CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Language is used as a vehicle for conveying messages and ideas. It is also used as a means of communication. Alexander (2002:12) confirms it as a key component and the barometer of our development. The Language in Education Policy of South Africa (LiEP) (1997) promotes multilingualism. The LiEP further states that the right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual. This implies that learners in South Africa have a constitutional right to be instructed in the language of their choice, where it is reasonably possible.

In the same breath, South Africa is in the process of transformation. English is no longer considered as the language of teaching and learning, or a language across the curriculum. Instead, teachers and learners are encouraged to learn English in such a way that it is not used at the expense of the promotion and development of African languages. Despite the new language policy, the hegemony of English remains unshaken and unstopped even after 200 years of dominance. English still remains the language of learning and teaching, and a language of communication in and outside the school. Crystal (1999:122) noted, quoting Sir Syndath Rampha, that "there is no retreat from English-speaking world". Phillipson and Kachu, in Crystal (1999:121) argue that "English happened to be in the right place at the right time".

In many countries English served as a vehicle for science, for the mass media, and to some extent for literature. Stevens (1998:62) contends that English still remains the language of scientific and technological advancement. Stein (1995:64) supports the above statement, that English is the most widely–spoken international language of wider communication, in the media, education, trade, science, technology, and research diplomacy. The English Academy of South Africa (1976) confirmed that English still remains the language of communication and convenience in staff meetings and various gatherings. Therefore learners and teachers are still expected to perform and compete in English in and outside the school.

It is upon this premise that the researcher aims to assess and evaluate language proficiency and to explore factors that lead to poor proficiency in English. The researcher assumes that the real situation in terms of using the language indicates that the basic skills in English are

not known by most learners. Ralenala (2003) says that more black learners move out of rural and township schools to ex-model C schools. Ralenala (2003) further argues that parents pay a lot of money not basically because they want their children to receive quality education, but that their children should express themselves powerfully in English. The fluency and accuracy in which the learners at private schools express themselves, seems to impress most parents.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

South Africa has a high functional literacy level. The functional literacy level is attributed to reading and writing skills of nine and sixteen year old children. This is supported by READ Educational Trust (2011) whose statistics rate functional literacy in South Africa at 85%. The organisations' finding suggests that over the past five years, there has been little or no improvement in functionally literacy. The recent report in July 2011 states that more than a third of South Africans, aged 16 years and older are illiterate. READ National Director Cynthia Hugo says that there is a "pressing need for the promotion of a culture of reading" (READ 2011). The finding further states that most impoverished children enter their formal schooling system being physically, emotionally and cognitively underdeveloped. The reason is that they lack the necessary foundation to begin literacy, numeracy and life skills work at school.

The researcher believes that informal education at home plays a small role in improving a child's English proficiency, since it is not the child's immediate informal second language. Formal education has the responsibility of improving learners English proficiency, since teachers are well trained in teaching the language, hence the concept "teaching the language". Ralenala (1993:144) states that the aim of teaching the language in any situation is to develop communicative competence. The opposite seems to be true in terms of language policy application and practice in the schools in Koloti circuit.

Austin (1962:102) contends that culturally disadvantaged rural learners face many obstacles the minute they set foot inside school. Austin (1962) argues that the children speak a different language and their communication skills are very limited. McDonald (1990:80) adds that for them to study English for the very first time at school, poses a great challenge. Therefore, it is against this background that the researcher finds it imperative that schools should lay a proper foundation, and that the skills in English as a second language should be correctly taught. These skills will assist learners to use English in various contexts.

The researcher is of the view that over the past twenty years, there have been numerous teaching approaches and methodologies, each representing a reaction to the previous one. This ranged from the grammar translation method, audio–lingual method and the cognitive code method. These methods were teacher centred and learners were evaluated in terms of how much they had memorised. It seems this method, did not promote acquisition of the second language.

In the 1970's, the communicative approach of Canale and Swain (1980) was introduced. The aim of the approach was to promote communicative competence. The approach emphasized the process of learning rather than the product of learning. The approach is more learner–centred rather than teacher centred. It is upon this theory that most curricular were designed and materials based. What is surprising is that this method seems not to have made a difference in the teaching of language, hence incompetence in communication.

The new dispensation in South Africa (1994) brought with it a new curriculum. The new curriculum is called Outcomes Based Education (OBE). Resource materials and the curriculum are still based on the communicative approach. The outcomes-based approach is also learner centred. Teachers are encouraged to teach learners in a way that they discover knowledge on their own, as groups and in their pairs. The approach emphasized understanding, comprehension and communication as core aspects to be mastered in a language. However, this approach seems to have brought confusion among teachers and learners.

Teachers complained about the Department of Education's relationship with the schools. They complained that the Department of Education did not conduct intensive workshops about these new approaches, and therefore during the process of teaching they found themselves as teachers and learners at the same time. This ultimately impacted in one way or another on the output of language.

According to the Outcome-based curriculum, learners are to be assessed according to different phases, the General Education Band (GET) and the Further Education Training (FET). Grade progression in English is emphasized. This is a new approach for teachers and it ultimately lowered the standards of second language teachers because most of the teachers did not know what is expected of them. Most educators used 'trial and error' methods until they lapsed back to 'rote learning' which ultimately defeated the purpose of the language policy. Learners continued to perform to their lower levels. Ralenala (1993) suggests that

learners who perform to their lower levels have the command of language below expectation. This practice was discovered in most schools. Mawasha (1998) contends that the teaching of English remains problematic. The problem seems to be on the increase rather than on the decrease. Mawasha (1998) further says, shortage of qualified teachers to teach English consequently affects learners' performance. Learners have become much less proficient in using the language. Mawasha (1998) also says, some of the problems relating to performance in English in black schools could be directly related to either poor English proficiency or linguistic background on the part of the teacher to render effective teaching in order to provide good results.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem in this study relates to investigation of poor proficiency in English as second language among learners in the secondary schools at Koloti circuit. The researcher views English proficiency as a contributing factor towards learners' performance and competence in and outside the school. The problem is that learners have poor proficiency in English.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to investigate English language proficiency in the secondary schools at Koloti circuit.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- To assess and evaluate English language proficiency through language diagnostic tests.
- To determine the root cause of poor English proficiency.
- To assess the role played by teachers and parents in assisting learners in their second language.
- To propose strategies that will assist both learners and educators in improving their language proficiency.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In addressing the problem in this study, the researcher is guided by the following research questions, which are in line with the research objectives:

- Do teachers conduct language diagnostic tests to determine the proficiency of learners when they enter a new grade?

- Are teachers able to assess and evaluate learners according to the language policy in the classrooms?

- Are parents able to assist their children at home in their language of learning and teaching?

- Do teachers keep abreast with new developments in second language teaching and practise them in class?

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the review of related literature the researcher intended to explore what authors say about proficiency, the nature and origin of second language proficiency as a therapy towards improving achievement, performance and competence. Research in second language proficiency started in the 1970's. Much of research was conducted in developed countries, and it focussed on the effect of the destination of second language proficiency of immigrants. Studies were conducted in the United States (Chiswick 1978; Chiswick & Miller 1995; Kossoudji 1998; Bellonte & Kogut 1998; Chiswick & Miller 2002), Canada, Australia and Israel (Chiswick & Miller 1995; Chiswick 1978; Pendakur & Pendakur 2002). The literature review focussed on immigrant language skills because of their assimilation into the labour market of the host country.

However, Chiswick et al (2000:350) states that there has been relatively little work in developing countries. Research conducted is based on the relationship between the dominant non-indigenous language skills among indigenous language speakers. This happened because in developing countries the dominant language in which business and public life is conducted, may not be the language spoken by the native or indigenous population.

Research has confirmed that there have been no national studies which investigate levels of English language proficiency in South Africa although English skills are widely believed to be significant in economic currency in the labour market. There is also no language proficiency in relation and return to education (Casale & Poosel, 2010:08).

1.8   LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The study of 'Language Proficiency' has been controversial among applied linguists. In South Africa there is also a generally accepted definition of language proficiency. For the purpose of this study, the researcher aligns with Chomsky's notion of language proficiency, meaning linguistic competence. Chomsky's notion implies that every healthy individual is in one language. Hymes (1997) supported Chomsky by introducing communicative competence which encompasses both linguistic competence and socio-linguistic dimensions, which is the capacity for appropriated use of language in a particular discourse situation.

Cummins (1980) distinguishes between two different kinds of language proficiency, BICS (basic interpersonal cognitive skills and CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency). BICS included accent, oral fluency and sociolinguistic competence and CALP refers to the ability to understand and produce the complex written or oral language skills which encompasses phonological and grammatical knowledge as well as basic reading and writing skills.

In 1996 the South African government adopted a progressive constitution, giving official status to 11 official languages. Nevertheless, English remains the dominant language in the public and economic spheres. Parents also wanted their children to be taught in English. It is upon this premise that the researcher wishes to investigate English language proficiency and how it affects competence and performance in deep rural disadvantaged African schools.

According to Heugh (1999:304), young African learners particularly from poor communities who attend historically disadvantaged African schools do not have sufficient time in classroom and exposure to English outside the classroom, to acquire a threshold level of English. Heugh (1999) also adds that teachers who are not native speakers of English are inadequate for effective teaching and learning in English. Teachers resort to code-switching and code-mixing in the classroom (Probyn et al, 2002; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004), although learners are required to write the final matriculation in English. The above recent research adds value to the purpose of the study under investigation.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the theories of Krashen's (1981) and Cummins (1991) respectively. Krashen's theory (1995) addresses second language learning and acquisition. Cummins theory (1991) addresses interrelated principles related to second language acquisition. The

first principle is the conversational academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skill (BICS). Krashen's theory (1981) is concerned with addressing the 'learned system' which is referred to as the product of formal instruction and it consists of conscious processes of learning rules about grammar. The 'acquisition system' is defined as the product of subconscious process undergone by children when they acquire their first language. Cummins (1991) made a distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The distinction was made to draw attention to the very different time periods typically required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in their second language as opposed to grade appropriate academic proficiency in that language.

These two theories are closely related to this study because proficiency is tested on the fact that learners have learned and acquired their second language through proper teaching methods and approaches. The researcher agrees with Krashen's theory (1981) that learners learn the language before they acquire it. Cummins (1991) theory which is almost central to most policy issues, addresses essential aspects of language proficiency. It addresses the ability of a second language learner to make complex meaningful meaning in either oral or written language modalities. In the context of this study, the researcher is concerned that learners lack basic language skills of reading listening, writing and speaking. Therefore it is the responsibility of the teacher to teach learners in such a way that they will not only learn but acquire the second language.

1.10   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is referred to as a system of collecting data for a research project. It is a way in which a researcher is going to gather information. Babbie and Mouton (2008:647) define research methodology as the methods, techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research design or research plan, as well as the underlying principles and assumptions in their use. Methodology, on the other hand, refers to the way one collects and analyses data. In simpler terms, it refers to a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate a specific research problem (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:9-10).

From a methodological point of view, there are two types of research approaches namely, qualitative research and quantitative research. Of the two approaches, the study follows the qualitative research approach. The researcher chose to follow a qualitative research approach

instead of the quantitative approach because the qualitative approach seeks to preserve the integrity of narrative data and attempts to use the data to exemplify unusual or core themes embedded in context. Maree (2009:50) says that qualitative data attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon or context, with the intention of developing and understanding what is being observed or studied. Qualitative research is also explanatory and involves an in-depth view into the research problem. It allows the researcher to be flexible throughout the research processes, and it also studies phenomenon from a natural setting. It emphasises people's life experiences so that their perception can be discovered and explained (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:3).

This study also provides a synopsis on the investigation of poor language proficiency and therefore follows an inductive quality approach. This is due, according to De Vos (2002:79), to the fact that the qualitative approach stems from an anti–positivistic interpretative approach which is idiographic and 'holistic' in nature and aims mainly to understand social life and the meaning that the people attach to everyday life.

1.10.1 Research Design

A research design is a strategic framework or plan that guides research activity to ensure that sound conclusions are reached. It is also a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be interpreted. De Vos (1998:77) defines it as a blue print or detailed plan on how research study is conducted. Balock and Balock (1982:60) added that it is an application of scientific methods to the particular phenomenon to be investigated which the researcher seeks greater insight on increased body of factual knowledge. Nachmias and Nachmias (1992:77-78) provides a summary of a research design as a plan that guides the investigators in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting observations.

The researcher decided to use case study as a qualitative research design. The researcher chose the case study design because it is a method that is concerned with investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context (Bromley, 1990:802). The researcher also chose case design because it considers the voice of one or two participants in a situation and the views of other relevant groups of actors and their interactions.

1.10.2 Target population

A population is a full set of elements or cases from which a sample is drawn (Mancosa, 2003:13). Koloti circuit consists of five secondary schools. The researcher collected data from three secondary schools because of convenience and proximity in the vicinity of Moletji area where most of the learners live. Grade 10 learners from the population were targeted. English teachers, heads of Department, curriculum specialists and managers formed part of the population. The learners in these institutions are mostly Sepedi speakers and all use English as their first additional language.

1.10.3 Sampling

It is usually impossible to include the entire population in the study. Therefore a sample is chosen. The main considerations when choosing a sample are time and cost. A sample is selection of representatives from the whole which helps the researcher to obtain workable number of subjects or cases. Bailey (1987:83) says that it is also an actual element of the population considered for actual inclusion of the study. Mason (1997:75) states that it enables the researcher to study a portion of the population rather than the entire population. The researcher chose purposive sampling for the purpose of this research study. The three main principles of sampling are, sampling size, representative and generalizations.

For a sample to be representative, a sample must comprise all the characteristic of the total population (Uys & Basson, 1991:87). For the purpose of this study, only Sepedi-speaking learners in Grade 10 and teachers who teach English as a second language comprise the sample. Koloti circuit consists of five secondary schools. The researcher used only three schools. The researcher chose five teachers from each school giving a total number of 15 teachers. Grade 10 learners were also chosen, 10 from each school giving a total of 30 learners. Other respondents included one HOD from each school (3 in total from three schools) and three principals (one from each school) and one curriculum advisor.

