

Opportunities to learn in isiNdebele textbooks

By

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Humanities Education in the faculty of Education
University of Pretoria**

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I Busisiwe Pretty Jiane, student no 11368129 declared that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the Master's degree in Humanities Education at the university of Pretoria, is my own and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



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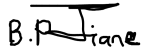
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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the opportunities to learn provided by the Grade 9 isiNdebele Home Language textbooks used in KwaMhlanga South West Circuit, where I have been teaching for the past eight years. Since the area is multilingual and most learners are exposed to a variety of languages while struggling with isiNdebele as their first language, an empirical investigation using a qualitative approach was conducted to investigate the quality of textbooks, specifically *Via-Afrika* and *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu*. This study employed Vygotsky's (1987) social constructivism theory as its theoretical framework. The two textbooks were evaluated using the textbook evaluation criteria from Afshin, Mehrjoofard, and Salemi (2011). These evaluations were compared to the CAPS document in order to determine whether the textbooks met the curriculum requirements. The study verifies that there are differences between these two textbooks regarding CAPS document compliance as well as other factors such as the use of visuals, learning objectives, authenticity, and exercises and activities related to language learning. The literature review refers to the significance of the historical context of the South African language policy, language policies in education, the South African National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the role of textbooks in teaching and learning, and cognitive levels of questioning. To analyse the data collected for this study, qualitative content analysis was used. The findings reveal that both textbooks focus on questions at a higher level and ignore the mark allocation for given questions. *Via-Afrika* has allocated marks only on the formative assessment. *Via-Afrika* contains more visuals than *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* and the representations are not always relevant to the subject matter or suitable for the educational setting. In terms of real-life learning examples, *Via-Afrika* is designed in a way that helps learners apply their learning to their daily lives. Some of the skills necessary for language learning, such as reading and **viewing**, have not been successfully demonstrated by *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu*. *Via-Afrika* successfully demonstrates skills by, for instance, beginning with an in-depth description of the writing process, explaining each genre, and showing examples so learners can observe the conventions and format of that genre.

Keywords: IsiNdebele textbooks, learning opportunities, Home languages, real life situations, language learning skills, cognitive levels of questioning.



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CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The curriculum in South Africa has had substantial modifications since the implementation of democracy in 1994; these changes have had an impact on teaching and learning (Riet, 2013). Curriculum 2005, a manifestation of Outcome-based Education (OBE), was adopted by South Africa in 1997 and it marked the beginning of transformation in education. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) was implemented in 2002. Since 2004, the South African government has implemented even more modifications to the curriculum, including the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2005 and the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) which was registered in 2011 but launched officially in 2012.

According to Kanjee and Sayed (as cited in Mtshweni, 2020), the aforementioned modifications were enacted with the objective of enhancing the quality of education and to efficiently address the principles of a new non-racial, non-sexist democratic South Africa, as well as enhance the proficiency and expertise of teachers to deliver high-quality education to all children, enabling them to actively participate in the emerging society. In addition, many aspects of education were affected by the changes, including subject-specific learning content and outcomes, the selection of learning materials, teaching standards, and assessment strategies. According to Du Plessis and Van Niekerk (2016), the transformation in South African education was instituted to improve the education system. However, alterations to the curriculum have caused difficulties for some subject areas, particularly African languages such as isiNdebele (Mandukwini, 2016). In addition, these changes resulted in the constant introduction of new curricula and textbooks.

IsiNdebele is one of those languages that did not previously have official status. Before 1985, isiNdebele was not even part of the curriculum; it was only introduced to schools after gaining official language status (Mamabolo, 2005). The introduction of African languages to schools implies that study material also should be introduced in order to assist teaching and learning and the development of that particular language. Study materials such as textbooks, workbooks, study guides, and teachers' guides for isiNdebele were not up to standard, because isiNdebele did not have sufficient literature or a tradition of academic study materials (Mamabolo, 2014).

Textbooks are the most important learning support tools that most teachers use (Lepik, Grevholm & Viholainen, 2015). According to Richards (2001), textbooks play a crucial role as integral components within the majority of language programmes. He further asserts that, in certain circumstances, these materials play a fundamental role in providing learners with language input and facilitating language practice within the classroom. Therefore, some teachers rely on textbooks to deliver content to the learners. Furthermore, schools had few teachers that met the requirements of teaching isiNdebele, and current teachers had not been adequately prepared for the task assigned to them in suddenly teaching isiNdebele and this resulted in a situation where learners do not perform well in isiNdebele, they lack skills in writing and presenting, reading, comprehending and interpreting poems correctly, language structure and conventions especially in Grade 9 (Mamabolo, 2014).

1.2. Contextualisation

KwaMhlanga, where the study is situated, is a multicultural community. However, isiNdebele and Sepedi are the home languages offered in most of the schools in this area. Therefore, the learners' proficiency level in isiNdebele varies. For instance, you will find a learner who is supposed to know and excel in the language struggling simply because of all these languages she or he is exposed to. Although the home language of most of these learners is isiNdebele, the proficiency level is distinct considerably. The reason for this difference is that learners in the area are exposed to many other languages and they tend to speak all of them interchangeably. Therefore, they are not able to comprehend isiNdebele effectively.

Textbooks are required to assist learners to learn. This study is, therefore, interested in discovering whether the textbooks that are used in Nkangala District, with particular focus placed on schools at KwaMhlanga South West Circuit, provide learners with such opportunities. KwaMhlanga is not the only area that offers isiNdebele as a home language in schools. However, this study focused on this area because KwaMhlanga is the area that has the most mixed population in Thembisile Hani Municipality, one of the most developed areas in Thembisile, and the most promising area that can play a part in the development of isiNdebele (Mtshweni, 2020).

1.3. Rationale

I am a teacher in KwaMhlanga and I have observed that learners are struggling with isiNdebele; some learners cannot read, write, and pronounce isiNdebele correctly. This leads to poor academic results in isiNdebele. I was curious about the textbooks used to help them learn isiNdebele.

I understand that there are other factors that might contribute to this dilemma, such as overcrowding and lack of teaching and learning materials. The textbook shortage is a complex issue with significant consequences for educational equity and individual learning outcomes. However, I was curious to find out whether the one primary resource that these learners have access to is indeed supporting their learning. I was concerned to find out whether these textbooks provide learners with sufficient learning opportunities. Therefore, I tried to establish whether these textbooks provide learners with such opportunities. I believe that conducting this research is crucial because it might help teachers to choose the best textbooks for their learners, and improve the quality of isiNdebele Home Language textbooks.

Through a professional lens, learners are promoted according to the national policy regarding the programme and promotion requirements of the national curriculum statement (NPPPR) grades 7 to 9 (Education, 2010). Learners progress from one grade to the next if they attain a satisfactory level of achievement (level 4) in their primary language of instruction. However, learners are not able to achieve the required level without comprehensive teaching and support from various stakeholders, as well as the utilization of proper Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM).

With that being said, the rationale of this study was that isiNdebele learners need textbooks that provide learning opportunities. While various resources exist, textbooks stand out as cornerstones for effective teaching and learning, aligned with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and school curriculum delivery plans (Langa, 2021). Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSMs) play a crucial role in enriching the educational experience for Grade 9 learners in South Africa (Langa, 2021). Moreover, LTSMs should be sufficient for both learning and teaching.

1.4. Problem statement

Nilsson (2006) argues that, utilizing high-quality textbooks not only helps learners learn a language or obtain better outcomes, but it also saves teachers an incredible amount of time. De Wet (2018) further states that textbooks help teachers to prepare for lessons and that they are even more important in classrooms with language barriers, because they may be the only information source for learners when they are studying at home. Learners do not perform as expected in isiNdebele (Owen-Smith 2015). There is confusion in African languages, more especially languages such as isiNdebele, as a result of the numerous languages spoken by people living in the multilingual area like KwaMhlanga (Mnguni, 2004). Learners adapt to those languages and try to speak all languages simultaneously as a vernacular. In addition, learners frequently conflate the language spoken on the street with the standard language that is taught at school as their native language. Consequently, they require a high-quality textbook to aid their learning. In South Africa, learners often suffer a language barrier due to being in a society where learners are exposed to more than one language (Owen-Smith, 2012). According to Owen-Smith (2015), children who are unable to acquire their most familiar language, typically their home language, have a disadvantage and are unlikely to reach their maximum potential. Teachers with little experience are contributing to the issue as well.

Although there are other alternatives or methods that teachers can use to equip learners with skills that can be acquired from textbooks, such as traditional oral literature and role-play; textbooks play a vital role in education. Therefore, the quality of textbooks should be a priority. At times, the dominance of textbooks can overshadow other effective and engaging learning methods, however, that should not be reason to overlook their importance in the classroom and thus compromise their quality (Bondi, 2016).

Textbooks are the constant factor that learners should be able to rely on. How exactly do the isiNdebele textbooks manage to serve in that capacity? Do these textbooks contribute to the educational growth of IsiNdebele as a subject? Are there high-quality questions that support this growth? Therefore, the learning opportunities in the textbooks needed to be evaluated as the textbooks that are available should contain pertinent information and methodological strategies for learners to be able to learn effectively. The problem that these researches study sought to investigate was whether the textbooks available for learners are of good quality and

assist learners in their learning. The textbooks should meet certain criteria already mentioned by scholars in textbook evaluation as discussed later in this study.

Ensuring the delivery of high-quality education to all learners is a key priority pursued by South Africa and other nations (Riet, 2013). This vision is partially attainable in South Africa through the provision of LTSM for efficient curriculum delivery. Although isiNdebele textbooks are included in these LTSM, research indicates that they have not been evaluated yet, as I was unable to locate any evaluation criteria for isiNdebele Home Language textbooks. Mamabolo (2005) concurs with this statement by stating that isiNdebele has never had tangible language planning and instructional support materials.

Since textbooks are an essential element of the LTSM, it is of the utmost importance that textbooks give learners the necessary knowledge and skills to reach the desired level of learning and acquiring of the language.

1.5. Focus of the study

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate opportunities to learn presented by current isiNdebele textbooks. An efficient textbook should provide a learner with all the possible learning information such as examples, skills, and questions that would enhance language learning skills. This study aimed to evaluate whether the textbooks that were used are aligned with the CAPS document provided by the Department of Education.

1.6. Aims of the study

The primary aim of the study was to discover the opportunities to learn presented by the sampled isiNdebele Home Language textbooks. In order to unpack these opportunities, three objectives steered the study. Firstly, the study sought to find the relevance of information and material provided by textbooks to learners in Grade 9. According to Riet (2013), textbooks assist learners in organising their learning both within and outside of the classroom. The study aimed to uncover how the textbooks make real life situations relatable with the given examples. Secondly, the study delved into how the sampled textbooks cover the language learning skills such as reading and viewing, listening and speaking, writing and presenting and language structure and conventions as required by the CAPS document, to enhance the efficacy of pedagogical practises and promote optimal knowledge acquisition. The third objective was to explore the extent to which the questions in the textbooks adhere to the cognitive levels stated in the CAPS.

1.7. Research questions

Questions that were answered throughout the study are known as research questions. The research inquiry was directed by the subsequent research questions.

1.7.1. Main research question

How does isiNdebele Home Language textbooks provide opportunities to learn as envisioned in the official CAPS curriculum?

1.7.2. Secondary research questions

1.7.2.1. How do the sampled textbooks facilitate the language learning skills as stated by the CAPS document?

1.7.2.2. How do the sampled textbooks make real-life situations relatable to its given examples?

1.7.2.3. To what extent are the questions in the textbooks adhering to the cognitive levels required by the CAPS document?

1.8. Concept clarification

Key concepts that are related to the research title are defined below.

1.8.1. Opportunities to learn

According to Banicky (2000), opportunities to learn were described originally as a measure of whether or not learners got the chance to study a specific topic or learn how to answer a specific sort of problem offered in a textbook. In recent policy discussions, the concept refers to a more proactive concern with providing appropriate learning opportunities for all groups of learners, rather than just the overlap between what has been taught and what has been assessed. It has been expanded to incorporate learners' experiences with resources, school settings, curriculum, and instruction. Furthermore, it has been defined as "what the educational system does to enable learners to fulfil the demands set by the content and performance standards" in standard-based reform (Banicky, 2000).

