (Prabhu 1987:46)

An example of information gap would be, for instance, naming parts of a diagram, recallecting numbers and letters of the alphabet,etc. Prabhu contrasts cognitive efforts required for information-gap activities with those ones required for 'reasoning-gap', which refers to any activity involving deriving some new information through the processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns. (Prabhu 1987:46).

Inferential comprehension and reasoning are by far the least underdeveloped of the thinking skills, precisely because they are abstract skills, and compel learners to think beyond the information available to make connections (for example, between cause and effect).

Lastly, according to Prabhu's three types of tasks, there is what he refers to as the 'opinion-gap tasks.' Opinion-gap refers to any activity involving identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation and usually require greater fluency in language than either of the other two types of tasks.

Drawing insights from Prabhu's framework, the researcher will be interested in establishing what kinds of tasks predominate in both the regular and intervention lessons and what kinds of interactions these tasks lead to.

Through the combined use of the analytical frameworks outlined above, the researcher will establish whether the classroom interactions facilitate learning.

CHAPTER 4: DATA COLLECTION

4.1 Introduction

In this study, three kinds of data were collected namely, observational data (in the form of video and audio recordings and field notes), interview data including focus group and joint review discussions of selected recorded lessons. This chapter describes the processes undertaken to collect the data.

In order to contextualise the study, it is essential to set the scene, by describing the research site, resources available and the socioeconomic profile of the school, and other considerations that have impacted on the process of data collection.

4.2 Location of school

The data were drawn from one local school based in Mankweng Township. Mankweng is a rural area about 30 km from Polokwane (capital city of the Limpopo Province) on the Tzaneen road. The population of the area is mostly 99 % Africans, with 94% Northern Sotho speakers (STATSSA/Census 2011). The population is predominantly Sepedi-speaking, with exception to Xitsonga and Venda language speakers who have settled in the area either for educational and or employment opportunities. Mankweng is a very dynamic township in the sense that it has grown and continues to grow economically and in terms of infrastructure. Though it is largely a township, it is surrounded by sprawling rural communities such as Makanye, Mamabolo, Mamotintane and others. Mankweng houses a regional hospital, a university, a public library, a sports complex and a children's park.

4.3 Socioeconomic and demographic review of the school

This section attempts to contextualise the study by exploring the demographic profile of the communities serviced by the school, and also the resources available in the schools.

The school is considered as Quintile 3, meaning that the school serves some of the most impoverished geographical communities in the country, and is therefore 'no-fee' paying school. The school also runs a feeding scheme funded by Department of Education and Social Development. The school being located in Mankweng makes it

to compete with two additional primary schools which are within walking distance of each other.

Though the school and community are predominantly Sepedi-speaking, the teachers noted that due to the increasing complexity of the Mankweng community, the numbers of children whose parents are small businessmen from other African countries such as Zimbabweans and Nigerians are slowly increasing in local schools. They also observed that many of the children do not speak Sepedi at home, posing challenges to their ability to academically progress in schools using African languages.

The teachers also noted that the trend of children not using Sepedi as first language is rapidly growing within the local community, and also in local schools, as a result of their parents moving from outlying areas within the province to the Mankweng community in search of jobs or settling in proximity to the health services or higher education facilities available at Mankweng in the form of Mankweng Hospital and University of Limpopo.

4.4 Description of the school and resources available

The school has 6 blocks built of cement, which are fully painted. The school also has additional mobile classrooms which according to the teachers where secured from Department of Education (DoE) to ease overcrowding which is pervasive in many rural-township schools. The school thus has four (4) mobile classrooms which are used to house grades with too many learners. In this respect, the school is fairly well-resourced relative to other rural-township schools.

The school has a vegetable garden and a sports field. It also has a computer room, with computers, which the teachers reported to have been donated by private companies. The computers however are unused, as the teachers reported that they are too few to be meaningfully used.

The school admits learners from grade R to grade 7. The principal has her own office, with one computer, copy/printer machine, and a fridge. There is one staff room with another photocopy/printer machine which is used by the rest of the teachers. In the staff room, there is no computer, but stacks of excess books are stored in piles at the back of the room. The teachers do not have computers in their

classrooms or in the staffroom, and can only make use of the photocopy machine in the staff room.

Per classroom, the number of learner varies, though some have about 40 to 55 learners**.** Each of the grades has three sections; for instance, in Grade 3 they have Grade 3A, 3B and 3C, with learners averaging 44 in each section. In the foundation phase, all learning areas are taught by one teacher; that is, each classroom is allocated one teacher, who then teaches and assesses all subjects taught to that classroom.

4.5 Teachers

There were five teachers who participated in this study; of which three were the ones whose teaching was observed and recorded and thus gave rise to the regular lesson data. For the purpose of interviews, three additional teachers were drawn in, as they were present to observe both the regular and the intervention lessons. They thus have contributed to the interview data.

4.6 Lessons observed

The overall number of lessons observed for the regular lessons was seven, and six for the intervention lessons. The observations occurred over the period between the 5th February-5th March 2013. For the regular lessons, four of lessons were in grade 1 classrooms while three were in grade 3 focussing on Sepedi HL lesson, English FAL and Numeracy lessons. In the interventions lessons, the focus was on HL and EFAL teaching thus three the lessons were for English HL learning and the remaining 3 lessons were dedicated to Sepedi HL lessons.

The classrooms in the school observed were furnished with posters on the walls (some of the display texts were handwritten while others were printed); most of them were predominantly about fruits, shapes, names, months, numbers and seasons of the year. At the back of the classrooms, copies of workbooks (mostly learner workbooks) were stacked for storage, as learners are not supposed to take them home. There are no materials for reading for pleasure, and much of learning and teaching is based on the workbooks provided by the Department of Basic Education. In addition, scribblers for writing practice are also placed at the back of the room,

and are retrieved for use by the students only when instructed to do so by the teacher.

4.7 Description of data collection procedures

4.7.1 Access to the school

There were various undertakings which were completed in order to gain access to the school, and to draw the school into the research project. Firstly, access to the schools in Limpopo area was secured from the Department of Education (Limpopo Province) (**Appendix 3**) via an application through the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) as the principal institution leading the multi-institutional research consortium (including University of Limpopo and the University of Pretoria). The said approval from the provincial department was then attached to a request to the school principal who approved the request (thus attached as **Appendix 2**). Consent sheets for the teachers, parents/guardian and learners themselves were subsequently delivered along with covering letters and permission from the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education.

4.7.2 Kinds of data collected

4.7.2.1 Observation data

Prior to the actual recording sessions, a preliminary field visit to the school was undertaken, which included sitting in during lessons and taking field notes. The primary objective of the preliminary field visit was have an idea of the kind of teaching and learning taking place, materials being used, and to actually meet the teachers.

Overall,13 lessons were observed and recorded, excluding preliminary observations. The observations included sitting in during the lessons for direct observations, video and audio recordings and collection of field notes. Of the 13 lessons, 7 were regular lessons, and 6 were intervention lessons. Of the regular lessons, 4 lessons were collected from two grade 1 lessons (that is, Grade 1B and 1C), while the remaining 3 lessons were observed and recorded from one Grade 3B.

As can be seen below in Table 1, there were three lessons observed and recorded for Sepedi HL learning, while only 2 of the recorded lessons were English FAL. In addition, a content subject, Numeracy was also observed and recorded.

Table 1: Breakdown of regular lessons

Date	Lesson taught	Number of learners	Grade	Teacher	Duration
5th Feb 2013	Numeracy	27	1C	Teacher A	18 min,40 sec
5th Feb 2013	Sepedi HL	27	1C	Teacher A	17 min
5th Feb 2013	English FAL	27	1C	Teacher A	33 min,8 sec
6th Feb 2013	Numeracy	28	3B	Teacher B	18 min,23 sec
6th Feb 2013	Sepedi HL	28	3B	Teacher B	29 min,19 sec
6th Feb 2013	English FAL	28	3B	Teacher B	33 min,35 sec
13th Feb 2013	Sepedi HL	42	1A	Teacher C	51 min,21 sec

Observing the teaching of content lesson was anticipated to provide useful insights about teachers' classroom behaviours and their usage of language to facilitate content learning, and based on such information, the researcher will be able to discern whether the use of language and patterns of engagement differs in any way to language classrooms.

When parents of learners opted not to sign the consent letters giving the researcher the clearance to include the learners in the recordings, which occurred over the first 6 observation days, contingencies have been made to move the learners concerned to another classroom of the same level. In Grade 1C, only 27 of 46 learners presented signed consent letters from parents, meaning that 19 learners had to be transferred to grade 1B and C classrooms.

In the Grade 3B classroom, 28 learners from a class of 39 brought forward signed consents. Similarly, the learners without consent to participate in the study were transferred to another section of the same grade.

In Grade 1A, the maximum number of parent consents was obtained and hence there was no need to transfer learners, as all the learners brought forward signed

consent letters. It is important to highlight that transferring of learners was made easy by the fact that the school had three two grade 3 classrooms, and moving the learners from the Grade 3B to Grade 3A and C could be completed without significantly disrupting learning and teaching. The transferring of the learners with no parent consent served two objectives, that is, as an ethical obligation and secondly, to ensure that the learners involved did not the miss lessons. This however had a potential to alter the natural composition of the class, as some of the learners had to be moved into another class, in some ways creating an artificial classroom setting. The observations and recording continued nonetheless, as this was viewed as having little effect on teachers' behaviours and classroom practices.

In addition to the data from the regular lessons, six intervention lessons formed part of the data collection, and is represented by Table 2. The English lessons were facilitated by a senior lecturer (Teacher D) from a local university, who was part of the research project, and the Sepedi HL lessons were taught by the researcher (Teacher E). The reversal of roles, that is, the 'researcher-as-teacher' allowed the researcher to experiment with various teaching strategies based on theoretical ideas very different from the regular teachers' beliefs.

Table 2: Breakdown of intervention lessons

Date	Lesson taught	Number of learners	Grade	Teacher	Duration of lesson
O4 March 2013	English FAL	46	1A	Teacher D	49 min,33 sec
04 March 2013	Sepedi FAL	46	1A	Teacher E	39 min,52 sec
04 March 2013	English FAL	39	3B	Teacher D	49 min,54 sec
05 March 2013	Sepedi HL	39	3B	Teacher E	46 min,3 sec
05 March 2013	English FAL	39	3B	Teacher D	59 min,37 sec
05 March 2013	English FAL	46	1A	Teacher D	52 min,49 sec

Relative to lessons observed in the regular data, in the intervention lessons, the number of learners with returned number of parents' consent forms was much higher, making the classroom size closer to the actual classroom size. Compared to

regular lessons, the lessons were significantly longer, to some extent exceeding the allocated time for each subject on the timetable. The classroom teachers were tolerant and patient enough to allow the researchers to exceed the allocated time but retrospectively this may have been problematic.

4.7.2.2 Teacher interviews and focus groups

In the study there were two sets of interviews, that is;

- ✓ One-on-one interview sessions which were recorded just after each lesson; and focused narrowly on soliciting information from teachers about the lesson they had just taught, and sought to gather from teachers, their goals and teaching practices, and their perceptions about the efficacy of their teaching practices.

- ✓ Focus group interviews were used to gather insightful information about varying aspects impacting on learning and teaching, including demographics and administrative aspects; as such, questions based on material resources in the school, and other contextual factors impacting their teaching.

The depth of discussions among the teachers was expected to help to energize each other to participate in the conversation. This will thus to make the data multi-voiced and capture multiple insights from the teachers. For the interviews, a semi-structured interview protocol was designed (attached as **Appendix 1**). The questionnaire used in this study included both open-ended (unstructured, free response) and closed-ended (structured, fixed response) questions.

During the focus group discussions, four teachers were participants, and the data collection instrument comprised of the following:

- Section 1: Demographics; focussing on information about teachers' background, qualification and experience including related information.
- Section 2: Literacy and language; focussing on teachers' views about how best to teacher literacy, including what constitute literacy and their own views about what should a literate child be able to do.

- Section 3: Debriefing and feedback on video recordings; where the focus was on engaging the teachers about the classroom data contained in the video data in order for the researcher and teachers to develop a common understanding of the data.
- Section 4: Questions on intervention lessons; this section aimed at getting teachers to study the footage from intervention lessons in order to establish what aspects of the teaching strategies do they consider doable, and those not doable, and in the context of the review confront their implicit theories of good practices and bad teaching practices.
- Section 5: Questions related to teachers' views about current teacher professional support and development models: this section aimed at establishing information from the teachers about their training, and levels of support they are receiving in order to effectively execute their roles in classrooms.
- Section 6: Questions based on teachers' knowledge of the literature on education quality in South Africa; questions in this section to enquire from the teachers about their knowledge of current and previous literature on education quality, and education administration in South Africa.

4.7.2.3 Joint video review sessions with teachers

In addition to the above, the researcher organised a joint video review session, whereupon selected video clips from the regular and intervention lessons were jointly viewed and reviewed by the researcher and the regular teachers. This enabled the researcher to come to a common understanding (with the teachers) about aspects of their teaching, their lesson objectives, and whether such lessons came close to what they intended to do.

4.8 Ethical issues relating to data collection

In order to obtain permission to the school and gather empirical data, there were ethical considerations to adhere to, including ensuring that learners and teachers participated voluntarily and are fully informed about the nature of research and its objectives.

The Department of Education (DoE), in relation to the schools, and the teachers concerned were also informed of this study. The teachers at the school were assured of the confidentiality of the information gathered from the interviews, and that their real names would be replaced by pseudonyms in the study.

Furthermore, the following were taken into consideration:

4.8.1 Importance of informed consent in research

In order to obtain consents from the research participants, requests for consent were designed and directed to the school principal as articulated in **4.7.1**, and classroom teachers (attached as **Appendix 4**), parents and guardians of learners (**Appendix 5**) whose classrooms were to be observed. Further consent was sought from the learners using **Appendix 6**. Consent for the research project had already been granted approval by the provincial Department of Education in Limpopo, through an application from the Human Sciences Research Council (on behalf of the consortium undertaking the NRF-funded national project). An approval had also been obtained from The Research Ethics Committee of the HSRC (attached as **Appendix 7**) for the year 2012 and 2013.

Both the parents/guardians and learners were bilingual because the letters were written in both English and Sepedi, the dominant language in the community. For learners who could not sign nor write on their own, the researcher and classroom teacher assisted them before the lessons. This was vital, because in research, it is essential to disclose sufficient information about the research, in order to make them fully aware of the scope and range of the research itself (Barnes 2003). Hence, in this study the school and teachers were reassured that the data collected was only going to be used only for the purpose of research, and that all identifying markers (such as the names of the schools or teachers) will be replaced by pseudonyms, and that a summary of findings will be made available to the schools.

4.8.2 Maintaining anonymity and confidentiality

The researcher undertook to ensure that the participants' right to privacy are adhered to. As a result, only learners and teachers willing to participate, and with written informed consent forms were included in the data gathering process. De Vos (2002:68) suggests that any information emerging from the research concerning the

research participants ought to be treated s confidential and accounted for under all circumstances. Key to maintaining privacy is not disclosing names of teachers, learners and research site, and by not showing the faces of children and teachers in video data that is used in presentations. In this study, anonymity means re-assigning names to the school and participants in order to ensure that the identity of the subjects (and the school) is not revealed.

4.8.3 Maintaining research credibility

The study design took in to consideration two central aspects which are key to the study's credibility. Firstly, the number of regular lessons observed was extended in order to gather feasible and usable sample of teachers' teaching. This data was essential, in order to observe teachers' practice, routines, patterns and other contextual factors impacting research subjects' behaviours, while minimizing distortions and building trust between research participants.

Secondly, teachers were drawn upon in the analysis of data, to gather from them their experiences and goals of what they were doing. This enabled the participants of the research to validate the findings of the study to be true to their own experiences. In this study, this was in the form of debriefing sessions held in the form of focus groups, while other sessions were organized for reviewing their video data.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the analysis of the data collected and compare some of the key findings emerging from the regular lessons and the intervention lessons. Transcripts of classroom data from both kinds of lessons will be analysed with the aim of showing in what particular ways the classroom interactions were similar or different. A specific focus will be on the types of questions teachers asked and the levels and quality of learner participation seen in the two kinds of lessons. The types of tasks that learners were required to perform and the forms of mediation provided will also be analysed. Finally, this chapter will also reflect on the teachers' insights arising from the interviews, focus group discussions and the joint video review sessions.

5.2 Findings related to the teacher profiles

The purpose of asking teachers about their background, training and professional experience was to discover how these factors have shaped their current beliefs about language and literacy learning and their classroom practices. This process enabled the researcher to obtain valuable insights from the teachers about themselves and their work experiences. Elbaz (1990) goes as far as to say that understanding teachers and their professional background enables researchers to establish a means of 'working with' rather than 'working on' teachers' conceptualisations.

A deeper understanding of teachers' experiences and professional backgrounds will also shed more light on how teachers' pedagogic practices and classroom behaviours are shaped by their academic and professional backgrounds.

Table 3 below summarises the profiles of the teachers:

Participant-teachers	Teaching experience	Mother tongue	Grade teaching	Allocated subject	Qualification of teacher	Period spent teaching at this school	Subject trained for at varsity
[1]Teacher A	N/A*	Sepedi	Grade 1	All subjects for the grade	B.Ed	N/A*	N/A*
Teacher B	15 years	Sepedi	Grade 3	All subjects for grade	B.Ed	Since 1998	English, Biology & Sepedi
Teacher C	[2]N/A**	Sepedi	Grade 1	All subjects for the grade	B.Ed	N/A**	N/A**
Teacher F	12 years	Sepedi (can also speak Venda)	Grade 3	All subjects for the grade	BA + PGCE	Since 2003	Xitsonga, Biology, English and Northern Sotho
Teacher G	17 years	Sepedi	Grade 3	All subjects for the grade	B.Ed	Since 2004	Sepedi, English, Geography

[1] Though one lesson of this teacher was observed and recorded, she dropped out of the project and did not attend any of the other lessons as an observer or participate in the interviews or focus group discussions. The principal later informed the researcher that this teacher was due to retire in a few months.

[2] The teacher was attending a training workshop during the interview sessions and could not therefore take part in the interview or focus group discussions. Some data for this teacher is therefore not available.

As can be seen, **Table 3** all the teachers are female, and are mother tongue speakers of Northern Sotho (Sepedi). In the foundation phase, teachers are allocated to a particular class and teach all the subjects to that class. The table also shows that the teachers had professional training related to language studies and or teaching, and other content subjects, such as Biology and Geography.

It was also established that the minimum qualification held by the teachers is a Bachelor's degree (B.Ed except for one teacher who has a BA (in Linguistics) and went ahead to do a postgraduate certificate in teaching (PGCE) to qualify as a teacher. All the teachers thus had formal training at university level. The teachers were also highly experienced, with the least experienced having 12 working years, while the most experienced had been working for 17 years.

The analysis of the classroom data will now be presented, beginning with the data from the regular lessons taught by the teachers in the school. The focus will be on the teachers' pedagogic practices and how they actualise the curriculum.

5.3 Analysis of the regular lessons

This presentation and analysis will draw excerpts from transcripts of the lessons in order to make visible the interactional pattern of the lessons, and participant roles in the learning process. The researcher also draws upon field notes taken during the actual observations to descriptively capture aspects that may not have been filmed or recorded in other ways.

5.3.1 Analysis of Sepedi HL lessons

One of the key factors which have an overwhelming impact on teaching and learning is the kind of questions teachers ask in their lessons. Looking at **Transcript 1** below, the teacher's questions show a consistent pattern, by following the 'what-question structure'. 'What-questions' are generally information-seeking, and according to Prabhu (1987:46) they refer to any activity involving a transfer of given information from one person to another, or from one form to another, or from one place to another, generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from or into language. Looking at the excerpt, teacher questions such as 'What do you see in this picture?' and 'What is that girl riding?'(in line 8), thus fall into this category of questions.