Findings from a study are based on a given sample, from a specific population at a certain time and place, using certain instrument and techniques. In the context of this study, two sets of samples were drawn to avoid generalisation, namely English teachers and Sepedi learners, both speaking the same language and studying in the same second language.

1.11 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Data collection instruments are tools that are used to gather data from the field. They are selected on the basis of compatibility with the purpose of the study, nature of data to be collected, cost, sizes and characteristics of the research samples. The tools that researchers commonly use in collecting data included surveys, interviews, review of documentation, questionnaires and even collection of physical artefacts. The following research instruments were used in this study namely, questionnaires and interviews. According to Bason (1991:65), a questionnaire is an instrument used by the researcher to gather data and is a more superficial instrument. The aim of the questionnaire is to inform the researcher about the perception of students regarding their linguistic needs in English as a second language. The teachers' questionnaire sought specific information on the role that is played by teachers in teaching English, exposure and qualifications in the subject.

In addition, the researcher used interviews to collect data. Interview schedules are more flexible data as collection instruments than questionnaires (Sewell and Price, 2001:1). Qualitative interviews as an instrument, attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of view, in order to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation. The disadvantage of interviews is that, they take much time and are sometimes expensive compared to questionnaires.

The researcher also used practical classroom observation. The researcher observed how learners learn and how teachers teach. The purpose of the observation was to shed light on the real interaction between learners and teachers during the English lessons.

1.12 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis is the actual process of analysing raw data as received, so that useful information can be extracted from it. The analysis of research data, however, does not in itself provide the answer to the research questions. Interpretations of data are also necessary because interpretation is an exercise of explaining and finding meaning of the aspects under study. De Vos (1998:204) regards data analysis as actually consisting of three stages namely: data reduction, data display and verifications.

Analysis of data means categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising data to obtain answers. The purpose of analysing data in research is to reduce data to an intelligible and interpretative form so that the relation of the research problem can be studied, tested and

interpreted with a view of describing variables. Data from the questionnaires and interviews for both teachers and learners was analysed according to common responses that were received. Pertinent points related to the aim and objectives were discussed. Data from the diagnostic tests were analysed according to levels of achievement using rubrics and rating scales.

1.13 DELIMITATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

The study is delimited to Limpopo Province in South Africa in the geographical areas of rural Moletjie tribal authority. Psychologically, the study will be delimited to the investigation of poor language proficiency in English as a second language.

1.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is important that a researcher is knowledgeable about ethics in research. De Vos (1998:24) states that it is important in order to protect respondents, their actions, competence and restoration of subjects. The researcher obtained permission from the Department of Education to conduct research. Permission was also sought from the school governing bodies of the schools used in the study. Permission was also sought from Mmakgabo Secondary School, as it was selected as the central venue for data collection meetings as it was convenient for transport and had readily available security and electricity. The reason for the researcher seeking permission was to protect respondents against any form of harm. Bailey (1987) also states that the research relationship must be collaborative, implying that there must be a mutual engagement between teachers, students and researchers.

The researcher's most important responsibility is to the teachers, student, and parents. The purpose is to respect them, openly share information about the research and consult with teaching colleagues in order to review plans for their study and explain research questions, methods of data collection and update their plans as the research progressed. The researcher also obtained written release from the individuals involved in the research. This serves to protect the confidentiality of people involved in research. The researcher assured the participants that trust was maintained because trust is the foundation of any ethical study (De Vos, 1998:79).

1.15 RESEARCH STRUCTURE

The study was divided into five chapters, chapter one of this study, covered orientation and background, aims and objectives, data gathering strategies and techniques, methodology through which the study was achieved, plan of study, delimitation of study, analysis and interpretation of study, and explanation of key concepts.

Chapter two dealt with literature review, an intensive review on literature, in terms of investigating poor English language proficiency and its causes was undertaken by the study, in order to expose the availability of knowledge covered in this area.

The approach taken in generating primary data was explained and justified. The study used qualitative research design. The sample, data collection and data analysis were outlined.

The researcher provided a report on what was found from the questionnaires and interviews in the form of numbers and statement answers. The results were interpreted and discussed and their implications explained. Key points were drawn out and argued scientifically. Qualitative data that was reduced to numerical values was also provided.

Summary of findings, recommendations and inclusions were presented, and the reasons for the problem explained in the problem statement. The importance of English language proficiency was also given attention.

1.16 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The researcher defined key concepts in order to elucidate meaning and avoid ambiguity and misconceptions that can mislead readers of research.

Language Proficiency

Language proficiency is a measurement of how well an individual has mastered a language. It is measured in terms of receptive and expressive language skills, syntax, vocabulary, semantics and other areas that demonstrate language abilities which include reading, writing, speaking and listening (ACTFL).

Competence

It is the capacity of continuing performance with specific ranges and context resulting from integration of a number of specific outcomes (Assessment Policy Get Band, 2007).

Evaluation

Evaluation means the process of information obtained through assessment which is interpreted to make a judgement about a learners' level of competence which include learners' attitude and values (Wein & Robert, 1994:3).

Assessment

Bainard, Maree and Fraser (2004:32) presents a sample definition of assessment as being the ability to see learners and to perceive what they can do in the hope of understanding how they can learn with the aim of assisting their learning.

Performance

Performance is defined by Ralenala (1993:33) as what is done when proficiency is put to practice.

1.17 CONCLUSION

English is one of the subjects learned at school. Like any other subject, it needs to be taught by teachers having knowledge of the correct methods and approaches in order that learners can reach the levels of competence and performance required. It is important that proficiency in English must be developed. To date, examinations in schools are still in the language that is mostly spoken, in business, used in research methodologies and political *imbizos*. Mother tongue instruction is still being planned and it is not going to be used in the immediate future (Mamphela, 2009).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The colonisation of Africa by European countries led to many countries in Africa losing their languages. South Africa like other colonised states was also a victim of colonisation. Countries such as Zimbabwe and Nigeria which were under British rule used English as a dominant language for learning and teaching. Zimbabwe, as one of the African countries that was colonised by Britain, had a language policy that did not recognise indigenous languages (L1) spoken by the majority of people (Ndamba 1999). According to the official language policy and the 1987 Education Act (which was revised in 2004), children in Grades 1-3 had to be instructed in their first language (L1) and learn English (L2) as one of the subjects in the curriculum. From Grade 4 onwards English became the language of instruction. The same situation was found in Nigeria where learners of the 'elite' group studied in English in their various private schools, rather than in their mother-tongue (Mamphela 2009). In Tanzania, studies conducted by Campell and Wales (1970) show that education in primary schools was conducted in Kiswahili but students favoured the retention of English as a medium of instruction in schools.

In order to understand the language used in education in South Africa, one needs to first look at the historical background of languages in South Africa. Language has been a controversial issue in South Africa for a long time. During the apartheid era, people in South Africa were segregated based on language. Afrikaans and English were called tongues or 'vernacular' (Mda 2004). Before 1994 there were 24 different spoken languages in South Africa with English and Afrikaans as the two official languages. The Bantu Education Act of (Department of Education 1953) stipulated that black learners should receive mother-tongue instruction in lower and higher primary grades with transition to English and Afrikaans (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2004; Probyn 2009). Many African schools started teaching in English from Grade 4 and often as early as Grade 1 (Probyn *et al.* 2002).

Attempts to force students to learn in Afrikaans as a medium of instruction for almost half of the curriculum in secondary schools in 1975 led to the student uprising in Soweto in 1976. Resistance to compulsory learning in Afrikaans coupled with the rejection of mother-tongue education in African schools and in the face of escalating opposition forced the government

to pass the Education and Training Act in 1979. The Act reduced mother-tongue instruction among African language speakers to four years in primary school, and thereafter schools could choose whether the medium of instruction would be English or Afrikaans. Most schools preferred to use English.

With the transition to democracy, the post-apartheid government adopted a progressive Language in Education Policy (LiEP) which promotes multilingualism. The policy also devolved the decision on the language of learning and teaching to the individual schools (through the school governing body) (Probyn *et al* 2002; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2004). The policy promotes (but does not mandate) the use of African languages alongside English. The policy encourages schools to maintain the learners' home language whilst at the same time they learn an additional language. The policy was also based on the notion of additive bilingualism, which was developed on theories of second language acquisition which state that conceptual grounding in the learners' home language provides the basis for later learning through an additional language (Heugh 1999:127).

However, most schools have maintained the use of English as the medium of learning and teaching from Grade 4 to high school level. Considering this current state of affairs in South African education and the maintenance of English as a language of teaching and learning, the researcher sought to further investigate the level of learners' proficiency in English. The researcher contends that learners, teachers and parents have developed positive attitudes towards English, but has observed that learners at Koloti circuit cannot read, write, listen and speak English both in and outside the school. The researcher's interest also lies in the proficiency of the teachers who are teaching the learners. Ali (1995) supports the researcher's view by saying that the majority of learners from previously disadvantaged schools battle with English second language (ESL) communication-related activities because they are not proficient in English. This may be attributed to lack of relevant teaching and learning strategies. Siergrunn and Pluddermann (1991) state that language skills of writing, listening, reading and speaking are needed by English second language learners, in order to complete the task-based activities that are found in the curriculum. Learners, especially in Grade 10, should be given the opportunity to be involved in task-based activities to develop communicative competence.

2.2   THE CURRENT LANGUAGE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.2.1   Language in Education Policy

In 1994 South Africa became a democratic state. The new government adopted a new language in education policy. The language in education policy promoted multilingualism and gave parents the opportunity to choose the language of learning for their children who attended school. Most parents chose to maintain English as the language of learning and teaching in schools, at the expense of mother-tongue instruction thereby defeating the purpose of the language in education policy. Mamphela (2009) argued that it was the responsibility of the government not to 'fudge' the language issue by declaring that there should be 11 official languages including English. She further says that the government has ignored the basic principles of learning by creating a post-apartheid framework which offers a choice in language instruction. She believes that parents were not informed about the risks and opportunities of choosing mother-tongue instruction. Furthermore, parents in the rural areas are illiterate and they cannot take responsibility of taking decisions of paramount importance. According to Mamphela (2009), recent educational practice has also created a tragic situation in which most teachers and pupils in poor schools do not have adequate command of any of the 11 official languages to be able to function well in society. She says that education authorities should do a better job than to pass this choice to poor communities to make a "Hobsons choice". It is for this reason that English is still chosen as the language of study.

South Africans are not alone in undermining the language policy of their country. Professor Pai Obanya, a retired Nigerian education strategist, suggested that education in Africa alienates itself with the roots of the elite and undermines the capacity to be an effective agent of change to promote sustainable development. Education is about acculturation which implies that a person could be knowledgeable yet develop a feeling of belonging nowhere. Elites in Nigeria educate their children in private schools where the teaching of indigenous languages is minimal. They see the ability of their children to communicate in English as a badge of honour (Mamphela 2009). According to research, a key reason why parents want their children to learn in English is that they perceive their children to learn from a language that has value in the labour market. However, this perception is not yet empirically estimated as the labour force surveys have not collected information on English language ability (Casale & Poosel 2010:02). According to the Annual National Assessment (ANA) in Limpopo Province 2011, learners in Grade 3 are failing beyond expectation in literacy and languages. This is attributed to poor proficiency in English, hence this investigation.

2.3. THE USE OF ENGLISH IN SOUTH AFRICAN CLASSROOMS

Mothata, Lemmer, Mola and Pretorius (2002) assert that the South African system of education has the foundation of the past and the present. The previous dispensation consisted of the tri-cameral parliament where each racial group had its own education department (Whites, Coloureds and Indians). After the 1994 democratic elections, the new government restructured the education system. This provision is stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. The present education system has a national, provincial and local school structure. A new curriculum and a totally new teaching approach (OBE) were implemented in South African education. As part of the Languages Learning Area, learners have to enrol for their first language as well as their second language. In ESL classrooms, communication takes place between the educator and the learner. Educators and learners interact in a meaningful way. Van Schalkwyk (2001) defines this communication as a two-way process in which feedback takes place when a sector in the classroom must depend on, what Cummins (1980) calls, Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS allow learners to speak and cope with pronunciation and vocabulary in order to be able to use English in everyday life. CALP, on the other hand, enables the learner to become a competent academic communicator. The learner is capable of showing various skills such as the ability to be engaged in cognitive demanding and problem solving tasks. In the classroom the learner must attain a CALP level of English proficiency in order to be successful academically. The deeper levels of cognitive academic proficiency would involve analysis and evaluation.

According to research, the opposite seems to be happening in ESL classes. ESL acquisition emerges as a challenge to the vast majority of learners for whom English is not a first language. This problem manifests itself in the previously disadvantaged black schools in South Africa. According to Schlebusch (2000), the problem is brought about by lack of English proficiency of learners before entering the senior phase. Rossel and Baker (1996) maintained that in order to become proficient in a second language, learners need to be exposed to the second language in optimal conditions for six to eight years. However, the practicality of BICS and CALP seems to be of no use. Educators seem to use the traditional way of teaching and defeat the purpose the theories of second language acquisition. Current teaching methods described by OBE where not used by educators, hence failure to ensure competence and performance. Despite the frustration encountered, English still remains the *lingo-franca* (Schlebush & Thobedi 2004).

2.4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

There are still serious debatable issues around second language proficiency. Iyldyz (2007) says that little effort has been made to deal with the issue of proficiency to date. There might be considerable agreement on the issue of models around proficiency among second language specialists but there is currently no empirically validated description. Applied scientists are spending much time discussing about communicative competence, which according to Iyldyz (2004), overshadows the concept of English language proficiency. The complexity of proficiency studies is discussed by a number of theoretical linguists who are trying to construct frameworks on proficiency and competence. Given the complexity of the issue, a general background on how the issue has changed needs to be outlined in order to create an atmosphere of understanding of the study.