1.8.2. IsiNdebele Home Language

IsiNdebele is a language that is spoken mostly in the Mpumalanga province in South Africa. According to Khumalo (2018), there exist three distinct variants of isiNdebele: Southern Ndebele comprises of Ndzundza and Manala, primarily spoken in South Africa, and Northern Ndebele prevalent in the Limpopo province normally called isiNdebele seMoletlane and Zimbabwean Ndebele which is spoken mostly in Zimbabwe. In the 1980s, isiNdebele was recognised as a standard language in South Africa. It was defined and implemented in schools in 1985. The original orthography and spelling rules were released in 1982 and they were changed again in 1995, 2005 and revised again in 2022 (Ndhlovu, 2022). Prior to 1994, isiNdebele was considered a minority language (Mahlangu, 2015). A minority language according to Mathibela (2013) is a language that is spoken by a small group of people, isiNdebele was and still is regarded as a minority language since it is still have less speakers compared to other languages such as IsiZulu, IsiXhosa etc.

1.8.3. Textbook

According to Bondi (2016), a textbook is defined as a scholarly publication that imparts knowledge on a certain subject and is predominantly utilised within educational institutions such as schools and colleges. Textbooks are specifically crafted to furnish learners with the necessary knowledge, language skills, and information, as per the provided definition. Additionally, textbooks allow learners to learn better, quicker, easier, and more clearly.

1.8.4. Language learning skills

Husain (2015) claims that the fundamental components of language proficiency encompass the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Teachers and textbooks should address each of these abilities and provide activities that incorporate all four skills whenever possible, as each one reinforces the others. Additionally, Husain (2015) asserts that language is fundamentally a skill. It differs from content-based subjects like Science, Social Studies, Commerce, Mathematics, and others, which are designed to impart knowledge and educate the human intellect. Language belongs to the psychomotor realm since it is a skill. The ability to perform well is referred to as a skill. Individuals have the capacity to acquire the ability to swim, engage in recreational activities, and cultivate other proficiencies. Similarly, individuals acquire proficiency in a language by honing their abilities in auditory

comprehension, oral communication, textual analysis, visual interpretation, written expression, and public speaking (Husain, 2015).

1.9 Preliminary literature review

The primary objective of a preliminary literature review is to offer a lens of the existing literature about textbooks. The available literature relates to the main research question: How do isiNdebele Home Language textbooks provide opportunities to learn as envisioned in the official CAPS curriculum? The literature was reviewed to establish what is known about the role of textbooks in general and, more specifically, about opportunities to learn in textbooks. Therefore, this preliminary literature review addressed textbook evaluation, the importance and qualities of a good textbook.

School textbooks are designed to follow a structured curriculum and provide an instructional sequence. According to Shahmohammadi (2013), textbooks hold considerable importance as reference materials and learning resources inside the educational system. Due to the importance of textbook content providing learners with learning opportunities, the textbooks should be evaluated. Both learners and teachers rely on textbooks. Therefore, it is vital to ascertain the evaluation of the material for the purpose of enhancing the pedagogical and educational processes (Husain, 2015).

1.9.1 Textbook evaluation

The choice of textbooks significantly influences the instructional and educational process, as teachers frequently rely on them as a point of reference. The quality of learning resources, such as textbooks, is the main ingredient of education according to Fernands (2014) in Mupa and Chinooneka (2015). Although the success or failure of teaching a language might be determined by the quality of the textbook, “the reality shows that textbooks are often purchased without careful analysis” (Rahmawati, 2018). Therefore, it is important that textbooks be evaluated, especially if they are to be used for teaching and learning purposes. According to Dendrinis as cited in Rahmawati (2018:9), textbooks, similar to other books published by publishers, can be regarded as goods, with their production primarily driven by the pursuit of commercial success.

However, Rahmawati (2018:10) believes that “most textbooks are in fact leading to learners’ failure in acquiring the language and in the worst case, contain serious pedagogical flaws and practical shortcomings, instead of contributing positively to student’s development in the

acquisition of language”. She further states that there are two reasons for textbook failure. The first one is that textbook publishers possibly are motivated by the need for commercial success. Publishers would have to produce according to public request. The second potential factor contributing to failure might be attributed to a lack of emphasis on the potential benefits that learners could derive from utilising the textbook. As Schunk (2012) asserts, textbook authors frequently rely on their personal intuition when developing materials, potentially resulting in disconnection between the intended users' needs and the actual content produced.

Be that as it may, the evaluation and selection of textbooks, workbooks and teacher resources is regulated and managed by the Department of Education. The Department of Education finalises the draft national catalogue and submits it to Heads of Education Committee (HEDCOM) for approval. The South African Department of Education has a well-established process for evaluating and selecting textbooks for use in schools. This process is crucial in ensuring that students are provided with high-quality and up-to-date learning materials that meet the requirements of the curriculum (Outhred, Beavis, Stubberfield, Wilkinson, Murphy & Kelly, 2013).

One of the key aspects of the textbook evaluation process is the consideration of the content and alignment with the curriculum. Textbooks undergo a thorough review by subject matter experts to ensure that the content is accurate, relevant, and in line with the learning outcomes specified in the curriculum. This ensures that students are provided with the necessary information and skills to meet the educational standards set by the government. Another important aspect of the evaluation process is the consideration of the quality of the instructional design and layout of the textbooks. This includes factors such as readability, organization, visual appeal, and usability. Textbooks that are well-designed and engaging can enhance the learning experience for students and make the material more accessible and easier to understand (Outhred et.al., 2013).

In addition, the South African Department of Education evaluates textbooks based on their cultural and social relevance. This includes ensuring that the content is inclusive and representative of the diverse population of South Africa. Textbooks are evaluated for their sensitivity to issues of race, gender, class, and other social factors, and efforts are made to promote diversity and equality in the content.

Overall, the textbook evaluation process in South Africa's Department of Education is a rigorous and comprehensive one that aims to ensure that students have access to high-quality, relevant, and culturally sensitive learning materials. By following this process, the government can help to improve the quality of education in the country and provide students with the resources they need to succeed academically (Outhred et.al., 2013).

1.9.2. The significance of quality textbooks

According to Ogan-Bekiroglu (2007), it is well established that access to and use of high-quality textbooks increase student achievement. In addition, studies have demonstrated that the use of well-designed textbooks or curricular material can have a constructive effect on teachers' attitudes and actions, which facilitates curriculum implementation (Ogan-Bekiroglu, 2007). Moore (2001) concurs with the fact that the use of textbooks has been found to be one of the least expensive methods of enhancing educational standards. Swanepoel (2010) believes that there are a number of ways in which textbooks can be used to compensate for teachers' lack of skills and knowledge. The utilisation of high-quality textbooks can yield advantages for learners as well as teachers in the realms of learning and teaching.

In their study, Bojanić and Topalov (2016) characterise a textbook as possessing multiple roles, including that of a teacher, a map, a resource, a trainer, and an authority. According to Njengere and Ji (2017), a textbook may be defined as a written resource that is intended for learners and focuses on a specific subject or field of study. Typically, textbooks are prepared in accordance with a syllabus and are designed to meet specific quality standards and learning objectives. The CAPS document (2011:60) stipulates that teachers should create their lesson plans utilising the prescribed textbooks and any other pertinent materials in order to teach the content in the right order and at the right pace.

1.10. Theoretical framework

I have chosen to work with the social constructivism theory of Vygotsky and Cole (1978). I found this theory relevant for my study because it emphasises building blocks, scaffolding, language development, and most importantly, learners' previous knowledge (Al-Abdulkareem & Hentschke, 2014). I focused on the constructivism checklist to evaluate the isiNdebele textbooks to ascertain whether or not they are written in a constructivist way which promotes learning. Therefore, these particular textbooks should provide learners with the following: new ideas which are matched against existing knowledge, real-life adaptive

problem solving which allows learners to master certain tasks without being assisted and allows knowledge to develop as a result of social relations and language practice (Pavešić, 2022). Chapter 2 provides a more comprehensive analysis of the social constructivist perspective, which posits that people actively construct and ponder their own representations of reality, integrating new information into their pre-existing knowledge. I chose social constructivism because I believe it would blend well with my research as it focuses on the quality of textbooks which would enhance the level of education. Social constructivism is based on the idea that people learn best when they work together (Kim, 2001) It served this study very well because this study also evaluated the group works provided by the textbooks in question and how they provided learners with activities that encouraged them to work together. Moreover, Agius (2013) concurs with the fact that the way people interact with their community, society, and each other shapes what they know. Learners depend on others to help them build their foundations, and what they learn from others helps them build their own information and reality (Hay, 2015).

1.11 Research design and methodology

In this section, a discussion of the research process employed in this study is presented. I have used an interpretivist theoretical framework for conducting my research.

1.11.1 Research approach

Bahari (2010) defines a research strategy as a structure that lays out a problem-solving or problem-finding strategy. There are two types of research approaches that are commonly used, namely, qualitative and quantitative research methods. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the learning opportunities provided by the isiNdebele textbook in Grade 9 through probing research questions. As a result, the study was classified as qualitative research. Qualitative research, as defined by Creswell (2013), is a methodological approach to inquiry that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon. This type of research involves a systematic process of investigation that uncovers a range of obstacles and complexities.

The primary objective of qualitative research is to acquire a comprehensive comprehension of a particular scenario by examining its substance and the manner in which it elucidates the phenomenon being investigated. According to Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape (2014), the primary objective of a qualitative researcher is to offer an extensive and interpretive

insight of the social reality under investigation. In studying social and human problems, qualitative research, according to Maree (2010), focuses on understanding patterns caused by social and cultural environments. The goal of qualitative research is to gather thorough descriptive information about a phenomenon, in this case the isiNdebele textbooks (Maree, 2010). Qualitative research attempts to comprehend the phenomenon and to provide the related causes, interpretations, or meanings. Using a qualitative method in this study allowed me to better understand how the textbook applies to real-life situations (Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima and Haider, 2011). Although as the first step in my methodology I used an evaluation checklist and awarded a mark out of 10, it is important to note that my study is not quantitative in nature.

1.11.2 Research design

There are several methodologies for performing qualitative research according to Williams (2007). I selected qualitative content analysis as my research design. Content analysis research as the study of analysing documents and communication artefacts which can include text, images, audio, and videos (Maree, 2016; Kyngäs, 2020). There are two distinct types of content analysis, namely manifest content analysis and latent content analysis. In his work, Maree (2016) examines the content aspect and provides an analysis of the visible and readily apparent components, which are commonly referred to as the manifest content. On the other hand, the examination of the subject matter discussed in the text pertains to the relational dimension and entails an elucidation of the implicit significance of the text, commonly known as latent content.

For my research, I employed a combination of latent and manifest content analysis, because I evaluated the content of these textbooks to see if it was aligned with the curriculum and if the language themes used in teaching isiNdebele were articulated in a way that is appropriate for Grade 9 learners. Furthermore, the study sought the availability of examples which can relate to learners' everyday life situations and determine whether questions asked in the exercises complied with the cognitive levels and the language skills as mentioned in the CAPS document. This is why my research focused on both the manifest and the latent content.

1.12 Data collection

A researcher could select different methodologies to collect data in order to avoid bias and other restrictions. However, which instrument is appropriate for gathering data for that

specific study is largely determined by the research problem (Maree, 2010). The type of research also influences the data collection methods used. This study utilises two isiNdebele Home Language textbooks commonly used in the KwaMhlanga area to collect data, there were no interviews or observations, this study's data was collected only through textbooks. In order to address the issue of learners who cannot correctly speak, read, and write isiNdebele, I believe that these textbooks had to be examined. Evaluation of these textbooks also contributes to the growth of isiNdebele.

1.12.1 Data analysis

As stated earlier, a textbook holds significant value as a reference and resource for learners within an educational framework, serving as a formal tool for studying a certain subject. Therefore, it was necessary to analyse these resources. This was done through qualitative content analysis as a way to acquire a deeper understanding of the opportunities to learn provided by isiNdebele Home Language textbooks. Content analysis refers to the systematic procedure of classifying linguistic or behavioural data with the aim of categorization, summarization, and tabulation. The task can be executed at two distinct levels, namely descriptive and interpretive. The following methodological strategies were used to analyse the data obtained in this study: identifying themes and patterns in the collected data as well as summarising and categorising data based on the themes and patterns identified.