This was a Grade 1 Sepedi HL language lesson, and was planned ahead to be a shared-reading lesson. Before the lesson could start, the teacher instructed learners to move to the front of the classroom to make a huddle in front of the board. The learners were seated on the floor, while the teacher sat on a chair right in front of them holding an A3 picture story book, which is referred to by the teacher as the Big Book. The first part of the lesson involved the teacher taking the learners through pictorial illustrations on the cover page of the book, and the teacher randomly selected learners to report on whatever they see on the page.

Figure 2: Seating arrangement for the shared reading activity and the Big Book with Teacher C.

The task was fairly simple as the many of the learners could be seen with their hands outstretched vying for the teacher's attention for a turn to speak. The transcript below captured this lesson:

Excerpt 1 of **Transcript 1:** Teacher questions by Teacher C

Original utterance in Sepedi	**English translation**	**Non-verbal aspects and actions**
5 T: A re ye Morongwa, le bonang, bolelelang godimo…bolelela godimo.	*T:* *Let us go, Morongwa, what do you see? Speak louder, speak louder!*	
6 L: Ke bona ngwanenyana le mošimanyana ba swarane	*L: I see a girl and a boy holding one another*	The learner remains seated.

7 T: O re o bona ngwanenyana le mošimanyana ba swarane. Eh…. Mmanthopa e na o bonang?	*T:* *She says she sees a girl and a boy holding one another.* *Eh….Mmanthopa, what do you see?*	 Teacher points at a Learner.
8 L: Ke bona ngwanenyana o nametse mozwinki	*L: I see a girl on a swing.*	A girl rises up on her knees.
9 T: Ngwanenyana o nametse eng?	*T: What is she on?*	
10 Ls: mozwinki	*Ls: A swing*	Few Ls respond spontaneously
11 T: Ke nnete?	*T: Is that true?*	
12 Ls: Yes mam.	*L: Yes mam.*	
13 T: O mongwe a ka reng? .... A re ye.	*T: What can the others say? Let`s go.*	Learners raise their hands and click their fingers. T looks at a boy.
14 L: Ke bona mošimane a sepela.	*L: I see a boy walking.*	Raising himself slightly
15 T: O re o mošimane a sepela. Boela kua morago o tle o bone ga botse. A na ge le lebeletše mo ke kae na?	*T: You say the boy is walking? Shift backward so that you can see clearly. When you look here, what do you see?*	The teacher indicates with her hand that he must move a bit back.

In the excerpt, the teacher (T) distributes turns among learners (Ls) to report on what they see in the pictures. The teacher starts in line 5 by affording the first learner a turn to speak (in line 6), and in line 7 the teacher implicitly accepts the learners' answer by restating what she said, and restart the line of questioning to another a learner within the same line.

The teacher again implicitly accepts another learner's answer from line 10, who observed from the picture **'a girl on a swing'**, and the learner thus used the Sepedi transliterated term 'mozwinki' as an equivalent to the English concept 'swing.' In line 13, the teachers calls upon other learners to mention some of the things observable from the picture, of which the third learner respond in line 14, and following the same pattern as with others, there was no explicit feedback to the learner.

Continuing with the lesson, the same structure of teacher-question is still persistent. Learners are called upon to articulate what they see from teacher's book, with no writing taking place.

Excerpt 2 of **Transcript 1:** Teacher questions continued

21 T: OK, a re buleng letlakala. A ha.., ka mo go ka be go diega eng?	*T: Ok, let us open the page. Aha... What is happening here?*	T pages through book. Most Ls raise hands and click fingers.
22 L: Re bona mošimanyana o a kitima.	*L: We see a boy running.*	
23 T: Ba re mošimanyana o a kitima. Ke nnete?	*T: They say the boy is running. Is it true?*	All the hands go up.
24 Ls: Yes mam.	*L: Yes mam.*	
25 T: O mongwe e na a ka reng?	*T: What can another one say?*	All the hands go up.
26 L: Re bona mosadi a reila koloi.	*L: We see a woman driving a car.*	L starts spontaneously.
27 T: Mosadi ba re ka mo le ena o reila koloi. Go kaba go diegang? Mošimane o kitimela kae?	*T: They say that a woman is driving a car. What is happening? Where is the boy running to?*	A few Ls raise hands
28 L: Sekolong.	*L: To school.*	

As seen in lines 22 and 26, the learners could confidently and spontaneously handle the illustrations and pictorial aspects of the text.

It is vital to highlight that teacher questions are embedded in teachers' classroom practices, and therefore tend to reflect the teachers' own pedagogic approach and how they perceive learning. The teacher's questions as seen from the transcript make little cognitive demand on learners and the teacher seems to be aware of it, hence she rarely gives feedback to the learners. The teacher seemed to be operating on the basis that the learners already know what is being dealt with in class, as the knowledge forms part of the learners' everyday knowledge, hence there

is no need for explicit feedback. Consequently, the learners don't necessarily move beyond what they already know, which ought to be a key consideration in knowledge and academic literacy.

Prabhu (1987) has shown that though 'what-questions' may serve other conceptual purposes in the broader matrix of learning, they are by far the least cognitively challenging relative to questions involving children's reasoning capacity and those seeking to get learners to articulate their opinions, and their subject positions.

As the lesson continued, it became apparent the lesson was rehearsed. When the teacher resumed with the shared reading, she would hold the book with her hands outstretched, first reading one line, and the rest of the learners seated in a huddle following, line after line. The lesson being based on the 'Big Book', learners seated at the back of the group could not clearly see the print of the text, and thus simply followed the chanting of the ones who seemed to have learned the story by heart. As a result, there was no structured engagement with print. This was further complicated by the reality that big books were limited; in fact the teacher reported that only one is made available per class.

During the group reading, it was evident that the learners could handle simple texts, though the text itself made little cognitive demand on the learners. From this lesson, two insights were generated about teacher practices; firstly, it was apparent that discussion on the illustrations and other features of the book took far more time than was given to learners' engagement with text. Secondly, though the teacher was able to involve learners in answering simple questions, her pedagogic practices did not enable the learners to become independent readers. The teacher reported that, this is how she would usually handle her shared reading lessons.

At another level, far too much time was spent on repeating sentences, and, as a result, there was little opportunity for the teacher to engage the learners in structured reading and understanding of the text.

The second Sepedi lesson also captured the teachers' difficulties of engaging learners in decoding texts. This lesson involved another teacher in grade 1, also using a Big Book, titled **'Na Lapa ke eng?**' (*What is a family?).* In this lesson, the

teacher was modelling to the learners how to read the title of the book, which the lesson was based on.

Excerpt 1 of **Transcript 2:** **‘**focus on form’ by Teacher A

Original utterance in Sepedi	**English Translation**	**Non-verbal aspects and actions**
4 L: Na .. la .. pa .. ko ...	*L: What .. is fa .. mi .. ly .. at ...*	The learner reads as the teacher points to the words.
5 T: ke	*T: is*	
6 L: ke	*L: is*	The teacher looks at the learner as she (the teacher) says the word each time.
7T: ke	*T: is*	
8L: ke	*L: is*	
9T: ke	*T: is*	
10L: ke	*L: is*	
11T: ke	*T: is*	
12L: ke	*L: is*	
13T: ke	*T: is*	
14 L: ke	*L: is*	
15T: E tšere modumo wa eng? ... e	*T: Which sound does it have? ... it.*	The teacher points at the word in the book
16L: e	*L: it*	
17T: e .. ke .. ekwa .. e .. ke .. e .. ke, bona*, ke..	*T: it .. is .. listen .. it .. is .. it .. is .., look, is ..*	The learner nods

18L: ke	*L: is*	
19T: e	*T: it*	
20L: e	*L: it*	
21T: e ... ng. A re bale gape. A re ye Mašabela, nke o traye wena. A reye.	*T: What? Let us read again. Let us Mašabela, you try. Let us go.*	T points out a girl at the back, who gets up

What the teacher did was to break the sentence into smaller parts and focus on the phonetic aspects of the language of the text. In lines 5 to 14, the teacher instructs one learner to repeatedly articulate the Sepedi word 'ke', until the teacher is convinced that the learner has got it. This attest to the teacher's internalised notions of literacy learning and embedded in it seemed to be teachers' belief that learners best grasp language ritualistically and through routinized repetitions involving memorizations and recall.

This excerpt could be interpreted as an extreme form of phonics. The 'focus on form' in the lesson was so pervasive that the teacher delayed getting learners to negotiate the meaning of the concept 'family', which was the key concept in the text, till the end of the lessons once she was convinced that the learners can articulate individual units of the of the sentence **'Na Lapa ke eng?'**. The construct 'focus on form' is used here to recapture Long's description (1991:45–46) of a pedagogy where classroom instruction is limited to a narrow focus on discrete points of language (such as pronunciation, sound-letter correspondence etc.) in isolation, with no apparent focus on meaning, even in contexts where meaning-focussed engagements would result in affirmation of learners and better understanding of concepts.

It is only in line 45 that the teacher attempts to get the learners to negotiate the meaning of the concept 'family'. However, the logic the teacher uses to define the

concept falls short of getting the learners to understand 'family', as a sociological concept.

Excerpt 2 of **Transcript 2**: Negotiating the meaning of family

The teacher's approach to the concept is through articulating the roles of members in what would normally be a traditional family set-up, consisting of a father, mother and

Original utterance in Sepedi	**English Translation**	**No-verbal aspects and actions**
45T: OK, le a bona gore lapa ke eng? Ke mo geno ... m … papa, papa e lego tlhogo ya ka gae, tlhogo ya mobu, the head of the family, ke papa….and then gwa latela mang?	*T:* *OK, can you see what a family is?* *It is at your home... father, father who is the head of the family, head of the soil who is the head of the family, the head of the family who is the father.* *And then who follows?*	
46Ls: Mama	*L: Mother*	By a few learners.
46 T: Gwa latela mang?	*T: Who follows?*	
46 L: Mama.	*L: Mother.*	By a few learners.
47T: Gwa latela mma, mma e leng mothuši wa, wa papa, the helper. Mma ke mothuši, mola papa e le tlhogo ya lapa…mamago o thuša papa, o thuša papa ka eng? Ka go mo eletsa, ka go mo direla tsa ka mo lapeng….E bile ke moeletsi wa gagwe. Ge re le ka lapeng, re a eletsana, o la o fa mogopolo, o mongwe o fa o mongwe kgopolo….Re a kgopotšana, ge re etla go godiša bana. Wena, wena. ... Ranko e tla o dule mo. Batho ba ba go se theeletše ba tla dula mo pele. Nabile ba re lapa ke eng? Re bone mo ke eng? Ke papa. Le a mmona, a re boneng. Mpotseng mo, ke mang o? ... (pause)	*T:* *Mother is next, mother who is the helper of… of the father, the helper.* *Your mother is helpful, while your father is the head of the family; your mother is helping your father. She helps him with what?... by advising him, and by doing everything for him in the family. She is even his advisor.* *When we are at home we Advice each other. We remind one another in the growing up of the children.* *You, you Ranko come and sit here. People who do not listen will sit in front.* *By the way what is a family?* *We saw what is here? It is the father. Can you see him? Let us see?* *Tell me, who is this one here? ... (pause)*	Teacher talks fast and explains using the picture on the cover of the book she holds up. The teacher points to a desk at the front. Teacher points out a figure in the cover picture.

child. The teacher continues exemplifying the concept, by basing it on the premise that a family has to consist of the mother, father and a child, where the father acts as the 'head of the family' (in line 45),and the mother stereotypically becomes the 'helper' or 'advisor' to the father (in line 47).

Though using roles (as line 47) and participants (line 45-47) making up a family may be the most visual, this approach ignores that families varies, and limit learners' ability to flexibly understand the concept in its varied contexts.

The Sepedi HL lessons have shown a consistent pattern in teachers' routine and pedagogic practices, among others the overwhelming dominance of oracy during learning and teaching, with little or no writing taking place. Even at textual the level, repetitive reading is still a dominant feature in teachers' pedagogic practice, as observed in the lessons. Repetition may either be in the form of learners repeating after the teacher, or learners repeating a word or text until the teacher is convinced. This has lead the researcher to speculate that the use of repetition in classrooms has more to do with keeping learners preoccupied and busy, or engage in what Chick & Hornberger (2001) refers to as 'safe talk', which reassures teachers that something is taking place in classroom while in fact little learning is taking place.

5.3.2 Analysis of the English FAL lessons

Two English FAL lessons were observed in both grade 1 and 3.The analysis of these lessons is presented through the researcher's field notes and commentaries.

5.3.2.1 Teacher practices

The first English lesson observed was in Grade 1 and was facilitated by Teacher A. The lesson seemed to reinforce the pattern observed in the home language lesson, that is, the overwhelming dominance of oracy with little or no writing taking place. In the (English FAL) lesson, the teacher started the lesson with rhythmic chants of a song called '*Head and shoulders, knees and toes'* while learners touched their heads, shoulders, knees and toes, in-sync with the tune. The singing and gesticulation persisted over 3 to 4 minutes.

As the lesson progresses it became evident that the lesson was based on 'parts of the body'. The teacher instructs the learners; ***'Show me your head!'*** *with learners*

responding by saying ***'This is my head'*** *(with pointing gesture). The learners proceed to pointing action, showing their eyes and then ears, under the instruction of the teacher. The learners would then say out loud, '****These are my eyes'****, '****These are my ears'*** *and etc. until the teacher is convinced the learners have grasped the articulation. The teacher affirms, "****I want you to pronounce correctly".*** *The teacher then instructs the learners to repeat several occasions, this time with correct pronunciation, seemingly with teacher's emphasis on oral fluency and pronunciation.*

The lesson is rigidly repetitive and learners repeatedly say after the teacher, ***'this is my head…this is my shoulders … (sic).'*** *with the lesson lasting over 30 minutes. The lesson is not based on workbook, but the teacher draw learners' attention to a poster at the back of the classroom wall, with human body with labels of body parts.*

Field notes (5th Feb 2013)

The teacher's pedagogic routine can be characterised as following the five key steps:

- Firstly, the teacher would **'show':** The learners are shown something so that they understand the word, or sentence. For example, in the lesson, the teacher made use of part of the body as visual aids alongside the use gestures to explain nouns such as head, ears, and eyes, and so on.
- Secondly, the teacher would then **'say':** The teacher verbally presents the word or sentence, taking care to pronounce the word correctly.
- Then the learners **'try out':** herein, the learners try to repeat what the teacher is saying.
- Then afterward the teacher would **'model'** what was said again: The teacher does so by correcting the learners and by ensuring that they are pronouncing the words correctly.
- **Repetition:** Finally, the learners are made to repeat the sentences and individual word a number of times. Here the teacher used a number of methods for repetition, including group repetition, single student repetition and chanting to get the learners to repeat the word.

The teacher's pedagogic practices come close to what would be characterized as the 'direct method', where learners are immersed in L2 discourse with the expectation that they will inductively grasp the language, and thus naturally learn the L2 in the same they learn the first language.

The same teacher taught an EFAL lesson in grade 3. The fieldnotes below capture the teacher's pedagogic routines.

The teacher opened the lesson by directing learners to a comprehension reading text in the learners' workbook. A whole-class setting was used for reading-aloud. The teacher's approach involves asking the learners to read aloud as a whole class, with limited teacher input. The teacher only interrupted the chorusing of scattered voices of learners to correct them in pronunciation, to make a point about punctuation conventions. She makes few attempts to contextualise the text. As the learners proceed, only few voices start dominating with the rest of the class waning.

*The learners read; '**Thabo is three…he goes to the Green Tree Nursery School'**. The teacher interrupts and draws the learners' attention to a grammatical conventional error by saying '**Thabo is three. There is a full stop there'.** As the lesson progresses, the teachers continues with error correction until the whole text is completed, and repeatedly rereads the text up to four times.*

Fieldnotes (6th Feb 2013)

As seen in the lesson, the teacher's reading strategies in both L1 and L2 were consistent; much of the focus was directed on oral fluency and pronunciation with little interest in focussed engagement with the meaning of text. This is central because teaching learners with limited knowledge of L2 means the learners are drawing from a weaker language which they cannot easily rely on. This means that the teacher views comprehension as an automatic and mechanical process, which follows accuracy.

This is an additional indication that the teacher's teaching of reading literacy seemed to ignore that reading is not a natural process because reading does not only involves articulating words, but also includes learning new curricular knowledge. This makes language not only a tool of communication, but a 'vehicle for those new concepts' Glegg (2002).

This deliberate focus on discrete skills (such as pronunciation and punctuations) over meaningful and focussed engagement with texts as ‘goals of learning’ was pervasive in the teachers’ pedagogic repertoire and embedded in it in both L1 and L2. The teacher seems to have a limited range of teaching strategies, especially for reading.

After the reading exercise, there was a writing exercise in the form of dictation. This was the only form of learner writing observed during the entire period of the observations. In the task, three words are dictated to the learners to write in their scribblers, focussing on words with the sound ‘ee’ from the text. The chosen words were ‘three’, ‘street’ and ‘keeps.’

The dictation task however shows that learners were unable to fully grasp either the pronunciation or the spelling of key words in the text. Some of the learners struggled with frequently used words such as *‘street’* and ‘*tree*’.

As it shall be seen, for Learner 1, all the entries were wrong. The learner mispelt the spellings of the selected terms for the dictation task, by writing **‘*tee*’** instead of tree, ‘***shlereet***’ instead of street, and ‘***teree***’ instead of tree. In figure 1 and 2, the learners even mispelt commonly used words such as ‘three’ and ‘tree’ which one would expect to be far simpler.

Below are snapshots of the learner’s writing from the dictation exercise:

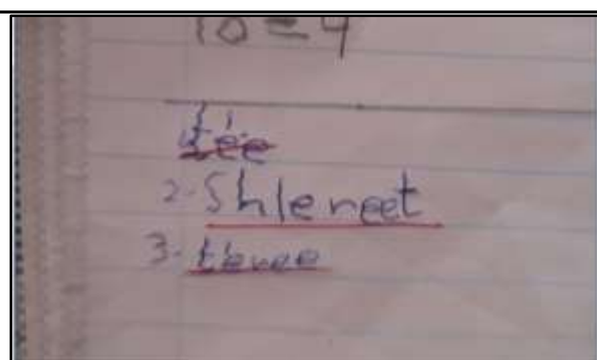


Figure 3: Learner 3 spelling with tree and street accurately spelt

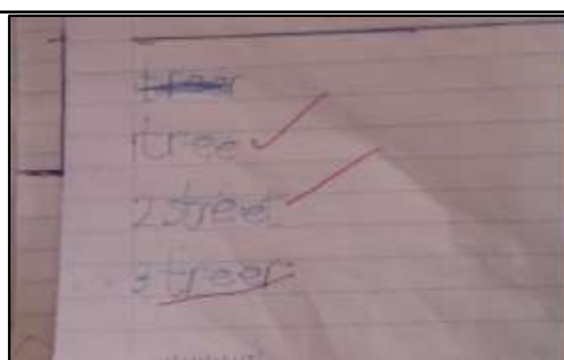
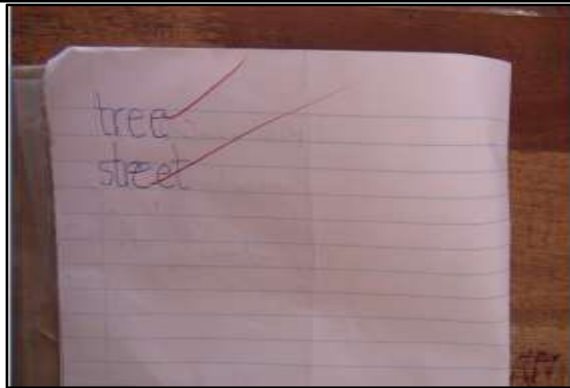


Figure 4: Learner with two correct and one wrong spelling

Most of the spelling errors are not only consistent, they are also systematic because, unlike random or guesswork attempts, they reveal the existence of an underlying

logical, though incorrect reasoning.These samples show that the learners are still unable to establish the sequencing of phonemic units making up the word as a whole, as notable in the graphemes, ‘tr’ in both the word ‘street’ and ‘tree’, and ‘th’ in the word ‘three’.