The controversy of the description is evident in North (2000), proficiency to him is defined as part of competence which, on the other hand, is an umbrella term. Vollmer (1981) says that the term proficiency stresses competence rather than performance aspects. Ingram (1985) adds that proficiency is more than knowledge; rather it is the ability to apply it in specific communication context. Taylor (1998) suggests that the term communicative proficiency as the ability to make use of competence and performance as what is done when proficiency is put to use. Davies (1989) defines proficiency as a part of communicative competence along with innate ability and performance. Of these definitions, the concept which was mostly preferred was communicative competence. Researchers believe that the concept will be easy to define in terms of second language proficiency.

2.4.1 The origin and nature of second language proficiency

The background knowledge on how the concept proficiency has developed over time is important in order to elucidate the meaning and understanding of the debate. The theoretical framework on the study of linguistic competence started with the structural school of linguistics, who maintained that learning a second language involves mastering its elements or components (Freed 1998:18). Early models in this work distinguished listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, together with knowledge components. This theory did not clearly indicate whether skills manifest knowledge or whether they had different relations with knowledge components. Second language during that time was based on the postulation that skills and knowledge components could be taught and be tested separately.

The structural linguistic theory along with behaviourist psychology theory influenced second language education producing the audio-lingual approach, which assumed that speech was primary and each language was to be viewed within its own context and unique system. According to Lado (1961), the approach implied that learning the language is viewed as a sequence of activities leading to habit formation. Audio-lingualism which focused the four skills made this perspective popular in the 1960s. Stern (1992) argues that the four skills remain useful expressions of proficiency in modern second language education. Chomsky (1965) started a theory of transformational generative grammar. Hymes (1997) supported the process by introducing communicative competence to include not only grammatical competence but also social linguistic competence. Campell and Wales (1970) suggested that appropriateness of language is more important than grammaticality. Oller (1979:79) further added that pragmatics must be added because it is fundamental. He proposed one underlying factor called global language proficiency and presented proficiency as a unitary construct. Communicative language teaching therefore replaced audio-lingualism and the structural approach.

The 1980s witnessed a stage where proficiency was characterised by communicative terms. This led to major shifts in conception of syllabuses and methodology, the effects of which are seen today in most education systems. Savignon (1985) admitted the need for communicative functions. Cummins (1980; 1991) made a distinction between two concepts of proficiency, basic interpersonal skills and cognitive academic language skills, which influenced most language policies. Canale (1983:14) were accepted as the first scholars to present an extended component to facilitate issues that are important for L2 education. The framework did not bring a perfect view of proficiency as attempts to prove this framework empirically failed. However, it opened a new era through introduction of new components of communicative competence and extended language testing theory and facilitated test development by giving attention to communicative testing. The framework was later refined by Canale and Swain (1983). In this framework, they distinguished between four principal types of competence, that is, grammatical, sociolinguistics, discourse and strategic competence.

Canale and Swain further included linguistic competence within communicative competence, arguing that grammar rules do not have meaning without rules of use. The proficiency concept which formed the framework designed by Canale and Swain (1980) was important to most education systems including South Africa. The framework designed by Canale and Swain was said to be important for teachers. The framework guides teachers in course

objectives and course content. It also helped teachers to determine outcomes. It helped teachers to prepare students for advanced and competent use of second and foreign language within and outside academic circles (Freed 1998:57). This made teachers, especially in US, proficient and it also started questioning proficiency standards (ACTFL) guidelines. According to Kasper (1997:345), the models of communicative competence are important because they serve as goal specification in second language education. Therefore it is important that the concept proficiency should be expressed as communicative competence in order to serve specified goals of second language. On the contrary, Stern (1992) argued that the problems lie with the constructs of communicative competence itself as theories have not as yet provided a theoretical basis for a satisfactory description of the components of proficiency. Therefore a valid clear theory is needed to serve as a foundation for proficiency.

2.5   ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Since there is no clear description of the concept proficiency in developed countries where research is advanced, this has affected studies in under-developed countries like South Africa were data need to be drawn from literature on the returns to dominant language skills in developing countries, in order to establish national household surveys on language proficiency in South Africa (Casale & Posel 2010).

This study sought to investigate English proficiency in the secondary schools in Koloti circuit which is situated in a deep rural area. This is important in the researchers view because to date, English is still a dominant language of business, government and education in South Africa. It is a language that is not spoken by the majority of the African population at home. The researcher adopted the description of proficiency by Casale and Posel (2010) as it is recent. The term proficiency is confined to having the ability to read and write in English at school and not in the work situation because much of the research is confined to the ability to read and write in employment situations.

2.6 ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

2.6.1 Second Language Learning

Second language learning is all about knowing the rules, having a conscious knowledge about grammar (Krashen & Terell 1983). Language learning differs from language acquisition because language learning has to deal with learning a second language. Language learning is the development of conscious knowledge about a language in isolation of linguistics rules.

The concept of language learning focuses on language in its written form and the objective is for the student to understand the structure and rules of language through the application of intellect and logical deductive reasoning (Robert & Yin 2003). The form is of greater importance than communication. During the teaching and learning process, one studies the theory in the absence of the practical; one values the correct and represses the incorrect. There is little room for spontaneity. Teaching and learning is also governed by a formal instructional plan with a predetermined syllabus. The teacher is an authority figure and the participation of the student is predominantly passive. Learning is normally tied to a present syllabus that includes memorisation of vocabulary and seeks to transmit to the learner knowledge about the language function and grammatical structure with its regularities, its contact with children's home language knowledge that one hope will become the practical skills of understanding and speaking the language. The effort of accumulating knowledge becomes frustrating because of the lack of familiarity with the language. According to the outcomes-based approach in ESL, Killen (1998) points out that teachers must use a variety of teaching and learning strategies in order to allow learners to learn the language they have mastered.

2.7 SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Second language acquisition is a natural unconscious process similar to home language acquisition. It depends upon what other people are saying, provided that the child hears meaningful speech and endeavours to understand it, acquisition will occur (Krashen 1981). Second language acquisition also occurs when the child is not deprived of meaningful language. This manifests itself in classroom activities that concentrate on the forms of language rather than meaning, or by psychological blocks that prevents the otherwise useful language from gaining access to the learners mind. Krashen and Terell (1983:18) describe acquiring a language as simply picking it up. It is developing a language by using it in a natural context. The only language that is acquired is the child's first language. The child acquires the first language from parents by being exposed to it. Krashen and Terrell (1983:03) state that the child's first language does not play a very important role in second language acquisition. Krashen (1981:13) referred to it as interference which implies that the knowledge of our first language gets in the way to fight acquisition. If one needs to fight interference, one must provide learners with extra lessons with practice and drill on those structures in which the first language differs with the second language. Exercises must enforce communicative competence in second language learning.

Although pedagogues differ on the issue of interference, Newmark, as quoted in Krashen and Terell (1983), emphasized that interference is not important at all when we learn and use second language because errors that are committed in the first language are simply the results of falling back and do not disturb acquisition. Krashen and Terell (1983) contend that the use of first language in second language acquisition is disadvantageous and is a short term solution because it needs to be monitored so that error correction does not disturb language acquisition.

2.8 DISTINCTION BETWEEN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LEARNING

According to Krashen (1983), language learning is different from language acquisition because language learning is knowing the rules, have a conscious knowledge about grammar. Language acquisition simply means "picking it up", that is, developing ability in language by using it in natural communicative situations. Language acquisition is the central most important means for gaining linguistics even for adults. Formal language learning is not important in developing communicative ability in second language learning. Researchers believe that language acquisition is responsible for the ability to understand and speak a second language easily and well. We use acquisition when we initiate sentences in second language and bring in learning as a kind of afterthought to make alterations and corrections.

2.9 THEORIES OF SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

This study is based on Krashen's theory of second language learning and acquisition. According to Krashen's theory (1981), there are two types of independent systems of second language performance; the learned system and the acquired system. According to Krashen, the acquired system or acquisition is a product of a subconscious process undergone by the children when they acquire their first language. The learned system or learning is a product of formal instruction which comprises of conscious processes that result in conscious knowledge of learning and knowing the rules of grammar (Krashen & Terell 1983). According to Krashen, the acquisition–learning hypothesis states that adults have two distinct ways of developing skills and knowledge in second language acquisition. These are acquisition by using language for real life communication, and knowing and learning language. According to Krashen (1988), formal language learning is not important because it is not important in developing communicative ability in second language. Research has shown that language acquisition is responsible for the ability to understand and speak the

second language easily and well. Acquisition is best used in initiating sentences in second language. It brings in learning as a kind of thought to make alterations and corrections.

2.10 DESCRIPTION OF KRASHEN'S THEORY OF SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

According to Krashen's (1989), acquisition occurs when there is comprehensible input. The situation is similar when babies acquire language from their surrounding environment without studying learning rules of grammar in text books and dictionaries. Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language, natural communication in which speakers are not concerned with the form of their utterance but with the messages they convey and understand. Second language learners acquire language easily by interacting with other language speakers and users. Therefore acquisition may take place at any age under appropriate conditions, while learning depends on the isolation of linguistic rules. Krashen (1981) further argues that language is acquired by understanding structures a bit beyond our current level of competence through the help of context extra-linguistic information. Language is best acquired by going for meaning first and later structure. Krashen (1981) regards communicative competence as the main function of learning a language. Teaching must focus on communicative abilities. The importance of vocabulary must be viewed as a vehicle for communicating means and messages. Acquisition is best reached when people comprehend messages and is therefore compared to natural assimilation.

2.11 CUMMIN'S THEORY

Cummins (1991) developed a theory on second language proficiency. In his theory, Cummins (1991) distinguishes two sets of interrelated principles. The first of these principles is the basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The aim of the distinction is to draw attention to different time periods typically required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in the second language as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language. This theory has become the most influential in central policy issues in the area of bilingual education in addressing the relationship between proficiency and academic performance.

Cummins (1991) argued that an individual develops two types of proficiency; basic interpersonal communicating skills and cognitive academic skills proficiency (CALP). Cummins (1991) suggests that the two proficiencies vary according to the degree of context

available to the learner, and the degree of cognitive challenge of the task. CALP represents little more than the test wishes. It is an appropriate way in which it is measured. Cummins argued that second language students learn BICS skills within a relatively short period. CALP addresses the skills learners need to have in order to succeed in their academic studies. BICS skills are not sufficient for students' academic success (Snow & Brinton 1977:07). Learners' skills depend on the development of CALP. Cummins emphasized CALP in order to develop academic writing skills in second language learning at school.

Cummins theory was criticised by a number of researchers. Wald (1984) argued that a simple dichotomy does not account for many dimensions of language use and competence, for example, sociolinguistics. Wald received a backlash from Cummins (1991) that the distinction between BICS and CALP was not proposed as a theory of language but as a distinction addressing specific issues related to education of second language learning, and does not address issues of sociolinguistics or any other discourse styles. Cummins further says that Wald's way of thinking is irrelevant and is compared to an apple which is not good because it tastes like an orange. (Romaine 1989:240) argues that BICS and CALP are conceptually distinct and cannot be acquired separately in different ways. Cummins responded that they are not necessarily distinct because all children acquire their initial conceptual foundation through conversational interaction and both BICS and CALP are shaped by the contexts of acquisition and use. Wald's idea was later ruled out.

2.12 CRITIQUES OF CALP AND BICS DISTINCTION

Cummins theory was also criticised by Edelsky *et al.*(1983), Romaine (1990), Trotsky (1990), Wald (1984) and Wiley (1997). Edelsky states that CALP represents little more than test wisdom. It is an artefact of the inappropriate way in which it has been measured. The constructs of BICS and CALP encourages skills–orientated instruction and thereby impedes the literacy development of bilingual students who thrive mainly in meaning-orientated whole language instructional context on tests. Furthermore, this theory can provide evidence on how well students perform on skills exercises and operate on a skills theory. Edelsky was surprised on how proficiency in any language varying in either oral or written modes, enable one to do everything humanly possible with language. Edelsky *et al*. (1983:65) refers to Cummin's theory as test witness or skills in instructional nonsense. Edelsky concludes that it is a theory that locates failure in children's heads. His critiques turned into nothing but rhetoric when asked to defend the stand he took. Wiley's (1996) was against the theory

because it only promotes language and schooling. According to Wiley (1996), school is not a neutral process, it involves class and culturally specific forms of socialist state, therefore the theory does not preach reality in terms of language development as it purports. Wiley's idea was also defeated and written off.

According to research, since the early 1980's, it is evidenced that immigrant students quickly acquire considerable fluency in the target language when they are exposed to it in the environment and at school. Despite this rapid growth in conversational fluency, it generally takes a minimum of about five years and frequently longer for them to catch up to native speakers in academic aspects of the language (Collier 1987, Cummins 1980) as assessed by measures of literacy and formal language knowledge.

2.13 KRASHEN'S THEORY AND THE NATURAL APPROACH

The basis of the Natural Approach is that learners should be able to listen to a language before they can speak it. This implies that learners must learn the language in a natural order. Krashen argues that language must be acquired first and thereafter production will take place. The Natural Approach is seen as an example of a communicative approach in which language must be taught through exercises promoting communicative competence. Although BICS and CALP supports Krashen's Natural Approach, educators misunderstood the usage and implications in rural areas. The goal of the natural approach is to communicate with native speakers of the target language. According to the natural approach, the student must first learn how to listen which precedes reading. Most activities in the early stages must be geared towards attaining comprehensible input without requiring oral production in the target language. These activities, according to Krashen, will map the beginning of production and few errors will be committed, however, students should not be forced in the target language.

The natural approach's syllabus consists of communicative goals. Therefore the focus of classroom topics must not be organised by grammatical structures. The teacher must present an optimal balance of acquisition and learning activities. The balance must be different in different contexts depending on the goals of the students' age ability to utilize grammar in monitoring. For learners to be successful in second language acquisition, learners need to be motivated and be encouraged to beat anxiety levels.

2.14 IMPLICATION OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages, and not when it is explicitly taught for conscious learning. The most important element of any language teaching is input. When the focus is on what is being said rather than on the form of the message, this is referred to by Krashen, as the great paradox of teaching the language. Comprehensible input is attained by using visual aids and pictures that assist the acquirer to understand and thereby to acquire concentration on syntax. Input will make the teacher to be concerned with the primary aim of understanding messages.

