A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR PARENTAL SUPPORT:

SUPPORTING LEARNERS' DEVELOPMENT

OF

SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

by

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Philosophiae Doctor in Educational Psychology at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

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Aubrey Tebogo Tsebe

23 July 2019

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ABSTRACT

The lack of parental support and the use of English as the language of teaching and learning are two of the main factors that influence poor learner performance in South Africa. Although a significant amount of research has been conducted internationally, the need for research tailored for the South African context still exists. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to contribute to knowledge about parental support concerning learner development of second language proficiency.

An explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research, also known as two-phased model was used to guide the study. The first phase focused on the quantitative secondary data from Progress in International Reading Literacy Study 2006 (PIRLS 2006). The source of the secondary data was the results of the parent questionnaire, administered to South African parents of the Grade 4 learners (n = 16 073). The International Database (IDB) analyser software and Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were used for data analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were computed. The quantitative results revealed that a significant percentage of parents (30%, SE =0.7) did not engage in literacy related activities with their children prior to Grade 1 compared to a low percentage (2%, SE = 1.21) of those who did the activities. However, a significantly higher percentage of parents (29%, SE = 0.65) did engage in literacy activities with their children in Grade 1, compared to 5% (SE =0.34) who never or almost never did the activities. A significantly higher percentage of parents (89%, SE = 0.67) agreed a lot with positive reading attitude statements compared to 2% (SE = 0.25) who disagreed a lot. The limited time spent by parents on reading and books at home were noted as a matter of concern. This concern was augmented by the low educational level and employment status of the parents. These results were used to inform the qualitative data collection in order to gain a deeper understanding of the experience of the parents.

The second or qualitative phase of the study used convenience sampling to select participants, to gain an understanding of their experiences with regard to supporting the second language development of their children. The eight (8 participants) selected parents participated in two focus group meetings. Six themes emerged from thematic data analysis, namely: alternative parenting, parent-child activities, technology and Internet support, parental challenges, language usage and quality of education. The characteristics used for developing a conceptual framework for parental support on

second language development were extracted from these aforementioned themes. The results revealed that parental support is a complex dynamic process that requires one to consider the interface of systems around the parent and the learner. Consequently, how this complexity requires a reconceptualisation of factors affecting parental support concerning second language development. The reconceptualisation can provide new avenues for theorising about parental support in second language learning context, particularly in multilingual and developmental countries.

Keywords: learners, language proficiency, language development, parental support, conceptual framework.

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A Conceptual Framework for Parental Support: Supporting Learners' Development of Second Language Proficiency

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACTFL   American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

AIDS   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ANA   Annual National Assessments

BICS   Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

CALP   Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

CAPS   Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

CDST   Complex Dynamic Systems Theory

CEA   Centre for Evaluation and Assessment

DBE   Department of Basic Education

DST   Dynamic Systems Theory

ELL   English language learners

ESL   English Second Language

HIV   Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IDB   International Database

IEA   International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement

IIAL   Incremental Introduction of African Languages in South African Schools

LA   Language Acquisition

LD   Language Development

LiEP   Language in Education Policy

LOLT   Language of Learning and Teaching

MT   Mother Tongue

NCLB   No Child Left Behind

NIHSS   National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences

NPC   National Planning Commission

PIRLS   Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

SA   South Africa

SACMEQ   Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

SAHUDA   South African Humanities Deans Association

SDA   secondary data analysis

SGB   School Governing Body

SLQ   Second Language Acquisition

SLD   Second Language Development

SMT   school management team

SPSS   Statistical Program for the Social Sciences

UG   universal grammar

UK	United Kingdom
UP	University of Pretoria
USA	United States of America
WLPB-R	Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery
ZPD	zone of proximal development

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the current study is to contribute to knowledge pertaining to the role of parental support in the development of language skills. Ultimately, this knowledge will assist in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. The conceptual framework will inform future theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process. The factors that influence poor learner performance are complex and may include poor language development, lack of educational resources, lack of teacher support and lack of parental support (Dhurumraj, 2013; Rammala, 2009). However, researchers are in agreement that lack of parental support is significant in that it has a negative effect on educational outcomes of South African learners (Alexander, 2011; Daniels, 2017; Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena & Palane, 2017; Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse, & Zimmerman, 2012; Howie, Venter, Van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Du Toit, Scherman & Archer 2006; Mmotlane, Winnaar & wa Kivilu, 2009; van Staden, 2011; World Bank, 2017; Zimmerman & Smit, 2014). The most common negative outcome is lack of second language proficiency, which has been found to affect overall academic achievement (Department of Education, 2012c; Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018). These two issues, second language and parental support, are the main focus of this PhD study, referred to as the 'current study'.

In the context of South Africa, I view quality education as the standard of education (from early childhood to tertiary) and educational resources available to learners, to allow them to thrive and follow their career path with the goal of making a meaningful contribution to the South African nation. The challenge of providing quality education, faced by the South African education system, is evidenced by the on-going criticisms by education researchers regarding the poor performance of learners at both national and international levels (DBE, 2012d; Howie et al., 2017). Needless to say, this is a pressing matter and as the development of a quality system requires the engagement of all stakeholders, developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development could potentially contribute to an improvement in the quality of education

(DBE, 2013a; eNCA, 2014; Howie et al., 2017; Political Bureau & South African Press Association, 2012; Stefani Film Channel, 2015; UNESCO, 2017, World Bank, 2017).

In this chapter, I offer a broad perspective into these two issues, as discussed in the above paragraph. In the next section (1.2), I provide the research background of the current study. In the background section, I share literature showing the problem of lack of parental support concerning second language development. The background also serves as an overview to help in understanding both the problem statement (1.3) and the rationale (1.4) of the current study. In the problem statement section, I argue for parental support as the main problem in education versus other problems that are currently being experienced. In the rationale section (1.4), I provide justification for the decision to focus on the problem of lack of parental support. The rationale is followed by the aims and objectives (1.5) and proposed research questions (1.6). These two sections are related in that the aims and objectives describe what the study aims to achieve, while the proposed research questions present the questions that guide how the aims and objectives are achieved.

Furthermore, in Section 1.7, I present the delimitation of the current study to indicate the scope that the topic of the current study will cover. The delimitation section is followed by the clarification of the concepts section (1.8) in which I present the four key concepts of the current study, namely language proficiency (1.8.1), language development (1.8.2), parents (1.8.3) and theory of parental support (1.8.4). In Section 1.9, I provide a summary of the dynamic systems conceptual framework, which is employed in the current study. A summary of the research design and methodology is presented in Section 1.10. The data analysis section (1.11) provides a summary of how the data of both phases of the current study was analysed. In the quality criteria section (1.12), I provide research concepts, which ensure that the current study follows the required standard for quality research. In the ethical considerations section (1.13) I provide a background of the ethical process followed to ensure that the current study was conducted in an ethical manner. The developmental process (1.14) provides a background of the current study, which explains the changes undertaken that have had significant outcomes on how this research has unfolded. Before the conclusion section (1.17), there is section of possible contributions of the current study (1.15), which focuses at the potential contribution to scholarship. It is followed by the chapter outline (1.16), which provide an overview of all chapters in the current document.

1.2 BACKGROUND

1.2.1 Research Background of the Current Study

A review of South African education history shows that the language of learning, which I refer to in the current study as the language in education, has always been a contentious issue (Hermanson, 2002; Seroto, 2011) (further elaborated on in Chapter 2, Section 2.2). The controversy over the use of language reached a peak around 1976 during the Soweto upraising when many students died during protests against the use of Afrikaans as the language of learning (Boddy-Evans, 2017; Booyse, 2011; Maluleka, 2008). Although protests against the use Afrikaans are not as common as they used to be in the 1970s, the issue of language is still very sensitive (ENCA, 2018; South African Legal Information Institute, 2018). However, while the focus during the 1970s was on Afrikaans, the English language, as the language of learning, has subtly found its way into education (see LiEP; DBE, 2012c), and it is only recently that its effects are being realised.

According to policy (DBE, 2012c), learners are taught in their home language for the first three years of formal schooling. Then at Grade four level, they transition to English as their language of learning and teaching (LoLT). This practice has become a challenge as most learners lack proficiency in the English language as it is not their home language, significantly is often their third or fourth language (Maree & De Boer, 2003; Nel, 2005; Nel & Swanepoel, 2010). Ramrathan (2017, p. 23) compared the results of Grade 6 learners across four countries in Africa and concluded that the "South African schooling system is failing its citizens", revealing that the problematic educational system of South Africa is not getting better. Ramrathan's conclusions (2017) do not come as a surprise given the words that Bloch (2009, p. 17) stated over a decade ago that, "there is no shortage of evidence showing how badly the South African education system is performing". Glaring evidence of the poor performance compared to their peers around the world is the recent report of performance of learners in South Africa. The latest results from The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2016, where learners were tested in their 'home' languages, show that South African children are performing below all 50 participating countries (Howie, et al., 2017). This poor performance is corroborated by previous larger scale studies such as the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) (SACME, 2011), PIRLS 2006 (Howie et al., 2008), PIRLS 2011 (Howie et al., 2012) and the Annual National Assessments (ANA) (DBE, 2011, 2012c) which reveal that South African learners are performing below the required level. All these aforementioned studies have mirrored the poor performance of South African learners as compared to counterparts elsewhere.

The effects of language usage in education seem to be felt more by Black learners whom English is not their home language. Statistical reports show that Black Africans constitute 79% of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2011). The statistical reports are corroborated by literature that shows English as the dominant language in most of the schools in South Africa (Alexander, 2011; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; van Staden, 2011). Thus, based on the categorisations used by Statistics South Africa, Black African excludes other demographic groups, that is, Whites, Coloureds and Indians or Asians. This suggests that the majority of the Black population receives education in a language other than their home language. Therefore, these learners would need educational support to help them reach proficiency in the English language, referred to as a second language in the current study. Despite these challenges, an increasing number of parents are choosing to send their children to English medium schools with the hope of better education and economic access (Corridor Gazette, 2018; De Klerk, 2002; Evans & Cleghorn, 2012, 2014). The fact that parents seem to prefer sending their children to English medium schools is a concern to those who advocate for multi-lingual approaches, given the limited support that parents provide or are able to provide for their children regarding the development of the English language.

Many international studies (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2015; Castillo & Gàmez, 2013; Gilleece, 2015; Jeynes, 2007, 2012; Liu, 2013; Wang, 2014) and national studies (Create South Africa Policy Brief 4, 2011; Daniels, 2017; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; Meier & Lemmer, 2015; Mmotlane, Winnaar & wa Kivilu, 2009; Zimmerman & Smit, 2014; Zimmerman & van Staden, 2008) have indicated a relationship between parental involvement in their child's education and educational success. Of importance to the current study is the literature that focuses on the relationship between parental involvement and language development (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2013; Daniels, 2017; Enemuo & Obidike, 2013; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; Gilleece, 2015; Jeynes, 2007, 2012; Liu, 2013; Wang, 2014). Given that parents decide on the school that their child attends, and subsequently, they also decide on the language of learning and teaching through the School Governing Body (SGB) (Department of Basic Education, 2012b; Ncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011; South African School Act, 1996), the study postulates that the parents, as one of the key stakeholders, should play an active role in assisting their children's language development. It however, appears that the lack of parental involvement remains a constant concern, evidenced in correspondence from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) to schools over the lack of parental involvement in learners' education, and pleading for the increased participation of parents (DBE, 2012a).

The lack of parental involvement in South African education is also corroborated by other studies (Meier & Lemmer, 2015; Motala & Luxomo, 2014; Naong & Morolong, 2011; Ncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011; Ndebele, 2015). In the literature review chapter, I argue that although the Department of Basic Education has circulated documents on parental support (see DBE, 1012b, 2015b), the documents have not provided sufficient information to guide parental support in education (see Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.4.6.). I also argue that when it comes to practical guidance on activities that parents can do with the child, the focus is on teacher support only (DBE, 2011b) and parents are excluded. Not only does this make it difficult for parents to become involved, it adds to the challenges (Chapter 2, Section 2.4) that parents already face with participation.

Therefore, the current study seeks to provide a platform for an understanding of the contextual challenges faced by parents of English second language learners, and how these challenges affect their involvement in their children's learning. It is envisaged that the results of the current study will serve as crucial elements in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, to scaffold the parenting skills needed in the development of the children's second language proficiency. The problem statement, presented below, serves as a basis to support the rationale for the current study.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

I have already highlighted in the above sections (Sections 1.1 and 1.3) how the South African education system is affected by a myriad of common and unique challenges, as compared to other nations around the globe (Howie, Combrinck, Roux, Tshele, Mokoena & Palane, 2017; Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse & Zimmerman, 2012; Howie, Venter, van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Du Toit, Scherman & Archer, 2008). Looking at the challenges faced by the South African education system, language is unarguably a major concern (DBE, 2002; Heugh, 2001; Nel, 2011; Stein, 2017). For example, South African studies focusing on school resources (Munje & Maarman, 2017) and key subjects such as mathematics (Maimane, 2006; Mji & Makgato, 2006; Stott, 2017) and physical science (Mji & Makgato, 2006; Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018), have shown that issues with language in education and lack of resources are the cause of poor performance of learners. This is corroborated by an international study that has shown that learners from homes with many books have higher achievements in reading, Mathematics and Science (Mullis, Martin, Kennedy & Foy, 2007). Furthermore, a longitudinal research on language, which is conducted by PIRLS, shows that the trends of poor performance still persist (I elaborate on this in Chapter 3, section 3.5.1). These aforementioned studies serve as an

example of research that shows how the South African issue of language and under-achievement seems to be a complex problem, and there are no obvious solutions. As such, more time is needed for research such as that undertaken by the current study, and subsequent interventions, before solutions can be realised.

Furthermore, parents as key figures in the lives of their children, cannot be excluded in the effort to try to address this problem. The Department of Basic Education has attempted to involve parents in their children's education through the introduction of the School Governing Body (SGB) (South African School Act, 1996). One of the key decisions of the SGB is to decide on the language policy of the school, and thereby, decide on the language of learning and teaching (DBE, 2012b; South African Schools Act, 1996). It would seem that taking into account parental involvement of selecting a school for their children, and determining the language of learning and teaching, one could assume that parents would make subsequent efforts to support their children in the acquisition and development of proficiency in the language of learning and teaching in the school they have chosen (DBE, 2012b; Ncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011). On the contrary, Mmotlane et al., (2009, p. 528) state that, "low parental participation in activities of the school has been detected in South African black schools in recent years". The lack of parental involvement is matter of concern to the current study given the essential role of parents, and therefore, beckons the need for parental support on how to be involved with the aim of promoting second language development (DBE, 2012b; Jansen, 2007).

Thus, although the SGB serves as a platform aimed at supporting parental involvement, it must also be noted that not all parents can participate in the SGB, which can only accommodate nine (9) parents at most, who form the majority in the SGB (Department of Education, 2015b; Heystek, 2004). The number of parents accommodated could also ensure that involvement in the SGB is a privileged position, in sense that those involved might not want to give others the opportunity to serve. For example, several studies have revealed that, corruption (Mncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011), power struggles and low levels of education (Mncube, 2009), dysfunctional SGB's (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Xaba, 2011), are cited as the main reasons that hinder parental involvement. Thus, although the SGB provides a parental support platform to promote involvement, examination of the operation of SGBs shows that the majority of parents do not participate (Mncube, 2009).

Reasons for lack of involvement are however, not limited to the state of the SGB or its operation, there are also other factors. For example, some parents want to get involved but do not know how to become involved (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011), a view consistent with studies in the United Kingdom (UK) (Okeke, 2014;

Willemse, Thompson, Vanderlinde & Mutton, 2018) and another in Nigeria (Enemuo & Obidike, 2013). In other instances, age seems to play a role, with young parents (35 to 49 years) showing more interest in involvement than older parents (Mmotlana, Winnaar & wa Kivilu, 2009). Some parents do not get involved due to insecurity based on their low levels of education (Mncube, 2009) and lack of second language proficiency used by the school (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011). Other parents do not view parental support of their children's education as their role; rather, as that of teachers. For example, a research study conducted in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, revealed that parents associate their support only limited to home-based activities such as homework support (Page, 2016). The above factors are just a sample of research conducted in different provinces in South Africa supporting the problem of lack of parental involvement in education and subsequent lack of parental support concerning second language development of their children. It is these two issues of second language development and parental support, that the current study aims to address by developing of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development.

In addressing this problem, the relationship between parental support and second language development as complex dynamic processes is relevant to the current study, as discussed further in Chapter 2 (Literature Review, Section 2.3) and Chapter 3 (Conceptual Framework). Therefore, it is in the problematic context of limited second language proficiency and lack of parental involvement as the key hindrance to parental support that this study finds significance. It is anticipated that through the development of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that the current study will be able to take a retrodictive (retrocasting) approach the research problem was addressed. Retrodiction is a process that takes a reflective approach of locking back at how a process (after event) has taken place (Larsen-Freeman, 2009).

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE CURRENT STUDY

The problems related to second language proficiency and parental involvement is informed by some of the aforementioned literature, highlighting limited involvement of the parents and lack of learner language proficiency and as well as personal observations of various educational scenarios encountered in my academic career as a student in Educational Psychology and also as a practicing Educational Psychologist. I noticed that some learners performed poorly in both their home language and second language (English). This poor performance on both first and second language is noted by Prinsloo, Rogers and Harvey (2018), who stated that learners who pursue the attainment of the second language without having established first language, run the risk of having both

languages remaining undeveloped. My attention was also drawn to various instances where it has been reported that parents were not involved in the education of their children (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mncube, 2009; Mncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011; Mmotlana, Winnaar & wa Kivilu, 2009; Page, 2016). The main problem of the current study relates to both these scenarios as challenges faced by the South African education system and   evidenced in literature on second language development and parental involvement (Alexander, 2011; Create South Africa Policy Brief 4, 2011; Department of Basic Education, 2012a; Evans & Cleghorn, 2012; Nel & Swanepoel, 2010; Prinsloo, 2012; van Staden, 2011; UNESCO, 2017; World Bank, 2017). Therefore, it is based on the above-mentioned literature and presented research problem that the current study finds relevance within the South African context.

The focus of the current study also finds relevance in scholarship given the attention that the topic of parental support, with regard to second language development, has received worldwide. For example, Chinese-based scholarly research has shown that most parents are very active in supporting their children in learning English as a second language, as they consider it fundamental to their children's future (Lau, Li & Rao, 2011; Wei, 2011). The same focus of parental support concerning second language development is found in American-based studies (Deborah, Gilliam & Lisa, 2013; Georgis, Donna Mae Ford & Ali, 2014; Wessels, 2014). There is a consensus in international literature about the positive effect of parental support on the academic achievement of children, which includes the development of second language proficiency (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al, 2015; Castillo & Gàmez, 2013; Daniels, 2017; Enemuo & Obidike, 2013; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; Gilleece, 2015; Jeynes, 2007, 2012; Liu, 2013; Wang, 2014). Therefore, the current study finds relevance within the current body of literature in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development amongst South African learners. Therefore, the results of the current study have the potential to contribute to knowledge in the field of parental support concerning second language development.

However, research focused on both second language proficiency and parental involvement, should be tailored for the South African context. Based on the above background, parents are key to the needed research. From my experience of working with parents in South Africa, I am of the same view held by Meier and Lemmer (2015), that parents would like to be involved in their children's education; however, the majority of them do not know how to assist. Parents seem to be hindered by other contributing factors, such as poverty (Biersteker, 2012; Branson & Zuze, 2012), their own low levels of education (Create South Africa Policy Brief 4, 2011; Mmotlane, Winnaar & wa Kivilu,

2009), lack support from the school (Mncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011; Naong & Morolong, 2011) and negative feelings associated with lack of (or limited) proficiency in their children's language of learning and teaching (Prinsloo, 2012). These contributing factors will be further discussed in the literature review section, focusing on parental involvement (Chapter 2).

It is against this backdrop that the current study aims to contribute to knowledge about parental support, which has the potential to encourage the active participation of parents in the education of their children. The historical background of lack of access to quality education, by not only the current school children but also their parents, further illustrates what is potentially hindering parents' active participation (or active citizenship) in their children's education (Bloch 2009, p. 41; Hoskins et al., 2008; van Staden, 2011). It is no doubt that this group of parents needs to be supported through the development of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can be used to inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process.

1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the current study is to contribute to knowledge about parental support. Ultimately, this knowledge will assist in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can be used to inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process. Therefore, to achieve this aim, I propose the following objectives:

- To gain an understanding of the home experiences of parents of English Second Language (ESL) learners in relation to language development from PIRLS.

- To gain an understanding of conceptualisation of language proficiency within the South African educational context.

- To understand the contextual challenges faced by parents of ESL learners, and how these challenges affect their ability to actively assist in the development of second language proficiency.

- To understand the characteristics that can be use to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development.

- To developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Against the background mentioned above, the main research question of the current study is presented below:

1.6.1 Main Research Question (MRQ)

> ***What conceptual framework can be developed for parental support on second language development?***

1.6.2 Sub-questions

Research Sub-question 1 (RSQ1)*: How is second language proficiency conceptualised within the South African educational perspective?*

Research Sub-question 2 (RSQ2)*: What can we learn from PIRLS about the home experiences of parents, with regard to language support to second language learners?*

Research Sub-question 3 (RSQ3)*: What challenges are faced by the parents of English second language learners with regard to supporting language development?*

Research Sub-question 4 (RSQ4)*: What are the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development?*

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

Based on the background provided thus far, the current study is delimited to parental support concerning second language development. I am of the view that support of the child in South African can be viewed from a very broad perspective. Support can range from caring for the child with regard to provision of shelter and basic needs to educational provision (Children's Acts of 38 of 2005, 2005; Constitution of the Public of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, 1996). Although I acknowledge the importance of other forms of support to the child, as indicated by the laws of South Africa (Children's Acts of 38 of 2005, 2005; Constitution of the Public of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, 1996; Smith, 2004), they are beyond the scope of the current study. The current study specially focuses on parental support concerning second language development.

Furthermore, the current study is delimited to English as the second language of learning. Although learners may use any of the eleven official languages as a second language at school (Stein, 2017), English is preferred LoLT in most South African schools, given its

international status and economic value (Alexander, 2011; De Klerk, 2002; van Staden, 2011). It is the only language, which has more non-native speakers than its mother-tongue speakers (De Klerk, 1999). With such value and status in South Africa, it is likely that children are exposed to the English language in one form or the other (De Klerk, 1999; Nel & Swanepoel, 2010; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000). With the afore-noted status of English, the current study aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process. The focus of support is in line with the view that both language in education and parental support are the main concerns faced by the South African education system (Nel, 2011; Nel & Swanepoel, 2010; Uys, van der Walt, van den Berg & Sue, 2007).

1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.8.1 Language Proficiency

The Department of Education (now-known as the Department of Basic Education) has made it unequivocally clear that as English is the chosen LoLT in many schools, it expects learners to reach proficiency in the English language (DoE, 2002; Nel, 2012). As such, the Department has adopted an additive bilingualism approach, which requires learners to strive for competency in at least two languages during their schooling period. However, no clear description is given of what 'second language proficiency' looks and sounds like at a practical level. Although I have attempted to offer a description of the concept of language proficiency in the literature review chapter, it is only at the conclusion of the current study that clarity can be provided. Although the description is a work in progress at this point, language proficiency will be viewed as functional literacy. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000, p. 6) to be functionally literate in English is to "know it well enough to be able to use it effectively in public life and can thus 'control' destiny through the language". Therefore, the concept proficiency is used interchangeably with functional literacy in the current study, and the term public life is understood to extend to the educational context where teaching and learning take place.

1.8.2 Language Development (LD)

In the current study, I distinguish between language development (LD) and language acquisition (LA). LA is viewed as unidirectional, in that it is associated with that which can be acquired or as a product, while LD can either grow or decrease, focusing on a "linguistically enabled processes" (de Bot, Thorne & Verspoor, 2013, p. 199). This description implies that LD is a continuous process and multi-dimensional. Lowie (2013, p.

1) refers to it as iterative in that, "the next step of development is determined by the state of the system at the preceding moment, which leads to unpredictable, non-linear developmental patterns". Therefore, in the current study, I have defined LD as the growth or increase in language components and the decrease or decline in less complex language components (Verspoor & van Dijk, 2011).

1.8.3 Parent

The view of a family within the South African context has changed due to a myriad of contextual factors such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The traditional structure of family has given way to the dynamic family constellations that are now evident. As such, the term 'family' has gained indefinite meanings (Moletsane, 2004). Therefore, my understanding of the term 'parent' also had to be adapted to fit the changing South African family system. In South Africa, less than half the children in urban areas and only 23% in the rural areas live with both parents (Hall & Posel, 2012). In such families, alternative arrangements are made with grandparents and family members taking on the role of parents under the title of guardians. In view of this, the word 'parent', within the context of the current study, will be regarded broadly to include all those who play the role of a guardian or caregiver to a second language learner in South Africa.

1.8.4 Theory of Parental Support

A theory is based on an established relationship between concepts to explain the phenomenon under study (Brink, 2010; Rule & John, 2011) it also looks at the relationship between the "studied phenomenon and their processes that bring about change" (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013, p.2). The current study is entitled, '*A conceptual framework for parental support: supporting learners' development of second language proficiency'* to reveal the ultimate aim of the current study to contribute to knowledge that could assist in theorising about parental support. Thus, although the current study will not eventually develop a theory of parental support, it aims to provide a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development to inform future theorising about parental support. I concur with Desforges and Abouchaar (2003, p. 8) who defined parental support as "the provision of parenting skills training, advice and guidance for parents on pupil achievement *with regard to second language development*" [author's emphasis]. The aforementioned definition is aligned to the current study in that it captures the idea of a theory of parental support that is recommended that I can be theorised from a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that the current study aims to develop.

1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework guides the literature review, methodological process and data analysis strategy of the current research (Sefotho & du Plessis, 2018). In the current study, I used Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), which focuses on phenomena that change over time to guide the current study (De Bot, 2008; De Bot, Lowie, Verspoor, 2007; De Bot et al. 2013). Parental support and second language development are such phenomena, in that they undergo a dynamic process. In the context of the current study, second language is the main dynamic system of focus, and both language development (or language learning) and parental support are the dynamic processes. Therefore, the systemic and dynamic perspectives of DST fit best for the current study, which focuses on both the second language system and the two aforementioned dynamic processes.

With regard to parental support in the context of education, there are various frameworks that one can choose from, especially the widely-used models such as Epstein (Epstein, 2001; 2010) and Hoover-Dempsey (Tekin, 2011). The Epstein model emphasises collaboration between the school, home and communities, while the Hoover-Dempsey's model focuses on psychological factors affecting parental involvement (Epstein, 2001; 2010; Tekin, 2011). Although both these models provide an understanding of parental support, they are not developed to provide support specific to second language development. That is one of the distinctions that sets DST apart from other theories, in that, not only does it provide tools to understand systems around the child, it was also developed specifically as a comprehensive theory of second language development (De Bot, Lowie, Verspoor, 2007; De Bot et al. 2013). It is therefore, on the basis of the abovementioned factor, amongst other key characteristics (such as its nonlinearity view to second language development), that I have chosen DST a guiding framework for the current study.

In the next chapter (Chapter 2, see 2.1 to 2.4), I elaborate further on choosing DST as a conceptual framework for the current study. I also provide the background of DST (see 2.2.), its characteristics (see 2.4), which are the principles that guide the current study. I offer a description of the principles of DST, which serve as tools that underpin the current study. The main principles adopted for the current study are, open systems, dis-equilibrium, sensitive dependence on initial conditions, nested system and subsystems, non-linear development, variability (both in and among individuals), self-organisation and feedback loop (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Human, 2003; Massachusetts Institute of

Technology, 2008). The penultimate section of Chapter 2 is the application section (2.5), where I describe how DST is applied to the current study.

1.10. A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

I indicated in the previous section (1.9) that DST guides the methodological approach chosen for the current study. Since DST is also characterised by being a nested system, the chosen epistemological paradigm fits well within the current study, which is a mixed methods study rooted in pragmatism (Haggis, 2008). Below, I provide a brief background of the epistemological paradigm and how it guides the methodological processes. Further elaboration on the methodological approach is provided in Chapter 4.

1.10.1. The Epistemological Paradigm: Pragmatism

The current study is grounded in the pragmatism paradigm. Pragmatism is more concerned with methodological eclecticism than choosing between the two (Creswell, 2009), a view echoed by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p. 73), in stating that:

> *A major reason that pragmatism is the philosophical partner for mixed methods is that it rejects the either-or choices from the constructivism-positivism debate. Pragmatism offers a third choice that embraces superordinate ideas gleaned through consideration of perspectives from both sides of the paradigms debate in interaction with the research question and real-world circumstances*.

The pragmatic paradigm is therefore more concerned with what works at a given time to address the research question than debating methodological preferences. Such a view lends itself well in the current study. The pragmatism paradigm paves the way for the use of all essential and relevant methods available to address the issues of limited language proficiency and lack of parental support.

The pragmatism paradigm is also favoured based on the emphasis it puts on the values of the researcher. Thus, the prerogative is on me, as the researcher, to decide on what to focus, based of what I deem valuable for my research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009, p. 90) "pragmatists decide what they want to study based on what is important within their personal values system". Therefore, the pragmatic paradigm fits into the current study as it speaks to the research value of wanting to help learners and their parents.

1.10.2 The Methodological Paradigm: Mixed Methods Research (QUAN → qual)

The current study sought to access both quantitative and qualitative data, and therefore, a mixed methods approach was considered suitable to achieve this purpose (Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). For the current study, the definition offered by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p.5) was used:

> *As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research.*

This definition focuses on a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a better understanding of the research.

The current study has adopted an explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research, starting with the quantitative data, and followed by qualitative data collection, with priority given to the quantitative approach (QUAN → qual). Thus, the availability of the secondary quantitative data, before the qualitative data collection, favours the quantitative-qualitative research sequence. According to Creswell (2005), this sequence could be instrumental in helping one to understand further and explore the quantitative results using qualitative methods and is referred to as a two-phased model (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Taking the above into account, an explanatory sequential design, based on its sequential collection of quantitative data, followed by qualitative data, was adopted. This sequential process is used in such a way that the quantitative data analysis is used to inform the qualitative data collection (refer to Chapter 4, 4.5 for further elaboration on the design). This two-phased model is deemed appropriate for the current study, which has adopted a two process, starting with quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by qualitative data collection and analysis. It is therefore, deemed the best design to guide the current study which fits into the two-phased process.

1.10.3 Methodology

1.10.3.1 Sampling design and sample size

The current study consists of two phases with each phase having a different sample. Phase one made use of quantitative data from PIRLS (2006) parent questionnaire which was administered to South African parents of the Grade 4 learners (n = 16 073). While phase two used a qualitative data obtained through focus group interviews with eight parents (8 participants). Since the first phase of the research was based on secondary data made available through quantitative processes of PIRLS (2006) research, this sub-section focuses on the second phase, which is the sampling of participants for the qualitative data. I have included in the appendices (Appendix A) detailed information about Phase 1 data collection processes, thus both the methodology and sampling process used by PIRLS 2006 (Howie et al., 2008; Kumar, 2012). Through the stratified sampling followed by PIRLS, 16 073 learners were selected in Grade 4. The parents of all sampled learners, as part of the representative sample of all the parents, guardians or caregivers in the South African population, were asked to complete parent questionnaires (Appendix A) (named Home Questionnaire in the original study).

1.10.3.1.1 Phase 1: PIRLS Parent Questionnaires

PIRLS used several context questionnaires to study the home, community, school and student factors associated with reading achievement at the fourth grade. These questionnaires included a parent or home questionnaire (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.5.1.1), a teacher questionnaire, the school questionnaire completed by school principals as well as the student or learner questionnaire.

As the PIRLS parent questionnaire gathered background information to ascertain learner home context (Howie at al., 2008, pp 14-15), secondary data from the questionnaire was used based on its focus on parental support. In the current study, I refer to this questionnaire as the PIRLS parent questionnaire. Although the questionnaire consisted of twenty-two questions (Appendix A), I focused on twelve (12) selected questions, which emphasise parental support (see Chapter 4, Table 4.2). However, I concur with Frank and Althoen (1994, p. 4) who after an observation regarding quantitative data stated that "some phenomena cannot be translated into numbers". Therefore, I finally selected twelve questions based on their potential to assist in answering the sub-question of the current study:

> **Research Sub-question 2 (RSQ 2)**: *What can we learn from PIRLS about the home experiences of parents, with regard to language support to second language learners?*

1.10.3.1.2 Phase 2: Qualitative Sample

A sample of eight (8) parents of English second language learners was selected using a convenient sampling (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016), from a faith-based organisation in Pretoria. The process of sampling and details of participants is provided in Chapter 4 (sub-section 4.4.1.2)

1.10.4.1 Data collection techniques

The data collection for Phase one was based on secondary data, which was obtained from the results of PIRLS parent questionnaire, as described above (sub-section 1.10.3.1.1). Therefore, the current section (sub-section 1.10.4.1) focuses on Phase two data collection techniques.

I chose a single focus group (see Chapter 4, sub-section 4.5.1 for further information) based on its purposiveness (Rabiee, 2004), focus on a particular subject (Duggleby, 2005) and strength to provide in-depth data not attainable from individual interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Therefore, the focus group, together with the field notes and recordings were used to collect the data for the second phase of the research (Further elaboration on this process is provided in Chapter 4, Sub-section 4.5.1).

1.11   DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was undertaken over a two-phase process. The first phase focused on a *quantitative* analysis of secondary data, while the second phase focused on an analysis of *qualitative* data. Both these phases were integrated through the seven-stage process of data analysis suggested by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003, pp. 375-380) (See Chapter 4, Table 4.2).

1.11.1 Phase 1: Quantitative Data Analysis

The first phase, focusing on secondary data analysis (SDA), aimed at providing data on the home experiences of parents of ESL learners with regard to language development. The parent questionnaire (Appendix A) was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to identify the home experiences of parents, the challenges they presently face and their implications. The descriptive statistics, stemming from the parent questionnaire, provided a description and a summary of data in a meaningful format (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The Analysis Module of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement

(IEA) software program, called International Database (IDB) analyser, was used for descriptive and inferential data analysis (See Chapter 4, Sub-section 4.6.2). For the descriptive statistics, I computed the calculations of percentages, means, standard deviations, standard error, t-tests and frequencies (The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 2016).

Inferential statistics looked at the analysis of variance between the scores of parents who completed the parent questionnaire (Creswell, 2012; Thompson, 2009). Inferential statistics is used to go beyond the description of data (Petersen & Maree, 2016), and aims to draw conclusions or predictions on a larger population (Ivankova, 2015), such as that of the current study. The inferential statistics provides an analysis of the difference between parents who participate in their children's education and those do not or participate to a lesser degree (Chapter 4, see Sub-section 4.6.2). The conclusion drawn from the inferential statistics was used to build towards the qualitative data.

1.11.2 Phase 2: Qualitative Data Analysis

In this phase, a thematic analysis was undertaken. This is an inductive process where data from participants was analysed to form general themes (Braun & Clark, 2006; Creswell, 2006; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The relevance of the identified themes depends on the focus and the content of the current study (Bergman, 2010). The emerged themes were used to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theories of second language development as a complex dynamic process. For the purpose of the current study, I used Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen and Snelgrove (2016, pp. 102-107) who provided a valuable description of the four phases of theme development and analysis, namely, initialisation, construction, rectification and finalisation. These four phases were used for the current study based on their comprehensiveness and thoroughness in guiding the thematic analysis process.

1.12   QUALITY CRITERIA

In mixed methods research, the quality criteria are represented by the concept, 'inference process'. This concept combines the quality measure from two traditional approaches (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; O'Cathain, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). It is an umbrella concept in mixed methods research that curbs the challenges of being faced with a plethora of quantitative and qualitative research quality criteria. Therefore, two terms are presented under this term by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), that is, inference quality, and inference transferability. The quality criteria for the current study are addressed in Chapter 4 (See section 4.7).

1.13   AXIOLOGICAL PARADIGM: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The axiological paradigm addressed the ethical principles that governed the current study. There were eight ethical principles that I considered, namely: Informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, voluntary participation, ethical clearance, researcher's position, positional discrepancies, dealing with sensitive information and expertise of the researcher. I have described these principles in Chapter 4 (See Section 4.8).

1.14   DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS OF THE CURRENT STUDY

Before I bring this chapter into a conclusion, I see fit to provide a developmental process of the current study based on its duration and the key changes and adjustments I had to make which have had a significant impact on the study. It is my view that an outline of this process is critical in helping the reader understand the current study. I concur with Dietz, Jansen and Wadee (2006), that a PhD study includes a chaotic process when one thinks of the student-supervisor relationship. A chaotic process however, does not imply total disorder (Sardar & Abraham, 1998); rather, it reveals the interconnectedness that exists in seemingly random events (Briggs & Peat, 1999; Dietz, Jansen & Wadee, 2006). The chaos reveals what can be referred to as "the ups and downs of doing a PhD" (University of Reading Graduate School, 2013). It sensitises a person to the fact that one cannot absolutely control events, but can, through a theoretical framework and methodological approaches, guide and manage the process they find themselves in (Brink, 2010; Rule & John, 2011; Sefotho & Du Plessis, 2018).

One of the random events I had to manage during the course of my study is multiple change of supervisors due to their resignations from the university, which led me to having to be re-assigned new supervisors. Although these resignations were beyond my control, they still had an effect on the current study due to the joint role that I had with my two previous supervisors (The University of Edinburgh, 2017). Subsequent to these changes, my research design and research topic changed respectively, from "design research" to "explanatory sequential design" and from developing an intervention tool for parental support, to developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development aimed at informing theories of second language development as a complex dynamic process. Such changes were a result of my previous thinking being challenged so that I had to reason differently about the current study and the process it followed. Such thinking has led me to conclude that, in an attempt to elicit solutions for my current study, I might have overlooked its complexity (Luse, Mennecke & Townsend, 2012; The University of Edinburgh, 2017).

In order to accommodate these changes, I began to engage more deeply and dynamically with the topic of the current study. I considered alternative approaches to the chosen topic (Luse, Mennecke & Townsend, 2012). Ultimately, this dynamic process has led me to not only acknowledge the need to adjust my topic and methodological processes, but to also embrace these changes. Firstly, change of research design has had an effect on the major aspect of my study, including the topic, focus and duration (Dietz, Jansen & Wadee, 2006). It afforded me the opportunity to refocus the current study, from developing an intervention tool to developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theories of second language development as a complex dynamic process. Secondly, the adjustment of the topic has influenced the focus of my literature review. Thirdly, all the aforementioned changes have affected the duration of the current study in that it took longer than anticipated. This meant that some of the key data, like that from Progress in International Reading Literacy Study 2006 and 2011 (PIRLS 2006, PIRLS 2011), had to be compared with the recent PIRLS 2016 findings (Howie et al., 2008; Howie et al., 2012; Howie et al., 2017). Although the difference in this comparison was not statistically significant (Howie et al., 2017), as I described in Section 1.3, it was important to make this comparison in order to show the relevance of the previous results in the current study. Therefore, this current study must be read in the light of the above-mentioned changes.

1.15   POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the current study was to contribute to knowledge about parental support. This knowledge was gained through an in-depth understanding of the home experiences and challenges of parents with regard to supporting language development of second language learners. This knowledge was used to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. These outcomes could contribute to the existing literature on the application of DST to second language development, with a particular emphasis on parental support (Alexander, 2011; Daniels, 2017; Howie et al., 2017; Mmotlane, Winnaar & wa Kivilu, 2009; van Staden, 2011). Therefore, theorising about parental support concerning second language development has a potential to contribute to literature on DST, given that the "application of DST to L2 is very recent and the framework has not been fully developed" (Lowie, 2013, p. 6).

A conceptual framework on parental support also has the potential to foster parental involvement with the school and subsequently, to parental support of second language development. This in turn, could improve parent-teacher relationships, which would in turn have a positive ripple effect on learners' learning experience. Education has been

historically viewed as the sole responsibility of the parents (Epstein, 2001); however, in more recent times, it has become increasingly clear that parents are essential stakeholders in the educational success of their children (Daniel, 2017; Epstein, 2001). Therefore, the outcomes of the current study have the potential to both encourage and enhance parent-teacher relationships and ultimately increase communication and partnership (Epstein, 2010, 2012).

The current study is located within the parent-child system (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007, Manning, 2017; van Geert & Steenbeek, 2013). Therefore, the outcomes of the current study will be relevant for both the family and education systems. Schools and stakeholders, interested in both these systems, could benefit from the outcome of the current study.

1.16 CHAPTER LAYOUT

Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 provides the general overview of the current study, which includes the introduction to the study, problem statement, rational, aims, research objectives and research questions. Following the delimitation of the current study section, I provide clarification of key concepts used. This is followed by a summary of both parental support and methodology sections.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2, a review of the literature, focuses on both literature on language development and parental support. The first section of the chapter provides a historical background of the South African education, with specific focus on the development of language policies. I follow the above section with a review on second language development and parental support literature. I have written extensively on hindrances that parents currently face as well as understanding the potential challenges that might hinder parental support. This section also explored strategies that are already in place, locally and internationally. In addition, the gaps that this study aimed to fill were identified.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework

In Chapter 3, I present a Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) as the conceptual framework underpinning the current study. I firstly present the background of DST theory, followed by the relationship between DST and second language, and key principles of DST. In the latter sections, I provide the application of DST to the current study as well as the concluding remarks.

Chapter 4: Methodology and Research Design

In Chapter 4, the methodology and research design are presented. This section includes the paradigms, epistemological and methodological, which were adopted in the study. A description of the research methods and techniques follow these paradigms. The chapter concludes with a discussion about quality assurance and axiological paradigm, which focuses on the ethical matters that the current study had to take into consideration to ensure that ethical processes were followed.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Interpretations

Chapter 5 focuses on two things: analysis and interpretation of the collected data. Both the quantitative and qualitative data are analysed and interpreted in this chapter. The main focus of Chapter 5 is on data integration where I present and analyse the six identified themes

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 6 aims at offering both the conclusions and recommendations. The first section of the chapter provides an overview of how the research questions of the current study were addressed. The subsequent section, which is the main focus of the chapter, is on developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theories of second language development as a complex dynamic process, which was the ultimate aim of the current study. Following the characteristics presentation, the contribution of the current study to the body of knowledge is presented, followed by limitation, recommendations and the conclusion sections.

1.17 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I provided the background of the current study, including the problem statement and the rational that underpinned this research. Aims and objective, together with key research questions were stated and how they are addressed through the mixed methods methodological process that was followed. This chapter concluded with an overview of the mixed methods research quality criteria and ethical considerations, which I adhered to. The potential contribution of the current study was also stated and the chapters outlined.

In the next chapter, I focus on the literature review of the current study, looking specifically at the second language development and parental support as dynamic processes.

CHAPTER 2

SECOND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND PARENTAL SUPPORT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter (Chapter 1), I presented the background of the current study, indicating that the purpose is to contribute to knowledge about parental support and developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that could later inform theorising about parental support concerning development of second language proficiency. In this chapter (Chapter 2), I turn my focus to the two aspects of the aforementioned purpose of the current study, namely; second language development and parental support. Through this focus, I endeavour to answer the first research sub-question (RSQ1) of the current study:

> *(RSQ1): How is second language proficiency conceptualised within the South African educational perspective?*

The review of the literature is an attempt to answer this question. Since the aim of the Department of Education in South Africa, with regard to second language development, is to reach high level of proficiency (DBE, 2002; Nel, 2005, 2011), understanding its conceptualisation of "high level of proficiency" builds toward the realisation of this goal. Ultimately, this chapter argues for the need for developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support and theories of second language development as a complex dynamic processes.

This chapter begins by offering the contextual background underpinning the current study. The context refers to the historical overview through which behaviour is observed and the environment in which the behaviour is taking place (Dornyei, 2009; Dornyei & Ryan, 2015). The history of South African language policies in education forms the larger context of all the systems of the current study. Therefore, in the next section (2.2), I provide a brief historical overview of the South African language policies and how these relate to the use of language in education (Lafon, 2009; Stein, 2017). It is followed by second language development and parental support section (2.3). Second language development focuses on English as the second language as the LoLT in the South African education system, and parental support focuses on how parents support their children's second language

development. The last section focuses on challenges of parental support concerning second language learners (2.4) and the concluding section (2.5) rounds off the chapter.

2.2 SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE POLICIES

This section on South African language policies provides an overview of the historical development of languages in the South African education system, with particular focus on the development of English as the second language in comparison to the indigenous languages. Therefore, below I discuss the critical role played by language in the history of South Africa (Bloch, 2009; Lafon, 2009). I look particularly at how these developments later informed policies related to language in education.

2.2.1 Language Policies in the Pre- Democratic Era

Key to language development is language policies, which have been a concern from the pre-colonial era, through the missionary period to the current time (Le Roux, 2011; Seroto, 2011). During the pre-colonial era (before 1652), the language of the indigenous people (The Khoi, the San & Bantu-speakers) was used for communication and to transfer knowledge through oral tradition (Seroto, 2011). When missionaries settled in the country, they used a team of mother tongue translators for the purpose of education (Hermanson, 2002). Then during the colonial period, (1652 to 1948), the missionaries helped in the establishment of formal schooling in South Africa (Le Roux, 2011).

Until around 1971, education for the indigenous people was largely in the hands of the missionaries (Booyse, 2011). However, the political rulers later infiltrated the education sector and began to use education to advance a colonial mind-set, where the indigenous people were educated as a way of indoctrination to believe that working and submission to power were the best principles to uphold (Booyse, 2011; Lafon, 2009). When the Nationalist Party's came into power in 1948, one of the defining policies introduced was the policy of apartheid and with it the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which proposed that all schools for Black people fall under the control of the government. These schools had to choose to either submit under the government or to eventually lose subsidy from the government (Booyse, 2011; Reddy, 2000). The schools that chose independence, were required to register with the Department of Education as independent schools, however, the registration was dependent on the discretion of the-then Minister of Education (Mafu, 2008). Towards the end of the 1950s, virtually all schools, except the Catholic schools, were totally controlled by the Nationalist Party (Bloch, 2009; Booyse, 2011. Thus, the government used financial support as a trap to put the schools under pressure to give in to the new legislation (Booyse, 2011; Reddy, 2000).

Although the arrangement above brought about some educational progress in the educational development of the indigenous people (Booyse, 2011; Lewis & Steyn, 2003; Viriri, 2004), the progress was mainly on mass access to education than equality. Therefore, the constant change of education policies coupled with the apartheid undertones seems to have blurred these achievements of educational progress (Lewis & Steyn, 2003; Mafu, 2008; Viriri, 2004). Jones (1973, p. 242 in Booyse, 2011) argues that the Nationalist Party aimed at uplifting the lives of the Black people, and that there has been "gross and erroneous generalisation" about the party having a hidden agenda of apartheid. However, it later became evident this aim was not achieved. Following the various unsuccessful policies in education, by 1980 it was clear that education for the indigenous people had failed (Booyse, 2011). In addition, efforts for economic and social transformation were not noticeable. Education for the indigenous people was still marked by poor infrastructure, inadequate teachers and teaching resources (Booyse, 2011; Mafu, 2008). It was clear that what seemed to be good education policies had some apartheid undertones of segregation (Bloch, 2009; Hlatshwayo, 2000; Mafu, 2008). Therefore, given these debates, one thing that is unarguable is that there were clear educational challenges for the indigenous people, which needed urgent address.