Data analysis implies that a researcher uses procedures that are appropriate for the particular research. Stemler, as cited in Maree (2016), describes content analysis as a methodical and reproducible approach used to condense extensive textual data into a smaller number of content categories, as well as employing predetermined coding standards. Content analysis starts with a clear definition of the aims or research issue to be investigated. The researcher establishes the study's goals based on the question: "What am I hoping to learn from this communication content?" As a consequence, the researcher must select an appropriate channel of communication and formulate questions that can be answered by content analysis (Prasad, 2008).

The objectives of content analysis are to turn recorded "raw" occurrences into data, which can be addressed in essentially a scientific fashion so that a body of knowledge may be built up according to Prasad (2008). Data interpretation is the final stage of the study; it is a continuous and iterative procedure (Maree, 2010). Data analysis brings order and importance to the information acquired, assists the analyst in composing and making sense of the data

gathered, and assists in answering the research question (De Vos, Delport, Fouche & Strydom, 2011). When information has been obtained, it must be organised into themes in order to analyse it and gain a better understanding of what has been gathered. Patton (2014) defines data analysis as the procedure of arranging and categorising data into themes, classifications, and basic descriptive units.

1.13 Quality assurance

1.13.1 Trustworthiness

Qualitative research uses trustworthiness to assure quality while quantitative research uses validity. In this segment, I presented how my research rigour was reinforced through trustworthiness. Through trustworthiness, researchers attend to credibility, conformability, and transferability.

Connelly (2016) defines **credibility** as the level of trust that may be granted to the veracity of the research findings. It analyses whether the research findings contain credible information generated from the original data of the sampled textbooks and are an accurate depiction.

Transferability, according to Connelly (2016), refers to the degree to which qualitative research findings are able to be used in multiple contexts or situations with different respondents. The researcher's extensive description aids a potential user's capacity to judge transferability. I am confident that if my study was conducted in another area, for instance in Gauteng in the area called Daveyton, the findings were more likely to be the same as in this study. According to Malinga (2012), Daveyton is a multilingual area because it was established to clear the slum and squatter areas that were proliferating around South African towns and cities. People from all over South Africa came to Johannesburg to work and ended up in squatter camps because they could not go back to their homes on a daily basis. Consequently, Daveyton was established to give these people homes; this is why people in this area speak multiple languages.

Prasad (2008) further defines **conformability** as the extent to which the research study's conclusions may be validated by other researchers. Its goal is to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are clearly derived from the data and are not the result of the inquirer's ideas. Therefore, if another researcher can conduct research using the same study, same literature review, and same textbooks, the researcher's conclusion would be similar.

1.14 Ethical considerations

Research ethics is concerned with the responsibilities of researchers to be honest and respectful to all participants who are involved in their research. Confidentiality, anonymity, and respect should be the priority in any research study (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). Furthermore, permission to enter the research field for data collection should be obtained by the researcher and harm, in any form, to participants should be avoided. However, this study focused on textbooks and did not involve human participants. Therefore, ethical clearance was applied for but only for the use of published material in the public domain. The research commenced after obtaining ethical permission from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria.

1.15 Overview of the study

1.15.1 Chapter one: Background and introduction

This chapter provided an introduction to the focus, purpose, and rationale of the study, following the initial introduction and contextualization. This chapter also provided an overview of the problem statement, objectives, and research questions, which served to guide the study. Additionally, it introduced the literature review and the theoretical lens. The initial chapter culminated with an examination of quality assurance and ethical considerations.

1.15.2 Chapter two: Literature review and theoretical lens

The literature review is discussed in this chapter, with emphasis on both local and international researchers. The literature reflected on some of the most important debates surrounding the topic under investigation. The literature chapter encompassed several key sections, namely: the historical backdrop of linguistic policy in South Africa, language policy within the educational sphere, the examination of the CAPS document outlining the language acquisition process, the significance of textbooks in the teaching and learning process, the necessity for textbook evaluation, and the specific criteria employed in this study for textbook evaluation.

This chapter further discussed the theory that informs the study. The social constructivism theory proposed by Vygotsky (1987) was the theoretical lens of this study, explaining the premises that learners build knowledge rather than passively taking in information.

1.15.3 Chapter three: Research design and methodology

This chapter presented the methodology employed in the study, along with the chosen research technique. The chapter additionally examined the research paradigm employed in the study, specifically an interpretivist paradigm that seeks to comprehend the research quandary pertaining to these textbooks. It also delved into the techniques used for data gathering, followed by the selection strategy for sampling, the method employed for analysis, and the resulting conclusion.

1.15.4 Chapter four: Data analysis and results

In this chapter, the results and data derived from the content analysis were scrutinised. Three themes that emerged from the data analysis method were elaborated upon in this chapter.

1.15.5 Chapter five: Discussion of findings

The findings were summarised in this chapter and linked to the literature and theory. The chapter also showed how the findings addressed the main research questions. The subsequent section of the chapter discussed the implications of the study for policy, practise, and further research. The research constraints were discussed as well.

1.16 Conclusion

In this chapter an aerial perspective of the research was provided. The chapter further denoted the intent of my research and the implementation strategies of my study. It also exhibited the theoretical foundation and verified the quality criteria. In the next chapter, the scholarly works pertaining to research are discussed.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL LENS

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter of this dissertation served as an introduction and summary of my research. This chapter details the review of literature related to this study. A literature review examines articles and other studies conducted related to the subject matter of the research study. A literature review aids readers and writers in comprehending the phenomena under investigation by placing them in historical context and encouraging further research. O'gorman and Macintosh (2015) assert that it is the most significant step a researcher should take prior to beginning a research project. The literature review provides the researcher with a critical and objective overview of the published literature on the research topic in question.

Ramdhani, Ramdhani and Amin (2014) state that the fundamental goal of a literature review is to familiarise the researcher with prior study on the issues, to identify current perspectives, and to support future research in an area that has been overlooked or understudied previously. A literature review can also provide a succinct assessment and discussion of evidence in a certain area. As a result, a literature review encompasses all of the major topics relevant to the research project (Ramdhani, Ramdhani & Amin, 2014). Ultimately, it should synthesise and evaluate prior research.

Mcmillan (2012) alludes to the fact that a researcher should review articles in order to understand their topic and to find their position within the body of reviewed literature. I read published work related to the evaluation of learning opportunities provided by Grade 9 isiNdebele Home Language textbooks to identify the limitations in the field and the findings. Textbooks are often the only resource that learners have access to and are a very important resource for teaching (Johansson, 2003). However, in South Africa, not many studies have been conducted that focus on isiNdebele textbooks. The majority of research has been done on the evaluation of Mathematics (Hemmi, Lepik & Viholainen, 2013) and English textbooks (Rahmawati, 2018) as well as the influence of textbooks on teaching and learning in general, and the use of textbooks (Mithans & Grmek, 2020). The vast majority of research that has been conducted on isiNdebele has focused on other aspects such as the history of amaNdebele, grammatical elements of isiNdebele (Mahlangu, 2015), the development of isiNdebele and the traditional elements of isiNdebele (Mabena, 2020).

As a result, the following topics were covered in this literature review: the background of language policy in South Africa throughout history, the CAPS document on the educational prospects supported by Grade 9 isiNdebele textbooks, the function of textbooks, the necessity of textbook evaluation, and the standards for textbook review.

2.1.1 Historical context of language policy in South Africa

Education was one of the principal methods utilised by the apartheid administration to enforce separate development and systematise the entrenched prejudice against the majority of the population (Kallaway, 2002). The apartheid government's directive pertaining to the language of teaching in schools was the principal catalyst for the Soweto Uprising on June 16, 1976. The Bantu Education Department made it mandatory for schools to teach English and Afrikaans on an equal basis (Stein & Taylor, 2022). The learners felt that Afrikaans was being imposed on them and that their native tongues were being weakened (Kallaway, 2002).

As a result, the right to get a basic education in a preferred language is now expressly protected under Section 29(2) of the South African Constitution. Everybody has the right, when it is reasonable, to get an education in public educational institutions in the official language or languages of their choosing. According to Cross (2009), the government should investigate all viable options for education in order to guarantee effective access to and implementation of this right. However, there are numerous roadblocks to its successful adoption. According to Mutasa (2015), language policies in Africa, no matter how good, are characterised by a declaration without implementation. South Africa's language education policy is a complex and evolving terrain, shaped by its diverse population, historical legacy, and ongoing debates about equity and inclusion.

2.1.2 Language policy in Education

Bostock (2018) asserts that in July 1997, Sibusiso Bengu the then-education minister announced the Language-in-Education Policy. He claimed that, among other things, the new government's plan to make South Africa a non-racial nation included the use of new language in the education programme, which was deemed vital and fundamental. It was meant to promote respect for languages other than one's own while also facilitating communication across barriers of area, language, and colour. The approach was consistent given that multilingualism, mutually societal and individual, is now the global standard, particularly on the African continent (Eben & Declerck, 2019). Consequently, there is an assumption that

acquiring proficiency in two or more languages ought to be the norm and a guiding principle in our society. This would effectively counteract any separatism or particularistic ethnic chauvinism through the provision of labour expertise or skills (Heugh, 2008).

Murray (2002), while quoting on the language policy in education asserts that the parent exercises the linguistic rights of the underage learner on behalf of their child. Every learner who has reached the age of maturity will be addressed as the learner, which will comprise the parent in the case of minor learners. According to Eben and Declerck (2019), when applying for admission to a certain school, the learner must select the teaching language. If there is a space available at the appropriate grade level and an educational institution uses the pedagogical and instructional language that the learner prefers, the institution is required to accept the learner. In the event that no school within the district provides instruction in the chosen language, the learner may request that the provincial education department provide, in which case Section 5.3.2 must be followed. All schools in the relevant school district must receive copies of the request from the provincial education department (Chetty & Mwepu, 2008).

Eben and Declerck (2019), suggest that being multilingual is the most distinguishing feature of being a South African. In addition, Heugh (2008) articulates that all of South Africa's official languages were given equal respect and acceptability under the policy in order to be fostered and nurtured. However, the progress in transforming it into a provincial implementation strategy has been modest (Eben & Declerck, 2019). According to Nugraha (2019), language in education policy plays a crucial role in language teaching and learning. As a result, it has been a prominent research topic in language in education policy. With reference to Lebesa (2021), South Africa is one of the countries that has become a focal point for language in education policy debates because of its unique multicultural and historical background. This had a significant impact on the country's current language in education policy (Nugraha, 2019).

2.1.3 The South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

Language skills (listening, writing, reading, and speaking) are required for successful learning across the curriculum, as well as full involvement in society and the workplace, according to the CAPS (2011:11). This assertion demands CAPS-compliant textbooks to fulfil the document's mandates while also providing learners with the necessary knowledge. Learners are required to master the reading and viewing of a diverse variety of literary and

non-literary texts, including visual texts, as well as the understanding of how genre and register reflect the purpose, audience, and context of texts. Textbooks provide learners with the necessary opportunities to reach their full learning potential. The learners' knowledge of language structures, conventions, rules, and their own life experiences determine their ability to comprehend and interpret written and visual content (Koutris, 2017).

Furthermore, Assaly and Smadi (2015) point out that language structures aid learners in comprehending how texts are formed. Learners are able to contextualise a wide variety of texts by using pre-reading, reading, and post-reading procedures such as predicting, clarifying, and assessing. Furthermore, learners should learn how to use pre-reading tactics such as skimming and scanning text features, parts of a book, and paragraph/text structure to contribute to meaning. Therefore, according to the CAPS document (2011:10), learners should be assisted in gaining vocabulary through reading a variety of text types.

According to the CAPS document (2011), the learning material used by learners should develop activities for the two-week cycle that are meaningful to learners and appropriate to the texts they are studying. As learners transition from seventh to ninth grade, more of these types of activities should be done. The amount of rules taught to learners should be reduced by selecting them carefully. As they are interdependent, it is necessary to teach all language skills and structures. All of these must be taught contextually. The CAPS (2011) states that content from the 'Language Structures and Conventions' column will be given attention automatically while interacting with texts, and during the specified time for listening, speaking, reading, and presenting, as it is related to the types of texts necessary for the development of those skills.