2.15 THE ROLE OF PROFICIENCY TESTING

Evaluating student progress is a necessity in academic situations and can serve as a useful part of the curriculum (Krashen 1983:165). Oller (1979:401) stated that the purpose of test is to measure variance in performances of various sorts. In this sense, Oller says that in teaching, typically, achievement testing serves as a monitoring device for learning. Tests are given at a particular point in time with the aim of sampling student learning. The most popular tests are pencil and paper tests even if taken on paper and computerised format. After a test is given there is some form of reporting that takes place, often in the form of a single score or grade. Sometimes decisions are taken on tests results, for example, retake the test, pass the course, and go to the next unit of instruction. A final important aspect of testing is that the test is usually kept hidden from the students until it is administered, indicating a degree of secrecy in order to assure confidentiality. Charles and Wood (1985) contend that tests are sometimes justified on the basis of accountability, whether students are learning what they are supposed to be learning. Decisions-makers need this kind of evidence in order to make judgements about how to spend resources. Sometimes tests are viewed as feedback for language students concerning their progress.

Krashen and Terrell (1983) add that testing should be fair and reasonably valid, and must have a positive effect on the student progress. The key to effective testing is the realization that testing has a profound effect on what goes on in the classroom. Testing motivates teachers to teach and students are motivated to study materials which will be covered in the tests. If students are to acquire a second language, they should be given tests that promote the use of acquisition activities. In other words, tests should motivate students to prepare for the tests by obtaining comprehensible input and motivate teachers to supply it. Using an approach in the classroom that emphasizes the ability to exchange messages and at the same

time testing only the ability to apply grammar rules correctly, is an invitation to disaster (Krashen 1983:166).

2.16 WHAT IS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST?

Language proficiency tests can be classified as tests of linguistic competence or communicative competence. Linguistic competence refers to the ability to control pronunciation, morphology and syntax. Communicative competence tests means tests that employ the ability to use language to achieve a particular purpose. These tests are always related and interchangeable because some students achieve a relatively high level of linguistic competence, but who in real communicative situations cannot exchange much information at all. The goal should be to achieve both communicative competence and linguistic competence. Krashen says that tests in language must cover listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Research says that a new alternative type of test is needed in which competence will be assessed including ones that involve the individual in making self-assessments. Brecht and Walton (1993:2) define competence as the capacity to perform a range of occupationally relevant communicative tasks, with members of another cultural and linguistic community using the language of that community whether that community is domestic or abroad. Gardner (1993) says that this alternative way of testing knowledge is important as there is a resurgence of interest in the idea of multiplicity of intelligences. He and other researchers claim the existence of mental modules such as fast operating reflexes and information processing devices. Fodor (1983:98) espoused that there are separate analytic devices involved in tasks like syntactic parsing, tonal recognition and facial perception. Others, (Sternberg 1988, Perkins 1981, Grabtree 1999) have investigated the concept of creativity. The operative alternative strategy could be used in foreign languages in order to monitor students' language progress and performance. This alternative assessment is an on-going process involving student teachers making judgements about the student's progress in language using non-conventional strategies.

In the South African context, the movement towards a new South Africa brought with it outcomes-based education and Curriculum 2005. According to this curriculum, learners in language education are assessed through different learning outcomes and assessment standards. This study investigated English proficiency by using diagnostic tests related to the approach.

Tests of diagnostic nature are also important in assessing students' ability when they enter institutions of higher learning. In the US at the University of Minnesota, tests are conducted on all university speakers who are non-native speakers of English in order to establish whether students demonstrate sufficient command of the English language necessary to succeed in college classes taught in English. These tests are done by undergraduate programmes at the University which requires specific minimum score which describe whether students require additional testing prior to registration which will determine if any additional course is needed. Testing is paper-based and occurs approximately once a month throughout the year. Tests are approved by TESOL (Teachers of Foreign Second Language), which is regarded as an international testing system.

2.17 COMPARISON BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN EDUCATION

South African education has been shaped by the political and economic forces of apartheid and colonisation. Prior to the passing of the South African Schools Act, rural schools were serviced by schools in small towns especially farm schools and community schools in the former homelands. The state budget devoted towards education meant that the majority of farm schools and community schools services were poorly provided and the learning and teaching environment deficient.

2.17.1 RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The African National Congress (ANC) as a government committed itself to close the gap between rural education and urban education. The ANC was aware that many rural schools were faced with problems. Educational standards in rural areas were lower than in the towns. Many children in the rural areas were poor and they left school because they could not afford school uniform, school fees and books. This type of a situation did not only take place in South Africa alone. Countries such as Zambia, Lesotho and Zimbabwe were affected as well. Resources in rural areas and towns were unevenly distributed. According to Read Educational Trust, the statistics regarding the unavailability of resources and deficiencies is at 27%. This deficiency is attributed to lack of libraries and lack of reading material in rural schools. The distribution of books also makes an enormous impact. The Department of Education realised that children are not learning how to read and write at the required level for school success. Rural schools also have little equipment, teaching resources and fewer specialised rooms such as laboratories for languages than urban schools. Over and above schools that need structural repairs, 1% of schools are beyond repair, and 12% of schools are

not suitable for teaching and learning. Teachers in most rural schools are under-qualified. In 1998, the statistics put this figure at 74%. With the emergence of outcomes-based education, teachers in rural areas were most challenged because they were under-qualified and needed more training (Gordon & Qiang 2000).

2.18 ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The 1994 elections heralded in a new constitution and a new approach to education. Assessment and evaluation formed the most integral part of the curriculum and grade progression. MacMillan and Schumacher (1997:9) acknowledge assessment as a process of assisting learners to improve their learning. They also place more emphasis on teachers using assessment to help them make appropriate decisions with the view to enhance learning. Stanley (1964:3-4) refers to evaluation as the summing up process in which value judgement plays a large part. He also believes that interpreting the scores for a particular purpose is evaluation. Stanley (1964) further views evaluation as a process of making judgement that follows measurement. Evaluation involves an interpretation of what has been gathered through assessment. Huitt (200l) provide a useful distinction between assessment and evaluation, assessment refers to the collection of data to describe or better understand issues, whereas evaluation refers to the comparison of data to a standard for the purpose of judging quality. Assessment occurs before, during and after instruction.

Learners were assessed according to different types of assessment. Gillespie (2004:106) describe baseline assessment as designed to be used at the beginning of a new set of learning activities to find out what learners already know and can demonstrate so that lessons can be planned for a wide range of abilities among learners. Formative assessment is designed to ensure that the positive achievement of the learners are recognised and discussed and the appropriate next step is planned. Through diagnostic assessment learning difficulties are scrutinised and classified so that appropriate remedial help and guidance can be approved. Summative assessment entails the recording of the overall achievement of the learners in a systematic way. Evaluative assessments intended to compare and aggregate information about learners' achievements so that it can be used to assist in curriculum development and evaluation of teaching and learning. The best model of assessment in OBE is continuous assessment (CASS) (Gillespe 2002). This type of assessment takes place over a long period of time and is on-going. Learners are assessed regularly and their records are updated throughout the year.

Jansen and Christie (1999:248-249) agree that while a paradigm shift is acknowledged, the actual implementation has been hampered by lack of understanding of the complexity of the issues involved. Teachers were not given appropriate training. Adequate in-service training and pre-service training were needed. Chisholm (2004) states that there were complex problems which were associated with OBE during the early ages of the curriculum. OBE needed resources and qualified teachers. Muller and Vinjevold (quoted in Chisholm 2004:10), revealed that at the end of the first three years of schooling, learners had only grasped the principles reading and writing. With the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), learners performed below grade three level and five years below grade six.

The frustrations experienced by teachers during OBE forced them to return to the traditional approach. Jansen (cited in Said) criticised the traditional approach by claiming that it is not effective and had no value. The teachers continued to assess OBE, through multiple-choice, true or false, matching objectives, fill in blanks and short essays.

2.19 CONCLUSION

According to systematic evaluation paper of the Gauteng Department of Education (2002:50), learner assessment and feedback were well below stipulations. Teacher learner ratio was not suitable for OBE requirements and only 54% of Gauteng teachers evaluated in-service training programmes. The failure of OBE assessment in South Africa led to the government designing a new curriculum called National Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS). It is hoped that this new curriculum, which will be implemented in 2012, will have a positive impact of proficiency levels of languages used across the curriculum.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In South Africa, language has played a very important role in shaping the socio-political history of the country. Language has also shaped nationalism and has also maintained a struggle against inequality. The rebirth of South Africa in 1994 brought change in the education system. Education changed from an apartheid state of Bantu Education to the introduction of a new curriculum, outcomes-based education (OBE).

The new education system (OBE) brought the implementation of new effective educational policies. Simultaneously, the outcomes-based approach was also introduced to advance the teaching and learning of learning areas in schools. The introduction of OBE in South Africa also brought a new era of meaningful teaching. The purpose of the new curriculum in education was to root out the last vestiges of apartheid education. The OBE approach constituted learning and teaching activities that aimed at empowering learners to succeed in the real life after leaving school (Schlebusch & Thobedi 2004).

The Constitution of South Africa adopted in 1996 recognised the 11 official languages (9 of those languages are African languages). English was also one of the languages included. The Language in Education Policy of South Africa (LiEP) also gave schools the opportunity to use mother-tongue in place of the former official languages of Afrikaans and English. Despite the advantage brought about by the language policy, parents still chose English as a medium of instruction in most African disadvantaged schools where the majority of Africans chose the language because they undermine their own languages (Ndamba 2008). This is a standpoint established by research that in most colonised states the language still spoken is English (Van der Merwe & Van Niekerk 1994).

According to the OBE curriculum, language is part of the LCC Learning Area. Learners have to enrol for their first language, as well as for their second language (ESL). In such instances, the local language is offered as first language and the English is chosen as the additional language. It also envisaged by the constitution of South Africa that learners should be fluent in at least two of eleven official languages (Schlebusch & Thobedi 2004:38). One of the main aims of using a language, for example English, is to develop communicative competence.

Communicative competence is the ability to linguistically apply the language correctly in authentic situations (Ralenala 1993).

The ability to use English in real life situations is achieved academically by integrating language skills of writing, listening, reading and speaking that are needed by every learner in order to complete the task-based activities that forms part of an OBE approach. To promote effective learning, learners need to be given the opportunity to be actively involved in task-based activities such as debate, discussion and problem solving which also assist in oral communication. According to the OBE approach, the language skills are grouped into learning outcomes which are coupled with assessment standards. For effective competence and performance, the learners must be in a position to apply assessment and learning outcomes standards to real life situations. The syllabus is divided into the General Education and Training Band (GET Band) together with the Further Education and Training Band (FET Band). The gap between the two syllabi shows how learners develop their language skills differently according to progression. This study was conducted by looking particularly at Grade 10 which is part of the FET Band.

Effective communication also depends on what Cummins (1991) call Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS allow learners the skills to speak and cope with pronunciation and vocabulary in order to be able to use English in everyday life. CALP on the other hand, enables the learner to become a competent academic communicator. The learner is able to show various life skills such as the ability to be engaged in cognitively demanding and problem solving skills. It is also ideal for learners to attain a CALP level of English proficiency in order to be successful academically.

In ESL classrooms, communication is a two way process, learners and teachers interact in a meaningful way. Van Schalkwyk (2001) defines communication as a two way process in which feedback takes place when a certain medium is used. The medium creates understanding not only to educators (encode inputs) but also in most importantly to learners (decode output). This meaningful interaction brings about effective English second language communication.

This study sought to investigate the effects of English language proficiency on performance and competence of learners in the rural disadvantaged schools of Koloti circuit. The researcher chose to conduct this study because English is still chosen as the language of learning and teaching in most schools, which contradicts the hopes of many policymakers

who aim at reducing the language policy into a written document. The recent ANA Report (2011) in South Africa found that the results in grade 4 are very poor. The results of English and literacy were once targeted. ANA (2011) reported that the results were poor because of English language proficiency and the inability of the educators to interact with the memorandum.

An increasing body of research, however, suggested that African learners have little exposure to English in their daily lives outside the classroom and where schools are poorly resourced, the adoption of English as the medium of instruction has been counter-productive and has adversely affected the acquisition of both English language and African home language skills (Heugh 1999; Probyn *et al* 2002; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir 2004; Probyn 2009).

Language acquisition (ESL) emerges as a great challenge to majority of learners for whom English is not their first language. This problem manifests itself in previously disadvantaged black schools. Rossel and Baker (1996) maintained that in order for learners to be proficient in English, learners must be exposed to second language under optimal conditions from six to eight years. Optimal conditions means excellent educators and efficient resources, which is currently not happening in South Africa.

3.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a system of collecting data for a research project. It is a way in which a researcher is going to gather information. Babbie and Mouton (2008:647) define research methodology as the methods, techniques and procedures that are employed in the process of implementing the research design or research plan, as well as the underlying principles and assumptions in their use. Methodology, on the other hand, refers to a technique for scaling objects or statements. It is a method of ranking attitudes or judgements and is particularly effective when the number of items to be ranked is large (Best & Kahn 2003:158).

This study sought to investigate how proficiency affects performance and competence in the rural secondary schools in Koloti circuit. The study also wanted to establish whether communicative approach is successfully implemented in schools, especially in language classrooms in Koloti circuit. Furthermore, it aimed at establishing which effective teaching and learning strategies should form part of the communicative approach in grade 10 classrooms to render it successful. The researcher is of the view that the proficiency of

learners in English leaves much to be desired and therefore assumes that learners are unable to read and write in the second language.

From a methodological point of view, there are two types of research methods or approaches namely, qualitative research and quantitative research. Research studies that are qualitative are normally designed to discover what can be learned about a certain phenomenon of interest, particularly social phenomenon where people are subjects. The concern of this study was to understand people's experience in context. The qualitative approach was therefore deemed appropriate for this study as subjects (teachers and learners in grade 10) could be observed and interviewed in their natural settings (the ESL classroom).