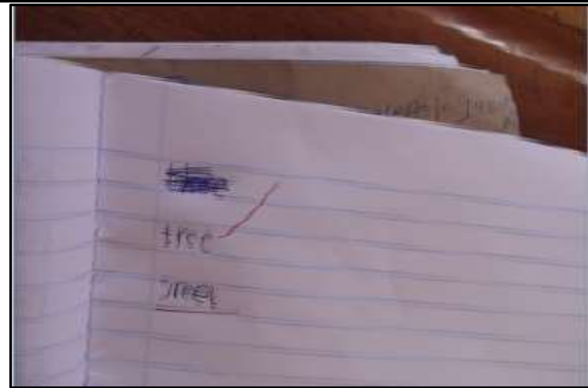


Figure 5 with learner with accurate spelling

Figure 6 with learner who mispelt the word street as ‘sreet’

Wade-Woolley & Sifel (1997) go as far as to hypothesize that reading-disabled individuals will usually have difficulty in any task involving parsing of phonological strings, which is evident in their inability to succesfully apply grapheme-to-phoneme conversion of both known and unknown words, which also affects their spelling. This failure to spell commonly used words such as ‘tree’, ‘street’ and ‘three’ point to the learners’ limited exposure to reading. As observed in the lessons, much of the reading predominantly involves chorusing and whole clsss recitation of text, with little engagement with meaning.

Considerable evidence has long existed to show that children's skills in segmenting words phonemically and their progress in reading are in fact, causally linked (in Hulme et al. 2005 whose argument is based on the view that phoneme awareness feeds into learners’ letter-sound knowledge,which then enables learners to read and then to spell).

5.3.2.2 Concept development during English FAL lessons

The two lessons raise profound questions about reading strategies, among others, the probable contentious one, being whether pronunciation and spelling can be taught explicitly as objects of study.

Cummins'(1991) through his 'iceberg-metaphors' has long argued that narrow focus on visible,quantifiable and formal aspect of language leads to the internalisation of surface features at the expense of less measurable aspects of profociency such as coding and decoding meaning of texts. By implication, Cummins' thesis suggests that an exlusive focus on discrete skills such as pronunciation and grammatical conventions as objects of study, especially in early literacy, are likely to result in epistemological impoverishment, and through them children's ability to make sense of new concepts and knowlegde is significantly lowered.

Table 3 below attempts to apply Cummins' four quadrants metaphor (1984) to the kinds of learner effort required in the regular lessons. Cummins' drew distinctions between Cognitively-Demanding versus Cognitively-Undemanding (a measure of learners' cognitive effort to meaningfully engage classroom instructional practices and tasks), and how such how engagements make varying demands on learners, both in terms of thinking and language. Using Cummins' framework, the kind of learning experiences exemplified in these regular lessons can best be captured by the table below.

By far the most demanding of the instructional practices from the EFAL lessons, was dictation, but within the broader scheme of language and literacy learning, is a very low-level activity and can only be placed in quadrant C. Classroom practices like pronunciation,dictation and chorussing are by nature language–specific and makes little cognitive demand on learners,and when teachers engage learners,they are mostly done undesirably through routinizations and repetitions. This constributes towards the impverishment of concept development and literacy growth in those classrooms.

Table 4: Cognitive effort of learners in EFAL lessons

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Cognitively Undemanding</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Context-embedded</td><td>A
EVERYDAY KNOWLEDGE
&
LOW ORDER LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS</td><td>C
●Rote recall and memorization
Incl. rythmic chants
●Naming parts of the body in group
●Pointing actions and
repeating after the teacher
● Chorusing
● Pronunciation of words

‘What-questions’; which demand little cognitive effort of learners.Langauge-specific tasks like dictation and spelling falls into this catergory.</td><td rowspan="2">Context-reduced</td></tr>
<tr><td>B</td><td>D
ACADEMIC/SCIENTIFIC
KNOWLEDGE
&
ACADEMIC LITERACY</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Cognitively demanding</td></tr>
</table>

The difference between quadrant C and A actitvities is that, quadrant A activities are embedded in human interactions, and learners can thus draw from each other’s experiences while in quadrant C, learners receive less or none of the contextual support to help them solve problems. However none of the activities in either A or C are cognitively demanding.

As seen in **Table 3**, Quadrant C is the area where most of the regular lessons are concetrated in. This quadrant is however is characteristic of low cognitive learning, and by far the least academic quadrant as there is minimal epistemic learning taking place

The epistemic impoverishment of both the lessons attests to the reality that teachers' operationalization of CAPS and the theory underpinning their pedagogic practices is misguided. This analysis points to the reality that there is little concept development taking place in the EFAL lessons, as no new concepts have been acquired by the learners from the learning experience.

5.3.3 Analysis of the Numeracy lesson: learning Numeracy through mother-tongue, Sepedi

The rationale behind the addition of a content lesson in the form of Numeracy, as articulated in **4.7** was to observe how complex and abstract concepts and mathematical operations are dealt with in the foundation phase using the mother tongue. There were two lessons observed in both Grade 1 and 3, and the lessons reinforced the notion that teachers misconstrue mother-tongue teaching of content lessons as language lessons in which they immerse learners in mother-tongue discourse, without any meaningful engagement.

This deliberate process of teaching the conversion of English to Sepedi numerals was observed in both Grade 1 and 3 lessons, in addition to chorus count from1 to 100 by learners. These lessons pointed to the reality that much of teachers' lived realities in classrooms, even in content lessons like Numeracy, demonstrate little evidence of joint intellectualization of content taking place in classroom. Even when attempted, learners are rarely engaged in rich mathematical discourse.

In a separate event, where the teacher sought to explain basic mathematical concepts such as 'even and odd numbers', the teacher made use of words such as 'paring and unpaired numbers' to describe the two. Though slightly related, the use of 'paring and unpaired' to refer to 'odd and even numbers' doesn't precisely capture the complexity of the concepts. The teacher was unable to creatively illustrate how is it that when one body is paired with another, the two makes an even number, and how this principle of paring is different when coming to odd numbers. This was further complicated by the teachers' own admission that there is no Sepedi equivalent to refer to 'odd and even numbers'. Mathematically, an 'even number' is any number that is 'evenly divisible' by two, while odd numbers refers to those which are not multiples of 2, and this operation can be demonstrated using common household or classroom resources. In the lesson, the learners were however unable

to emerge with this refined understanding of the concepts because of the teacher's poor content pedagogic knowledge.

In both Grade 1 and 3 lessons, reciting Northern Sotho numerals occupied the largest part of the lessons, as the learners were instructed to read-out loud. This was not only time consuming, but denied learners opportunities to meaningfully engage with mathematical operations.

Being in the foundation phase, both the Grade 1 and 3 lessons were taught in Sepedi language medium, the mother tongue of the learners. As a result, much of the classroom exchanges were centered around getting learners to understand the Northern Sotho equivalents of English numerals, and how to count up to 100 using the Sepedi language. This lesson interestingly shows that poor teaching can still exist even in LoLT medium of instruction. By implication, for meaningful learning and teaching to take place in classrooms, pedagogic content knowledge is key, in order to empower them with both knowledge of their disciplinary content and meaningful strategies of communicating the knowledge they have to their learners.

The inability to breakdown and mediate abstract concepts to learners' levels, through the use of analogies, visuals and practical examples adversely affect learners' abilities to meaningfully grasp abstract concepts, and to make sense of what they are being taught in classroom.

5.4 Analysis of the intervention lessons

5.4.1 Introduction

There were six sessions organised for this purpose consisting of three lessons for Grade 1 and another three lessons for Grade 3. Of the six sessions, four were for English FAL and were taught by Teacher D, while the two lessons were observed in Sepedi FAL learning and teaching wherein Teacher E was the lesson facilitator.

5.4.2 An analysis of the Sepedi intervention

The analysis will resume with the grade 1 lesson:

5.4.2.1 Analysis of the Sepedi intervention lesson in Grade 1

The first intervention lesson was taught to a grade 1 class (1A), and was based on a picture story with three picture frames, in the following sequence:

a) The first one with ***a dog chasing a cat***
b) The second picture frame, consisted of ***the cat climbing on a tree*** to escape from the barking dog
c) The third picture frame was ***a boy rescuing the cat from the tree***.

The page from the learners' book is reproduced below.

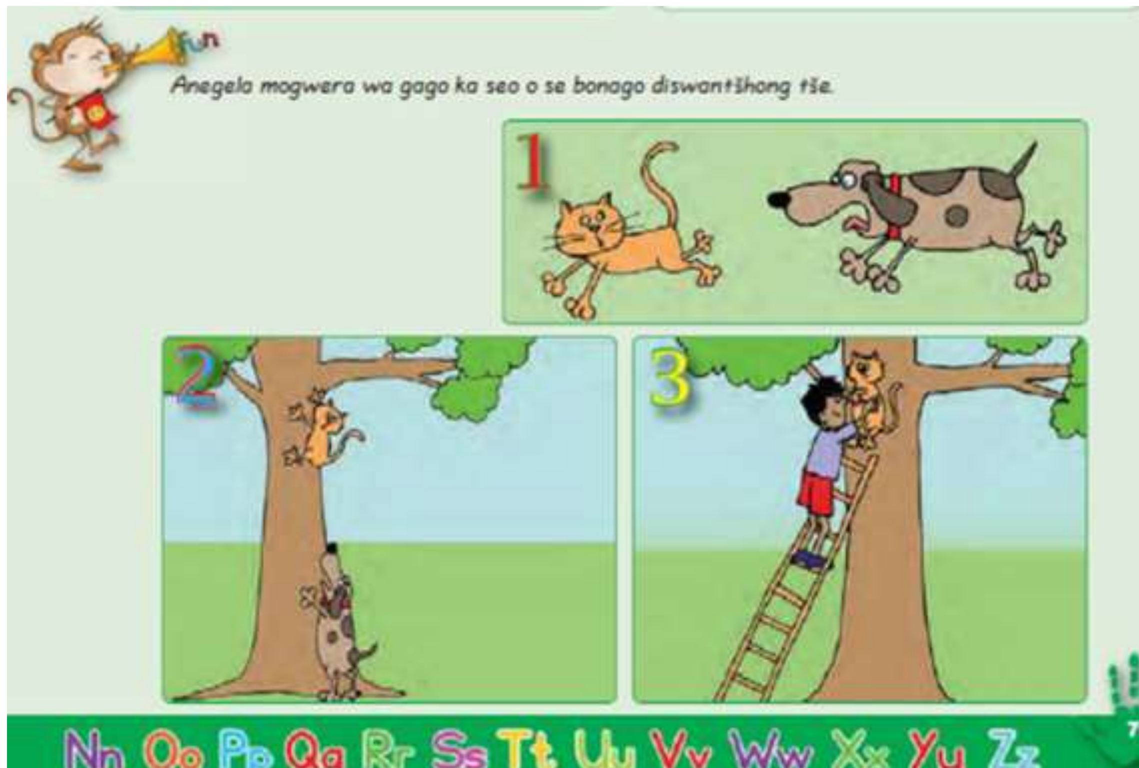


Figure 7: Picture story

The lesson was very interactive. The teacher first elicited oral descriptions from the learners, during which the learners would described the events in the picture frames using their words. After the description stage, the teacher invited learners to write those descriptions on the board in full sentences, using the picture story sequence as a guideline. The usefulness of the practice lies in demonstrating how teachers can integrate writing into their oral literacy practices, using age appropriate and inclusive materials which learners can easily relate with. This easy-to-follow material was thus used as an entry into writing development.

The transcript below shows how the last sentence in the story was jointly constructed.

Transcript 3: Joint co-construction of text by Teacher E

Original Sepedi utterance	**English translation**	**No-verbal aspects and actions**
43 Teacher A re lebeleleng seswanšho sa boraro… Ke eng seo se diragalago fao?	*Let's look at the third picture* *What is happening in the third picture?*	Learners raise their hand seeking teachers' attention
44 Learner Buti o fološa katse mohlareng…..	*'Buti' is getting the cat off the tree*	'Buti' is a Northern Sotho word to describe any 'male sibling'
45 Teacher O wa ifološa . O mongwe yena e kaba a bona eng?	*…he is assisting the cat to come down from the tree.* *Any other? What do you see?*	Learners raise hands for teacher's attention as the teacher pass on the turn to other learners.
46 Learner …..Buti o wa ifološa.	*…Buti is rescuing the cat…*	Another learner restate the initial statement
47. Teacher Wena o bona eng…?	*You, what do you see?*	Learners raise hands for teacher's attention as the teacher pass on the turn.
50 Learner …..Katse e thabile	*…..Katse e thabilie*	One learner responds.
51 Teacher (unclear)	*(unclear)*	
52 Teacher Ok, ke mang a ka re ngwalelang seo se diregogo mo seswanšhong so boraro? Ok, a re lebelelang motho yo a e fološago…ke mang yena?	*Who can write a sentence for picture* *ok, let's look at the person rescuing the cat…who is it?*	Learners and teacher focus on the picture in the text
53 Learner ……Ke buti	*….it is buti!*	Learners respond!
54 Teacher Ke buti goba mošemane	*Is it buti or mošemane ?*	The teacher tries to bring to the learners' attention the

akere. Le bona bjang gore ke mošemane?	 *How do you see that he's a boy?*	distinction between 'buti' which refers to 'a male sibling' and 'mošemane', which is a general term to refer to a 'boy'. Learners raise their hands seeking the teachers' attention.
55 Learner Re bona…ka..ka hlogo….Ka borokgo.	 *We see…by his head.* *….by his pants*	 One learner responded. Another learner asserted.
56 Teacher Re a kgona go ngwala mošemane? O dira eng mošemane Ke mang yena a tla re ngwalelang?	 *Can you write the word Mošemane?* *What is the boy doing?* *Who can write for us ?*	 [Mošemane: 'boy']
57 Learner (writing) O fološa katse <u>motlhareng*</u>	 *He rescues the cat from the tree*	 Learners write the sentence on the board The learner misspells the last word in the sentence.
58 Teacher Ke yona?	 *Is this correct?*	 One female learner raise hand with disapproval. The teacher invites the learner to come and write the correct sentence on the board.
59 Learner Mošemane-o-fološa-katse-mohlareng	 *The boy rescues the cat from the tree*	 One female learner comes to the board to write the sentence.
60: A re baleng mo a ngwadileng gona	 *Let us read what has been written then.*	 Pointing at the corrected version. Then the teacher invites learners to read the sentence on the board
   61 Learners:		

Mošemane-o-fološa-katse -mohlareng	*The boy rescues the tree from the tree*	Whole class read aloud from the board

In the lesson, the teacher's engagement with the learners occurred at three levels. Firstly, by elicitation, the teacher got the learners to describe the picture frames using their own words. Questions such as 'What is happening in the picture?' (in line 43) are asked and the turn is rotated among learners (as seen in lines 45 and 50). Even though learners to some extent restate the same points, the teacher provides a platform for learners to speak in the class, which increases their confidence levels and keeps them focussed.

Secondly, the teacher also draws upon learners' writing skills, by calling them to write sentences on the board. This was key, because it enabled the learners to make the connection between oracy and literacy, and begin to learn that writing is symbolic and meaningful, and that writing can be used to describe things. In lines 52 and 60, the teacher calls upon the learners to come and write the sentences describing the third picture frame. Notable in line 56 is that a learner writes "*Mošemane-o-fološa-katse-<u>motlhareng</u>"* with the last word wrongly spelt. The learners were able to spot the error, and one learner was called upon to help make up the final sentence with the corrected spelling, which was accepted by the rest of the class.

Thirdly, the teacher makes provision for peer learning, by allowing learners to draw upon each other's strengths. When learners struggle to successfully complete a sentence on the board, the teacher extends turns to other learners with only minimal input. The learners start peer-mediating each other and drawing upon each other's knowledge. A notable example, as already pointed out occurs in line 57, when peers help to correct the spelling of a word. This form of co-construction grants agency to learners to meaningfully shape classroom discourse.

In line 54 the teacher draws the learners' attention to the use of accurate vocabulary in texts, by pointing out that the image of a male in the picture frame is best interpreted as a boy (*mošemane*) than as a male sibling (as the word *'buti'* connotes).

5.4.2.2 Analysis of the Sepedi intervention lesson in Grade 3

The intervention in Grade 3 Sepedi was based on the same reading the Grade 3 Sepedi teacher used for the regular lessons, which was a short story titled ***'Kanegelo ya Makgolo'***. The lesson also followed the principle of immersing learners in writing activities using accessible texts in the learner workbooks. In this lesson, there was more focussed reading of the text, followed by learners interpreting the paragraphs making up the short story in order to rewrite the story sequence on the board.

The lesson was aimed at serving two essential functions in the lesson plan, that is, to understand whether learners can meaningfully make sense of texts through their own readings, and how this experience can be integrated in to writing development.

Firstly, three learners were assigned three paragraphs of the text to read, which they read fluently. The transcript below is an excerpt of the Sepedi intervention lesson, and exemplifies this:

Excerpt 1 of **Transcript 4**: Individual learner reading

Original Sepedi utterance	**English translation**	**No-verbal aspects and actions**
3 Teacher: Ke mang yena a ka re balelang temana ya mathomo... ja, O tla thoma ka temana ya mathomo, a re theeletšeng.	*T: Who can read for us the first paragraph...yes,..you will start with the first paragraph, Let us listen.*	One L puts up her hand. T asks her to read.
4 Ls: Ke..., ke ... ka fao ke ithutileng go, go bopa, go bopa dipitša tše di botše. ... Kgalekgale, mola ke be ke sa le yo monnyane bjalo ke ... k..ka wena ... Ke be ke dula le mme le tate mo polaseng. Re be re na le dikgomo le dinku tše dintši…Fela re be re dula kgole le bagwera barena. Go be go sa ... Go be go se na le yo	*Ls:* *That...that...that is how I taught myself to, to build, to build beautiful pots. ...* *Long long ago, when I was small ... like you, ...* *I was staying with mother and father at a farm.*	She stands up, picks up her book, holds it neatly and reads rather fluently.

nka bapalago le yena. Ke be ke fela ke bogela mme ge a bopa dinkgo.	*We had lots of cows and sheep.* *But we were staying far from our friends.* *There was ... There was no-one to play with.* *I used to watch my mother making calabashes.*	
5 T: OK, Dankie, eh ... o badile tema ya mathomo a kere? Ke mang ya ka re ballang ya bobedi?	*T: OK, Thanks, eh... she read the first paragraph, isn't that so. Who will read for us the second paragraph?*	

This kind of individual learner engagement with text was not observed in the regular lessons, as teachers predominantly opted for reading aloud and chorusing/group reading.

Secondly, beyond being able to read fluently in their mother tongue, learners, when instructed, were able to engage in sustained reflective talk with the teacher in the form of predictions and reformulations, thereby meaningfully engaging with the text.