Molepo (2014) states that the goal of CAPS's introduction was to lessen the burden that numerous Learning Areas placed on teachers and learners. Focusing on returning to the fundamentals, substituting individual work for group projects, referring to Learning Areas and Learning Programmes as subjects, and replacing assessment standards and learning goals with themes are some of the major changes brought about by CAPS.

2.1.3.1 Informal assessment according to the CAPS document

The CAPS document (2011) defines informal assessment as a daily appraisal of learners' development. This is achieved by observations, dialogues, practical exercises, learner-teacher

discussions, and informal classroom activities. Informal assessment can be as simple as stopping during a lesson to observe learners and discuss their development.

2.1.3.2 Formal assessment as per the CAPS document

According to the CAPS document (2011:119), formal assessment refers to all formative assessments that constitute an annual formal assessment plan. The teacher assesses and documents formal assessment tasks for progression purposes. Every formal assessment task is controlled for quality assurance and to ensure that the proper standards are maintained. Formal assessment activities should measure a wide range of language skills in order to evaluate critical skills throughout the term and year. Teachers should ensure that these elements have been tested informally to provide learners with feedback prior to being assessed formally (CAPS, 2011). The applied assessment methods should be age and skill appropriate. The structure of these exercises should include the subject's content and include a diverse range of tasks meant to achieve the subject's aims. It should demonstrate the knowledge and skills obtained throughout the course. It should utilise each grade's term plans to determine the type of tasks and skill sets required for each component of the formal assessment procedure. For example, if one assigns learners in Grade 9 Term 1 the assignment of composing a poem, they should be encouraged to "create sentences of the same length that rhyme", because this is what they would have learned (CAPS 2011:120). If an informative assignment is given during the first term, learners will be obliged to use the appropriate framework or structure. Similarly, learners would not be required to demonstrate proficiency in listening and speaking.

According to Dilley et al. (2012) as cited by (Bomela, 2022), getting evidence of students' learning is a prerequisite for conducting assessments. It should be taken into account while organising the lesson's material because it is a crucial component of both teaching and learning. Teaching, learning, and assessment are typically seen as entwined processes rather than distinct events. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) provides a brief overview of the close connection between instruction, learning, and assessment.

Assessment is a vital tool that teachers must use to raise the standard of instruction in their classrooms, according to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). The content to be studied each term and the four required assessment tasks are the main foci of the CAPS. One major worry is how teachers manage issues linked to classroom assessments and coordinate their methods of assessment to satisfy the requirements of the CAPS

guidelines (Bomela, 2022). In accordance with the CAPS document (2011), formal assessment provides teachers with a thorough review of learners' progress in a grade and subject. Examples of formal assessments comprise tests, assessments, practical activities, projects, oral presentations, demonstrations (such as repeating a tale or matching), exhibitions (such as acting), essays, participation in oral tasks (such as dialogues, conversations, and discussions), and written tasks (such as completing a worksheet or composing texts).

2.1.4. The role of textbooks in teaching and learning

Laaksola (as cited in Lepik, Grevholm & Viholainen, 2015) believes that textbooks play a very important role in teachers' daily lesson preparations, since they provide directions and guide teachers to plan for lessons. He further states that "textbooks are often perceived to reflect the officially intended curriculum by the teacher". Textbooks often serve as the primary resource for teachers on how to present a lesson (Johansson, 2006). Rahmawati (2018) evaluated English textbooks with emphasis on the standards for selecting appropriate textbooks in nations where English is taught as a foreign language. She claimed that textbooks are one of the learning tools used for English. To determine the best textbook for teaching English as a second language, many English as Foreign Language (EFL) textbook evaluations have been conducted.

According to research by Riet (2013), even though the LTSM is essential for instruction, it is not just its availability that can have a significant impact on teaching and learning; rather, it is the teachers' and learners' optimal use of and engagement with the LTSM that will result in the achievement of the curriculum goals as outlined in the CAPS policy. Johansson (2006) provides another study that gives insight into how the textbook is used in the classroom. Three lower-secondary teachers in Sweden were observed and interviewed. In all three classrooms, textbooks were in direct use about 60% of the time and the dominant activity was learners' individual work on tasks in the textbook. Riet (2013) emphasises the necessity of providing learners with LTSM that provides opportunities to acquire the necessary information and abilities, as outlined in the curriculum, in order to attain excellence in education.

This illustrates how textbooks are used as primary resources to enhance learning in most countries. Other authors, such as Kleve (2009), emphasise that textbooks are used to clarify concepts that are often used in learning, and that teachers utilise textbooks for examples and assessment purposes. Rahmawati (2018:9) refers to the textbook as "one of many kinds of

instructional materials used in learning. Textbooks are usually succinctly written, tightly organised, and greatly condensed”. She further states that textbooks serve as tools to motivate learners and stimulate language learning. Teachers may use textbooks as a reference point to manage their teaching process and to identify a focus for their teaching. Textbooks may further enable teachers to keep track of their development.

According to Rahmawati (2018:9), “textbooks are particularly useful in providing support and security for new inexperienced teachers, who have relatively low confidence to deliver”. Novice teachers often find it difficult to deliver lessons. However, with high-quality textbooks and teaching guides, their work can be much easier. In the interviews conducted by Lemmer (2008), teachers requested additional assistance from the Department of Education in selecting textbooks. A qualified group should develop selection criteria and workshops should be conducted promptly (Lemmer, 2008). This demonstrates that teachers require assistance in order to select appropriate textbooks for their learners. They acknowledge the need for a qualified team to assist and also instruct them through workshops on how to select high-quality textbooks.

In the teaching and learning process, textbooks play a significant role in dealing with the learner’s ability to learn. According to Richards (2001), the roles played by textbooks are resource presentation materials (spoken and written), a source of the activities for learning practice and communication interaction, a reference source for learning grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, a source of stimulation and ideas for classroom activities, a syllabus (to reflect on learning objectives that have already been determined), and support for inexperienced teachers who have yet to gain confidence in teaching. Lemmer (2008) recommends that textbook authors ensure the learning activities are challenging and allow learners to acquire the subject matter, scientific procedures, and language abilities. The fundamental concepts should be covered thoroughly and accurately in the textbooks.

Since textbooks are the primary resource for both learners and teachers, as stated by Johansson (2003), it is crucial that they encourage interactive learning which Martin (2021) defines as a teaching strategy that incorporates components of learner participation and engagement. Learners are encouraged to engage in hands-on activities, collaborate in groups, and utilise technological components to complete their homework. Instruction based on interactive learning aims to attract learners' attention quickly and efficiently in order to maintain their interest in learning. Furthermore, she argues that enhanced student

participation is the first benefit of interactive learning that comes to mind. Nevertheless, interactive learning also provides learners with a number of other significant benefits. Learners usually collaborate with their peers in interactive learning. As a result, cooperative skills develop swiftly. Learners develop the ability to listen to others' ideas, build on those ideas, and blend those ideas to produce unique solutions, which is crucial for fostering critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. Therefore, it is essential for textbooks to align with learning outcomes to support and enhance students' development in these areas (Kim, 2001).

2.1.4.1. The importance of learning outcomes in the textbook

According to Malik and Hassan (2022), the successful development of an academic unit of instruction is predicated on a clear understanding of what can be accomplished upon completion of the course or programme. In addition, the programme cannot be implemented until its learning outcomes are identified and stated in writing. Learning outcomes are textual statements of what a successful learner should be able to do by the end of each unit (Adam, 2004 as cited in Mahajan & Singh, 2017). They further state that learning outcomes are statements of what a student should know, understand, and be able to demonstrate upon conclusion of a learning process.

The learning outcomes should be measurable and specific. Typically, learning outcomes are written using Bloom's Taxonomy. Bloom's Taxonomy defines the learning process and has proven to be an effective tool for developing learning outcomes. The premise of Bloom's Taxonomy is quite straightforward. Learners have a clear understanding of what they will learn from the unit of instruction prior to enrolling.

The benefits of learning outcomes are that they eliminate the possibility of squandering time and reduce learners' stress levels. Before the start of every session, learning outcomes provide learners with a clear picture of what they will learn or accomplish by the end of the unit (Mahajan & Singh, 2017). The learning outcomes underline exactly what the learners should know and be able to accomplish by the end of the course. By obtaining learning objectives, learners can demonstrate that they have attained the course's pinnacle. Learning outcomes also can benefit teachers by assisting them to easily organise a lesson since it can provide a clear understanding of what and how much to teach and how to plan properly. Moreover, learning outcomes assist teachers in creating more effective instructional materials and in

selecting effective instructional tactics. Finally, learning outcomes assist teachers in avoiding unnecessary instruction, which ultimately saves time (Mahajan & Singh, 2017).

According to the CAPS (2011), learning outcomes can be supported in drafting assessments and evaluation as clear and simple assessment mapping is made possible through the use of learning outcomes and course adjustments can be made based on these outcomes. Learners are more likely to do independent research and arrive prepared if they are held accountable for meeting specific learning outcomes. The success of the unit can be determined by analysing the results of the learners' learning. Learning outcomes have a vital impact on the allocation of marks when creating question papers.

Mahajan & Singh (2017) further assert that learning outcomes serve as a crucial framework for designing effective assessments, ensuring that the evaluation process aligns with the intended learning objectives. By clearly defining the knowledge and skills that learners are expected to acquire, learning outcomes facilitate the creation of assessment tasks that accurately measure student progress. Moreover, learning outcomes provide a mechanism for course adjustment, allowing educators to identify areas where the curriculum may need to be adapted to better support student learning.

According to Malik and Hassan (2022), accountability for achieving specific learning outcomes encourages learners to take ownership of their education, engaging in independent research and arriving prepared for class discussions and activities. This self-directed approach fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter and promotes lifelong learning habits. By aligning assessments with learning outcomes, educators can effectively gauge the success of the unit, identifying areas of strength and areas that may require further attention. Additionally, learning outcomes play a significant role in mark allocation when creating question papers, ensuring that assessment tasks are relevant to the learning objectives and reflect the students' level of understanding.

2.1.5 The need for textbook evaluation

According to Rahmawati (2018:10), the “wrong choice of textbooks would be likely to negatively affect both teaching and learning”. Financial resources would be wasted as well. More recent scholars in the area of language materials development expressed concerns for the cultural content of textbooks which are “inherently social and culturally based” and help to perpetuate a form of “gendered” language. In summary, it is very important to conduct

language textbook evaluation to ensure language textbooks can effectively facilitate the attainment of teaching objectives and at the same time be economically viable to teachers and learners (Rahmawati, 2018:10).

However, Ayu and Inderawati (2019) emphasise that there is no one-size-fits-all book that can meet the demands of all types of learners. Some of them are not always acceptable for the curriculum. That is to say, every textbook could contain flaws. As a result, textbooks that are used in the classroom should be evaluated. According to Rahmawati (2018), this decision is based on a clear answer to whether the textbook satisfies the curriculum's aim, matches the content of the learners, and other factors.

2.1.6 Criteria for textbook evaluation

The characteristics of good textbooks are generally determined by the following principles: it should be aligned with the teaching syllabus for examination, it should meet the needs of the official public, and it should suit the interest, needs, and abilities of the learners and teachers. Subject matter, aims and goals, bibliography data, vocabulary and structures, layout and physical makeup are the sections used by Roohani and Sharifi (2015) on their checklist to evaluate the quality of a good textbook. Garinger (2002) believes in three content areas that need to be addressed when evaluating a textbook's content: teaching objectives, depth and breadth of the material, and whether the textbook is to be used in conjunction with another textbook or not. The evaluation of textbooks is essential as they contribute to the enhancement of learners' language skills, acquisition of topic knowledge, and cultivation of cross-cultural awareness pertaining to individuals from diverse nations (Radić-Bojanić & Topalov, 2016). In contrast, textbooks also can be beneficial to educators by functioning as a structured curriculum and providing support to those with limited experience by enabling them to build confidence, experiment with novel teaching approaches, and develop an understanding of pedagogical concerns (Radić-Bojanić & Topalov, 2016).

Cunningsworth (as cited in Rahmawati 2018:11) proposed general criteria for textbook evaluation, which includes 45 criteria in eight categories, which are aims and approaches, design or organisation, language content, study skills, topic, methodology, teachers' guides and practical consideration. These were regarded as the most important criteria in language textbooks. Miekley (2005) provides a textbook evaluation checklist that could be used to evaluate learners' books and teachers' guides. For the learner book, he suggested four

categories: content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and activities, and attractiveness of the text and physical makeup.