According to Cresswell (2002:81), qualitative research describes events, persons scientifically without the use of numerical data. It is also planned carefully and leaves the possibility of change to ask different questions and to go in the directions that the observations may lead the experimenter. The researcher chose the qualitative research approach because it studies phenomenon in their natural settings. This is supported by Lincolin and Guba (1985), in Best and Khan, that its naturalistic inquiry implies that participants' observational technique results in a more natural approach, than the tests survey used in the more traditional qualitative approaches.

Qualitative research also stems from an anti-positivistic, interpretative approach, it is also idiographic and holistic in nature, and aims mainly to understand social life and the meaning that people attach to everyday life. The researcher further chose this approach because its naturalness is suitable for educational and social research. It also gives the researcher the direction to take especially in detailing the specific stages that the whole research should follow in addressing the research questions.

The researcher also followed a phenomenological approach. Wilson 1977 (Bogdan & Biklen 1998) states that this kind of an approach can provide detailed and reliable explanations for social phenomena such as language learning based on experiences of people within a society or schooling system. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) have influenced the selections and presentation of data in this study.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where 'here' may be defined as the first set of research questions to be answered, and 'there' some conclusions or answers about those questions (Yin 1994:19). Mcmillan and Schumacher (1997) contend that research design is a plan for selecting subject, research sites and data collection procedures, also, to answer the research question. The researcher chose the qualitative research design to capture relevant information. The researcher followed a case study design because it gives the researcher the opportunity to explore and shed light on a particular phenomenon. The phenomenon studied was English proficiency among secondary school learners in Koloti circuit. The case study also allowed the researcher to do an in-depth study in order to understand the problem situation. The importance of a case study is to bring the details from the new point of the participants in a natural setting using multiple sources of evidence with data that ultimately converge into triangulation (Yin 1994).

3.4. THE POPULATION

The usual purpose of educational research is to learn something about a large group of people by studying a much smaller group of people. The larger group which the researcher wishes to learn about is called the population and a small group is called a sample. Cresswell (2002:142) defines population as a group of individuals who have the same characteristics. Mancosa (2003:13) adds that it is a full set of elements of cases from which a sample is drawn. In the context of this study, Koloti circuit is a cluster with five secondary schools from which the researcher drew a sample of participants in this study, particularly, educators and learners selected in those schools who served as representative of the entire population.

3.5. THE SAMPLE

It is usually not possible to include the whole sample in the study, a representative of that population should be chosen. Best and Kahn (1993:220) states that sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as a representative of that population. One type of that population is called target population. The advantage of drawing a small sample from a large population is that it saves time and expense of studying the entire population. There are different kinds of samples from which the researcher chooses. This is always done in the context of the study. The researcher chose to follow simple random sampling. (Borg & Gall 1989) describe simple random sampling as a procedure in which all

the individuals in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected as a member of the sample. By independent, it means that the selection of one individual does not affect in any way the selections of any other individual. It is also precise in the sense that it is a process of selection from a population that provides every sample of a given size an equal opportunity of being selected.

The intention of random sampling is to choose individuals to be sampled, who will be representative of the population. Any bias of the population will be equally distributed among the people chosen (Tuckman 1994:213). For the purpose of this study, the researcher chose only Sepedi speaking learners in grade 10 and English teachers from the five secondary schools, the researcher only used three schools. The researcher chose five teachers from each school which gave a total of 15 teachers. 10 grade learners were chosen from each school, giving a total of 30 learners. Three Heads of Department (HOD) were chosen, one from each school and one curriculum advisor and three principals, one from each school.

3.6. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

To perform any task, or to do any job, one needs tools that are naturally associated with the task. In the same breath, the researcher uses tools or objects to realise his or her goal. Leedy (1993:26) contend that the tools are what the researcher employs to amass data or manipulate them to extract meaning from them. The data collection instruments are selected on the basis of compatibility with the purpose of study, nature of data to be collected, cost, sizes and characteristics of the research sample (Vockell 1983:78). The following research instruments were used for collecting data namely, questionnaires, interviews, diagnostic test and classroom observation.

3.6.1. Questionnaires

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to convert into data information directly given by a person (subject) by providing access to what is inside a person's head, to measure what a person knows, what a person likes or dislikes or what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs). Interviews and questionnaires are generally used to discover what experiences have taken place and what is taking place at this moment. Tuckman (1988:214) says of the two instruments, a questionnaire is the mostly used survey method. The reason for using this tool is because of some of the advantages it has. One of the most important advantages of a questionnaire is that it is made to be self-explanatory, so that it can be completed in privacy

and without supervision (Fink & Kosecoff 1998). Liys and Basson (1991),in Best and Kahn (2003:65) refer to it as a more superficial instrument than an interview and it involves a large number of participants. For the purpose of this study, Vockell's (1983:78) definition of a questionnaire will be used. Vockell (1983) refers to a questionnaire as any data collecting instrument, other than an achievement or ability test where the respondent directly supplies his or her own answers to a set of questions. In the context of this study, respondents and educators will provide information that is important for this research study.

A clear and unambiguous questionnaire was designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was distributed to learners, and teachers as well as curriculum advisors and parents. The questionnaires were given to learners in order to elicit specific information referring to linguistic self-analysis of the student with reference to the learning and usage of English as a second language and to determine whether it should continue as a language of learning and teaching. The parent questionnaire sought information on the role and responsibility they play in the decision making process about language and how they assist their learners in the second language. The purpose of the questionnaires to teachers and learners was to seek data on linguistic competence and ability. Open-ended questionnaires were used to extract relevant information about the subjects' linguistic background.

3.6.2. Interviews

An alternative method of gathering data is an interview. Interviews are much flexible data collecting instruments than questionnaires. The purpose of using the interview as a data collecting instrument is to fill whatever gaps the questionnaire might leave unfilled. An interview is defined by Macmillan and Schumacher (1999), as encounter between a researcher and a respondent. Furthermore, Selinger and Shohanmy (1989:90) explain the purpose of an interview is to obtain information by actually talking to the subject. The interviewer asked questions and the subject responded in a face-to-face situation and by telephone. Furthermore, interviews are personalized and they permit a level of in-depth information gathering, free response and flexibility that cannot be obtained by other procedures.

The disadvantage of using an interview is that it is more time consuming, and it needs money and energy to conduct it than to administer a questionnaire (Dalen 1979:158). The interview data can also easily become biased and misleading if the person is being interviewed is aware of the perspective of the interviewer (Gay, 2003:87).

An interview schedule was prepared for both teachers and learners in order to gather information on their linguistic proficiency and the ability to cope with all language aspects. Open-ended questions were asked during the interview.

3.6.3. Classroom Observation

In qualitative observation, the researcher is looking around with only a general scheme to guide him and the product of such observation is field notes (Tuckman 1994). In qualitative research, this often means sitting in the classroom in an obstructive manner as possible and watching teachers deliver a programme to students in a structured way. The researcher looked for the relationship between the behaviour of the participants, i.e. the students working together or intention behind the behaviour an outcome so as to confirm or disconfirm various interpretations that have emerged from the interview of reports. The researcher does in an attempt to complement data gathered from questionnaire and interviews. The main aim of the researcher in observing was to establish the use of English in the classroom and how it benefited the learners.

3.6.4. Diagnostic Tests

The researcher also used diagnostic tests to gather data. These tests were designed in order to establish individual linguistic needs for English learners in their listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. The aim of the diagnostic test is to measure the current status of individuals with respect to proficiency in given areas of knowledge of skills (Gay 2003:144). The test was divided into two sections. The first section was the section for creative writing and the other section for grammar and language use. The tests were 4 hours, given in two-hour slots over a period of two days. The tests were conducted at Mmakgabo School, and the researcher was assisted by English teachers for invigilation and arranging suitable accommodation for the learners. Learners were seated randomly and no dictionaries were allowed.

3.6.5 Audio Recordings

Audio recordings were also used as another method of gathering data. The researcher found the use of audio-recording to be an advantage because all the interactions that are audible can be recorded and analysed later (Johnson 1997:86). Lessons were also audio-recorded for accurate information. The researcher used audio-recording as this can be used as a 'back-up' in the process of the write up. It also gives a clear picture of the actual classroom situation. It

is almost important that it might be very impossible for the researcher to capture all the important information during classroom observation.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is concerned with identifying what is in the data. The research description and analysis focuses on making sense of what the description means (Gay 2003:229). The method that is used to analyse data is qualitative. When analysing the data, the researcher made sure that the transcripts of data collected were kept together with the recorded and written data. The importance of recording data is, over time it will be difficult to remember everything said in an interview or in the classroom if records are not kept properly. Keeping records enables the researcher to refer back when the need arises. During data collection, the researcher made sure that data was analysed simultaneously. This was also done in order to avoid data collected being forgotten and to avoid data overload.

The lessons observed were transcribed and analysed manually. The transcription of lessons observed was done following the strategy of Malamah and Thomas (1997). Interaction analysis was also used to analyse the interaction between the teacher and the learner during lesson observation. The analysis of data focussed mainly on the functions of the interaction.

The researcher used triangulation to analyse data. Triangulation is a method discussed by Johnson (1992:146) as bringing all the information that pertains to a research question. It is through the triangulation method that the reliability of the data can be enhanced. Triangulation is described by Macmillan and Schumacher (1999:498) as the cross validation among data sources, data collection strategies, time periods and theoretical schemes. It is through triangulation that the researcher could check the effects of English language proficiency on performance and competence of learners.

3.8 CONCLUSION

Data collected in this study will assist both teachers and parents in Koloti circuit in improving proficiency in English as a second language. This study also encouraged learners to develop a positive attitude when learning a second language. The researcher addresses the problem as stated in the problem statement which encourages competence in English as a second language.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this chapter is to analyse, interpret and comment in detail on the research data collected from students, educators, parents and language specialists. Data collected from students sought empirical evidence on students' linguistic self-analysis as well as the educators' rating of their own students and themselves. Data on the role of parents in assisting their children in the second language was also collected. Language specialists were questioned about their position regarding the use of English as a language of teaching and learning in schools. Gay and Airaisian (2003) describe data analysis as a combination of methods interviews, surveys and observations which are used to gather information in a natural context. These data collection techniques are important in qualitative research, especially in ethnography, grounded theory and action research. The techniques are referred to as qualitative data collection techniques. Bogdan and Biklen (2003:213) also added that qualitative data analysis means breaking down data into smaller units in order to determine their importance and putting the smaller units together in a more general interpreted form. When collecting data, the researcher ensured that during the process, transcripts of data collected were kept, for example, records and written data. The reason why the researcher kept the information was to make it easier for her to remember everything said in the interviews, questionnaires and also in the classroom. Keeping the records also enabled the researcher to refer back when the need arose.

The data in this chapter was interpreted in line with the form of the questionnaire administered to parents, interviews conducted, and diagnostic tests written by students in Koloti circuit. Classroom observations were also conducted with teachers and learners in order to gain an in-depth understanding of real classroom practice. Interviews and classroom observations were conducted in the schools for the purpose of data differentiation, reliability and validity. The researcher observed learners and teachers in English classrooms in one of the sampled schools. The purpose was to observe how teachers were teaching and how learners were responding to various tasks in their English lessons. The researcher took park in this activity so that she was able to set the diagnostic test for Grade 10 learners according to the national curriculum standards and syllabus for languages.

4.2   USE OF TESTS TO COLLECT DATA

Testing was done at Mmakgabo High School hall using the first data collection method. Thirty learners from three sampled schools assembled at Mmakgabo School because it was a centre of convenience for them in terms of transport and proximity to their homes. The researcher asked permission from the relevant schools and the parents in writing. English teachers at Mmakgabo High School were also asked to assist in invigilation of the tests, and in the preparation of suitable accommodation for learners. The test was set in order to determine individual linguistic needs of learners in English in listening, reading, speaking, writing grammar and vocabulary. The purpose of the tests was also to determine areas in which students found it difficult to achieve competency. The findings from the diagnostic test assisted the researcher to come up with possible answers and strategies for teaching English in the schools in the study.

The researcher divided the test into two sections which was written over two days. The first section was on creative writing and the second section was on language and editing. The tests lasted for 2 hours each. The grammar test consisted of reading comprehension and language. The creative writing test consisted essay and letter writing. The reading comprehension test was set to test learners' competence in the reading skills, understanding and comprehension. Retrieving of information from the passage and extracting evidence to support understanding and the difference between opinion and fact were also tested. Listening components were closely related to the writing components as learners were expected to listen attentively to a passage, take notes and answer questions in written form. The researcher chose an interesting passage that would generate enthusiasm and capture the learners' listening ability. The passage was read to learners four times in order to familiarize them with the contents of the paragraphs. The fourth time allowed for them to comprehend and answer the questions.

The aim of the test was to test whether learners were able to listen in English which is used as a second language. The speaking component took the form of an oral interview which lasted for 30 minutes and six students were sampled from each school. There were an equal number of boys and girls. The aim was to test learners' speaking ability in order to establish how well they could engage in oral interaction between themselves and their teachers during an English lesson, and also to establish their ability to communicate in and outside the school. Each student was given three minutes to respond to each question. The learners were expected to give direction from Moletjie to Polokwane. Learners were also encouraged to ask the

researcher questions after the interview. For the writing component, learners had to write a 1½ page essay and a letter. The essay had to comprise of 250-300 words. The essay was based on a topic that was familiar to learners which enabled them to come up with content structure, presentation and chronological order of events within the context of the topic. The aim of this component was to test learners' creative writing skills within an acceptable writing genre in English. Learners were advised to write as if they were writing an examination but the marks were going to be used for research purposes only. No dictionaries were allowed in the hall.