Excerpt 2 of **Transcript 4:** Teacher-learner engagement in reflective talk about text

Original Sepedi utterance	**English translation**
31T: Bjatše go, go diregang ge a bopa nkgo ya gae?...Ke mang ya ka re bontshang gore go diregang?	*T:* *Now what happens when she builds her own calabash?* *Who can show us what is happening?*
32Ls: O ile a robetse pula ya thoma gona.	*Ls:* *While she was sleeping, the rain started falling.*
33T: O ile a robetse pula ya thoma gona, a kere? Gwa direga eng morago ga fao, nkgo ya gagwe ya …?	*T:* *While she was sleeping, the rain started falling, isn't that so?* *What happened then, her calabash….?*

34Ls: Ya fetoga leraga.	*Ls: It turned into mud.*
35T: Ya fetoga leraga. Ka morago ga foo gwa direga eng? ... Go diregileng ka morago ga fao? O ile a thakgala?	*T:* *It turned into mud.* *Then what happened... ?What happened then?Was she happy?*
36Ls: O ile a nyama.	*Ls: She was disappointed.*
37T: O ile a nyama, a kere? Mm…ge wena ntho ya gago e o e ratang e ka senyega, o ka se thakgale, a kere?	*T:* *She was disappointed, isn't that so?* *Mm... If something that you like can break, you will not be happy, isn't that so?*
38Ls: Eng.	*Ls: Yes.*
39T: Re tlo nyama ka mokana garena. Ei, o thibile go nyama a dirang ka morago ga fao?	*T:* *We will all be disappointed.* *What did she do after afterwards?*
40Ls: A thoma go bopa e nngwe.	*Ls: She started building another one.*

This excerpt exemplifies how teacher questions affect the kind of engagement that may take place in the classroom. In the transcript, directive questions, such as the one in line 31, asking learners to show understanding of what they have read makes learners not only enables learners to read reflectively but to start engaging texts for meaningful purposes. This kind of question not only requires oral skills, but draws upon learners' ability to decode texts.

In this lesson, the teacher's role was largely facilitative and consistently drew input from the learners to get them to reflect on various aspects of the text, including characters in the story, events in the story and the sequence of events shaping the story. In this way learners started to use their own voice to describe what they have read in the text, and describe how the story evolves after each event (as in lines 32, 34, 36 and 40), and also use their own imagination to predict things based on their reading of the text.

After the reading activity, the teacher deliberately planned a writing activity during which he solicited insights from the learners on the picture story, to allow the learners to establish facts, events and scenes, which the learners incorporated into their production of texts. The move to draw learners into the co-construction of a text was empowering, because it enabled them to make critical decisions in the writing process about what information to include, and which one was less significant to the overall meaning of the text being written.

Excerpt 3 **Transcript 4**: Learner writing on board

Original Sepedi utterance	**English translation**	**Non-verbal aspects and actions**
55T: Ke mang a ka re ngwalelang lona... Makgolo o bogela mmagwe, O.... Makgolo, ...	T: *Who is it who can write it for us? Makgolo is watching her mother. She watches her ...Makgolo. ...*	
56 Ls: Makgolo o bogela mmagwe	*Ls:* *She watches her mother*	T calls L, who moves to the board, and receives the chalk to write the sentence: Makgolo o bopela mmagwe.
57T: A bopa...?	*T: While building...?*	
58Ls: Letsopa.	*Ls: Mud pot.*	
59T: A bopa letsopa...A re mo thuseng go le feleletša.	*T: She builds the mud (pot). Let us help her to complete.*	
60Ls:	*Ls:*	L writes on the

A **bepa** letsopa	*She builds mud pots.*	board: '**a bepa letsopa'** with the Sepedi verb 'bopa' wrongly spelt.
61T: OK, ke yona.	*T: OK, it is right.*	
62Ls: Yes, ng..ng.	*Ls: Yes….yes....yes.*	
63T: Ke yona?	*T: Is that right?*	

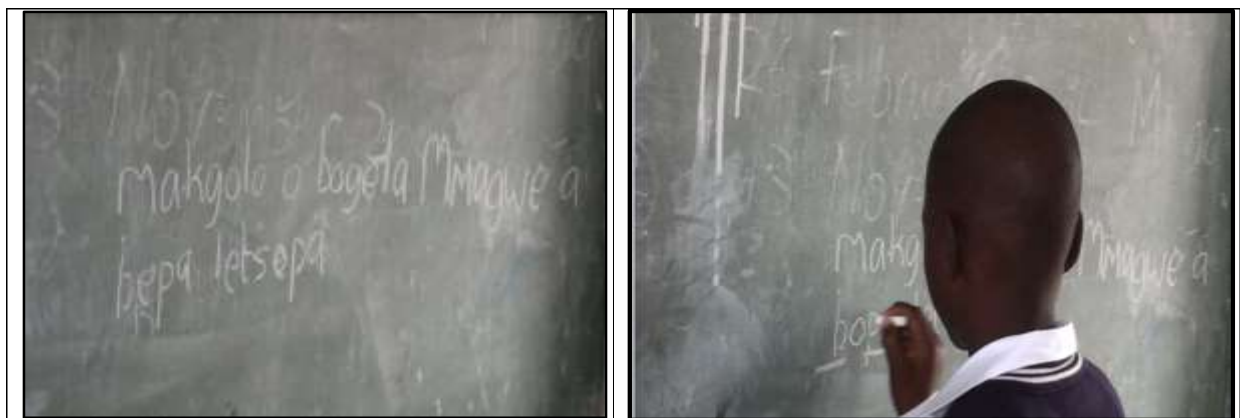


Figure 8: Picture capturing an instance of peer-correction

Continuing from line 60, where a learner wrongly spelt the Northern Sotho verb '**bopa**', as '**bepa**', the picture above captures an instance of peer-correction as a powerful tool for learning. This instance shows that democratising access to the board, and talk in the classroom enables learners to engage in risk-taking activities and thereby becoming free to experiment and participate in the learning process.

The teacher's role was largely facilitative, and judgements about whether a word or sentence is wrong or right (and error correction in both reading and writing) were negotiated by the teacher and learners. Though much of the lesson is spent rereading and writing down ideas from the story, in-between there are discussions about the learners' writing on the board.

In such a learning environment, both the teacher and the learners begin to act as participant readers, treating everyone's writing seriously, and offering chances to discuss writing at all stages of the composition process, as pupils learn to appraise their own and each other's writing.

This session enabled regular teachers (who were observing the lesson) to see that learners can and will take initiative, write meaningfully and with elaborate syntactic sentences when given opportunities in the classroom. In addition, teachers may have seen that errors do not have to be dealt with punitively, but that error correction can be integrated as part of their pedagogy, and effectively part of the learning process.

5.4.3 Analysis of English (FAL) intervention lessons

There were four EFAL intervention lessons (two each in grades 1 and 3) were taught by Teacher D. The lessons were largely exploratory as the teacher, being totally new to the learners, had no prior knowledge of what learners were capable of doing. This meant that the teacher had to tentatively explore learners' proficiency levels in the act of teaching.

For instance, in the grade 1 lesson, the teacher started the lesson with a simple rhyme only to find that the learners already knew the rhyme, and the based on this understanding, the teacher progressively converted the rhyme into a literacy practice, and a learning opportunity.

Transcript 5: ABCD Rhyme with Teacher D

Original utterance in English	Non-verbal aspects and actions
1 T: I am first going to teach you a song….do you like singing?	
2 L …………………………..	No affirmative response from the learners, though some nod their heads.
3 T Ok, let me teach you how to sing…I will sing and then you will sing after me…okay.	
4 L Yes…	Whole class response

5L Alright…*Come little children come to me, I will teach you ABC ABCDEFG HIJ K LMNOP LMNOPQ RST UVW XYZ*	Teacher writes on the board The learners join in the singing. The teacher is surprised.
4T Do you know this song? Oh…you know the song! So, I am going to write the song here. *Come little …….*	Many of the learners knew the ABC part, and thus persistently nodded. Teacher start writing on the board: '*Come little…..'*
5 T What must come here?	
6 L ….'children'	One learner softly mentions 'children'
7T Yes….children What must I write next....? *Come little children, come to me. I will teach you ABC ABCD EFG HIJ K LMNOP LMNOPQ RST UVW XYZ*	The teacher then completes the sentence Scattered voices of the learner started singing, with the teacher writing the rhyme on the board.
8 T Who can show me where is 'B'? Do you know?	
9 L…………..	The learner comes to the board and places his finger on the letter B
10 T Is she right..? is she right? Ok, you stay here, come and show me 'B'	
11 Ls: Yes, ma'am…yes ma'am!	

The teacher was keen on observing the learners' comprehension and oral production. Learners were generally able to understand, because the teacher spoke slower than usual, and gesticulated more.

The teacher then instructed learners to think of words they know beginning with a specific letter (or speech sound) which tapped into learners' phonological awareness in a more meaningful and integrated way.

In another Grade 1 lesson, the lesson invited the learners to come and write their names on the board. It was surprising to see that most learners could do so, even if their names were quite long. She then asked learners to identify names beginning with a certain sound like 'm' or 'p.'

As exemplified by the lesson, teachers don't need textbooks to begin teaching phonological awareness, because children come to school comfortable with their names which could then become key entry points into literacy learning. The learners get to see that writing is symbolic, and that letters stand for sounds in their names. Furthermore, such a learning experience could make learners start thinking about sounds, letters of the alphabet and words in a more meaningful way.

The use of learners' knowledge (of how to write their names) makes teaching literacy learning personal, since this enables teachers to tap into learners' personal experiences, transforming their knowledge about sounds in their names, into letters in their months of birth (as in a grade 3 lesson) , and knowledge about themselves into meaningful learning experiences.

This was also exemplified in the Grade 3 lesson, this time using learners' birthdays. The teacher brought learners to the board to write their names and their birthdays. The teacher then asked the class to determine learners which of them was the oldest, and which one was the youngest. Learners generally found it difficult to answer such questions, largely because the cognitive effort involved was quite high.

A question such as 'Who is the oldest?' makes great demands on the learner, largely because it calls for comparing the birthdays of four or more children and calculating the correct answer. The teacher is required to engage in a great deal of syntactic elaboration to mediate this question. As the learners' competence in English is quite weak, many learners do not understand the question. Noting that the learners are unable to respond to the question, the teacher invites one student who understands the question to explain it to the rest of the class in Sepedi, their mother tongue. A part of this interaction is captured in the excerpt below.

Transcript 6: Home language as a resource for EFAL learning

Original utterance	**Non-verbal aspects and actions**
1 T Who understands my question?	
2 L Yes	Some of the learners affirmatively respond.
3T I want you to explain in your language to her what I'm asking…I am asking you to tell me….we've got four birthdays and four names…correct? I want to know who was born first and who was born last…That means who is the oldest and who is the youngest? Now, they don't understand the question. Can you tell them in your language…in Sepedi…what I want? Stand here and tell	The teacher points to the board where the names of four students along with their birthdays are written.
4 L……………..(Not audible)	The learner stumbles, and the teacher passes the turn to another learner.
5 T Ok…Tell…in your language, tell them.	
6 L ***Ba re o monyane ke mang?…Ke mang a belegweng pele, le wo a belegeng mafeleng ke mang?*** (The question is who is the youngest? Who's the one born first, and the one who followed last?)	A female learner stands up and interprets the question to the rest of the class in Sepedi
7 T Did she say it correctly?	
8 Ls: Yes!	
9 T You all understood her?	
10 L: Yes!	Learners respond

This excerpt demonstrates how L1 can be a resource for learning and understanding. Schweers (1999) goes as far as to suggest that the teacher should integrate L1 into L2 classes to improve classroom dynamics, and states that starting with the L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learner's lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves (p.7). Through this teacher intervention, learners who are slightly ahead begin be agents in peer-mediation by assisting their peers to understand the English utterances of the teacher.

In contrast to the regular lessons, where chorus answers and repetitive read-alouds dominate, the teacher of the intervention lessons needed to demonstrate how teachers can use the resources that learners bring (such as the knowledge of their home language and their ability to write their names and birthdays) to bring about learning.

In the following excerpt, we see the teacher helping learners to understand a word in their text 'sorts' in a lesson on a visit to the library. The text contained the sentence 'There are all sorts of books in the library.'

Transcript 7: Negotiating the meaning of 'sort'

Original utterance	Non-verbal aspects and actions
79. T: Who can read it? Try! It doesn't matter if you don't get it right. It's OK. Just try!	
80. T: Who wants to try? Do you want to try? ... Come! Try! ... Alright, try reading it. Come! ... They ...	Teacher trying to encourage learners.
81. L: They... (inaudible)	
82. T: Yes, you're reading it very nicely. Read it loudly.	Teacher moves closer to learner to hear better
83. L: They ...	
84. T: They ... they... What is this word after 'They'? What is the word after 'They'?	Teacher points to learner's page. One learner has their hand up, the majority are mumbling amongst each other.
85. Ls: ... were ...	
86. T: Yes! They were ... excited ... to see all the books. ... They were excited to see all the books.	Learners each keep on trying to read at their own pace.
87. T: OK. Who is going to read the next line? ... Next one -- it begins there. ... This one. Who's going to read that? ... Will you read the sentence? ... From here ... Can you read?	Teacher points to the next sentence. The learners are not engaging much with the teacher.

88. T: OK. Anyone who can read that? ... There.... There... yes.	2 learners raise their hands
89. L: ... all ... (inaudible) ...	Learners each try reading at own pace.
90. T: ... all ... What is the next word? There were ... there were all...?	Learners each try reading at own pace.
91. Ls: There were all sorts of books.	Learner raises her hand and teacher points to her to read.
92. T: There were all sorts of books...OK, I'm going to write this word here.	Teacher writes 'sorts' on chalkboard.
93. T: What is this word?	
94. Ls: Sorts.	
95. T: Sorts. What is the meaning of 'sorts'? ... What is the meaning of 'sorts'? ... There were all sorts of books. ... There were all sorts of books. ... What does it mean?.. What is the meaning of 'sorts'?	Teacher gestures to imply lots/many. Learners do not engage and keep their heads down
96. T: OK. You go into a vegetable shop. Right.	
97. L: Yes.	
98. T: If you go into a vegetable shop, what do you find in a vegetable shop?	A learner raises his hand and the teacher walks over to him. More learners start to raise their hands. Teacher walks around selecting learners to answer the question.
99. Ls: Vegetables.	
100. T: What…vegetables? What type of vegetables? Give me the name of one vegetable.	
101. L: Tomato.	
102. T: Toma ... tomato. OK. ... Yes.	
103. L: inaudible	
104. T: Pineapple? Yes. Pineapple.	
105. L: Apple. ... (inaudible other options)	
106. T: Apple. ... Banana. ... Pear. ... Yes, pear ... right. What other ... vegetables, and fruits? Huh?	
107. L: Fruit.	
108. T: Fruit. OK. ... Oranges ... yes. ... Spinach... Yes.	
109. L: Mango.	
110. T: Mango. OK. So, when you go ... When you go to a vegetable and fruit shop, you'll find all sorts of vegetables ... Understand the meaning of 'sorts'?	
111. Ls: Yes.	
112. T: What's the meaning of 'sorts'? Can you tell me?	Teacher waves arms asking if anyone can answer the question. Teacher spreads arms open suggesting many.
113. T: Can somebody tell the meaning in Sepedi? ... All sorts of vegetables. ... Carrots, bananas, spinach, oranges, uh, pineapples, all ... all sorts. ... OK? ... So what is the meaning of	

‘sorts’?	
114. T: Do you know this word?	The teacher writes ‘kinds’ on chalkboard.
115. T: ... all kinds.	
116. T: All kinds of vegetables. ... Do you know the word ‘kinds’? ...	Teacher points to word on the board.
117. Ls: No.	
118. T: OK. It means: ‘many different things’. OK. Like you have many different vegetables and fruits, you also have all sorts of books ... many kinds of books. OK.	Teacher spreads arms open suggesting many.
119. T: So, you can have books about games. ... You can have books about songs. ... You can have books about stories. ... You can have books about ... uhm ... sports – different kinds of sports like soccer, rugby. ... You can have books about the world – all the countries. OK.	
120. T: So, you can have many, many kinds or sorts of books. ... OK.	Teacher collects book and points out the next sentence. Some learners raise their hands. Other learners read at own pace.

From line 93 onwards, the teacher begins a discussion with the learners on the word ‘sorts’ and by using the example of a vegetable shop and many kinds of fruits and vegetables found there, tries to get learners to understand the meaning of the term ‘sorts.’ The teacher tries to make the concept accessible to the learners by exemplifying it in such a way that learners may easily relate with it. This kind of mediation is based on the teacher’s ability to get learners to draw upon their existing knowledge frameworks to discern the possible meaning of the term.

5.4.4 Analysis of interview data

5.4.4.1 Introduction

This section reports on some of the key insights that emerged from the focus group discussions and joint video review sessions. There were three one-hour sessions organised with teachers to reflect on different aspects of the research. The first meeting aimed to gather insights from the teachers about their teaching and the principles influencing their teaching, including their views about language and literacy learning. In this session only the teacher who taught the regular lessons. The

second session was aimed at dealing with the information for the teacher profiles, namely, their qualifications and teaching experience.

The third was the focus group discussion involving three teachers who observed all the lessons (regular and intervention lessons) and the two teachers who did the actual teaching in the regular lessons. In addition three junior researchers from the NRF team were also present. Overall, five regular teachers participated in the interview sessions. It was in this session that the selected videos we jointly viewed and reviewed.

In this section, some of the insights that emerged from the discussions are reported and commented on.

5.4.4.2 Teacher reflections on both regular and demonstration lessons

When teachers were requested to reflect on both the regular and intervention lessons, the two regular teachers focussed initially on phonics. What underscored their reflections was their insecurities with the learners' poor grasp of phonics, and how best they can assist their learners.

Reflecting on the intervention lesson based on the principle of integrated phonics in which the teacher used the learners' names as an entry point into phonics learning, the first teacher outlined her reservation against this model.

What I understand is that in first grade is that the learners are exposed to the Sepedi sounds and English sounds…sometime (in the lesson) you said who can read something on the board….Those learners can't read English now.

Teacher C (21 February 2013)

This teacher actually believes that learners at grade 1 are unable to read and therefore they limit their teaching to focus on individual sounds and words. They have very low expectations of learners and this obviously influences their perceptions of what their learners can and cannot do.

This teacher further commented that:

"….and again they cannot write it. We don't have the sound [c] in Sepedi as in English; we only have [k]. So, we don't teach the sound early (in grade 1)…because

once you teach them the sound, learners won't be able to differentiate between the two."

Teacher C (21 February 2013)

The teacher's comment reveals that L1 and L2 should be kept strictly apart and the teaching and learning of the two languages are isolated, separate and discrete processes. She assumes that teaching such letter-sound correspondence across two languages to children is a hindrance to their effective learning of the sound in both L1 and L2. The underlying assumption is the teacher's belief that the learning of L2 interferes with the development of L1 resulting in confusion for the learners.

To avoid the complications associated with variations in sound-letter correspondence, the teachers do not let the children engage in writing activities in grade 1. In this regard, the teacher said:

> *"……So that is why at the first term, they don't write. We usually do it orally."*

The reality however is that bilingual children mix languages, which is not due to genuine confusion, but to their ability to use all their languages as resources. In fact, in writing their names on the board, the children used the letters 'c' and 'k' correctly. However, teachers tend to ignore this kind of evidence and adhere to their rigid views about what should and should not be done in teaching learners about sound-letter correspondence. The fact that these children are already using these sounds and letters as part of their language repertoire is not recognised. It is obvious that much deeper discussion of this issue and more interventions are called for to enable teachers to shift their views.

This teacher also criticised the intervention teachers for not writing within the lines that were on the board and for not training the learners to stay within these lines when they invited them to write on the board. This was seen as a serious shortcoming in the intervention teachers' approach to the teaching and learning of writing. The teacher argued persistently that in earlier grades, emphasis ought to be on getting the learners to write between the lines, which are an argument that has been heavily criticized by the emergent literacy paradigm. This suggests that in the view of some teachers, literacy is brought about by mastery of the technical aspects

of writing such as correct size and shape of letters, spelling, punctuation and neat handwriting.

Such a technicist approach has the potential to not only suppress engagement with literacy as a meaningful practice, but it misses the point about the value of writing as a reflective, metacognitive tool (Bearne 2007). This suggests that ideologies about mechanical processes of literacy are entrenched in teachers' practice; and therefore they have to be convinced of the importance of developing writers rather than just teaching the skills of writing (Bearne 2007) in their literacy teaching approaches.