The National Education Policy Act of 1967, attempted to address issues of literacy development of the indigenous people, particularly in the foundation phase. According to Lafon (2009), the medium of instruction for the first years of primary schooling (currently known as the foundation phase), was the primary home language of the child. However, this language arrangement only favoured the indigenous people at primary school but not in higher school. In high school, the new language policy saw the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction together with English. The dual language policy was, however, not a new thing in education. The prime minister of the National Party (Dr H.F. Verwoerd), once tried it in 1943 but later conceded that it would not work and that it would be burdensome for people having to study three official languages. Therefore, about 24 years later, M.C. Botha, re-introduced the 50-50 Afrikaans and English language medium of instruction and enforced it in schools. The introduction of three languages implied that schools had to choose between the three options, either exclusively "Afrikaans, or exclusively English or Afrikaans and English on 50-50 bases as the law was known" (Mafu, 2008, p. 178). The choice of language usage at any school was dependent on the location of the school and dominant white population in the area (Mafu, 2008). These language policies caused tension within communities where indigenous people were dominant, as in Soweto, as a 50-50 basis implied that key subjects such as Mathematics, which were only offered in Afrikaans, were unattainable as learners had to start learning in

the language they had not been taught, let alone being exposed to due segregation of Black people in specific homelands (Boddy-Evans, 2017; Booyse, 2011). The indigenous students saw the decision for language change as abrupt and unacceptable. The language usage matter caused much frustration, as expressed by the words of Maluleka (2008, p. 116), who stated that, "the shift from mathematics to 'wiskunde', from history to 'geskiedenis' and from general science to 'algemene wetenskap' was painful, annoying, inconvenient and unacceptable". Practically, this implied that one had to find ways to learn the language on the side so that he/she would be able to understand what was being taught in class, creating a matter of tension between the ruling party and the indigenous people.

This tension in education, together with the socio-economic situation of the time is what led to the Soweto uprising: a historical event whereby students stood up for their rights to be educated in their own language (Booyse, 2011; Reddy, 2000). These protests on the historical day of June 16, 1976, resulted in a day marked with death and violence. Although there was not much change in practice within the South African education system from 1977-1979, much pressure from organisations and international bodies led a push for radical change to negotiations with the Nationalist Party in the late 1980s and the advent of democracy (Booyse, 2011) with the first national democratic election in 1994, in which the African National Congress (ANC) came to power.

The coming into power of the ANC government marked the new era. The new government introduced the country's governing constitution, which created a platform for redressing past problems (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996). Among these problems was the issue of language usage in education, which was addressed by the introduction of new language policies, which I discuss below.

2.2.2 Language Policies in the Democratic Era

The language redress by the new government implied that the new government had to promote the previously marginalised languages. Historically, this referred to all South African indigenous languages, excluding English and Afrikaans, which had enjoyed dominance in the past era. However, this situation created a dilemma for redress since English is the international language and also one of the 11 legislated national languages (Wolhuter, 2011). The fact that English would have preference over Afrikaans in the redress process although both had enjoyed similar opportunities in the past, has been and still is, an issue of serious contention between those who advocate for the use of Afrikaans and those who calls for the decolonisation of education (Lafon, 2009). This is

played out in how Afrikaans is treated, as one of the South African languages, compared to English.

Taking the issue of the Overvaal High School as an example, one can easily notice this discrepancy. The school took the Gauteng Department of Education MEC to the Gauteng North High Court requesting an interdiction as the Department instructed the school to admit 55 English-speaking pupils at the single-medium Afrikaans school (Southern African Legal Information Institute, 2018). The court ruled against the Gauteng Department stating capacity issues and school language policy. This decision implied that the court found the school's decision justified given the laws pertaining to language policy and the availability of capacity within other surrounding schools. Although the learners ended up being accommodated at other English-medium schools around the district with capacity, this decision was not taken kindly by the Department of Education and other opposing political members who resorted to violent protests outside the school (ENCA, 2018). This incidence is an indication of the tension that still exists in the South African education system with regard to language redress where Afrikaans and English are the focus. Tension continued as the MEC took the matter to the Court of Appeal. The incident at Overvaal High School is not the only example, as there have been various court cases between the Department of Education and Afrikaans-medium schools regarding the accommodation of English language learners (Stein, 2017). The Overvaal High School incident was one example to show that current policies have not as yet addressed the language problems found in South Africa.

The policies which address language in education in South Africa include the following: National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996), Language in Education Policy (LiEP) (1997), Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Department of Basic Education, 2010), and The Incremental Introduction of African Languages in South African Schools (IIAL) (DBE, 2013b). Firstly, I focus on discussing the first four policies then conclude this sub-section with the focus on the policy on Incremental Introduction of African Languages in South African Schools (IIAL).

2.2.2.1 National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996), Language in Education Policy (LIEP) (1997), Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (Department of Basic Education, 2010)

The National Education Policy Act states that learners have the right to be educated in the language of their choice while the South African Schools Act gives the School Governing

Body (SGB) the authority to determine the language policy for the school, with the focus on redressing past imbalances. The Language in Education Policy (LiEP) supports the view of multilingualism and an additive approach to language in education where learners can start with one language and then use it to develop the other less-dominant language. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (DBE, 2010) follows an additive approach to the promotion of multilingualism and states explicitly that learners' home language should be used for learning and teaching wherever possible.

Although the acts and policies shed some light on various language issues, they also present some limitations, and to some extent, they represent work in progress. Woolman and Fleisch (2009) indicate that the constitution or language policies do not necessarily prevent the establishment of monolingual schools. Instead, both the constitution and the language policies are against the dominance of one language in such a way that it leads to discrimination of indigenous languages. Woolman and Fleisch (2009) show that a deeper analysis of the language policies suggests that single-medium schools are one way of accommodating the language rights of the learner, as long as it is reasonably practicable. However, given the aforementioned situation at Overvaal High School, these policies could be regarded as being very good on paper but poor on implementation. When the same Department that gave the School Governing Body (SGB) the power to decide on the language policy turns to fight the same SGB in court for exercising its power, which has legal merits, it becomes unavoidable to question the practical implementation of the language policies (Kaschula, 2004; Stein, 2017).

Limitations of the language policy can be due to the fact that the policy provides goals of what it aims to achieve without providing guidelines on how these goals will be achieved (Alexander, 2005; Nel, 2005, 2011). The language policy seems to lack practical guidelines on how to implement these plans. For example, Nel (2005, 2011) presents the challenges of teachers in applying the additive approach in their classrooms. What learners seem to get from teachers is code-switching, which is different from the aims of the Department (Probyn, 2012). This implies that the objectives of the Department of Education are being not achieved in the classrooms.

2.2.2.2 The Incremental Introduction of African Languages in South African Schools (IIAL)

It is based on the historical backdrop of formerly marginalised languages that the policy on Incremental Introduction of African Languages in South African Schools (IIAL) was introduced, aimed at promoting the teaching of African languages (DBE, 2013b). It

focuses specifically on previously marginalised languages and the goal is to have this policy implemented at all public schools by 2029 (Gina, 2017). Twenty-seven percent of schools should have implemented the policy by the end of June 2017 (Gina, 2017), an initiative to deal with the recurring problem of marginalised languages. However, like any other policy, it has limitations. The policy has received criticism regarding its lack of value and sufficient teachers to carry out the policy imperatives (Davids, 2013; Gina, 2017).

It is also important to note that the policy of IIAL acknowledges that poor language proficiency is at the core of the performance of learners in South Africa (DBE, 2013b; National Education Evaluation & Development Unit, 2013). It is suggested that if the issue of learners learning in a language spoken at home can be addressed, this will alleviate the underperformance by learners. The policy also cites studies such as Annual National Assessment (ANA) (2011), PIRLS (Howie et al., 2008) and SAQMEC (2011) as corroborating studies that show that the lack of language proficiency affects the performance of learners in South Africa. These studies are important as they also serve a pivotal role in this current study by showing the extent of the language problems faced in South African schools.

2.2.2.3 Roles of Education Policies on Parental Support

The policies above have played a dual role of enabling parental participation and also disabling it in some respect. For example, the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), South African Schools Acts, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996), and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DBE, 2010), support the use of home language in education. The National Education Policy and South African Schools Act suggests that parents have the power through the School Governing Body (SGB), to decide on the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) (South African Schools Act, 1996). I elaborated further on the SGB in Section 2.3.3.1. One of the key responsibilities of the SGB, according to this current study, is to decide on the language policy of the school. Therefore, through this body, parents have the prerogative to decide on the language in which their children are taught.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (DBE, 2010) supports the use of home language at school as much as it is possible. However, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement lacks guidelines on its implementation. For example, even if parents might want to use a particular language, the choice depends on the location of the school, and the availability of teachers to teach such a language (Gina, 2017). Therefore, although these policies have the potential to assist in providing guidelines for language

usage, they are not enough to address the complex process of second language development. To unpack this complex process of second language development, I explore it in relation to parental support, which has been found to have a positive relationship with language development (Boonk, Gijselaers, Ritzen & Brand-Gruwel, 2018; Castro, Expósito-Casas, López-Martín, Lizasoain, Navarro-Asencio & Gaviria, 2015; Enemuo & Obidike, 2013; Gilleece, 2015; Motala & Luxomo, 2014).

2.3 PARENTAL SUPPORT FOR SECOND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

I have indicated in the introduction section that this chapter focuses on two aspects, second language development and parental support. We have established in the first chapter that the second language referred to is the English language (See Chapter 1, Section 1.8). Therefore, below I examine what parental support of second language development entails from the perspective of the current study. I start by focusing firstly on English as the language for support.

2.3.1 English Second Language

The English language has been gaining momentum as the universal *lingua fraca*. In the past decades, English has gained attention as the language of teaching and learning in Europe, Asia and non-Anglo-American countries (Lueg & Lueg, 2015; Xiaoyi, 2017). In the Arab countries, although the English second language programmes are failing, they have identified English as the universal language with high demand; hence they are currently investing in implementing programmes that supports its development (Fareh, 2010). In South Africa, the same trend has been noticed. English has been the second language of choice in most schools around South African (De Klerk, 2002; Heugh, 2001; Nqoma, Abongdia & Foncha, 2017).

According to policy, English is viewed as the primary language of learning and teaching from Grade 4 onwards in most South African schools, and it is used as a second language by more than 80% of learners in Grade 4 (Howie et al., 2008; Lafon, 2009). However, English has been identified as being spoken by less than 10% of the population (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Howie, 2003). As a result, most South African children at schools are learning in a language other than their home language (Nel, 2005, 2011; van Staden, 2011). The latest report from Statistics South Africa shows that Black learners at government schools outnumber the learners from the white population (Statistics South Africa, 2011, p.13). Although the statistics are not a surprise given that the white population in South Africa comprises less than 10% of the total population. It is however,

of a major concern given that English is the Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT) in most South African schools (Howie et al., 2008; Howie, 2003). Based on the literature and statistics, the current study suggests that most learners in South Africa have English as their second language, thereby putting them in the category of ESL learners.

Nel (2005, 2011) identifies three groups of learners who fall under the category of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners: The first category are learners who have been placed in schools where the language of learning and teaching from the beginning of their school career, differs from their mother tongue. The second category are learners who joined schools later in their school careers where the language of learning and teaching is different to their mother tongue. The third category includes learners who come from countries where English is not the official language but then are taught in English from the first grade. Furthermore, Nel (2005, 2011) presents a debate about the use of the terms, ESL learners versus English language learners (ELL). Nel (ibid) argues that the former term is more labelling as it categorises learners whose home language is not English. While on the other hand, the latter is more acceptable to all learners who are in schools, where the LoLT is English and learners have to learn English. In the reported study, I have made use of the term ESL learners to refer to learners whose LoLT is not their mother tongue. However, this is not meant to discriminate against such learners, but instead, for the sake of clarity (Nel, 2005, 2011; van Staden 2011).

2.3.2 Development of English Second Language

At the crux of the current study, is the mechanism of second language development. Many schools of thought (theories) have dedicated research to the field of second language development in education (de Bot et al., 2013; Ruiz et al., 2015; Song, 2018). The aim of these theories has always attempted to explain how a learner develops second language abilities. The ultimate aim of second language development has been on improving educational programmes and assisting stakeholders in learner development to be equipped on how to provide second language support. However, it is beyond the scope of the current study to attempt to review all the theories of second language development. Over three decades ago, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991, p. 227) indicated that there are "at least forty theories" of second language development. Therefore, as expected, the numbers have subsequently risen with the development of research (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). I do not attempt to describe these theories, rather, I have grouped them based on their similarities (De Bot, Lowie, Thorne & Verspoor, 2013), and described the principle tenets within each in the following categories: social theories, language theories (including usage-based and socio-linguistic), and second language theories (De Bot et al., 2013).

Therefore, below I have also adopted this approach in understanding theories of second language development. This approach supports my focus on the theories that are relevant to the discipline of Educational Psychology and of interest to the Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) conceptual framework.

2.3.2.1 Theories of second language development

Amongst the theories that speak to language developments, are the social theories. According to de Bot et al., (2013, p. 207), "social theories focus mainly on the social interaction needed for language development". Within the context of the current study, I refer to the development of second language that is based on the interaction of the learner and his social environment (de Bot et al., 2013). An example of a prominent researcher in the field is the American psychologist, Albert Bandura. Bandura was famous for his social learning theory that emphasised learning from the social environment by observing and modelling the behaviour of others (Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993). According to Bandura, for learning to take place, there are certain conditions (mediating factors), which must be met such as one's attention, retention, motivation and other similar factors, which DST refers to as internal resources (See Chapter 3, Section 3.4). Bandura viewed language as social learned phenomenon, which is important for mental development (Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993). Bandura's emphasis on social learning of key development such as language, was also shared by another prominent psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1981 in Rieber, 1998).

Lev Vygotsky was known for his socio-cultural theory and complex human behaviour. Although his views about human development cannot be categorised as systemic, he was one of the first researchers to view human development as complex and that it should be understood from a non-linear perspective (Bot et al., 2013). Vygotsky is also known for his principle of zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is used to support language development. The ZPD refers to the level of development that the child has reached alone versus of the level of potential development that the learner can reach through the assistance of an adult (Vygotsky, 1978). In social theory, the development through ZPD is mediated by parental support in the environment of the learner.

According to social theorists, a child cannot development language unless he is in constant interaction with such an environment. Implied in this view is that, for a learner to develop English second language, he/she must be exposed to an environment where the target language is used. It is therefore, in this view that all the social environments (such as the school, family and the community of the child) to which the child is exposed, gain prominence with regard to language development. Authors like Epstein (2001, 2010) have

written extensively on the role of school, family (parental support) and community on the education development of the learner.

The tragic story of Genie (Fromkim, Krashen, Curtiss, Rigler & Rigler, 1974) is an example of the impact of social interaction that is supported by the social theorists. According to the available medical reports, Genie was confined to extreme isolation from 20 months old until the time of her discovery at 13 years and 9 months. At this time, she was an "un-socialized, primitive human being, emotionally disturbed, unlearned and without language" (Fromkim et al., p. 84). Although there is little information available about Genie, such as her language development prior to confinement, her story has provided important information about the power of early exposure to language environment and supporting resources, what the dynamic system theorists have termed initial conditions (de Bot et al., 2013). The story however, raised many questions with regard to the relationship between environmental exposure and language development. Such questions include the lack of explanation by the social theories about the creativity of children to produce language to which they had never been exposed or clear connection with any evident language in the environment. It is critics such as these that have presented limitations of social theories in explaining the language development.

Theories of language development have been an attempt to give an explanation to some of the questions which could not be answered from a perspective of social theories. For example, Chomsky's theory of universal grammar (UG) "which set itself off against behaviourism by assuming that creativity in language use cannot be accounted for without some innate mechanism particular to language learning" (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2008, p. 10). The universal grammar theory has made milestones on connecting the mind (cognitive abilities) and language development. It postulates that language development cannot be understood without universal grammar (language mechanism in the brain) (Menezes, 2010; Ruiz et al., 2015). In other words, the brain has a programmed language mechanism of some sort, which allows each human to acquire all languages on earth (Pinheiro, 2016). The universal grammar theory has helped to explain why children can easily acquire language in any part of the world, regardless of their origin.

The universal grammar approach has also provided rules and principles organised by the brain on how language is acquired, through direct and indirect access (Ruiz et al., 2015). The direct access could be likened to the acquiring of language from the mother (mother tongue language learning) and indirect access to second language learning by using principles of first language. Through direct access, UG has argued for a connection between first language (mother tongue) and second language. The principle of applying

skills and strategies used in mother tongue (of the first language) to develop the second language, are associated with the UG approach (Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018). The UG has also given rise to many theories that explain the relationship between language and the brain, such as emergentist theories and cognitive linguistics theories. I have covered some principles associated with emergentist theories in the section below (see Sub-section 2.3.3.1).

The cognitive linguistics theories, which emerged from UG, have focused on the relationship between human cognition and language. Unlike the proponents of social theories, the cognitive linguists place greater emphasis on the human brain by focusing on the imagination, groupings, schematisations, categorisations and analysis (de Bot et al., 2013). The focus on the brain has given rise to different systems of language, such as language forms (receptive or listening, spoken, reading and writing) and language components (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics) (Lerner, 2006). It is outside the scope of this study to describe each component of the language systems and how they support language development (more on that can be found in Ardila, 2011; Greenhill, Wu, Hua & Dunn, 2017; Lerner, 2006). The focus of the current study is on second language development in general and how parents can support this development, thus, the focus on the systems in general and their dynamic interaction.

It is also through the cognitive linguistic theories that the focus shifted from non-environmental (external) factors to internal factors such attitude and motivation (Gardner, 1968; Krishnan, Al Lafi & Pathan, 2013), aptitude and willingness (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; de Bot et al., 2013). Thus, language development was no longer viewed as just the result of the environment, rather, as also accounted for by the internal factors within the child (such as child's attitude towards language, motivation and level of cognitive ability). All these factors have been associated with language development and distinguish socio-linguistic theories from social theories, which emphasise social or socio-cultural environmental factors. However, even with the impact that it has made, the socio-linguistic theories have failed to explain the origin of the pre-programmed language abilities, rules and principles. A question explained by the principle of emergence (see Chapter 3, Sub-section 3.3.7), places emphasis on how the language emerges through the process of language usage within the system (de Bot et al., 2013).

Dynamics systems theory (DST) is one of the *theories of second language* development (I present this theory in Chapter 3). Although DST is not a new theory (de Bot, 2008; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Thelen & Smith, 2005; de Bot et al., 2013), its approach to second language development differs from its counterparts. The application of DST to

second language development is attributed to the work of Larsen-Freeman. In her 1997 article on *chaos/complexity science and second language acquisition*, Larsen-Freeman (1991) argues for attention to be given to the striking similarities between the principles of chaos/complexity theory and second language acquisition. Some of the key features being that of a system, which is dynamic, complex and nonlinear (Larsen-Freeman, 1991). Relating this to second language development, the theorists of DST have shifted from the concept of "acquisition" which seems to suggest an end state, to "development" which suggests continuity (de Bot et al., 2013). Although the view of language as a complex system is not new to studies of human development, as I have indicated above (Thelen & Smith, 1993; 1994; Vygotsky, 1981 in Rieber, 1998), conceptualisation of it as a dynamic, complex and non-system is new. De Bot et al. established this conceptualisation in their 2013 article on *Dynamic Systems Theory as a comprehensive theory of second language development*.

The striking feature of DST is its collaborative approach to the previous theory of language development. It views all other theories on language development, as discussed above, as focusing on different aspect of granularity in second language development (de Bot et al., 2013). DST is therefore presented by de Bot et al., (2013) as a comprehensive theory of second language development by showing the commensurability of the above theories with principles of DST. Using DST as a conceptual framework of second language development necessitates the application of principles governing chaos/complexity theory, as discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 3, Section 3.3).

The above background provides an overview of the categorisation of theories, which have attempted to explain language development, particularly second language development. These theories are discussed so as to reveal their different perspectives, albeit having a systemic view about second language development. The background further shows how the choice of DST as a conceptual framework is relevant for the current study based on its incorporation of the systemic views of the above-mentioned theories. For example, the importance of social theories, in addition to the learner's individual system, as well as other environmental systems such as the school and social community of the learner (Epstein, 2010), are important to DST. The theories of language development and cognitive linguistics are key to understanding internal systems within the child such as first language, second language and other psycho- linguistics factors (for example, motivation, attitude and interests) (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Gardner, 1968; Krishnan, Al_Lafi & Pathan, 2013). Therefore, the Dynamic Systems Theory, as one of the theories of second language development, has emerged as an overarching framework to incorporate commensurable theories of second language development (de Bot et al., 2013). It is

based on the above, among other reasons, that I further explore the DST conceptual framework (see Chapter 3)

2.3.3 Challenges of Second Language Learners in the context of Education

The problem of learners being educated in their second language is long-standing, and among the most pressing issues are how the hegemony of English in the workplace and school hinders the performance of Black learners, thereby compromising their academic achievement and career advancement (Nqoma, Abongdia & Foncha, 2017). This mainly affects children who have to use it in everyday learning particularly when English is not their mother tongue. However, children are often not involved in decisions regarding which school to attend and whether they will be taught in their home language or not. Rather, the parents are the ones who tend to be responsible for making this decision (see Sub-section 2.3.3). Therefore, it is on this basis that parents are taken into account to establish an understanding of their decisions concerning the choice of school and language of teaching and how such decisions affect the development of the second language for second language learners. Looking at challenges associated with the use of English as LoLT could shed some light on areas that a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development could aim to address.

Underlying the literature associated with the use of English as the LoLT, is the view that such a decision is one of the main contributors to the overall educational problems of second language learners. Although the role of English is acknowledged as a contributing factor for the poor performance of learners, often the other corroborating factors seem to blur the effects (Nel, 2005, 2011; Nqoma, Abongdia & Foncha, 2017; van Staden 2011). When one looks broadly at the literature in education, the performance of second language learners, as compared to counterparts elsewhere in the world, seems to be affected by a myriad of factors. Among these factors are the poor quality of education in public schools (NPC, 2011) and lack of competency by teachers (ANA, 2011; Nel & Swanepoel, 2010; Uys et al., 2007). Teacher incompetency is identified as lack of subject knowledge and limited language proficiency (Uys et al., 2007) and has an effect on the quality of education in public schools. Lack of parental involvement is also a key aspect (DBE, 2012a). All these factors play a role in the overall picture of a poor education system that has a specific effect on second language development of South African learners (Bloch, 2009).

Looking deeper into factors such as teacher competency, poor quality education, just to name a few, one can find that there is an underlying root problem. The interaction of the

factors affecting second language development is an indication of the complexity of the second language system and the reason a systemic approach is important for the current study. The Department takes the stance that, "poor learning outcomes in South Africa are to a great extent a result of poor language proficiency" (DBE, 2013b, p. 5). This view is also supported by the policy on the Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL) in South African Schools (DBE, 2013b), which suggests that looking at all the presented challenges faced by second language learners, at the root of these problems is poor language proficiency. Therefore, by focusing on the presented problem without addressing language matters could be viewed as focusing on the symptoms, instead of the cause of the problem.

The Education Department would also agree that language underlies everyday learning. In the teacher's guide to the development of learning programmes, it is stated that "languages learning area also underlies all other learning areas, since language is the medium through which all teaching, learning and assessment takes place" (DoE, 2003, p.19). Thus, "without language, no other learning area could exist" (DoE, 2003, p.19). For example, a South African study (using data of 12 000 participants) on the impact of language factors on learner achievement in Science as a subject, has made a clear relationship between language used at school and home and Science achievement (Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018). The study found that "more than half of the overall effects on Science scores were attributed to language" (p.8). The study further stated that learners who are exposed to the language of learning and teaching at home are likely to flourish academically (ibid). The effect of language on overall academic achievement is consistent with research in other parts of the world.

An American study, researching the impact of English proficiency on academic performance of international learners, has revealed that most learners, especially those from non-English speaking countries, might struggle with academic achievement (Martirosyan, Hwang & Wanjohi, 2015). The findings are also supported by a Saudi Arabian study conducted with medical students by Kaliyadan et al., (2015). According to Kaliyadan et al. (2015), most schools in Saudi Arabia use the Arabic language as the language of teaching and learning as compared to the medical universities, which use English as the primary language. The study has shown that there is a close correlation between the English language proficiency and academic performance (ibid). The aforementioned studies are examples of how lack of proficiency in the English language (common language of learning and teaching), affects overall achievement globally. Both national and international research suggest that an effort to improve language proficiency

is a possible solution to address the current academic challenges faced by learners. This view is in line with the Department's second language development goal, which is aimed at reaching high levels of proficiency (DoE, 2002; Nel, 2005, 2011). Therefore, in the current study, understanding language proficiency has been identified as the place to start addressing the problem, as it is the goal of second language development.

2.3.3.1 Understanding proficiency in the context of second language

It is important to note at the onset that the Department of Education does not describe the term 'language proficiency'. It also does not provide the markers for the required level of proficiency, nor guidelines on how to move from low-level, or lack of language proficiency, to a high level of language proficiency. In one of its official documents, the Department of Education states that, "It is important that learners reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages" (DoE, 2002, p. 4). However, even in this instance, the Department does not explain what comprises a high level of proficiency. Therefore, this creates a gap in understanding what language proficiency is supposed to mean, a concept which is seemingly important to language development. This gap could be attributed to the limited literature focusing on language proficiency. Although the language proficiency of learners has been the focus of international studies (see, Chiswick, Lee & Miller, 2004; Cummins, 1979; Stephenson, Johnson, Jorgensen & Young, 2003), literature research on this topic within the South African context has not yielded many results besides that which has been discussed in the paragraph above.

Internationally, it appears that language proficiency is measured by the four components of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and rated on four levels ranging from 'distinguished' to 'novice', where novice is the lowest and distinguished is the highest level (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Esquinca, Yaden & Rueda, 2005). In this way, it makes it easier for one to measure the language proficiency level or at least provide the benchmark in which language proficiency can be measured. With these ranges, a person can determine of the level of proficiency in which he/she is performing. The four components approach seems better than just providing the concept without description. In this way, one can focus on the levels of performance on each of these four components to measure language proficiency.

Although the above view of measuring language proficiency might be helpful, it however, creates some challenges as it seems to ignore some principles in which language is used in both the formal and informal context (Esquinca, Yaden & Rueda, 2005). Thus, language is more complex than just being competent on the four components of language (that is,

listening, speaking, reading and writing), as mentioned in the paragraph above. Advanced intellectual components of language might not be well placed within these categories, for example, the use of language for critical reasoning, organising and analysing information would need more than just mere knowledge of the language on these four components (Kucer, 2009).

The Department of Education seems to have taken an extended view of the language proficiency concept to include visualisation and abstract cognitive language skills or critical literacies (DoE, 2002; Nel, 2005, 2011). These additional components are then classified as types of literacies (DoE, 2002). However, in this instance, only the language components are given, but one cannot draw a definition of language proficiency from these descriptions or be able to describe a proficient language learner. Looking at an American study, a proficient language learner is described as one who can participate in regular classes conducted in English without requiring significant English language support (Stephenson, Johnson, Jorgensen & Young, 2003). In this definition, the focus is on the ability of the learner to independently cope within the formal education context. However, in the South Africa education system, the description seems a bit vague (DoE, 2002; Nel, 2005, 2011) and close to non-existent.

As such, I have relied on studies on emergent literacy (part of emergentist theories, see 2.3.2.1 above), which are an attempt to provide clarity regarding the concept of language proficiency. In emergent literacy, the term language proficiency is viewed by Bouwer (2004, p. 87) as the "key to a new conception of literacy". It is made up of two words: 'emerge' and 'literacy'. The Oxford dictionary defines the term "emerge": "[*as something*] - to start to exist, to appear or to become known that or come forth" (Wehmeier, 2005, p. 477). While the term 'literacy' is viewed by Bouwer (2004) to have developed beyond the four components of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to include the thinking that leads to understanding and construction of a basic concept and subject area. Although there are different definitions of literacy, reading ability is one of the key characteristics (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011; Van Dyk & Weideman, 2004). Therefore, development of emergent literacy cannot be thought of as a linear or simple process, but rather as a complex process in a multifaceted phenomenon. Thus 'literacy' begins to emerge as the child notices symbols and print in the environment and begins to understand that the symbols represent meanings, words and thoughts. The emergence of literacy is constructive and non-linear, and it rarely develops systematically" (Bouwer, 2004, p. 87). Therefore, emergent literacy represents studies that focus on the emergence of the complex (second) language development.

The studies discussed in the paragraph above, suggest that to understand the development of language proficiency, one needs to take into consideration literature on emergent literacy. According to Bouwer (2004) and van Staden (2011), the preschool years are the most critical stages of language development, through what is termed 'emergent literacy', thus emphasising the importance of language development during the early childhood education. Such findings (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011; Van Dyk & Weideman, 2004) might have served as the rationale for recommendations made by the National Planning Commission (NPC, 2011). In their report to the presidency regarding the key focus areas, the NPC identified access to high-quality early childhood education as a key focus of the 2030 vision (NCP, 2011), which is in support of the view mentioned above, regarding the importance of early childhood education. In addition, there seems to be a consensus regarding the promotion of early childhood education by the international community as it could be deduced from their pledge to achieve education for all (UNESCO, 2011). In this vision, language development is promoted through the support of early childhood education or promotion of emergent literacy.

In the above paragraphs, emergent literacy is presented as the building block towards the conceptualisation of language proficiency. Although emergent literacy does not exclude the four language components (listening, speaking, reading and writing), its broad description beyond these four components of language serves as the foundation to help in conceptualising language proficiency. It favours the broader conceptualisation of language proficiency that is not limited to the traditional four components of language (Bouwer, 2004; DoE, 2002; Nel, 2005, 2011). This presents useful data to pave the way for understanding language proficiency within the South African context.

Two aspects could be noted as crucial in conceptualising language proficiency. Firstly, there is need to indicate how the level of proficiency for a learner is measured. Since the Department (DoE, 2002; Nel, 2005, 2011) aims to reach a high level of language proficiency, it is imperative that different measuring scales are provided to benchmark proficiency levels. Measurements such as the five-scale rating seem widely used (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2011). In this measurement, point one means very poor and point five means very successful, while point three is average. Through this measurement, it is easy for one to measure language proficiency level of learners. Secondly, the concept of language proficiency should not be limited to the four components of language, as the language process is broader than these components. Language dimensions, cognitive aspects and social use of language, vocabulary skills, comprehension skills such as inference and evaluation must also be taken into consideration (Dednam, 2005, 2011).

Given the attempt above to shed some light on how language proficiency could be understood, I conclude that there is no universal or at least, an agreed definition of language proficiency by either international or local researchers. Instead, each study that focuses on language proficiency seems to provide its definition of language proficiency that aligns to the purpose of the study (see Ally & Christiansen, 2013; Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2011, for examples of local studies). Various local and international studies show that measurement of language proficiency focuses on different aspects, ranging from language components (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012; Esquinca, Yaden & Rueda, 2005; Nel, 2005, 2011; Stephenson, Johnson, Jorgensen & Young, 2003, Weideman & van Rensburg, 2002), thinking styles (Maree & De Boer, 2003) and literacy (Bouwer, 2004; DoE, 2002; Esquinca, Yaden & Rueda, 2005; van Staden, 2011). However, underlying all these studies is the idea that reading serves as a crucial foundation to assist in the initial development of language proficiency. For example, the literature on emergent literacy focuses on print in the environment, which provides the visuals for a child to learn to read and encode. This view of initial reading and encoding is seen as the key component of language development which promotes language proficiency, as supported by many local and international studies of language proficiency (Magno, 2010; Posel & Casale, 2011; van Staden, 2011, UNESCO, 2002; Weideman & van Rensburg, 2002). It is important to take cognisance of the fact that reading is a crucial component of the development of language. Reading takes many forms, as will be discussed in later sections, either by the child being read to initially or reading on his/her own. Therefore, any effort to promote reading ability will subsequently lead to reading development, which shifts the focus to reading proficiency as key to the development of language proficiency (Kucer, 2009).

The background above provides some idea of the concept of the language proficiency. Although a description of this concept was attempted above, it is only at the conclusion of the study that clarity can be provided. However, as a work in progress in this study, proficiency will be viewed as functional literacy. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000, p. 6) to be functionally literate in English is to "know it well enough to be able to use it effectively in public life and can thus 'control' destiny through the language". Thus, in this reference, proficiency is used interchangeably with functional literacy, and the term public life is also taken to include the educational context where learning takes place.

2.3.3.2 Challenges in developing proficiency in language and the role of parents

From the above section, it is evident that challenges in developing language proficiency are overshadowed by certain factors. As previously mentioned, factors that have emerged

from research are poor quality of education (NPC, 2011), lack of competency by teachers (Nel & Muller, 2010; Nel & Swanepoel, 2010; Uys et al., 2007) and lack of parental involvement (DBE, 2012a). These factors that result in poor performance of learners (ANA, 2011, Howie, et al., 2008) are well captured in the words of Ramrathan (2017, p. 23), who concluded the findings of his study with the statement that, "South African schooling system is failing its citizens". The problem of limited language proficiency of learners is evidenced in the latest PIRLS results that South African learners are performing below other learners in the 50 countries across the globe on literacy (Howie et al., 2017). As reported earlier, Grade 4 learners obtained a score of 353, and Grade 5s a score of 302, both scores significantly below the international average of 500. Taking into consideration the previous PIRLS results over three cycles of testing, one can notice that the low performance by South African learners has been a trend for over a decade (Howie et al., 2008; Howie et al., 2012).

Language serves as the foundation for educational success and as such, limited language proficiency has a major impact on performance as "without language, no other learning area could exist" (DBE, 2012c). To understand the challenge associated with the LoLT policy, language acquisition theory explains that a child from birth within the home environment with parental support develops basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS). BICS refer to conversational fluency which is developed through social interaction (Cummins, 2008). Having developed BICS in the home language, the child, after early stages of schooling develops Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). CALP is the ability to understand and express concepts and ideas relevant to success at school in both oral and written modes (Cummins, 1979), in other words a language proficiency acquired in school. Equipped with BICS, the child, in the first three years of schooling, learns in the mother tongue and develops CALP in the mother tongue. At Grade 4 level, the LoLT changes to English and this then becomes a concern as the child no longer learns in his/her mother tongue language but transitions to English where firstly basic interpersonal communication skills have to be established before cognitive academic language proficiency is established, and thus the ability to learn through the medium of English.

Learners' home circumstances and previous educational experiences may not have allowed them to develop either of their proficiencies. Thus, it requires parental intervention in helping their children to develop language proficiency. Children enter formal education with certain levels of language background, and this development is largely in the hands

of the parents. It is for this reason that parents play a vital role in the language development of their children in preparation for their educational development.

Having viewed the challenges in language development and the need for parental involvement, one needs to examine what happens in practice as compared to what is reported in the literature, as there seems to be a disconnect. Below, I present the expectations in practice according to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (DoE, 2003) and compare it with what current literature says about the same matter. The Department states that, "in a multilingual country like South Africa it is important for learners to reach a high level of proficiency in two languages" (2003, p. 19).

To understand the level of proficiency being referred to in the above text, it is important that the description "high level of proficiency" is understood. There is, however, a paucity of literature focusing on the concept of proficiency (Chiswick et al., 2004, Cummins, 1979; Stephenson et al., 2003). This limitation makes it difficult for parents to know and understand what "high level" or "proficiency" means if these concepts were not well defined. In addition, it would be difficult to know whether proficiency refers to what Cummins (2008) has termed basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in the target language or academic language proficiency (CALP).

A study by Garcia-Vazquez, Vazquez, Lopez and Ward (1997) has taken a different approach to the measure of proficiency; it used the Woodcock Language Proficiency Battery (WLPB-R), a set of individually-administered tests for measuring abilities in oral language, reading and written language, to measure proficiency. Later studies describe guidelines created by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages to assess proficiency on levels, namely distinguished, superior, advanced, intermediate and novice (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012, 2012). Although both these methods seem to be valid ways of measuring language proficiency, it is not clear which method is utilised by the Department. It does however, appear that the seven-point scale used to assess learners, and which are indicated on their report cards, are what is currently available for the measurement of proficiency (DBE, 2012e). On the seven-point scale, the measurements are as follows (DBE, 2012e, p. 13):

Table 2.1: Achievement Measurement Scale

Level of Achievement	Achievement Description
Level 1	Not Achieved
Level 2	Elementary achievement
Level 3	Moderate achievement
Level 4	Adequate achievement
Level 5	Substantial achievement
Level 6	Meritorious achievement
Level 7	Outstanding achievement

The Department of Education promotes an approach referred to as "additive multilingualism" (DoE, 2003, p.20). This approach emphasises the development of both languages without losing either one or the two. According to this approach, the home language (mother tongue) serves as the foundation for the development of the second language (Bouwer, 2004; Nel, 2005). This approach would require that parents focus on home language development to such an extent that it serves as a springboard for the second language development. However, contrary findings emerge from the literature indicating that most parents are reported to be viewing English as the language of prestige (Howie, 2003; Lafon, 2009; De Klerk, 2002; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000). This view of the English language leads parents to push for their children to gain knowledge of English to the detriment of home language development. This approach is led by an attitude that "the earlier the child learns in English, the better" (Weideman & van Rensburg, 2002, p. 159).

The existence of the attitude mentioned above cannot be ignored. It is however, argued by Heugh (2001), who provides statistical evidence to show that most Black parents prefer a bilingual education system to a monolingual system. The author asserts that views presenting English as the language of preference by South African parents are simply opinions taken from elite parents in urban areas who are not truly representative of most parents in the rural areas. This could be based on the statistics showing that only 13.4% of parents prefer a sudden transfer to English while 54% prefer a gradual transfer to English (Heugh, 2001). Parental decision to enrol children in English-only schools is also argued to be a decision based on the poor conditions of public schools, rather than as an indication of language preference (De Klerk, 2002; Heugh, 2001). Thus, it appears that when it comes to Black parents enrolling their children to English-only schools, the decision is partly taken to avoid having them attend certain public schools where the

conditions are poor (including, quality education), even though they might have had an opportunity to learn in their home language. It seems that parents tend to move their children to English-only schools to secure quality education for their children, rather than to indicate their language preference.

Therefore, when looking into the issue of parents' choice of school, and the language of learning, the matter should be viewed in light of the above discussion. It is relevant to this study to understand the reason(s) underlying the decision by parents regarding the LoLT in public schools. It is also important to establish whether the parents are aware of the implications of their decisions, and the demands thereof. Such findings could be essential in developing a framework for encouraging parental involvement.

2.3.4 Parental Support in the Context of Education

Parental support, with regard to the child, refers to the participation by the parents in the life of their children that allows the child to thrive holistically (Ireland, 2014). Epstein (2010) has developed a parental involvement framework to assist in developing and fostering school and family partnerships to help children succeed in school. These include *parenting* (help all families establish home environments to support children as students); *communicating* (design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about school programmes and children's progress), *volunteering* (recruit and organise parent help and support), *learning at home* (provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum activities, decisions and planning), *decision making* (include parents in school decisions, develop parent leaders and representatives) and finally, *collaborating with community* (identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programmes, family practices and student learning development).

Although this framework has received much attention in both international (Avvisati, Besbas & Guyon, 2010; Boonk et al., 2018; Castro, et al., 2015; Enemuo & Obidike, 2013; Gilleece, 2015) and South African research (Motala & Luxomo, 2014), it does not seem to have had much impact on policies of the Department. Thus, official documents related to parental support and language rarely make reference to any model of parental support, which parents can follow (DBE, 2015a; DBE, 2012a; Stein, 2017). However, since every person has parents, the value and the role of parental support of the child cannot be ignored.

In South African law, the issue of parental support is emphasised by the rights of a child to parental care and education (Children's Act of 38 of 2005, 2005; Constitution of the

Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, 1996). Implied in this law is that, it is within the human rights of children for their parents to provide care and educational support (Children's Act of 38 of 2005, 2005 & Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, 1996). It is therefore, important for one to understand these two aspects of support, namely education and care.

The word education in the context of the law refers to formal education. Care on the other hand is a broad term, which covers both the person being taken care of and the provision of the necessary environment to allow the person being cared for, to flourish (Smith, 2004). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parent (or caregiver) to provide a caring environment for a child where learning can take place. Provision of alternative parenting is an option in cases of children being removed from the family environment. Participation of parents in the education of their children could be viewed as the human right responsibility (Children's Act of 38 of 2005). Therefore, the reported non-involvement of parents requires investigation.

The reported problem of non-involvement of parents (DBE, 2012a; Mmotlane, Winnaar & Wa Kivilu, 2009) has prompted the Department to write to school heads and chairpersons of school governing bodies urging them to increase the participation of parents in the education of their children. It is stated in the referred letter that, "many parents still believe that education is the responsibility of the school and the Department alone" (DBE, 2012a, p.1). This issue raises further concerns given that the parents, in a signed memorandum of agreement with the Department at the beginning of their children's education (DBE, 2003), agree to participate in the education of their children. Below is an extract from the memorandum of agreement of the promise (DBE, 2003, p. 19):

Table 2.2: Parents' Memorandum of Agreement

As a PARENT, I promise to:
• involve myself actively in the activities of the school, including school governance structures;
• have regular discussions with my children about general school matters;
• cultivate a healthy, open and cooperative relationship with my children's teachers;
• create a home environment that is conducive to studying;
• assist in the protection of educational resources such as textbooks, chairs, tables and other objects; and
• to contribute, within my means, the resources needed to the schooling of my children.

Parental involvement is based on the above agreement that forms part of the memorandum between the parents and the school, and as such, the Department holds the parents responsible for participating in the education of their children. Essentially, lack of participation is a breach of this agreement. The agreement in the memorandum guides the levels of involvement expected by the Department and includes involvement in the School Governing Body (SGB), parent-child educational support, parent-teacher relationship, the value of educational resources, financial support and current parental activities. These agreements are looked at separately in sub-sections below to provide information on how parents should be involved in their children's schooling

2.3.4.1 School governing body (SGB)

In Sub-section 2.2.2.2, I referred to the role of the school governing body (SGB) within the context of language policies and how these policies have enabled its formation. In this section, I provide a broader view of the SGB from a school governance perspective. I refer to the role of the SGB within the context of parenting and the child's development. The SGB is a school governance body comprising schoolteachers, learners' parents (majority members) and learners (South African Schools Acts, 1996). This body is responsible for the governance of the school including making decisions about the language policy of the school (DBE, 2012b & South African Schools Act, 1996). The SGB is an important platform created by the Department to encourage parental involvement in the education of children. Although there is a reported lack of participation at schools by parents (Naong & Morolong, 2011), the existence of the SGB suggests that there are some parents who are involved.

Through the SGB, the parents play a critical role in determining the LoLT in the school. It could be argued that statements regarding the issue of majority of learners learning in a language other than their mother tongue (MT) could provide a skewed perspective, suggesting that such is the problem of the Department alone. The fact that the government has put the onus of determining the language policy on the SGB is important to note. All public schools follow the policy guidelines by agreeing on the LoLT at the annual general meeting (DoE, 2012a). Therefore, it would then suggest that parents have chosen English as the language of learning and teaching for their children. This decision seems to corroborate the previous literature that showed that some parents view English as the language of prestige (Schuring & Calteaux, 1997 in De Klerk, 2002; Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000). Such a preference of English as the LoLT is a trend that has been continuing (Evans & Cleghorn, 2014).

Although the SGB has provided a platform for parental involvement, the Department urges parents to further participate in their children's education by becoming involved in other areas. This could suggest that the participation provided by the SGB is not seen as sufficient parental involvement (DBE, 2012a). Thus, although the SGB is a good platform to allow parental involvement, it has a limited scope, even though the Department provides the structural composition of the SGB whereby the parents are the majority members (DBE, 2014; DBE, 2015b; Heystek, 2004; South African Schools Acts, 1996). The number of people forming the composition structure of the SGB differs depending on the size of the school based on "Schedule E" categorisation. According to "Schedule E" categorisation, the most substantial number of parents in the SGB is nine (9) (DBE, 2015b). It is obvious that this number is not representative of all parents in the school. Therefore, I conclude that although the role of parents on the SGB is crucial, it does not in itself exclude the non-involvement of other parents or replace their role thereof (Mncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011). Thus, regardless of the existence of the SGB, there is a need for parents to be involved at other levels of the education of their children. Such involvement is not limited to school meetings, it also includes parent-child educational support.

2.3.4.2 Parent-child educational support

The other aspect indicated in the memorandum of agreement (DBE, 2003), includes regular discussions between the child and the parent about general school-related matters. This would include discussions about administrative matters that might have been reported at school, schoolwork and homework given to the child or other school-related activities. Administrative reports or announcements are not a major aspect of this study but could include announcements about the meetings, consistent with activities that have been identified in literature as essential for educational achievement.

A Chinese study about improvement in children's foreign language learning identified various activities that could form part of parental involvement in their children's education. The activities include asking children about the daily lessons, homework, liaising with the teachers, attending school activities and signing educational-related documents (Xiaoyi, 2017). A European study investigating the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement, found four variables such as reading at home, high expectation by parents about the child's achievement, parent-child communication about school and encouraging and supporting learning by the parents, as correlating to academic achievement (Boonk et al., 2018). These findings are also corroborated by another European study (Castro et al., 2018) which found that high levels of achievement are

obtained by learners whose parents focus on general supervision of their children's learning activities, coupled with high academic expectations, developing and maintaining communication with the school and assisting in developing good reading habits. Common within all of the studies, is that involvement of parents in the education of the child has a positive effect on achievement.

Consistent with the approach used by the Department is homework support, which includes reading. The Minister of Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga released figures of reading percentages where "Only 14% of South Africans are readers of books, and only 5% of parents read to their children" (DBE, 2016). These shocking figures led the Minister in 2105, to introduce a reading initiative: "the focus of the reading campaign is to improve the reading abilities of all South African children while the main aim of the campaign is to ensure that all learners can demonstrate appropriate age levels of reading by 2019" (DBE, 2016, par.1). The campaign entails supporting communities and schools with literary resources and activities that enhance reading. Thus, for children to reach this higher level of reading ability (referred to in Chapter two as high proficiency), parents have to play a role in helping their children read and develop good reading habits.

In the previous section, it was established that reading is the key component of language development to promote language proficiency (Magno, 2010; Posel & Casale, 2011; van Staden, 2011, UNESCO, 2002). Therefore, the role of parents in this regard is crucial. What might be of concern, however, is the awareness of the fact that not all parents can read, an aspect that was taken into consideration by the Minister of Education when presenting the reading campaign. According to the reading campaign, parents who are literate can read to their children while the parents who cannot read can allow their children to read or narrate stories (DBE, 2016). All these activities enhance the reading abilities of the child and subsequently the language development of the child. Since parents do not need to know how to read to engage in this kind of parental involvement, all parents can be involved in their children's education.