The method of scoring the test was designed on the basis of six levels of performance which were assigned percentage values as follows:-

Table 4.1 Rating Scale

Rating Scale	Description of Competence	No of learners	Marks
6	Outstanding	30	80-100
5	Meritorious		60-79
4	Satisfactory		50-59
4	Adequate		40-49
2	Partial		30-39
1	Inadequate		0-29

The researcher adopted the National Curriculum scale of achievement for the overall performance of the test in Grade 10. This scale is used as a general description to assist teachers in assessing learners and placing them in the current rating after writing a test. Outstanding means that the learners have achieved ideal performance in English in Grade 10 as required by the Department of Education. Meritorious means the learner has the ability to function in English comfortably at all levels. A satisfactory learner has the ability to function in English competently. An adequate score means that the learner is at approximately 40% level competency in performance, that is, the learner has the ability to cope with lessons and some of the text but is not adequately competent in written and oral work. Partial achievement means that learners are unable to function competently in English. It also implies that learners can barely benefit from lessons; they do not participate in class and have difficult in completing prescribed tasks, notes and hand-outs. Each learner was assessed on

the basis of all the tests described, and scores were compounded to get one score per tested learner. The purpose was to distribute the 30 learners into their different levels of performance as described, so that the distribution in turn gives a profile level of performance in English as a second language. This generalization could apply to similar situations in English performance as a whole.

Table 4.2 Performance of learners

Rating Scale	Level of English Performance	No of students	%
0-29	Inadequate	12	40%
30-39	Partial	09	30%
40-49	Adequate	07	23,3%
50-59	Satisfactory	02	6,7%
60-79	Meritorious	00	0%
80-100	Outstanding	00	0%
	TOTAL	**30**	**100**

This table depicts that generally learners are performing poorly in writing, listening and reading in English. The highest percentage of learners fall in the inadequate (40%) level of performance while 6,7% of learners were satisfactory. There were no learners who were performing at outstanding levels in English as a second language. The results depict a higher level of deficiency that needs to be addressed by both learners and teachers. Scores were also compounded individually to rate the level of performance of learners in each skill in English as a second language.

Table 4.3 Levels of proficiency of learners

Rating Scales	Level of Proficiency	No of Learners	% of Learners
0-29	Inadequate	15	50%
30-39	Partial	09	30%
40-49	Adequate	04	13,3%
50-59	Satisfactory	02	6,7%
60-79	Meritorious	00	0%
80-100	Outstanding	00	0%
	TOTAL	**30**	**100**

Table 4.3 was designed according to learners' scores from the comprehensive test set which was out of 30 marks. The marks, according to learners' performance, were grouped together and converted to a percentage in order to fit in the scale. 50% of learners showed inability to comprehend and understand the text. This shows that the culture of reading and availability of reading materials and other reading resources are not available in these schools. Teachers need to be taught how to teach using the correct reading strategies and how to answer questions so that performance can be enhanced.

The method of scoring the test for the writing tasks was designed according to the National Curriculum Statement Rubric for longer transactional texts of writing. The text produced by the candidates was assessed according to the following criteria in the rubric.

- Context and planning (32 marks)
- Language, style and editing (12 marks)
- Structure (6 marks)
  Total = 50 marks

The rubric reads as follows:-

Outstanding Learners: Learners must show effective use of language and punctuation. Figurative language must be used appropriately. Choice of words must be highly appropriate. Sentences and paragraphs must be coherently constructed. Style, tone and register must highly suit the topic. Text must be error–free following proof–reading and editing. The length must be in accordance with the topic.

Mark range:

40-50 code 7

Meritorious: Use of punctuations, language and figurative language must be correct. Choice of words must vary and be correctly used. Sentences and paragraphs must be logical and they must vary. Style, tone and register must be appropriately used with the topic. The text must be error-free and the length must be correct.

Mark range:

35-39 code 6

Substantial: Language and punctuation must be correct choice of words must suite the text. Sentence and paragraphs be logical and must vary. Style, tone and register must suit most of the essay. Text is error-free following proof reading. Length is correct.

Mark range:

30-34 code 5

Adequate: Language must be simple and punctuation adequate. Choice of words is adequate. Sentences and paragraphs mighty are faulty in places but essay must make sense. Style, tone and register generally consistent with topic requirements. Text still contains errors following proof-reading and editing. Length must be correct.

Mark range:

25-29 code 4

Moderate: Language ordinary and punctuation often inaccurately used. Choice of words is basic. Sentences and paragraphs faulty but idea is understood. Style, tone and register are lacking in coherence. The text contains several errors following proof-reading and editing. Length is too long or too short.

Marks range:

20-24 code 3

Elementary: Language and punctuation flawed; choice of words limited. Sentences and paragraphs constructed at an elementary level. Style, tone and register inappropriate. Text is error-ridden despite proof-reading and editing. Length is too long or short.

Mark range:

14-19 code 2

Not Achieved: Language and punctuation seriously flawed. Choice of words is inappropriate. Sentences and paragraphs are muddled and inconsistent. Style, tone, register flawed in all aspects. Text is error-ridden and confused following proof-reading and editing. Length is far too long or short.

Marks range:

00-13 code 1

Presentable essay

Content:

Outstanding: Code 07. Shows impressive insight. Development of topic is vivid and detailed. Planning and drafting is flawless.

Meritorious: Code 06. Interpretation of topic is clear, imaginative and interesting. Planning and drafting is well crafted. Presentable essay.

Substantial: Code 05. Shows a sound interpretation of the topic, interesting and convincing, relevant details developed. Awareness of language evident, planning and drafting, well presented essay.

Adequate: Code 04. Must show an adequate interpretation of topic; ordinary, lacking depth. Necessary details developed, planning and drafting, satisfactorily presented essay.

Moderate: Code 03. Grasping coherence, topic mostly relevant. Repetitive. Necessary points evident, planning and drafting satisfactory, essay well presented.

Elementary: Code 02. Content not always clear, lacks coherence few ideas, often repetitive. General line of thought not properly flowing. Inadequate planning and drafting of the essay.

Not Achieved: Code 1. Content irrelevant, no coherence. Repetitive, off topic. Planning and drafting of essay poorly presented.

Table 4.4 Learner performance according to rubric

Rating Scale	Level of English Proficiency	No of Learners	% Component
0-29	Inadequate	15	50%
30-39	Partial	09	30%
40-49	Adequate	04	13,3%
50-59	Satisfactory	02	6,7%
60-79	Meritorious	00	00
80-100	Outstanding	00	00
	TOTAL	**30**	**100**

According to Table 4.4, learners showed a writing deficiency, 50% of learners cannot write essays and letters correctly. The degree of competency in essay writing leaves much to be desired. Sentence construction was very poor, which shows that learners do not understand tense. Planning and drafting was done in such a way that the structure does not correlate with the paragraph and ideas. There was poor presentation of essays, in the sense that learners' ideas are not coherent. There was more than one idea in a paragraph. Language was poorly used; there was no evidence of mastering of punctuation and sentence structure. Learners showed very serious signs of lack of adequate vocabulary. Most learners did not understand the topic and therefore the content was always flawed. Learners did not keep to the number of words they used when writing. The number of scores is reflected in the table and converted to a percentage.

Letter writing was also assessed out of 30 marks. A longer transactional rubric was used for writing letters. The letter was a letter of complaint to the Municipal Manager.

Learners were assessed according to the following criteria:-

- Content and planning and format (20 marks)
- Language, style and editing (10 marks)
- Must indicate complaint against the municipality
- Style be descriptive
- Must suggest solutions to the problem raised
- Letter be addressed to the Manager
- Tone and register of the letter must be formal

The following aspects of format should be included:-

- Address of sender
- Address to recipient
- Date
- Subject line
- Greeting / salutation
- Suitable ending
- Signature / name of sender

Mark range for content and language

Outstanding   :   24-30

Meritorious   :   21-23

Substantial   :   18-20

Adequate   :   15-17

Moderate   :   12-14

Elementary   :   09-11

Not Achieved   :   00-08

Table 4.5: Compound Scores according to the Writing Skill: Letter Writing

Rating Scale	Level of English proficiency	No of Learners	% Component
0-29	Inadequate	07	
30-39	Partial	11	
40-49	Adequate	12	
50-59	Satisfactory	0	
60-79	Meritorious	0	
80-100	Outstanding	0	
	TOTAL	**30**	**100**

The method for scoring the listening skill was designed out of 10 marks. The rubric for listening was designed according to the National Curriculum Statement.

Outstanding   Code 07:   08-10 marks

Meritorious   Code 06:   07 marks

Substantial   Code 05:   06 marks

Adequate   Code 04:   05 marks

Moderate   Code 03:   04 marks

Elementary   Code 02:   03 marks

Not Achieved   Code 01:   0-2 marks

Table 4.6: Compound scores according to the Listening Skills

Rating Scale	Level of Proficiency	No of Learners
0-29	Inadequate	10
30-39	Partial	13
40-49	Adequate	04
50-59	Satisfactory	03
60-79	Meritorious	00
80-100	Outstanding	00

According to Table 4.5 (writing of letters) and Table 4.6, learners understand the writing of letters better than essays. They lack vocabulary and good sentence construction but performed well in other aspects of letter writing. Learners were unable to listen in English. The number of learners who scored below average in listening depicts that most of the time learners do not hear what the teacher says during lesson presentations. Therefore, it is difficult for learners to reproduce what is stored in their long-term memory.

4.3 DATA FROM LEARNER INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

Interviews with learners were done orally and results were analysed descriptively. Learners were engaged in verbally giving directions from Mmakgabo School to Polokwane. Learners were given marks out of 10. This was one of the most difficult aspects of language. Learners were unable to express themselves fluently in English. It was difficult for the researcher to understand what learners were saying as their sentence construction was very poor. Learners were shy to ask questions. This was a sign that they rarely engage in speaking activities in the classroom.

The other method of data collection was distributing questionnaires to students in order to establish their linguistic competence. 30 learners were sampled from the schools to respond to the questionnaire, 14 boys and 16 girls in Grade 10. A questionnaire consisting of open and closed-ended questions was distributed to learners. Learners were assured that their responses were confidential and would only be used for the research purposes. The responses were grouped together and analysed descriptively.

Discussion of the student questionnaire responses

Do you always understand the English questions?

Most learners responded that they do not understand some of the questions in English, especially level three questions (according to Blooms Taxonomy). They also did not understand inferential and comprehension questions in literature. These are the type of questions that test learners' thinking and opinions. They felt that some concepts in English should be translated into Sepedi to enable better understanding.

What language do you speak in the classroom and outside the classroom?

All the learners responded that they use both English and Sepedi in the classroom but use their mother tongue outside the classroom. The learners hardly use the language of learning and teaching outside their classroom. The *Laissez Faire* attitude used in schools contributed towards poor competence in English as a second language and a language of learning and teaching. Therefore, the learners' level of English proficiency always remains poor. Using code switching in the classroom also confuses learners and affects their mastery of the English language as they always use both languages at the same time.

Should English remain the language of learning and teaching in your school?

All students agreed that English must remain the language of teaching and learning, as English is the language of business and the internationally used medium of communication. Students also stated that it is used as a language of communication across different racial groups.

Which areas of learning do you find difficult, rate them according to their degree of difficulty, and state why?

Student rated speaking and listening on their priority list as the first challenging area in English. The second area was reading and writing. For those students who rated listening and speaking as the most challenging, their reason is that these skills are not always taught in the classroom. Students rarely got a chance to engage in speaking activities as most of their time was spent on writing. This ultimately impedes their communication skills. Students rated reading and writing as the second most difficult area to master and the reason they gave was that reading is mainly done in the classroom during literature periods and never done for pleasure. Students also did not have enough books. They always shared those available at

school and that ultimately contributed to poor performance in most literature tests in Grade 10.

This table shows how learners responded to the rating of skills according to their reasons for the ratings.

Table 4.7 Rating of skills

Skills	Rating	No of Students	% of Students
1. Listening and speaking 2. Reading and writing	1 2	6 3	66,6 33,3
	TOTAL	**9**	**100%**

According to Table 4.7, 67% of students responded that listening and speaking are the first rated challenging skills in English. 33% of students rated reading and writing as second of the skills that are difficult for learners. This happens mostly because of lack of facilities, media centres, teaching aids in rural schools.

Do you have language laboratories, libraries and dictionaries at school? Explain

Student responded that they have none available at their schools in the rural areas. They learn English without libraries and dictionaries and they depend much on those who are able to buy dictionaries. This shows that there is no culture of reading and this ultimately impedes learning.

4.4 TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Interviews were conducted with 9 teachers at various sampled schools in Koloti circuit. Three teachers were interviewed from each school. Information was analysed and interpreted according to how teachers responded to the questions and their numbers grouped together data was analysed descriptively.

Do you think that learners in your ESL class experience problems with English?

Most teachers said that students seem to understand English and are able to converse in it. They were of the opinion that the major problem that learners have is that learners encounter

is to express themselves properly in English in a formal learning environment like the classroom. Most tasks that always involve creative writing and creative thinking were always a cause for concern as most learners struggle with this aspect of language.

Which methods / strategies and LSM do you use when teaching ESL? Explain

Most teachers responded by saying they prefer to use the textbook and telling methods. They say that the content is expanded in the classroom and they cannot make mistakes. They feel that they should only tell learners about content because learners need to get all the information. A small number of teachers mentioned that normally they start their lessons with reading and speaking activities, and they do not involve comprehensive dialogue with regard to content.

Teachers said that they start with the telling method first in their classrooms or use it like "ice breakers". The do this because they want to discover learners' prior knowledge before delving into the actual lesson. Most teachers responded that there are no specific teaching strategies that they follow because when students read, they get a chance to pronounce the words.

Do you think your current teaching methods are successful compared to the ones prescribed in the NCS?

Most teachers are of the opinion that as long as the learners can understand the questions in the textbooks or on the chalkboard, they are fine. Teachers think that their ESL teaching methods are fine and adequate. They responded that they decided to stay within the methods because they were never trained on how to use national curriculum statement prescribed in the NCS. They wished that there could be other strategies prescribed to assist their learners. The teachers said that the learners struggle with putting words into context when making sentences, that is, internalizing words and making meaning out of novels. The question of teachers being unable to change their method of teaching seems to be a reason why learners also seem unable to think and reason on their own and compete in English as prescribed in ESL teaching in the national curriculum statement.