On the positive side, the regular teachers were full of praise for Sepedi intervention lessons, for the facilitator's ability to engage learners in writing extended and elaborate texts. The teacher's interpretation of the learners' writing was still within a form-focused view of language however, as she further continued by saying:

"My children…they now know that a paragraph is made up of sentences. After writing a paragraph you start a new sentence with a capital letter……the use of commas and more importantly that a paragraph must have a heading. They also learned that a story must have the main idea."

Teacher B (21 February, 2013)

Though the teacher seemed to acknowledge the importance of the conventions of writing like commas, full stops and both small letters and capitals where they belong, she also made a profound remark about the importance of allowing learners to engage in ideas, both orally and through writing in literacy learning.

The same teacher also said quite reflectively:

What I noticed was…you were so patient. You tried to involve all the learners. You were interested in all the learners to take part in your lesson (sic) to ensure that that learners understand…and if there are learners who don't understand, you made things simpler, you made it simpler for them to understand. That's what I noted…and that what I learnt from you…and that's what I want to practice.*

- *Refers to the lesson facilitator in the Sepedi HL, intervention lesson

Interview data (21 Feb, 2013)

This teacher's reflection about this aspect of the intervention lesson suggests that the teacher's principles underlying her teaching have evolved somewhat, and she wished to experiment with some of the pedagogic practices demonstrated in the intervention lesson.

When asked about what aspect of the intervention lessons they would most likely adopt, the teachers noted that they have learned that writing 'need not be delayed' to the second or third quarter, and they will definitely seek to bring forward the teaching of writing. This may be seen as a very positive outcome of the intervention lessons.

5.4.4.3 Teacher experience in the use of classroom materials

During the focus group and joint discussion sessions, there was a general consensus among the teachers that the current books they are using for the foundation phase are not adequate and not satisfactorily designed, and therefore not appropriate in the foundation phase. One teacher remarked that:

"As educators we have no materials. Let's say the reading books…like now, we depend on the green books which are supplied by the government. Those are the only books we have…No reading books! In that book it is just activities….There is no material you can give to a child and say read this and explain what is happening in this story. So, learners end up not being able to relate (sic) a story, because they have never read [an extended writing before]."

Teacher F (22 May, 2013)

According to the teachers, the current workbooks provide few opportunities for reading for pleasure, unlike children's story books, which used to be at the core of language learning. At the heart of teachers' dissatisfaction with the current workbooks is design of the workbooks, which the teachers outlined as a structured set of activities, with each activity covering a two-page spread. This was intended to provide work for one or two lessons but could take between a day or two, or up to a week to satisfactorily finish.

The teachers questioned whether the content has to be covered in the prescribed order, since there are pre-set weekly activities for each week, month and the quarter. This teachers' argument seems to reflect their collective understanding that learning

is not only about ‘planned’ activities, and emphasized the need for flexibility to enable teachers to work at their own pace depending on the classroom conditions.

In addition to the above teacher remark, one of the teachers decried the burden of having to contend with materials which are poorly designed, which is further compounded by the fact that they (teachers) have received little training on how to use those materials, including workbooks. She noted that:

“*There are too many people outside classrooms telling teachers and educators what they need to teach in their classrooms…They order…they tell us what to teach…when to teach…and how to teach! We teach it, whether we think it is the right material to teach or not, we have to teach it.”*

Teacher F (11th Feb 2013)

More profoundly, one teacher argued that current materials being used limit their ability to creatively carry out their jobs, because they have to meet their weekly targets, and have little time to generate sufficient materials to compensate what they consider as ‘design flaws’ of the current materials. This also highlights the mismatches between teachers (as practitioners) and material developers, over a range of challenges to teachers with regards to the underlying assumptions, expectations and goals of the learning process. This is clearly evident in the mismatch between what teachers consider relevant for their teaching as opposed to those that material developers and policy makers consider educationally appropriate.

5.4.4.4 Teachers’ beliefs about the pedagogic significance of code switching

For many bilingual teachers, especially those speaking English and an African language, the unintended creeping of elements of one language into another is very common in their linguistic repertoire. Teachers reported that they code switch for varying purposes, for instance, when they cannot find an appropriate expression or word in the target language.

When confronted about their code switching practices in the classroom, they however argued that instead of code switching, they ought to paraphrase, and reformulate challenging questions. The teachers insisted that learners have to be challenged, as opposed to the usual ‘dumbing down’ as a result of excessive code

switching in EFAL lessons. A teacher without knowledge of the learners' L1 (possibly referring to the EFAL intervention teacher) was able to get the learners to engage in challenging tasks without code switching. The basis for the teacher's criticism of code-switching was however based on a concern for linguistic purism; they asserted that only English should be used in the EFAL lessons and instruction has to be only in English.

Asked about the pedagogic significance of code-switching in their teaching, and whether CAPS permits the use of code switching, the teachers seemed to lack clarity. One of the teachers responded by noting that they would mostly encourage other teachers to rather simplify by reformulating instructions or paraphrase when learners have difficulty in understanding instructions in English. Embedded in this argument was the belief that the continued use of Sepedi in English lessons has the potential to destroy children's motivation to learn English, *"because they (learners) can easily rely on teacher's code switching"* (*Teacher B during interview*).

In fact one of the teachers asserted that *"we work with children from difficult backgrounds, where there is little English or writing, we therefore have to make sure that the learners speak and write repeatedly"* (Interview data, 11 Feb 2013). This suggests that teachers view routines such as repetition as key in dealing with children's needs. These understandings have their origin in teachers' beliefs, and are embedded in their practice, and outlook. Inevitably, 'dominant theories of the past (such as behaviourism) continue to operate as the default framework affecting and driving current practices and perspectives.

5.4.4.5 Teachers' understanding of assessment

When asked about some of the recent systematic and international studies currently being done in the country to measure educational quality, and administration of education in the country, teachers only seemed to be aware of the Annual National Assessment (ANA).

When further probed about the central findings of the reports, and their views about the administration of the ANA tests, the teachers argued that learners were not given sufficient time to complete their tests. They also seemed more focussed on the administration of the test than on its value as a diagnostic tool. This was an

important consideration in the light of the DoE's view (2011) that assessment exercises such as ANA were about holding schools (and teachers) accountable for their results, and tracking changes in performance.

Arguably, because teachers administer the ANA tests and are involved in marking them, the DoE envisages that such teachers will be exposed to good testing practices and appropriate standards leading to internally-driven changes in classroom practice. The DoE expects that teachers can also see, at first hand, the strengths and weaknesses of their learners, and hence come to understand the efficacy of their own teaching. The legitimate expectations on teachers could therefore be that the content and focus of the classes ought to be informed by their school-based analysis of the ANA scores and performance of learners. Such an analysis could then be used to bring about change in the teaching of reading and writing and other competencies. This however cannot take place, if little meaningful reflection on the ANA results occur in schools.

5.4.4.6 Teachers' views about current teacher training models

It emerged during the focus group discussion that the teachers think that the 'current workshop model' of teacher support is not sufficient. The basis of the teachers' view is the belief that workshops don't actually teach teachers how to actually do about the business of teaching the (new) curriculum, which is essential for teacher professional development. The workshop model they referred to tends to be mostly in the in the form of one-to three-day workshops at district level to train teachers.

Traditionally, the lack of success of any curricular innovation is generally attributed to the failure of the teachers to implement curricular innovations in tune with the intentions of the developers. This approach is misleading; at best it assumes that the teacher's goals are more or less similar to those of experts, policy makers and developers of teaching and learning workbooks.

Current understanding of teacher professional development shows that for meaningful change in the classroom, curricular innovations have to be embraced by teachers first, rather than imposed upon teachers. Put differently, the complexity of the factors impacting learning and teaching suggests that the most effective forms of teacher empowerment occur when the teacher is seen as an autonomous

professional, rather than subordinate to external authority and the expertise (of experts).

This means there is a dire need to engage teachers as agents of educational reform, which is in stark contrast to the current view of teachers as ’curriculum implementers’. In fact, Van Driel et al. (1997) draw from Duffee & Aikenhead’s (1992) assertion that educational reform should rather tacitly focus on teachers’ craft knowledge, as an area of teacher development, teacher practice and curriculum development.

In this regard, the teachers reported that they had in fact received CAPS training, lasting over three days. Though they value such experiences, they argue that such training seem to be centred on administrative aspects of the curriculum, than on essential strategies for teachers to use in their respective classrooms. The workshop approach seems to fail to acknowledge that teachers’ understanding of learning is not simply acquired as knowledge that is put into practice; rather, they develop over time and in diverse contexts working with diverse students, based on on-going experience and reflection.

5.4.4.7 Language proficiency mismatch between learners and teachers

Generally, teachers’ assumed proficiency (of learners) manifests through their own practices, that is, through the questions they ask their learners and the kind of activities they get their learners to do (including their reflections based on the teaching of others). This represents what teachers consider age-appropriate to their learners’, and thus influence their pedagogic practices.

In one of the reflection sessions based on an English intervention lesson in Grade 1, when the teacher was asked why the learners could not write a word starting with the sound [c], the teacher insisted that she hasn’t began teaching her learners the sound because of her insecurities, among others, that the learners will start confusing the sound [c] with the Sepedi [k], which sound the same in selected words in Sepedi. This argument ignores that there are learners whose names already have the sound, and thus already have the sound in their linguistic repertoire.

Generally, when teachers were confronted about what informs what they do in classroom, they insist that their classroom practices are consistent with the CAPS' expectations on them. However, a review of the contrast between pedagogic practices in the regular lessons and interventions lessons shows that teachers are teaching at far lower conceptual level than the learners actually are. In the regular lessons, teachers predominantly engaged learners in ritualistic and routinized tasks centred around rhythmic chanting, reading out words and texts without any sound understanding. This kind of practices takes little consideration into what learners are able to do, and the skills they bring to classroom. Teachers thus miss opportunities to accumulatively build on learners' key competencies.

In the intervention lesson, learners have shown to have developed sophisticated mastery of the oral and narrative genre, and thus could individually read texts without aid in Sepedi and to some extent in English. The learners could also read well beyond word level, and thus be drawn into processes of coding meaning in texts, as was demonstrated in the Sepedi intervention lessons. This point to the reality that teachers in the regular lessons were operating at basic level, and are inherently unable to conceptualise age-appropriate pedagogic practices in line with the lived linguistic proficiencies of their learners.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the research's central findings, and reflects on some of the key insights generated from both the regular and intervention lessons, and teacher interview data. The chapter also address the limitations of the research emanating from the methodological design of the study. Based on the implications and findings of the study, key recommendations are presented addressing various aspects impacting learning and teaching in the context of teacher professional development.

To recapture the aim of this research, this study sought to find out what kind of engagements and interventions may potentially lead teachers to revise their theories, beliefs and principles which underpin their classroom practices in the context of change. Key to this was to get teachers to critically and reflectively engage their teaching and teaching of others. As shown in the previous chapter, this research was able to present actual transcripts of the lessons as evidence of their practices in classroom. This chapter will seek to summarise these insights and findings of this study with reference to scholarly literature.

6.2 Summary of findings

The findings of this study are related to teachers' regular classroom practices, and the nature of intervention lessons, and are thus presented as follows:

6.2.1 Findings related to regular lessons

The central question of the study was to find out what conceptualizations, beliefs and principles underpin teachers' classroom behaviours and pedagogic practices. Potsi (2011) asserts that beliefs are routed into our lives and are usually disguised with several kinds of names as attitudes. He cites Harvey (1986) to support the view that teacher beliefs represent teachers' individualized representation of reality that has enough validity, truth, or credibility to guide them through practice and behaviours in the classroom. This assertion suggests that teachers' classroom practices are informed by conceptualizations and beliefs they hold about aspects of their teaching. This also suggests that one cannot fully understand teachers' classroom behaviours

without understanding contextual factors influencing their practice, including beliefs and conceptualizations of literacy. Inherent in those factors are; how teachers manage learning and teaching, and what kind of resources do they use to facilitate learning, and what kind of learning actually takes place classroom.

6.2.1.1 Epistemological impoverishment of classroom engagements

The study has revealed that teachers overwhelmingly depend on traditional methods of teaching as marked by repetitions, rote learning and chorusing and as such, the nature of interactions in classroom is predominantly teacher-centred. These localised pedagogic practices make little epistemological contribution's to learners' understanding of concepts, nor meaningfully develop learners, in terms of literacy skills. The transcription data point to a consistent pattern observable across HL and EFAL lessons, showing that learning and teaching is occurring at a far lower cognition level and far below learners' linguistic and cognitive capacities. Even when learners engage in reading exercises, they are mostly dealt with at superficial level, and learners don't have meaningful opportunities to engage in reading as a meaning making activity. In retrospect, the lessons captured by Transcripts 1, 2 and 3 shows that little conceptual development is taking place because the kind of learning of learning does not enable learners to cross the bridge between every day knowledge to academic literacy skills.

This continued reliance on traditional approaches by teachers, in the way they teach can be conceptualized as lack of theoretical understanding of the learning process, and to some extent, limited understanding (and exposure) of current literature on learning and teaching.

A review of current teacher practices (as evidenced by the transcripts) has shown that teachers view reading as a mechanical process, and narrowly as a process of verbalising texts, with little considerations for meaning. As seen in the lesson transcripts, teacher are more interested on how learners articulate, pronounce and whether they recall words they have encountered in texts through dictation and spelling tests. This means learners are unlikely to develop an understanding of the structure of language and text-making. The overwhelming focus on discrete skills (as evidenced in **Transcript 2** and **3**) also suggest that there is inflexibility in the way teachers interpret and operationalize the CAPS policy.

The evidence produced by the current study shows that we can confidently assert the following with regard to teachers' classroom practices:

6.2.1.2 Predominance of safe-talk in classroom

The cumulative effect of having predominantly rote learning and low order classroom practices characterise what Chick and Hornberger (2001) refers to as 'safe talk'. Hornberger & Chick (2001) defines 'safe talk' as an interaction sequence in a classroom where teachers and students preserve their dignity by hiding the fact that little or no learning has taken place. They initially hypothesized that 'safe talk' manifests itself when a dominant language is forced upon second language speakers. However, in the data, 'safe-talk' has been shown to take place in home language lessons as well, reinforcing the view that safe talk occurs when the level of cognition required is low, and when teachers conceptualise teaching as transmission whereupon learners emerge with little conceptual skills from such learning experiences. Though learners bring varying proficiencies in their L1 (including among others, oral and narrative skills) to classroom, such competencies are rarely tapped in by teachers.

This study thus differ significantly the view that safe talk is a by-product of having a foreign language as LoLT, a point put forward by Chick & Hornberger (2001).The two speculated the learning through second language brings about safe talk, because the LoLT is thus foreign to learners, however the study has shown that in fact the teaching strategy, kind of teacher questions and as the nature of classroom engagements is the one that gives safe talk. As seen in the L1 lessons, learners were glaringly inundated with repetitions, rhythmic chants, singing and rote memorizations.

Even in Numeracy lessons, taught through the mother tongue, teachers fail to engage learners in deeper understanding of simple mathematical concepts (such as odd and even numbers). This inability to breakdown and mediate abstract concepts to learners' levels with analogies, visuals and practical examples adversely affect learners' abilities to meaningfully grasp abstract concepts, nor make sense of them.

6.2.1.3 Low order cognition (writing)

As demonstrated by Transcripts 1 and 2, teacher questions were predominantly centred around learners' abilities to list, mention things, suggesting that teachers struggle with engaging learners in more cognitively-demanding tasks such as reasoning, explaining, comparing and analysing.

The work of Prabhu (1987) has shown that though 'what-questions' may serve other cognitive or linguistic purposes, but they are the least cognitively- challenging questions, relative to questions involving children's reasoning capacity and those seeking to get learners to articulate their opinions.

6.2.1.4 Dominance of low-order literacy (writing)

In all the lessons observed, the amount of writing was minimal. When learners write, it is mostly at word level (in the form of dictation/spelling or isolated words on the board, as observed). The lack of extended writing in classrooms was alarming. Infrequent and inadequate exposure to writing has adverse effects on learners' abilities to grasp writing as a mode of expression and a tool of symbolization representing reality and meaning.

In fact Taylor et al. (2013:170) in their study found out that 'single words are the most common types of writing found in the learner workbooks', and continued by noting that, on average "half of all exercises written over the course the year, 55% in grade 4 and 51% in grade 5, consisted of isolated words". They make an even more profound observation with regard to non-existent culture of 'text-level writing' in South African primary schools by noting that of great concern is how little extended writing is taking place. In fact in their study close to one-third (32 %) of the learner books (in schools based in North West and Northern Cape Provinces) were found not to not contain a single paragraph (p.171).

Limited exposure to writing has far reaching implications for literacy learning, particularly for children from non-literate backgrounds, who are dependent upon the school schooling system for literacy learning.

In the current study, the researcher found that many writing tasks in the Grade 1 and 3 learner workbooks were not completed , and those that were , were mostly were at word level.

6.2.1.5 Teachers' interpretation of CAPS is inflexible

One of the key findings of the study was teachers' acknowledgement that they have received minimal training in CAPS, a policy framework premised on teachers' abilities to make use of the learner workbooks to advance learning. The historical context behind the establishment of workbooks in the foundation phase was the need to address content-deficit characterising early literacy learning in the foundation phase. Content deficit was one of the criticisms levelled against Outcomes-Based Education (OBE), eventually leading to its demise. In OBE, the emphasis was on the skills learners ought to learn rather than on the educational processes. The learner workbooks in CAPS are seen as the answer to the question of how best can teachers facilitate the educational processes.

In the learner workbooks, there are pre-set activities and tasks for daily, weekly and quarterly learning and teaching, a marker of the overwhelming rigidity within the country's content-focus approach within the CAPS framework. In practice however, as was observed in the regular lessons, the focus on content seems to be short-changed (as interpreted by teachers) as meaning more instruction (by teachers) while learners memorize. This is further complicated by the pressure imposed by CAPS to complete scheduled activities within the stipulated time frame.

Some of the teachers misinterpret CAPS as suggesting that they have to allocate time to every activity or task and teachers quickly move on, even though learners may not have really understood or completed previous tasks. This notion that curriculum can be fixed and synchronized in a 'one size fits all' approach assumes that learners and teachers all over the country are working from the same level of understanding, pace and more importantly that learners can be synchronized to learn equally from teacher input.

In reality, the assumption that fixing curriculum content will automatically result in good teaching is far from the truth. The inflexibility of the curriculum may also be due to the fact that teacher-trainers, instructors (and material developers) are

predominantly academics, who may be somewhat out of touch with classroom realities and teacher perceptions and capabilities. At a pedagogic level, this suggest that teachers as professionals require a more flexible curriculum that will not only enable, but empower them with authority to use their discretion to establish what works and what does not in their own classrooms

6.2.1.6 Teachers' inability to contextualise learning

A key finding from the regular lessons was the reality that teachers lacked essential training and knowledge on how to appropriately use contextualization strategies during teaching to enable learners to make explicit connections between their already existing knowledge frameworks and new knowledge. The development of early literacy is further hampered by teachers' inabilities to effectively assist learners to cross the bridge of learning in L1 and L2 (which is mostly English), and equally to cross the bridge between oracy and literacy, and between everyday knowledge to academic/disciplinary knowledge. In their study, Theron & Neli (2008) report that grade 4 teachers who participated in their research expressed feelings of 'ineptitude' about how to support ESL (English Second Language) learners with limited English proficiency.

Contextualizing is used here to refer to the utilization of particular situations or events that occur in (or outside) of text or that are of particular interest to learners' to motivate and guide the presentation of concepts and literacy skills (Rivet and Krajcik 2008). In literacy learning, contextualization thus can be resource through which teachers can draw on learners' prior knowledge and everyday experiences as a catalyst for understanding.

Failure by teachers to adequately contextualise activities has far reaching implications for learning and concept development, especially with learners with limited exposure to academic discourse.

6.2.1.7 Ineffective use of learner workbooks

In the learner workbooks, the texts contain pictures which are connected to the themes dealt with in the texts. However, when teachers take learners through the material, the pictures are treated as if are not part of the overall text structure and reading is treated as an independent exercise. As a result, learners are unable to

meaningfully engage with texts which are multimodal, and other conventions of print. This further means that the overemphasis on the verbal elements of texts deprive learners of multimodal experiences they can learn from.