2.3.4.3 Parent-teacher relationship

The memorandum of agreement (DBE 2009) also indicates that the parents have agreed to have a relationship with the teachers of their children. Key to this relationship is the "co-operative" aspect, as stated in the memorandum of agreement that parents will cultivate an "open and cooperative relationship" (DBE, 2003, p.9). This relationship is based on frequent interaction and parental involvement in school activities of the child and enhances trust between all parties involved (DBE, 2003). Grolnick & Slowiaczek's

research (1994) conducted in the United States of America (USA), found that frequent interaction between parents and teachers, parental engagement in the child's school activities, and parental involvement at home with the child's schoolwork are crucial in assisting the child achieve academically.

A study conducted in Turkey, conducted on conflict management in schools, refers to the above activities as dominant in enhancing the academic achievement of children (Karakus & Savas, 2012). Using over 250 teachers, this study aimed at determining the effect of parental involvement and teachers' trust in parents and students, The findings of the study found that, "as parents are more involved in schools' activities and they interact more frequently with teachers (as measured through a parental involvement scale), the teachers' trust in parents and students increases" (Karakus & Savas, 2012, p.2982). This kind of relationship is crucial for cultivating an environment of trust around the child. It is an environment that communicates to the child that he is trusted to perform well in his studies and reach the expected level of achievement.

In an international study conducted in Asia, teachers found certain parents to be objectors in the education of the child (Wu, 2015), which implies that parents are not involved with teachers but object to what they do. The non-involvement of parents hinders the desired parent-teacher relationship. It affects the education of the child and reveals the different perception between parents and teachers about what co-operative work is all about (Lau, Li & Rao, 2012). Although there are evident differences between the parents and teachers, they should not hinder parental involvement in education.

It must be noted, however, that parental involvement is a complex process, particularly when considering the parents who might be facing challenges other than their children's education. Therefore, both the parents and the teachers need to be equipped with skills necessary to develop and inculcate the parent-teacher relationship (Lau, Li & Rao, 2012; Murray & Mereoiu, 2016). The parent-teacher relationship is key to parental involvement in education (Epstein, 2010), and therefore, efforts to support such relationships seem vital for educational success.

2.3.4.4 Value of educational resources

Educational resources can range from educational furniture to objects around the school and other study materials. The importance of educational books is that they facilitate the development of a reading culture, which is critical for language development (DBE, 2016). Internationally, it has been indicated that students from homes with many books have

higher achievements in reading, Mathematics and Science (Mullis, Martin, Kennedy & Foy, 2007). Researchers in the South African Department of Education, Sullivan and Brown (2016) have identified reading for pleasure as the most important aspect of the cognitive development of children. Therefore, in the context of this study, parents can be involved in education by adding to the educational resources at home.

2.3.4.5 Financial support

Financial support is a complex form of involvement. A Mexican study has found that financial involvement has a high impact on parental involvement (Altschul, 2011), as parents who are financially advantaged, seem to be more involved than those who are financially disadvantaged. The above is also corroborated in the South African context with a study conducted by Ndebele (2015) on parental involvement in homework. It was found that the higher the income and socio-economic status, the more likely parent were in becoming involved, whereas parents from poorer socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to become involved in homework with their children. Therefore, the complexity of financial involvement exists in a sense that the parents who are more financially advantaged seem to have a better chance of involvement than those who are financially disadvantaged. South African statistics show that about 40% of Black men and over 50% of Black women are unemployed, as compared to 8.1% White men and 12.5% White women. Given the statistical reports that Blacks are experiencing a high poverty rate and a high percentage of unemployment, financial support might further suggest that people from the Black population are likely to be more disadvantaged and thus have less involvement with their children (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Hall & Posel, 2012). However, in the context of this study, financial support is not meant to compare those with money and those who do not have. Instead, educational support focuses on how money is used to support the child's education.

Within the context of the current study, I acknowledge that payment of school fees is also not a clear aspect of parental involvement since not all parents pay school fees. Thus, based on the school categorisations, there are certain schools, which are exempt from paying school fees (National Education Policy Acts, 1996; Setoaba, 2011; South African School Acts, 1996). The introduction of non fee-paying schools was a governmental intervention policy to financially assist poor parents who are unable to pay school fees (Setoaba, 2011). Although this intervention aimed to assist, children's parents at these kinds of schools have no platform to show their financial involvement through the payment of school fees. Therefore, such parents would need to find other ways to be involved in their children's education. The forms of involvement needed could be categorised within

school-based involvement and home-based involvement (Altschul, 2011). These two forms of involvement include all forms of engagement mentioned in this section and other activities such as homework assistance, discussions about schoolwork and intellectual activities. All the aforementioned activities are some of the activities that parents can also explore as alternatives to financial involvement in their children's education.

Above are forms of parental involvement that parents can engage in with their children. It is true that various behaviours or activities encompass what parental involvement is all about (Altschul, 2011). The above forms of parenting are based on the memorandum of agreement that parents sign (DBE, 2003). These forms of parental involvement reveal that the parents have various platforms of involvement, which they can use to show their participation.

2.3.4.6 Current parental activities

This section examines the activities, which could comprise parental involvement. To say that parents have absolutely not been involved in education might not be accurate; a view about limited involvement is also considered involvement. Some form of involvement can be attributed to documents provided by the Department on ways in which parents can be involved (DBE, 2012b, 2016; South African Schools Acts, 1996), although the information contained in these documents does not provide much information regarding second language support, they do indicate the Department's effort to try to include parents in one way or the other. With regard to second language development, the Department seems to focus more on teachers than parents. In the Foundation Phase Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, the Department describes three activities in which parents can engage to support second language development (DBE, 2011b; Van der Mescht, 2014), namely: listening to stories, shared reading and total physical response.

2.3.4.6.1 Listening to Stories

Listening to stories is an activity whereby the child listens to a story without exposure to the text related to the story (DBE, 2011b). It is a form of oral exposure, which could include listening to the story on television, theatre drama play or the parent telling or reading a story to the child. Listening is key to language development in that it is identified as the first form of language system that develops (Lerner, 2006; Dong, 2016) (See also Sub-section 2.3.3.1). Therefore, listening to stories are activities that can help support second language development.

2.3.4.6.2 Shared Reading

Shared reading includes a reading activity between the parent and the child. The DBE (2011b) has suggested a shared reading approach whereby both the parent and the child, as the target reader (Paulson, 2005), uses the same book, with larger text for easy reading. Such an approach is effective for both language development and adding to the word vocabulary of the child (Ndebele, 2015). Shared reading is one of the most important activities found in literature to contribute to language development (see Magno, 2010; Posel & Casale, 2011; van Staden and more in sub-section 2.3.4.2). For example, a meta-analysis study of seventy-five articles by Boonk et al. (2018) on relationships between parental involvement indicators and academic achievement has identified twenty-two articles which report on a close relationship between reading at home and academic achievement. Taking such research findings into account, the Department has initiated a reading campaign (See sub-section 2.3.4.2 above) to develop reading proficiency. Therefore, the parents can engage in this shared reading activity, in order to assist in second language development.

2.3.4.6.3 Total Physical Response

Total physical response refers to the activity whereby the parent gives out an instruction (such as 'come here') to the child using the second language so that the child can respond physically to the instruction (DBE, 2011b). Total physical response is helpful in that not only does it reveal the understanding of the child, it also serves as a tool to identify early language delay or underdevelopment, especially when the child is failing to respond to simple instructions (Dong, 2016; Lerner, 2006; Snowling, 2017; Snowling Nash, Gooch, Hayious-Thomas & Hulme, 2019). This process of early identification can help with opportunities for the child to obtain support early through language specialists or parental support such as scaffolding second language development.

2.3.4.6.4 Scaffolding Second Language Development

The Department has recommended that where language development is lacking, scaffolding can be provided (DBE, 2011b). Although scaffolding is not one of the three activities identified by the Department, it is one of the strategies that can be used for language development. Scaffolding is a mediating strategy associated with socio-cultural theory whereby a parent can provide support based on the child's zone of proximal development (ZPD) (see sub-section 2.3.3.1 above). When working with learners, there are various ways to support learners through scaffolding. For example, for learners in the Foundation Phase, scaffolding can be provided through playing out activities related to language development (DBE, 2011b; Wassick & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017). Play provides a

relaxed environment for the child to learn and receive support (Van der Mescht, 2014). Play could include various activities such as puppet play where both first and second language communication can be demonstrated (DBE, 2011b), using questioning, feedback by the parent and also allowing the child an opportunity to respond (Wassick & Jacobi-Vessels, 2017). The parents can choose any form of scaffolding method that might be relevant to their context and the age of the child (Van der Mescht, 2014).

2.3.4.6.5 Family Language Policy

Family language policy is based on the principle that if the learner has developed a first language or mother tongue, that language's skills serve as building blocks to support second language development (Prinsloo, 2018; see also Cummins, 1979; 2008). The family language policy is a principle emerging from family studies advocating for policy on how language is used within the family (King, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008; Schwartz, 2010). Based on this policy, the family decide on the language to be used by each parent throughout the child's development. Through this readily available, cost-free strategy, the child can be exposed to a number of languages and within the family context are supported in both first and second language development.

2.3.6.6 Internet and Technology

At the global level, much progress has been made with regards to supporting second language learners and teachers with classroom and online educational resources (see Stephenson, Johnson, Jorgensen & Young, 2003; Zehler, 1994). Some websites focus on parental support (Cummins, 2012; Kansas State Department of Education, 2012). Technology and the Internet has been viewed as the mediating force through which learning can be supporting (Kern, 2014), although in South Africa, not much effort has been dedicated to parental support concerning the Internet and technological usage. Emphasis seems to have been on environmental print and creating a learning environment by making books available (Bouwer, 2004), and promoting a reading culture (Howie et al., 2008; van Staden, 2011); however, technology is not as easily accessible to learners in rural areas, although activities such as surfing the net, would be particularly accessible in well-resourced communities. Parental support through the use of Internet and technological devices can be effective. However, issues regarding data costs and lack of access to computers and technological devices might be a concern (Mdlongwa, 2012) for lower socio-economic families and those living in rural areas.

2.4 HINDRANCES TO PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

The participation of parents can be attributed to various factors such as parenting styles, parents and parental availability. Parenting styles refer to the way parents raise their children, which have been found to have an effect on learner achievement (Akinsola, 2011; Ibukunolu, 2013). Availability of parents includes looking at the composition of the homes of South African learners, which can be affected by single-parent homes due to parent mortality and urbanisation. One of the publications, which has looked into some of the challenges that hinder the participation of parents, is a collection of studies conducted by the University of Cape Town's Children Institute (Hall & Posel, 2012). In the study, parent mortality, urbanisation and single parent families were indicated as some of the key factors affecting parental involvement. Therefore, below I discuss the above-mentioned factors, starting first with parenting styles (2.4.1), secondly, the mortality of parents and urbanisation (2.4.2). Mortality of parents and urbanisation examines how the relocation and death of parents affect parental involvement. A section on single parent homes (2.4.3) follows examines how single parent homes hinder parental involvement. The last section is about parental levels of education (2.4.4), which research has shown hinders parental involvement.

2.4.1 Parenting Styles

Berk (2003, p.564) lists four child-rearing or parenting styles and their strengths and weaknesses. The parenting styles include the authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved styles. Among these styles, the authoritative and authoritarian styles seem to be the most favoured. Between the two, the authoritative is more effective and is characterised by high expectations from the parents followed by harsh punishment when the child does not meet such expectations. On the other hand, the authoritative style allows the child to make independent decisions when they are ready to do so (Ibukunolu, 2013). A child reared under this parenting style allows him/her a safe environment in which to grow and develop the language. Among these styles, there are two ineffective styles called permissive and uninvolved child-rearing styles. Both these styles are characterised by the premature independence given to the child in making individual decisions Parents who use this style of parenting are likely not to be involved in the education of their children. In this case, the child would be left to make educational decisions on his/her own without any intervention by the parents (Akinsola, 2011; Ibukunolu, 2013). The extreme aspect of these styles is when a parent has a 'don't care attitude' about any decision that a child makes, thus allowing the child to do as he/she

wishes. Therefore, parents who adopt an uninvolved child-rearing style, would likely need support to participate in the education of their children.

2.4.2 Parental mortality and urbanisation

Mortality can lead to either lack of parents to look after the children or to single parent families. One of the main contributors to parental mortality is the epidemic of HIV and AIDS in South Africa (Moletsane, 2004; Posel, 2012). The HIV and AIDS pandemic has left many children orphaned or with only one parent (Posel, 2012), thus leaving the children to fend for themselves or depending on only one parent for survival. These, among other factors, have led to parentification (Stein, Riedel & Rotheram-Borus, 1999).

Parentification is a concept that has been in existence since the 1970s. Parentification refers to the reversal process in which the child is forced prematurely to take on adult roles and responsibilities due to ineffective parents or parenting or the absence of parents (Stein, Riedel & Rotheram-Borus, 1999). Although this is often a precise form of parenting, its psychological and academic effects on the child cannot be ignored. Parentified children are associated with poor academic performance (Stein, Riedel & Rotheram-Borus, 1999). Thus, the overloading of responsibilities with which such children are burdened, affects the progress of their schooling. One cannot, therefore, expect good performance from a child caught up in a parentification role. The problems associated with children who are parentified are vast and include psychological problems such as harmful behaviours, trauma and stress (Bennel, 2005; Fox, 2001; Phillips, 2005). There are also financial challenges, which could be escalated by lack of support grants (Phillips, 2011; Tybazayo, 2009). These problems also include academic problems, as highlighted in the above sub-sections (Stein, Riedel & Rotheram-Borus, 1999; Tsegaye, 2005). Among all these complex problems, the academic challenges are the most relevant to this study. The children, playing the role of parents, are overburdened with work, which leads to fatigue and a sickly life, which subsequently affects their school attendance (Tsegaye, 2005). This further results in delayed academic progress and subsequent failure at school. These children are the main support for their families, and therefore, they often lack learning support to help cope with the demands of education.

Among the factors stated above, there is also the problem of urbanisation. The latest statistics indicate a high poverty rate among blacks and a high percentage of unemployment (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Hall & Posel, 2012). Due to poverty and unemployment, most people migrate to cities and better locations to seek work and a better life (Prinsloo, 2011). This work-related migration, as indicated by Hall and Posel

(2012), is found to occur mainly among men as compared to women, and seem to explain (to some extent) the single-female parent family context mentioned above, particularly in more rural areas. With this background of poverty and unemployment, most parents might be more focused on activities that ensure their daily survival rather than on education, which seems to hold a long-term benefit. Thus, mortality and urbanisation have also put a burden on the remaining parents, having to raise children in single parent families.

2.4.3 Single parent families

In addition to the problem of the absence of one parent due to either death or urbanisation, there is also the issue of single parent families. The above statistics suggest that the majority of South African parents, mainly women, have the responsibility of raising their children alone in the family (Hall & Posel, 2012). The main reason provided for the absence of men is that men move away from home, to seek work. This further suggests that the remaining parent has to balance between household chores and be involved in the child's education. This might be an overwhelming task for a single parent to accomplish.

The problem of single parent families might be further exacerbated by the lack of education of the remaining parent. This could also present as a challenge faced by the parents of English second language learners. Bloch (2009) reports that during the apartheid period, few professions were open to middle-class or educated Black Africans, and this serves as one of the reasons for low education among Black African parents. With low education, issues of low confidence and feelings of inadequacy to assist children emerge. I concur with Prinsloo (2011) who stated that some parents have negative feelings associated with their lack of education, and this has hindered their involvement in their child's education, as they feel that they are not proficient in their child's language of learning and teaching. This challenge creates a problem for both the child and the school, as it limits the participation of the parent in both the home and school context.

2.4.4 Parental Levels of Education

The World Bank has released a report showing inequalities in South Africa (The World Bank, 2018) and associated with inequalities is the effect that the parents' education has on the possible educational attainment of their children and subsequently, their children's chances of getting employment. The report reveals that, "the level of a child's education can be strongly influenced by that of the parent" (The World Bank, 2018; p. 46). The census also shows that only 12% of the population has higher education qualifications and 28.4% have completed Grade twelve (Statistics South Africa, 2011). The statistics

also show that the Black and Coloured populations have the lowest number of people with higher education (less than ten percentages each) (Statistics South Africa, 2011). The White population, on the other hand, has the highest number of people with higher education qualification. In terms of number, there are about 1,2 million Blacks and Coloureds with higher education compared to 2 million Whites. Taking into consideration that there are around 24.1 million Blacks over the age of 20 years and 3,5 million Whites, respectively, the number of educated Blacks is far below their White counterparts. This could be a possible explanation for the reported low unemployment rate among the Black population as compared to the White population (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Furthermore, the parents with low educational achievement seem to lack the skills (such as LoLT and subject knowledge) and the confidence to be involved in their children's education (Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mncube, 2009; Xaba, 2011). Although the problem of low education levels remains the responsibility of the parents, the school can provide support to parents on how they can be involved. There is a plethora of research recommending how parents could be supported in how to become involved in their children's education (Enemuo & Obidike, 2013; Mbokodi & Singh, 2011; Mncube, Harber & du Plessis, 2011; Okeke, 2014; Page, 2016; Xaba). The lack of relationship between the school and the parents is of concern. Maphoke's (2017) study, based in a district in Limpopo, concluded that the school management team (SMT) should be trained on how to effectively incorporate parental involvement. It was also suggested that principals regarded parental involvement as interfering with school programmes. Therefore, although the Department has circulated several documents (DBE, 2016a; 2016b) on parental support, there seems to be a lack of practical programmes, which are aimed at supporting parental involvement in education. Countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) seems to share the same challenges of lack of parental involvement as South Africa (Okeke, 2014; Willemse, Thompson, Vanderlinde & Mutton, 2018), although other nations seem to have been effective in addressing this matter.

Several studies conducted in Asia (Lau, Li & Rao, 2011; Wei, 2011) and the USA (Deborah, Gilliam & Lisa, 2013; Georgis, Donna Mae Ford & Ali, 2014; Wessels, 2014) have shown progress in supporting parents with regard to educational involvement. Epstein (2010) and his model of six types of parental involvement is an example of some progress in the USA about progress in supporting school and family system programmes (Epstein, 2010). A Miami researcher has indicated that based on the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) project, the family and parental involvement in schools is the main priority of the Department of Education in the USA (Johnson, 2015). In Australia, the Department of Education, together with the bodies of Australian parents and other stakeholders have

developed a framework on parent-school partnership, which provides strategies that can be used to enhance parents-school partnership (Australian Government, 2018). These principles are guided by the seven strategies, namely: communication between families and schools, connecting learning at home and at school, building community and identity, recognising the role of the family in education, consultative decision-making, collaborating beyond the school and participating. Therefore, these international programmes can be an example of practical steps from which the South African Department of Education can learn to support and develop parental involvement in their children's education.

The above discussion offers some of the key challenges faced by South African parents. Given the international literature provided, it is clear there is a long way to go to reach the desired state. However, the international literature provides guidelines of what is happening in other parts of the world, and could serve as guidelines to improve parental involvement, and eventually, improve second language development.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 2, I reviewed literature on two dynamic processes of the current study, second language development and parental support. In this chapter, I have shown that second language development is a dynamic process marked by the historical changes in education from the missionary period to this day (Section 2.2). Therefore, to understand second language as a dynamic process, I have looked at how language has developed in education and explored the goals of language proficiency as set by the Department (DoE, 2002). The literature has shown that although the Department has indicated higher language proficiency as the goal of studying second language at school, to allow children to interact with the world, the concept of language proficiency is lacking. Therefore, I explored both local and international literature in an attempt to conceptualise second language proficiency and provide guidelines of some of the preferred second language development trajectory.

In order to reach the desired level of proficiency in second language, the role of parents has also been indicated as crucial. Although second language development is affected by many variables, reading has emerged as one of the key activities critical for second language development (Bouwer, 2004; Harty & Alant, 2011). However, whether parents are aware of reading as an important activity for language development or not, it remains to be discovered. Furthermore, given the reported discrepancy between what happens in the homes of the learners (Cummins, 2012; Howie et al., 2008; van Staden, 2011), and what literature says, it appears that parents have limited access to information about the

role of language in their children's education. Therefore, the above complex facts together with hindrances to parental involvement in their children's education (see 3.5), begs for an intervention to support parents. A conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, is aimed at addressing some of the challenges indicated above, with the aim of informing theories of second language development and theorising about parental support. In the next chapter, I use the literature review as background information to guide the conceptual framework of the current study.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, I presented literature on second language development and parental support, which is best conceptualised within a systemic approach to support the topic of the current study. Therefore, I have employed a Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) for the current study which focuses on systems or "group of entities or parts that work together" as a whole (de Bot et al., 2013, p. 200). In others words, DST scholars study how systems develop over time. I chose DST for the current study based on its non-linear approach to second language development as a developmental process (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011), rather than viewing it as product (or outcomes), which is a simplistic linear perspective towards the view of language (de Bot et al., 2013). DST scholars are not interested in a linear view as they maintain that language development follows a nonlinear process. According to de Bot and Larsen-Freeman (2011, p. 12), in non-linear development, "there is no proportionate effect for a given cause". Within the context of the current study, nonlinear development suggests that there is no direct link between language inputs (such as shared reading between the parent and the child) and language outcomes (improved spoken language). From a non-linearity perspective, the DST scholars of second language development are not interested in predicting the outcome of the system (which, in this case is second language); rather, their interest is to explain and describe the components of the system (such as language forms and structures) (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.2), the relationships that exist amongst the components and the behaviour (which, in this case, is second language development) that is manifested from this relationship. In short, the focus is on the process of second language development. This process can be done retrodictively by looking back at how the development took place (Larsen-Freeman, 2009)

DST summarises a dynamic system as one that exhibits the seven characteristics, which I describe below in Section 3.3. Before I delve deeper into describing the characteristics of Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) in Section 3.3, I firstly present the background of DST (3.2), in order provide a brief historical account of how the theory (dynamic systems) that originated in mathematics (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011) culminates in the current Educational Psychology study. The relevance of DST to the current study, which focuses on parental support concerning second language development, is clearly presented in

Section 3.4. Furthermore, in Section 3.4, I elaborate on second language as a dynamic system of the current study and both second language development and parental support as complex dynamic processes. Before the conclusion section (3.6), I provide an overview of how DST is applied to the current study (3.5).

3.2 BACKGROUND OF DYNAMIC SYSTEM THEORY

DST is often referred to as the "new theory" (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Thelen & Smith, 2005), that is until one considers its long history. DST originated in mathematics with the purpose of analysing complex mathematical systems (de Bot, 2008; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; de Bot et al., 2013; Thelen & Smith, 2005) and was later applied to various fields such as physical science, biology, economics and meteorology (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Human, 2003; Gleick, 1998; Nicolescu & Petrescu, 2013; Sardar & Abrams, 1998). During the early 1885s, DST was used in understanding ordinary differential equations and their qualitative properties within mathematics (Holmes, 2007). This development was supported by the work of H.J. Poincaré, which focused on mathematical study of dynamical systems (Aubin & Dalmedico, 2002). Poincaré could be accredited with the foundational work in DST and the qualitative analysis of non-linear differential equations (Aubin & Dalmedico, 2002; Holmes, 2007; Nagashima & Baba, 1999; Sardar & Abrams, 1998). Although the focus on the non-linear complex dynamical systems around the 1980s opened the door to the use of DST on research focusing on non-linear development (such as in the field of human development), the connection between DST and psychology was not spontaneous (Vallacher & Nowak, 1997).

Some years before the application of DST to psychology, psychologists such as Vygotsky (1981, in Rieber, 1998) and Piaget (in Lewis, 2011), had long started to grapple with the complexity of human development. For example, Lewis (2011, p. 282) states that, "Piaget was an early DST theorist. While Vygotsky (1981, in Rieber, 1998 p. viii) stated that: "In the process of development, all the functions (attention, memory, perception, will, thinking) form a complex hierarchic system where the central or leading function is the development of thinking, the function of forming concepts *used in language*" [Author's emphasis added]. It is such complexities signalled by the above-mentioned psychologist that have prompted scholars in the field of human development to look outside their discipline for other applicable principles to use in studying complex human development. The application of DST to the study of human development could be attributed to the work of Thelen and Smith (1993, 1994), which began around late 1980s. Literature (Thelen & Smith, 1994; Von Bertalanffy, 1968) shows that both Thelen and Smith sourced their support from Vygotsky and biologists such as Ludwig von Bertalanffy, who both applied

the DST principles to human development. It was from this time onward that principles used in DST (such as those presented in 3.3), were applied to studies of human development.

It was however, the landmark work of Larsen-Freeman, in her 1997 article on *Chaos/Complexity science and second language acquisition*, that laid the foundation for the application of DST to second language acquisition and ultimately second language development. It seems that it is from this relationship of complexity/chaos theory and DST, that DST has been known by various names such as "dynamic (al), or complex system theory, chaos theory or complexity science or some arrangements of these terms" (Cupit 2007, p.107). Larsen-Freeman and his colleagues had a conceptual shift from DST to complex adaptive systems (De Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011), and recently, complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) (Larsen-Freeman, 2017). Although conflating these terms can be confusing to scholars like Tobin (2016) who viewed them separately to DST scholars, such a distinction does not seem to matter. Thus, to DST theorists, both complex and chaos theories are complementary theories to DST (Larsen-Freeman, 2007), used to explain processes found in DST such as disorder and complexity (Zaminpira & Niknamian, 2017) (I elaborate on this complementary relationship in Section 3.4 below). However, due to the seemingly lack of clear and agreed upon conceptualisation of the DST (Lewis, 2011), Larsen-Freeman, together with a group of Dutch scholars (Wander Lowie, Marjolijn Verspoor, Kees de Bot, Marijn Dijk & Paul van Geert, just to name a few), began organising theory around one central concept of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST) (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Therefore, for the purpose of the current study, I have chosen to use DST mainly because it is the name that is commonly used by various scholars and many publications, and it seems to have been well established within its root in mathematics, science and biology (Gleick, 1998; Nicolescu & Petrescu, 2013; Sardar & Abrams, 1998).

What has also been important however, regarding Larsen-Freeman's (1997) article with reference to the current study, is her position, which I concur with, that there are striking similarities between the study of dynamic, complex non-linear systems and second language acquisition. Following the foundational work by Larsen-Freeman (1997), there has been a wealth of publications in the form of articles and books arguing for the study of second language as a complex dynamic system. The publications are shared in various disciplines related to humanities, such as second language acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2002), linguistics (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007) and developmental psychology (Van Geert, 1998). The book by Verspoor, de Bot and Lowie (2011) entitled: *A dynamic*

approach to second language development: methods and techniques and the article by de Bot et al. (2013) entitled: *Dynamic Systems Theory as a compressive theory of second language development*, are pivotal in that they underpin the usage of DST in the current study. Below I present the principles of DST used in the current study.

3.3 KEY PRINCIPLES OF DYNAMIC SYSTEMS THEORY (DST)

I have explained in the above section (2.2), that the application of DST to human sciences is fairly new and hence, proponents (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2011; Larsen-Freeman, 2017) of DST are in consensus that the theory is still in the process of development. Due to this on-going developmental process, there are still no agreed-upon principles to guide DST inquiries. Hence, scholars such as Dönyei (2009), Ladyman, Lambert & Wiesner (2011), Lowie (2013), and Verspoor, de Bot and Lowie (2011), still use DST principles, which are not consistent with each other. Although there are cognate principles used among some of the scholars (such as, Verspoor, de Bot & Lowie, 2011, Ladyman, Lambert & Wiesner, 2011 and Larsen-Freeman, 1997), the inconsistency in the number of and specific principles used, leaves one with uncertainties regarding the specific principles, which are relevant for use in a DST study. However, the clarity provided by de Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2007), who stated that DST provides various principles as tools to study dynamics systems, therefore allows one to adopt specific principles based on their relevance to the discipline and the undertaken study, and thus guide my decision of the use of specific principles.

I concur with Larsen-Freeman (2017) that understanding ideas from their origin is important, as such an approach provides one with the original purpose as they were initially intended, in order to avoid potential misuse. Therefore, based on the work by Larsen-Freeman (1997), as the foundation that paved the way for the application of DST to second language development, I have adopted seven principles to be used in the current study, namely: open systems (2.3.1) dis-equilibrium (2.3.2), sensitive dependence on initial conditions (2.3.3), nested system and subsystems (2.3.4), non-linear development (2.3.5), variability (both in and among individuals) (2.3.5), self-organisation (2.3.6) and feedback loop (2.3.7) (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Human, 2003; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2008). Although the above-mentioned principles might not follow the same order as presented by Larsen-Freeman (1997), this is due to their development and usage over the years rather than deviation from the original concepts. The approach I took is supported by a more recent publication by Larsen-Freeman (1997) and her colleagues (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011; de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007), who also refer to better-categorised principles in an order and fashion

that is distinct from the one presented in her 1997 article. I therefore adopt the same approach in presenting and describing the seven principles below.

3.3.1 Open System

An open system is the one that is free to environmental influences (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). Although Harrison and Singer (2006, p. 28) state that, "openness is not a measure of complexity", it characterises complex systems which are usually open to allow interaction with the outside environment. The openness principle implies that there cannot be control of the number of, or the type of inputs that the system will receive from the environment due to its openness. For example, the studies show that children learn language not only from their parents and teachers at school, but also from their social environment, such as from peers and social media (Donnerstein, 2013; Epstein, 2010; Kern, 2014; Symington & Dunn-Coetzee, 2015). Therefore, due to the free flow of the information from the environment, the system self-organises itself to maintain order (I explain this principle later on 3.3.5). In the current study, the openness of the system reveals the complexity of a second language system based on the diverse inputs that have the potential to contribute (either positively or negatively) to the trajectory of second language development. For the system to continue in its open state, it must operate away from the equilibrium state.

3.3.2 Dis-Equilibrium

An open system operates away from equilibrium or from a state of dis-equilibrium (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). Dis-equilibrium is a state in an open system where the system uses the chaos that exists within it to self-organise itself (Human, 2003). A system that restricts influences from the outside environment (lack of openness) eventually reaches an equilibrium state. The second language system of the current study operates away from equilibrium in that it receives constant flow of information (due to its openness) (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007) from various sources, such as the school, social and home environment. Although parental support is presented as the main dynamic process aimed at supporting second language development, it is possible that development will also be affected by other factors outside the parental system (de Bot, Lowie, Thorne & Verspoor, 2013). Therefore, since the second language system of the current study is always open to constant influences, internally and externally, it is important that factors that have potential to influence these changes, are studied as well through the next principle of sensitive independence on initial conditions.

3.3.3 Sensitive Dependence on Initial Conditions

Sensitive dependence on initial conditions (also referred to as the butterfly effect) is attributed to the work of the prominent mathematician-turned meteorologist, Edward Lorenz (Briggs & Peat, 1999). The butterfly effect is expressed by Lorenz's statement, "does the flap of a butterfly's wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas?" (Briggs & Peat, 1999; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Ghys, 2012; Manning, 2017). Lorenz used the butterfly effect as an analogy to describe the ability of small changes (analogous to the flap of the wings), making an impact somewhere very far (analogous to the distance between Brazil & Texas) (Briggs & Peat, 1999; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; de Bot et al., 2013; Ghys, 2012). In the context of the current study, it refers to how seemingly small changes (such as language input by the parents) on initial conditions can greatly affect the trajectory of second language development. It is on the basis of this butterfly effect that the complex dynamic system is unpredictable. Thus, since there is no relationship between changes on initial conditions and outcomes, predictability is difficult. On the other hand, looking at the outcomes, such as proficient language expression, it is impossible to absolutely relate that to a specific initial condition. Therefore, general understanding of the factors that form part of the initial conditions is important to the current study, in showing how interaction of those factors makes predictability of language development outcomes difficult. The difficulty is brought about by the fact that the second language system, referred to in the current study, is open to the outside environment and therefore, in constant change. As such, the initial conditions will also be in constant change, implying that the understanding of the initial conditions should be viewed within the context of a constantly changing system.

As indicated below (Section 3.4), I view second language of the current study as a complex and dynamic system, that is sensitive to initial conditions, which therefore is also to some degree, unpredictable. Some of the most important factors that could have a 'butterfly effect' on language development have been identified as learner's first language (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; de Bot, Lowie, Thorne & Verspoor 2013), attitude and motivation (Gardner, 1968; Krishnan, Al_Lafi & Pathan, 2013), aptitude and willingness (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; de Bot et al., 2013) and support from the family (Epstein, 2001). These abovementioned factors serve as important initial conditions to second language development (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.2). Various researchers, including the ones mentioned above, have showed how these factors can have a butterfly effect on the second language development. For example, Larsen-Freeman (1991), has shown how small errors of overgeneralisation on first language (for example, I ate it), have

been identified in second language speakers. The errors present as minor perturbation (small changes) to the standard language, but the impact was significant in that it affected the development of second language. According to Larsen-Freeman (ibid), the errors in second language production form a dialect, which is referred to as a language of its own (interlanguage), not governed by the same principles as those of first and second languages. Although such errors might seem to be minor from a linguistic perspective, they have a huge effect when viewed from the perspective of DST. Thus, such errors affect the trajectory of second language development in that, an *interlanguage* (I explain this concept in 3.3.5) emerges in the process required to succeed in education, but which is not the standard language. Thus, instead of developing a standard second language or what Cummins (2008) has termed cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), the speaker remains with a dialect of the standard language (interlanguage), which is only sufficient for basic interpersonal communication (BICS). The aforementioned trajectory presents the butterfly effect, of which its complexity is brought about by the psychosocial factors (such as, attitude and motivation and cognitive factors like aptitude and willingness), and it is this complexity that makes the predictability of second language development difficult (de Bot et al., 2013). I have elaborated on the complexity of these factors in relation to second language development in the literature review chapter (see Section 2.3).

3.3.4 Nested System and Its Subsystems

A nested system and its subsystems refer to the fact that all parts within the systems and outside the systems are connected (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011). I mentioned in the introductory section (3.1) that second language is the dynamic system of the current study. This system has interconnected subsystems within it (such as language forms and language structures, as mentioned below (3.4.), and the system itself is also connected to other systems (such as, first language and the social system) (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007). The components of the system that are very closely related and possess the same characteristics of a system constitute a subsystem (de Bot et al., 2013; Tan, 2013). In other words, a subsystem is made of constituent parts of a system, which are also nested, and in constant interaction. There is a mutual relationship between the language components (sub-systems) of the second language system and therefore, change in any variable (in or outside the system) will have an impact on the system (thus the butterfly effect).

For example, within the phonological language subsystems (of the language system) there is a phonetics sub-subsystem and an alphabetic sub-subsystem (Lerner, 2006). All

these sub-subsystems are in a mutual relationship with other subsystems on the phonological level (such as morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics) and forms of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The list of subsystems and sub-subsystem reveals the level of interconnectedness that exists within the system and its complexity. Thus, change in any of the language subsystems (sub-subsystems) will manifest in a non-linear change or non-linear second language development.

Another example is that of educational psychology research on speech disorders, which has shown that children with hearing problems, are likely to have delayed speech, reading and low self-esteem; which have a negative impact on language development (Lerner, 2006). While in another publication on learners with dyslexia (reading disorder), it has been shown that there is a relationship between reading disorder and delay in language development (Snowling, 2017). Therefore, the relationship between hearing loss and dyslexia to language development serves as an indication that language development is not a linear process of the inputs (receptive language) and production (expressive language) process, rather, there are various interconnected subsystems that are interconnected within the language development process. Therefore, to further understand the development that emanates from the interconnectedness of the second language system (and its subsystems), it is necessary to understand the principle of non-linearity, which I describe below (3.3.3).

3.3.5 Non-linear Development

In DST, non-linear development seeks to provide an understanding about "systems that change in ways that are not amenable to linear cause-and-effect model" (Warren, Franklin & Streeter, 1998, p. 358). De Bot and Larsen-Freeman (2011, p. 12) refer non-linearity in second language development to a developmental process in which "there is no proportionate effect for a given cause". Non-linearity can be contrasted to a linear view of second language learning, which adopts a linear relationship, for example, where input from the parent can be viewed as linearly related to second language acquisition. However, from a non-linear perspective, language inputs such as words learned from parents, do not have an associated output in the system (de Bot et al., 2013) or can have outputs that are not in a proportional relationship with the inputs (Guastello, Koopmans & Pincus, 2009; Hohenberger & Peltzer-Karpf, 2009).

An applied linguistics study by Murukami (2016) serves as an example of non-linear development. In Murukami's (ibit) study, the researcher compared a group of learners with equivalent features of morphemes in first language and those without these features, with

regard to second language development of English grammatical morphemes. Murukami's (2016) study builds on the past literature that has shown that there seems to exist an order in acquisition (also referred to as development of accuracy order) of morphemes for the first (L1) and second (L2) language speakers, although this order differs between L1 and L2 (Mohammed & Sanosi, 2018; Seong, 2015). The result of Murukami's research has revealed a non-linear second language development of English grammatical morphemes for both groups. For instance, although the learners with equivalent features of morphemes in their first language outperformed those who lacked the feature in their first language, in terms of plural morphemes, outputs on different levels of accuracy of English grammar morphemes and cross-sectional development (referring to a comparison between morphemes in L1 vs those in L2). Thus, how the existence of, or non-existence of, L1 morphemes influences L2 morphemes development did not differ between the two groups regardless of presence of first language features.

Another similar study that shows non-linearity in language development is Meara's (2004), computerised model of Boolean network (consisting of variables with specific functions related to inputs and outputs of connected subsets of variables) (Squires, Pomerance, Girvan & Ott, 2018; The Audiopedia, 2017), where each word has a subset of interconnected words. A result of this inter-connection of words, when words are switched "on" or "off" (one after the other), has an effect on interconnected words. The focus of this experiment was on vocabulary attrition (attrition is "known as the reverse process of language acquisition" (Wei, 2014, p. 1603), which is the effect of switching on/off words within a network of interconnected words. The study revealed however, that switching off words (one after the other), did not follow a linear process. At times, other words decline after switching off a few words and at other times, the words remained intact after many words were switched off.

Although de Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2007) have criticised Meara's model as rudimentary in that switching words 'on' or 'off' does not reflect how a real lexicon works, the authors have acknowledged that the research findings provide a crucial insight into the understanding of second language development as a non-linear process. Both the aforementioned studies demonstrate the butterfly effect, where a small change to a word results in an unpredictable non-linear development of interrelated words. In the study by Murukami (2016), the presence or absence of L1 morpheme did not have an effect on L2 morpheme development, while in Meara's (2004) study, the switching off of words, had an unproportional effect on the subset of interconnected words. The non-linear development, demonstrated above, is an example of the second language development of the current

study, where I discuss how second language inputs (such as parent shared-reading activity with the child) can follow an unpredictable second language trajectory. Understanding variability in second language development helps to account for non-linearity in development that exists amongst individuals, which I discuss next.

3.3.6 Variability (both in and among individuals)

In the current study, variability refers to the difference in both the second language development process and those (parent and the child) involved in the second language developmental process, as a result of internal and external variables that interact with the environment of the system (van Dijk, Verspoor & Lowie, 2011; Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk, 2008). Therefore, variance emerges due to the interaction of the environment with the existing variables such as memory, intentionality, attention, maturity or motivation, which serve as the flow of energy that supports the growth of a dynamic system (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007). It is through the changing of, or interaction of, variables that variability is demonstrated. Although each of the above-mentioned components can be associated with second language development, in the DST approach, more interest is on how the interaction of the second language system and its subsystems can mediate the second language development in the presence of the multifinality principle (Tangarelli, Ruiz, Vega & Rubeschat, 2016).

Multifinality, also known by complex systems theorists as path dependence, refers to the developmental process whereby "systems that start in a nearly identical starting state can develop in a completely opposite direction as the system amplifies initial minor differences" (Warren, Franklin & Streeter, 1998, p.364). The path dependence principle is important to gain an understanding of the second language development process of the current study where the trajectory is unpredictable. For example, given that there are similar environmental conditions for second language learning for different learners, some learners' language learning can be amplified to CALP required for academic success (Cummins, 2008), others can result in regression (or loss of language usage) (as in studies by Siegler, 2007) and while others might experience a levelling-out (Tangarelli et al., 2016). This implies that although parent-children interactions might be similar, and children might have similar social conditions, it is still possible to have variability in second language development due to the path dependence principle (Briggs & Peat, 1999; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Sardar & Abrams, 1998). Path dependence can account for variability that exists when there seems to be similar conditions in parent-child interactions.

Another study. conducted by Boonk et al. (2018), on the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement has revealed that a parent, reading with the child, has a positive effect on the child's language development. However, psychologists have also discovered (as in the aforementioned research by Lerner, 2006, see sub-section 2.4.2) that a child who has shared reading experiences with their parents still may have language delay due to hearing problems. The above examples indicate that the interactions between the parent and child are just one aspect in a myriad of interacting factors that can contribute to second language development. Even if two separate parents are reading a similar book (symbolising similar reading support) to their children, factors such as children's differences and that of their parents would also play a role in the trajectory of language development emanating from such interaction. Thus, although shared reading between parents and the child might have been indicated as having a positive effect on language development (Boonk et al., 2018), there cannot be full predictability of the outcomes of the system as variance will always exist. I agree with Paulson (2005, p. 342), who stated that "like the weather, reading doesn't have a clear beginning or ending. While there can be a physical text with first word and a last word, reading also involves the reader". Therefore, to understand variability in second language development, one must also look into individual differences that contribute to this variance.

Variability is also viewed as an "inherent property of a changing system" and self-organising developing system (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007, p. 14; Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk, 2008), in that it provides important information regarding the developmental process of the second language system. Therefore, to explain the concept of variability I focus on the next principle, the self-organisation principle and its associate concepts, emergence and attractor state.

3.3.7 Self-Organisation

According to Lewis (2011, p. 280), the concept of self-organisation was introduced by Paul van Geert "for explaining the emergence of order in *second language* development" [author's emphasis]. Self-organisation refers to the *emergence* of patterns and order (*attractor states*) by the complex dynamic system as its internal components interact with each other and the environment (Granic & Lamey, 2002; Thelen & Smith, 2005). Self-organisation can be associated with variability in that it denotes some form of variability. For example, high variability can be an indication of a system that is changing or self-organising and a low variability can occur when a system is more or less stable (Sardar & Abrams, 1998; Warren, Franklin & Streeter, 1998; van Dijk, Verspoor & Lowie, 2011;

Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk, 2008; Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk, 2007). High variability can occur at early stages of language development demonstrated through "free" variability, which is a form of variation that is not based on any language principles (interlanguage), but it occurs as a learner tries to explore the communication strategy that might work and settle (attractor states) on them (van Dijk, Verspoor & Lowie, 2011; Verspoor, Lowie & van Dijk, 2008). A child enters into this process of free variability (a form of language exploration) as he receives inputs into the second language system.

Inputs from outside the system flow into the complex second language systems due to its openness (also referred to as an open system) and hence, its self-organisation process is adaptive *(system adaptability)* in that it emerges from inside the system as it develops. Through the *self-organisation* process, the system has the ability to control its internal structure regardless of the external influences and *adapt* to changes in its environment. Hence, variability is viewed in DST as a result of the system's ability to show flexibility in adapting to its environmental changes (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007). *Emergence* refers to the "coming-into-existence of new forms of properties or *language usage*, through on-going processes intrinsic to the system itself" (Lewis, 2000, p. 38) [Author's emphasis]. Emergence in second language development is characterised by the fact that it does not have traceable effects to prior events (Guastello, Koopmans & Pincus, 2009). Thus, both the emergence and self-organisation are spontaneous, and so is the *attractor state* on which it settles.

I refer to *attractor states* as behaviour patterns that the system gravitates towards and temporarily settles at during the process of self-organisation, until another input in the form of energy (or resources) acts on it (Cupits, 2007; de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007). An example of an attractor state that language systems can settle on is demonstrated by parent-child communication, which settles at, for example, the pronunciation of 'banana' as 'anana' since the child has not yet developed the phonetic awareness required for an adult speech. Thus, regardless of the different goals that we might have for language development, the desired state is adult speech (Smith & Thelen, 1993). Therefore, although one cannot predict the aforementioned attractor state, they are preferred in that they all communicate between the parent and the child. For example, it cannot be predicted why one child will refer to a 'banana' as 'anana' and the other as 'nana', the patterns are however, preferred by the system as they allow the needed communication process to take place. This kind of language, used by both the parents and the child, can fall within the concept of interlanguage, attributed to Larry Selinker (Odlin, 1993), which; refers to a form of language between the first language (L1) and target language (TL)

(second language -L2) (Selinker, 1972), and governed by its one rule (Larsen-Freeman, 1991). This view of children using different names to refer to the same thing (such as banana) could also be related to van Dijk, Verspoor and Lowie (2011), who showed how a learner during 'free' variability, can explore using different resources to try different language strategies to communicate a particular meaning; once an effective strategy is obtained, the child might settle for that strategy (attractor states). Although attractor states cannot be predicted, the current study focuses on them as they are the preferred language development processes of the system (Hall & Posel, 2012; Mmotlana, Winnaar, & wa Kivilu, 2009; NEEDU, 2013; Nel 2011).

3.3.8 Feedback Loops

The feedback loop is the process through which the dynamic system governs itself (Queen's University, 2018). It is a process through which the variables, within and outside (environment) the system of the current study, have a mutual interacting relationship with each other (Nagashima & Baba, 1999; Sardar & Abrams, 1998). The feedback loop is marked by two processes, negative feedback loop and positive feedback loop. The negative feedback loop maintains the status quo (or it restricts positive growth) while the positive feedback (or iterations) amplifies the small changes in the system to provide higher order functioning (positive growth) (Briggs & Peat, 1999; Warren, Franklin & Streeter, 1998). This higher order functioning can also be referred to as self-organisation that I have described above (3.3.5). Therefore, within the context of the current study, parental support (as an external environmental force to a language system) is expected to form iterations to support positive feedback of the second language system (I elaborate on this in the application section, see sub-section 3.5.2).

All the above-mentioned principles are relevant to the current study in that they provide an understanding of a second language system and both the second language development and parental support dynamic processes that are involved. Therefore, how the aforementioned principles are applied to the current study is presented in the next section.

3.4 DYNAMIC SYSTEMS (DST) AND SECOND LANGUAGE

In the current study, I view second language as a dynamic system in a sense that it undergoes changes over time, based on inputs from both the external setting or the environment (home, school or social settings) and internal (resources within the language learner such as memory, motivation, aptitude and so forth) (de Bot et al., 2013). Both the external and internal inputs are crucial to the understanding of how second language develops. Therefore, DST, as a compressive theory of second language development, is

relevant because it provides tools necessary to study a second language system and the dynamic processes (both second language development and parental support) of the current study (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2008; de Bot et al., 2013).

However, the second language system studied in the current study is not only dynamic, it is complex as well. It is important that I put in a caveat at this point, that "complexity" as used in the current study should not be viewed according to its common usage of something that is difficult to understand (Hornby, 2005). A complex system (from complex theory perspective) is characterised by interconnectedness of many components or variables and their relationship, and how pattern or order emerges from the seemingly chaotic process (Mosaic, 2018; Sardar & Abrams, 1998). I present second language as a complex system based on its different units, such as language forms (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and language components (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics), which serve as language subsystems that interact in a reciprocal relationship. For example, educational psychology studies on language disorders have shown that children who struggle with phonological awareness end-up struggling to read and in-turn, children who lack exposure to reading activities may experience phonological awareness difficulties (Lerner, 2006). This complexity is exacerbated by other internal factors (such as learner's first language, attention, memory, intentionality, and so forth) and factors in the learning environment (such as parental support, books, television and so forth). It is therefore, based on the focus of DST to studying second language development and complex systems, that I chose it as a theoretical framework suitable for the current study.