Do you think that it is important that ESL educators receive continuous training in OBE teaching strategies? Explain

Most teachers responded that the success of the ESL lesson only relies on thorough in-service training in OBE principles. Teachers wished that OBE training was done on a continuous basis which allowed them to stay abreast with any changes regarding alternative approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers had a positive attitude towards the OBE methods of teaching and they hoped that these methods would have brought about satisfactory results in ESL. The problem is that they did not receive advance OBE training on how to elevate the level of ESL teaching and learning with relevant strategies and they ultimately reverted back to the methods that they were able to master better. Some of the educators commented on the manner in which the learning facilitators were guiding them in OBE workshops that they attended. The teachers felt that the training was minimal and not comprehensive enough to make an impact on educators. The ESL educators responded that it seemed as if the facilitators were not passionate about OBE and were uncertain around OBE and its principles themselves. Some of the educators responded that OBE training was necessary as learners have difficulties in placing their expressions into context. Some educators lamented that they were not happy about the four other workshops on OBE as it was not sufficient for thorough training in new skills. They also mentioned that the problem is the learning facilitators who were not clear and certain on their stand in promoting OBE.

How would you describe the learner involvement in your ELS lessons?

Most educators responded that learner involvement took the form of use of hand-outs in the form of classwork and homework. Some said that they preferred to use task-based activities such as writing comprehension, a bit of dialogue and debating.

How often do you use English outside the class with both learners and educators?

Most educators responded that they rarely use English outside the classroom. They do not see the necessity of speaking English inside and outside the classroom because learners are used to speak to their educators in their mother tongue outside the classroom. One of the teachers mentioned that learners feel more comfortable when using their mother tongue in conversation with teachers outside the classroom. One of the teachers mentioned that during conversation outside the classroom, learners have problems in looking at themselves when speaking in English. Learners do not always feel confident to speak English outside the classroom. Teachers say that learners learn in English and therefore they are used to speak to

members of their community in their mother tongue. From the responses given by educators, it is clear that English is rarely spoken outside the ESL classroom. The researcher is of the opinion that this might contribute to the lack of confidence in ESL learners to meaningfully participate in ESL classes.

What do you think can be done to make teaching and learning in ESL more effective? Elaborate

Most educators responded that they prefer to be supplied with enough materials instead of only textbooks, such as charts and transparencies. They want to use ready-made materials because textbooks consume much of their time and making their own teaching and learning material is also time-consuming. Some of the educators find it difficult to teach because most learners do not have dictionaries to enhance the understanding of English.

Level of English Qualifications

Most teachers in the rural areas are qualified to the required standard and few have degrees. Most teachers have not moved to the level of an honours degree and therefore it is difficult for them to keep abreast with new development in languages. Some did not use correct English when answering a question.

Which area in your teaching is most difficult for learners to understand?

Most teachers responded that they have problems in speaking and writing when they are teaching. Learners seem to be performing poorly in those areas and teachers felt that they need to be well trained in order to reach the required standards for ESL teaching.

How does the linguistic weakness affect the performance of learners in English, explain in detail

Most teachers responded that learners reach Grade 10 without mastering the necessary aspects of English required for Grade 10 level. This is because teachers are always confused about what to teach in Grade 8 and 9 in relation to the NCS. Teachers lamented that it becomes difficult for them to teach the learners the syllabus in Grade 10 because they do not have the necessary background from the lower classes. This deficiency contributes towards learners' competence and performance because learners are overloaded with work in Grade 10. Some of the learners who are weaker and have average abilities are unable to cope with the amount of work.

4.5 OBSERVATION IN GRADE 10 CLASSROOMS

Most educators are still using the traditional methods of teaching which is the telling method or narration method. The teachers inform learners beforehand what to expect in the lessons that are going to be taught. Most of the learners automatically followed the instructions as were set out by the educators. It is the researcher's opinion that such a trend might lead to the teacher believing that all learners understand what was taught in the lesson. In the classroom, most learners responded to the questions asked by the teacher by raising their hands in order to indicate that they knew the answer. Learners who do not raise their hands were not given a chance to try to respond nor to ask clarity on questions. Learners were mostly told what to do and were always given clues on how to respond to the questions asked. The telling method that most teachers adhered to made teachers overlook the important issue of learner involvement in the lesson. Effective questioning in order to ascertain the level of understanding of learners was minimal.

A.   **Classroom Organization and Management**

Most classrooms had between 40 and 60 learners each. The only space allowed for free movement was in front of the chalkboard. Proper interaction between the educator and learner, as envisaged by the OBE principles, could not be executed.

B.   **Use of Learning and Teaching Support Materials**

Most educators used textbooks during their lessons. Teachers always read from the textbooks but showed no confidence of leaving out the textbook even though they did not read from it all the time. Most educators did not use any other learner support materials. It was also told to the researcher that textbooks were in minimal supply in most ESL classes. One textbook was usually shared between four learners. Most of the time learners would have classwork books, homework books and tests. The chalkboard was mainly used as a support material in some classes to explain some of the aspects of the lessons. It seemed that educators were not prepared to buy or even create their own LSM which is encouraged by the Department of Education. They most probably expect the Department of Education to supply them with all the materials.

C.   **Assessment and Reinforcement of Performance Tasks**

Tasks given to learners during classwork and homework were limited to either textbooks or the chalkboard. Group discussions rarely took place. Learners mainly completed their work individually. Learners were not given time to complete their work. Teachers were only

interested in covering the content of the syllabus in the classroom. The researcher's concern was less time was given to corrections on performed tasks which may have a huge impact on assessment scores that learners obtain in continuous and summative assessments. Most of the homework involved writing, most of which was not corrected but followed by a new set of tasks. During the writing of classwork and homework there is no creative thinking involved. This could result in lack of proper knowledge to build on. Assessment was done mostly towards the end of the lesson and learners experienced problems in constructing proper sentences during answering and had difficulty in expressing themselves. Activities such as dialogues, debates, discussions or dramas and singing were rarely observed and these were mostly activities that involve learners and must form part of the OBE approach to teaching and learning in ESL classrooms.

4.6 PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Parents were randomly selected to complete the parents' questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to parents and explained to them individually. Parents who completed the questionnaire were those who could read and write.

The parents' questionnaire was analysed and interpreted. The findings were reported descriptively. The findings of the parents' questionnaire are as follows: -

Most parents who completed the questionnaire responded that they do assist learners at home, because English is not their mother tongue, they sometimes find it difficult to assist them in other activities. All parents responded that they are not invited to talk about language policies at school and they only assume that learners must use English at school as they are not informed about their responsibility. Parents wanted their children to learn in English as English will assist them in the economic world and help them to find jobs.

4.7 LANGUAGE SPECIALIST QUESTIONS

Table 4.9 Participants according to their number and gender

Language Specialists	Gender	Number	Percentage %
A	Male	1	50
B	Female	1	50
Total		2	100%

Do you want English to remain the language of learning and teaching? Explain why?

Both of them agreed that English should remain the language of teaching and learning as there are still problems related to the use of mother tongue in schools. They cited issues such as texts that are not yet translated into indigenous languages. This is because translation is a specialist field in language and there is lack of recognition. Translators have also studied English as a second language and as a result, their command of English is not very good, they are not fully bilingual. Both language specialists acknowledged that learners perform poorly in English and this is seen in junior primary education, as alluded to by ANA.

4.8 CONCLUSION

The findings gathered from this study show that learners cannot perform or compete in English as a second language. The overall performance of learners in the diagnostic test leaves much to be desired. The researcher is of the view that there is no quality teaching in English. The learners' knowledge of phonology, morphology and syntax is questionable. Most learners lack vocabulary and therefore have poor writing skills. The most serious problem is that learners cannot communicate in English although they learn it as a second language. They were shy to ask the researcher questions during the oral interview.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to give a brief overview of the study and to make a conclusion based on the data collected and analysed. This chapter also makes recommendations on the main problems identified in this study.

5.2 SUMMARY

This study was conducted at a time when South Africa had undergone a process of change. The new curriculum (OBE) was being introduced at schools and the Department of Education was busy with a number of revisions of the curriculum. It is disturbing that teachers showed inadequate knowledge in terms of the new curriculum which ultimately impacted on the learners. It is categorically clear that the performance and competence of learners lies in knowledgeable qualified teachers. Outcome-based education stressed that learners must show competency in literacy, especially in the second language. This was not evident at Koloti circuit. The study has demonstrated that teachers need intensive in-service training in curriculum-related issues in order to understand the language curriculum. Teachers also need to be learning how to teach in English as they are unable to do so in ELS classes. They actually teach English using Sepedi and this affects competence in English and encourages learners to be reluctant in studying the second language. In the diagnostic test completed by learners, it was clear that there were no learners who reached outstanding and meritorious achievements. Most learners performed inadequately or adequately. It is not surprising that the Department of Education has introduced the Annual National Assessment (ANA) to analyse the results. Most of ANA findings are attributed to proficiency in English. The results of this study are in line with ANA results for literacy. Learners lacked listening, speaking, writing, reading skills in English and that is why they performed at their lowest levels. There is also no consistency in talking the language inside and outside the classroom, as there are no policies in schools that force learners to use English in the school premises and to practice it. The lack of these four skills leads to incompetence and poor communication in English.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations in relation to the study on the development of second language proficiency and rural schools in order to alleviate incompetence and poor performance.

- Educators are encouraged to conduct diagnostic tests for learners in English when they enter the FET Band from the GET Band. This will assist them to assess the learners' English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing and will help them to discover their weaknesses in linguistic competency.

- Educators need to receive intensive training in any new curriculum in order to teach competently in ESL classes. Teachers need to be taught how to integrate various language skills in their ESL classes in order to arrive at the output of production which is competence and performance. This will help them to interact with the concepts of communicative language teaching. Educators should also be taught to build in exercises in their lessons because they are still struggling with this issue in the classroom.

- Educators must be taught to review books in order to select suitable books for their grades.

- More speaking exercises should be developed in schools in order to encourage oral activities, writing for a purpose and for pleasure in classrooms.

- Schools should look for donations to have facilities to help them in teaching.

- Teachers should also be encouraged to develop themselves in order to keep abreast with new developments in ESL teaching and learning.

- Teachers should be oriented about reading skills because of poor performance in reading by learners.

- Discursive or expository writing must be mastered, especially in second language teaching.

- Educators must be encouraged to assist one another; this will help them to interact as fellow teachers of English. For example, teachers should bring along old magazines and newspapers for learners to read in order to develop a culture of reading at schools; this will improve performance in ESL.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Most learners lacked vocabulary used for sharpening their writing skills. The skills of reading and writing needed to be integrated. This is not properly done in Koloti circuit. Teachers need to receive adequate in service training on the new curriculum as this impact on learners' performance and competence. Research has also revealed that in ESL teaching and learning in Grade 10, deficiencies and ineffective teaching occurs in most of the classrooms. The ESL educators confirmed that they are still using the traditional way of teaching. Research has also revealed that teachers do not have a thorough knowledge of relevant teaching strategies that can be used in teaching of ESL especially when working with large groups of learners. It was also surprising, that teachers are also not fluent in English especially when answering research questions. The researcher is of the view that this might affect learners' competence.

The researcher believes that this research will assist in the development of second language proficiency that is preferred in the 21st century. This is possible even if the language being learned is not the first language of either the learners or the educators in most of the schools. Educators should take it upon themselves to promote usage of English in all spheres of the school.

REFERENCES

Alexander, P. 2002. Article 23 of the International Labour Organisation. Convention 107. http://wwwGermanorg/Mercator/oit-GB.htm. Retrieved on March 1, 2006.

Ali, S. 1995. Teaching Literature in Malays ESL content: Reflections and Recommendations. *English in Education* 29(1): 53–65.

American Council on Teachers for Foreign Languages. 1986. *Proficiency Guidelines.* Hastings – on Hudson ACTFL.

Article 23 of the International Labour Organisation. 1957. Convention 107. Article 23 retrieved on March 1, 2006 from http://www.German.Org/Mercator/Oit – GB. html.

Austin, J.L. 1962. *How do things with words.* Oxford.

Babbie, E. 1995. *The practice of social research.* (7th edition). USA: Wadsworth.

Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. 2008. *The practice of social research:* South African Edition. Oxford University Press. Cape Town.

Bailey, K.D. 1987. *Method of Social Research.* (3rd Edition). The Free Press: New York.

Bainard, I., Fraser, W.J. and Maree, J.G. 2004. *Outcomes-Based Assessment.* Heineman: Sandown.

Balock, A.D. and Balock, C. 1982. *Introduction to Social Research.* (2nd Edition). Prentice Hall Inc: England Cliffs.

Basson, B. 1998. *What Technology enhanced learning THL brings to behaviourism and what behaviourism brings to THL.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bellante, D. and Kogut, C. 1998. "Language ability US Labour Market experiences and the earnings of immigrants". *International Journal of Manpower* 19(3): 319–330.

Best, J.W. and Kahn, J.V. 2003. *Research Education. 7th Edition.* Allyn and Bacon (Boston).

Bogdan, R. and Biklen, S.K. 2003. *Quantitative Research for Education: An introduction to theory and methods.* Boston: Alyn and Bacon.

Borg, W.R. and Gall, M.D. 1989. *Educational Research.* New York: Longman.

Brecht, R. Walton, R. 1993. *National Strategist Planning in the less commonly taught languages occasional papers.* Washington D.C. National Foreign Language Centre.

Brock-Utne, B. and Holmarsdottir, H.B. 2004. Language Policies and Practices in Tanzania and South Africa: Problems and Challenges. *International Journal of Educational Development* 23: 67–83.

Bromley, R.G. 1990. *Methodology in Nursing Research.*

Campbell, R. and Wales, R. 1970. *The study of language acquisition.* In J. Lyons (Ed) New Horizons in Linguistics (pp. 242 – 262). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Canale, M. 1983. From Communicative Competence to Communicative Language Pedagogy. In J. Richards and R. Schmidt (eds.). *Language and Communication.* pp. 2-28. London: Longman.