Leite as cited in Lemmer, Edwards, and Rapule (2008) states that a textbook represents the curriculum in light of the worldviews, values, and presuppositions of the authors. This means that all the textbooks used by the learners in schools should be aligned with the content standards of the curriculum. It is said that a good textbook provides learners with opportunities to learn and must have the learning objectives either in the beginning or at the end of a chapter (Riet, 2013).

Therefore, each chapter in textbooks should be introduced or summarised with the learning outcomes, which will qualify the textbook as a quality textbook. For the purpose of student learning, a textbook should translate the four main components of the curriculum which are, firstly, content (the information contained in a textbook), secondly, assessment strategies to assist teachers on what to assess and assist learners on how to prepare for assessment, thirdly, aims at the beginning or at the end of each chapter, and lastly, learning and teaching strategies should be provided for teachers to track their teaching (Education Bureau, 2018).

Since textbooks are known to be the most accessible source for learners in most cases, the language of the good textbook must be clear and precise (Education Bureau, 2018). It must be understandable and user friendly for the learners. In order for the book to provide opportunities to learn, it must be well organised, it must have a visible font, and it should not have unnecessary blank spaces or irrelevant information that could confuse the learners. The graphics, drawings, and tables should be visible and easy to understand (Education Bureau, 2018).

2.1.7 The cognitive levels in the CAPS

A textbook that fulfils the learner's personal objective should be chosen based on recognition of the learner's linguistics perspective. To learn a language effectively, the learner should only acquire a small amount of new information at a time. The amount of learning that can be completed in a specific amount of time is known as the quantity of learning. The amount of learning should be commensurate with the learner's previous knowledge, and by adding new learning, the learner should be able to deepen his or her comprehension of the language (Akpan, Isemin, Udoh & Ashiru-Oredope, 2020). According to CAPS (2011) formal assessments such as controlled tests, assignment, investigation and examinations should cater

for all the cognitive levels of questioning, these types of assessments should consist of questions such as cloze, direct questions, multiple choice and comparison to cater for a variety of learners. Below I will provide a brief explanation of each level as per the CAPS document.

Level 1 questions are regarded as **literal** as the answers to this type are explicitly stated in the text. For example these are the type of questions that require learners to list, name, state and identify etc. There are also **reorganisation** types of questions, which are classified as level 2 questions. These questions are questions that ask a learner to analyse, combine, or organise knowledge that is clearly given in the text. These questions normally require learners to summarise, give an outline of and group the common factors. Both level 1 and level 2 questions should weigh 40 % (CAPS, 2011).

Level 3 questions that are known as **inference questions**, ask learners to express how they relate to specific information in the text in terms of their own experiences. Inference-leading verbs normally explain and compare; these questions should also weigh 40%. Furthermore, there are level 4 types of questions, which, according to CAPS, are **evaluations**. These types of questions relate to evaluations of worth and value. These include assessments of truth, veracity, facts and opinions, validity, logic, and reasoning, as well as matters like the morality and acceptability of choices and actions. Evaluation questions include discussing critically or commenting, and they also require learners to provide reasons for their answers (CAPS, 2011).

Lastly level 5 questions which are known as **appreciation** are the types of questions that would primarily depend on learners to participate in or make an effort to respond to, like "Do you sympathise with the character?" In such a scenario, what course of action or choice would you have made? Talk about or offer criticism of the author's linguistic use. Examine the writer's style, introduction, conclusion, imagery, metaphors, use of poetic methods, and literary devices. Both level 4 and level 5 questions should weigh 20% (CAPS, 2011).

2.2 Theoretical and conceptual frameworks

2.2.1 Introduction

Firstly, I will discuss the reasons for choosing social constructivism as the lens for my study. My research focused on textbook-based learning and how textbooks might help learners

learn. Secondly, I will present the theoretical framework I will be using and explain why it is important to the study.

2.2.2 Social Constructivism

The social constructivism theory proposed by Vygotsky (1987) will be the theoretical lens of this study. Social constructivism is a theory that states that learners build knowledge rather than passively taking in information. Furthermore, social constructivism maintains that people construct their own representations of reality as they encounter and reflect on it, and that new information is blended into their pre-existing knowledge. It is considered to be a key learning principle that teachers employ to assist learners in their learning. Basically, it is centered on the assumption that people actively construct or generate their own knowledge, and that a learner's experiences affect his/her reality (Dorgu, 2015).

Instructions in textbooks should build on learners' prior knowledge, for instance their existing concepts and preconceptions, to incorporate new knowledge into their cognitive structures through the process of meaningful learning (Novak, 2004). As a result, existing knowledge and different native conceptions that learners bring to the learning opportunity should be considered before new concepts are introduced. Therefore, the selected textbooks should provide the learners with information that will help them connect what they already know to the new information introduced to them. According to Al-Abdulkareem and Hentschke (2014), social constructivism holds the idea that knowledge begins with the selection of ideas from everyday life.

In 1968, Vygotsky introduced the concept of social constructivism as a theory of learning. According to this theory, language and culture play essential roles in shaping the way humans perceive, communicate, and understand the world around them. Vygotsky emphasized the importance of language and culture in fostering intellectual development and influencing individuals' worldview. Ideas and concepts are transmitted through language, and are later interpreted and comprehended through first-hand experiences and interactions within a specific cultural context (Kim, 2001).

2.2.3 Constructivist learning

Learning, according to Piaget and Vygotsky, is what leads to the development of higher order thinking. Piaget, on the other hand, adopted a constructivist approach to learning and concentrated on the individual, whereas Vygotsky employed an active theory approach to

learning and focused on social interaction. When a learner solves a difficult problem with the help of adults or more capable peers, he or she is in what Vygotsky refers to as the area of proximal development (Valsiner, 2007).

Learning is a fundamental aspect of human development, as both Piaget and Vygotsky emphasize. Through the process of learning, individuals are able to develop higher order thinking skills that allow them to problem-solve and think critically. Piaget's constructivist approach to learning suggests that individuals actively construct their own knowledge through experiences and interactions with their environment. This focus on the individual's cognitive development highlights the importance of personal growth and understanding (Kim, 2001).

On the other hand, Vygotsky's active theory approach places a strong emphasis on social interaction and collaboration in the learning process. By working with more knowledgeable others, such as adults or peers, learners are able to reach their zone of proximal development, a concept coined by Vygotsky. In this zone, individuals are able to tackle challenges that would be too difficult to complete alone, ultimately leading to growth and development (Hay, 2015).

Both Piaget and Vygotsky provide valuable insights into the role of learning in human development. While Piaget's focus on individual construction of knowledge is important, Vygotsky's emphasis on social interaction and collaboration highlights the importance of working together to promote learning and cognitive growth. Ultimately, it is through the process of learning that individuals are able to develop higher order thinking skills and reach their full potential (Hay, 2015).

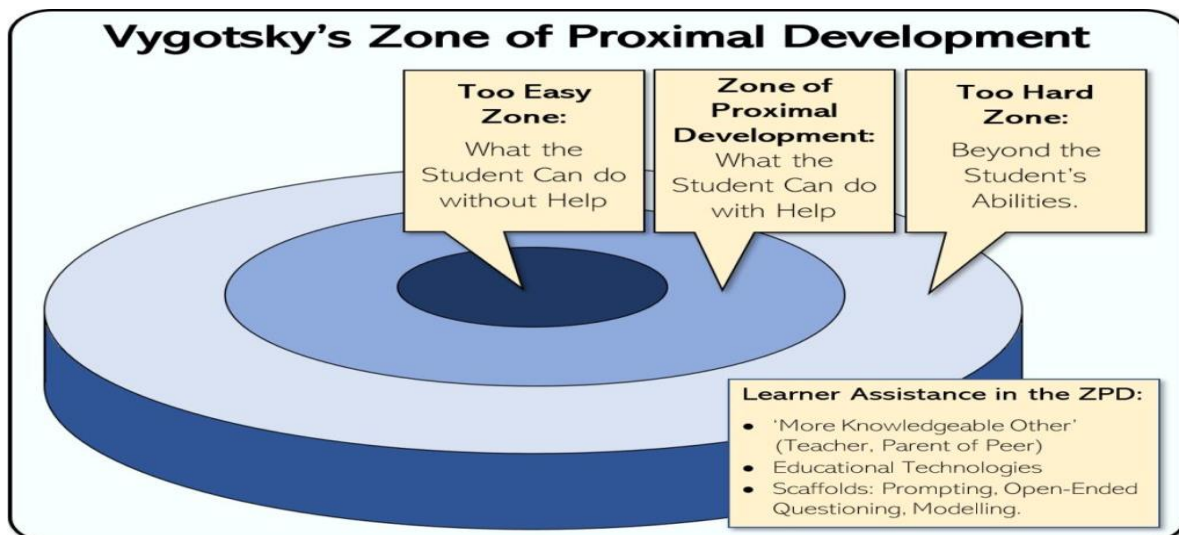


Figure 2.1: A graphical presentation of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

According to Yager (1991), the area of proximal development can take on many different forms, including asking questions, demonstrating, and motivating. The learner can only work inside the domain of proximal development if they use language to communicate with peers and an adult who is assisting the process (Vygotsky, 1987). Therefore, language is the key component when the learner operates in that area.

According to Pinter (2006), children learn new languages in meaningful circumstances. They improve their pronunciation and comprehension by conversing with a more experienced peer. As a result, the instructor is the one who offers the majority of this crucial linguistic input in language instruction with the aid of teaching material. Learners, on the other hand, have a strong need to join and participate in order to learn a language. According to Pinter (2006:13), it is critical that the teacher creates strategies to aid or "scaffold" language development. Tedick and Lyster (2019) assert that language acquisition and scaffolding strategies include demonstrating and modelling the target language orally or in writing. Motivating learners to utilise their native language abilities. By activating prior knowledge on a new subject, a framework is established for the new information.

As my research is based on the opportunities for learning provided by textbooks, I chose to work with Vygotsky's social constructivism theory. This theory is significant to my research since it is built on building blocks that can be used to construct something from the ground upwards. Furthermore, constructivism is based on the belief that a learner's prior knowledge is critical to his/her learning.

I have focused on the constructivism checklist of Kapur (2018) to evaluate the isiNdebele textbooks in order to determine whether they are written in a constructivist way, which promotes learning. Therefore, these particular textbooks should provide learners with new ideas which are matched against existing knowledge and real-life adaptive problem solving to allow learners to master certain tasks without being assisted and to allow knowledge to develop as a result of social interaction and language use.

According to the social constructivism theory, knowledge begins with the selection of concepts from everyday experience. Therefore, the textbooks selected for this study should supply and facilitate learning by engaging in real-life situations. In addition, this theory emphasises the relevance of culture and context in comprehending what occurs in society and developing knowledge based on that comprehension (Kapur, 2018).

The learner may be described as a self-contained entity that functions as an organization and has both individual and group needs. These requirements are both intellectual and emotional in nature. IsiNdebele is a complex language system that transmits meaning and allows the speakers to interact with others. Language behaviour is a component of social conduct and it cannot be fully understood outside of that context. The teacher's role is to enhance learning by connecting the learner's learning process to professional abilities such as teamwork (the ability to work with others). The textbook's purpose is to aid both the learners and teachers in the process of learning facilitation (Lee, 2013).

As cognitive frameworks are formed by a collective of individuals who share a shared language and culture, knowledge is both socially and collaboratively constructed. While constructivists believe that learners construct knowledge individually based on their experiences, social constructivists view knowledge as being created through collaboration with peers, teachers, and other learners. Social constructivism recognizes the importance of a facilitator and peers in the collaborative nature of learning (Kim, 2001).

Social constructivists argue that knowledge is not simply a product of individual cognition, but rather a result of shared experiences and interactions within a social context. This view emphasizes the role of collaboration in the construction of knowledge, as individuals draw upon the collective experiences and perspectives of their peers, teachers, and other learners to build their understanding of the world. By engaging in dialogue, debate, and reflection with others, individuals are able to challenge their own assumptions and co-construct new meanings and interpretations of concepts (Hay, 2015).