When DST is applied to a complex system, such as a second language system, it becomes the science of complex systems (de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007). When DST is viewed as the science of complex systems or Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST), it incorporates both complexity theory and chaos theory (de Bot et al., 2013; Human, 2003). The science of complex systems perspective afforded me an opportunity to adopt principles used in both complexity theory and chaos theory and apply them to Dynamic Systems Theory as used in the current study (refer to Section 3.3.). I have defined complexity in the above paragraph as the interconnectedness of various components of the system and their relationship. I define chaos in the current study as "the period of complete randomness that complex non-linear systems enter into irregularly and unpredictably" (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, p. 143). Chaos brings an understanding to the complexity of the second language complex system (Sardar & Abrams, 1998). I combine the two theories by using a complexity perspective to help me understand the complex

nature of the second language system and I use chaos to understand the order within this complexity.

I bring the relationship between these two aforementioned theories together by using their associated principles in application of DST to the current study. Research has shown a relationship between the principles of complex theory, chaos theory and Dynamic Systems Theory (de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor 2007; de Bot et al., 2013; Human, 2003). In the current study, I chose the principles based on their relevance to the focus of the current study (de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007). Below I provide the application of DST to the current study.

3.5 APPLICATION OF DYNAMIC SYSTEMS THEORY (DST) TO THE CURRENT STUDY

3.5.1. Application to the complex second language system

In the above section (3.4), I provided examples to support the view of second language as a complex dynamic system. As indicated in Section 3.4, it is inevitable that the second language system of the current study should be viewed as complex and dynamic (Ladyman, Lambert & Wiesner, 2013). Although the above examples focused more on internal subsystems of a second language system, the complexity of a second language system exists because of other nested systems which I highlighted above in sub-section 3.3.4, such as, the school and the community systems (Epstein, 2010). For example, in the previous chapter (Chapter 2), I discussed the protests that arose following the decision of the apartheid government to introduce Afrikaans as the medium of instruction (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2.1) (Boddy-Evans, 2017; Booyse, 2011). The protests were triggered by the government's decision of language of instruction and were the students' reaction, as non-Afrikaans speakers, to being taught in a language not common in their communities (Maluleka, 2008). Since the learners did not know how to speak Afrikaans, it was clear that learners had to learn the Afrikaans language in order to learn through the medium of Afrikaans. Underlying this idea is the language learning principles well stated by the Department of Education that "without language no other learning area could exist" (DBE, 2012c, p. 19). Implied in the aforementioned statement, is that without the knowledge of the language used to teach a subject, no learning can take place.

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is a typical example of international longitudinal studies that reveal the effect of lack of language achievement in South Africa learners. The PIRLS studies have revealed that since 2006 when South Africa started participating in PIRLS, the performance of learners has not reached

international benchmark average pass mark of 500. The table below illustrates the performance of South African learners in the three consecutive cycles of participation in PIRLS. The last column represents Grade 5 learners who took the tests in English, Afrikaans and IsiZulu. This assessment was for benchmark reasons to ascertain any change from previous assessments with regard to widely-spoken languages when assessed on the main stream PIRLS (Howie et al., 2017).

Table 3:1 Average Scores of South African Learners who Participated in PIRLS

Year	Grade 4 11 official languages	Grade 5 Afr & Eng	Grade 5 Afri, Eng & IsiZulu
2006	253	403	359
2011	323 (pre-PIRLS)	421 (PIRLS)	No African language in Grade 5 (PIRLS)
2016	320	434	406

In 2006, PIRLS assessed South African learners in all 11 South African official languages (Howie et al., 2017). The overall average score was 253 for all Grade 4 learners, and 403 for all Grade 5 learners, of which both scores were below the international benchmark of 500. In 2011, the South African learners including learners from countries such as Colombia and Botswana which were developing in literacy, were assessed using an instrument that was easier compared to the standard PIRLS test (Howie et al., 2017). This test was called pre-PIRLS and was used to assess Grade 4 learners. Even though the assessment comprised less difficult passages and items, in comparison to PIRLS, it did not have a positive effect on the results of learners. The score of 323 was well below the international benchmark of 500. Therefore, this trend of low performance compared to international counterparts continued, as the latest results (PIRLS 2016) show that there has not been much change in terms of the low performance of the South African learners compared to their peers (Zimmerman & Smit, 2014). The fact that Grade 5s (Table 3.1) were also tested using the PIRLS instrument, usually applied to Grade 4 learners in other parts of the world, shows the seriousness of the language problems in South Africa. Therefore, the above scores from PIRLS reveals the low achievement of South African learners with regard to language assessment. These language challenges, identified at this level of education have infiltrated other subjects as well, such as Physical Science and Mathematics (DBE, (2012c), (I discussed this in Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.2). Therefore, through the DST approach, second language problems are not viewed as an isolated system, rather, as a nested system with other complex systems.

Although the related systems, as mentioned below (sub-section 3.5.2), are not the main focus of the current study, I am taking these systems into consideration to help understand the nestedness of the second language system of the current study. Since all systems are interlinked in a mutual dynamic relationship (Steenbeek & van Geert, 2013), it is therefore, necessary to take this system into consideration and understand how they interact with the second language system.

3.5.2 Application to the systems of the current study

Previous studies on DST have revealed that certain researchers have referred to different systems based on the focus of their study (Dong, 2016; Faye, 2011; Marin & Peltzer-Karpf, 2009; Sauve & Bartlett, 2010). In a study about bifurcations, Faye (2011) referred to neural field equations as dynamic systems. In another study about the development of listening strategy use and listening performance, both listening strategy use and listening performance are referred to as dynamic systems (Dong, 2016). Even in education, the same approach is held. For example, in the DST study of readiness to change with cerebral palsy learners, the key systems are the school, home and learners with cerebral palsy (Sauve & Bartlett, 2010). Van Geert and Steenbeek (2013, p. 3) refer to "teaching-learning system" in their study about development and education, indicating that what is important about these patterns is one's choice of system, based on the variables of the study. It is based on these variables and their characteristics that a research study demonstrates its nature as complex and dynamic (Ladyman, Lambert & Wiesner, 2013).

3.5.2.1 System to Second Language Nested Systems

Guidance, however, has been provided about systems critical to second language development, which is the focus of the current study. In their article about DST as a comprehensive theory of second language development, de Bot et al. (2013, p. 200), refer to more than three complex dynamic systems which are "language (be it first, second or third), language learner (young or old) and language communities (naturalistic or instructional settings)". I view language communities as referring to the social context where language learning takes place. This could refer to various communities where the learner obtains language lessons such as the school and the family (Epstein, 2001, 2010). I concur with de Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2007, p. 14), who refer to the language learner as a "dynamic subsystem within the social system". The social system, is viewed as the context through which learning takes place. Since all subsystems of the social system have the characteristics of a dynamic system, school and family as systems are considered as interconnected to the language and language learner systems. Therefore, in the current study, I have referred to the four nested complex dynamic systems as the

school, family, the language learner and the second language and their subsystem where necessary (see Figure 3.1 below). The main focus of this diagram is to illustrate how the systems interact with each other.

Figure 3.1: Complex Dynamic Systems of the current study (source: author)
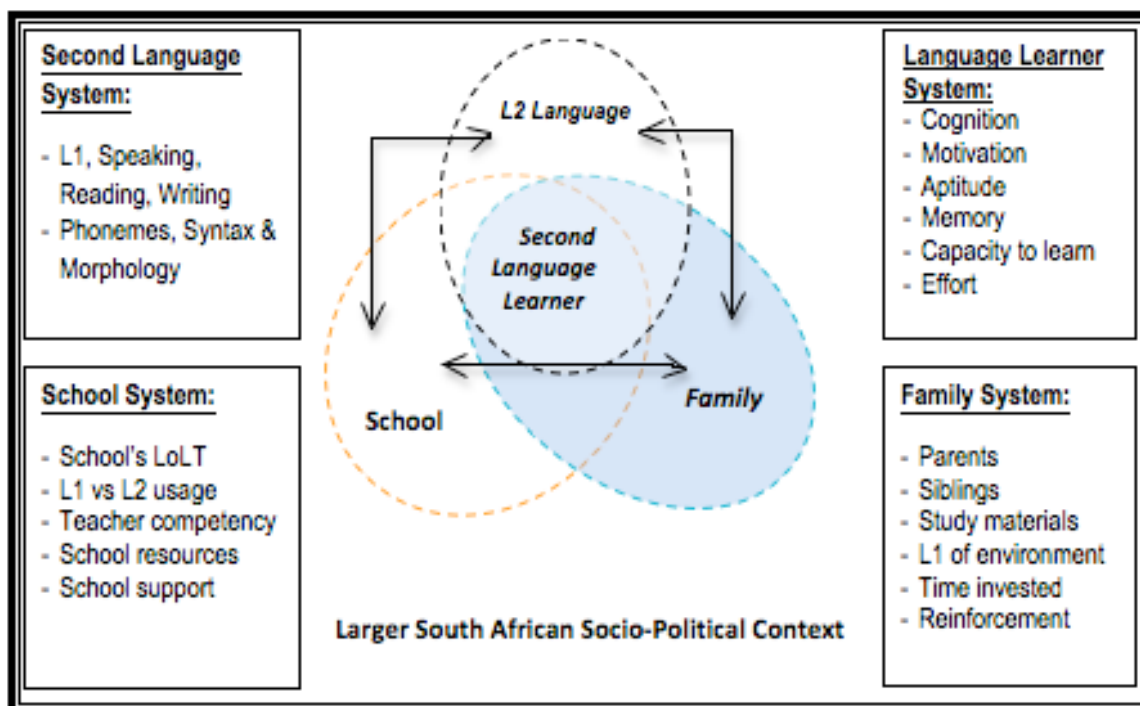
In the above diagram (Figure 3.1), I have depicted four-nested systems including the second language system. All these systems are located within the larger South African socio-political system, which I described in the previous chapter (Chapter 2, Section 2.2). The second language learner lies at the centre of the systems where language, school and family intersect, as the learner represents the target system to benefit from parental support and second language development. Hence the learner is connected directly to the various systems. Each box in Figure 3.1 represents the subsystems or variables (see sub-section 3.3.6 above) found in the specific system. There is also a mutual non-linear relation between the systems, as indicated by the arrows pointing in both directions.

3.5.2.1.1 Second Language

The second language system refers to the second language of the current study as introduced in Chapter 1 (Section 1.7) and discussed in detail in Chapter 2 (sub-section 2.3.1). From a dynamic systems' perspective, second language is seen as a complex dynamic system connected to other systems (such as first and/or home languages) and their subsystems (such as language components and structures) Therefore, in

understanding a second language system, the relationship between the first and second language development must also be well established (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.1). The same principles of mutual interaction also exist within each system (see sub-section 3.3.4 above). Therefore, the same principles that apply to a second language system, as an example, can also be applied to other systems indicated below, such as the family system (see Figure 3.2).

3.5.2.1.2 Second Language Learner

Second language learning refers to the development of the second language targeted by the learner. The learner's system is important to the current study as the ultimate aim is to support second language development that can assist in formal education. However, such development cannot be realised without taking into consideration the learner system (the target of second language development) and other systems related to it (as referred to in Figure 3.1 above). For example, it is within the learner system that interaction of the second language system and the first language system are observed. According to Prinsloo, Rogers and Harvey (2018, p. 8), learners who pursue attainment of second language without sufficient development of their first language, "continue to struggle though their academic trajectory". Such learners, although they might demonstrate conversational abilities in the second language, often their proficiency levels remain at basic interpersonal communication (BICS) level, rather than developing cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) necessary for formal education (Cummins, 2008). It is therefore, the focus on the second language learners that aims to ensure that the language that is being supporting, is on par with the language demands of formal education.

3.5.2.1.3 Family System

The family system is important in that both the parental support and the second language learner co-exist within a mutual dynamic relationship. This mutual relationship between the parent and the child is presented below in a model adopted from Steenbeek and van Geert (2013).

Figure 3.2 depicts the reciprocal relationship that exists between the parent and the child within the chosen family system. This figure shows that the actions of the parents have an influence on the actions of the learner and vice-versa. The black solid arrows show the reciprocal influence between the parent and a child, while the larger grey and white arrows show the subsequent influence that each action has on each individual. This figure reveals the mutual dynamic relationship that exists between the parent and child.

Figure 3.2: Feedback Loop between the Parents and the Child

(Adopted from Steenbeek & van Geert, 2013)
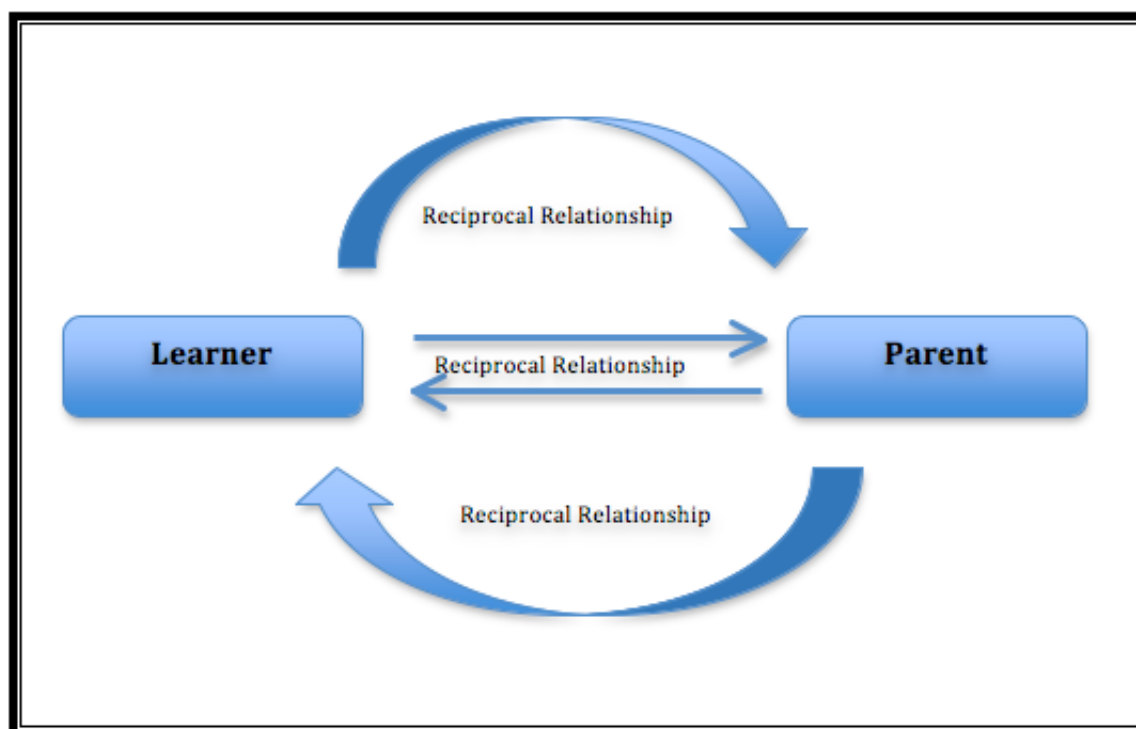
3.5.2.1.4 The School System

The school system has been fully explained in the review of literature (Section 2.3). Besides being a place where English language is taught, it is also the place where the child spends most of his/her time under instructional learning. Every school-going child spends over six hours daily under instruction. Therefore, this system focuses on the reciprocal relationship that this system has with both the second language learner and the family system. Important about this complex nested relationship, is how the school plays a role in supporting second language development. Literature has shown that there are principles that govern how learners acquire and develop second language (Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018). These authors have stated that learners must be fully established in their first language in order to effectively develop the second language. Therefore, to support the learner through this process, the school plays a key role in partnership with the family system and learner (Epstein, 2010).

3.5.3 Application to research and practice: Theory of parental support

The ultimate aim of the current study is to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support and theories of second language development as a complex dynamic processes. It has already been established (see Chapter 1), that there is limited research focusing on

parental support concerning second language development (DBE, 2012a; Mmotlane, Winnaar & Wa Kivilu, 2009). It is on this basis that I also focus on parental support as one of the dynamic processes of the current study, in addition to the second language development. Therefore, to understand the a conceptual framework for parental support, important variables to second language development and parental support are referred to (See Chapter 2, Sections 2.3 & 2.4). These variables include internal factors within both the parent (such as parent's first or second languages, parental attitudes and beliefs about second language development) and the learner (first language, attitude, motivation, aptitude and so on) and other external factors such as parents' education, parenting styles, socio-economic status, environmental resources, political and economic value which contribute to attainment of second language (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007, de Bot et al., 2013; Ndebele, 2015). Therefore, these factors, together with the maturity of the child and his/her level of education (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007), play a role in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development.

Parental support is an important dynamic process of the current study in that its contributions could have a potential butterfly effect on the second language system. Thus, various meta-analysis studies have indicated a relationship between parental support and second language development (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2015; Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2007, 2012; Wilder, 2014). Although these studies were not aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, as is the aim of the current study, they provide important case studies, which support the focus of the current study. De Bot, Lowie and Verspoor (2007) have identified case studies as important to DST in that they guide simulations. Simulations or iterations, are recursive models of behaviours aimed at achieving a behaviour goal (van Geert & Steenbeek, 2013). In DST, simulations are used to focus the development on a trajectory that has a potential lead to a desired attractor state such as proficient language development or sufficient yet ongoing, language development likened to adult speech (Smith & Thelen, 1993). Although in the current study, I am not intending to conduct simulations, it is aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, which can (like a case study), guide the simulations that parents can follow in supporting second language development.

The intended simulation (in a form of parental support) depend on the variables of the aforementioned case studies (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.4.6) and how they relate to the findings (themes) of the current study, as discussed in Chapter 5 (See sub-section

5.5.2). For example, the aforementioned case studies emphasise the following variables as key to supporting language development of the learner: shared reading (Boonk et al.,2018; Castro et al., 2015; Jeynes 2007, 2010; Wilder, 2014), homework checks, communication between the parents and the teacher (Jeynes 2007, 2012; Wilder, 2014), parental expectations, communication between parent and the child regarding school, parental encouragement and support for learning (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2015; Fan & Chen, 2001). These variables are supported by other international (Castillo & Gàmez, 2013; Gilleece, 2015; Okeke, 2014) and African studies (Motala & Luxomo, 2014; Ndebele, 2015; Nyarko, 2011). These variables serve as background for understanding characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theories of second language development and theorising about parental support as complex dynamic process.

Any change to initial conditions would be brought about by implementation of the result of the current study, as discussed in Chapter 6 (sub-section 6.2.3). Within the context of the current study, the small changes could imply implementation of shared reading (See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2.2: Parent-child Activities) as it has been found to be an important variable in parental support (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2015; Du Plessis, 2012; Jeynes 2007, 2010; McCabe, 2011; Wilder, 2014), and iterate this behaviour with the aim of it supporting second language development. Even more such a shared process with regard to literacy activity, can have an effect on both the development of language proficiency of both the parent and the child. Although the non-linearity principle warns against predictability (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Hoffman, 2007), that is not the aim of DST; rather, a retrodictive approach is encouraged by Larsen-Freeman (2009). As indicated in chapter one, retrodictive approach implies that, as a researcher, I am able to look back at how development took place based on the small changes that occurred, in order to help in theorising about parental support. In other words, you "explain the next state by the preceding one, rather than predicting (or forecasting)" (Larsen-Freeman, 2009, p. 10). Based on the retrodictive approach, one does not give up from supporting the small changed that are associated with the desired second language developmental outcomes. Briggs and Peat (1999, pp. 49-50) also provide an encouragement that:

> *We may never know if or how or when our influence will have an effect. The best we can do is act with truth, sincerity, and sensitivity, remembering that it is never one person who brings about change but the feedback of change within the entire system.*

In essence, Briggs and Peat (1999) provide an encouragement to positive parental support efforts knowing that second language development is dependent on the response of the entire system. However, DST scholars maintain that any effort, regardless of size, has the potential for no effects or larger effects depending on the system (butterfly effect) (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Hoffman, 2007). Therefore, developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language is aimed at encouraging these individual efforts of parental support, which have a potential to provide iterations that supports second language development.

3.6 Conclusion

In the current chapter, I presented DST as the guiding conceptual framework for the current study. Through DST, I have indicated that the current study is focused on a dynamic system that is rather complex and chaotic. I have also described the seven principles of DST associated with the current study, namely: open systems, dis-equilibrium, sensitive dependence on initial conditions, nested system and subsystems, non-linear development, variability (both in and among individuals), self-organisation and feedback loop. I have described how these principles fit into and should be understood within the current study.

The application of DST principles has shown that, although I focus on second language system, there are other nested systems which the current study takes into account, namely: school, family and the language learner (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; de Bot et al., 2013; Epstein, 2010). The four systems are complex in nature and have their own dynamic subsystem. The parental support dynamic process has been isolated (like a case study), to guide the simulations that parents can follow in supporting second language development.

The application section further serves as an introduction to how DST is applied to the current study. In the subsequent chapter, I provide the research design and methodology followed in the current study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The current study aims to contribute to knowledge about parental support. Ultimately, this knowledge will assist in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theories of second language development. In order to engage in the practical aspect of the current study, I framed my endeavours through the presentation of research strategies and methodological processes. I am however, not going to treat this chapter like a suspense novel where you, as the reader, have to read in anticipation of conclusions that are only revealed by the author at the end of the novel (Morgan, 2007), instead, I will explain at this stage the sub-sections that are to follow and the contents of such sub-sections.

As a doctoral student and a young researcher in the field of social sciences, one of the concepts I had to grapple with in my encounter with methodological texts is the concept of paradigm, a concept attributed to Thomas Samuel Kuhn by various authors (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012; Creswell, 2010; Morgan, 2007). According to Kuhn (1970, p. 10), "the study of paradigms is what mainly prepares the student for membership in the particular scientific community with which he will later practice". In light of the aforementioned definition, I embarked on a journey to gain an understanding of this concept. This will undoubtedly be crucial in my preparation for a career within the broader field of social science,

I begin my endeavour by briefly discussing this concept and I present its use in the current study as an overarching worldview or philosophical lens through which I view the methodological processes of this research (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012; Morgan, 2007). Thus, the paradigm provides me with the philosophical lenses through which I view the current study. Morgan (2007) however, cautions against such inclusive use of the concept "worldview" to describe a paradigm. Therefore, I have thought it pertinent to first offer a discussion on the concept of a paradigm to provide the background of this chapter as it serves as the basis for the subsequent concepts. That is, following this concept, I present the two paradigms used in the early stages of this chapter, namely: epistemological and methodological. I conclude this chapter by looking at the last paradigm, the axiological paradigm that looks into the ethical considerations applied by the current study. Before I discuss the above-mentioned sections, I present the

diagrammatical representation in Figure 4.1, of the questions of the current study and their collaborating sections.

Figure 4.1 Research Approach to the Research Questions of the Current Study
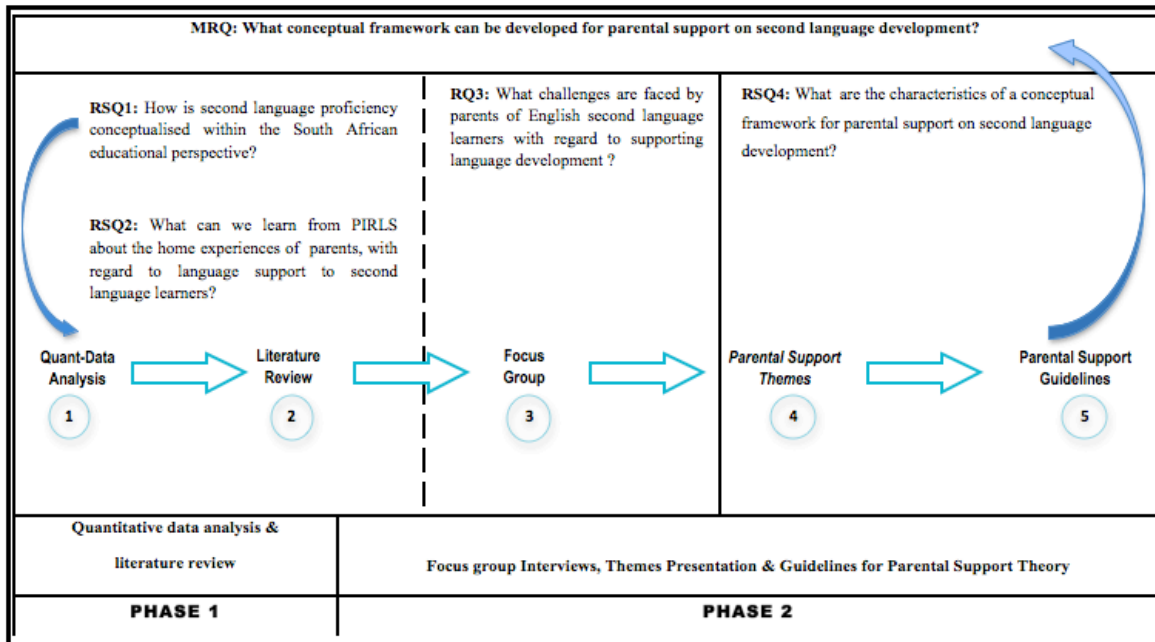
4.2 PRAGMATISM AS THE UNDERPINNING PARADIGM

The question about the 'paradigm perspective' seeks to understand one's "standpoint in relation to epistemological questions" (Sullivan, 2010, p. 18). Thomas Samuel Kuhn is attributed to the 1970 work of a paradigm concept. According to Morgan (1997, p. 50), Kuhn introduced the concept in his landmark book entitled, *The structure of scientific revolution* (1962/1996). In summary of Kuhn's work, Morgan (ibid) states that Kuhn released a *postscript* to bring some clarity, following critique about his varied use of the word paradigm. In response to the criticism levelled against him, Kuhn describes a paradigm as shared beliefs amongst members of the same scientific field (Creswell, 2010; Morgan, 2007). Morgan emphasises the importance of staying closer to the original view of the word paradigm as used by Kuhn. According to Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2011, p. xvi), "It seems important to consider the spirit, the soul of the ideas and not just the terms". That is, looking into a paradigm concept, one needs to be sensitive to the proper use of the term as it was originally intended. It seems that it is this spirit and soul of the paradigm concept that Morgan (ibid) is trying to preserve. As such, Morgan (ibid) argued for an understanding of a paradigm as "systems of beliefs and practices that influences how researchers select both the research questions and the methods they use to study them" (p. 49). I concur with Morgan in that the argument aligns with the dynamic systems

approach advanced by the conceptual framework of the current study. Morgan (ibid) asserts that this definition maintains the same version of paradigm that Kuhn also favoured (Creswell, 2010).

In further support for his view of paradigm, Morgan (ibid) provides a description of four different views in which the word paradigm is used. Firstly, as *a worldview*, that is, all-encompassing ways of experience about the world, including beliefs about morals, values and aesthetics. Secondly, as *an epistemological stance* which includes epistemological issues about the nature of knowledge and how one goes about obtaining this knowledge (incorporating ontology, epistemology and methodology) (Creswell, 2010; Morgan, 2007). Thirdly, as *a model*, exemplars of how research is conducted in a given field or as the "best or typical solution to problem" (Creswell, 2010, p. 55). Fourthly, *as shared beliefs* among members of speciality area. Morgan (ibid) states that this fourth version was the one that Kuhn upheld and it is the same view that he tries to align with himself. These are the four versions that Morgan claims are often used in literature, and this seems to be supported by various publications (see Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Therefore, the worldview is limited to the research of the current study as a system in which I find myself, within a plethora of other views I regard as nested systems of the global system (that is, larger worldview). Bhattacherjee (2012, p. 20) states that "paradigms are like 'coloured glasses' that govern how we view the world, what we believe is the best way to study the world, and how we structure our thoughts and observations". As such, I adopted this paradigmatic view to refer to the research worldview, as it helps me structure my thoughts and observations in the current study.

Pragmatism is the epistemological paradigm used to ground the current study because of its philosophical position of action. Pansiri (2005, p. 195) traces the concept of pragmatism to the "metaphysical club" in which the founding fathers of American pragmatism gathered to discuss the philosophical issues. However, the introduction of pragmatism concept in philosophy is solely attributed to the work of the classical pragmatist, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) (Johnson & Gray, 2010; Pansiri, 2005). It is derived from the Greek word *pragma*, which means action (Pansiri, 2005, p. 196). It is for this reason that pragmatism is viewed as the philosophy of action or action-oriented philosophy (Kilpinen, 2008; Pansiri, 2005; Taatila & Raij, 2011). This suggests that in pragmatism, the focus is on research-oriented action to deal with the researched phenomena.

The action-oriented philosophy is an essential aspect of this paradigm in that it focuses on solving the problems rather than philosophising them. It seeks to find effective solutions to solve human problems (Johnson & Gray, 2010; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The starting point of this paradigm is compiling the research questions, as indicated in Figure 4.1. Therefore, to answer this question from a pragmatic perspective, I relied on the tripartite principles: namely, ontology, epistemology and methodology which serve as the tripartite components of a paradigm, attributed to work of Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln who developed them to compare different paradigms in social science research (Morgan, 2007; Brink, 2010; Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012). Below I look into these concepts and their assumptions from a pragmatic perspective. I refer to these tripartite concepts as assumptions, as the pragmatic perspective rejects a fixed view of truth by maintaining that what we gain in daily research is provisional truth, which is constantly modified and improved (Johnson & Gray, 2010; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

4.2.2.1 Ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), *ontology* deals with a phenomenon being studied, *epistemology* about the relationship between this phenomenon and the researcher, and *methodology* focuses on ways followed to understand the studied phenomenon. Ontology attempts to answer the question about the nature of reality (Biesta, 2010; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The reality that is referred to in the current study is the support of parents of second language learners. From a pragmatic perspective, the positivist and anti-positivists' views state their position with reference to reality, that is, objective and independent reality versus subjective reality (Pansiri, 2005). The ontological assumption in pragmatism focuses on external reality and what works in a current situation. It rejects the either/or dichotomy between the positivism and interpretivism approaches. The method that works between the two is applied in view of reality. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009, p. 90, 2010), "pragmatists decide what they want to study based on what is important within their personal values system". The idea of making decisions based on the system of focus is well supported by the scholars of dynamic systems (DST) (van Geert & Steenbeek, 2013). Therefore, parental support is viewed as an existing reality that must be understood, as constructed from the social context of the parents and their children.

Ontological assumptions are well related to the epistemological assumptions. While ontology asks the question about the nature of reality, epistemology seeks to understand the ways that one follows to gain knowledge of the existing problem. The word, epistemology comes from the Greek word, *epistêmê*, which means knowledge (Trochim,

2000). Epistemological assumption seeks to understand how, as the researcher, I get to know about the problem of the current study. In the current study, the *epistemological assumption* seeks to know about the solution that could help address the problem, which is adopting the action-oriented pragmatic perspective. As such, the pragmatic perspective views this process as a continual process where, as the researcher, I need to use different approaches or methods that could help me address the research phenomenon. That means that in the pragmatic paradigm, the researchers should not take a fixed perspective of truth, but rather see every discovery in science as just a "provisional truth" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 18). Therefore, this process requires one to utilise the available process that would best answer the research question. It is based on this essential epistemological perspective that the current study further adopted an explanatory sequential research design (See Section 4.6 below). In practice, this epistemological assumption links very well with methodological assumption discussed in the next paragraph.

With regard to *methodological assumptions*, this paradigm is different from its predecessors, quantitative and qualitative epistemological paradigms. The methodological assumption is different in that it is more concerned with methodological eclecticism rather than choosing between the two (Creswell, 2009). That is, the pragmatism paradigm is not about the purist views, thus, comparing the difference between the qualitative and quantitative approach and choosing which one is better than the other. Instead, it feeds on their similarities and acknowledges the strength of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches and takes advantage of this relationship (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). It is for such reasons that the pragmatism paradigm supported the decision I took in the current study to use a mixed methods approach. The decision to use the mixed methods approach is consistent with nested systems characteristics in that it uses two methodological sub-systems (combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches) (Haggis, 2008). The mixed methods approach is also in line with the view of some of the leading scholars in the field of mixed methods field. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009, p. 73) stated that:

> *A major reason that pragmatism is the philosophical partner for mixed methods is that it rejects the either-or choices from the constructivism-positivism debate. Pragmatism offers a third choice that embraces superordinate ideas gleaned through consideration of perspectives from both sides of the paradigm debate in interaction with the research question and real-world circumstances.*

The current study is in favour of pragmatism based on the aforementioned description, which represents its eclectic strength and nature. Pragmatism utilises all essential and relevant methods available to address the identified problems. Hence, mixed methods research was chosen with its principle methods.

In summation, the pragmatism paradigm is favoured in the current study because it is concerned with what works at a given time to address the research question, rather than with debating methodological preferences. That is, in the pragmatism paradigm, the research questions guide the method(s) of research (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Therefore, based on the research questions of the current study that seeks to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development (see Figure 4.1), the current study has adopted an explanatory sequential design as the research design to provide the overarching structure for gathering data (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012).

The explanatory sequential design is adopted under the principles of the pragmatism paradigm to allow the method that best addresses the research questions to take precedence. Therefore, in the subsequent section, I look into the research design of the current study, followed by the explanatory sequential design. I however, precede the focus on research design with a background to mixed methods research in order to provide a clearer relationship between mixed methods and the research design.

4.3 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

Many authors have attempted to define mixed methods research based on the principles of both traditional methods, qualitative and quantitative research (see, Creswell, 2005, p. 510; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008, p. 21; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 2010). However, for the purpose of the current study, the definition offered by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p. 5) is used:

> *As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research.*

The above description is chosen based on its broadness in describing mixed methods research. Not only does it refer to the combination of methods in the study, but it also

triggers awareness that there are principles underlying different methodological strategies, such as data collection, analysis, and the strength of mixing both qualitative and quantitative methodological paradigms for better outcomes.

In considering the nature of this methodological paradigm, the current study adopts it with much deliberation. Creswell (2005, p. 510) presents three conditions under which one can undertake a mixed methods study. Firstly, the condition is met if a researcher intends to build on the data strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Secondly, when a researcher has planned to work in phases and would like to build from one phase to another, and thirdly, when a researcher wants to incorporate data from one study to another. The above conditions are found in the current two-phased study, which used secondary quantitative data from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and corroborated that with qualitative data (See Section 4.8 below for further elaboration). It is in this indicated relationship that mixed methods research finds relevance for the current study.

4.3.1 Typologies: Methodological Structure

In mixed methods research, it is important for one to clearly indicate the typologies used in the current study. Different authors refer to typologies with different names such as strategies, procedures, characteristics or factors of, mixed methods research (see, Creswell, 2005; Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), typologies provide a structure for the mixed methods study. Nastasi, Hitchcock and Brown (2010) characterised these typologies into different classifications, however, for the purpose of the current study, only three strategies are relevant: priority, implementation process or sequence and stage(s) of integration.

Priority refers to the relative weight or importance that is given to a particular method(s) (Creswell, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). It has to do with methodological emphasis, that is, whether emphasis is given to qualitative or quantitative or both. Implementation process or sequence has to do with the sequence that is followed by the researcher in collecting both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell et al., 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) refer to the implementation process or sequence as indicative of the relationship between qualitative and quantitative methods. Integration of data or timing indicates the stage of the research at which data is combined, that is, either at data collection, analysis, interpretation or whether a concurrent

approach is followed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell et al, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

The current study adopted a sequential approach (thus, exploratory sequential research design principles as I will describe in the next section (4.5), starting with the quantitative data followed by qualitative data collection and with priority given to the quantitative approach (QUAN → qual) (Creswell, 2009). Thus, the availability of the already existing secondary quantitative data prior to the qualitative data collection favoured the quantitative-qualitative research sequence. According to Creswell (2005), the sequential approach could assist one to further understand and explore the quantitative results using qualitative methods. The ultimate goal of the current study is to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. It is therefore, expected that the qualitative data will build on the results of the quantitative data by assisting in developing protocols to help in understanding challenges faced by the parents and ultimately a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. Although interaction of both the qualitative and quantitative data would occur prior to the integrative interpretation, some interaction would occur at data analysis in preparation of the qualitative data collection. According to Creswell et al. (2008), this approach would help when working in phases in order to firstly explore with a large quantitative sample, and in addition, to further gain an in-depth exploration of the research phenomenon using a limited qualitative sample. Therefore, this approach seems best for the current study, which followed a two-phase process.

The research design concept is one of the most debated concepts in research, particularly within pragmatism studies. Several authors have attempted to describe this concept in order to bring some clarity (see, Brink, van der Walt and van Rensburg 2012; Creswell, 2009; Ferreira, 2012; Mouton, 2001). The concern about some of the descriptions is how the research design concept is being conflated with research methodology, which I view as different. I am supported by Mouton (2001), who provides a building analogy to show the distinction between research design and research methodology. I view research design in light of Mouton's (2001) view, as the blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. That is, research design provides the guiding structure of how the research will be taken from start to finish. This view is in line with the pragmatism approach that allows the research question to determine the research design to best address the objectives of the study.

When one thinks of mixed methods, three designs might come to mind as the typical options to conduct the mixed methods study, namely; exploratory, explanatory and triangulation (concurrent) designs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:60-61). Although these designs seem to be the only few typically known methods to be used for mixed methods research (Creswell, 2009; Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007), they are just a few of the most used (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark (2007), thus, suggesting that one's choice of a design within the mixed methods approach is not limited to these three traditional designs.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) indicated that mixed methods research does not have a menu of designs to choose from like the quantitative and qualitative approaches. That is, in mixed methods research, one is not limited to the traditional approach due to the leverage to use any design available and suitable for the current study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, pp. 60-61). In the current study, I chose the explanatory sequential design of mixed methods designs (Creswell, 2012). Explanatory sequential research design fits in with the pragmatism paradigm, which focuses on providing a workable solution to address the existing problem (Johnson & Gray, 2010). Below, I explore the explanatory sequential design and how it was applied to the current study.

4.4 THE EXPLANATORY SEQUENTIAL RESEARCH DESIGN

The current study adopted an explanatory sequential research design of mixed methods research (Creswell, 2012). The explanatory sequential design is characterised by collection of quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data (See Figure 4.1 below). This sequential process is used in such a way that the quantitative data analysis is used to inform the qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2012). Thus, the findings from the quantitative data determine the kind of data to be collected in qualitative research. This means that the quantitative data have a higher priority than the qualitative data. The qualitative data are used to explore the findings found in the quantitative data. Although the bulk of the analysis in the current study might seem to be weighted towards qualitative data, that is mainly because qualitative data are used to further explore and get a better understanding of the quantitative to ultimately inform future studies.

The explanatory sequential design also refers to as "a two-phased model" (Creswell, 2012, p. 542; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This two-phased model is well fitted for the current study, which has two phases, the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis processes. The quantitative phase focuses on language development, while the development of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language

development is the focus of the second phase. It is based on this two-phased process that explanatory sequential design is best suited to guide the current study.

4.5 METHODOLOGY

4.5.1 Sampling Design and Sample Size

It has already been established that the current study is two-phased. Therefore, based the adopted methodological principles, the first phase focuses on quantitative secondary data and I provide background information about this data in the appendices (Appendix A). The second phase is based on qualitative data collection from the participating parents. The explanatory sequential research design of the current study is outlined in Figure 4.2. Thereafter, Section 4.7.1 focuses on the sampling procedure for both phases of the current study. However, since the first phase of the research was based on secondary data, which is already made available through quantitative processes, Section 4.7.1 focuses on the second phase, which is sampling of participants for the qualitative data. I will however, review the challenges and advantages of secondary data as used in the first phase.

4.5.1.1 Phase 1: Quantitative Sample

As previously stated, the first phase of this study is based on a secondary source which implies that data used was not based on one-on-one interactions with the participants, rather, from an already existing data. The secondary source of this data is the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study 2006 (PIRLS 2006) conducted in South Africa. Background questionnaires obtained information about the reading and attitudes of learners' homes and schools (Howie et al., 2008, p. 14). The questionnaires were given to learners (learners' attitudes), teachers and principles (school context) and parents (to assess the home context of the learner). The latter questionnaire (parent questionnaire) was the focus of the current study. The parent questionnaire was administered to parents or primary caregivers on "literacy related activities or resources at home and their perception of support provided by the school environment" (Kennedy, 2007, p. 25). Parents of learners who participated in PIRLS 2006 completed the parent questionnaires. Although both Grades 4 and 5 learners participated in 2006 PIRLS (Howie et al., 2008), only Grade 4 results were used in the current study as it is the first year of schooling where learners are expected to start using English to learn (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.1 and Chapter 3, sub-section 3.5.1).

According to Howie et al. (2008), 441 schools were selected through the stratified sampling, but only 429 (98.5%) school were eligible for inclusion. From the schools,

16 073 Grade 4 learners were selected. Subsequently, the same number of parents were also included in the study and given the parent questionnaire to complete. This brief

Figure 3.2 Explanatory Sequential Design Research Model (Adopted from Creswell, 2013)
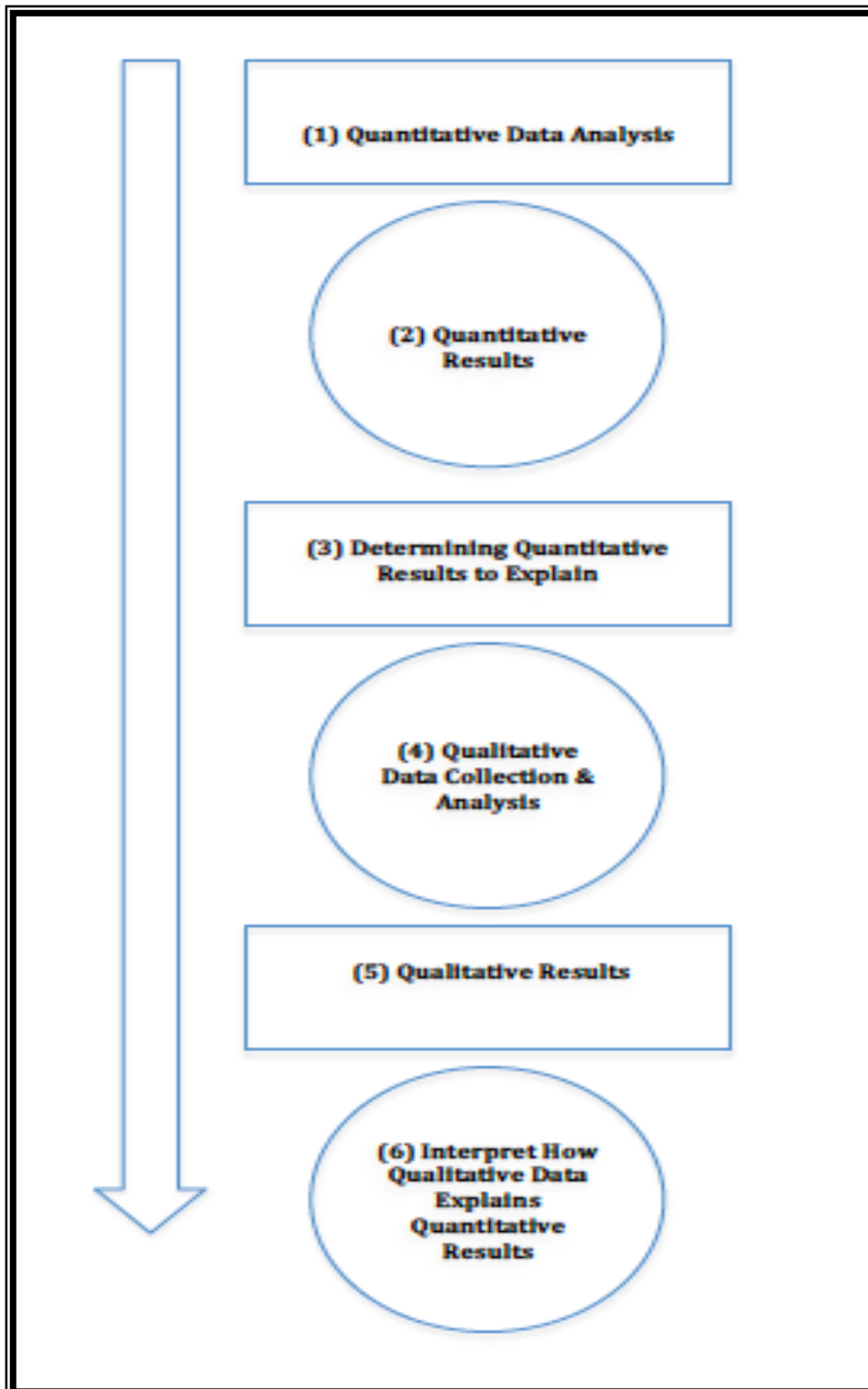
background is aimed at providing an overview of the methodological processes, followed by PIRLS in collecting data. The secondary data was chosen based on its potential to contribute to understanding the need to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can be used to inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process.

4.5.1.2 Phase 2: Qualitative Sample

Phase two focused on data collection with parents of second language learners. The parents were sampled using convenient sampling, which is characterised by "members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate" (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016, p. 2). Therefore, besides the issue of accessibility, proximity and availability, the sample was chosen from a larger non-profit organization based on its diverse membership of parents from various towns around Gauteng. Below I describe the process followed to select the parents who participated in this study:

4.5.1.2.1 Parents

Based on convenience sampling method of the current study, I developed criteria to determine whether the data collection site I had planned to select will have relevant participants for the focus group (See Table 4.1) (Palinkas et al., 2015). The criteria were also informed by literature which suggested a relationship between parents' level education and academic achievement of the child's second language proficiency (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011; Meier & Lemmer, 2015). Based on the above, the selection criteria considered the parents' level of education. Literature has also suggested a relationship between parental support and learner performance (DBE, 2011, 2012a; Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011). Therefore, the inclusion of both the performance of learners and parental level of education was added to understand their possible relationship to a conceptual framework on parental support, which the current study aims to present. Based on the aforementioned background, the following inclusion criteria was developed.

Table 4.1 Criteria for Selection of Participants

The criteria were based on:
- Parents with no post matric qualification (Grade R to 12)
- Parents with post matric qualification (such as post matric certificate, Diploma).
- Parents with children who are performing well at school (achieve code 3 and above on English language).

> - Parents with children who are not performing well at school (achieve code 2 and below on English language).

Therefore, a letter of request for permission to conduct the study was sent to the office of the director of the chosen organisation in Pretoria[1] (Appendix B). The organization was chosen for its capacity of members from diverse environmental background. On receipt of the letter, the director called a meeting with relevant departmental leaders so that I could explain the purpose and aim of the current study. Following the approval by the organisation, members were informed and those interested in participating in the current study submitted their names and contact details. In order to refine the details of the participants, the selection criteria (see Table 4.1 above) based on the literature review and quantitative results, was used. Eight (8) parents from the following areas in Pretoria: Soshanguve, Mamelodi, Centurion, Pretoria West, Pretoria East and Pretoria Central formed the sample but none of the parents were PIRLS 2006 participants. I concur with Bian (2016), who states that in an explanatory sequential design, the participants who provide the second phase data are not the same as those who provided the initial data. Therefore, based on the design of the current study and challenges associated with using previous participants, different participants were sampled.