Learners need not only engage with the verbal elements of texts, they have to explore the design of texts, the representation of things in texts, layout features, genre etc. The use of different modes of encoding meaning in learners' workbooks should be integrated into the overall literacy goals of the curriculum and appropriate time should be invested in this.

6.2.2 Findings related to the intervention lessons

6.2.2.1 Activating learner agency

The intervention lessons addressed one of the central issues in the regular lessons, namely, the predominance of oracy, with little or no writing taking in place. In both the Sepedi HL and he EFAL intervention lessons, the teachers introduced writing early in the lesson, instead of it being an add-on at the end of the lesson. The intervention teacher for the HL used the regular texts (a picture story with three picture frames for Grade 1 and a short passage for Grade 3) to develop writing tasks in which learners could encode information in writing using their own ideas and formulations. In the intervention EFAL lesson for Grade 1, the teacher quickly wrote up the A-B-C-D rhyme to show that what the learners were singing could in fact be symbolically represented in writing. Using the regular workbooks was a way of showing that writing can be developed without having to change the materials.

In the Sepedi intervention lesson, the teacher focussed on two things; firstly to get learners to use their own voices to interpreting texts and then encode the information into an organized text. The same principle was followed in the English FAL lessons, through learners writing on the board, reading aloud for others etc. Underpinning these pedagogic practices was the belief that the liberalization of talk, access to the board and granting agency to learners empowers learners to participate in the classroom, and thus increases their confidence.

Children learn best when engaging in meaningful interactions and activities, and through the use of language, because they begin to form their own voices. This view is also articulated by Mercer (1995) who following Vygotsky argued that children's

mental process and abstraction of literacy and concept development originate from mostly interactive exchanges, until the learners eventually are able to reconstitute their understanding.

6.2.2.2 Crossing the bridge between oracy and literacy

In the regular lessons, it was already been established that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that learners write relatively little either in both L1 and L2, in either in plenary sessions or individually. This is further complicated by teacher's inabilities to conceptualize age-appropriate and challenging exercises writing tasks, within the confines of the curriculum; as a result, the teachers were unable to draw learners into interactive writing practices embedded in disciplinary knowledge.

To address this shortfall, the use of picture stories and readings within learners' workbooks formed the focus on the intervention. Through engaging the texts orally, the learners start to understanding that writing is about ideas, and through guidance, and peer mediation, learners start taking risks by writing by themselves. This ascertains and reinforces the value of openness, and trying out in classroom, without inferior complexity that normally defines the interactions between learner and teacher.

6.2.2.3 Teacher response to change when confronted with alternative practices than theory.

Bailey (1991) and Jackson (1992) point out that change refers to many things including knowledge, beliefs, attitude, understanding, self-awareness and actual teaching practices.

The teaching interventions sought to demonstrate alternative approaches with the objective of stimulating a different kind of thinking among teachers about their classroom practices. The operational principle of the intervention was the belief that teachers can improve their knowledge and skills, not necessarily by following a particular methodological process (or expert theories), but rather with an enquiring attitude which allows them to find out the most adequate techniques in each situation. This kind of learning is situational, contextualized and personalised, and teachers can therefore mentally construct this conceptual process according to their classroom needs. This kind of engagement is more productive (as supported by

Allwright & Bailey 1991), and reinforces the notion that teaching needs to take into consideration the learners' individual characteristics, classroom context and goals of each lesson.

It is apparent that professional development that engages teachers in exploration of their beliefs and practices provides greater opportunities for self-awareness. Awareness may be in the form of their awareness of the language repertoire, including teachers' classroom management and code switching practices. In the interview, teachers drew from their observations from the English FAL intervention lesson to assert that teachers rather rephrase their instructions as opposed to frequent code-switching which, if over-used, defeats the objectives of developing learners' comprehension skills in L2.

This reflection had its origin in the teachers themselves, born out of their observation of how their learners dealt with a teacher who did not share their mother tongue, and the kind of support made available for the learners to meaningfully engage in oral exchange in English FAL. Furthermore, this observation was based on the teachers' own reflections and to some extent self-correction that their underlying perceptions of what they consider too difficult for their learners may not necessarily be the case. But rather, when granted opportunities for learning with guidance from the teacher, learners are able to infer meanings using whatever resources they have.

In addition, when exposed to different sets of teaching practices, teachers start to question their everyday practices, and the practices of the intervention teachers. During the group interview sessions, pointing to the video data one teacher remarked that some of the learners at the back of the classroom were not involved in the classrooms discussion. This, they noted was due to the fact that the teachers were concentrating on a few active learners in front. This remark talks to the central issue of classroom inclusiveness. This highlighted why the teachers insist on practices such as chorusing, which they believe ensures that all learners are engaged, even though there is little real learning taking place. Such practices (such as rhythmic chanting, chorusing and repetitions) seem to have more to do with classroom management than classroom inclusiveness, that is, to keep learners preoccupied rather than for epistemic purposes.

As far as classroom management is concerned, this research showed that classroom management practices are influenced by teachers' beliefs and value systems. Teachers recalled that many times when they write notes for learners to copy in the board, many (of the learners) in fact start making noise. Asked how best they can be inclusive in their teaching, the teacher descried large classroom sizes as part of this problem, but also noted they have to start rethinking their teaching practices. Rethinking their teaching practices meant challenging their learners more, getting learners to write at text-level and increasing opportunities for learners to engage with the teacher during learning and teaching.

Teachers also reflected about the intervention lessons, especially about English and literacy learning. The principle of 'reading readiness' is very much embedded in teachers' understanding of language and literacy learning, in that they believed that learners have to systematically progress from the phonemic level to words and then isolated sentences before they could meaningfully make sense of texts. As a result, according to them, text-writing can only take place in the third and fourth quarter. One of the teachers responded by noting that she was delighted to see her learners writing at sentence level (as demonstrated in the intervention lesson), and has since started experimenting with her learners, and she claims that results have been positive. This indication that the teacher has already started trying out extended writing and she has future plans to sustain it was very encouraging.

These insights were consistent with current teacher development approaches in which development is viewed as an active process of engagement whereby practitioners learn by reflecting on their current practices and the practices of others, leading to 'trying out new things'. The new experiences are processed in terms of the personal experiences of practitioners and finally 'owned' by the teachers in whatever form they find appropriate, and in whatever way is relevant to their classrooms.

6.3 The limitations of the study

The construct 'intervention' in research presupposes some level of activism, with the objective of activating change. In retrospect, the limitation of the study had to do with the fact that the study was not interested in 'change as an end', but rather was interested in exploring the transformative processes teachers undergo when they engage in critical reflections and discussions about their own teaching, and the

teaching of others. So, in this study, the intervention lessons (along with regular lessons) were used as stimuli for teachers to deeply reflect about their practices, and in the process start to interpret the CAPS policy, their pedagogic practices and principles informing their classroom actions and behaviours. It is this context that the rationale behind the intervention lessons has to be understood.

Researching the process of change accurately captures the complexity of the study, in contrast to 'activating change' which would have meant ensuring that there is a take-up of the intervention.

However, for this study, very few intervention lessons were taught and the interactions with the teachers on the interventions were brief and fleeting. In a more sustained teacher development model, the interactions would have carried for long stretches of time with frequent meetings between the researcher and the teachers. More time would also have been devoted to the viewing of the videos of the regular and intervention lessons. Both the researcher and the teachers needed to have engaged in deeper, self-critical reflections on their own and each other's teaching. However due to the time frame for the research and the limited nature of the interventions, this kind of sustained engagement was not possible.

Equally, it is difficult to judge whether teachers actually take up some of the intervention teaching practices and experiment with them over a period of time.

6.4. The implications of the study

One of the significant findings of this research which has a far-reaching implication for learning and teaching is the that the use of L1 as medium of learning and teaching does not automatically guarantee quality instruction; for meaningful learning and teaching to take place, firstly, teachers need resolute understanding of pedagogic and subject/content matter in order to conceptually engage their learners. The prevalence of safe-talk in the mother tongue content and language lessons is testimony to the reality that for quality education, resorting to mother tongue instruction may not necessarily solve educational problems.

This study suggests that teachers inflexibly interpret the curriculum (CAPS) in more deterministic ways, and the interpretation of CAPS by teachers needs further attention. This equally suggests that teacher's operationalization of CAPS means

children rarely get any experience of doing cognitively-challenging tasks that require thinking skills. If one looks at South African schooling, over the past decade, a wealth of studies have consistently shown that effective learning and teaching in rural township schools is hampered by various challenges, key to which, is poor pedagogic content knowledge by teachers. This is further complicated by the reality that teachers are not pushing learners beyond everyday knowledge and BICS, even at the most basic level; ritualistic practices such as chorusing, rote-recall and memorizing practices dominate.

Though observable innovative patterns may exist within teacher's routines, they are mostly at a microlevel, and occur by accident, such as, allowing practices such as 'shared reading'. The empirical data has shown that teachers appear to use a limited range of reading and writing strategies. As far as writing is concerned, dictation was by far the dominant strategy used by teachers to get learners to write, even so, the writing was at word level. As a result, learners are unable to develop the essential skills of engaging in writing for conceptual purposes.

The pervasive dominance of teacher talk was another aspect with significant impact on learners' ability to develop oral fluency particularly in L2, and the teachers seemed to be unable to create space for learner-initiated talk. At most, learners were co-opted into the classroom discourse to complete a sentence, repeat after their teachers, and or give one word answers on the instruction of teacher.

The unavailability of collaborative talk for conceptual purposes adversely affects learning and knowledge development on the part of learners.

As part of the intervention, it was essential to exemplify how learners' voice and agency may be activated in classroom. This was based on the principle that learners gain confidence and take initiative when they actually see that their voices, ideas and writings are taken seriously, and are important enough to be written on the board. Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester (2000:99) make the point that there is an urgent need "to contest the traditional power weighting of the power relations in the classroom by paying attention to and granting agency and voice to actors and practices at what has traditionally been the less powerful spectrum which is mostly learners".

Peirce’s (1995) discussion about helping students claim the ‘right to speak’ is a useful construct in understanding how agency and voice are connected to power relationships. She suggests that those who are learning a new language need to believe that they have the ‘right to speak,’ that what they say will be heard and responded to with interest, respect and action.

This was an important consideration in the intervention lesson. As the learners came to the board, they inadvertently become teachers of each other, where those ‘who don’t know’ learn from those ‘who already know’. Hornberger (2002) goes on to point that learners as participants in the classroom begin to see themselves as agents of learning, who have the power to meaningfully contribute to the lessons and are not merely recipients of already decided upon norms and patterns of engagement in the classroom.

In conclusion, the regular data and intervention data have both shown that for meaningful learning to take place, classroom interactions and dialogue have to be content-driven, meaningful and co-constructed by the participants in classroom. This is also noted by Abbey (2008), who noted that knowledge building, problem-solving dialogue is a powerful tool for classroom learning and teaching.

What however is critical here is that the principles that teachers are operating with require more research. While teachers may claim to be adhering to CAPS policy, they constantly attribute minimal amount of writing in classroom, narrowly focus on discrete skills such as pronunciation, spelling etc. to what CAPS policy expects them to be doing. Even in Numeracy lessons, one is inundated with the amount of time learners spent practising the Sepedi versions of numerals (*tee, pedi, tharo* etc).

By implication, this study suggests that current models of teacher training are not sufficient to enable teachers to radically shift the conceptualizations they are operating with, nor change the principles underpinning their classroom practices. Instead of the traditional teacher training model where the expert comes and imposes curricular ideas on teachers, the study argues for a model of change where teacher’s experiences are gathered and reviewed, and based on those insights, establish possible areas of intervention.

6.5 Recommendations

This section sets some recommendations arising from the findings of the study.

6.5.1 The need for CAPS-based support

The kind of support teachers require is the one where conceptual, pedagogic and content matter are integrated to ensure that teachers know exactly what to do in classroom, and effectively deliver curricular ideas. This kind of engagement can in the form of regular training sessions, working focus groups and or among teachers themselves. In this respect, the Department of Basic Education should initiate support programmes to enable teachers to leverage their abilities in the area of content delivery, conceptualizing content knowledge and effective use of current workbooks, in line with CAPS.

6.5.2 Writing practices

Current teacher practices are silent on the importance of exploratively engaging learners in a meaning-driven writing as a conceptual process of engaging ideas, describing events, through which learners start to view writing as an expressive medium of producing texts.

All of the above require a deeper level of processing than dictations or short-answer questions. This is particularly the case because academic writing is based on learners' skills of reformulating and manipulating information, drawing upon their writing skills to generate new links between new and existing knowledge frameworks. This suggests that there is a need for teachers to radically rethink the way writing is taught and the kind of training teachers make available to learners.

6.5.3 Professional development

The study as supported by the DoE (2012) through the ANA 2011 report acknowledged that poor subject knowledge on the part of teachers continues to be a critical problem despite decades of training by provincial education departments, universities and NGOs having produced disappointing results.

This suggests that there is a need to provide teaching and learning resources and organise collegial but small scale training facilities in which local schools are grouped together to find common solutions to their classroom challenges. This will be useful in the context of enabling teachers to get meaningful opportunities to deal with subject-specific areas of their teaching, and therefore be able to develop alternative ways of looking at their professional classroom responsibilities.

6.5.4 Professional networks for teacher development

The significance of collaboration and engagement between researchers, academics, NGOs (operating within the field of teacher development) and with in-and pre-services practitioners is thus key in this regard. In South Africa and beyond, the teacher training model has been the subject of criticism from researchers and teachers, though seeming to enjoy the support of literacy specialists in South Africa, teacher trainers and authorities in in education administration. There is equally a strong body of research that has shown that current workshop approach of teacher development is not enough to assist practising teachers to radically transform their everyday practices.

This suggests that there is a need for locale-specific initiatives where local schools and teachers link up with researchers and progressive thinkers located within higher education and NGOs to progressively conceptualise alternatives to current problems impacting teaching and learning.

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Appendix 1: Teacher questionaire protocol

Section 1: Demographics (teaching qualifications, experience, obligations and related background)

1.1. What is your mother tongue?

1.2. How good are you in your mother-tongue?

1.3. Any language you also proficient in?

1.4. What grades do you teach?

1.5. What learning areas/subjects/phases do you teach?

1.6. What are your qualifications?

1.7. How long have you been teaching at this school?

1.8. Have you received training to teach the CAPS curriculum?

1.9. What were your teaching subjects / majors at varsity/college?

Section 2: Literacy and language (Status, problems, solutions)

3.1. What language/s are learners exposed to (a) at home and (b) in their broader environment?

3.2. What do you think a literate child should be able to do?

3.3. What is the best way to teach literacy?

3.4. Do you think the learners read and write better in Sepedi (or other HLs) than they do in English?

3.5. What do you think are some of the problems facing language and literacy learning in South Africa?

3.6. What can teachers do to improve the current state of teaching in South Africa, particularly literacy teaching?

Section 3: Intervention teaching

6.1. What do you think was the objective of the lesson that you observed?

6.2. Did you find anything interesting in the intervention lesson?

6.3. Do you think the learners learnt something they did not know before?

6.4. Do you think you can also do some of the things you observed in the intervention lesson(s)?

6.5. What aspect(s) do you think might work in your classroom?

6.6. What are those things that you think may not work in your classroom?

6.7. What is your overall feeling/impression about the lesson you have just observed?

6.8. Do you think the classroom activities were different from what normally happens in lessons?

6.9. Do you think the learners behaved differently from how they normally do?

6.10. What were the positive things you noticed about the lesson?

6.11. What were the negative things you noticed about the lesson?

6.12. Do you think the CAPS objectives for this lesson were met?

6.13. Is there any aspect of the lesson that you would retain in your own teaching in future?

6.14. Do you think such interventions are useful or not useful?

6.15. Do you think relations between schools and universities could be based on such teaching interventions and discussions? (Why or why not?)

6.16. Do you think other teacher may benefit from a similar experience you underwent?

Appendix 2: School principal consent for the research

I herewith give permission to Professor Esther Ramani from the University of Limpopo to conduct research in my school as part of the study on Paradigms and practices of teaching and learning in Foundation Phase classrooms in Gauteng and Limpopo provinces. This study involves two teachers i grades 1 and 3, and 8 lessons will be observed and audio- and video-recorded. I understand that some teaching interventions will take place which will be of benefit to the teachers in our school.

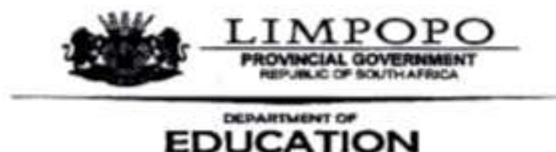
February 6, 2013

2013 -02- 06

SIGNATURE

LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Appendix 3: Limpopo DoE approval

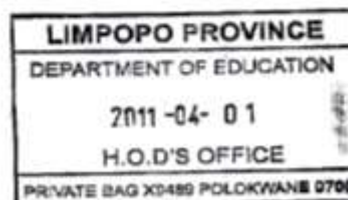


Enquiries: Mr. Makola MC, Tel No: 015 290 9448 e-mail: MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Research Project Team

HSRC

Education and Skills Development



Dear Researchers

RE: Request for permission to Conduct Research

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct a research has been approved- **Title: PARADIGMS AND PRACTICES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN FOUNDATION PHASE LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS IN GAUTENG AND LIMPOPO PROVINCES.**
3. The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with both the Circuit Offices and the schools concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programme at the schools.

3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the forth term.

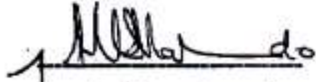
3.5 During the study, the research ethics should be practiced, in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

Page 1 of 2

4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.
5. The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



Head of Department

2011/03/31

Date

Appendix 4: Teacher consents

We have selected Dikolobe Primary to be our contact school in a research project we are currently undertaking. In this regard, we write this letter to speak your consent to include you and your learners in our research project which is going include among others, audio and video recording of lessons in your classroom.

We are researchers from University of Limpopo, undertaking the research aimed at learning more about how teachers teach language and literacy in the foundation phase.

We guarantee that the recording will be kept confidential, secured at all the times. The copies of all the recordings will also be provided to the principal and teachers in due time.

The research will thereupon inform many other teachers about how best they can teach learners to read and write well in both mother-tongue, Sepedi and English.

Kindly sign underneath to certify your confirmation

Thanks for your consideration

…………………………………………………….

Signature

…………………………………………………….

Date signed

Appendix 5: Parents and Gurdians consent sheet

We have selected your child's school for a research project we are undertaking. We write this letter to seek your consent to include your child in our research project, which is going to include audio and video recording of lessons in the classroom in which your child is in.

We are student-researchers from University of Limpopo, undertaking the research aimed at learning more about how teachers teach language and literacy in the foundation phase.

We guarantee that the recordings will be kept confidential and secured at all times. Copies of all the recordings will be made available to the School. The summary of the research findings will also be provided to the principal and teachers.

The research will thereupon inform many other teachers about how best they can teach learners to read and write well in both the mother tongue and Sepedi.

Thank you.

Your child's name:…………………………………………

Grade:……………………………………………………

Kindly sign underneath to certify your confirmation

Signature………………………………….

Date signed……………………………….

Parents and guradians consent sheet (in Sepedi)

Re le ngwalela go kgopela tumelelo ya motswadi go dira dikgatišo mafelong a boithutelo, ka mphatong was ngwana wag ago. Ka go realo, re kgopela tumelelo go akaretša ngwana wa gago mo dikgatišong.

Rena re baithuti re baithuti Yunibesithing Ya Limpopo. Mo nyakišišišong ye re duma go ithuta ka mokgwa wo barutiši ba rutago bana polelo, go bala le go ngwala mephatong ya fasana.

Re itlama go kgonthiša maikarabelo mo dikgatišong.