Moreover, social constructivism highlights the crucial role of a facilitator in guiding the collaborative learning process. A skilled facilitator can create a supportive and inclusive environment where learners feel comfortable sharing their ideas, asking questions, and challenging one another's perspectives. By providing scaffolding, feedback, and guidance, facilitators can help learners make connections between their own experiences and the insights of their peers, leading to a richer and more nuanced understanding of complex concepts (Hay, 2015).

In conclusion, social constructivism offers a compelling argument for the collaborative and socially situated nature of knowledge construction. By recognizing the importance of collaboration, dialogue, and facilitation in the learning process, social constructivists provide a valuable framework for understanding how individuals can collectively build their understanding of the world (Kim, 2001).

The way learners understand things is not only influenced by their experiences in the physical world, but also by their interactions with other people in a world that goes beyond what is tangible and can be perceived through the senses. This world is cultural, meaningful, and significant, and is primarily constructed through language. According to Hein (1991), the potential level of development, or academic performance, is determined by what a learner is capable of achieving with the guidance of teachers and collaboration with peers. Hein believes that learning is a social activity that involves interactions with peers, family members, and acquaintances. Social constructivism recognizes the social aspect of learning, as well as the importance of dialogue, interaction with others, and the practical application of information, in order to achieve learning objectives (Akpan et al., 2020).

Vygotsky argued that interaction with others is crucial for personal growth and that our cognitive development is influenced by social learning. In simpler terms, learners of any level can complete tasks with the support of adults and peers. This concept emphasizes the importance of providing opportunities for learners to collaborate with teachers and classmates to construct knowledge and understanding. According to Kapur (2018) knowledge is socially constructed through various means and in different settings, such as group discussions, teamwork, or educational institutions, social media platforms, religious contexts, or marketplaces. By engaging with others and their surroundings, learners acquire the information and experiences necessary for successful and fulfilling lives.

Social constructivism, which is often referred to as collaborative learning, relies heavily on the active participation, exchange of ideas, and collective efforts of learners. This teaching approach offers a range of opportunities for learners to interact and cooperate with one another. These opportunities may involve whole-class discussions, small-group conversations, or partnerships where learners collaborate on specific tasks or projects. The fundamental concept of this theory is that learner's team up to share their thoughts, collaborate on generating innovative ideas, and collectively identify the root causes, potential solutions, or valuable contributions that can enhance existing knowledge.

Social constructivism suggests that knowledge is not something individuals possess but rather emerges through social interaction and shared experiences. Lesh and Kelly (2012) propose using social constructivism in conjunction with various instructional strategies in the classroom. These strategies include case studies, research projects, problem-based learning, brainstorming, collaborative learning or group work, guided discovery learning, and simulations. The teacher can divide the class into groups or pairs and guide them by asking questions and directing them to find concepts or learning experiences that align with the desired objectives.

Social constructivist teaching methods can be divided into two main categories: conversation and activity/group work. These methods aim to facilitate learning by encouraging students to actively engage in discussions and collaborate with their peers. In the group project/activity approach, students work together in small groups to achieve a common learning objective. Within the group, each student takes on a specific role, which can either be formal or informal, and these roles often change over time. This approach emphasizes the importance of students reflecting on their own learning and thinking critically in order to enhance their understanding. In simpler terms, it involves identifying what students already know, determining what they need to know, and finding ways to acquire new knowledge that can help solve a problem.

A learning conversation, on the other hand, involves a teacher guiding students towards specific insights or solutions to a given problem or dilemma. The teacher uses a series of structured questions to create a dialogue and gradually build an argument. This approach encourages students to think deeply about the topic at hand and actively participate in the conversation. (Lesh & Kelly, 2012) illustrate the process of conducting a learning conversation.

Social constructivism is a theory of learning that sees learning as a social activity where students work together in groups to achieve meaningful learning. Teachers play a role in guiding instruction by using teaching methods that encourage students to interact and collaborate with each other. In social constructivism, the responsibility for acquiring knowledge shifts from the teacher to the learner, transforming the learner from a passive listener to an active participant and collaborator with their peers in constructing knowledge. (Lesh & Kelly, 2012).

Social constructivism is a highly effective theory of learning that promotes active engagement and collaboration among students, ultimately leading to a deeper understanding of the material. By emphasizing the importance of social interaction in the learning process, students are able to construct their own knowledge through meaningful discussions and exchanges with their peers (Kim, 2001). This approach empowers students to take ownership of their learning and encourages them to think critically and creatively. Additionally, teachers serve as facilitators in this process, guiding students in their exploration of concepts and providing support when needed. By shifting the responsibility for acquiring knowledge onto the learners, social constructivism promotes a dynamic and participatory learning environment that fosters growth and development. Ultimately, social constructivism allows students to not only learn content, but also develop important collaboration and communication skills that are essential for success in the real world (Agius, 2013).

2.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature emphasised the significance of the South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), the historical context of language policy in South Africa, language policy in education, the role of textbooks in teaching and learning, the significance of learning outcomes in textbooks, the need for textbook evaluation, criteria for textbook evaluation, and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. I shall discuss the research design that guided this investigation in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 served as the theoretical foundation for my study. In this chapter, I will discuss my interpretivist research approach, including the methodological paradigm, study design, data collection methods, data analysis, quality standards, and ethical considerations. Therefore, I will not claim that I have discovered the “truth” but rather my interpretation thereof. The following diagram represents the logical flow of this research.

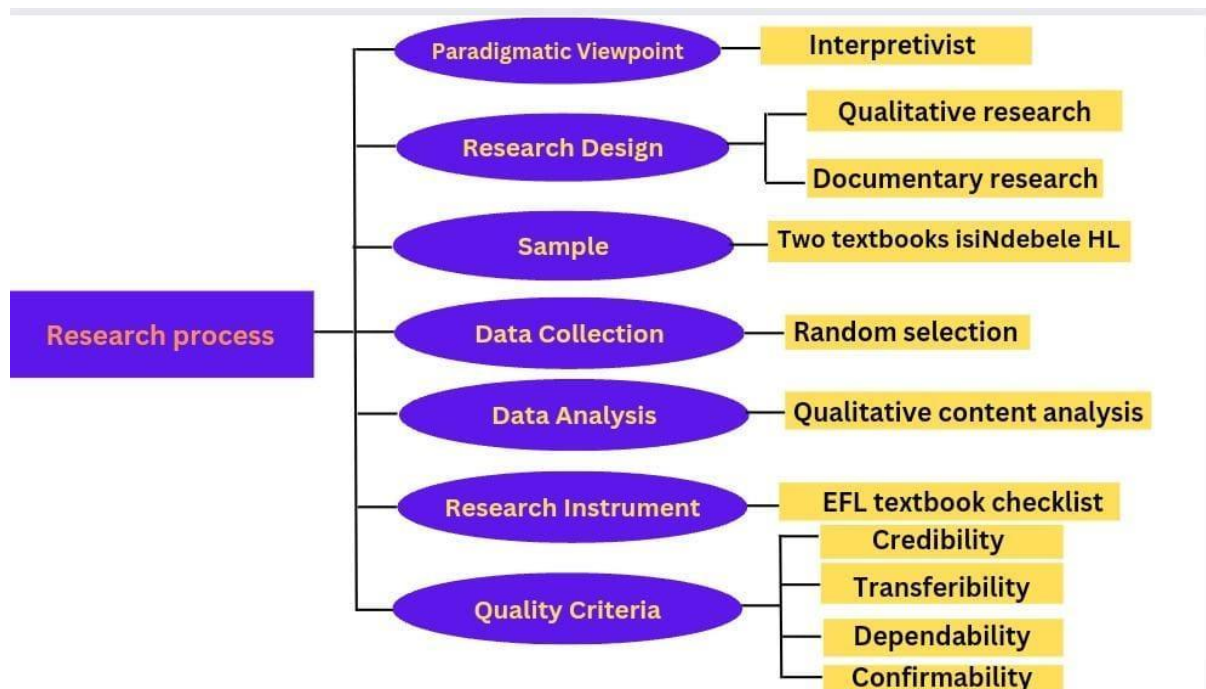


Figure 3.1: Logical flow of the research process

Figure 3.1 logically illustrates the flow of this research. Because of the qualitative nature of this study, the paradigmatic viewpoint used in this study is that of interpretivism which reflects my ontological belief that there is no single truth, but rather various realities. Random selection was used and the sample consists of Grade 9 isiNdebele textbooks. The research instrument is an EFL textbook checklist and through documentary research I opted for a qualitative content analysis.

Although documentary research provides access to a vast repository of existing data and its non-reactive nature ensures that the data reflects authentic and uninfluenced behaviour or attitudes; it has been acknowledged that it can reflect the biases of the author or the time period in which they were created.

3.2 Research paradigm

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) describe a research paradigm as a researcher's beliefs regarding the world in which she/he lives and the world in which she/he aspires to live. In addition, it consists of the abstract beliefs and concepts that shape how a researcher perceives the world and performs within it. A researcher's perspective is essentially defined by his/her research paradigm. In other words, a researcher's perception and behaviour in the world are determined by his or her abstract beliefs and ideas (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This study was steered by the interpretivist paradigm.

By delving into the rich depths of qualitative data, (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) point out that interpretivist research can reveal hidden patterns, subtle nuances, and unexpected insights that might be overlooked by more quantitative approaches. Moreover, it encourages researchers to be reflexive and aware of their own biases and assumptions, acknowledging the impact of the researcher's positionality on the research process. This reflexivity helps to ensure transparency and rigorousness in the interpretation of findings (Kivunja & Kuyini 2017). A paradigm comprises fundamental principles and a conceptual structure that establishes assumptions regarding ontology, epistemology, methodology, and approaches. In essence, it serves as our method of comprehending and investigating the world's actuality (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

3.2.1 Epistemology

According to Fitzgerald (2016), epistemology is the study of how people learn and discover new things. For instance, how researchers distinguish between actual information and opinion influences how they gain knowledge. The interpretivist paradigm was relevant to my epistemology because it recognises that there is no single truth, but rather various realities. An interpretivist paradigm places a strong emphasis on examining, articulating, and clarifying human experience while also considering how context affects how that experience is understood (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). I was able to gather useful information on textbooks criteria through the checklist evaluation and made these criteria applicable to the sampled textbooks. I was able to gather further information on whether the textbooks complied with the CAPS document through documentary analysis and comparison. This is how I created my theory of knowledge.

3.2.2 Application of interpretivism to the study

This study used the interpretivist paradigm through a discussion of its ontological, epistemology, and methodological features (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). As stated by Creswell (2013), **ontology** includes what individuals think about themselves and the environment surrounding them; it is an ontological assumption that is influenced by the researchers' views of the nature of reality. Nieuwenhuis (2015) articulates that interpretivism can include individuals' beliefs, ideologies, and customs which can impact on individuals' relationships. For the purpose of this study, the relationship was between the textbook, learner, and teacher. It entailed how these textbooks provide learners with opportunities to learn through the assistance of the teacher, how these textbooks assisted teachers to prepare and deliver the lesson so that the learners can learn effectively, and also how learners learned without the teacher (self-directed learning).

Working in the interpretive paradigm implies that I did not categorise anyone's experiences and conclusions, but instead conducted my own content analysis and review of the textbooks to answer the research questions of the study. Hence, this study sought to evaluate the learning opportunities provided by textbooks. Since they were written by different authors, I worked with the assumption that the books were designed in different ways. The authors of these textbooks had diverse backgrounds, which influences the difference in approach and language usage in these textbooks. Although standardised language was used in textbooks, the personal language and idiosyncratic difference between authors were still visible (Nieuwenhuis, 2015).

3.3 Research design

According to Fan and Kaeley (2000), a research strategy is a plan to address an issue or identify new issues. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012) believe that there are two most commonly used research approaches that a researcher can employ to conduct their research, namely quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The goal of my research was to evaluate the quality of Grade 9 isiNdebele textbooks in terms of the opportunities to learn provided by these textbooks. Therefore, qualitative research was employed to conduct my research. Creswell (2013) states that qualitative research is a knowledge-building process that relies on a wide range of methodological practices. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) add that the goal of qualitative research is to make sense of phenomena by the meaning people attach to these phenomena in their natural contexts.