Following the convenience sampling process, the eight participants who showed interest to be part of the current study were invited to be part of a focus group interview (See Table 4.2 below, for composition of participants). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), a focus group should consist of five to twelve participants. Therefore, the sample size of the current study was based on data size guidelines. According to Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016, p. 2), "the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience". Therefore, it was based on the aforementioned literature background and criterion, that a site for data collection was selected. The parents who formed part of the sample were identified through a local non-profit organisation. I have indicated the information of the participants of the current study in Table 4.2 below.

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[1] The name of the organisation is kept private for ethical reasons (See Section 4.8)

Table 4.2 Participant Composition of the Current Study

No	Marital Status	Gender	Employment Status	Highest Qualification	Child Care	Child's Grade
1	Single	F	Unemployed	Degree	Single parent	Grade 3
2	Single	F	Unemployed	Matric	Guardian	Grade 4
3	Single	F	Employed	Diploma	Guardian	Grade 4
4	Married	F	Employed	Matric	Both Parents	Grade 2
5	Single	F	Employed	Honours	Both Parents	Grade 3
6	Divorced	M	Employed	Honours	Single Parent	Grade 3
7	Married	F	Employed	Diploma	Both Parents	Grade 4
8	Divorced	F	Employed	Degree	Single Parent	Grade 4

Two of the eight parents were married, two were divorced and four were single parents. Six of them were employed and two were unemployed. Out of those who were unemployed, one only had a matric and the other had a degree. The table also shows that two of the parents had a matric as their highest qualification, two had degrees, two had diplomas and two had honours qualifications. Three of the parents indicated they care for the child alone as single parents. Three of the parents indicated that both parents share the care of the child and two parents indicated that they have a guardian taking care of the child.

4.5.2 Data Collection Instruments

4.5.2.1 Parent questionnaire

The parent questionnaire consisted of twenty-two questions (Appendix A). Based on the purpose of the current study, I focused on twelve of these selected questions for data analysis (See Table 4.3 below). I concur with Frank and Althoen (1994, p. 4) who made the following observation regarding quantitative data, that "some phenomena cannot be translated into numbers". The same is also true of the questions obtained from the parent questionnaire. Therefore, I have listed the questions below based on their potential to assist in building towards answering the main question of the current study:

> ***What conceptual framework can be developed for parental support on second language development?***

The selection of questions serves as a data reduction process whereby all the questions from the questionnaire are reduced to a few questions relevant to the current study. The pre-selected questions were chosen between my supervisors and I, and were used to display the selected data before any interpretation process can be undertaken. These questions are presented below, and I provide a new numbering for each as a coding process for data analysis.

Table 4.3 Questions Selected from PIRLS 2006 Parent Questionnaire

Q #	Question	Q#PQ
Q1	*Before your child began Grade 1, how often did you or someone else in your home do the following activities with him or her?*	Q2
Q2	*In what language did most of the activities in Question 2 (Q2) take place?*	Q3
Q3	*What language did your child speak before he/she began school?*	Q4
Q4	*How well could your child do the following when he/she began Grade 1?*	Q7
Q5	*How often do you or someone else in your home do the following things with your child?*	Q8
Q6	*In a typical week, how much time do you usually spend reading for yourself at home, including books, magazines, newspapers, and materials for work?*	Q12
Q7	*When you are at home, how often do you read for your own enjoyment?*	Q13
Q8	*Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about reading.*	Q14
Q9	*About how many books are there in your home?*	Q15
Q10	*What is the highest level of education completed by the child's father (or stepfather, or male care-giver) and mother (or stepmother or female care-giver)?*	Q18
Q11	*Which best describes the employment situation of the child's father (or stepfather, or male care-giver) and mother (or stepmother or female care-giver)?*	Q19
Q12	*What kind of work do the child's father (or stepfather, or male care-giver) and mother (or stepmother or female care-giver) do for their main job?*	Q120

Note:

- *Q#* = Question numbering in the current study
- *Question* = Refers to the specific question from parent questionnaire (Appendix A)
- *Q#PQ* = Refers to the numbering of the question on the parent questionnaire (Appendix A). The number next to the letter 'Q' refers to the question number as used in the current study compared to the one in the parent questionnaire, which is indicated inside the brackets.

4.5.2.2 Focus Group interview

Focus groups took place over a period of two (2) meetings. The focus group interview was based on the interview questionnaire, prepared prior to the meeting (See Appendix D). Focus group interviews were chosen based on the strength they have to provide in-depth data that is not attainable from individual interviews (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In line with the explanatory sequential design, data from the quantitative results were used to inform guidelines for the focus group discussion. The five categories of the quantitative data were taken into consideration in drafting the focus group interview questionnaire. This process is consistent with what has been shown by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), that during the mixed methods research, data from one technique can be used to formulate a different data collection technique. This follows what Collins, Joseph and Bielaczyc (2004, p. 34) termed "continuous refinement", which represents one of the characteristics of a research design. Therefore, a focus group was aimed at building on data from the previous phase, to understand elements of parental support that are significant for a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development.

4.5.2.3 Field Notes and Audio Recordings

Field notes are one of the crucial techniques of focus group research, keeping records of all information shared (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012). For the purpose of the current study, field notes included all notes taken during my interaction (including observations) with the participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morris, 2002). The notes were taken during the focus group meetings. Parents' narratives of their experiences also served as part of the field notes.

The field notes were also used to supplement the audio recordings. That is, during the focus group interviews, and wherever necessary, an audio recorder was used. The recordings were transcribed (see Appendix E) for the data analysis process and were supplemented by the field notes. Cohen, Manion and Morris (2002) expressed a concern that audio recordings exclude aspects of non-verbal cues and the social context. Therefore, the use of both field notes and audio recordings played a crucial supplementary role in this study, as field notes might also not be complete, and as such, audio recordings help as a supplementary technique.

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

4.6.1 Seven Stage Process of Data Analysis

The analysis and integration of data processes for both phases were guided by a seven-stage process of data analysis suggested by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's (2003, pp. 375-380) (See Table 4.4 below). The seven-stage process is consistent with other mixed methods data analysis strategies such as the cross-over (mixed) analysis strategy (Onwuegbuzie & Coombs, 2010). In line with Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), the stages of data analysis were not meant to be followed in a linear form, rather one can combine certain stages and move from stage one to the last stage (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003), hence the process I adopted in the current study. Table 4.4 below) describes the stages suggested by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003, pp. 375-380) below:

Table 4.4 Seven-Stage Process of Data Analysis (Adopted from Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003)

Stages of Data Analysis	Quantitative Data and Qualitative Data
Data Reduction	Reducing dimensionality of *quantitative* data through descriptive statistics
Data Display	Graphical display for *quantitative* data
Data Transformation-	Conversion of *quantitative* data into *qualitative* data through descriptive analysis. Using this data to inform qualitative data collection.
Data Correlation	These stages are combined into one topic of interpretation and discussion. In this section, I describe and analyse both *qualitative* and *quantitative* data to provide a holistic understanding of the mixed methods data.
Data Consolidation	
Data Comparison	
Data Integration	

4.6.1.1 Data Reduction

According to Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2013), data reduction includes the reduction of the dimensionality of the data through the use of various data analysis methods, applicable for the specific research approach. In the current study, the focus was on descriptive statistics. Castro, Keillison, Boyd and Kopak (2010) have termed this process 'dimensionality', which includes identification of data statistical descriptions in preparation for data conversion (See sub-section 4.6.2). The goal of this process was described by Agarwal and Rao (2003, p.1) "to aggregate or amalgamate the information contained in

large data sets into manageable (smaller) information nuggets". Therefore, I pursued this goal by obtaining statistical outputs of the pre-selected questions from the parent questionnaire as the first stage of data analysis (Appendix H).

4.6.1.2 Data Display

Data display includes using any available mode of data representation to display the research data in pictorial form. This could include the use of graphs, tables, charts, smart artworks and the likes. However, since the aim of this process is not an exhibition of one's knowledge of computer skills where all the displays available are presented, provision of a visual summary of the results using few displays would also suffice (Dickinson, 2010). Therefore, in the current study I decided on presenting the results of the data graphically from the statistical outputs (See Chapter 5, Section 5.3).

4.6.1.3 Data Transformation

The process of data transformation is achieved through integrative analysis. Data transformation can be viewed as a process in which quantitative data is converted into narratives that can be analysed qualitatively (Onwuegbuzie & Coombs, 2011; Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003). This analysis provides narratives and in the current study, and following the explanatory research designs, the narratives from quantitative data were used to provide guidelines for qualitative data collection.

4.6.1.4 Data Integration

Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003, p. 379) state that for the purpose of expansion, one may bypass the three stages, namely: data correlation, data consolidation and data comparison, and proceed to integration. This suggested process is followed in the study; however, all these stages are incorporated in data integration. Thus, data integration includes interpretation and analysis of all three to provide a holistic understanding of both the quantitative and qualitative data.

Although the above seven-stage process guided data analysis, in accordance with the data collection process, data analysis took place in two phases. The first phase focused on a *quantitative* analysis of secondary data, while the second phase focused on an analysis of qualitative data.

4.6.2 Phase 1: Quantitative Data Analysis

The first phase focused on the secondary data analysis (SDA). The Analysis Module of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) software

program called International Database (IDB) analyser was used. The IDB analyser was developed by the IEA specifically for larger data sets and it takes into consideration sampling principles to produce weighted data (Howie, et al., 2018). The weighted data implies that the results reflected are a representation of the entire sampled population (Mohadjer et al., 1996). The IDB analyser, a plug-in for the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS), was used to produce SPSS syntax (output files). Therefore, under the guidance of the data manager at the Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), University of Pretoria (UP), who works closely with the IEA on the PIRLS project, a statistical analysis was run to produce the weighted results (IEA, 2016).

There are different analyses that can be run (computed) by the IDB analyser to produce the weighted results, such as percentage means, regressions, benchmarks, correlations and percentiles. The current study opted to use percentage and means analysis, which is a computation that produces syntax to give file outputs on various measures. For the current study, the focus was on percentages, means, standard deviations, standard error, t-tests and frequencies (IEA, 2016). The file outputs with these results are included as part of the appendices for reference purposes (Appendix H). Although the descriptive statistics have a variety of measures that can be employed to describe the data patterns, it is not compulsory to use all measures (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Therefore, the aforementioned measures served the purpose of the current study, which sought to learn about the home experiences of the parents of English second language learners, as indicated in below sub-question 2 (RSQ2).

> **RSQ2 What can we learn from PIRLS about the home experiences of parents, with regard to language support to second language learners?**

The applications of these statistical procedures, descriptive and inferential statistics (Brink, van der Walt& van Rensburg, 2012; Petersen & Maree, 2016a, 2016b; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), are reported in the next chapter (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2 to 5.3). Both descriptive and inferential statistic procedures are discussed in the sections below (see sub-sections 4.6.2.1 and 4.6.2.2).

4.6.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

One of the key characteristics of descriptive statistics is that it addresses specific research question through the use of various statistical methods (Petersen & Maree, 2016a). Among other measures, it reports on the measure of central tendencies and variation

(Creswell; 2012; Pallant, 2010). This descriptive analysis was also aimed at addressing the second research sub-question (RSQ2) of the current study:

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RSQ2: What can we learn from PIRLS about the home experiences of parents, with regard to language support to second language learners?

</div>

The analysis was conducted through the measure of central tendency, which indicated the patterns that emerged in the home setting. Data analysis of the parent questionnaire was conducted to report on the emerging tendencies (Appendix A).

In educational research, three ideas categorise descriptive statistics, namely, central tendency, variability and relative standing (Creswell, 2012). In the current study, the focus has been on the variability and central tendency, which were relevant for the analysed data. According to Wilson and MacLean (2011), there are three measures that one can select to measure central tendency: mean, median and mode. These measures have been used to describe the data of the current study. The *median* focuses on the middle score when score is ordered from lowest to highest (Hinton, 2014). In the current study, the median is taken into consideration to report on the score that best represents the parents of English second language learners in South Africa. The *mean* provides the average score of the data while the mode provides information about the most occurring score. The *mean* was used due to its commonness for measuring central tendency and for its sensitivity to the data (Creswell; 2012; Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Although the *mode* is referred to as the most common of the three measures, the current study employs it based on the measure of frequently appearing scores. Since the current study focused on descriptions instead of numbers, the mode was best fitted to provide the descriptions, which have high frequency (Appendix H).

On variability, the current study also looked at the *standard deviation* of the presented scores and *range* of the presented data. The *standard deviation* focuses on the spread of the scores or descriptions around the mean (Hinton, 2014; Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Therefore, through this measure, one can determine if outliers affect the identified tendencies or not. The *range* on the other hand, provides information about "the difference between the highest and lowest scores to items on the *parent questionnaire*" (Creswell, 2012; p. 186) [emphasis author's addition]. It can also be reported by the minimum and maximum scores of a particular variable (Schwartz, Wilson & Goff, 2015). The range is used to report on the highest and lowest scores.

Descriptive statistics is also characterised by representation on graphs and tables (See 5.3.). These representations depict the distribution of percentage scores, which is the representation of the descriptive data (Schwartz, Wilson & Goff, 2015). However, like any other research that deals with samples, with regard to descriptive statistics, one cannot have absolute certainty about the data (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). Therefore, *standard error* (SE) of measurement is provided to show spread around mean (See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.). The higher scores (SE > 10) implied that the scores are dispersed around the mean, and lower scores (SE < 10) which mean that the scores are clustered around the mean (Howie et al., 2018). Furthermore, the data obtained from the descriptive statistics serve as the basis for the second phase of data collection. That is, the descriptive statistics results that were obtained were explored further with the sample of the current study (See Figure 4.3).

4.6.2.2 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics include the analysis of the data in order to draw conclusions about the differences in the population of the current study (Creswell, 2012; Thompson, 2009). It goes beyond the summarising and organisation of data provided by the descriptive statistics (Petersen & Maree, 2016b). In other words, data from the descriptive statistics was used through inferential statistics to infer on the results from the population of the current study. In the current study, inferential statistics focused on the analysis of variance (ANOVA) among the parents who support their children with language development and those who do not (Creswell, 2012; Wilson & MacLean, 2011). To achieve this comparison, the parents were split into two groups; those who engage in literacy activities (language support) and those do not. For example, in question 1 (see Q#PQ2 in Table 4.2), I examined the mean difference between the sample of parents who did literacy activities often (supportive parents) and the sample of those who never or almost never (non-supportive) did. The current study focused on analysis of variance (ANOVA), particularly looking at the mean differences between various groups of the sample because "means tend to closely approximate the normal distribution" (Wilson & MacLean, 2011, p. 325). The difference is obtained through hypothesis testing (t-test), which is "an ANOVA in abbreviated form and is used to infer on statistical grounds whether there are differences between group means" (Sawyer, 2009, p. 29). ANOVA is conducted through the t-test of hypotheses of the current study, which are predictive estimates made about the research data (Creswell, 2012, 2014). The alternative hypotheses that were tested in inferential statistics and its subsequent null hypothesis are presented below:

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): *There is significant difference between the home experiences of parents of English second language learners with regard to language support.*

Null Hypothesis (H0): *There is no statistically significant difference between the home experiences of parents of English second language learners with regard to language support.*

To compute the t-test, the significance level for this hypothesis was set at the probability value (p-value) of 0.5 (Creswell, 2012; Howie et al., 2018). The p-value shows the "probability that the results of each question might have been produced by chance; if the null hypothesis were true" (Creswell, 2012, p. 189). Therefore, this implies the results were considered significant if the p-value is less than 0.05, and therefore, the t-value is less than (-1,96) or larger (1,96) (Howie et al., 2018, p. 190). The t- test results assisted in understanding the difference in performances between the two groups of parents in order to draw inferential conclusions (see Chapter 5, Section 5.3). The results from inferential statistics were used to conduct the qualitative data collection.

4.6.2.3 Advantages of using secondary data

It is without a doubt that time reduction is one of the most favoured advantages of using the secondary data. Castle (2003, p. 287) indicates that the traditional methods of data collection "result in loss of valuable time and resources". Since the data is already collected, as the researcher, I can invest my time on other valuable activities with the time I would have used to collect data. Castle (2003) also emphasised that secondary data collection is very good for a beginner researcher who would then depend upon the skills of the experienced researchers. The value of secondary data to beginner researchers like me, could be based on its proven quality and reliability (Cheng & Phillips, 2014; Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). According to Howie et al. (2008, p. 15), in the PIRLS study, "several check points were put in place to ensure the highest data quality". Therefore, as a first-time doctoral student, using secondary data from an international standard such as PIRLS, served as an advantage for the current study.

4.6.2.4 Disadvantages of using secondary data

The first disadvantage of the secondary data source is that the original data was not collected for the current study (Castle, 2003; Singleton, 1988; Cheng & Phillips, 2014; Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). Secondary data can be contrasted with the primary data source where data is collected specific for the identified research problem. Therefore,

attempts were made by selecting data from PIRLS as it has elements that relate to the current study. The current study focused on developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support. The secondary data from PIRLS is based on performance of second language learners (Howie et al., 2008). Therefore, the data from PIRLS provides background information with regards to areas of need for learners and serve as guidelines for areas to be addressed by parents.

Secondly, using secondary data leads to dependence on the original researcher's choice of participants (Castle, 2003; Flowerdew & Martin, 2005). That is, as the researcher of the current study, I did not have the opportunity to manipulate the participants of the secondary source, but have had to work with what was presented. However, in the current study, I did not have much interest in specific participants' responses or list of such participants (Thomas & Heck, 2001). As such, the overall information about the participants and their outcome performance was adequate for the purpose of the current study. PIRLS provides an overall performance of learners with regard to language performance and that is sufficient background data for the current study.

The third disadvantage, and the last for this section, is the state of data used. The data used from PIRLS was not obtained at a "ready use" state for the current study. This disadvantage was taken into consideration during data analysis, to ensure that data was prepared for the analysis purposes.

4.6.3 Phase 2: Qualitative Data Analysis

4.6.3.1. Thematic analysis

In this phase, a thematic analysis was undertaken (see Appendix E: Transcripts). This is an inductive process, where data contents from participants was analysed to form general themes (Braun & Clark, 2006; Creswell, 2006; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The relevance of the identified themes depends on the focus and the content of the current study (Bergman, 2010). The obtained themes were used to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen and Snelgrove (2016, pp. 102-107) provided a valuable description of the four phases of theme development and analysis, namely, initialisation, construction, rectification and finalisation (see Figure 4.3 below). The four-phase process is consistent with the three-stage process offered by Bergman (2010), except that in Bergman's case (2010), the last two stages are combined into one stage. Therefore, the four phases by

Vaismoradi et al., (2016) were used for the current study based on their comprehensiveness and thoroughness in guiding the thematic analysis process.

4.6.3.1.1 Initialisation Phase

The initialisation phase includes reading through the transcripts for coding purposes, which helps in reducing the raw data into meaningful units (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Vaismoradi et al. (2016, p. 104) provide guidance on the type of codes that one can identify. Key elements of the study and domains were identified (conceptual codes). These codes were guided by the participants referring to concepts that were relevant to the study such as reference to "I mix English and mother tongue" (Appendix E: 2M24). Participants' perspective codes were also indicated, which reveal participants' view about parental support. Therefore, these codes helped in the building towards the thematic analysis process of the current study.

To start with the coding process, I firstly separated the transcripts of the two meetings. Secondly, I gave titles to each transcript, 1st Meeting (1M) referring to the first meeting and 2nd Meeting (2M) referring to the second meeting and both "1M" and "2M" are quotes assigned to refer to first and second meeting respectively. I also numbered each statement per meeting. Therefore, a quote with reference "1M2" underneath it as in Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2.1, implies that the quote can be found on the document entitled 1st Meeting number 2. This example indicates how all quotes should be understood and used throughout the current study, especially in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.6.3.1.2 Construction Phase

The construction phase involves the identification, comparison and description of identified themes. During the construction phase, identified codes are colour coded and labelled based on the conceptual codes. The labelling uses a single word or phrase to capture the idea of the theme so that similar codes can be collated into themes. According to Vaismoradi et al. (2016), the grouping of themes and classification depends on the researcher's creativity when organising identified codes. Therefore, during this process, the codes which are similar with regard to contents but with lower or subtle details, were grouped as subthemes to form themes and subtheme relationship (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). All themes were described with references to providing an understanding of what they mean in relation to the current study.

Figure 4.3 Thematic Analysis Process

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Initialisation Phase | Construction Phase | Rectification Phase | Finalisation Phase

SIX THEMES

1. Alternative Parenting
2. Parent-child Activities
3. Technology and Internet Support
4. Parents Challenges
5. Language Usage
6. Quality of Education
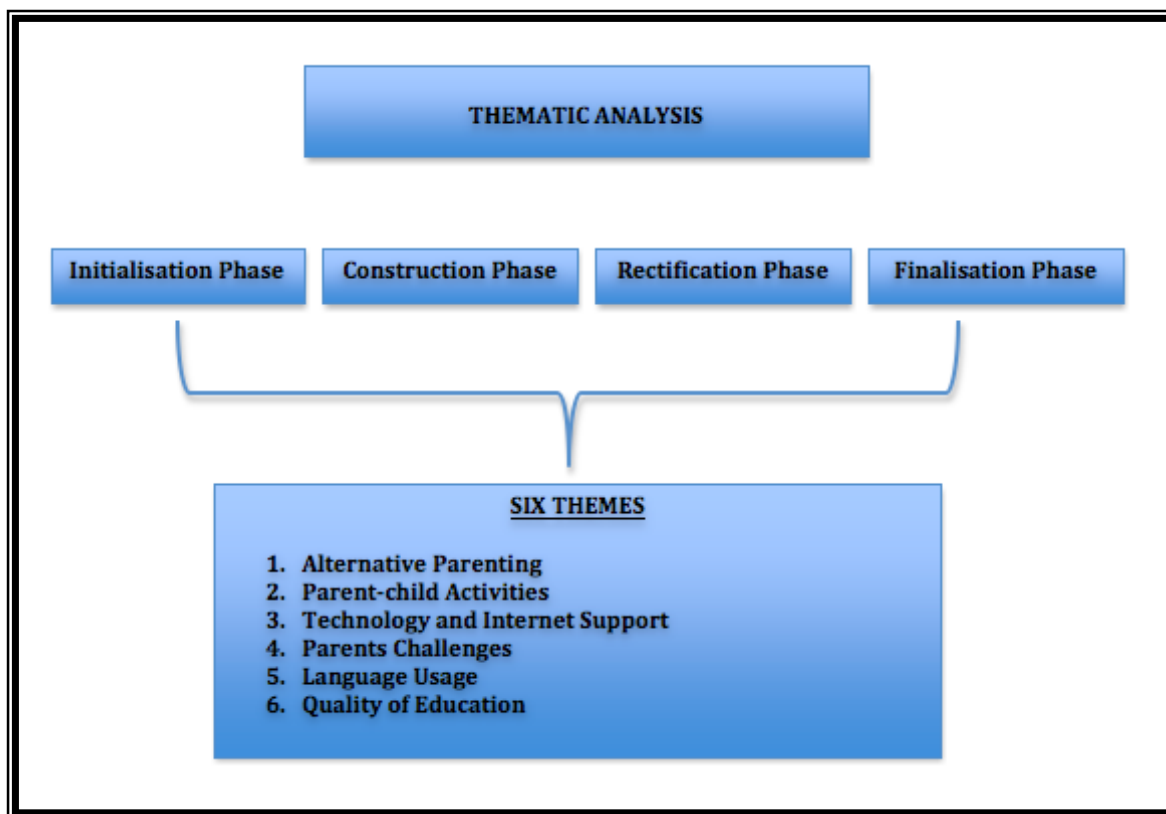
4.6.3.1.3 Rectification Phase

The rectification phase takes a paradoxical format of immersing and distancing oneself in the identified data. The purpose of this paradoxical process is to increase the critical approach in analysing the presented data. In addition to a critical review of all themes and subthemes, I presented the themes in relation to the body of knowledge (Vaismora et al., 2016). Reference to the body of knowledge was aimed at ensuring that the process of theorising about parental support is based on literature. Following the review of identified themes and sub-themes in relation to the body of knowledge, themes that form a coherent answer for the research questions of the current study were presented (Neuendorf, 2009), which resulted in an integrated view of the themes of the current study and how they relate to each other.

4.6.3.1.4 Finalisation Phase

The finalisation phase includes portrayal of the identified themes through a storyline, which provide a coherent picture of the results of the current study. I have therefore, incorporated the above four phases process in Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's (2003)

integration stage, as part of the mixed methods data analysis process. In Chapter 5, I provide the finalisation phase through synthesis on data interpretation (See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.3).

4.6.4 Advantages of Mixed Methods Data Analysis

Key to the use of mixed methods research is its emphasis on the strength of both the qualitative and quantitative methods (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). It is not concerned with comparison of each method; rather, how the combination of both methods can benefit the study. Therefore, analysis of the mixed methods data is based on these strengths, hence the focus on advantages of the methods rather than exploring its disadvantages.

Mixed methods research involves the mixing of data at certain key stages as predetermined by the implementation process or sequence of the study (Creswell, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Creswell et al, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This suggests that the data for the qualitative and quantitative components of the mixed methods research are not mixed throughout the study. There are certain instances in the study when one can make a clear distinction between the two methodologies. Data analysis is one of those instances. During the process of analysing mixed methods data, each of the data from both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies are analysed separately. Thus, data analysis and competencies are viewed separately for each method (Bazeley, 2009). Therefore, the advantages of the mixed methods data analysis should also be viewed in the same light. The advantages are viewed separately for each method but their implication is viewed holistically to represent the mixed methods data analysis.

Quantitative data comprised the first part of the data analysis of the current study. The current study employed a descriptive statistics method of data analysis of the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics allows description of data obtained quantitatively in a meaningful way (Petersen & Maree, 2013). Descriptive statistics were key element in this data analysis process, in that it allowed presentation of data in such a way that it made it easier to combine quantitative and qualitative data. This serves as the strength of quantitative data analysis in mixed research, which is more concerned with corroboration of data from both methods than comparison of both methods.

The qualitative research on the other hand, adds another advantage that drives the study home. According to the implementation process of this study, the qualitative approach was used to further explore on the quantitative data. This is evidenced by the focus on both the descriptive analysis during the data analysis process. In this study, the first part is based on how the participants understand and make meaning from the data obtained

quantitatively (Nieuwenhuis, 2013). This is an empowering approach in that it allows the participants to draw meaning from the data being presented. It does not impose any meaning from the data, rather it allows the participants to make sense of what the data means to them. It is for this reason that a researcher, using qualitative data analysis, is advised to avoid early hypotheses and focus on thorough exploration of the presented data (Silverman, 2014). This view is well aligned to the general aim of qualitative research, thus gaining an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. It is based on these qualities of a qualitative data analysis that this method finds a place in this study to provide an in-depth understanding of language development and parental support, as key aspects of the current study.

Having noted the above advantages of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches, it is must also be noted that their separate view is not contrary to the mixed method research. The key aspect to mixed methods research is corroboration or mixing of the methods (Bazeley, 2009). The corroboration process that focuses on the strength of both methods is what matters the most to mixed methods research. According to Teddlie and Tashkkori (2010), it is the integration aspect that shows maturity in the development of a mixed methods research approach. Which means, instead of considering what each method can do and not do, the focus is on what each method has the ability to achieve. It takes the eclecticism approach, mentioned in the first section (Creswell, 2009), which increases reliability and trustworthiness of the findings of the current study as it introduces a corroborative aspect to the study. It is this strength that the mixed methods data analysis rests upon. Both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis abilities are employed to provide the best outcome for the results of the current study. It is based on these corroborative efforts that this mixed methods data analysis is chosen as a suitable method for the current study.

4.7 QUALITY CRITERIA

In mixed methods research, the quality criteria are represented by the concept, 'inference process', which is presented by inference quality and inference transferability, as described below (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, 2010).

4.7.1 Inference Quality

The term inference quality refers to "the standard for evaluating the quality of conclusions that are made by both the quantitative and qualitative findings" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p.27). It includes the qualitative term, trustworthiness, and the quantitative terms, internal validity and reliability, which I describe below:

4.7.1.1 Trustworthiness

The qualitative term, trustworthiness, is achieved by engaging in multiple methods of data collection (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The use of an experienced transcriber ensured that the views and experiences of the participants were documented correctly, to increase the trustworthiness of the results (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Furthermore, member checking was also considered important to ensure credibility of the transcripts (Creswell, 2007; Harper & Cole, 2012; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Therefore, member checking the transcripts of the current study with participants helped to confirm whether the conclusions drawn from the study were accurate in reflecting the views of the participants. Both the transcripts and the conclusions drawn were checked by my supervisors, and were also guided by the literature review.

4.7.1.2 Internal Validity

A quantitative measure, validity, refers to the measure to ensure that the instruments (questionnaire) used in the current study measure what they intended to measure (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Inferential quality in mixed methods research refers to the internal validity of the constructs of the study (Gray, 2009; Maree & Petersen, 2007). Internal validity is viewed by Eeva-Mari and Lili-Anne (2011), as referring to "the most essential manifestations of validity". In looking at the instruments used and methods followed, one can determine the validity of the study. Therefore, the use of the secondary data, which has already undergone quality assurance by the PIRLS team, ensured that the current study relied on experts in the field with the regard to the data that was being used (Howie et al., 2008; 2018). I worked with the data manager the CEA at UP, who was responsible for capturing and managing all South African PIRLS data. This stepped ensured that the data and instruments of analysis were used correctly and that the conclusions drawn were valid.

To analyse the data, I also used the IDB analyser, which is an international developed instrument, tailored specifically for the PIRLS study (IEA, 2016). The use of IDB analyser, as a plugin to SPSS, without any changes to the program, was to ensure that I used the internal settings supplied by statistics experts from The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) globally.

As a novice researcher, I also relied on the professional feedback from my supervisors about the contents of the results drawn from the instruments so that I drew valid conclusions from the results (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2011). In addition, the process of

ensuring validity of the current study, was supported by the body of knowledge consulted in relation to the results drawn from the data instruments used.

4.7.1.3 Reliability

Reliability has to do with the consistency of the results produced (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Reliability in research has the underlying principles: if another person was to follow the same process that I had followed in data collection and analysis, would they end with the same conclusions? (Eeva-Mari & Lili-Anne, 2011). Throughout the research, I worked very closely with PIRLS data experts to ensure that the data were used in the way they were supposed to be used, so that there was consistency with the correct use of the program. IDB analyser has a re-test program which runs the computation several times to ensure that the results output is reliable. The results were also validated by my supervisors to ensure that they were consistent with the conclusions drawn.

4.7.2 Inference Transferability

"This is the degree to which the conclusions from a mixed methods study may be applied to other settings, people, time periods, contexts and so forth" (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 29). It includes the quantitative term, external validity, and the qualitative term, transferability. Both external validity and transferability, are concerned with generalisability of the results to a larger population (Gray, 2009; Maree & Petersen, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). I describe these inference factors in the sections below.

4.7.2.1. External Validity

In inferential transferability, external validity refers to the question of whether the general conclusions can be drawn from results of the current study (Eeva-Mari & Lili-Anne, 2011). The use of the larger PIRLS data provided the current study with an advantage to generalise the results to the general population, as data was collected from a wide population. As indicated above (sub-section 4.6.2), the IDB analyser uses weighted data that allows for the generalisation of the results to the wider population. Therefore, based on the instruments used and the data, the current study has made inferences drawn from the result of the quantitative study to the general population. Furthermore, a comparison is made between the results of previous PIRLS, to ensure that the conclusions drawn from the current study are still relevant (See Chapter 1, Section 1.3). The results are however, explored further through qualitative data, to ascertain whether they can be transferable to the participants of the current study.

4.7.2.2 Transferability

With qualitative data, transferability examines how the results of the current study can be applied in other contexts different from the one of the current studies (Wium & Louw, 2018). The limited number of participants for the qualitative study suggests that the results from this phase can only be transferred to a population similar to the population of this study. However, the use of mixed methods research and comparing the results of the qualitative study, provide guidelines on how the results of the current study can be applied to another population of similar context.

4.8 AXIOLOGICAL PARADIGM: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Submission of a research proposal to the ethics committee helps to protect the researcher and the research participants (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Therefore, in keeping with the ethical requirements of the University of Pretoria, an application for ethical approval of the proposed study was submitted to the ethics committee of the Faculty of Education, at the University of Pretoria. Such a process allowed for scrutiny of the ethical process that the current study planned to follow. Subsequently, ethical clearance was given confirming the ethical processes that this study had planned to ensure that it was ethically undertaken (See Appendix G). On completion of the current study, an ethical certificate was applied for which was granted following the assessment by the ethics committee to ensure that the current study followed the ethical processes it had initially indicated that it would follow (See Appendix G).

4.8.1 Informed Consent

This ethical principle has to do with voluntary participation and the protection of participants from harm (Brink, van der Walt & van Rensburg, 2012). Informed consent was obtained from participants to adhere to this principle (Appendix F). I drafted a letter explaining the study and the potential benefits and risks of being part of this study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Participants were requested to give their consent to participate in the study, should they be interested. A signed informed consent form is attached to the appendices (Appendix F) of the current study as supporting proof that participants consented to voluntary participation.

4.8.2 Confidentiality, Privacy and Anonymity

Confidentiality is concerned with the protection of both the identity of participants and their data (Gray, 2009). In a bid to maintain confidentiality, privacy and anonymity, the research data did not use details that might lead to the identification of the participants. This

principle was also discussed with participants to ensure that members understand its importance and respect each other's confidentiality, privacy and anonymity against those who were not part of the current study. Subsequently to that, the participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identity and they also decided which information provided could be used for the research, and how such information could be disseminated. All information collected was treated as confidential, private and anonymous, unless otherwise indicated by the participants. To ensure safety, the collected data was saved in a secure place, in respect of the data storage policies of the University of Pretoria.

4.8.3 Voluntary Participation

Participation in the current study was based on voluntary involvement, and the participants were not coerced into participating. To ensure that the participants were aware of this information, it was included in the letter of informed consent. The letter (Appendix F) highlighted that participation in the current study was voluntary, and that one could choose to withdraw from the current study without any subsequent risk (Brink, 2010). The letters of informed consent were read during the first focus group meeting, to ensure that all participants were aware of the requirements of the study, and the potential risks that could be involved (Marshall et al., 2014).

4.8.4 Researcher's Position

Research position focuses on the role of the researcher in comparison to that of the participants. It examines whether the researcher is inside or outside the research process. Allen (2004) cautions researchers to consider their insider and outsider positions and how these might affect the current study. When you are an insider, you are viewed as identifying with the participants and therefore are able to relate well with them (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009); however, the opposite is also true with regard to being an outsider. In the current study, although mainly an outsider in relation to the participants, I also found myself positioned in between these two constructs. Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 60) refer to this position as connecting two worlds, "this hyphen can be viewed not as a path but as a dwelling place for people. This hyphen acts as a third space, a space between, a space of paradox, ambiguity, and ambivalence, as well as conjunction and disjunction".

Implied by the above, is that I was positioned in the centre of the current study as both an insider and an outsider. These positions suggest that I could take either one of the roles when needed. As a second language learner, raised by a parent, I can identify with the challenge that the parents are facing. Again, as an educational psychologist who works with parents of English second language learners, I have gained enough knowledge to

relate with the participants. These positions make it easier for the parents to relate to me and see me as one of them. According to Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 61), an insider position can disadvantage the researcher in that participants might not share all information, assuming that the researcher does not understand. It is under these circumstances that my dual role as an insider and outsider becomes crucial.

I found myself as an outsider in the current study because I was not one of the participants. I am therefore, an outsider because I might not relate well with the parents' challenges faced who have children learning English as second language at school. Although this outsider position can have a potential disadvantage, it allowed me to remediate the insider position in that I am able to inquire thoroughly to avoid any information that had potential to be left out due to assumed identification. In this way, my position as an in-between researcher served as an advantage to ensure that I related well with the participants and obtained relevant information for the current study. This emphasises the point that, with regard to the insider and outsider role, one is not better or trustworthy than the others, but rather, they are just different and as long as I was aware of the limitations of my role, then trustworthiness was not compromised (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

4.8.5 Dealing with Sensitive Information

The current study dealt with language development of children and parental support. I therefore, did not expect to come across any sensitive information that might need further attention or referral. Nonetheless, I engaged in the current study ready for any situation that might need attention. I had a list of possible referrals that I would consider should anything arise. The participants were aware that based on their confidentiality clause, they were not obliged to divulge any information which they were not comfortable in divulging. As a result, I did not encounter any information that needed further attention. My focus was on building a trusting relationship with the participants in order to create a safe environment that allowed dialogue. This approach served as the foundation that allowed a smooth process during data collection process.

4.8.6 Positional Discrepancies

As a black South African PhD candidate who had completed a Master's Degree in Educational Psychology, I had some sort of advantage or power position. Kestere, Rubene and Stonkuviene (2015, p. 5) describe this power: "Education and power relations are closely intertwined: Education is both the legitimiser and the instrument of power, as well as the generator of power relations". Thus, education gives one power over the

uneducated or less educated. It provides one with an advantage over those below him as far as education is concerned. Therefore, as a researcher in this state, I had to consider this power position when engaging in the research. In so doing, I had to take into consideration that not only does education give one power, but it also provides one with the understanding of power (Kestere, Rubene & Stonkuviene, 2015). Through education, I learnt how to control power in such a way that it does not negatively affect those with whom I work, that is, the participants of the current study.

Therefore, I dealt with these power discrepancies by creating the platform for empowering participants. I had to make the participants aware that our meetings were not to showcase my level of knowledge over them, instead it was a sharing of knowledge amongst ourselves. Power is created by inequalities; those who are dominant and sub-ordinates, and therefore, these hierarchies can be levelled and anyone can be given power (Kestere, Rubene & Stonkuviene, 2015). That was the focus of the approach I adopted in this process, to level the relationship between the participants and myself. This process created a safe environment between myself and the participants in such a way that they were open to share their views without any fear. The balance of power between the participants and myself helped generate data that was meaningful for the current study.

4.8.7 Expertise of the Researcher

In the year 2010, I completed a Master's Degree in Educational Psychology with a dissertation entitled: *The experiences of mentors implementing a mentorship program at a higher education institute*. As part of my degree, I had to conduct a research study (Tsebe, 2010). In 2012, I completed a master of theology degree where I also had to complete a research project. Therefore, both these studies afforded me with the necessary expertise to conduct future research. It was based on this experience that I felt I could employ my research abilities to conduct the current study. I do however, acknowledge that I am still a novice researcher. Therefore, beside the above experience, I also leaned on the support of my supervisors, Dr Tilda Loots, Prof Salome Human-Vogel and my co-supervisor, Prof Vanessa Scherman; their support provided me with the added experience that I needed for the completion of the current study.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the methodological processes followed in the current study. I elaborated on the philosophical pragmatism paradigm (4.2) underpinning the current study and its mixed methods approach. Based on the decision of the current study to use the quantitative and qualitative data, the relevance of using the pragmatism paradigm was

justified (4.3). That was followed by the explanatory sequential design (4.4). The explanatory sequential design was presented and described, with its two phased approach. For overview of the explanatory sequential design, I provided a figure (Figure 4.2) for pictorial clarity of the sequential process that I followed.

The methodology section which followed the explanatory sequential design, reported on the sample used for each phase of the research and, instruments and methods of data collection (4.5). Towards the last sections, I described the data analysis process (4.6). In the data analysis section, I described the analysis of the first phase as depicted on the presented table (Table 4.4). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were also discussed, and I described how the current study went about presenting the data. Thematic analysis process of qualitative data was also described for the phase two process of data analysis, and the inductive process that was followed.

The quality criteria section reported on both inference quality and inference transferability (4.7). On inference quality, I described factors that ensured the validity of the current study. The inference quality is underpinned by the trustworthiness concept of qualitative research, and internal validity and reliability of quantitative research. While inferential transferability was concerned with generalisability of the results of the current study, both external validity and transferability were described to account for this factor. The last section before the conclusions of the current study was the axiological paradigm, which accounted for the ethical processes (4.8).

Following the methodological processes explained above, data was collected and analysed. The next chapter (Chapter 5), presents the data which were collected, analysed and interpreted. Although cross-references are made between Chapters 4 and 5, some information that is contained in Chapter 4, where necessary, is also replicated in Chapter 5 for easy access. In the introduction section of the next chapter (Chapter 5), I outline the processes followed for data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study adopted a mixed methods approach in which both the quantitative and qualitative research methods are used. At this point, it is important to reflect on the priority given to these methods and how such a priority guides the approach taken in this chapter. As indicated in the previous chapter on research design and methodology, the priority of the mixed methods approach is given to the quantitative method. This refers to the weight and emphasis of the research (Creswell, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). An explanatory sequential research design guided the current study where its use implied that qualitative methods were used to explore and explain the quantitative data (see Chapter 4, section 4.4). The focus of the current chapter (Chapter 5) is on both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis and interpretation.

As it was stated in Chapter 4, the overall data analysis was guided by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's (2003) seven stage-process of the data analysis. These stages, described in Chapter 4 (sub-section 4.6.2); are applied to guide the data analysis process. According to Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003), the analysis process follows a flexible approach when applied to seven-stage process. I have taken advantage of this allowance, and proceeded from the data transformation stage to data integration.

 I commence by presenting the first stage of data analysis below (Section 5.2). In the data reduction section, I describe the parent questionnaire used for quantitative data and I present the specific questions which were used for the current study. The data reduction process is followed by a data display section where all quantitative results are presented (Section 5.3). It is important to reiterate at this point that the focus of the data display is on the parent questionnaire, which was analysed by means of both descriptive and inferential statistics (See Chapter 4, sub-section 4.6.2), to learn about the home experiences of English second language learners (Appendix A: Parent Questionnaire) (Howie et al., 2008). The descriptive results from the parent questionnaire were conducted by the IDB analyser (Howie et al., 2018). The Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) output files were added as part of the appendices (Appendix H). The descriptive results are presented below, both descriptively and with figures (see Section 5.3).

The third stage is analysis and interpretation of the quantitative results (Section 5.4), which focus on interpretation of presented descriptive and inferential statistics, and analyse constructs that were significant and seem essential for further exploration with the qualitative data. The fourth section centres on interpretation and discussion of both the quantitative and qualitative results (Section 5.5) comprising three subsections. The first is the presentation of how the quantitative data was transformed into qualitative data, and how that data informed the focus group interviews (sub-section 5.5.1) (See also, Chapter 4, sub-section 4.6.3). The second sub-section is about presentation of qualitative data. In this sub-section, I present and describe the themes of the current study (Sub-section 5.5.2). The third sub-section is the synthesis of both the quantitative and qualitative results (sub-section 5.5.3). The last section focuses on the characteristics for working towards a conceptual framework for parental support, which incorporates the quantitative and qualitative results in presenting a story line that aims to answer the last two research sub-questions:

> **RSQ3: What challenges are faced by the parents of English second language learners with regard to supporting second language development?**

> **RSQ4: What are the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development?**

The third research sub-question (RSQ3), is addressed by both the results of the quantitative and qualitative data (Section 5.2 to sub-section 5.5.2), while the fourth above-mentioned research sub-question (RSQ4) is addressed by the analysis of the qualitative data (Sub-section 5.5.3).

5.2 DATA REDUCTION

Data reduction focuses on preparation for data analysis. The parent questionnaire (Appendix A), comprising twenty-two questions, was used in preparation for the qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2009; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Based on the purpose of the current study, I focused on twelve of these selected questions and obtained their mean percentages (descriptive statistics) and ANOVA analysis of variance (inferential statistics) (See Chapter 4, sub-section 4.6.2) (Appendix H: SPSS output). Because it is not always possible to translate quantitative data into text (Frank & Althoen, 1994), the current study

focused on descriptive analysis of the results of the parent questionnaire (See Chapter 1, section 1.10.3.1) (Questions 1 to 12). Therefore, I have listed the questions below based on their potential to assist in building towards answering the main question of the current study:

> **What conceptual framework can be developed for parental support on second language development?**

The selection of questions served as the data reduction process whereby the parent questionnaire questions were reduced to a few questions relevant to the current study. The pre-selected questions were chosen between my supervisors and I. The questions were used to display the selected data before any interpretation process could be undertaken. These questions were presented in Table 4.3 in the previous chapter (Chapter 4, sub-section 4.5.2). For easy reference, I have included this table in the current chapter (See Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1 Questions Selected from the PIRLS Parent Questionnaire

Q #	Question	Q#PQ
Q1	*Before your child began Grade 1, how often did you or someone else in your home do the following activities with him or her?*	Q2
Q2	*In what language did most of the activities in Question 2 (Q2) take place?*	Q3
Q3	*What language did your child speak before he/she began school?*	Q4
Q4	*How well could your child do the following when he/she began Grade 1?*	Q7
Q5	*How often do you or someone else in your home do the following things with your child?*	Q8
Q6	*In a typical week, how much time do you usually spend reading for yourself at home, including books, magazines, newspapers, and materials for work?*	Q12
Q7	*When you are at home, how often do you read for your own enjoyment?*	Q13
Q8	*Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements about reading.*	Q14
Q9	*About how many books are there in your home?*	Q15

Q #	Question	Q#PQ
Q10	*What is the highest level of education completed by the child's father (or stepfather, or male care-giver) and mother (or stepmother or female care-giver)?*	Q18
Q11	*Which best describes the employment situation of the child's father (or stepfather, or male care-giver) and mother (or stepmother or female care-giver)?*	Q19
Q12	*What kind of work do the child's father (or stepfather, or male care-giver) and mother (or stepmother or female care-giver) do for their main job?*	Q120

Note:

- *Q#* = Question numbering in the current study
- *Question* = Refers to the specific question from parent questionnaire (Appendix A)
- *Q#PQ* = Refers to the numbering of the question on the parent questionnaire (Appendix A). The number next to the letter 'Q' refers to the question number as used in the current study compared to the one in the parent questionnaire, which is indicated inside the brackets.

In Table 5.1, I have provided a new numbering for each question which differs from the one used on the parent questionnaire as a coding process for data analysis. The next stage of data presentation focuses on displaying the data from the questions (Table 5.1) with the aim of addressing the main research question and its sub-questions.

5.3 DATA PRESENTATION (DISPLAY)

Results from parent questionnaire are grouped into five categories: early home literacy activities (5.3.1, Q1 to Q5), parental reading (5.3.2) (Q6 to Q8), books at home (5.3.3) (Q9), parental education (5.3.4) (Q10) and parental employment (5.3.5) (Q11 & Q 12). These categorisations are based on their depiction of the groupings of the displayed data (Pallant, 2010), and common usage in the PIRLS reports (Howie et al., 2018; Howie et al., 2012; Howie et al., 2008).

5.3.1 Early Home Literacy Activities

The parents were asked to respond to the engagement of early literacy activities with the child prior to entrance into Grade one. Early literacy activities have been associated with positive language development (Combrinck, van Staden & Roux, 2014; Howie et al., 2012). The early home literacy activities cover five questions in the parent questionnaire (Questions, Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 & Q5) (see Table 5.1 and Appendix A).