Nyakišišo ye e tlile go ruta le ge bontšha barutiši ba bangwe mekgwanakgwana yeo ba ka rutago bana polelo, go bala le mogwalo. Gape re tla kgona go laetša barutiši ba bangwe mekgwa ya go šomana le ditšhitišo tšeo ba tlhakanago le tšona thutong.

Saena mo fase go thekga projeke ye

Saena:……………………………………………………….

Tšatšikgwedi:……………………………………………

Appendix 6: Learner- consent sheet

Hello, we are researchers. We would like to make recordings of your language lessons for research project we are currently doing. We hope to learn more about how to teach language and literacy learning in the foundation phase. This research will help inform many other teachers about how they can best teach learners to read and write well in both mother tongue, Sepedi and English.

We have already sought written consent from your teacher and parents/guardians and caretakers, and reassure you that we shall never show the video to anyone who is not in our team.

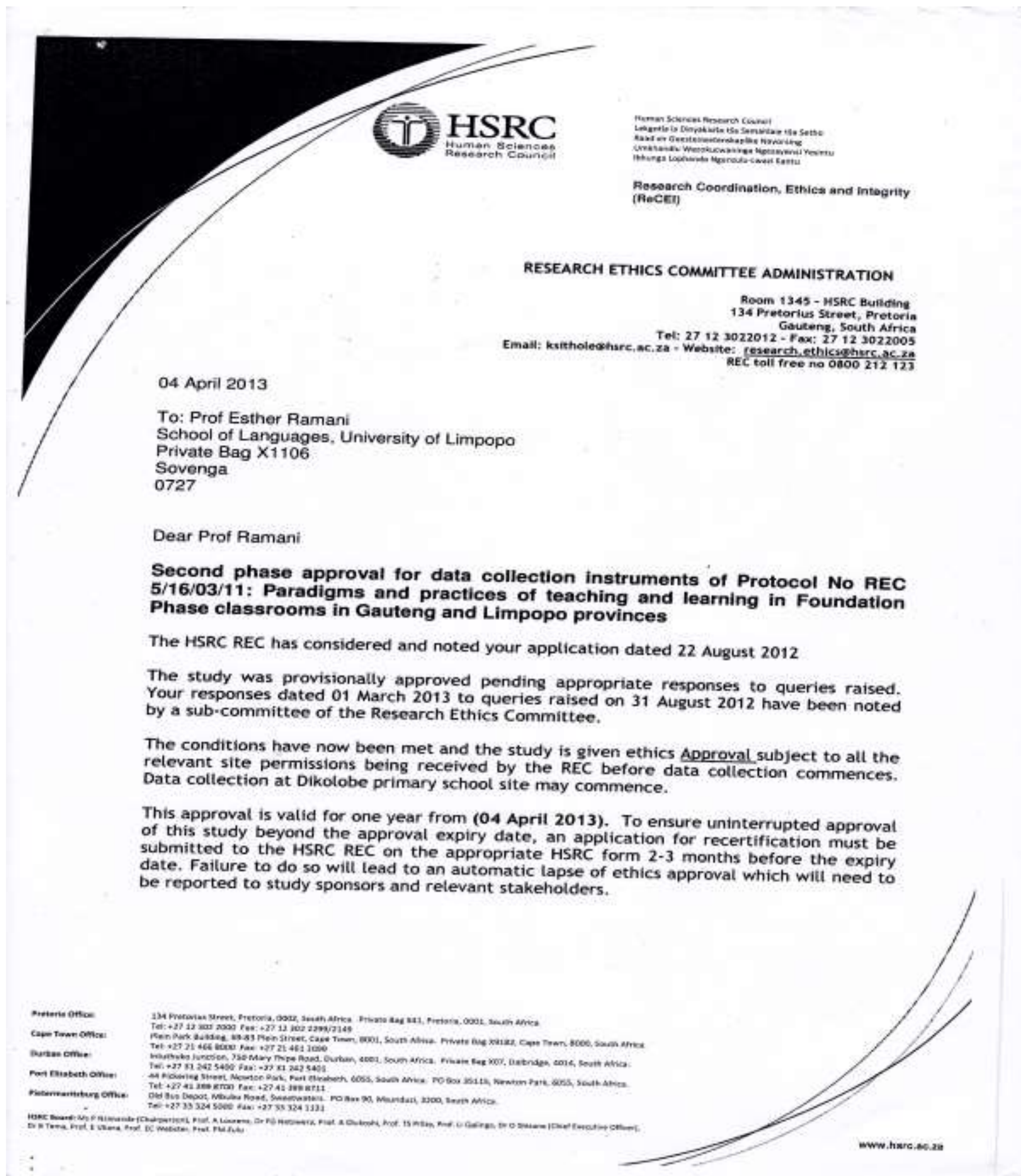
Copies of video and audio recording swill be provided to your teacher and principal in due time. Attach your names and sign underneath to participate.

I,…………………………………………………….agree to be included in the recordings to be dones in my classroom

Nna,…………………………………………………ke a dumela go tšwelela kgatišong ya diswantšho, yeo e tlogo go dirwa ka phaphošing yeo ke lego go yona.

Thanks for your consideration

Appendix 7: The Research Ethics Committee of the HSRC clearence



HSRC
Human Sciences Research Council

Research Coordination, Ethics and Integrity (ReCEI)

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION

Room 1345 - HSRC Building
134 Pretorius Street, Pretoria
Gauteng, South Africa
Tel: 27 12 3022012 - Fax: 27 12 3022005
Email: ksithole@hsrc.ac.za - Website: research.ethics@hsrc.ac.za
REC toll free no 0800 212 123

04 April 2013

To: Prof Esther Ramani
School of Languages, University of Limpopo
Private Bag X1106
Sovenga
0727

Dear Prof Ramani

Second phase approval for data collection instruments of Protocol No REC 5/16/03/11: Paradigms and practices of teaching and learning in Foundation Phase classrooms in Gauteng and Limpopo provinces

The HSRC REC has considered and noted your application dated 22 August 2012

The study was provisionally approved pending appropriate responses to queries raised. Your responses dated 01 March 2013 to queries raised on 31 August 2012 have been noted by a sub-committee of the Research Ethics Committee.

The conditions have now been met and the study is given ethics Approval subject to all the relevant site permissions being received by the REC before data collection commences. Data collection at Dikolobe primary school site may commence.

This approval is valid for one year from **(04 April 2013).** To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, an application for recertification must be submitted to the HSRC REC on the appropriate HSRC form 2-3 months before the expiry date. Failure to do so will lead to an automatic lapse of ethics approval which will need to be reported to study sponsors and relevant stakeholders.

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Any amendments to this study, unless urgently required to ensure safety of participants, must be approved by HSRC REC prior to implementation.

Your acceptance of this approval denotes your compliance with South African National Research Ethics Guidelines (2004), South African National Good Clinical Practice Guidelines (2006) (if applicable) and with HSRC REC ethics requirements as contained in the HSRC REC Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures, all available at http://www.hsrc.ac.za/index.php?module=pagesetter&func=viewpub&tid=132&pid=167

The HSRC REC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-290808-015). The HSRC REC has US Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) Federal-wide Assurance (FWA Organisation No. 0000 6347).

We wish you well with this study. We would appreciate receiving copies of all publications arising out of this study.

Yours sincerely

Professor D.R Wassenaar
Chair: HSRC Research Ethics Committee

The National Health Act's section 71 governs 'research on or experimentation with human subjects'. This section was made effective from 1 March 2012 by proclamation in the Government Gazette.

The content of this provision has an extremely restrictive impact on research, particularly if the research involves minor participants. No regulations came into effect simultaneously. This presents a problem for compliance because there is no current guidance on how to comply, and the newly proclaimed section 71 is inconsistent with the current SA Department of Health (2004) ethical guidelines and policies.

Until clarity is obtained, the HSRC REC has decided to proceed, in the interim, on the same basis as before the proclamation, i.e. **the ethics review process will, in certain circumstances, deviate from the newly proclaimed provisions of s 71, but will follow the same rigorous and comprehensive ethics review process as it has always done**. The REC will thus continue to approve methodology, recruitment strategies and informed consent requirements and processes in accordance with current ethics guidelines and policies.

The implications of this decision by the REC for researchers are that changes to methodology and informed consent processes may have to be made if and when the provisions of section 71 are made properly implementable. The full text of the National Health Act may be viewed at http://www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=68039
Should you require more information on this matter, please feel free to send your queries to research.ethics@hsrc.ac.za

Transcript 1: Teacher questions by Teacher C

Original utterance in Sepedi	English translations	Actions / non-verbal
1 Teacher: O lebelele gabotse. Le bonang?	*Teacher: You look carefully. What do you see?*	Teacher pulls chair backwards and sits down. Facing the learners, she shows them the front cover of a book. She turns around and remains silent.
2 L:	*Ls:*	They raise up their hands.
3 T: Go emiša letsogo ga se gore (unclear). Le a raloka.	*T: Raising your hands up does not mean…(unclear). You are playing.*	
4 Ls:	*Ls:*	
5 T: A reye Morongwa, le bonag, bolella godimo, bolella godimo.	*T: Let us go, Morongwa, what do you see? Speak louder, speak louder.*	
6 L:Ke bona ngwanenyana le mošimanyana ba swarane	*L:I see a girl and a boy holding one another*	The learner remains seated.
7 T: O re o bona ngwanenyana le mošimanyana ba swarane. Eh…. Mmanthopa e na o bonang?	*T: She says she sees a girl and a boy holding one another. Eh….Mmanthopa, what do you see?*	Teacher points at a L.
8 L: Ke bona ngwanenyana o nametse dipitse.	*L:I see a girl and a boy riding horses.*	Person operating roving camera moves a chair (noise). A girl raises up on her knees.
9 T: Ngwanenyana o nametse eng?	*T: What is the girl riding?*	
10 Ls: Dipitse.	*Ls: A horse.*	Few Ls respond spontaneously
11 T: Ke nnete?	*T: Is that true?*	
12 Ls: Yes mam.	*L: Yes mam.*	
13 T: O mongwe a ka reng? ... . A re ye.	*T: What can the others say? Let`s go.*	Learners raise their hands and click their fingers. T looks at a boy.
14 L: Ke bona mošimane a sepela.	*L: I see a boy walking.*	Raising himself slightly
15 T: O re o mošimane a	*T: You say the boy is walking?*	The teacher shows

Original utterance in Sepedi	English translations	Actions / non-verbal
sepela. Boela kua morago o tle o bone ga botse. Anna ge le lebelletse mo ke kae na?	*Shift backward so that you can see clearly. When you look here, what do you see?*	him to move a bit backwards
16 L: Sekolong.	*L: School.*	
17 T: Ke kae?	*T: Where?*	T lifts book a bit higher
18 L: Sekolong.	*L: School.*	
19 T: E kaba sekolong?	*T: Can it be at school?*	T lifts book another bit higher
20 Ls: Yes mam.	*L: Yes mam.*	
21 T: OK, a re buleng letlakala. A ha.., ka mo go ka be go diega eng?	*T: Ok, let us open the page. Aha... What is happening here?*	T pages through book. Most Ls raise hands and click fingers.
22 L: Re bona mošimanyana o a kitima.	*L: We see a boy running.*	
23 T: Ba re mošimanyana o a kitima. Ke nnete?	*T: They say the boy is running. Is it true?*	All the hands go up.
24 Ls: Yes mam.	*L: Yes mam.*	
25 T: O mongwe e na a ka reng?	*T: What can another one say?*	All the hands go up.
26 L: Re bona mosadi a reila koloi.	*L: We see a woman driving a car.*	L starts spontaneously.
27 T: Mosadi ba re ka mo le ena o reila koloi. Go kaba go diegang? Mošimane o kitimela kae?	*T: They say that a woman is driving a car. What is happening? Where is the boy running to?*	A few Ls raise hands
28 L: Sekolong.	*L: To school.*	
29 T: Sekolong? Koloi e yona ke ya go diang? Mpshe?	*T: To school? What is the use of this car? Mpshe?*	T looks at a boy raising his hand.
30 L: Ke ya go mo tšea.	*L: It is used to collect him.*	
31 T: Ba re koloi ye ke ya go mo tšea. E mo iša kae?	*T: They say this car is used to collect him. Where is it taking him to?*	
32 Ls: Sekolong.	*Ls: To school.*	
33 T: Alright. A re kweng, a re boneng, a re boneng, ka mo gona? Ka mo gona go tshwere eng? Ke eng se mošimane waka?	*T: Alright. Let us hear, let us see, let us see. What about this side? What is contained at this side? What is it my boy?*	T turns the page. She looks at the picture on the left (with text on right). Many Ls raise hands and click fingers.
34 Ls: (unclear)	*Ls: (unclear)*	Many Ls raise hands and click fingers
3 T: O ya kae Mmatli?	*T: Where are you going to,*	

Original utterance in Sepedi	English translations	Actions / non-verbal
[2 min]	*Mmatli?*	
36 L: Sekolong.	*L: To school.*	

Transcript 2: Focus on form by Teacher A

Original utterance in Sepedi	English Translations	Actions / non-verbal aspects
1 Teacher: e .. ng, e .. ng. He e, re theeditše naa? e .. ng Namille wa row a ngwala bjalo. A kere ke go boditse na gore ke eng. Ke e- le -ng. A reye .. e- .. -ng ... a ra kwalang. Bala gape Madimetša, Madimetša bala kudu ba go theeletse ... (unclear word) Na la ...	*Teacher:* *e .. ng, e .. ng. No no, are we listening? ... e .. ng ...* *As such we are writing now.* *I did tell you what it is.* *It is e- and -ng. Let ... e .. ng ... us write.* *Read again Madimetša, Madimetša read well let them listen to you ... (unclear word). What is fa ...*	Teacher points at the chalkboard whereeng is written. She goes to front learner and points toNa lapa ke eng? on an A3-sized book).
2 Learner:Na … la ... pa … ka … ...	*L:Na … la … pa … ka … ... (What ... is ... fa ... mi ... ...)*	The learner reads from the book cover.
3 Teacher: Eh, modumo o ke eng? Gape o atlhame, o atlhamela gona mo, ke ya go atlhamiša yona e? Ga se ya go atlhamiša,ska tšoga neh,batho bale ga ba tlo re bolaya, ba tlo no go kwa wena,wena mmeme a go ruta ka moo gore o a kwa naa? O kwišiša modumo o, hee wena kwa morago ko, ko, ba go raloka oa ba bona, ge o tlo ba botšiša gaba	*T:* *No no what is this sound?* *By the way you have opened your mouth. You open your mouth here. Is if the one for opening your mouth? Do not be afraid, OK, those people will not kill you. They will listen to you, you when your mam is teaching you to see that you are listening. Do you understand the sound?*	Teacher first addresses the learner; and talks very fast. Teacher then scolds a learner at one of the desks at the back.

Original utterance in Sepedi	English Translations	Actions / non-verbal aspects
tsebe nto e o tlo ba botšiša yona. a. Moš, motho yo, wena o dutse le mang mo wena o dutse fatshe. Mašabela dula fatshe. b. A reye, bala gape mo.	*Hei you at the back there, there the playing type are easily seen, when you ask them, they do not know what you ask them.* *Bo, you person with whom are you sitting, you sit down.* *Let us go, read again.*	
4 L: Na .. la .. pa .. ko ...	*L: What .. is fa .. mi .. ly .. at ...*	The learner reads as the teacher points to the words.
5 T: ke	*T: is*	
6 L: ke	*L: is*	The teacher looks at the learner as she (the teacher) says the word each time.
7T: ke	*T: is*	
8L: ke	*L: is*	
9T: ke	*T: is*	
10L: ke	*L: is*	
11T: ke	*T: is*	
12L: ke	*L: is*	
13T: ke	*T: is*	
14 L: ke	*L: is*	
15T: E tsere modumo wa eng? ... e	*T: Which sound does it have? ... it.*	The teacher points at the word in the book
16L: e	*L: it*	
17T: e.. ke .. ekwa.. e .. ke .. e .. ke, bona, ke..	*T: it .. is .. listen .. it .. is .. it .. is .., look, is ..*	The learner nods
18L: ke	*L: is*	
19T: e	*T: it*	
20L: e	*L: it*	

Original utterance in Sepedi	English Translations	Actions / non-verbal aspects
21T: e ... ng. A re bale gape. A reye Mašabela, nke o trae wena. A reye.	*T: What? Let us read again. Let us Mašabela, you try. Let us go.*	T points out a girl at the back, who gets up
22L: Na …	*L: If ...*	
23T: Emelela Mašabela.	*T: Stand up Mašabela.*	
24L: Na …Na…Na	*L: What …*	
24 T: Na …	*T: What …*	
25T: Kgane ga o bone monna ga o bone gore nto e gore ke eng? ... ... Ga o bone, ke o batamele, ke go batametse, a reye, ...	*T: Can`t you see man, can`t you see this thing? Can`t you see? Should I come nearer you? I am nearer you, let us go ...*	Teacher walks closer to the learner and holds up the book.
25 L: Na ...	*L: What ...*	Said very softly.
25 T: bala kudu ba o kwe.	*T: ... read loudly, they hear you.*	
26 L: Na ... ...La…pa…ke…en	*L: What ... ...*	Learner opens her mouth; leans forward. A learner coughs.
26 T: ...la…pa….ke….e	*T: I ...*	
26 L: la .. pa .. ke .. e ..	*L: is .. fa .. mi .. ly ..*	
27T: .. ng, ke rile ng.	*T:.. ng, I said 'ng'.*	
28L:ng	*L:ng*	
29T: A reye, o boeletse gape. Na ...	*T: Let us go, repeat again. What ...*	
30L: Na .. le .. la .. pa .. ke .. e	*L: What .. and .. fa .. mi .. ly .. it is.*	
31T: ng	*T:ng*	
32L: ng	*L:ng*	
33T: Gape, gape oe ngwale gabotse o seke wa re na .. la .. pa .. ke .. e .. ng. O a kwa. O e bale gabotse jwale, fela akere o e kwale gore na e ya kae. A re ye bala gabotse jwale wena.	*T:* *Again, again read it clearly, do not say What .. is .. a .. family ..* *Do you understand? Read it clearly, but write it clearly.* *Now read well you.*	Teacher mimics slow staccato reading while rocking from left to right on every next word.