Canale, M. and Swain, M. 1980. Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. *Applied Linguistics* 1: 1–47.

Casale, D. and Poosel, D. 2010. The male mental earnings premium in the context of bride wealth payments: Evidence from South Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 58(2): 21-23.

Casale, D. and Possel, D. 2009. *Unions and the gender wage gap in South Africa. Economic Research Southern Africa.* Working Paper No. 113.

Charles, J. and Wood, J.L. 1985. Natal Textbook. 79–115.

Chisholm, L. 2004. *The Quality of Primary Education in South Africa*. Available from: Research 7 – hl en & q – Linda + Chisholm – the reality education + in + South Africa & b + n G = Google + search &Meta (Accessed 14 July 2006).

Chiswick, B.R. 1978. The effect of Americanization on the earnings of foreign – born men. *Journal of Political Economy* 86: 89–91.

Chiswick, B.R. and Miller, P.W. 2002. Immigrant earnings: Language Skills Linguistic Concentrations and the business Cycle. *Journal of Population Economics.*

Chiswick, B.R. and Miller, P.W. 2002. Immigrant earnings: Language Skills Linguistic Concentrations and the business Cycle. *Journal of Population Economics.*

Chiswick, B.R. and Miller. P.W. 1995. The endogamy between language and earnings: International analysis. *Journal of Labor Economics* 13(2):246–258.

Chiswick, B.R., Patrines, H.A. and Hurst, M.E. 2000. Indigenous language skills and the Labour Market in a Developing Economy: Bolivia. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 48(2): 349–367.

Chomsky, N. 1965. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Collier. 1987. *Academic Achievement in a Second Language.* www.cal.org/resources/archives/digest1991achievement.html.

Crabtree, B.F. 1999. *Doing Qualitative Research*. 2nd Edition. London: Sage Publishers.

Cresswell, P. 2002. *Educational Research Competencies for analysis and application.* 3rd Edition. Macmillan Publishing Company.

Crystal, D. 1999. English as a global language. *Language in Society*. 28(1).

Cummins, J. 1980. *The Construct of Language Proficiency in Bilingual Education.* In J. Alatis (Ed). *Current issues in Bilingual Education.* (pp.81–103). Washington D.C: Georgetown University Press.

Cummins, J. 1984. *Bilingualism and Special Education*: Issues in Assessment and Paedagogics. Clevedon. England Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. 1991. *Language Development and Academic Learning: Language Cultural Cognition.* Cleredon: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. 1994. *The Acquisition of English as a Second Language.*

Cummins, J. 2000. *Putting Language Proficiency in Bilingual Education*: Responding to Critiques of the Conversational / Academic Language distinction. In J. Cenoz & U. Jesiner (Eds.). English in Europe: The Acquisition of a third language. pp.54-83. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Dalen, V. 1979. *Understanding Educational Research: An Introduction.* 4th Edition. University of California. Berkeley.

Davies, A. 1989. Communication Competence as Language use. *Applied Linguistics* 10(2): 157–170.

Davies, D. 1991. Schools Reacting out: Family School and Community Partnership for Student Success. *Ph. Delta Kaplan* (72)5.

De Vos, A.S. (Ed.) 1998. *Research at Grassroots*. Pretoria: J.L. Van Schaik.

De Vos, A.S. 2002. *Research at Grassroots.* Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. 1994. *The Handbook of Quantitative Research.* (2nd Edition). London: Sage Publishers.

Deobold, B. and Van Dalen. 1979. *Understanding Educational Research. An Introduction.* 4th Edition. University of California. Berkeley.

Department of Education - Bantu Education Act of 1953.

Edelsky, C. 1990. *With Literacy and Justice for all*: Rethinking the Social in Language and Education. London: The Falmer Press.

Edelsky, C., Hudelson, S., Flores, B., Barkin, F., Altwagen, B. and Jilbert, K. 1983. Semi-lingualism and language deficit. *Applied Linguistics* 4: 1-22.

English Academy of South Africa. 1976.

Fink, A. and Kosecoff, J. 1998. *How to conduct surveys*. CA: SAGE Publications.

Fodor. 1983. Multiple Intelligence. *The modularity of the mind*. Cambridge. MA: M.T. Press.

Freed, B. 1998. Perspectives on the future of Proficiency based Teaching and Testing. *ADPL Bulletin*. 20(2):52–57.

Fried, C. 1966. *Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Gardner, H. 1993. *Multiple Intelligences*: *The theory in practice.* New York. Basics Books.

Gauteng Department of Education. 2002. *Systematic Evaluation Provincial Report. Mainstream Education Foundation Phase.* Pretoria: Government Printers.

Gay, L.R. and Airaisian, P. 2003. *Educational Research Competencies or Analysis and Application.* 7th Edition. New Jersey.

Gay, R. 2003. *Educational Research Competencies for Analysis and Application.* 3rd Edition. Education, Macmillan Publishing.

Gillespie, D. 2004. Curriculum 2005. *Revised National Curriculum Statement in Service Training*. Intermediate Phase. OBE Generic Module. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.

Gordon, S. and Quaing, S. 2000. Comparative Perspective Education in China and South Africa. 1992-2000. Management Information Systems.

Heugh, K. 2000. Multilingual Voices – Isolation and the Crumbling of Bridges. *Agenda* 46:21-43.

Heugh, L. 1999. Language, Development and Reconstructing Development in South Africa.

Huitt, W. 2001. Assessment, Measurement, and Evaluation Overview. *Educational Psychology Interactive:* Valdosta University. Available from http://Chivon.Valosta,edu/Whuitt/Col/measervera/mservlou.htm1 (Accessed 31 August 2006).

Hymes, D. 1997. *Competence and Performance in Linguistic Theory.* In R. Huxley and E. Ingram (Eds). Language Acquisition: Models and Academic Press.

Ingram, D. 1985. *Assessing Proficiency: An Overview of some aspects of testing.* In K & Hyltesnsham & M. Pieremann (eds.). Modeling and Assessing Second Language Development (pp:215–276) Claredon Multilingual Matters.

Iyldyz, L.B. 2007: *Rethinking Validity of the L2 Proficiency Concept. Lessons for EIL.* Volume 9. Issues in Article 4.

Jansen, J. & Christie, P. 1999. *Studies of Outcomes Based Education in South Africa.* Kenwyn: Juta.

Johnson, S.D. 1997. Learning Technologized Concepts and Developing Intellectual Skills. *International Journal of Technology* in Krashen and Terell. 1983.

Kasper. 1997. *Pragmatics in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Killen, R. 1998. *Effective Teaching Strategies*. Australia: Social Science Press.

Kossoudji, S.A. 1988. English language ability and the labour market opportunities of Hispanic and East Asian immigrant men. *Journal of Labour Economics*. 6(2): 205-288.

Krashen, S. 1981. *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. English Language Teaching Series. London: Prentice Hall UK Ltd.

Krashen, S. 1988. *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Prentice Hall International.

Krashen, S. 1995. Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition. English Language Teaching Series. *London Prentice Hall International Design Education* 7:(1-2): 83–96. UK Ltd.

Krashen, S. D. and Terell, T.D. 1983. *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom*. Hayward. CA: Alemary Press.

Lado, R. 1961. *Language Testing: The construction and use of foreign language tests: A teacher's book*. London: Longman.

Language in Education Policy (LieP). 1997. Department of Education: Pretoria.

Leedy, P.D. 1993. *Practical Research: Planning and Design:* MacMillan Publishing Company: New York.

Malamah–Thomas. 1987: *Classroom Interaction*: Oxford University Press.

Mamphela, R. 2009. *Her mother tongue clashes with the mother's tongue.* Sunday Times, 8 March.

Mancosa College of South Africa. 2003. Durban.

Maree, K. 2009. *First Steps in Research.* Van Schaik. Pretoria.

Mason, J. 1997. *Qualitative Researching*: Sage Publications: London.

Mawasha, A.L. 1998. Learner Perceptions of English Language Teaching in African Schools Implications of Language Policy. *Per Linguam, A Journal for Language Learning* 9(27).

McDonald, C.A. 1990. *Crossing the Threshold into Standard Three Report Sting – 16, Human Science Research Council*. Pretoria.

McMillan, J.H., and Schumacher, S. 1997. *Research Education: Conceptual Introduction.* New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman.

Mda, I. 2004. Learning best in the Home Language.

Modelling and Assessing Second Language Development. pp.215–276. Claredon Multilingual Matters.

Mothata, S., Lemmer, E., Mola, T. and Pretorius, F. 2000. *A Dictionary of South African Education and Training*: Johannesburg. South Africa: Hodder and Stoughton.

Machmias and Nachmias. 1992. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences.* St Martin: New York.

Ndamba, G.T. 1999. *Discrepancy between the Official Language Policy and Implementation at Infant Level*. M.Ed: Dissertation Unpublished. University of Zimbabwe.

North, B. 2000. *Development of a common framework scale of language proficiency.* New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Oller, J.W. 1979. *Language Tests at School.* London: Longman.

Pendakur, K. and Pendakur, R. 2002*:* Language as both Human Capital and Ethnicity. *International Migration Review* 36(1): 147–177.

Perkins, D. 1981. *The minds best work*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Probyn. M. 2009. Smuggling vernacular into the classroom: Conflicts and tension in classroom code switching in township/rural schools in South Africa. *International Journal of Bilingualism.* 12(2): 123-136.

Probyn, M., Murray, S., Botha, L., Botya, P., Boorks, J. and Westphal, V. 2002. Minding the gaps–an investigation into language policy and practice in four Eastern Cape Districts. *Perspectives in Education* 20(1): 29–46.

Ralenala, M.F. 1993. *A study of Specific Language needs (English) of African Students Enrolled for First Year Science at University Level.* Unpublished M.ED Dissertation: University of the North.

Ralenala, M.F. 2003. *Reading Behaviour of First Year University Physics Students:* Unpublished PhD Thesis, Rand Afrikaans University.

Ramphelele, M. 2009. *Her mother tongue clashes with the mother tongue.* Sunday Times, 8 March .

READ Educational Trust. 2011.

Report on the Annual National Assessment of 2011. Department of Basic Education.

Robert, K. and Yin. 2003. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Third Edition. Applied Social Studies.

Romaine, S. 1989. *Bilingualism.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Rossel, C. and Baker, K. 1996. The Educational Effectiveness of Bilingual Education. *Research in Teaching of English* 30(1): 385–419.

Rowntree. 1997. *Assessment Policy GET Band*. November 2000. NPDE.

Savignon, S. 1985. Evaluation of Communicative Competence: The ACTFL Provisional Proficiency Guidelines. *Modern Language Journal* 69(2): 129–34.

Schlebusch, G. and Thobedi, M. 2004. Outcomes-based Education in the English Second Language Classroom in South Africa. *The Qualitative Report* 9(1): 35-48.

Schlebusch, G.J. 2000. *Functional Lesson Designs for the Free State Gold Fields Grade 10 Economics Learners with Limited English Proficiency,* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Vista University, South Africa.

Selinger. A. and Shohamy, E. 1992. Beyond Proficiency Testing: A Diagnostic Feedback Testing Mode for Assessing Foreign Language Learning. *Modern Language Journal* 76(4): 513-521.

Sewell. A.K. and D.A. Price. 2001. An inter-species difference in CBD. *Trends in Immunology* 22: 595.

Siegruhn, A. and Pludderman, P. 1991. *Multilingual Education for South Africa.* Johannesburg South Africa: Heinemann Publishers.

Snow, A. and Brinton, D. 1997. *Content- Based Second Language Instruction. Michigan Classic Edition.*

Stanley, J.C. 1964. *Measurement in Todays Schools.* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Incorporated.

Stein, H.H. 1983. *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stein, P. 1995. What we can learn from good language learners? *Canadian Modern Language Review* 31: 304–318.

Stern, H.H. 1992. *Issues and options in language teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sternberg, R. (Ed). 1998. *The Nature of Creativity.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stevens, P. 1998. *Teaching English as an International Language:* From Practice to Principle. Pergamon Press: Oxford.

Steyn, H.J. 1993. International Opinion on Minimum Requirements in the South African Education System. *South African Journal of Education* 134: 182–187.

Taylor, D. 1998. The meaning and use of the term Competence. *Linguistics and Applied Linguistics* 9(2): 148–168.

Trotsky, T. 1990. Minneapolis 1990. Available online at the Reds-Die Roten site.

Tuckman, W. 1994. *Conducting Educational Research*. 4th Edition. Florida State University.

Uys, H.M.M. and Basson, A.A. 1991. *Research Methodology in Nursing Kagiso Tertiary:* Pretoria.

Van der Merwe, I.J. and Van Niekerk, L.O. 1994. *Language in South Africa*: Distribution and Change. Stellnbosch, South Africa: Stellebosch University Press.

Van Schalkwyk, M.J. 2001. *Communication Management and Secretarial Students*. Parow, Cape Town, South Africa: M.J. Van Schalkwyk.

Vockell, E.L. 1983. *Educational Research*: Planning and Design Macmillan Publishing Company. New York.

Vollmer, H. 1981. *Why are we interested in General Language Proficiency?* In J. Alderson & A. Hughes (Eds.) ELT. Documents 111 – Issues in Language Testing (pp.152–175). London: British Council.

Wald, B. 1984. A sociolinguistic perspective on Cummins current framework for relating language proficiency to academic achievement. pp. 55-72. In C. Rivera (ed.). *Language proficiency and academic achievement.* Claredon England: Multilingual Matters.

Wdamba, G.T. 1999. *Discrepancy between the Official Language Policy and Implementation at Infant Level.* M.Ed: Unpublished Dissertation. University of Zimbabwe.

Wein, A. and Robert, K. 1994. *Outcomes Based Education.* New York. Sandown: Heineman.

Wiley. 1997. *Economic Journal.* Volume 107. Wiley.com/journal/10.1111(ISSW)1468-0297.

Yin, R.K. 1994. *Case Study Research Design and Methods*. 2nd Edition. Newburg Park. Sage Publications.