5.3.1.1 Early literacy activity before Grade 1 (Q1)

Parents were requested to respond to how often their children did the following activities:

Table 5.2 Early Literacy Activities

a) Reading books

b) Tell stories

c) Sing songs

d) Play with alphabet toys (for example, blocks with letters of the alphabet)

e) Talk about things you had done

f) Talk about what you had read

g) Play word games

h) Write letters or words

i) Read aloud signs and labels

j) Visit a library

k) Read nursery rhymes

The parents had an option of choosing either one of the following responses: *Often, Sometimes* and *Never or Almost never* for each of the sub-sections a-k.

Figure 5.1 Percentage of the early literacy activities before Grade 1 (Q1)
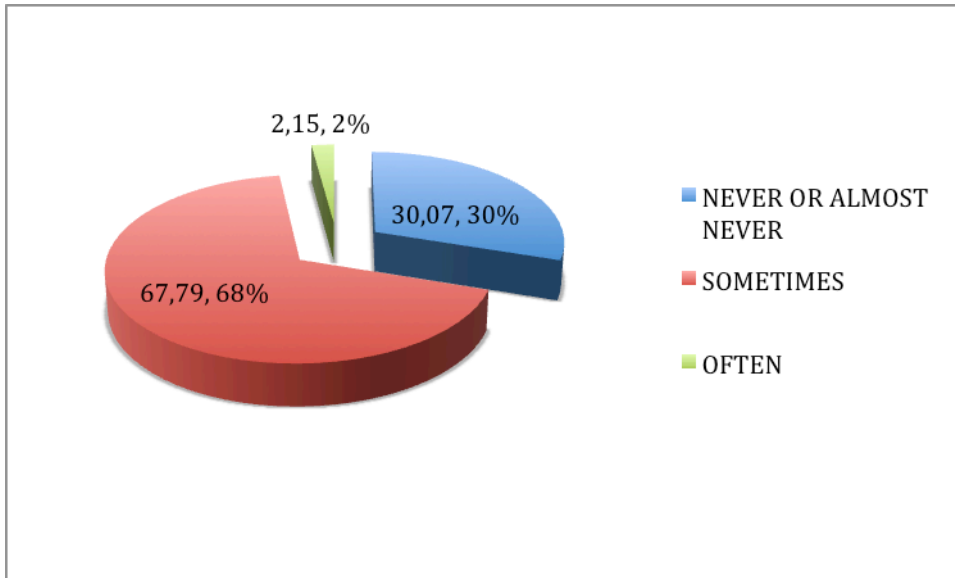
Figure 5.1 above presents the percentage of parental engagement in home activities with their children before Grade 1. From all parents represented in the study, 30.07% (SE[2] 0.7)

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[2] SE = Standard Error (See Chapter 4, Sub-section 4.6.2)

Never or almost never engaged in early literacy activities before Grade 1, 67.79% (SE = 0.70) did the activities *Sometimes,* with only 2.15% (SE = 0.21) engaging in the activities *Often.* The ANOVA analysis of the means of the two groups of parents was conducted (See Appendix H, for results of ANOVA). The results reveal a statistically significant difference between the parents who never or almost never did literacy activities before Grade 1, compared to those who did them often.

The results implied that the alternative hypothesis of the current study was accepted. It could be inferred from the results that, on average, there are more South African parents who never or almost never did literacy activities prior to Grade 1, compared to those who did them often.

5.3.1.2 Language spoken at home during activities (Q2)

Figure 5.2 below displays a pictorial representation of the percentages of the language spoken at home during engagement in language development activities before Grade 1. It must be noted that all learners who participated in PIRLS 2006, took the test in their home language (Howie et al., 2008). The principle of referring to the test language when talking about home language during activities is that the test language was the same as the home language used during activities. However, given the migration processes of many South Africans, it was taken into consideration that, at times, the home language of the child differs from the language of teaching and learning (Howie et al., 2008). The parents had to choose either one of the eleven official languages (See Appendix E).

Figure 5.2 Percentages of language spoken at home during activities (Q2)
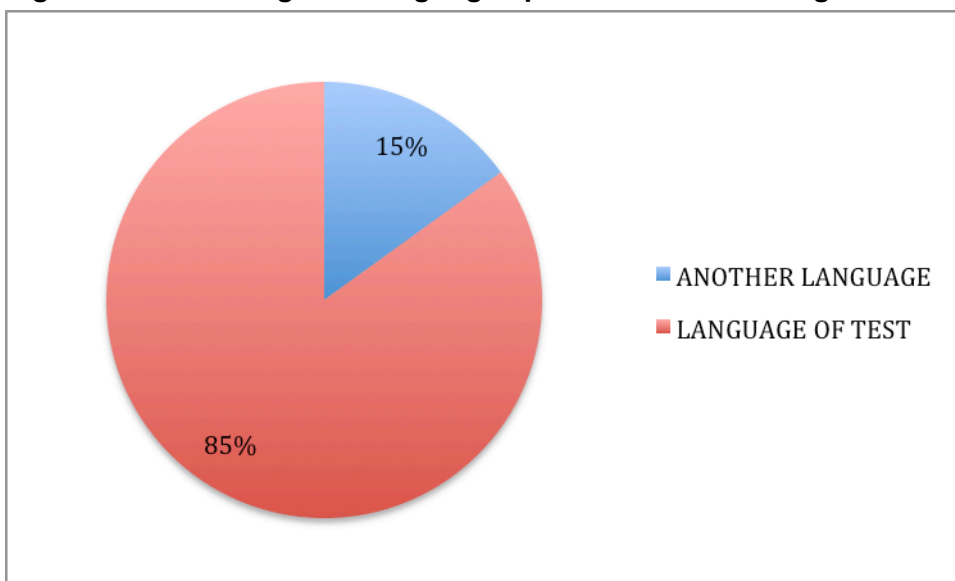
The results of question two (Q2), presented in Figure 5.2, show a statistically significant difference between 84.95% (SE = 0.79) of South African parents who use the language of the test at home, and 15.05% (SE = 0.79) who use a different language. These results indicate that the majority of the parents (84.95.8%), used the same language at home for the home activities, which was also used at school, while a small percentage (15.05%) used a different language to the one used at school.

5.3.1.3 Language spoken before Grade 1 (Q3)

Parents were asked to indicate the language that the child spoke before he/she began school. Parents had to respond to either *Yes* or *No* for each of the eleven official languages indicated (Appendix A). Some 86.42% (SE = 0.57) answered *Yes* to having used the same language of the test. While those who answered *No* made up 13.58% (SE = 0.57).

Figure 5.3 Percentage of language spoken before Grade 1 (Q3)
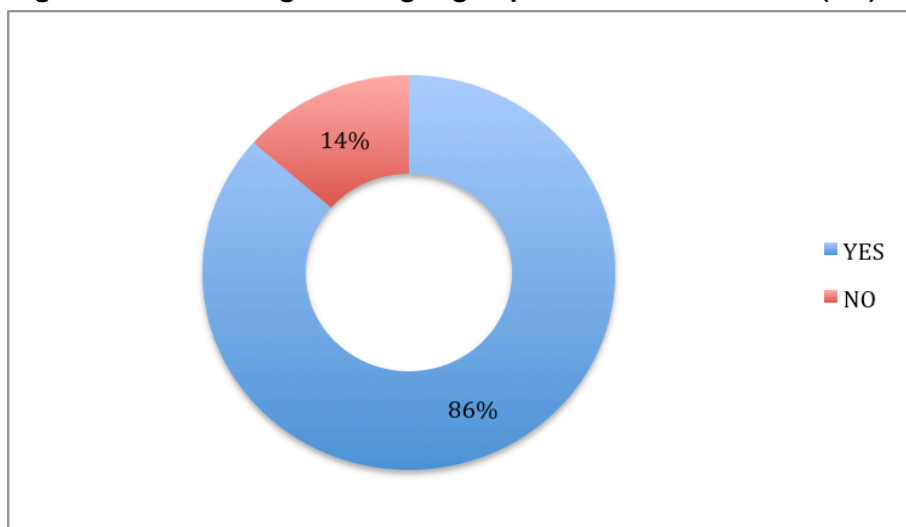
The results indicate a statistical difference between the parents who answered Yes and those who answered No. The majority of the parents answered Yes to their child speaking the same language of the test, compared to those who answered No.

5.3.1.4 Abilities in Grade 1 (Q4)

Parents were asked to comment on the ability of their children to do certain literacy activities by the time they entered school. Parents responded by choosing one of the following options for each activity (a-h): v*ery well, moderately well, not very well or not at all*:

Table 5.3 Abilities of children in Grade 1

a)   Recite nursery rhymes

b)   Draw patterns or shapes

c)   Tell a story from pictures

d)   Recognise most of the letters of the alphabets

e)   Read some words

f)   Read sentences

g)   Write letters of the alphabet

h)   Write some words

Figure 5.4 displays a pictorial representation of the percentage of children able to do the literacy activities on commencement of Grade 1. Within the South African population, 5% (SE = 0.33) children could *not at all* do the literacy activities, 20% (SE = 0.64) of the children could do the activities *not very well,* 44% (SE = 0.64) did them moderately well and 31% (SE = 0.66) could do them *very well*.

Figure 5.4 The overall percentage of abilities of children in Grade 1 (Q4)
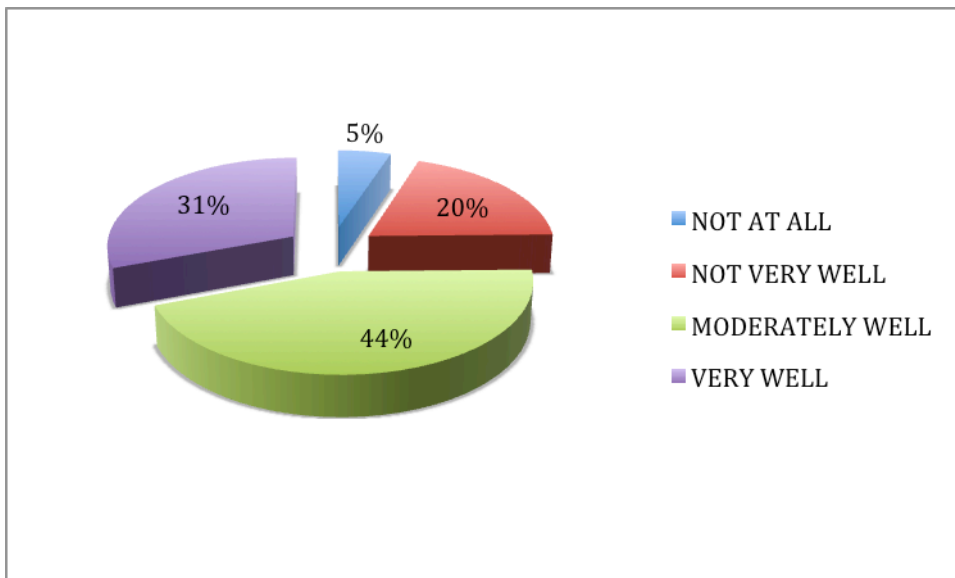
A comparison was made between the parents whose children cannot do literacy activities at all and those whose children can do them very well. There was a difference between the parents whose children did the activities very well and those who could not do them at all. The percentage of those who did the activities very well were significantly higher than those who did not do them at all.

5.3.1.5 Duration spent on reading related activities (Q5)

Duration spent on reading was measured by the question: "How often do you or someone else in your home do the following things with your child". The parents were asked to tick the most applicable options of the four available, responding to the reading-related activities listed in Table 5.4 (a-J), namely, *every day or almost every day, once or twice a week, once or twice a month and never or almost never*.

Table 5.4 Reading-Related Activities

a)	Listen to my child read aloud
b)	Talk with my child about things we have done
c)	Talk with my child about what he/she is reading on his/her own
d)	Discuss my child's classroom reading work with him/her
e)	Go to the library or a bookshop with my child
f)	Help my child with reading for school
g)	Encourage my child to read
h)	Encourage my child to write
i)	Sing songs with my child
j)	Talk with my child about what I am reading (Or what someone else in my home is reading)

Figure 5.5 The overall percentage of duration spent on reading-related activities (Q5)
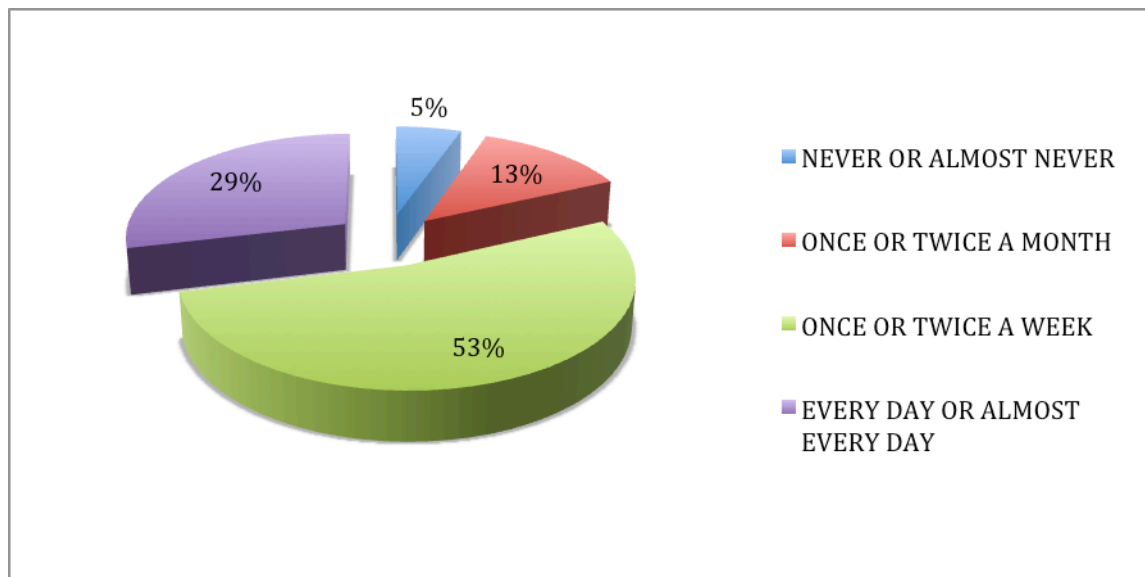
The results presented in Figure 5.5 revealed that 5% (SE = 0.34) of parents *never or almost never* engaged in the reading-related activities. Some 13% (SE = 0.48) engaged in reading-related activities *once or twice a month*, 53% (SE = 0.84) *once or twice a week* and 29% (SE = 0.65) who engage in the reading-related activities with their children *every day or almost every day*.

A comparison (t-test) of the group of parents who never or almost never, do literacy activities with the child versus those who do literacy activities every day or almost every day, was conducted. These results showed that there is a significantly higher percentage of parents who do literacy activities at home with the child every day or almost every day compared to those who never or almost never do them.

5.3.2 Parental Reading

According to Kloosterman, Notten, Tolsman and Kraaykamp (2011), parental reading has a positive correlation with student achievement. In emphasising the importance of parental reading. Punter, Glas and Meelissen (2016) stated that a low achievement of a country is a sign of low parental competency in reading. In the current study, the parental reading factor focuses on three questions from the parent questionnaire (Q6, Q7 & Q8) (see Table 5.1 for corresponding questions on the parent questionnaire).

5.3.2.1 Personal reading duration (Q6)

Parents were asked to comment on how much time, in a typical week, they usually spend reading at home, including books, magazines, newspapers, and materials for work. The parents had to choose by circling one of the time options indicated in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Personal Reading Duration

a)	Less than one hour a week
b)	1-5 hours a week
c)	-10 hours a week
d)	More than 10 hours a week

Figure 5.6 provides a pictorial representation of the percentage of time spent by the parent reading for personal benefit. The results reveal that 30% (SE = 0.72) of the parents read *less than one hour a week,* 34% (SE = 0.72) read *one to five hours a week*, 20% (SE = 0.66) of parents read six to ten hours while 16% (SE = 0.57) parents read *more than ten hours a week*.

Figure 5.6 Percentage of personal reading duration (Q6)
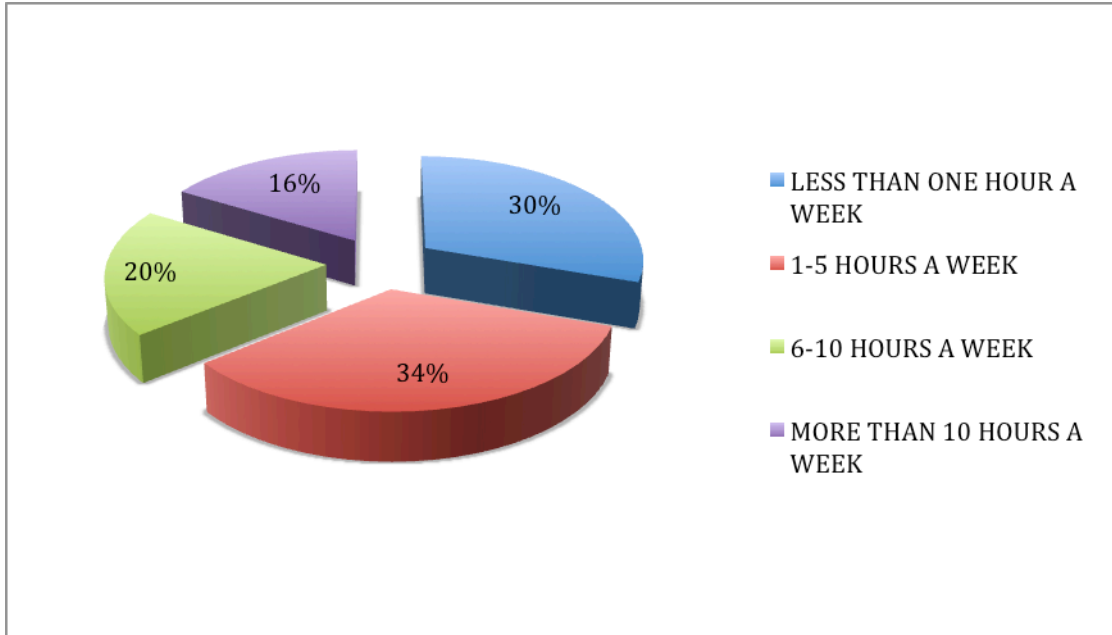
These results show that the there is a significantly higher number of parents who read less than an hour a week compared to those who read more than 10 hours a week.

5.3.2.2 Duration of reading for personal enjoyment (Q7)

This question required parents to respond to how often they read for own enjoyment. A comparison (t-test) of parents who read every day or almost every day with those who *never* or *almost never* read for enjoyment, was conducted. The results are presented in Figure 5.7 below:

Figure 5.7 Percentage of duration for personal reading for enjoyment (Q7)
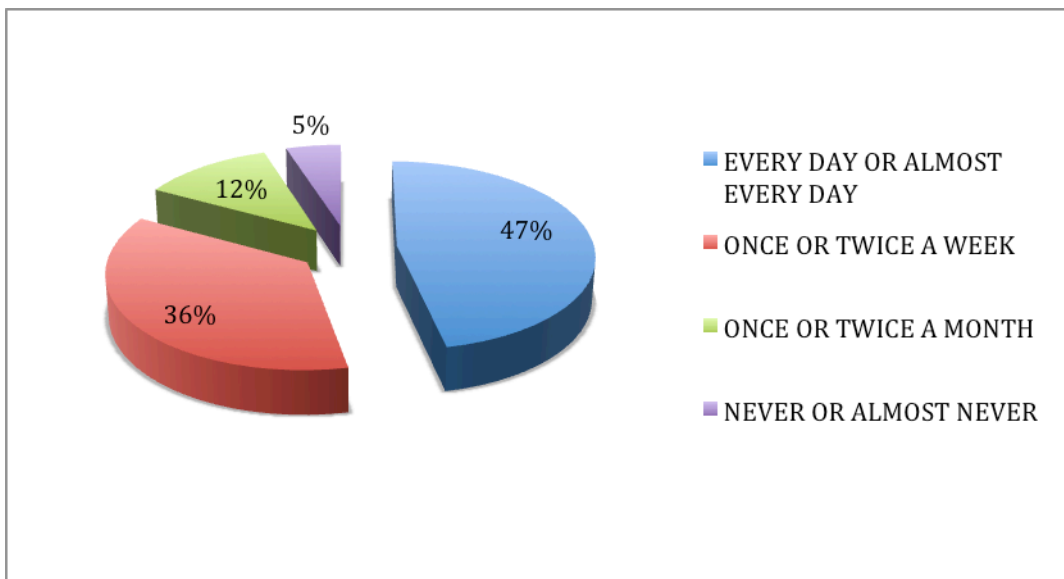
Figure 5.7 reveals that 47% (SE = 0.66) of parents read e*very day or almost every day* for enjoyment. Some 36% (SE = 0.62) read *once or twice a week*, while 12% (SE = 0.43) read once or twice a *month* and 5% (SE = 0.34) *never or almost never read* for their own enjoyment.

There is a significantly higher percentage of parents who read every day or almost every day, as compared to those who never or almost never read for enjoyment.

5.3.2.3 Reading attitude (Q8)

Attitude to reading required parents to indicate how much they agree with the statements in Table 5.6. Responses depended on whether they *agree a lot*, *agree a little, disagree a little and disagree a lot* with the statements a-e.

Table 5.6 Reading Attitude

a) I only read if I have to
b) I like talking about books with other people
c) I like to spend my spare time reading
d) I only read if I need information
e) Reading is an important activity in my home

The results of this question (see Figure 5.8 below.) reveal that 9% (SE = 0.54) of parents *disagree a lot* and 20% (SE = 0.80) *disagree a little* with the above statements. Some 56% (SE = 0.89) *agree a little* and 15% (SE = 0.75) *agree a lot* with the statements.

Figure 5.8 Overall percentages of reading attitude (Q8)
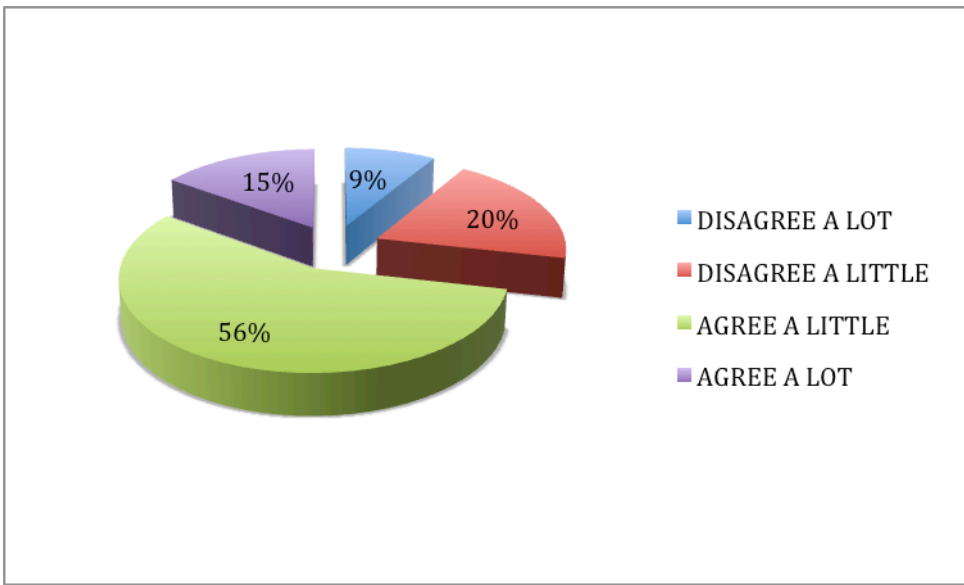
A t-test comparison was conducted between the parents who agree a lot with the above statements and those who disagree a lot. There is a statistical significance between the parents who agree a lot and those who disagree lot with the above statements. There is a significantly higher number of parents who agree a lot than those who disagree a lot with the above reading attitude statements (a-e).

In order the further understand the attitudes of parents, the above statements were categorised based on their suggested level of attitude towards reading. A t-test comparison was conducted between the parents who agree a lot and those who disagree a lot with statements that seems to reflect, a low level of attitude (statements a & d) and a high level of attitude (statements b, c & e), towards reading. There is no significant difference between the parents with regard to statements "a" and "d". While, there was a significant difference on statements "b", "c" & "e". There is a significantly higher percentage (88,85%, SE =0.67) of parents who agreed a lot, as compared to those who disagreed a lot (1.68%, SE = 0.25), with statements that supports positive reading attitude.

5.3.3 Books in the Home (Q9)

Educational books for reading are considered to be a key factor in language development (DBE, 2016). Therefore, the availability of books as educational resources in the homes, is critical to the educational success of the child (Evans, Kelley, Sikora & Treiman, 2010). The current study also looked at this factor.

The books in the home factor was measured by asking parents to identify the number of books in their homes. Parents were required to choose one of the following options as indicated in Table 5.7:

Table 5.7 Books in the Home

a)	10
b)	11 – 25
c)	26 – 100
d)	101 – 200
e)	More than 200

Figure 5.9 below reveals that 51.72% (SE = 0.94) of parents have *zero to ten* books in the home and 26.93% (SE = 0.61) have *eleven to twenty-five* books. Some 11.96% (SE =

0.58) record having between *26 to 100*, while 4.40% (SE = 0.31) have *between 101 to 200 books* while only 4.98% (SE = 0.36) have *more than 200 books* in their homes.

Figure 5.9 Percentage of number of books in the home (Q9)
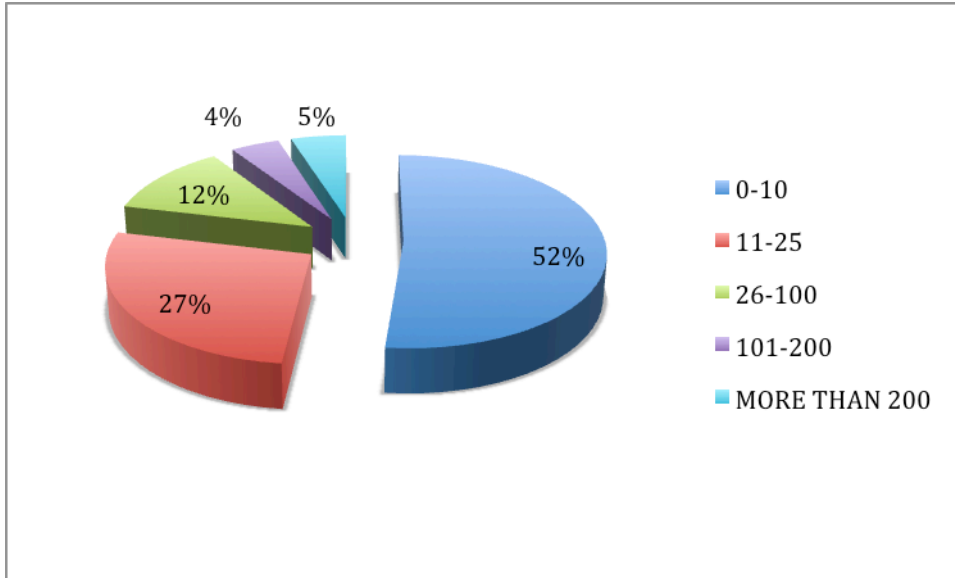
A comparison (t-test) was done between the parents with 0 to 10 books and those with 26 to 100 books. There is a significant difference, indicating that more half of the parent population have only 1 to 10 books in their home, in comparison to those with 26 to 100 books (12%) and only 5% having more than 200.

5.3.4 Parental Education (Q10)

Literature has shown that there seems to be a relationship between parents' level of education and the academic achievement of the child (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011). Therefore, the current study investigated this factor in relation to parental support. The highest education of both the father and mother were examined separately with each indicating the highest level of education based on the following educational levels:

Table 5.8 Parents' Level of Education

a)	Did not go to school
b)	Some primary school; lower than Grade 9 (<ISCED LEV 2>)
c)	Grade 9 (<ISCED LEV3>)
d)	Grade 12 (<ISCED LEV 5B>)
e)	Post Secondary Training (Vocational Training) (<ISCED LEV 5A>)
f)	First Degree/Diploma
g)	Honours degree

5.3.4.1 Highest education of the father

The results show that 37,95% (SE = 1.32) of fathers of English second language learners did not go to school. Around 13.81% (SE = 0.74) of fathers have some primary school or education lower than Grade 9. Nearly 29.56% (SE = 0.94) have Grade 12, 5.55% (SE = 0.64) have post-secondary training (Vocational Training), and 2,93% have a first degree or a diploma. The question was not applicable to 3,86% (SE = 0.30) of fathers.

Figure 5.10 Percentage of the highest education of the father (Q10a)
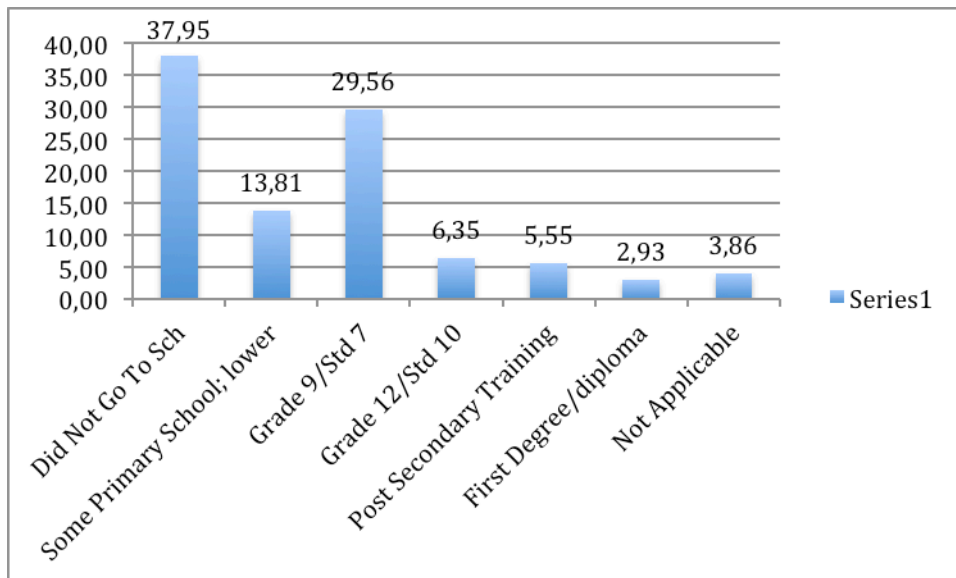
A comparison was made between a group of fathers who did not go to school and those with a first degree or diploma. The results (Figure 5.10) showed a significant difference between the two groups. A significantly higher percentage of fathers did not go to school compared to those with a first degree or a diploma.

5.3.4.2 Highest education of the mother

The results, depicted in Figure 5.11 below, reveal that the results of the mother are also similar to those of fathers in that 33% (SE = 1.25) of mothers of English second language learners did not go to school. Around 17.04% (SE = 0.74) of mothers have some primary school or education lower than Grade 9, while 31.75% (SE = 1.07) have Grade 12. Slightly similar to fathers, only 6.94% (SE = 0.62) of South African mother have Post

Secondary Training, and 2,28% (SE = 0.38) of mothers have a first degree or diploma. The question was not applicable to 2,28% (SE = 0.33) of the mothers.

Figure 5.11 Percentage of the highest education of the mother (Q10b)
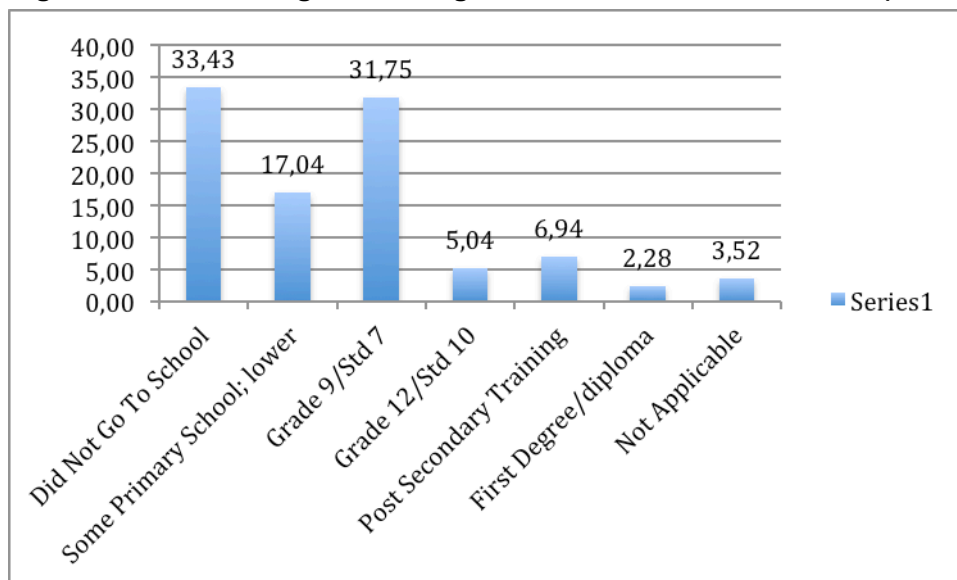
A comparison of mothers who did not go to school and those who had a first degree or a diploma was conducted through a t-test. The results reveal a noteworthy difference between the two groups in that a significantly higher percentage of mothers did not go to school compared to those with a degree or a diploma.

5.3.5 Parental Employment

Unemployment has been a long-standing problem in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2011) and its relation to socio-economic status. Parents who are unemployed or with a low socio-economic status are reported to having low levels of involvement in their children's education (Ndebele, 2015; Hall & Posel 2012). This factor was investigated by the questions regarding the employment status of the parents. The first question referred to the work situation and the second to the kind of work being done. Similar to the question about education of parents (5.3.4), the employment of both the father and mother is presented separately.

5.3.5.1. Employment of the father (Q11a)

The parents were asked to indicate which employment situation best describes their current employment status. Responses were based on the following options:

Table 5.9 Parents' Employment

a)   Working at least full time for pay

b)   Working part-time only for pay

c)   Not working for pay, but looking for a job

d)   Other

e)   Not applicable

The results of the father's employment, illustrated in Figure 5.12, show that 45.31% (SE = 1.31) of fathers *work full-time for pay*. Some 24.88% (SE = 0.80) *work part-time for pay,* while 15.29% (SE = 0.68) are *not working, but looking for a job.* About 15% indicated *other* or *not applicable option.*

Figure 5.12 Employment of the father (Q11a)
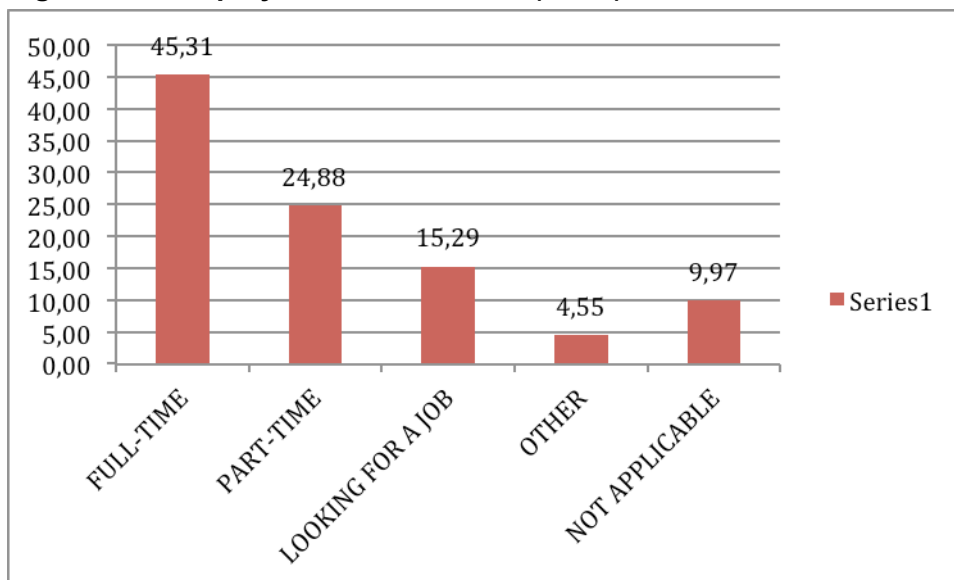
Fathers who work full time were compared to the fathers who are looking for a job through a t-test. The results revealed a statistical difference between the fathers who are working full time and those who are looking for a job. There are more fathers who are working full time compared to those who are looking for a job.

5.3.5.2 Employment of the mother (Q11b)

These results, presented in Figure 5.13 below, show that 28.80% (SE = 1.17) of mothers *work full-time for pay*. Some 22.94% (SE = 0.80) *work part-time for pay*, while 24.28% (SE = 0.86) are looking for a job, which means that almost a quarter of mothers are

unemployed and are looking for a job. About 23% indicated the *other* or *not applicable* option.

Figure 5.13 Employment of the mother (Q11b)
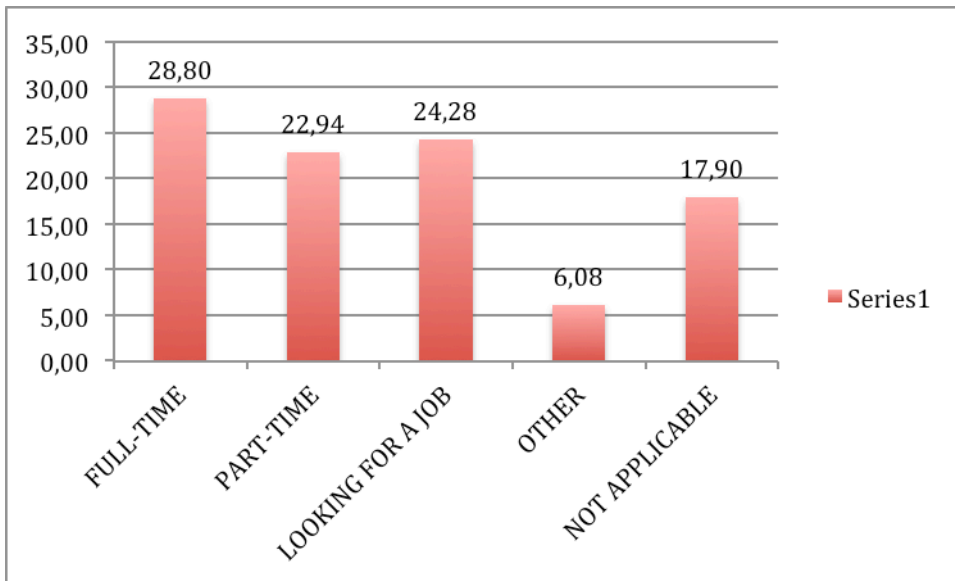
A t-test was conducted for a comparison between mothers who are looking for a job and those who work full time. The results revealed that there is a significant difference between South African mothers working full time and those looking for a job. A larger number of mothers are working full time than those looking for a job.

5.3.5.3 Kind of work for the father (Q12a)

Both the father and mother had to indicate the type of work do as their main job by indicating at least one of the following options of a-l, as listed in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10 Kind of Work

a) Has never worked outside the home for pay
b) Small business owner
c) Clerk
d) Service or sales worker
e) Skilled Agricultural or fishery worker
f) Craft or trade worker
g) Plant or machine operator
h) General labourers
i) Cooperate managers or senior officials
j) Professional
k) Technician or associate professional

I)	Not applicable

Figure 5.14 reveals the father's employment status where 13.51% (SE = 1.08) of fathers *have never worked outside the home for pay*. Around 4.71% (SE = 0.55) *work as professionals* and 12.35% (SE = 1.52) *work as senior officials*. Some 13.49% (SE = 0.70) indicated *not applicable*. Therefore, the rest of the percentages are distributed amongst different kinds of work. The results show that the majority of the parents are employed in some sort of job.

Figure 5.14 Kind of employment for the father (Q12b)
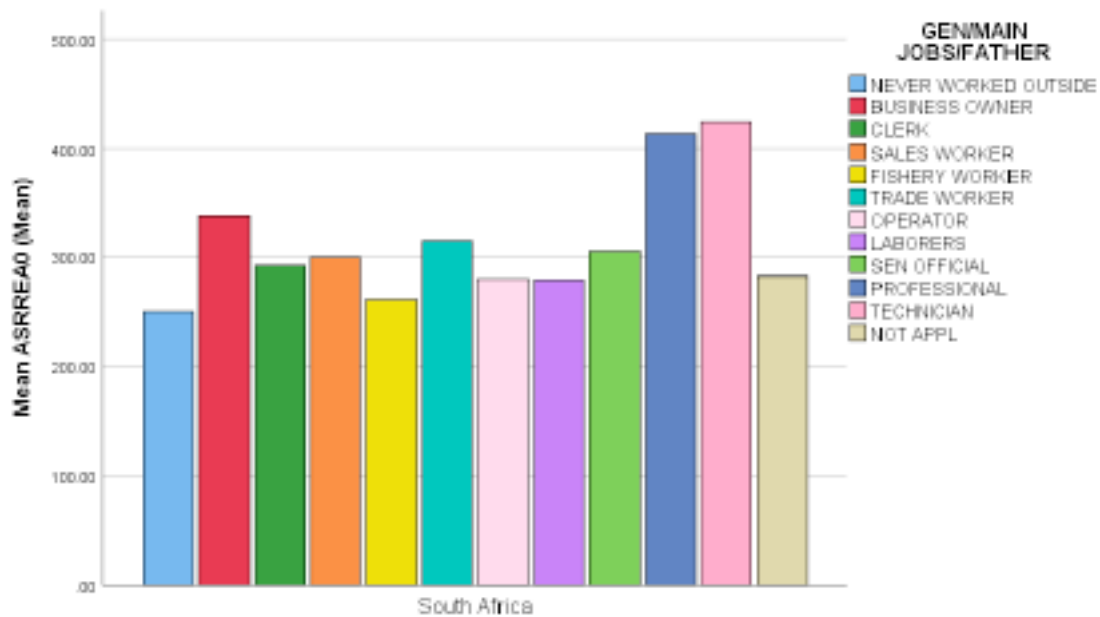
A t-test, done as a comparison between the fathers who have never worked outside the home for pay and those who work as professionals was statistically significant. The results showed that there are more fathers who have never worked compared to those who work as professionals.

5.3.5.4 Kind of Work for the mother (Q12b)

Figure 5.15 illustrates that the kind of work done by the mother. Results reveal that 22.87% (SE = 1.19) of mothers *have never worked outside the home for pay*. Some 5.71% (SE = 0.75) *work as professionals* and 8.72% (SE = 1.36) work as senior *officials*. Around 16.21% (SE = 0.78) indicated *not applicable*. Therefore, the rest of the percentages are distributed amongst different kinds of work. The results show that about a quarter of the mothers *have not worked outside the home for pay*.

Figure 5.15 Kind of employment for the mother (Q11b)
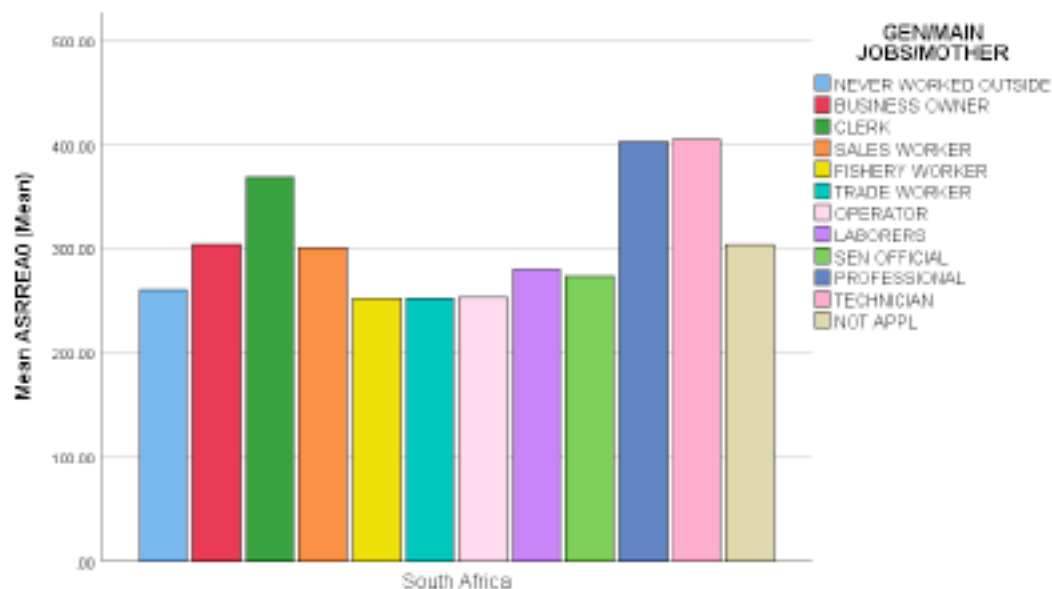
A t-test, done as a comparison between the mothers who have never worked outside the home for pay and those who work as professionals, was statistically significant. The results showed that there are more mothers who have never worked compared to those who work as professionals.

5.4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

The current section (Section 5.4) focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the descriptive and inferential statistics reported in the previous section (Section 5.3). The data analysis and interpretation follow a transformation process, as described by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003). The ultimate aim of the transformation process is to transfer the narratives from the quantitative data analysis to guidelines that can be used for a collection of qualitative data. The transformation process is consistent with the explanatory sequential research design where the quantitative data analysis is used to inform the qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2012, 2013) (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4 on the design).

Following the structure adopted in the previous section (Section 5.3, par 1), I have categorised the data analysis and interpretation into five categorisations, namely: early home literacy activities (5.4.1), parental reading (5.4.2), books at home (5.4.3), parental education (5.4.4) and parental employment (5.4.5). The main focus of this analysis is the significant scores under each categorisation and how analysing such results can inform the qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2012; Pallant, 2010).

5.4.1 Early Home Literacy Activities

According to Archer and Zimmerman (2008), early home literacy activities refer to the language-related activities undertaken at home either by the children alone or with both the child and the parent. The early home literacy activities are associated with positive language development (Combrinck, van Staden & Roux, 2014; Howie et al., 2012). Several questions looked into this item of early home literacy activities (See Section 5.3, Questions 1 to 5).

With regard to the child, the focus of the parent questionnaire was early literacy activities that took place before Grade 1. The results revealed that although a significantly higher number of the parents never engaged in literacy activities before Grade 1, the opposite is currently true with regard to literacy-related activities at home during Grade 1. A significantly higher percentage of parents reported on the child doing certain literacy activities very well in comparison to those who do not do them at all. Critical about this process is the language used when engaging in literacy activities. The results showed that a significantly higher percentage of parents reported to be using the same language at home as the language used at school and thus in the test, when engaging in home activities. Since the majority used the same language, it could be assumed that it is the home language or mother tongue (MT), that was also used at home (Figures 5.2 & 5.3).

Therefore, given that a review of the literature revealed that within the South African context parents tend to prefer the use of English over their mother tongue (Heugh, 2001; De Klerk, 2002), further investigation is needed to ascertain which language participants in the current study use at home and how that language relates to the standard language usage in educational settings. The relationship between language usage at home and the standard language is supported by the theory of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skill (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 2008, 2012; Krashen & Brown, 2007) which is vital in scaffolding second language development and thus proficiency. The results of this enquiry will serve as the background through which a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development can be developed.

The South African Department of Education assumes that the children commence Grade 1 class with the ability to understand and speak the home language (DoE, 2003). The focus group interview (Phase 2) was, therefore, key in identifying how the home language is used by children at home (NEEDU, 2013) as well as at school in the Foundation Phase. The results of the focus group interview also assisted in understanding home language usage through the BICS and CALP concept and as the LoLT in the Foundation Phase.