Original utterance in Sepedi	English Translations	Actions / non-verbal aspects
34L: Na .. la .. (pause) … Na .. Na .. Na la .. pa .. ke .. e .. ng?	*L: What .. fa …(pause), .. What .. What .. What is .. fa .. mi .. ly?*	
35T: eng? Na lapa ke e ... ng? Koba. Le a kwa? Na lapa ke e ... ng? Lena le tseba la e le eng? Lapa ke eng? Ge ba re gone lapa ba raya eng?	*T:* *What? What is a family? Koba. Do you hear?* *What is a family? You know it as what?* *What is a family? When they say there is a family, what do they mean?*	
36L:… (unclear)	*L: … (unclear)*	
37T: ..ng. Ge ba re ka ko ke ka lapeng la ga bo mang, mang ke lap aba raya gore go tla bo go ena le mang? Lapa eno ba lap aka mme o mogolo? Lapa ba bolela ka eng? Go tla ba go na le eng? Go ena le eng mo? O re ka mang o mo?	*T:* *Ng. If they say that there is a family, whose family is it, With the family what do they mean who will be there?* *A family is a family when there is an elderly mother?* *What does family mean? Who will be there?* *What is there? What do you say who is there? Kgomotso.*	Teacher talks very fast.
37 Ls: (unclear)	*Ls:(unclear)*	
38Ls: Tch .. tch .. tch ... ... tch .. tch .. tch	*Ls: Tch .. tch .. tch ... ... tch .. tch .. tch*	
39T: Ke mang? Motho o ge o mo lebeletše e kaba mang? E kaba mang o. lapa, lapa la geno, go ne bomang ka lapeng la geno? O dula le bomang ka gageno, ka geno.	*T:* *Who is it? If you look at this person who can it be?* *Who can this one be? Family, your family, who is in your family?*	Teacher points out some figures on the book cover. The learner who responded

Original utterance in Sepedi	English Translations	Actions / non-verbal aspects
Ke lapa la geno, ke lapa ke le, ke malapa ke a, ba nyaka go tseba gore na femeli ya gago ke bomang, o dula le mang ka femeling ya gago. Ranoko re botse, wena femeli ya gago o dula le mang?	*With whom are you staying at home?* *With whom are you staying at your home? It is your family, this is a family. These are families. They want to know your family is. With whom are you staying in your family?* *Ranoko tell us, with whom are you staying in your family.*	earlier at the back is still standing at her desk. She is smiling and looks very attentive.
40L: Ke bo-mma le sesi … (unclear).	*L: It's my mother and sister ... (unclear).*	Next boy responds.
41T: Mma gago le sesi a gago? Wena.	*T: Your mother and your sister? You.*	
42L: Ke dula le bo-mmaka le bo papa ka.	*L: I stay with my mother and my father.*	Next girl responds.
43T: Wena o dula le bo mmaka le papa ka. O mongwe ena o dula le mang? Bolela ka moka.	*T: You stay with your mother and your father. Say it all of you.*	
44L: Le bo mama ka le bo papa, le bo papaka, le bo ngwaneso.	*L: With my mother and my father, with my father, with my siblings.*	Girl, still standing at back, responds again. She then sits down.
45T: OK, la a bona gore lapa ke eng? Ke mo geno ... m … papa, papa e lego tlhogo ya ka gae, tlhogo ya mobu, the head of the family, ke papa. a. And then gwa latela mang?	*T:* *OK, can you see what a family is? It is at your home. ... M ... father, father who is the head of the family, head of the soil who is the head of the family, the head of the family who is the father. And then who follows?*	
46Ls: Mama.	*L: Mother.*	By a few learners.
46a T: Gwa latela mang?	*T: Who follows?*	
46b L: Mama.	*L: Mother.*	By a few learners.
47T: Gwa latela mma, mma e leng mothuši wa, wa papa, the helper.	*T:* *Mother is next, mother who is*	Teacher talks fasts and explains using

Original utterance in Sepedi	English Translations	Actions / non-verbal aspects
O a thuša mama gago, mola papa gago e le tlhogo ya motse, mamago o thuša papa, o thuša papa ka eng? Ka go mo eletsa, ka go mo direla tsa ka mo lapeng. E bile ke moeletsi wa gagwe. Ge re le ka lapeng re a eletsana, o la o fa mogopolo, o mongwe o fa o mongwe kgopolo. Re a kgopotšana, ra etla go godiša bana ba. Wena, wena. ... Ranko e tla o dule mo. Batho ba ba go se theeletše ba tla dula mo pele. Nabile ba re lapa ke eng? Re bone mo ke eng? Ke papa.Le a mmona, a re boneng. Mpotseng mo, ke mang o? ... (pause)	*the helper of, of the father…Your mother is helpful, while your father is the head of the family, your mother is helping your father. She helps him with what?* *By advising him, by doing everything for him in the family.She is even his advisor.* *When we are at home we give one advice, and another one gives another an idea. We remind one another in the growing up of the children.* *You, you Ranko come and sit here.* *People who do not listen will sit in front.* *By the way what is a family?* *We saw what is here? It is the father.* *Can you see him? Let us see? Tell me, who is this one here? ...* *(pause)*	the picture on the cover of the book she holds up. The teacher points to a desk at the front. Teacher points out a figure in the cover picture.

Transcript 3: Joint co-construction of text by Teacher E

Original utterance in Sepedi	English translations
At the end of picture frame 1, three sentences were generated to narratively describe the picture, and these were: Sentence 1: A dog is chasing a cat (Mpša e kitmiša katse) Sentence 2: A dog is barking at cat (Mpša goba katse) Sentence 3: The cat is being chased by a dog (Mpša e kitimišwa ke katse) The teacher recounted that all the three sentences can be used to describe what is happening	

in the picture, and thus continued to the second pictures frame.	
36. Teacher Ok, are lebeleleng seswantšho sa bobedi….go direga eng mo seswantšhong sa bobedi…are re lebeleleng.Wena o bona eng?	*Ok, let's look at the second picture frame… what is happening there?* *Let's all look. You, what do you see?*
37 Learner Katse e nametše mohlare	*'Cat climbs a tree'*
38 Teacher Re bona katse e tšhabela mohlareng O mongwe o bona go direga eng?	*We see a cat climbing a tree* *Anyone else? What do you see?*
39. Teacher Ok, a re ngwaleng seo se diregago mo seswantšhong sa bobedi	*Ok, let's write what is happening in the in the second picture.*
40 Teacher Ok, re rile katse e dira eng? Ke mang yena a ka re ngwalelang tšhabela... (lentšu) le tswa go tšhaba!	*Ok,we said the cat did what?* *Who can write this for us?* *The word 'tšhabela' comes from 'tšhaba'!*
41 Teacher Aga…ba re feleleditše lefoko la rena…Ba re 'katse e tšhabela ……mohlareng.' Ke mokgwa wo re ngwala 'mohlareng' mo? Le bona e le yona…re ngwala 'mohlare' so? Do you notice any error here? Modumo wo ke hl…hl…hl…	*Ok, here we go! Our sentence has been completed.* *We have* ***A cat climbs a tree*** *(to escape to escape from the dog)* *But is this the correct way of writing the word 'mohlareng'* *Do you think we write the word like that?* *Do you notice any error here? Look at the sound 'hl-'.*

42 Teacher Lentsu le ‘mohlareng’ ga le ngadilwe ka mokgwa wo akere. Ke mang yena a kare ngwalelago mohlareng as šumiša modumo wahl gabotse. So, seswantšhong sa bobedi..*Re bona Katse a tšhabela mohlareng*	*The word ‘mohlareng’ is not written like the way it is written on the board.* *Who can write the word correctly using the sound ‘hl-‘ correctly.* *So, in the second picture we see the cat escaping to the tree.*
The teacher then recalls the description of the first two picture frames, emphasizing that in the first picture ‘the dog was chasing the cat’, and the cat outran the dog.In the second picture frame the cat is seen climbing the tree. Now, the focus is directed to the third picture frame, which is the last part of the picture story.	
43 Teacher A re lebeleleng seswantšho sa boraro….Go diregang mo seswantšhong se.	*Let’s look at the third picture. What is happening in the third picture?*
44 Learner Inaudible…..	………..
43 Teacher A re lebeleleng seswanšho sa boraro… Ke eng seo se diragalago fao?	*Let’s look at the third picture* *What is happening in the third picture?*
44 Learner Buti o fološa katse mohlareng…..	*‘Buti’ is getting the cat off the tree*
45 Teacher O wa ifološa .O mongwe yena e kaba a bona eng?	*…he is assisting the cat to come down from the tree.* *Any other? What do you see?*

46 Learner …..Buti o wa ifološa.	*…Buti is rescuing the cat…*
47. Teacher Wena o bona eng…?	*You, what do you see?*
50 Learner …..Katse e thabile	*…..Katse e thabilie*
51 Teacher (unclear)	*(unclear)*
52 Teacher Ok, ke mang a ka re ngwalelang seo se diregogo mo seswanšhong so boraro? Ok, a re lebelelang motho yo a e fološago…ke mang yena?	*Who can write a sentence for picture …ok, let's* *look at the person rescuing the cat…who is it?*
53 Learner ……Ke buti	*….it is buti!*
54 Teacher Ke buti goba mošemane akere. Le bona bjang gore ke mošemane?	*Is it buti or mošemane?* *How do you see that he's a boy?*
55 Learner Re bona…ka..Ka hlogo….Ka borokgo.	*We see…by his head…..by his pants*
56 Teacher Re a kgona go ngwala mošemane? O dira eng mošemane Ke mang yena a tla re ngwalelang?	*Can you write the word Mošemane?* *What is the boy doing?* *Who can write for us?*

57 Learner (writing) O fološa katse motlhareng*	*He rescues the cat from the tree*
58 Teacher Ke yona?	*Is this correct?*
59 Learner Mošemane-o-fološa-katse-mohlareng	*The boy rescues the cat from the tree*
60: Teacher A re baleng mo a ngwadileng gona	*Let us read what has been written then.*
61 Learners: Mošemane-o-fološa-katse -mohlareng	*The boy rescues the tree from the tree*

Transcript 4: Teacher-learner talk with Teacher E

9T:	*T:*	More learners raise their hands.
OK, eh ... re kwele kanegelo yarena, akere? Ke mang ya ka re botsang gore kanegelo e e bolela ka eng? E bolela ka eng kanegelo e? E bolela ka makgolo le … ...	*OK, eh ..., we heard our story, is that so?* *Who can tell us what our story is all about?* *What is the story all about?*	The teacher cleans space onthe board.

(unclear), ...	*It is about Makgolo and … … (unclear), ...*	
9.1 L: E bolela ka ...	*L: It is about ...*	One learner answers
9.2 T: E bolela ka makgolo, a kere? A re makgolo o dirang mo kanegelong mo? Ke mang o mong ya ka re botšang, makgolo o dirang?	*T: It is about Makgolo, is that so? What is Makgolo doing in this story? Who is the other one who can tell us, What is Makgolo doing?*	Teacher cleans space and writes Makgolo on the board.
10L: O bopa dinkgo.	*L: She was building the calabashes.*	Learner stands.
11T: O bopa dinkgo, ... le a tseba gore nkgo ke eng?	*T: She was building the calabashes, ... do you know what a calabash is?*	
12L: Eng?	*L:Yes.*	
13T: Nkgo ke eng?	*T: What is a calabash?*	
14L: Ke pitsa.	*L: It's a pot.*	
15T: Ke mang a ileng a e bona? ... ... Ga le e tsebe?	*T: Who ever saw it? ... ... You do not know it?*	Teacher chuckles
16Ls: Re a e tseba.	*Ls: We know it.*	
17T: E dirang kgante ... e … e šoma go,e šoma go dira eng?	*T: What is it doing then, ... it ... it is used to , it is used to do what?*	
17a Ls: ... unclear ...	*Ls: ... unclear ...*	
17b T: Ke mang ka mo wena ga o lebelletse wena, o bona o kare e šoma go dira eng mona?	*T: Who is it you, if you are looking, you think, you see as if it is used to do what here?*	
18L: ... (unclear) ...	*L: … (unclear) ...*	
19T: E šoma go dira eng?	*T: It is used to do what?*	
20L: … .. (unclear) go lokela diapola ...	*L: … ... (unclear) to put the apples ...*	Learner stands up and answers the question
21T: Go lokela diapola? Hmm ... o mong a kare e šoma go dira eng?	*T: To put the apples? Hmm, ... what can tell us its use?*	
22L: Go lokela mablomo.	*L: To hold flowers.*	
23T: Go lokela mablomo. ... O	*T:* *To hold flowers. ... Another one? ... ...*	The teacher shows them the pictures in

mongwe? ... ... OK, eh..., kgalakgale batho ne ba sena dibakete, la di tseba dibakete di plastiki, a kere? Ne ba sena tšona, ba šomiša leraga go bopa poto. Gotee ba kgona go tshela metsi gore ba kgone go nwa le go fitlha dilo tše dingwe, mara gantsi be e šoma go ga metsi le go lotša metsi. A kere.Gona bjatše metsi le le tshela metsi gare ga eng?	*...* *OK, eh..., long-long ago people had no buckets, do you know buckets, plastics, they did not have them, not so?* *They used mud to make pots.* *The same time they would be able to pour water for drinking and to hide some things inside, but usually it was used to fetch water and to store it. Is that so?* *Now where do,do you pour water?*	the book.
24L: Ga bakete.	*L: In the bucket.*	
25T: Le tshela gare ga bakete, a kere?	*T: You pour inside the bucket, is that so?*	
26Ls: ng.	*Ls: Yes.*	
27T: Kgalekgale ne ba šomiša di, ba šomiša matsopa go aga dinkgo go lota metsi le tse dingwe. OK, la e kwišiša bjatše gore nkgo ke eng. Mm..Ei, bjatše Makgolo kgalekgale ba šomiša dinkgo go ga metsi dinokeng ba iša kae? Ka gae, a kere?	*T:* *Long-long time ago they used the, they used the mud to build calabashes to store water and other things.* *OK, Do you understand now what a calabash is? Mm..* *Ei,now makgolo long long time ago was using calabashes to fetch water from the rivers, taking it to where? At home, is that so?*	
28Ls: Ka gae.	*Ls: At home.*	
29T: Eng, so ile ra re mo kanegelong, Makgolo o bopa dinkgo, a kere?	*T: Yes, so we said that in the story, Makgolo is building the calabashes. Is that so?*	
30Ls: Eng.	*Ls: Yes.*	
31T:	*T:*	

Bjatše go diregileng ge a bopa nkgo ya gae? Ke mang ya ka re bontshang gore go diregileng?	*Now happened when she build her own calabash?* *Who can show us what happened?*	
32Ls: O ile a robetse pula ya thoma gona. Nkgo ya gagwe ya fetoga leraga	*Ls: While she was sleeping, the rain started falling. Her calabash turned into mud*	
33T: a. O ile a robetse pula ya thoma gona, a kere? b. Gwa direga eng morago ga fao, nkgo ya gagwe ya …?	*T:* *While she was sleeping, the rain started falling, is that so?* *What happened thereafter, her calabash did ….?*	
34Ls: Ya fetoga leraga.	*Ls: It turned into mud.*	
35T: Ya fetoga leraga…Ka morago ga foo gwa direga eng? ... (pause) Go diregileng ka morago ga fao? O ile a thakgala?	*T:* *It turned into mud.* *Thereafter what happened?.... (pause)* *What happened thereafter?* *Was she happy?*	
36Ls: O ile a nyama.	*Ls: She was disappointed.*	

Transcript 5: ABCD rhyme with Teracher D

Original utterance in English	Non-verbal aspects and actions
1 T: I am first going to teach you a song….do you like singing?	
2 L …………………………..	No affirmative response from the learners, though some nod their heads.
3 T Ok, let me teach you how to sing…I will sing and then you will sing after me…okay.	
4 L Yes…	Whole class response

5L Alright…*Come little children come to me, I will teach you ABC ABCDEFG HIJ K LMNOP LMNOPQ RST UVW XYZ*	Teacher writes on the board The learners join in the singing. The teacher is surprised.
4T Do you know this song? Oh…you know the song! So, I am going to write the song here.*Come little …….*	Many of the learners knew the ABC part, and thus persistently nodded. Teacher start writing on the board: '*Come little…..'*
5 T What must come here?	
6 L ….'children'	One learner softly mentions 'children'
7T Yes….children What must I write next....? *Come little children, come to me. I will teach you ABC ABCD EFG HIJ K LMNOP LMNOPQ RST UVW XYZ*	The teacher then completes the sentence Scattered voices of the learner started singing, with the teacher writing the rhyme on the board.
8 T Who can show me where is 'B'? Do you know?	
9 L…………..	The learner comes to the board and places his finger on the letter B
10 T Is she right..? is she right? Ok, you stay here, come and show me 'B'	
11 Ls: Yes, ma'am…yes ma'am!	

Transcript 6: Home language as a resource for EFAL learning with Teacher D

Original utterance	**Non-verbal aspects and actions**
1 T Who understands my question?	
2 L Yes	Some of the learners affirmatively respond.
3T I want you to explain in your language to her what I'm asking…I am asking you to tell me….we've got four birthdays and four names…correct? I want to know who was born first and who was born last…That means who is the	The teacher points to the board where the names of four students along with their birthdays are written.

oldest and who is the youngest? Now, they don't understand the question. Can you tell them in your language…in Sepedi…what I want? Stand here and tell	
4 L……………..(Not audible)	The learner stumbles, and the teacher passes the turn to another learner.
5 T Ok…Tell…in your language, tell them.	
6 L ***Ba re o monyane ke mang…? Ke mang a belegweng pele, le wo a belegeng mafeleng ke mang?*** (The question is who is the youngest? Who's the one born first, and the one who followed last?)	A female learner stands up and interprets the question to the rest of the class in Sepedi
7 T Did she say it correctly?	
8 Ls: Yes!	
9 T You all understood her?	
10 L: Yes!	Learners respond

Transcript 7: Negotiating the meaning of 'sort' by Teacher D

1. T: OK. Who is going to read the next line? ... Next one -- it begins there. ... This one. Who's going to read that? ... Will you read the sentence? ... From here ... Can you read?	Teacher points to the next sentence. The learners are not engaging much with the teacher.
2. T: OK. Anyone who can read that? ... There ..There ... yes.	2 learners raise their hands
3. L: ... all ... (inaudible) ...	Learners each try reading at own pace.
4. T:. .. all ... What is the next word? There were ... there were all ?	Learners each try reading at own pace. [8 min]
5. Ls: There were all sorts of books.	Learner raises her hand and teacher points to her to read.
6. T: There were all sorts of books ... OK, I'm going to write this word here.	Teacher writes 'sorts' on chalkboard.
7. T: What is this word?	

8. Ls: Sorts.	
9. T: Sorts. What is the meaning of 'sorts'? ... What is the meaning of 'sorts'? ... There were all sorts of books. ... There were all sorts of books. ... What does it mean? .. What is the meaning of 'sorts'?	Teacher gestures to imply lots/many. Learners do not engage and keep their heads down
10. T: OK. You go into a vegetable shop. Right.	
11. L: Yes.	
12. T: If you go into a vegetable shop, what do you find in a vegetable shop?	A learner raises his hand and the teacher walks over to him. More learners start to raise their hands. Teacher walks around selecting learners to answer the question.
13. Ls: Vegetables.	
14. T: What...? vegetables. What type of vegetables? Give me the name of one vegetable.	
15. L: Tomato.	
16. T: Toma ... tomato. OK. ... Yes.	
17. L:inaudible	
18. T: Pineapple? Yes. Pineapple.	
19. L: Apple. ... (inaudible other options)	
20. T: Apple. ... Banana. ... Pear. ... Yes, pear ... right. What other ... vegetables and fruits? Huh?	
21. L: Fruit.	
22. T: Fruit. OK. ... Oranges ... yes. ... Spinache ... Yes.	
23. L: Mango.	
24. T: Mango. OK. So, when you go ... When you go to a vegetable and fruit shop, you'll find all sorts of vegetables...Understand the meaning of 'sorts'?	
25. Ls: Yes.	
26. T: What's the meaning of 'sorts'? Can you tell me?	Teacher waves arms asking if anyone can answer the question. Teacher spreads arms open suggesting many.
27. T: Can somebody tell the meaning in Sepedi? ... All sorts of vegetables. ... Carrots, bananas,	

spinache, oranges, uh, pineapples, all ... all sorts. ... OK? ... So what is the meaning of 'sorts'?	
28. T: Do you know this word?	Teachers writes 'kinds' on chalkboard.
29. T: ... all kinds.	
30. T: All kinds of vegetables. ... Do you know the word 'kinds'? ...	Teacher points to word on the board.
31. Ls: No.	
32T: OK. It means: 'many different things'. OK. Like you have many different vegetables and fruits, you also have all sorts of books ... many kinds of books. OK.	Teacher spreads arms open suggesting many. Teacher touches fingers in counting fashion. Learners are quiet.
32T: So, you can have books about games. ... You can have books about songs. ... You can have books about stories. ... You can have books about ... uhm ... sports – different kinds of sports like soccer, rugby. ... You can have books about the world – all the countries. OK.	
33T: So, you can have many, many kinds or sorts of books. ... OK.	Teacher collects book and points out the next sentence. Some learners raise their hands. Other learners read at own pace.
34T: Who will read the next sentence? ... Anyone who can read it?	
35T: Try to read it to yourself, and then you read aloud.	
36Ls: (inaudible)	
37T: There were ... ... Great! ... You read. ... OK, now listen to him. You all tried to read that sentence. ... OK. Come. ... There were ... . Read that. ... There were ...	