The primary objective of qualitative research is to enhance comprehension of a given situation by analysing its content and the manner in which it represents the phenomenon being investigated. Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, and Ormston (2013) assert that the aim of qualitative researchers is to provide a profound and interpretive understanding of the social reality being studied. This approach facilitates the comprehension of the causes and mechanisms underlying the occurrence of the event. According to Maree (2010), qualitative research methodology focuses on identifying behavioural patterns that are influenced by social and cultural contexts, while also examining social and human issues.

The ultimate goal of qualitative research is to gather comprehensive descriptive information about a particular phenomenon (Maree, 2010:50). This type of study is characterised as a comprehensive strategy that encompasses the presentation of findings (Williams, 2007). Because of the nature of this study, which was to evaluate opportunities to learn presented by current isiNdebele textbooks, this study thus employed a qualitative research methodology as it allowed for the comprehension of subjective experiences of individuals and to elucidate the underlying causes, interpretations, or meanings associated with their emotions (Bahari, 2010).

The utilisation of a qualitative methodology in this research enables a more comprehensive understanding of the practical application of the textbook in real-world scenarios. Qualitative research focuses on understanding individuals' interpretation of their experiences and their understanding of their environment (Merriam, 2009). Despite not employing participants, in my capacity as a teacher, I have endeavoured to assess the educational prospects through the lens of a learner.

According to (Merriam, 2009), assessing educational prospects through the lens of a learner involves evaluating the potential benefits and drawbacks of an educational program or pathway from the perspective of the individual learner. This involves considering various factors that influence a learner's educational experience and their ability to achieve their learning goals, in such a way that the educational program or pathway should accommodate different learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learners. Additionally, (Merriam, 2009) highlights that this adaptability will ensure that all learners have equal opportunities to learn effectively.

3.3.1 Qualitative content analysis

According to Williams (2007), multiple methodologies exist for conducting qualitative research. The chosen research design is qualitative content analysis. According to Maree (2016:111), content analysis research is defined as the examination of documents and communication artefacts, encompassing various forms such as texts, photographs, audio, and videos. Manifest and latent content analysis are two distinct approaches employed in the field of content analysis. According to Kondracki et al. (as reported in Maree, 2016), the study focuses on the content aspect and examines the visible and apparent components, which are referred to as the manifest content. On the other hand, the examination of the subject matter discussed in the text pertains to the relational dimension and entails an elucidation of the implicit significance of the text, commonly known as latent content.

In this study, a combination of manifest and latent content analysis was employed to assess the alignment of textbook content with the curriculum and the appropriateness of language themes used in teaching isiNdebele to Grade 9 learners. Additionally, the research investigated the presence of illustrative representations that can establish connections with learners' daily life circumstances. It ascertained whether the inquiries posed in the exercises align with the cognitive levels specified in the CAPS document, as well as the language proficiencies outlined in the CAPS document. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) summarise qualitative content analysis as a research endeavour for subjectively interpreting the content of text data through a systematic process of coding and recognising themes or patterns.

Combining manifest and latent content analysis in qualitative research provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the data. Kondracki et al. in Maree (2016) asserts that manifest content analysis focuses on the explicit or surface-level meaning of the text, while latent content analysis delves into the underlying or implicit meanings. This combination is particularly useful for exploring complex social phenomena, cultural practices, and individual perspectives.

3.3.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of content analysis

Table 3.1: Advantages and limitations of content analysis (adapted from Hsieh & Shannon 2005)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The primary benefit of content analysis is that it examines the text, thereby capturing its fundamental component; ● The investigation also employs qualitative and quantitative methodologies, resulting in significant insights; ● It adheres to a set of systematic techniques; ● It is simple for researchers to replicate; ● The replicability factors also ensure that another group of researchers can validate the analysis's results; ● It is affordable because in most cases there is no need for travelling costs; and ● It is easy to access the data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Statements might be taken out of context; ● It is easy to come to the wrong conclusions; ● Larger context (macro context) is often overlooked; ● Without the right background, the analysis might not do what it was supposed to do; and ● It might take a reductionist approach.

Qualitative content analysis offers a valuable approach to understanding human experiences, social phenomena, and cultural practices by delving into the depths of textual, visual, or auditory data (Williams, 2007). It provides a rich source of insights into the subjective, contextual, and nuanced aspects of human expression and behaviour. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this method and consider its potential drawbacks alongside its strengths. It offers several advantages that make it a suitable choice for many research contexts. Its flexibility allows researchers to explore a wide range of data types, from written documents to social media posts, images, and audio recordings. This

adaptability enables researchers to capture the richness and diversity of human expression and behaviour. However, Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima, and Haider (2011) argue that the subjective nature of the analysis can lead to potential biases and interpretations that may vary depending on the researcher's background, perspectives, and theoretical framework.

One commonly used method in qualitative research is qualitative content analysis. Currently, there are three distinct approaches to conducting qualitative content analysis: conventional, guided, and summative, rather than just a single method. All three approaches fall under the interpretivist paradigm as they aim to extract meaning from the substance of textual data. The main differences between these approaches lie in the coding conventions, the history of codes, and potential threats to reliability. In traditional content analysis, coding categories are directly derived from the text data. However, in guided content analysis, the initial codes for analysis are guided by a theory or relevant research findings. Summative content analysis involves counting and comparing keywords or other informational pieces before interpreting the context. For this study, the conventional approach has been employed, as it focused on coding that is directly derived from the text data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

The conventional approach to qualitative content analysis, with its emphasis on data-driven coding, provides a rigorous and systematic method for exploring the complexities of human experience, social phenomena, and cultural practices. By grounding the analysis in the empirical data and employing transparent and replicable procedures, I can generate meaningful insights that inform theory development, policy interventions, and social change initiatives. Moreover, the conventional approach allows for the identification of both explicit and implicit meanings within the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

3.4 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a group of people from the general population. According to Maree (2010:172), sampling is the process through which researchers select a subset of the population to study. Sampling supports researchers in establishing the purpose of the study. The two types of sampling are probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Maree, 2010). Probability sampling is a procedure in which subjects are chosen at random in order for the analyst to determine the likelihood of selecting each individual from the population (Mcmillan, 1996). Non-probability sampling is a way to choose people to interview based on things other than chance, like their availability, closeness in location, or

expert knowledge to assist in answering a research inquiry (Vehovar, Toepoel & Steinmetz, 2016).

Maree (2016) states that probability sampling chooses the members randomly from the population in order to obtain particular information. In my case, I did not have to choose members or participants for interviews, but I had to select textbooks. This is because the study's goal was to find information about the textbooks rather than about people. My sample consisted of two books that are frequently used by Grade 9 teachers and learners: *Via-Afrika IsiNdebele ILimu Lekhaya* and *Platinum Nasi-ke Isikhethu*. The criterion of frequency ensured that the books generally were used in most schools, and specifically in the school where I currently teach.

Data is information about the phenomenon that is being studied. This study's data is the compatibility of the materials in the language textbooks with the criteria of a good language textbook. Since these textbooks are commonly used in most circuits, the data for analysis was gathered from these two textbooks series.

The data collected in this study provided a valuable assessment of the compatibility of these widely used language textbooks with the established criteria for effective language learning materials. As per Mcmillan (1996), by identifying areas of strength and weakness, the study offers insights that can inform the development of more effective and engaging textbooks that better support student learning outcomes. Ultimately, the study will contribute to the ongoing efforts to improve the quality of language education and empower learners to achieve their full language proficiency potential.

Table 3.2: Sampled resources description

Title of the book	Properties	Author(s)	Publisher	Year of publication	Page numbers
Nasi-ke Isikhethu	Nas-ke isikhethu is a learners' book written in isiNdebelele (Home Language) Grade 9 learners book	N.D Kabini, J. Mahlangu, E.S. Thubane and G.N Tjiane	Pearson	2013	209 pages

	E- ISBN:97806361746 41 Print ISBN: 9780636140387				
Via Africa IsiNdebele Ilimi Lekhaya	Via-Afrika IsiNdebele Ilimi Lekhaya is a learner's book used in the majority of schools KwaMhlanga south west circuit ISBN: 978-1- 41542-242-7 (First Edition)	M.B Jiane, E.T Mampokoro, P.J. Masilela and A.A Mthombeni	Via-Afrika publishers	2013	218 pages
CAPS document	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement for isiNdebele grade 7- 9 ISBN: 978-1-4315- 0501-2	Department of Education	Department of Education	2011	162 pages

The four types of non-probability sampling are convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling (Maree, 2016). The textbooks were chosen because of their availability in the KwaMhlanga area. Therefore, I used convenience sampling. Most schools and the majority of learners had access to these two books. Every textbook were assessed according to the same set of criteria, with the goal of addressing the research question.

I undertook content sampling within textbooks since I did not review the entire textbook. I used the first three chapters from each textbook and focused on the following: visuals, skills, activities, and exercises. The reputation of the remaining chapters appeared to be based on the first three chapters. I believe that the first three chapters of the book held utmost significance to my research since they established the fundamental basis around which the entirety of the book was constructed. While each section within a lesson unit served a distinct purpose, the first chapter of the textbook primarily functioned as an introduction to new vocabulary pertaining to the theme. Additionally, various activities such as "listen and repeat", dictation, "listen and write", and "read aloud" can be employed to facilitate the enhancement of the four language skills within the first chapter (Lambert & Freed, 1982).

By focusing on the first three chapters of each textbook, this study provided a comprehensive evaluation of the introductory material that lays the foundation for the remainder of the text. Examining the visuals, skills, activities, and exercises within these initial chapters allowed for a thorough assessment of the textbook's ability to engage learners, promote language acquisition, and establish a solid base for further learning (Lambert & Freed, 1982). This targeted approach would yield valuable insights into the effectiveness of these textbooks in supporting student success and contributing to the overall quality of language education.

3.5 Data collection

Data collection aids in protecting the integrity of the research and allowing the researcher to identify and resolve discrepancies before drawing conclusions. Data collection is an essential component of the research process, serving as the foundation upon which conclusions are drawn and inferences are made (Nieuwenhuis, 2015). By carefully gathering and analysing data, researchers can ensure the validity and reliability of their findings, thereby upholding the integrity of their research. In the context of this study, the systematic collection of data on the compatibility of language textbooks with established criteria played a crucial role in ensuring the credibility of the results. By meticulously examining the materials within the textbooks, I could identify areas of strength and weakness, providing a comprehensive assessment of their effectiveness as language learning tools.

Moreover, the data collection process allowed me to identify and resolve discrepancies before drawing conclusions. Through thorough analysis, I could uncover inconsistencies or gaps in the data, prompting further investigation and clarification. Thus, ensuring that the findings were well-grounded in the evidence and not the result in oversights or misinterpretations.

Table 3.3: Sources of Data

Picture 1: Nasi-ke Isikhethu	Picture 2: Via-Afrika IsiNdebele ilimi Lekhaya	Picture 3: CAPS document
		

In the realm of education, Wall (2015) asserts that textbooks serve as cornerstones of knowledge, providing students with a structured foundation in various subjects. As an educator, I have had the privilege of engaging with a diverse range of textbooks, each with its unique approach and methodology. However, two textbooks have captured my attention, standing out for their comprehensive coverage, engaging pedagogy, and alignment with the school's curriculum. These textbooks, which were instrumental in shaping my teaching approach, had been the focus of this analysis. Limiting the scope to these two exemplary works allowed for an in-depth exploration of their strengths and contributions to the educational landscape.

When selecting the textbooks for the study, I was guided by two significant factors. Initially, a comprehensive examination was conducted on the several potential textbooks that were accessible for use within the KwaMhlanga area. In the area of KwaMhlanga, there is a limited availability of textbooks for the purpose of teaching and learning the isiNdebele. The textbooks in question also are utilised as instructional materials in the school where I have been employed, which renders them conspicuous and rational selections. After conducting a thorough analysis, I made the decision to concentrate on these two textbooks only. Including other samples would have diminished the depth of detail that I am able to offer (Wall, 2015).

The information on the occurrence to be captured is referred to as data. The data of this research was the materials in the first three chapters of the isiNdebele textbooks. The data for this study came from two isiNdebele textbooks used in Grade 9 for home language, published by *Via-Afrika* and Pearson.

Rahmawati (2018) asserts that the researcher is the most important tool in qualitative research. The researcher must understand the research method as well as the research problem. He further states that for the researcher to have reliable and valid data for the findings, a proper instrument should be used. The instrument that supports the analysis of this study is the EFL textbook evaluation checklist which was adapted from Soori, Kafipour, and Soury (2011) in their study titled *EFL textbook evaluation and graphic representation*.