According to the Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) of the current study, if second language learning does not include CALP, which is required for academic success, an interlanguage might emerge (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.4.1, par 3). As result, a child who can use language for social interaction (BICS) might still perform poorly academically (Cummings, 2012).

There is also an assumption by the Department that children enter the Foundation Phase with no knowledge of the first additional language, which in the current study is English (DBE, 2011). The view by the Department is argued by De Klerk (1999), Webb and Kembo-Sure, (2000), stating that children get exposed in one way or another to the English language. This has been found to be the reason for the emergence of Black South African English (De Klerk, 1999), which once the child enters school has an effect on the development of English as a second language. If children of the parents in this current study have been exposed to English, the above findings and literature seek for further exploration with regard to the possible use of English at home before Grade 1.

In terms of language development within the bilingual school situation, allocation of time is vital. According to the Department, home language is allocated about 10 hours in Grade R and 7 to 8 hours in Grades 1 and 2 (GDE, 2012, DBE, 2011). On the other hand, the first additional language is allocated 2-3 hours in Grades 1 and 2, and 3 to 4 hours in Grade 3 (GDE, 2012, DBE, 2011). The time allocation suggests that more time is dedicated to mother tongue language development and less time to the English language as a second language. The idea of time allocation is to allow more time to be spent on mother tongue as way to establish language principles that can be used for the development of the first additional language (Prinsloo, Rogers, & Harvey, 2018). The time allocation is, however, consistent with other countries. For example, education departments in New York and Canada, gives 6 and 8 hours per week respectively on home language which is more than the time given to second language development (NYC Department of Education, 2011; Kawartha Pine Ridge School Board, 2011). Consistent with the time allocation, the results have also revealed a significantly higher percentage of time spent on reading-related activities compared to those never or almost never spending time on reading-related activities. The qualitative study explores the time spent by the parents of the current study. The next item looks at the time duration spent by parents and their reading-related views.

5.4.2 Parental Reading

Parental reading refers to the personal time that parents spend on reading for themselves (Archer & Zimmerman, 2008). Parental reading investigation was crucial for the current study as literature has revealed that firstly, there is a relationship between parental

reading and student achievement (Kloosterman et al., 2011). For example, it was reported that low parental competency in reading has been associated with the low achievement of learners in the country (Punter, Glas & Meelissen, 2016). Secondly, it was previously established (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3.1) that reading is key to language development (Kucer, 2009; Nel 2005, 2011; Spencer, Lephalala & Pienaar, 2005; van Staden, 2011) as well as parents' attitude to reading, which in turn shapes how children are exposed to and experience text. Therefore, this item examined the time that parents spent reading for enjoyment, the levels of involvement in the reading-related activities and attitudes toward reading.

The results revealed that a there is a significantly higher percentage of parents who read less than an hour a week compared to those who read more than 10 hours. This is shown by a significantly higher percentage of parents who spend time reading for enjoyment compared to those who never or almost never read for enjoyment. However, the time spent on reading generally is concerning as many parents spent about less than an hour a week or less compared those who tend to read more than 10 hours a week. This aspect ties in with attitude to reading: a significant majority of the parents displayed a positive attitude to reading and a significantly higher percentage of parents agreed to the value of reading-related activities compared to those who disagree. Literature has shown that parents' positive and supportive attitudes to reading and undertaking early literacy activities have a significant positive influence on the language development of their children (Archer & Zimmerman, 2008; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Mudzielwana, Joubert, Phatudi & Hartell, 2012; Wei, 2011). In addition, the degree to which children acquire language skills is a strong predictor of future academic success (South African Book Development Council, 2016).

The time that parents generally spend reading with their children at home is matter of concern, when compared to what is required in the school context. According to the time allocation for language-related activities at school, 10 hours is allocated for Grade R and 7 to eight hours for Grades 1 and 2 (GDE, 2012, DBE, 2011). Therefore, the lower percentage (16%) of parents spending more than ten hours a week reading could suggest that over 80% of parents spend less than what is required for Grade R on literacy-related activities. A longitudinal study including 27 nations (South African included), has revealed that a scholarly culture, which includes parents making more books available in the home and modelling this culture by engaging with the books, enhances their children's educational achievement (Evans, Kelley, Sikora & Treiman, 2010). The aforementioned study further states that the effects are "strong among the underclass in a society designed to maintain group privileges (South African Blacks under apartheid)" (Evans et

al., 2010, p. 17), which typifies the parents of the current study. Although the Department encourage parents to model reading to their children at home, it is not indicated how much time is recommended or sufficient (DBE, 2016). However, based on the aforementioned research (Evans et al., 2010), what is essential for the parents, is to advocate for the scholarly culture by increasing the books they have in their homes.

5.4.3 Books at Home

Books at home refer to various types of books found in the home for reading (Howie et al., 2012). According to Archer and Zimmerman (2008, p. 31), there seems to be "a relationship between the number of books at home and achievement of learners". Children who are exposed to more books at home are likely to engage with the reading material and subsequently have better language development than those with no exposure or with limited exposure. The number of books available at home also reveals the value parents place on literacy-related activities and reading, particularly for information seeking and talking about books. Therefore, the significant number of more than half of the South African parents not having more than 10 books at home is a concerning matter. A study ascertained that there needs to be at least 20 books in the home to have significant impact to propelling the child higher in education (Wharton, 2010). Therefore, the above results for South African parents fall drastically short of what is indicated in research. It is because of concerns such as this that have prompted research projects such as PIRLS 2006, 2011, 2016 to be undertaken in South Africa in an attempt to identify problem areas and to offer recommendations to the Department. In addition, studies such as these identify the value of books, reading and its effect on educational achievement. However, the fact that only half of South African parents read at least weekly for leisure (South African Book Development Council, 2016), is a cause for concern. Such results are consistent with the latest general household survey by Statistics South Africa that revealed that over 47% of adults never read with their children at home (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Therefore, this item was investigated further in the qualitative data to gain an understanding of themes that might relate and offer some recommendations.

However, the data does not provide information about what parents would like to read or the kind of books they like talking about. Although reading for pleasure is important for cognitive development (Sullivan & Brown, 2016), the kind of books present in the home seems to make a positive difference (DBE, 2016; Evans et al., 2010; Mullis et al., 2007). Therefore, to know the kind of books that parents read, can add value to the current study.

5.4.4 Parental Education

Parental education looked at the level of education achieved by the parent (Archer & Zimmerman, 2008). Literature has shown that there seems to be a relationship between parents' level of education and academic achievement of the child (Statistics South Africa, 2011; Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011). A comparison was made between the parents who did not go to school with those with a first degree or diploma. The results revealed that a higher percentage of parents did not go to school compared to those who have a first degree or a diploma. Looking at the results of both the fathers and mothers respectively (Figures 5.10 & 5.11), it is revealed that over 80% of the parents do not have post Grade 12 qualifications. The high figure of parents who have no post matric qualification seems to be consistent with the low learner achievement in South Africa (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011). Therefore, the qualitative data looked at this relationship by exploring the aspects of post matric qualifications and whether that is an important theme for parental support.

5.4.5 Parental Employment

Parental employment refers to the nature of employment by the South African parents (Archer & Zimmerman, 2008). In South Africa, unemployment has been a long-standing problem (Statistics South Africa, 2011), and it is a concern that the situation is not improving (Statistics South Africa, 2019). Parental employment is considered important for the current study in that literature has shown a relationship between unemployed parents and low levels of parental involvement (Ndebele, 2015). Therefore, in the current study, the employment of parents was investigated and a comparison done between parents who are working full time and those who are looking for a job. With regard to the father, it was revealed that a significant number (45.31%) of fathers are working full time as compared to those looking for a job (15.29%). The same was also true with the mothers, but the difference was a significantly small percentage (4.52%). Since the current study did not have the same parents participating as those in PIRLS, it could not be validated how many of the parents who took part in PIRLS were still working at the time of the current study. It would be been interesting to relate such results with the current report from Statistics South Africa.

Studies by Posel (2012) and O'Donoghue (2014) have also shown a relationship between low socio-economic status and low parental involvement. Therefore, the descriptive and inferential results on the kind of parental employment assessed this factor. A t-test compared the parents who have never worked outside the home for pay to those who work as professionals. Both results showed that there were more parents who have never

worked outside home for pay compared to those who work as professionals. These results seem to relate with the above description about parental education (sub-section 5.4.4), which shows that more parents did not go to school compared to those who have a first degree or a diploma. The implication is a lower percentage of parents are employment in professional positions because such work requires higher levels of education of which a first degree or diploma is a first step. Therefore, the current study also looked into this factor through a qualitative data collection process.

Overall, the above results reveal that the parents seem to have a positive attitude towards literacy and these can be deduced from their support of the children with literacy activities and the results of the parental reading item. However, the limited time spent on reading and the low number of books at home seems to suggest a need for further exploration of these results. Thus, even though the parents tend to have a positive attitude towards reading, it is important to understand the reasons behind the limited literacy materials to support language development and the limited time spent on reading. In addition, the fact that a very low percentage of both fathers and mothers have a first degree or diploma is concerning. The low educational level seems to have a close correlation with the work status of the parents. Thus, there are many parents who did not go to school and this too seems to correlate with a low percentage of books in the home and time spent on literacy-related activities. Although most parents work full time compared to those looking for a job, the majority work outside the professional level of work. Therefore, a further qualitative study was conducted to explore these results in order to gain deeper understanding of the experience of the parents of English second language learners.

5.5 INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESULTS

According to Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie's (2003) suggestions, one approach in mixed methods is followed by the data integration of both approaches. Data integration includes the interpretation and discussion of both the quantitative and qualitative data to provide a holistic understanding of the collected data. This section includes the focus group interviews followed by the presentation of the identified themes and their descriptions.

5.5.1 Qualitative Data: Focus Group Data Selection

According to Stewart and Shamdasani (2015), presentation of focus group data is not a simple process; it requires care and judgement. In the current study, care and judgement was ensured by following the four phases guidelines suggested by Vaismoradi et al., (2016, pp. 102 -107), as described in Chapter 4 (See Section 4.8.3). As guided by the

initialisation phase (see Vaismoradi et al., 2016), I read through the transcripts of the focus group interview sessions. In the construction phase, I reviewed what was said by individual participants and compared this with what was shared by the group in order to identify the themes of the current study. This process was important to maintain the balance of the presented data. Morgan (1997, p. 64) warns "too much summarisation is not only dry but also deprives the reader of even the indirect contact with participants that their verbatim statements provide". Therefore, to avoid too much summarisation, the data presentation provides quotations of individuals in the group to give clarity of what was said. This, however, is done carefully to "match the quotation with the importance of the topic" (Morgan, 1997, 64). The relevance of the chosen themes to the current study was ensured by following the rectification phase (Vaismoradi et al. (2016), whereby, not only did I compare the themes with current literature, I have also taken time to distance myself from the data in order to re-examine it with fresh eyes for a better and critical analyse.

Since the results presented in this section (5.5) came from the focus group, it was not important during the presentation of results to indicate to whom among the participants the quotation belong. Hence, the quotations are presented without any specifications to an individual participant. However, reference to identify the location of the quote on the transcripts is given, as described in Chapter 4 (see sub-section 4.8.3). Most important was the decision on the topic or themes to be presented in this analysis. Morgan (1997, p. 63) stated that one should consider some people who spoke on the particular topic and the energy and enthusiasm before a topic is taken as important. This process was followed during the review of data transcripts to decide on the themes of the current study.

In addition to the frequency of the statement to decide the important topics or themes, I have looked at the statement, which referred to the objectives of the current study. Stewart and Shamdasani, (2015) stated that a "successful focus group must be consistent with the objectives of the research". Therefore, the themes were also chosen based on their consistency with the objectives of this current study. That is, important themes were also chosen based on whether they answer the questions of the current study. Focus group guiding questions served a crucial point in this regard to provide the focus of the current study (Puchta & Potter, 2004; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2015). It is, therefore, based on the above backdrop that I present the themes related to the qualitative data.

5.5.2 Qualitative Data: Identified Themes

Six themes were identified from the transcripts, namely: alternative parenting, parent-child activities, technology and Internet support, parents' challenges, language usage and

quality of education. I present these themes below with their sub-themes. A brief description and analysis of each theme and its sub-themes is also provided:

5.5.2.1 Alternative parenting (Theme 1)

Alternative parenting is considered a form of parenting which includes any person playing the role of a parent other than the biological parent of the learner (South African Schools Act, 1996; DBE, 2014). Alternative parenting emerged from the focus group interview as one of the themes which relates the concept of alternative parenting identified as a factor of parental support in education (see Chapter 2 sub-section 2.3.4). Alternative parenting thus is seen as a key substitute support to the parental role with regard to learner support, with others taking on the role that a parent should play. Alternative parenting emerged from discussions about the activities that the parents do with the children. The following extracts relate to situations where the role of alternative parenting is seen in after-school care centres, with family relatives, extra classes and tutors.

Okay what I do is that, I enrolled my kids for aftercare (Grade 4), which is a <u>school after care</u>. I opted for that one because of the curriculum; they know the system and everything. So, they assist with homework. They have homework for reading and after reading what they do are the English activities. Every day they are given activities to complete. 1M2

My one (referring to the child) is in grade 3. What I do every day, <u>I have an aunt at home</u> and she is living at home so I ask her to assist my child when doing homework. (Referring to activities while the mother still at work). 1M5

That's why even at school they introduced <u>extra classes</u>… (Referring to the view raised during discussion that parents do not have time to assist their children at home. 2M216

Alternative parenting emerged strongly as one of the elements that aid in parental support, which helps in completing some of the school activities that the parents would have had to do with the child. From the above extracts, this support ranges from homework support to language development through reading activities, key tasks that a child has to do after school. For example, in previous chapters (See Chapter 1, Section 1.3; Chapter 2, Section 2.3; Chapter 3, Section 3.3), the importance of reading was discussed, especially in early childhood as it helps in language development (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011). Alternative support has been found to reduce the direct

involvement of parents in supporting their children. It seems that with many parents working full time, having alternative parenting support, reduces the time constraints that parents might have in supporting their child through completing homework tasks and reading, although it seems that the parents do confirm that the schoolwork is completed well by signing the homework diary. Prinsloo (2008) stated that extra classes are beneficial when conducted by the good competent teachers and tutors, as seen in the following extract:

> *I wanted my daughter actually to have a tutor before I took her to the government school. I said okay let me get you a Zulu tutor and a Sepedi tutor. Every Saturday we will sit with this lady or gentleman who will teach them the technical. 2M161*

Although the collected data does not provide information about the background of the people providing extra-classes of alternative support, the positive role of such support is of high importance. Therefore, the role of alternative parenting as an after-school educational support as well as extra classes and tutoring, seems an important aspect to be considered for inclusion in developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development.

5.5.2.2 Parent-child activities (Theme 2)

Parent-child activities refer to the educational activities that parents engage in with the child for educational support. It was indicated that identification of the activities undertaken by parents with their children should be seen as a form of learner support and an indication of parental involvement. However, the issue of non-involvement of parents gives added importance to this theme (DBE, 2012a; Mmotlane, Winnaar & Wa Kivilu, 2009) especially in view of the previous theme of alternative parental support. These activities include going through the work done with after-school care support and reading with the child.

> *And then when they get home what I do is I go through what they did at after care. And then sometimes you will find that there are mistakes, so I will go through the mistakes with them and rectify where they went wrong, and they will also read to me as well and then I will sign next to the teacher's signature to say that I went through the reading as well. 1M2*

> *So, I correct her, I don't ask aunt to correct it and I don't ask aunt to do it with*
> *... So, she must do it alone and then when I come back, I will mark and check*
> *where she went wrong and then I will call her and say this is wrong, do it.*
> *1M5*

Parent-child activities relayed here indicate some form of evidence of parental involvement. The extracts indicate parents going through the schoolwork done by the child at extra classes or after-school care centres show their involvement, albeit on a lesser level.

Another form of parental involvement is reading to and/or with the child. In the extracts below, the parents make some effort to read with their children. I refer to this as an effort because it does not seem to work out as the parents would have preferred. It is an effort because the parents indicated that often the children do not want to read.

> *He will only read when I'm sitting like maybe with notes and stuff, or if I'm*
> *taking my books to read, is when he will show interest and read and go*
> *through.1M29*

> *But what I have seen is that now she is starting to read because she sees me*
> *reading, I had to find out what she loves on the reading. 1M17*

What motivates the children to read is when they see their parents reading, and often this happens when parents are engage in their studies or reading any other material. In the absence of parents' studies, it does not appear as if parents make conscious decisions to get books to read as a way to model reading for their children. It seems to happen as an intervention measure to get the children to read or to listen to their reading homework. This suggests that parents might lack a culture of reading for leisure as a way to model reading to their children. This could also be related to the unwillingness of the children to read, as reading might not be the norm in their homes and a culture or reading has not been developed in the home.

Regarding homework support, parents indicated that going through the work helps them identify mistakes from the extra class support or after-school care centre. This suggests that the work done by after-school care workers might not be up to standard with what might be required at school. However, it would be an exaggeration to indicate that the

entire work done by the after-school care workers is not up to standard. At this point, it can only be deduced that such support helps in supporting the child to get some of the work done to reduce the load on parents. The issue of the identified mistakes is addressed in the research by Prinsloo (2008), who indicates the importance of having the best teachers and tutors for extra classes and aftercare. Although this might not guarantee the absence of mistake(s), it seems to suggest a solution to prevent the problem.

Given the identified theme of parent-child activities, it would have been interesting to discover the motivation for the parents to engage in this activity with the child even though they have done the work with after-school care workers. One of the above extracts indicates that parents have to sign the work of the learner as an indication that they have checked the child's work. According to Brown (1989) in her study involving parents in the education of their children, requesting parents to review and sign homework is one of the methods to get the parents involved, and could also be the primary reason why parents check the homework. Thus, although the parents could check books in order to fulfil their requirements from the school, the parents of the current study did not suggest signing of books as a motivation for them to check their children's schoolwork. Instead, parents suggested that they do so because they care about what the child does at school and at after-school care centres.

5.5.2.3 Technology and Internet support (Theme 3)

Technology and Internet support emerged as an unexpected phenomenon among all themes as it did not show eminence in the literature review (See Chapter 2). However, as a theme of the current study, technology and Internet support came out very strongly and included accessing educational material on the Internet, Google search, WhatsApp usage and educational programmes on television. As reported by Howie et al. (2008 p. 36): "As part of everyday experiences outside of school, learners may be exposed to a wide variety of texts ranging from magazines, books, newspapers or text in electronic format as found on television subscripts and the Internet". In the extract below, the parent has used the Internet to find reading information, downloaded it and printed it onto hard copy for the child to read. Access to books may be difficult and expensive and this is one way in which the parent has become involved in creating literacy activities to support language development.

> But then what I've done from my side, I've printed these <u>Bible stories from the internet</u> and made a file for him. 1M29

In this extract, the parent has used the Internet to source worksheets for the child as extension work, which shows the interest that the parent has in the child's reading development as well as development in other subjects such as mathematics.

> The worksheet, master one, the one that I said I download every day, it has problems, and memorandum….1M176

It was previously reported that children get exposed in one way or another to the English language. In the following extract, a parent describes how his child has developed English language skills through television viewing, even though he is still so young (aged 4 years) and might still be developing basic interpersonal communicative skills in his mother tongue:

> He's only 4 and he is so fluent in English, I think his English is even better than all of us in the house, 'ja' and I ask myself where did he learn that and he is into TV, cartoons, he loves cartoons, he loves anything that has cars, he will watch Formula 1 from beginning to the end. 1M82

The advent of the Internet and the ability to 'surf' for information has offered an alternative to the use of books for information. In addition, handheld devices such as cellular phones and iPads give ready access to information. In the following extracts, parents explain their use of the Internet and Google:

> When a child approaches you with homework, okay my experience. If I don't know the answer I turn to my phone and google that's what I do. 1M123

In this particular extract, the parent is aware of the dangers of too much access to multimedia and too much time spent with devices. As such, he limits this for the child, ensuring that a balance is maintained with parental monitoring. It does seem, though that within this new age of technology, children are far more knowledgeable with technology and from an early age are comfortable incorporating it into their lives, both at school and for leisure, although parents are aware of the dangers of too much technology.

> In my spare time at work, I do the 'googling' because if I can show him he will be like every day let's go to Google, so I don't want that. 1M133

So, she now has the laptop, she has the modem, she actually goes to Google
herself, at school she was taught how to use Google and what not to do in the
computers and what to do. So, I just have to oversee. So, yes she is in there
understanding that Google knows it all. 1M138

As society moves into the electronic age, more and more available apps seem to provide access to a variety of information. Social media platforms such as WhatsApp have provided a link between school and parents and parents themselves:

Oh and then the class has the WhatsApp group, that's when you get home
and you find that there's a homework you don't understand as a mother, you
can always chat with the other mothers as well …. 1M144

The focus group participants of the current study expressed strong views about the role of technology and the Internet in providing parental support (See extract 1M123 above). The parents indicated the easy availability of providing solutions to support children through the Internet and the WhatsApp social media platform. This theme seems to work well as a supporting tool to other themes (see sub-section 5.5.3. below for further discussion on this theme).

5.5.2.4 Parents' challenges (Theme 4)

Parents' challenges refer to challenges faced by parents that hinder parental involvement in their children's education (Slain, 2019). Although the challenges differ from parent to parent, there are general challenges that they face (O'Donoghue, 2014). For example, Slain (2019) identified limited time and lack of support as some of the challenges that hinder them from being involved in their children's education. This theme was important for the current study as it provided insight into the reasons for lack of, or limited parental involvement. The four sub-themes of parental support, parent-child relationship, time, helplessness and understanding of the child's curriculum, describe the challenges of parents in supporting their children. The challenges that parents face with regard to the relationship with their children are related to the home activities

5.5.2.4.1 Parent-Child relationship
The parents indicated that their children often refuse to read when requested to do so. The reason for this refusal was not explored as it was outside the purpose of the current study, although one parent suggested that this might be due to the stubbornness of the child.

> *My challenge is reading. She doesn't want to read …_ 1M5*

Other parents commented on the tension which develops between them when engaging in literacy-related activities or reading. It seems that a love of reading has not been fostered and as a result, the children tend to see reading as a task rather than as something to be enjoyed.

> *She will read but after forcing her to read and that's my challenge to say I've got a problem to say is she understanding what she is reading or she is just looking at the book and would like to say let me satisfy my mom to say I'm reading because she said I must read. 1M11*

In both the subsequent extracts, the tension caused between the parents and the children due to the child's reluctance to read is noted. This tension leads to emotional outbursts or responses from both the parent and the child. According to the parents, the child might end up crying, and the parent might isolate himself from the child (See extract 1M29 & 1M35). The process of having reading activities leading to psychological outcomes where the child is crying and the parent feel isolated, could be related to the butterfly effect of DST of the current study.

> *My concern is the understanding of what you are reading. So, I don't know really how to work around it and I find myself sometimes impatient, scream… 1M29*

> *She knows that I give up and she goes her way and I go my way, but then how far is that way gonna continue. 1M35*

As a result, parents are reluctant to persevere as they want to avoid the conflict, although they do understand the value of reading and its role in education. Literature shows, however, that such behaviour might arise due to reading difficulties in children (Dreyer, 2015). This could be the result of a lack of early literacy activities leading to children manifesting with reading difficulties or disorders, which in turn could affect second language development (Snowling, 2017). Therefore, examining the literature could help to determine reasons for a child's refusal to read.

Thus, although shared reading between the parent and the child can support second language development (Boonk et al., 2018), it also has the butterfly effect potential resulting in behaviour outcomes that were not intended (Paulson, 2005), such as those indicated by the experience of the parents of the current study. Such outcomes however, do not provide a solution to the reading problem as the other parent noted, "*but then how far is that way gonna continue*" (1M35).

5.5.2.4.2 Time

The relationship problem is augmented by the limited time found in the day with perhaps both parents working full time.

> *But where is the time, <u>I don't think the time is enough</u>..., we come back at 4,*
> *7/8 is bed time, where do we have this time to (read with the child). 2M210*

It has been found that parents do not have much time at the end of the day to engage in reading activities with the child. In addition, the refusal of the child to read is viewed by the parents as a challenge, which is difficult to overcome.

> *We <u>don't get so much time</u> on our hands to sit and I don't know because she*
> *doesn't, if you like reinforce something to her she gets irritated, it feels like*
> *you are forcing her and she starts crying and their voice is up there… I give*
> *up and then I say 'okay do it alone. 1M29*

One parent stated that with the limited time available, it becomes difficult to ensure that the child does engage in reading tasks. It seems that there is resistance and once tension builds between the parent and the child, it is difficult to continue, particularly as these activities occur only once the parents and children get home. It could be that the child (and the parent) is tired and not in any conduction, after a full day, to begin with reading activities.

5.5.2.4.3 Helplessness

This extract illustrates the emotions which parents experience when they firstly, feel ill-equipped with supporting the children through engaging in literacy activities, secondly have only limited time, and finally, deal with a child who perhaps is not wanting to read and is resistant to engaging in any literacy activities.

> *I must be honest I didn't try any other avenues or to encourage him or, I think I'm like tired or option-out I must say, I don't know what to do anymore…1M51*

Such situations lead to feelings of helplessness and a point where parents feel that options have run out and ultimately they do not really know how to overcome the challenges to offer that all-important parental support.

5.5.2.4.4 Understanding of the Child's Curriculum

The helpless state, explicated above, is exacerbated by the parents' lack of understanding of the child's curriculum, which means that parents are perplexed on how they are supposed to assist the children with their education.

> *From my point of view, honestly my ability to assist him it's on a level of 1, I'm not so well equipped to assist a grade 4 child. In fact, I never stayed with a child. I don't know how to go around it. My mom was always there, so on this time, day and time, I'm not that well equipped. 1M133*

> *…we don't understand what is required from us or, they know what to do but we are not sure how to assist them with the curriculum. 1M175*

All these psychological behaviour outcomes that emerge from reading activities, reveals the butterfly effect that a simple process of reading can produce instead of the second language development, which is intended. In an article entitled: *Second language acquisition and the national curriculum,* Dampier (2014) writes about the lack of clarity by the education departments in presenting the curriculum. This is an issue that even this current study has noted (Chapter 3). Therefore, one can understand the parents' situation in having difficulty in understanding what is expected of them. To overcome these challenges, a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, taking into consideration of the curriculum and the reasons that can hinder children from reading, must be looked into. The conceptual framework will also assist parents in getting their children to read and avoid the emotional outbursts associated with the refusal to read.

5.5.2.5 Language Usage (Theme 5)

Language usage refers to the language that is used by the parents in providing parental support. It is through the medium of language that the attitude of parents towards

language (and with that attitude to reading and reading-related activities) that either promotes or hinders its usage. This theme focuses at how parents and their children use language, and the views they both have about language.

Prinsloo (2018) and others (Cummins, 2008, 2012; Krashen & Brown, 2007) have shown that mother tongue language is crucial to serve as building blocks to support second language development. However, it is reported that some parents prefer English-use over mother tongue language (Heugh, 2001; De Klerk, 2002). The reasons for the use of English as a second language over mother tongue is important for the current study, which aims to assist parents on how to support their children in this regard. It is on this basis that this theme is important for the current study, as it has the potential to answer some of the questions related to reasons for parents to opt for English as a second language over mother tongue. The language usage theme includes the following sub-themes: mother tongue, language levels, language used during home activities, English as an international language and reading.

5.5.2.5.1 Mother tongue
Second language development is one of the dynamic processes of the current study. However, the language that is used in the home prior to formal education is essential for language development.

The use of English language in reading raised views from the parents that were important to note. Although parents indicated that they value the mother tongue, they viewed it as important only for communication reasons and not for academic purposes.

> *Our mother tongue is not necessary for them to be fluent in, he can talk the mother tongue we can understand …2M122*

It seems that parents who do not foster the development of mother tongue are unaware of the vital foundation that mother tongue provides with regard to second language development.

> *So, to answer your question short, no effort whatsoever to chase our mother tongue. 2M77*

This view that some participants had about mother tongue development indicates a need for consideration of the Basic Interpersonal Communications Skills (BICS) and Cognitive

Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 2008, 2012). Parents viewed mother tongue as only necessary for communication or Basic Interpersonal Communications Skills (BICS) and did not seem to think it important to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Views expressed in the literature about language development were overlooked. For example, the parents did not see any association between mother tongue and English, which is contrary to the views expressed in the literature (Bouwer, 2004; DBE, 2012c; Nel 2005, 2011). The parents' view about mother tongue is contrary to the view held by the Department of Education, which hold that both the home language and the first additional languages (second language) are learned at the CALP level (DBE, 2013b), which aligns with theory that a foundation of both BICS and CALP in the home language leads to an easier transition to developing a second language (Cummins,1979, 2008, 2012).

5.5.2.5.2 Language levels

Language learning includes all official languages and are offered at different language levels (DBE, 2011b, p. 8). As many schools do not offer the home languages of some or all the learners, one of the two languages are offered at home language level and at second language level (first additional language), which refers to the proficiency of the language (DBE, 2011b, p. 8). The less value that parents place on mother tongue, as compared to English, was also shown by their lack of understanding of the language order levels. The parents were not sure whether their mother tongue is the first language at school or English is the first language. In the extract below, the parent show confusion about the LoLT and second language.

> *My understanding, as long as the language is not your mother tongue, it automatically means she is doing it as a second language. 2M7*

In an attempt to correct the other parents who noted the comment, one parent stated, as shown below, that isiXhosa, which was her home language, was her child's second language as English was being used as the first language and the LoLT.

> *Xhosa is her second language. 1M79*

Some parents agreed with the statement made by one of the parents that the mother tongue is the first language regardless of the languages that a child learns at school. However, their understanding was that, if the child had taken English and Afrikaans at school, the languages would be studied as second and third levels and that there would be no first language (See Section 5.5.2.5.3 above).

So, when I checked it and studied it, <u>it only goes up to two</u>, so it would be first and second language, <u>there won't be any third or fourth</u>. 2M15

This misunderstanding suggests that parents are not entirely interested in understanding the Departmental language policy or the language policy at school. In order to support their children both at home and at school, parents should develop an understanding of language levels, which are described in the Department of Education policies and shown on the report cards of every learner (DBE, 2011b).

In the last extract, it seems that the parent has some understanding of the need to develop the mother tongue, but also to spend time using English with homework tasks. This participant is very aware that from Grade 4, there is a transition to leaning through the medium of English and all subjects thereafter are taught in English. If a child by the end of Grade 4 has not developed CALP in English, then academic proficiency will be compromised (Cummins, 2008; DBE, 2012b, 2012c).

It's mainly enforcing the mother tongue at home, that's what I was saying with my niece, I enforce that we speak Xhosa in the house, English at school and homework is English because I can't teach history in IsiXhosa. 2M89

5.5.2.5.3 Language used during home activities
As previously discussed, early learning activities engaged in between the child and parent before entering school and formal education, are usually conducted in the mother tongue. This interaction forms a foundation for language development of the mother tongue. However, once the child enters school, and depending on the language policy of the school, English comes into play. It is then that parents are faced with using both mother tongue and the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).

In line with this view, one parent even stated that she enforces *the mother tongue at home …, I enforce that we speak Xhosa in the house*, but when it comes to school activities, she uses English as the LoLT that needs to be developed. However, in some cases, especially when the child has just entered school at Grade 1 level, the LoLT is still developing and English has only just been introduced, parents find that, in order for their children to understand, they need to resort to code-switching. Code-switching is seen as a change from one language to another within the same oral text (DBE, 2011b, p. 111).

Mine they don't have foundation. I had to switch they don't understand because <u>the only language that is in them is Sepedi</u>, so they just started now in grade 1, so I'm … I have an experience. I was a teacher before, I am a teacher by profession, <u>so I know how to play around language.</u> 2M46

5.5.2.5.4 English as an international language

Parents view English as having more value than mother tongue. It was based on this reason that they feel that mother tongue should not be developed beyond the BICS level, which is basic conversational language. On the other hand, English is viewed as the international language and key to academic success as the majority of subjects at all levels of education are taught and studied in English. The parents cited the limitations of mother tongue versus the international value of English as the main reason for preferring English. It was based on this view that parents opted for English development instead of mother tongue.

<u>Everything is in English</u>, I'm telling you … 2M72

In fact, the mother tongue was viewed as a hindrance to the development of English and limiting the child's career.

<u>There's no Sepedi (on WhatsApp)</u>, you see the international comes in this way, when you want them to be vernacular but at the end of the day internationally, if you want them to be taken on as different experts in life and both your <u>medical terms mostly it's English, your IT is English, you know sciences are in English</u>. 2M74

This view by the parents is however, supported by the findings of Banda (2000), who stated that the focus on mother tongue is becoming less attractive as compared to the lucrative opportunities offered by the English language. It is, therefore, this opportunity that the parents are taking in pursuing the development of English language, as they feel their mother tongue will limit them.

5.5.2.5.5 Reading

In the parent-child activity theme, reading was referred to as one of the parent-child activities. However, in the current theme about language usage, reading emerged as a sub-theme, which uses language. Important to note is the parents' concern about the reluctance of their children to read or lack of understanding by those who read.

The parents participating in the current study were concerned about their children when developing language skills, whether home language or English as a second language. In the parent-child activity theme (sub-section 5.5.2.2), it was indicated that reading is one of the activities that the parents engaged in with their children in order to develop language skills. However, in some cases, children, for some reason or another, do not want to read and seemingly cannot be forced. This means that parents meet with resistance and subsequently are unable to offer in-depth parental support.

She doesn't want to read; she doesn't want to read at all. 1M5

In the following extract, the parent has been able to interact with the child during reading activies, but it seems that although the child can read accurately, it is more parrot fashion without reading smoothly, and with appropriate phrasing and expression, taking into account the dynamics of reading such as tone, pace and awareness of the conventions of reading (DBE, 2011b). This aspect aligns with what is required by the curriculum and the parents' feelings are being ill-prepared to assist their children.

…he will read the sentence, he will start and there is no comma, there is no point, he will read, read and then I will have to stop him and ask him, 'Why are you just reading? 1M29

She will read but after forcing her to read and that's my challenge to say. I've got a problem to say is she understanding what she is reading or she is just looking at the book and would like to say let me satisfy my mom to say I'm reading because she said I must read.1M11

As indicated in the two extracts, either the children refused to read, encountered difficulties when reading or lacked comprehension when they read. Concerns were raised by parents as to whether their children have only learnt to read word for word with little understanding of what they were reading. PIRLS 2006 defines reading literacy as "the ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual. Young readers can construct meaning from a variety of texts. They read to learn, to participate in communities of readers in school and everyday life, and for enjoyment" (Mullis, Kennedy, Martin & Sainsbury, 2006, p.3).

During data collection, these two problems were areas of concern. Although it was beyond the scope of the current study to explore the reasons for the reluctance to read and the

lack of comprehension, these factors are however important to parental support (See Chapter 6, section 6.6.1).

This theme caused an intense debate among the participants which suggested that it needs serious attention as a critical component of a conceptual framework on parental support. Analysis of this theme and inclusion of its role in a conceptual framework on parental support requires that one critically review its usage. It could be reviewed how mother tongue is used by those who advocate for it, before it can be effectively adopted and implemented by the parents. The warning of Banda (2000, p. 64) seems true today that, "as long as policymakers and those in places of influence appear to send mixed signals to ordinary people, the general change of attitude required for an effective bilingual language in education policy will remain illusive". Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support that aims to promote the importance of the mother tongue and the use of English, as an additive language (second language), should address the general use of language usage in South Africa as whole.

5.5.2.6 Quality of Education (Theme 6)

Quality of education refers to that standard of education and services that the school offers. The extract below represents the views of the parents about what is offered to their children at public schools in the township compared to the schools in towns.

> *"It's just that now, the fact that you take your child there, <u>it means that you not going to have much (With regard to school services)</u>." 2M60*

Parents were critical of township schools as they felt that they did not offer quality education, comprising an inclusive broad curriculum incorporating extra-curricular activities, which is vital for equipping their children for their place in today's changing society.

> *… if the location (township) schools is giving as much extra murals and their advanceness, we would have no problem. We would take our kids there but because now you can see that now the world has changed, <u>if you are going to take your child in there (township schools), they are not going to learn how to swim. They are not going to learn a lot of things. So, you will be setting them up for a bit of a failure.</u> 2M53*

The quality of education was discussed in the literature review as one of the main reasons for the poor performance of the learners (DBE, 2012d; Howie et al., 2008). Many factors

influence quality in schools and factors such as size of class, curriculum coverage, poor resources and the ability of the teacher and this in turn affects parents' decision of where to enrol their children. Many parents as such move into larger towns and cities in order for their children to attend school where they feel better education is offered, particularly if additional services are provided to support the child, as the extract below suggests:

> …that's _why some of the children will then become troublesome in the_ _classroom_ and then you have to go through psychologists and things they do not have … but I know in _our towns we even have psychology_. If they see they will take your child for assessments and then even refer you, even apply for you for a special school … but in there they don't, and _the number of kids_ _in the one classroom, in the towns is few_. 2M87

During focus group interviews, the quality of education emerged as the determining factor for choosing schools by the parents. Since parents viewed mother tongue as having a lesser priority compared to English, and did not play a major role when it came to a decision about school choice. Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) suggested that low esteem could be the reason for parents choosing English over their mother tongue. However, the findings in this theme are contrary to that. Thus, parents choose English, based on opportunities that the language offer (Banda, 2002). In addition, the choice of English is also, by default, based on the quality of the school of choice. Therefore, these findings suggest that the issue of quality of education should be considered attentively to understand its impact in influencing the decision of the parents regarding school choice.

5.5.3 Qualitative Data and Quantitative Data Synthesis

Data synthesis provides an overall analysis of the data from both the quantitative and qualitative results. This synthesis focuses on the interpreted quantitative and qualitative data. To guide this analysis process, I apply the presented theoretical framework of the current study, Dynamic System Theory (DST). The ultimate goal of this section is to identify the characteristics that could form part of a conceptual framework for parental support, which answers the last sub question of the current study:

> **RSQ4: What are the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development?**

As previously underscored, the current study aimed at developing a conceptual framework that could inform theorising about parental support concerning second language

development. This is a two-tiered process, which aims at supporting both parents and learners. Therefore, this analysis takes into consideration factors and elements of each focus area, either parents or learner or both.

5.5.3.1 Home activities and parental involvement

Home activities refer to the educational activities that take place between the parent and the child. In the current study, reading and homework activities were the main home activities that parents engaged in with their children. Drawing from literature, two reasons can be identified to support the importance of home activities between the parent and the child. Firstly, shared reading between the parent and the child indicates that the language development of both the parents and their children is developed. Literature has shown that a reading activity is fundamental to language development (Du Plessis, 2012; McCabe, 2011; Van Dyk & Weideman, 2004). Thus, benefits are not only for children, parents also develop themselves in the process. Secondly, shared reading between the parents and their children confirm that the parents are involved in their children's education. One of the main problems of the current study is the indicated lack of support or involvement of parents in their children's education (DBE, 2012a; Mmotlane, Winnaar & Wa Kivilu, 2009). Therefore, the occurrence of these activities provides a contrary view to what literature indicates. It confirms involvement by parents to some extent as they engage in reading and homework activities with the child. However, from a DST perspective, one cannot predict the trajectory of the systems development. Thus, even though the result of the current study has shown that parents do engage in educational activities with their children to some extent, it cannot be predicted how this involvement will turn out. As seen in some instances, a simple shared reading experience between the parents and children led to totally different behaviour outcomes, which produced negative psychological effects for both the parent and the child (See sub-section 5.5.2.4 below).

It is important however, to note the use of the concept, "parental involvement" in literature. This term is loosely used in literature to refer to parents' support and parents' participation (Create South Africa Policy Brief 4, 2011; Mmotlane, Winnaar & Wa Kivilu, 2009). In the current study, it refers to the parents' support that result from parents being involved in their children's education. Literature has shown that this term is comprehensive. Thus, parental involvement can include both the care and educational support of the child by the parent (Children's Act of 38 of 2005, 2005 & Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, 1996). Therefore, when parental involvement or support is mentioned, it is important for one to indicate in which area support is seen.

Many studies have been undertaken about parents' support, and all of them refer to specific areas of support. For example, a study by Ratzilani-Makatu (2014) focused on parental support with regard to pregnant adolescents. The other studies focused on parental support with regard to terminally ill HIV infected adolescents (Mangena-Netshikweta, Tshitangano, Mudhovozi & Tshililo, 2014), and support with regards to promoting children's physical activities (Kanan & Al-Karasneh, 2009). These studies serve as an example that support is specified in studies of parental support (see also, Bannink, Van Hove & Idro, 2016; Setswe, Johannes & Kgoroeadira, 2009, for other examples). Therefore, to mention that parents are not involved can be misleading. Parents might be not be attending parents' meetings at school, but they could be caring for the child's needs in such a way that the child is well nourished to thrive educationally. The parents might also be buying the child all necessary material related to schooling. Therefore, involvement must be specific to indicate the areas in which support is needed.

5.5.3.2 Reading and language

A phenomenon that was noted in the current study is the value that parents place on English with regard to education and consequently, reading. Thus, all the reading activities at home took place in English even though English was not the home language of the participants. These findings are in line with the discovery that De Klerk (1999) made that children enter school with some form of English ability, which they learn their parents or from interacting with media. Although media seemed to have had a role in the current study, the use of English by the parents cannot be ignored. Parents who participated in the current study were open regarding the value they place on English as compared to their home language because of the international and economic opportunities that English offers (see 5.5.2.5.5.). Since English is not the home language of the parents of the current study, challenges with regard to the language usage was not a surprise.

Lack of reading comprehension emerged as the main concern of the parents. Parents indicated that children do not understand what they are reading. Lack of understanding what one is reading is typical of reading comprehension that is key to language development (Dednam, 2005, 2011). Without comprehension, a child will not understand and make meaning of what he is reading (Mudzielwana et al., 2012). It was indicated by the parents that often children refuse to read, and it would take much effort for them to get the children to read. As a result of the refusal to read, parents feel frustrated and that time has been wasted. The same negative feelings were also reported emanating from the child. Although the parents did not attribute this refusal to any aspect, the time factor and associated feelings relate to those of lack of comprehension. This is consistent with

literature that shows that lack of comprehension can lead to the those involved experiencing negative emotions (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Mudzielwana, et al., 2012)

Reading comprehension is a concern that has received much attention in the literature. Many factors have been associated with it (Mudzielwana et al., 2012), such as parental involvement, high level of poverty, low parental literacy levels, poor governance in many schools, poorly resourced schools and poorly qualified teachers, the use of home language and language of teaching and learning (Alexander, 2006; Howie et al., 2008, 2012; Pretorius & Machet, 2004; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016). Although all the problems mentioned above have a significant contribution, language proficiency is identified as the main role player. That is, the fact that the children of the parents in the current study focus on English to read might be contributing to lack of comprehension during reading. Although the parents indicated that their children could speak English well, parents did not have an understanding of the language levels and let alone the distinction between basic language and cognitive language abilities. Therefore, it could be that to pursue the English language and its perceived opportunities, children suffer the lack of comprehension, as they have to read in the language of which they do not have proficiency. This could imply that, unless the issue of language usage and with regard to reading is fully understood by parents and effective measures to correct it incorporated, lack of comprehension might continue further in the children's education.

5.5.3.3 Reading and homework activities

Early literacy activities included encouraging the child to read and write, sing songs with the child, talk with the child about what the parents are reading or what someone else at home is reading (See, Figure 5.4). Parental involvement begins in a child's early years but should continue once the child enters school with reading and homework activities as parent-child activities at home. Activities include listening to the children read aloud, talking with the child about things done, talking with the child about what he/she has read on his/her own and discussing the child's classroom. In order for the parent to support reading literacy develop, activities should also include reading work, going to the library or a bookshop with the child and helping the child with reading for school. The majority of the parents indicated that they do these activities to some extent. The limitations of selected option questions resulted in lack of clarity about which of the mentioned activities are done by the parents even though the results of the focus group interviews shed some light on the specific activities through the emergence of the reading and homework sub-themes. Although the parents of the focus group were not the same as those of the secondary data, similarities can be observed with the two data sets.

Past and recent studies have indicated inconsistency as one of the limitations of using the multiple-choice questions (Christiansen & Aungamuthu, 2013; Melzer, Schach & Koeslag, 1976). These findings could assist in understanding the results of the parent questionnaire as compared to the focus group results. Thus, should the parents be given the opportunity to indicate the specific activities they do with the child, it is probable that the list of activities could have provided deeper understanding. Therefore, further studies can be beneficial to identify the specific activities that the parents do with the child among the ones listed and the reason for the indicated activities. However, the conclusion of the current study is that homework and reading activities would be part of the list of parental support.

5.5.3.4 Supporting factors

Quality of education, alternative parenting support, and technology and online support appeared to be factors that serve as support to parents with challenges they face. It was indicated that quality of education provision is compromised by factors such as poor governance in many schools, poorly resourced schools and poorly qualified teachers, the use of home language and language of teaching and learning, which has negative effects on reading comprehension (Alexander, 2006; Howie, et al., 2008, 2012; Pretorius & Machet, 2004; Pretorius & Klapwijk, 2016).

Parents felt that schools should be able to assist them in the areas where they are not equipped, and it was this role that directs choice of school. A phenomenon noted by Machard and Mckay (2015) in their study about school commuting within the City of Johannesburg, is associated with the parents seeking quality education. Parents are said to travel from Soweto to the inner city for schooling that offers quality education to their children. This scenario indicates the value that parents put on quality education. In many cases, the availability of the funds to pay school fees, allows parents to choose schools viewed as offering quality education (Machard & Mckay, 2015). The above results on the value that parents place on English also shows that parents seem to put more emphasis on quality of education than their home language. This implies that the issue of language development, especially the promotion of the mother tongue at school, cannot be looked into independently without considering the role of the quality of education. That is, overlooking this fact is only to mask the problem without exploring the underlying factors (Howie et al., 2012).

It appears that the absence of quality of education places more burdens on parents having to invest more time assisting their children with what they could have obtained at school. It is based on this concern that alternative parenting emerged as one of the factors

supporting parents. Although parents still do some educational work with their children, time spent is minimal due to the help of alternative support such as after-school care, a tutor or a helper at home. Parents who completed parent questionnaire (secondary data), indicated that they spend minimal time a week engaging in school-related activities with their children (see, Figure 5.4, Q4). Therefore, since time has been indicated to be a matter of concern to the parents (see sub-section 5.5.2.4.2), the combination of a good quality of education and alternative parenting can serve as a buffer against parental challenges. Studies by Prinsloo (2011) and Hall and Posel (2012), have revealed how the employment of parents far from home provides them with limited time to assist their children with educational needs. Given the views mentioned above, it seems important that it takes into consideration the role that can be played by the combination of both good quality of education and alternative parenting.

Good quality of education and alternative parenting can both be enhanced by the inclusion of technology and online support. Technological and Internet support assists parents in accessing queries and addressing children's educational needs. Technology and Internet support have always been used to achieve and enhance educational partnership and empower the community (van der Merwe, 1997). An aspect of technology which supports parents a class is the development of a "WhatsApp group" or an online site that provides all the activities expected of the child (See sub-section 5.5.2.3 above). Either the parents or any person offering alternative support can use such technological network or online support. However, although many parents were aware of the usefulness of technology and online support, many seemed cautious about revealing it to their children. Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support might need to focus on assisting parents to understand the role of technology and online support in education in such a way that it can be used freely with their children. Recently, many studies have been conducted supporting the use of the Internet as a safety platform for learning (Donnerstein, 2013; Ahmed, 2011; Baker & White, 2010; le Roux, 2003; Symington & Dunn-Coetzee, 2015). Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support should explore the use of technology and online support as a parental support tool.

5.6   CONCLUSION

In summation, the data analysis followed an explanatory sequential design through which descriptive and inferential statistics quantitative data was provided, followed by the thematic analysis of the qualitative data. The description of the quantitative results and their inferences were presented in Section 5.3. The results were categorised into five sections, namely, home literacy activities (5.3.1), parental reading (5.3.2), books at home

(5.3.3), parental education (5.3.4) and parental employment (5.3.5). The results of these items were interpreted and discussed (5.5), and their conclusion served as part of the qualitative data collection and analysis process. In sub-section 5.5.3, these results are incorporated into the qualitative results through an overall synthesis and analysis of the results of the current study.

With regard to the qualitative results, six subthemes were identified, which emerged from the focused group. The first theme referred to alternative-parenting, a theme consistent with the literature on family composition and alternative parenting (Hofmann & Wan, 2013; Moletsane, 2004). It emerged that most parents depend upon alternative parenting support to help their children. Alternative parenting or educational support by a relative, teacher and tutor or after-school care centres, serves as a key buffer to challenges of parental support (Phillips, 2011; Tybazayo, 2009). A conceptual framework for parental support would, therefore, have to consider the critical role that alternative parenting plays as a buffer to the demands of parental support.

The second theme of parent-child activities tended to focus on homework activities supervised by after-school care centres and tutors rather than parents. Reading did not seem to be the main focus unless homework had been completed. This is a concern given the critical role that reading plays locally and internationally in supporting language development (Dednam, 2005, 2011; Du Plessis, 2012; Kucer, 2009; McCabe, 2011; Nel, 2005, 2011; Richards & Leafstedt, 2010; Van Dyk & Weideman, 2004). Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support should have a clear understanding of the purpose of the parent-child activities, especially considering reading as a key component to language development.

Development of a conceptual framework for parental support should also take into consideration the quality of education offered by the school as most of the activities can be addressed by the school. Thus, the poorly resourced school can result in poor education delivery, which subsequently increases challenges for parents (DBE, 2012d; Howie et al., 2008). Therefore, to address this through a conceptual framework for parental support, the framework must be able to provide guidelines on what exactly the parents need to do to make the right decisions. The parents must understand what is expected of them, so that they can find means to assist their children, using whatever means available.

One of the other means to aid in parental support, which also emerged as a theme is technology and Internet support. This theme included accessing educational material on the Internet, Google search, WhatsApp, Television and so forth. The Internet provides easy access to information, networking through WhatsApp as indicated, to provide easy group support amongst parents who have children in the same class. Technology and the Internet, together with alternative parenting, can be used to address the theme of parents' challenges. It is already indicated that parents would like to be involved but are hindered by the socio-economic challenges they face (Altschul, 2011; Hall & Posel, 2012; Statistics South Africa, 2011).

The last theme identified is the theme of language usage. The results reveal that parents do not seem to place much attention on language and its usage at home as compared to school. An analysis of this theme shows that to address the language problem in South Africa, a need for a top-down approach is axiomatic. It needs to start from those who advocate for mother tongue before it can be effectively adopted and implemented by parents in the family context (Banda, 2000). Thus, the language problem is not a problem experienced only at the mother-child level; it is a global problem that must be addressed within the larger system. Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support that aims to promote the importance of the mother tongue and the use of English, as an additive language, should address the issue of language usage in South Africa as a whole.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter which brings the current study to an end. Section 6.2 addresses the research questions that guided the research. Drawing from these conclusions, the characteristics of a conceptual framework, which paves the way toward theorising about parental support, are presented (6.3) The final sections outline contribution to the knowledge (6.4) limitations of the current study (6.5), recommendations and considerations for future research (6.6).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the current study was to contribute to knowledge about parental support. Ultimately, this knowledge was aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic processes. A conceptual framework for parental support on second language development could contribute to the improved quality of education, which is one of the pressing matters in education (Chisholm, 2011; DBE, 2013a; eNCA, 2014; Modisaotsile, 2012; Political Bureau & South African Press Association, 2012, Stefani Film Channel, 2015). To fulfil this purpose, a mixed methods research was conducted, using explanatory sequential research design to achieve this aim. Below I provide the summary of the research design and the methodology that was followed. This process was undertaken to address the objectives and research questions of the current study.

6.1.1 Summary of Research Design and Methodology

The explanatory research design was chosen to guide the current study based on its characteristics of collecting quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data (See Figure 6.1 below). The current study followed a two-phase process (QUAN → qual), whereby the quantitative data analysis informed the qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2012). Thus, interpretation and analysis of the secondary quantitative data assisted in the compilation of the guiding questions for the focus group interview (See Appendix D), used during the focus group data collection. This (QUAN → qual) process was critical in exploring the quantitative results (Creswell, 2005), as the participants of the quantitative data differed from those of the qualitative data. Although the PIRLS data reports on a representative sample, it was beneficial to further explore results of the quantitative data in order to identify themes that emerged from the responses of parents who are were not participants in the original PIRLS study. Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) was deployed to make sense of these results as the conceptual framework of the current study.

6.1.2 Summary of Conceptual Framework

Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) was employed for the current study based on its focus on systems that work together and develop over time (de Bot et al., 2013). DST was also used based on the non-linear approach to both second language development and parental support as complex dynamic processes, key to the current study (de Bot & Larsen-Freeman, 2011). Both these processes were presented through the seven principles of DST (See Chapter 3, Section 3.3), namely: open systems, dis-equilibrium, sensitive dependence on initial conditions, nested system and subsystems, non-linear development, variability (both in and among individuals), self-organisation and feedback loop (de Bot, Lowie & Verspoor, 2007; Human, 2003; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2008). These principles of DST are applied in this chapter which aims at working towards a theory of parental support that parents can use to support second language development (see Section 6.3).

However, the next section in this chapter (6.2) investigates how the current study went about addressing the research questions. The research question section is then followed by the characteristics of a conceptual framework (Section 6.3), drawn from the themes of the current study in order to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process. Contribution of the current study to the body of knowledge is presented in Section 6.4. In this section, I argue for a position based on the results of the current study on second language development and parental support. The focus is on how to mediate the challenges that hinder parental involvement which beckon the need for parental support on the language development of learners.

In the subsequent section (Section 6.5), I present the limitations of the current study. The limitation section focuses on factors that potentially could have hindered the aims and objectives of the current study, and how those factors were addressed to mediate the processes followed. Section 6.6 outlining recommendations follows the aforementioned section where I offer suggestions for future research that could relate to the current study. The final section is the conclusion which provides a summary of the current chapter and concludes the current study.

6.2 ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

6.2.1 Main Research Question (MRQ):

I address the main research question in the section below looking at characteristics of parental support in order to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can inform theorising about parental support concerning second language development (see Section 6.3).

> *What conceptual framework can be developed for parental support on second language development?*

The main research question supported by sub-questions, served as developmental milestones towards answering the main research question. Hence, I address these sub questions before the main research question.

6.2.2 Research sub-questions

In this section, each of the research sub-questions is discussed individually and findings presented.

> *RSQ1: How is second language proficiency conceptualised within the South African educational perspective?*

The first research sub-question referred to the conceptualisation of second language proficiency within the South African education perspective and investigated how the concept is used within the educational system. It is a complex matter as there is no clear definition provided by the Department of Education about how second language proficiency could be conceptualised, although learners are encouraged to aim for high levels of proficiency. However, contradictions within the Department's policies that introduced the concept have been found. International and local studies, have provided some guidance on how proficiency can be understood (see Ally & Christiansen, 2013; Bouwer, 2004; Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2011; Dednam, 2005; 2011; Maree & De Boer, 2003; van Staden, 2011). Drawing on a review of the literature (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3), I have established that the concept of (second) language proficiency should be viewed in line with functional literacy as inspired by studies of emergent literacy. Emergent literacy

studies seem relevant to guide this task based on their non-linear approach, which is one of the principles of Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) guiding the current study. I viewed functional literacy in the current study as (second) language usage that allows one to communicate meaningful using an adult language. I concur with Smith and Thelen (1993, 2003) who affirm that the desired aim for language development is to reach adult speech. Although from the perspective of DST, this is not the end state or product *per se,* it is however, the emergent language usage expected as parents support second language development. Second language proficiency thus ensures that a child demonstrates basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and works towards developing academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1979).

I have however, noted that the use of the concept 'proficiency' lacks some universal consistency and that studies which refer to it, seem to define the concept in a variety of ways in order for it to fit into their specific studies. Such studies also suggest how proficiency can be measured (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.3.3.2). Therefore, the current study recommends that the Department investigates how the concept is used in the South African context in order to provide clarity on its understanding and usage. From the results of the current study, an interim position is recommended that the Department adopts a principle of functional literacy for proficiency, as discussed in the above paragraph. However, further research can also be conducted in this area to help in conceptualising the language proficiency concept, so that the goals of "aiming for higher proficiency" by the Department are clear and specific (See Chapter 2, subsection 2.3.4.2).

> **RSQ2: What can we learn from PIRLS about the home experiences of parents, with regard to language support to second language learners?**

The second research sub-question drew on the PIRLS 2006 parent questionnaire data and from the quantitative research data analysis phase of the current study (See Chapter 5, Section 5.3). The 2006 data from parents of Grade 4 learners were analysed using the International Database (IDB) analyser, that produced weighted results (Howie et al., 2018) (See Chapter 4, sub-section 4.6.2). The use of weighted data provided results that are representative of South African parents. Therefore, the results obtained could be taken as representing those of the experiences of the parents of Grade 4 learners in South Africa for whom English is not their home language.

The home experiences of the parents were categorised into five categories, which are consistent with the PIRLS 2006 parent questionnaire (Archer & Zimmerman, 2008; Howie et al., 2008), indicated in Chapter 5 (Table 5.1). These categories are: early home literacy

activities (5.3.1, Q1 to Q5), parental reading (5.3.2) (Q6 to Q8), books at home (5.3.3) (Q9), parental education (5.3.4) (Q10) and parental employment (5.3.5) (Q11 & Q 12). Descriptive statistics of these questions were presented and inferences from the t-test analyses were also drawn, after comparing the two groups of parents, those who engage in activities related to parental support and those did not or with less engagement. All parental experiences were statistically significant, indicating that there are very high chances that the results were not based on chance, but rather, are a true reflection of the South African parent population. Therefore, consistent with the explanatory sequential research design of the current study (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4), the experiences of the parents were categorised into the five items mentioned above, and were used to inform phase two, the qualitative data collection process (See Chapter 4, sub-section 4.5.1 & Chapter 5, Section 5.4). Guided by the research design, the quantitative results were used to build towards qualitative data collection (See Chapter 5, Section 5.4), and ultimately, in answering the third research sub-question, indicated below.

> **RSQ3: What challenges are faced by the parents of English second language learners with regard to supporting second language development?**

The relationship between parental support concerning language development and children achievement is well established in both international (Boonk et al., 2018; Castro et al., 2015; Castillo & Gàmez, 2013; Gilleece, 2015; Jeynes, 2007, 2012; Liu, 2013; Wang, 2014) and national literature (Akinsola, 2011; Create South Africa Policy Brief 4, 2011; Daniels, 2017; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; Ibukunolu, 2013; Meier & Lemmer, 2015; Mmotlane, Winnaar & wa Kivilu, 2009).

However, a problem of lack of parental support with regard to language development of children in South Africa (DBE, 2012a) (See Chapter 1, Section 1.2) has been noted. Research sub-question 3 (RSQ3) investigated challenges that parents experience which could affect the support needed for second language development. A collection of studies conducted in South Africa revealed that there are challenges that hinder participation of parents in their children's education (Hall & Posel, 2012). These challenges include the parenting styles (Akinsola, 2011; Ibukunolu, 2013), parental mortality and urbanisation (Phillips, 2011; Posel, 2012), single-parent families (Hall & Posel, 2012; Prinsloo, 2011) and parents' level of education (Statistics South Africa, 2011; The World Bank, 2018). The aforementioned literature provided a rationale for the third sub-question of the current study.

A question about challenges that parents face with regard to second language development, was raised during the focus group interview (See Appendix D). The challenges were identified and discussed in the previous chapter (Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2.4) as part of the theme of parents' challenges. Challenges that parents face are those related to parental support. Four sub-themes were identified that represented the challenges of parents of English second language learners with regard to second language development. These challenges and how they are experienced by the parents of the current study were discussed in Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2.4.

> **RSQ4: What are the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development?**

According to Vithal and Jansen (2004) and Ferreira (2012), a conceptual framework has to do with linking concepts from literature to explain an event or a phenomenon. Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development is intended to explain how parents can support their children and to inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process and second language development as a complex dynamic system. Dynamic Systems Theory (DST), a conceptual framework that underpinned the current study, guided the above-mentioned sub-question (See Chapter 2). Based on DST, de Bot et al. (2013, p. 200), referred to more than three complex dynamic systems, which are "language (be it first, second or third), language learner (young or old) and language communities (naturalistic or instructional settings)". Informed by DST, I have referred to the four nested complex dynamic systems of the school, family, the language learner and the second language and their subsystem, where necessary (See Chapter 3, Figure 3.1). The four nested complex dynamic systems were the focus of the literature review and supported the analysis of the qualitative results, in order to identify the themes that emerged within each system. In other words, the themes that emerged were analysed within each of these four nested complex dynamic systems. In the section below (Section 6.3), I refer to these four nested systems in order to elaborate on how they relate to the findings of the current study and shed some light on the understanding the conceptualisation of a framework for parental support on second language development.

Six themes were identified from the transcripts, namely: *alternative parenting*, *parent-child activities, technology and Internet support, parents' challenges, language usage* and *quality of education* (See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2). The themes represented the

collective views of the parents of the current study with regard to supporting second language learners. Therefore, these themes were identified as the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support that the current study aimed to use to inform theorising about parental support. In the next section (6.3), I describe these characteristics and explain how they relate to the chosen conceptual framework.

6.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: TOWARDS A THEORY OF PARENTAL SUPPORT

This section answers the main research question of the current study as indicated below:

> *MRQ: What conceptual framework can be developed for parental support on second language development?*

As mentioned above, a conceptual framework has to do with linking concepts through literature to explain an event or a phenomenon (Ferreira, 2012; Vithal & Jansen, 2004). Parental support concerning second language development was the main phenomenon targeted in the current study. Thus, the current study aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support. Therefore, guided by the current study's conceptual framework (DST), four nested systems were identified as the focus of literature review (See Chapter 3, sub-section 3.5.2). The four systems comprised the school, family, the language learner and the second language and their sub-systems where necessary (See Chapter 3, Figure 3.1). The DST also assisted in making sense of both the quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Subsequently, six themes emerged from data analysis as guided by the conceptual framework (See Chapter 5, Sections 5.4 & 5.5).

The themes (See Chapter 3, sub-section 3.3.7) served as the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support concerning second language development (Guastello, Koopmans & Pincus, 2009). In the subsequent section (Section 6.3.1), these characteristics are presented and described. The description is followed by sub-section 6.3.2, where I describe how the presented characteristics serve as principles that interact with each other. I conclude this section by discussing how the conceptual framework was used, related to the results of the current study in the conceptual framework review section (6.3.3). In this concluding section, I also present an argument on how the conceptual framework served the current study and how it can be used in further studies.

6.3.1 Characteristics of a Conceptual Framework for Parental Support

The characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development were deduced from the six themes of the current study (Thomas, 2005):

6.3.1.1 Alternative parenting

Alternative parenting refers to the support of the child with language development activities by any person or a system other than the parent(s) of the child. This support could come from tutors, after hours care centres or extra classes. This implies that, alternative parenting can be located within three systems, the family (e.g. relatives) and social system (e.g. after hour care centres or private tutors) and the school (extra classes). Prinsloo (2008) revealed the value of 'best services' for alternative parenting care to facilitate the parental support role. Therefore, given the challenges of time and other factors that might hinder the parental involvement (See sub-section 6.3.1.4), this principle is presented as a potential alternative support to parents.

6.3.1.2 Parent-child activities

Parent-child activities refer to specific activities that the parent can do with the child to promote language development. All these activities are located within the family system where the parent-child relationship takes place. In the current study, shared reading and homework support were the two main activities in which parents engaged with their children. Both these activities are important to the current study as they promote language development (Boonk et al., 2018; Magno, 2010). Although the parents seemed to voice challenges in motivating their children to read, such challenges seem to be related to lack of strategy by the parents on how to promote shared reading. For example, literature shows that shared reading is effective when the parent and the child use the same book to read together (DBE, 2011b; Paulson, 2005). The frustration experienced by the parents of the current study seemed to relate to a resistance by the child to reading and the inability to take constructive criticism when the reading was being monitored. Although this might work with children who enjoy reading and are fairly fluent, it might not work well with children who experience reading difficulties (See sub-section 6.3.1.4). It is therefore, recommended that the school provide guidance on how the parents should support the child, especially when engaging in shared reading and homework (See sub-section 6.6.2 below).

6.3.1.3 Technology and Internet support

Technology and Internet usage emerged as a theme in parental support. Both these tools are found to be effective in offering supporting platforms for learning (Donnerstein, 2013;

Symington & Dunn-Coetzee, 2015). It appears that parents of the current study had strong views about how the use of technological devices (such as television, cellular phones, computers or iPads) and using the Internet can help them either to access educational content or liaise with the school. This theme connects to three systems, namely, the family system, school system and the social system. The use of technology and access to the Internet in education is aligned with the evolving fourth industrial revolution (Butler-Adam, 2018) where individuals move between digital domains and offline reality and in which social-media platforms are used to connect, learn and access information. Therefore, the principle of using technology and the Internet is seen as positive step for parental support towards supporting e-learning advancements in education, particularly that of language development. If the current statistics are correct, then there is positive progress with an improvement from 40% to 54% of Internet access for the South African population (Flickerleap, 2019). Although a significant amount of population still has no access to the Internet, more than half of the total population does have access. This suggests that greater effort is needed by the ministry of telecommunication to ensure increased access to services that allows usage of technology and Internet support.

6.3.1.4 Parents' Challenges

Parents' challenges refer to the challenges that hinder parents' involvement in the education of their child. The parents' challenges shed light on the specifics that hinder parental involvement (Akinsola, 2011; Ibukunolu, 2013). In the current study, the parent-child relationship, limited time by the parents, feelings of helplessness and lack of understanding of the child's school curriculum are the main identified factors hindering parental involvement in their children's education. These challenges could be associated with factors intrinsic to both intrinsic (feelings of helplessness) and extrinsic (time constrains) factors related to the individuals with the family system. The issue of time constrains seems to be related to working hours and type of work (social system) that leads to the parents having a limited time to be involved in educational activities with the child to provide the needed support.

The main challenge emphasised by parents was the difficulty they face when trying to get the child to read or complete homework activities, which are the main activities for second language development (sub-section 6.3.1.1). Noted from the results is that parents of the current study focus on making the child read alone without guiding them on how to read, such as through shared reading. The parents can provide this support either personally or through the assistance of alternative parenting care, which has been shown to have potential to mediate the gap (sub-section 6.3.1.1). The use of alternative parenting could

address the issue of limited time and feelings of helplessness that seems to be experienced by parents in trying to get their children to read. A further challenge is the lack of understanding of the curriculum. However, this challenge is not unique in a sense that Dampier (2014) noted that lack of clarity of the curriculum tends to be an issue raised in research.

6.3.1.5 Language Usage

This principle refers to the language used by the parents in facilitating parental support and includes, mother tongue, language level, language used during home activities, English as an international language and reading tasks. This theme also takes brings to the fore an interface of three systems, namely, family system (mother tongue and language used for home activities), school system (LoLT) and larger social system (English as an international language). Parents seemed to be unanimous about the home language being needed only for social communication but not for academic development. The view about mother tongue not being used for academic purposes seemed to be supported by the lack of educational material. Even social media platforms such as WhatsApp rarely have a language choice other than English. Subtly, such indirect messages seem to be communicating to the parents that mother tongue is not as important as English, a concern noted by Banda (2000).

Therefore, there are efforts needed to be made by education specialists and the government to help parents understand the role of mother tongue in education and how that can be used in relation to English as a first additional language. Although the curriculum, on the use of English as first additional language, does offer some information with regard to the use of English in relation to mother tongue (See Chapter 2, Section 2.3). However, the information is limited and such documents seem to be available to teachers rather than the parents. Drawing on second language development theory, more effort needs to be made to increase awareness to parents about the value of mother tongue as the foundation to further language development and how it can be understood in relation to the global value of English (See sub-section 6.6.2 below).

An issue raised by parents referred to reading difficulties and lack of comprehension with children reading in English. This concern is common to the South African learners, as evidenced in various international studies (Howie et al., 2018, 2012, 2008), but one that is not addressed in this research.

6.3.1.6 Quality of Education

The quality of education refers to the standard of education and services that schools offer. This theme is only located within the school system as the sole determiner of quality of education. The quality of education is one of the important characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development in that, it has been indicated as one of the main reasons for poor performances of learners (DBE, 2012d, Howie et al., 2008). To the parents of the current study, the quality of education was the determining factor for school choice. Based on the value that parents put on the quality of education, efforts to improve the quality of schools, especially in townships where the parents of the current study live, need to be put in place. Such improvement could assist in ensuring that parents enrol their children in township schools within their home area and thus avoid having to travel long distance to access quality education. It has been noted in literature that it is often the schools that are far from townships that offer only English as the language of learning and teaching and this perpetuates the devaluing of the mother tongue and enforces the idea that English is better than the mother tongue.

In summation, the above characteristics present important factors that can be used for developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. Looking at these characteristics through the lens of DST and its four nested systems it is evident that all the identified themes fall within the four nested systems as indicated above. The relationship between these themes to the systems of DST provides a research-based knowledge that can be used to develop a conceptual framework for parental support concerning second language development. For example, all the above-mentioned characteristics except for the quality of education, are associated with more than one system. This demonstrates the openness principle of DST in that, the above characteristics (which are system-based) are open to external influence.

The above view is further demonstrated by the result of the current study, which has located alternative parenting principle within the three systems of DST, namely, the family system (e.g. support by relatives), school system (e.g. after school care support by the school) and social system (tutorial services from either the individuals or private institutions). In other words, parenting is not only located within the family system but also, the system is open to receive parenting from outside itself. This view, based on the experiences of the parents of the current study, shifts the focus from the traditional view of only the biological parents (family system) being the main figure when it comes to parental

support being considered as the norm. The alternative-parenting concept revealed that there are support resources that are located outside both the parental and the second language learner systems. The view of alternative parenting is consistent with the literature that is focused on unconventional ways of parenting (Hofmann & Wan 2013) and reveals that South African family composition has changed to accommodate other forms of parenting (Moletsane, 2004) (See Chapter 2, Section 2.4). It is my view that alternative parenting espouses the *ubuntu* perspective of African philosophy (Sefotho, 2018), which is characterised by communal support by members of a community or common social group. Through this view, parental support is not only localised within the family system, as indicated on the four-nested system but can emerge, for example, from a teacher at a school who also serves as a member of the community or members of the community who are not part of the nuclear-family or relatives.

Furthermore, the other themes that emerged, such as parent child-activities (located within the family system) and technology and the use of the Internet (located within the family, school and social systems), revealed the complexities of language development that exist in the mutual relationship between the learner and parent as presented by DST (See Chapter 3, Section 3.4) and also the issue of access respectively. The issue of access arises when one brings to the fore the subject of technology and the Internet in education. Although there is a serious access concern that needs to be addressed to pave the way for the use of technology and the Internet in education, it must also be noted that it is an unavoidable reality given the fact of the fourth industrial revolution. Within the context of the current study, these developments also challenge the view of parental participation (which signifies involvement and subsequent educational support) as mainly measured by the attendance of school programmes by the parent. Instead, the theme also beckons for the need of consideration regarding how parents might be participating in other ways that differ from the physical presence within the school premises. A view that takes into consideration the challenges of parents (located within the family system) (see sub-section 6.3.1.4 above) that might limit their involvement in their children's education. For example, participation in the SGB, school social media platforms, telephonic and WhatsApp communication with the teachers are other means in which the parents can show their involvement. It is therefore likely that parental participation will be highly dependent on the quality of the school (see sub-section 6.3.1.6 above), which goes beyond the addition of extra-mural activities, to include services that enhance parental participation and taking cognisant of the challenges faced by parents such as time constraints, insufficient knowledge of what is expected of them and low educational levels.

6.3.2 Interacting Relationship: Characteristics of a Conceptual Framework for Parental Support

Below I present the interacting relationship of the characteristics that comprise of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. These characteristics, depicted in Figure 6.1 below, illustrate an interactive relationship. The arrows depict connections between these characteristics and identify those that have a mutual relationship to each other. These relationships are described more fully in the subsequent sub-sections (sub-sections 6.3.2.1 to 6.3.2.2).

Figure 6.1 Interacting relationship between the characteristics of parental involvement
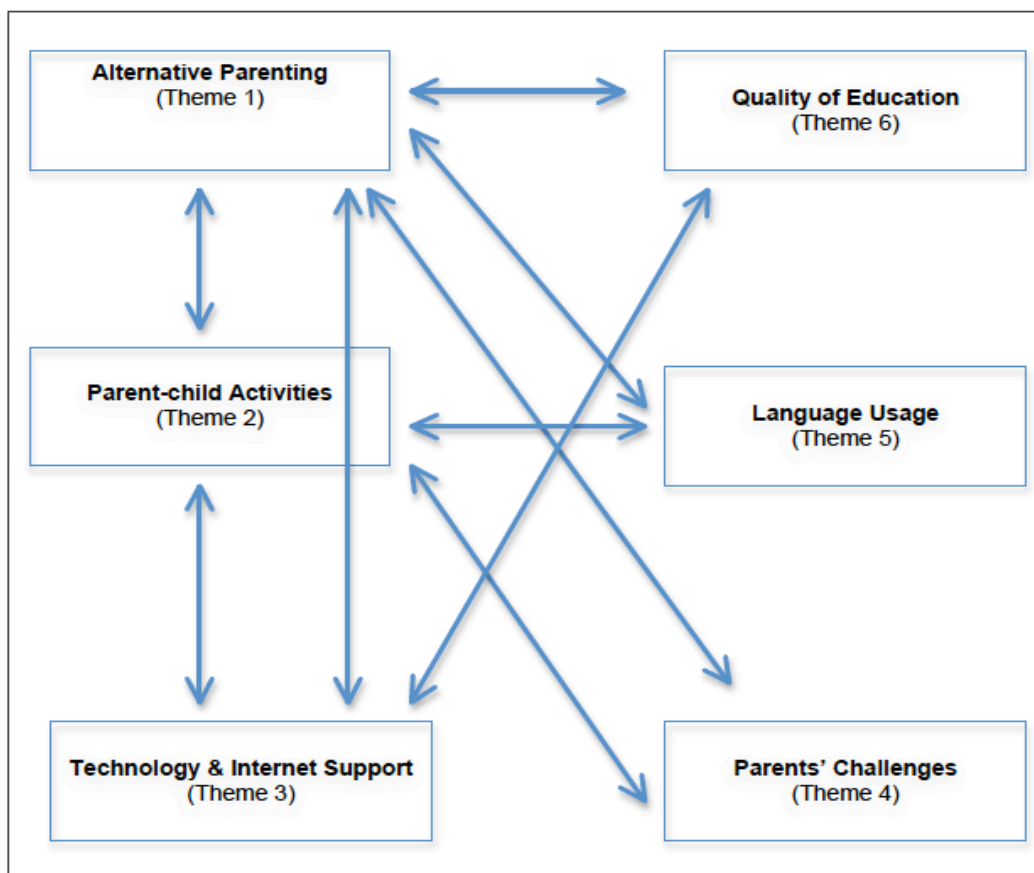
6.3.2.1 The interrelation between Theme 1, Theme 4, Theme 5 and Theme 6

The six characteristics form the conceptualisation of a framework for parental support on second language development aimed to inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process (Figure 6.1). From a dynamic systems perspective, these principles are not viewed independently, rather as having a relationship to and with each other (See Chapter 3, sub-section 3.3.4). For example, some parents might rely on alternative parenting (Theme 1) principles such as tutoring and after-school care centres to support their children (Hofmann & Wan, 2013; Phillips, 2011; Tybazayo, 2009).

However, the need for alternative parenting seems to be associated with the parents' view that they do not know the curriculum well (understanding child's curriculum is sub-theme of theme 4), and they also do not have enough time (sub-theme of theme 4) to assist their children. An idea that is supported by literature indicates that socio-economic factors hinder Black parents from being involved in their children's education (Altschul, 2011; Hall & Posel, 2012; Statistics South Africa, 2011). This is further augmented by their admitted lack of information about what is expected of them, resulting in feelings of helplessness (sub-theme of theme 4). The interface of these characteristics demonstrates the principle of the nested system of DST. Thus, since all the characteristics are related to all the DST system as indicated above (Section 6.3.1), their interactions signify an inter-systemic relationship.

Reciprocally, the work done by alternative parenting support services can either be of benefit to the parents or add more work. Thus, alternative-parenting support, like a butterfly effect, follows a non-linear developmental process. For example, some parents have indicated that they tend to fix errors done by the after-school care workers (see Theme 2, extract 1M2), it appears that those who have been offering alternative parenting services to the parents of the current study did not provide sufficiently satisfactory services. In addition, the shortage of tutors (part of Theme 1) offering assistance in mother tongue (sub-theme of Theme 5) was also indicated as a concerning factor, hence the parents opted for services in English. Although this decision indicates exposure to English, such a decision seems to hamper second language development as parents have indicated that their children's mother tongue proficiency was not well developed. Thus, the indicated literature (Bouwer, 2004; DBE, 2012c; Nel 2005, 2011) has shown that children who have not acquired language skills in their mother tongue will have difficulty in second language development. Therefore, although alternative parenting seems to have the potential to alleviate the burden of work upon the parents, the conceptualised framework for parental support should be understood within the principle of non-linear development. The above understanding, however, has an important implication to a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. It is not mean to discourage alternative parenting efforts, rather, to encourage it based on literature like that from Prinsloo (2008) who stated that, extra classes are beneficial when conducted by competent and experienced teachers and tutors. Thus alternative parenting should be viewed as an important variable in parental support that could greatly affect the trajectory of second language development if offered by competent people. The above view provides an important perspective in developing a

conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, which views both parental support and second language development as complex dynamic processes.

6.3.2.2 The interrelationship between Theme 1, Theme 2, Theme 4 and Theme 5

Figure 6.1 also shows that limited time (sub-theme of Theme 4) available to parents seems to affect how parents decide to engage in activities with the child (Theme 2), thus, deciding whether to use alternative parenting or not. The interaction between the themes demonstrates the openness of the systems and the resultant mutual interactions between them, which affects the trajectory of the parental support approach adopted. This further demonstrates the DST principle of dis-equilibrium and self-organization (see Chapter 3, section 3.3) in that, as the parental system faces challenges (e.g. time constraints) which serve as changes, it will make a necessary adjustment that helps it to maintain some form of order or family operations. This is an important developmental process to note for a conceptual framework on parental support in providing an understanding with regard to circumstances related to the decision of parents to use alternative parenting support. For example, the parents of the current study indicated that they prefer to focus on monitoring what has already been done by the school and after-school care centres or tutors due to time constraints. The time constraints not only determine how parents engage in activities (Theme 2) with the child but their decision to seek for alternative parenting support (Theme 1). Reciprocally, depending on the quality of work done by after-school care workers, this can affect the time parents have to spend checking their children's work.

The decision of parents to focus on work done by the after-school care centres is motivated by the fact that most parents who participated in the current study, have indicated that they feel uninformed about what the school expects from them (Understanding child's curriculum sub-theme of Theme 4). It was, however; noted that there were some different perspectives on how others felt about what the school expected from them. This difference is accounted for by the variability principle of DST, which explains the distinction amongst individuals due to internal and external variables interacting with the environment of the system (Chapter 3, section 3.3). As such, although others felt uninformed, others felt informed but did not know how to assist or did not feel that they had the competency required to assist due to a different curriculum compared to the curriculum during their time of schooling. It was on this basis that Internet surfing and technological advancement (Theme 3) such as Google and social media platforms such as WhatsApp has emerged as a supporting tool. A trend consistent with the literature indicated that technology could be used to mediate second language learning (Kern,

2014). Thus, parents indicated the use of the school's WhatsApp group to update parents and provide easy access to information about schoolwork. Therefore, in the current study, technological interventions and Internet access served in bridging the gap between the teacher (school) and the parent (Theme 5). Furthermore, these results suggest that proper investment in the Internet and technological approaches to education that focus on parents have the potential to benefit parental support. This view is consistent with emerging trends from literature about technological and social media usage within education (Donnerstein, 2013; Ahmed, 2011; Baker & White, 2010; le Roux, 2003; Symington & Dunn-Coetzee, 2015). Through technology, parents can also be active in holding the school or after-school care centre accountable to deliver on their promises of helping their children. For example, applications such as "Team viewer" and "Facebook live" can be explored to provide a platform for parents to have access to what is happening in their children's learning environment. The use of technology and the Internet as a supporting tool could also provide a feedback loop process whereby the teachers in return, could respond to this monitoring process by seeing the need to give feedback or proof of what was covered in class. Therefore, technology and the Internet as mediating tools for second language development (Kern, 2014) can also play a crucial role, together with the interacting themes as supporting tools for second language development in the theory of parental support. Reciprocally, the development of the second language can be enhanced through its use of the Internet and by certain technological devices.

In conclusion, the above account of the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on the second language shows that the experiences of the parents of the current study could be explained through the principles of DST. The interacting relationship between these characteristics has revealed that both parental support and second language development are complex dynamic processes. That implies that there is an interplay of factors that one needs to consider when aiming at developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development, and hence the use of the DST approach, as adopted by the current study. For example, analysis of the language usage (Theme 5) and inclusion of its role in developing a conceptual framework that can inform theorising about parental support requires that one critically review how second language and mother tongue are used by those who advocate for mother tongue (sub-theme of Theme 5) before it can receive the recognition it deserves as an important language that parents can use to promote second language development (Banda, 2000) (DBE, for example - Theme 6) in more ways than just basic interpersonal communication. Thus, language problems are not only experienced at the mother-child level; rather, it is a global problem that must be addressed within a larger social system. On a practical level,

this suggests that if key figures in government and the Department do not use the mother tongue in their official communications (Banda, 2000), parents and children might not be motivated to do so. Reciprocally, that can also affect the efforts of the Department when trying to improve mother tongue language proficiency (DBE, 2013b). Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support, presented by the current study, advocates the importance of the mother tongue development and the use of English as an additive language. Without such an approach, knowledge about second language development, as indicated in the literature, is likely to remain the privileged domain of academics and inaccessible to the parents who also need it (Banda, 2000; Cummins, 2008, 2012).

6.3.3 Dynamic Systems Theory Review

The current study discussed and analysed the results based on the Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) and its associated principles. The results of the current study revealed that second language development is a complex dynamic system (See Chapter 3, Section 3.4). Therefore, DST served as the relevant conceptual framework to address the questions of the current study, in that, it provided a framework through which the second language complex system and its associated systems were explored. The interrelation between themes that emerged and their non-linearity is consistent with the principles of DST. Although selection of the four systems was crucial as guided by DST, the principle of an open system served equally to sensitise me to the awareness that the interaction within the systems might be reciprocated by systems beyond the ones pre-selected in the current study (Chapter 3, sub-section 3.3.1). For example, the preselected systems seemed to guide one towards specific research that focused on themes already dominant in research.

However, there are other themes that can easily be overlooked if one does not focus beyond themes that are typical of the preselected system. For example, the technological support as a parental support tool might be easily overlooked in South Africa because there seems to be limited literature in relation to it. However, some studies have shown that technological usage is key to educational support and advancement (Donnerstein, 2013; Symington & Dunn-Coetzee, 2015). The current study however, did not focus on how such a theme might be related to the evolving fourth industrial revolution. Nonetheless, it can be noted that a theme that focuses on technological usage in education is building a critical skill towards potential changes that might be brought about by the fourth industrial revolution (Butler-Adam, 2018). Therefore, it is for this reason that the above figure (Figure 6.1), does not focus on systems, rather, on themes, which serve

as characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. Such a depiction is still consistent with DST in that it is the themes, as variables within the systems, which interact with each other (See Chapter 3, sub-section 3.3.6). Therefore, DST has provided guidelines on depicting the principle of a theory of parental support (Figure 6.1).

6.4 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

The current study aimed at contributing to knowledge on parental support concerning second language development. It achieved this aim by presenting an interrelationship of factors that can be used to develop a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development (Section 6.3). Below I present how these factors contributed to knowledge about the development of a conceptual framework for parental support (6.4.1), and how understanding these factors and their affect on parental support can help in remediating parental support challenges and provide insight on understanding parental support as a complex dynamic process (6.4.3):

6.4.1. Conceptual Framework for Parental Support

In the above section (See Section 6.3), I presented the interrelationship between the characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support, which demonstrated that parental support on second language development is a complex dynamic process. This complexity has necessitated the need to reconceptualise factors that affect parental support concerning second language development. The results of the current study have shown that parents are willing to support their children with second language development; however, they need assistance to understand how they can provide support (See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2). Therefore, a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development serves as a response to the need of parents by informing theorising about parental support in second language learning contexts, possibly in multilingual and developing countries.

A conceptual framework for parental support has the potential to also enhance the parent-teacher relationship, which is key to increase parental participation (Lau, Li & Rao, 2012; Murray & Mereoiu, 2016). Thus, since the teachers are aware of parents' eagerness to assist, the reconceptualisation of factors that impact on parental support can bridge the gap between home and school by creating an enabling environment to foster parental involvement and ultimately parental support on second language development. A

conceptual framework for parental support can also be useful to key stakeholders such as caregivers, teachers, lecturers, the Department of Education and educational centres.

6.4.2 Remediating Parental Support Challenges

The current study has presented important factors that affect parental support concerning second language development (See Chapter 2, Section 2.3). I have also indicated in the problem section of the current study that in South Africa, there is seemingly a lack of parental involvement, which hinders parental support in the education of learners (See Chapter 1, Section 1.3). Therefore, identification of these factors was the first step towards reconceptualisation of parental support and how this reconceptualisation could assist in remediating lack of parental involvement issues and enhance parental support within educational contexts, particularly multilingual contexts such as those found in South Africa and other countries with similar contexts.

6.4.3 Parental Support as a Complex Dynamic Process

Studies of second language development have promoted the view of language as a primary complex dynamic process (See Chapter 3, Section 3.1). However, the current study revealed the complex and dynamic process of parental support. Thus, there are reciprocal relationships within the family system where parental support takes place (see Chapter 3, sub-section 3.5.2). Therefore, the results of the current study show that parental support, as key to the educational development of the child, is an equally important complex dynamic process for second language development. Subsequently, an investigation into parental support concerning second language development should encourage exploration of more than one complex dynamic process.

6.5   LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY

6.5.1 Change of the Research Design

The current study began with the use of design research with the aim of developing an intervention tool (Plomp, 2009). However, due the developmental process of the current study (See Chapter 1, Section 1.14), I had to make changes to the design, which led to a different conceptualisation of the current study (Luse, Mennecke & Townsend, 2012). Consequently, I adopted the explanatory sequential research design (See Chapter 4, Section 4.4) and adjusted my topic and methodological processes in order to embrace these changes. Although acknowledging that such amendments are not uncommon given the complexities of the PhD study (Dietz, Jansen & Wadee, 2006; The University of Edinburgh, 2017), I acknowledge that they had the potential to influence the focus of the

current study, and alter its purpose. Subsequently, these changes resulted in the study taking longer than intended. As such, I had to make constant amendments to ensure that the current study remained focused on its objectives and purpose.

6.5.2 The use of PIRLS 2006 Data

I have indicated above (sub-section 6.5.2) that the current study took longer than anticipated (See Chapter 1, Section 1.14). The longer the current study, which commenced in 2013, took, the more it was thought it could affect the view of the PIRLS 2006 (Howie et al., 2008). In the interim, two other PIRLS cycles (PIRLS 2012 & 2016) have been conducted in South Africa with their results being released a year or two after completion of the analysis. It would have been preferable to use the latest data for the quantitative data, particularly as it would have been more current. This was not possible, however, as the last results were only released when the current study was close to completion in 2018. However, the current study did take into consideration the latest results of PIRLS (2016). The findings however, revealed that the results of PIRLS 2006 are still consistent with the latest results of PIRLS 2016, with regard to performance of South African learners, compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world.

6.5.3 Participants of the Current Study

The current study was two-phased, following a sequential approach whereby the quantitative data was used to inform the qualitative data collection from eight (8) participants (See Chapter 4, Section 4.5). The use of only eight participants was a limitation in that, the limited number of participants used reduced the transferability of the result to a narrow context. Using a larger sample than what was used could have helped to increase the transferability of the result to a larger context.

The participants of the quantitative phase of the study were also not the same as the eight (8) participants of the qualitative phase of the study. It is also possible that using the same participants who were part of PIRLS 2006 could have provided a richer data and allowed a comparison of how the weighted results of PIRLS compare to the qualitative data on the same participants. It was however going to be difficult to use the same participants from a study that took place over many years ago. It is however, recognised that, such an effort might have added value to the current study and enhanced transferability.

The fact that the results of PIRLS 2006 data were weighted, suggests that the results are a representation of the South African population represented by the sample. Given the sample of the current study, compared to that of PIRLS 2006, parents of the current study can be viewed as represented in the PIRLS weighted results. Therefore, the quantitative

results from PIRLS 2006 could also be viewed as relevant and representative of the parents who participated in the current study.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the current study and the above discussions, the following recommendations are offered for policy development and practice.

6.6.1 Policy Development

The current study found that, although the various policy documents on second language development are available, there are limited policies on parental support (See Chapter 2, sub-section 2.2 7 2.3). Therefore, the current study recommends that the Department of Basic Education develop a parental support policy document (for example, an information booklet), which clearly states Departmental expectations and provides clear guidelines on how parents can achieve the stipulated expectations taking into consideration their socio-economic and systemic challenges. Such a document should be easily accessible for parents, as the results of the current study have shown that parents are interested in reading for information (See Chapter 5, sub-section 5.5.2). Although there are some documents that are aimed at parental support, with the *Practical Guidelines: how parents can contribute meaningfully to the success of their children in schools* (DBE, 2016), being close to what is recommended, such documents fall short of supporting parents fully. Beside the fact that they are not policies, they also lack the practical comprehensive guidelines, which take into consideration the socio-economic and systemic challenges of parents. Although it speaks about developing a daily reading routine, it does not provide guidelines on how this can be done, especially taking into consideration parents with similar challenges as those of the current study, who seemed concerned about the limited time they have in juggling work and family responsibilities. Furthermore, it encourages parents to make reading material available at home but does not provide guidelines on how parents can overcome this challenge of limited finances which are the reasons for the limited number of books found in homes. The limitations cited above, are just an example of factors that must be addressed by the policy document on parental support. The practical guidelines are available online for parents; however, efforts must also be made for such a document to be accessible in hardcopy format for families in rural areas where access to this Internet might not be available. Research shows that the majority of the South African homes do not have Internet access, especially in rural areas (Statistics South Africa, 2017). A recommendation is that such a policy can also be made part of the registration package given to parents by the schools.

It is further recommended that such as policy document also provides guidelines on how parents can support their children with regard to second language development. Although all languages follow the same developmental principles, there are strategies that can be put in place to allow home language to serve as a springboard for second language development (Prinsloo, Rogers & Harvey, 2018). Such principles must be made easily accessible to parents like those of the current study, who seem not to understand what is written in their children's report cards to help with distinguishing home language from first additional language. It would also be of great support toward the promotion of indigenous languages if such a policy document assists parents in understanding the value of mother tongue in relation to the global value of English.

6.6.2 Practice

The results of the current study have revealed the use of alternative parenting as one of the characteristics that can be used to develop a conceptual framework for parental support (See Section 6.3 above). Given the challenges faced by some South African parents, which hinders them from being personally involved with their children, the use of alternative parenting can be explored. Therefore, it is recommended that the educational practitioners and specialists develop after-school care centres or tutorial classes within schools to serve as alternative parenting tools to support the parents and their children in order to ensure quality education.

6.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The main purpose of the current study was to contribute to knowledge on parental support. Ultimately, this knowledge was aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development. The current study achieved its aim in a sense that it identified characteristics of a conceptual framework for parental support on second language development that can be used to inform theorising about parental support (Brink, 2010; Rule & John, 2011). Therefore, based on the needs identified in the current study, the following suggestions are made for further research:

- Further research is recommended, to explore the proposed conceptual framework and use it to theorise about parental support as a complex dynamic system and inform theories of second language as a complex dynamic system .

- Further research is also recommended in the area of parent-child relationship within the context of educational support.

- The parents of the current study showed concern with regards to reluctance of the children to engage in reading-related activities. This concern, given the low literacy and reading attitude of the South African population (See Chapter 5, Sections 5.3 & 5.5), needs to be investigated.

- The attitude of children towards reading-related activities and reading-related disorders, which have been shown to occur in children who struggle to read (Dreyer, 2015; Snowling, 2017), could also necessitate further research. The results showed that some children cried whenever they were told to read, and parents could not explain what could be the cause of such behaviour.

- A further recommendation for research is to focus on the appropriate time required for parental support to have effective results. Literature provides the amount of time that teachers need to spend on language (See Chapter 5, Section 5.4), but there is limited literature on the amount of time required at home. It might be beneficial for the parents to know how much time is sufficient regarding parental support. This information could help when one looks for a tutor or after-school care centre. It can also help with budgeting for such services or even determining if the parents can have enough time to cover the support by themselves.

6.8 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of the current study was to contribute to knowledge on parental support. Ultimately, this knowledge was aimed at developing a conceptual framework for parental support concerning second language development that can be used to inform theorising about parental support as a complex dynamic process. The current study has achieved its purpose in that it presented and described interfacing factors that parental support. These factors have been used to reconceptualise parental support concerning second language development. This conceptualisation can be used to enhance parental involvement and subsequently, parental support in education. The reconceptualisation can also provide a new avenue for theorising about parental support in the second language learning context, particularly in multilingual and developing countries. In the process of the current study, I have also discovered that parents are faced with various challenges that hinder their role in supporting their children. It is therefore, my hope that, if these challenges are overcome, through the implementation of the proposed conceptual framework and recommendations provided in the above sections (Sections 6.3 & 6.6),

parents will be equipped with the necessary skills to support learner education. It is without a doubt that,

at the end of the day, the most

overwhelming key to a child's success is

the positive involvement of parents.

Jane D. Hull

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APPENDICES

(See Memory Stick)

Appendix A	PIRLS Background; Parents Questionnaire
Appendix B	Letter of Permission to collect Data
Appendix C	Sample Letter of Extension and approval
Appendix D	Focus Group Questionnaire
Appendix E	Focus Group Transcripts
Appendix F	Participant's informed Consent and Biographical information
Appendix G	Ethics Approval and Clearance Certificate
Appendix H	SPSS outputs: Frequency Tables