This analysis delved into the intricacies of two EFL textbooks, meticulously examining their features and contributions to the teaching and learning process. Through a comprehensive evaluation framework, the strengths and areas for improvement of each textbook have been brought to light, providing valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers. As the field of EFL education continues to evolve, it is crucial to critically evaluate the resources we employ, ensuring that they align with contemporary pedagogical approaches and empower learners to achieve their full potential. The EFL textbook evaluation checklist, adapted from Soori, Kafipour, and Soury's (2011) work, has served as a robust tool in this analysis, guiding the assessment and providing a structured framework for understanding the nuances of each textbook.

3.6 Data analysis

The study has utilised qualitative content analysis which is defined by Rahmawati (2018) as the process of summarising and reporting written data or the main points of what was written. It also can be described as an analysis of what is written or shown in a document. In this research, content analysis was the methodology to evaluate and analyse the sampled isiNdebele textbooks. It was also a way to collect data. Raza and Hameed (2022) define content analysis as a method where the textbook is judged according to a list of criteria that has been made already. It has many advantages over other data analysis methods. They further state that it is methodical as it ensures that all important factors are considered. I used a checklist in order to efficiently review the textbooks and collect as much information as possible. The criteria of a good English textbook, which was taken from the study of Rahmawati (2018) with the title *“A content analysis of the English Textbook “primary*

English as a second language”, was used because none of the isiNdebele criteria were available. I have found the research of Rahmawati (2018) to be very useful for my study.

I chose to do a qualitative content analysis of textbooks. As not all teachers are familiar with the appropriate selection criteria for textbooks, I did not use participants. To prevent bias and other constraints, a researcher may use triangulation whereby the researcher finds other sources of data that support his/her interpretations. Moreover, there should be an examination of the assumptions of the researcher, which will aid in determining how the researcher might show bias in his/her analysis. The type of research (in this case, documentary research) also will influence the data collection methods used. Therefore, the content analysis, the checklist, and the official curriculum triangulated the process of analysis.

The textbooks that were evaluated in this study consisted of not more than three chapters in each book. However, this study did not evaluate the books page by page; rather it focused on chapters that assisted in answering the research questions. This ensured that the researcher was not biased when selecting chapters to be used for the purpose of the study. The data were collected to address the following: alignment of concepts and the proposed language skills with the CAPS, examples that are relevant and relate to real-life situations, and the level of questioning pertaining to the following questions:

1. How do the sampled textbooks facilitate the language learning skills as stated by the CAPS document?
2. How do the sampled textbook make real-life situations relatable to its given examples?
3. To what extent are the questions in the textbooks adhering to the cognitive levels required by the CAPS document?

This research was conducted using the EFL evaluation checklist criteria from Afshin, Mehrjoofard, and Salemi (2011) which were modified to suit the demands of this study. The table in (Table 4.1) provides a comprehensive overview of the evaluation criteria and how these textbooks were graded. In addition, the codes, themes, and categories that developed in the preceding chapter are elaborated on further.

These findings serve as valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding textbook selection and implementation to optimize the learning outcomes of EFL students.

3.6.1 Textbook evaluation method

The textbook evaluation method includes different stages and all these stages are very important to the evaluator. McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2013) as cited by Khan, Khan, Niamat, Munir, Fazal, Mazari, Seema, Bashir, Kanwal & Ahmed (2011) proposed a three-stage evaluation process that includes external, internal, and overall evaluation. As stated by Khan et al. (2011), the external evaluation is the stage that provides an overview of the textbook from the outside, such as examining the introduction, table of contents, and assessing the claim made about the book's institution. This phase comprises investigating the textbook's intended proficiency level, context of use, audience, layout, cultural bias (if there is any), and main objectives.

McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2013) assert that internal evaluation is the stage that concentrates on skill presentation, material grading and sequencing, the presence or absence of discourse level language, and the authenticity of texts and activities. Furthermore, the textbook's relevance to the needs and learning styles of the learners can be assessed. Furthermore, McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2013) state that during the overall evaluation stage, conclusions and final comments on whether the textbook is usable, adaptable, and flexible are made.

3.6.2 Types of evaluation methods

According to Mcgrath (2016), there are four different types of evaluation methods, namely in-depth method, impressionistic method, checklist method, and criteria method.

3.6.2.1 In-depth method

As the title suggests, this technique entails a thorough examination of the textbook. Ideally, the evaluator should focus on only one or two chapters of the textbook (Mcgrath, 2016). However, there are some disadvantages to employing this method. To begin with, the selected units may not be representative of the entire book and, thus, may provide only a partial assessment. Be so as it may, even a partial assessment can offer valuable information, especially if conducted rigorously and transparently as the entire textbook is of the same style throughout. Furthermore, in-depth analysis takes time and requires expert knowledge.

3.6.2.2 Impressionistic method

This is a type of general examination that employs techniques similar to those used in the external evaluation discussed earlier (Mahfoodh & Bhanegaonkar, 2013). It is a comprehensive assessment that determines the practicality, objectives, and syllabus-type of the textbook (Mcgrath, 2016). However, unless the evaluator intends to screen and reject textbooks that are inappropriate for the relevant context, this method is insufficient on its own.

3.6.2.3 Checklist method

This method employs a pre-prepared checklist of criteria against which the textbook is evaluated. It has numerous advantages over other methods. Firstly, it is methodical which ensures that all elements deemed important are considered, and then it is "cost efficient", allowing the evaluator to note many pertinent details about the textbook in a relatively short period of time. Furthermore, its design is functional as it allows the evaluator to compare two or more books. Lastly, it is straightforward, presuming there is no ambiguity in the language, and presents a coherent approach for outcome (Mahfoodh & Bhanegaonkar, 2013). This type of evaluation focuses on many aspects of the textbook such as weighting, rating and scoring, response and item format, revising, and piloting.

3.6.2.4 Response and item

In terms of response and item, the evaluator has to decide which type of questions will be relevant for the research: the choice must be made on whether the research needs closed or open-ended questions. In order to get comprehensive responses, Tomlinson (2016) prefers open-ended questions because he believes that they are more format-flexible. Close-ended questions, as mentioned by Mcgrath (2016), can ensure that the evaluation is completed quicker and the answers can be compared more easily. Furthermore, this format can include one or even more detailed remarks.

3.6.2.5 Weighting, rating, and scoring

According to Mahfoodh and Bhanegaonkar (2013), weighting, rating and scoring could provide more accurate and specific data. Thus, the current study included structured materials assessment as well, though the devised tools were different and much more comprehensive than those identified. Mahfoodh and Bhanegaonkar (2013) add that several checklists may

require straight responses like Yes/No, whereas others may include a rating scale that leads to quantitative assessment. Furthermore, it is important to emphasise that quantitative scoring is limited and can be used to evaluate only a few aspects of the textbook (Mahfoodh & Bhanegaonkar, 2013).

3.6.2.6 Revising and piloting

Evaluation checklists should always be piloted and be open for revision as required. According to Mcgrath (2016), a checklist for evaluation ideally should be piloted and then revised as needed. Piloting should be done by the person who made the list and the checklist should be assessed by another familiar and trustworthy individual.

This study selected to utilise the **checklist method** even though only one person will be doing the evaluation. As stated by Budiarsih (2022), it is allowed to adapt and modify the checklist to suit the needs of the researcher. The modified checklist focuses on the following: aims and objectives of the textbooks, language used in the textbooks (grammar), levels of the textbooks, skills addressed in the textbooks, topics covered in the textbooks, the components of the textbooks, and the situations they are intended for.

When evaluating a textbook, the researcher should be able to consider the textbook that best aligns with the curriculum and syllabus, develops basic competencies, and displays teaching and learning activity. The review of textbooks is essential since it is seen as a significant factor in enhancing the quality of education (Budiarsih, 2022). The evaluation checklist may be qualitative or quantitative in nature. In qualitative checklists, open-ended questions often are used to acquire comprehensive and detailed information about a textbook. It should be noted that, although numeric values are used in the checklist, it is not part of a quantitative process but rather should be seen as an indication of how the textbook is evaluated.

Concerning the creation of a checklist, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2012) as cited by Budiarsih (2022) note that two crucial steps should be considered. The first step is to establish the evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria comprise the checklist's body, which varies depending on the textbook being reviewed. The second step is the relative weight of each condition. In addition, the criteria in the checklist used for this study comprise of seven subheadings:

Textbook visuals: This criterion describes the textbook's physical appearance, including layout, binding quality, font size, and font type (Budiarsih, 2022).

Skills: This criterion explains how the language skills are offered in the textbook as compared to those required by the CAPS document (Budiarsih, 2022).

Exercises and activities: This criterion examines the success of learning activities and exercises in the textbook (Budiarsih, 2022).

Pedagogic analysis: This criterion determines what the goals are for teaching and learning isiNdebele at the senior phase level, and then it compares those goals to the materials in the textbook (Budiarsih, 2022).

Appropriateness: This criterion evaluates how well the materials, language focus, instruction, and learning activities address the needs of the learners (Budiarsih, 2022).

Supplementary materials: This criterion determines whether the textbook provides additional materials, such as an audio CD for a listening activity (Budiarsih, 2022).

General impression: In this section, teachers or assessors provide a general assessment that addresses the sixth preceding criterion (Budiarsih, 2022).

This process ensures a comprehensive and nuanced evaluation that captures the essential elements of a successful EFL textbook. By carefully considering these factors, (Nieuwenhuis, 2015) points out that educators and curriculum developers can make informed decisions regarding the selection and implementation of EFL textbooks, ultimately fostering a more engaging and effective learning environment for learners.

The newly created checklist was used to gather as many different types of data as possible. This checklist was created to generate a score for the textbook under consideration. Scores are not given in absolute terms, but they can be used for comparison if more than one textbook is evaluated (Afshin, Mehrjoofard & Salemi, 2011). The textbook evaluation checklist used for this study consisted of 45 questions and was utilised to evaluate both textbooks. The questions in the checklist assisted me in analysing the data, evaluating the textbooks, and drawing conclusions.

By systematically examining each criterion outlined in the checklist, educators can gain a comprehensive understanding of the textbook's content, methodology, alignment with curriculum standards, and overall suitability for the target audience. Pathak, Jena, and Kalra (2013) assert that this structured approach ensures a thorough and objective evaluation process, empowering educators to make informed decisions regarding textbook selection and

implementation. Ultimately, the checklist serves as a valuable resource for optimizing the learning outcomes of EFL students and promoting their academic success.

3.7 Data interpretation

The process of qualitative data analysis is typically non-linear: all data aspects, including collection, sorting, interpretation, and analysis, are interconnected and not performed sequentially (Nieuwenhuis, 2015). The primary objective of qualitative data analysis is to "let research findings emerge from the key themes inherent to raw data" (Nieuwenhuis, 2015:109). Pathak, Jena, and Kalra (2013) assert that qualitative researchers frequently return to "insight, intuition, and perception" which means that they are learning continually.

The process of qualitative content analysis usually starts at the beginning of data collection. This initiation in the analysis phase will assist me in moving back and forth between generating ideas and collecting data. It also may help one focus on sources that are more useful for answering the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For valid and reliable conclusions to be drawn, qualitative content analysis uses a set of clear and systematic steps for processing data. Some of the steps are the same as those used in traditional quantitative content analysis as described by Tesch (2013), but others are used only in this method. Depending on the objectives of one's research, having a good content analysis may be more flexible or more standard. Generally, it can be broken down into the following steps, from preparing the data to writing the results in a report. I have outlined below the stages I experienced while attempting to analyse the data.

By embracing this non-linear and fluid approach, I can gain a deeper understanding of the nuances and complexities inherent in the data, leading to richer and more comprehensive research findings.

Stage 1: Data preparation

Roth (2017) states that the initial viewing of the data should not be undertaken with a critical eye, so I did not read the book critically. Firstly, I wanted to familiarise myself with the information, which was very simple as I am a Grade 9 teacher who uses these textbooks for my daily preparations and activities. Reading the data without a critical eye also assisted me in identifying potential codes as stated by Braun and Clarke (2006) as referenced by De Wet (2018).

By approaching the data with an open mind and allowing patterns to emerge, I was able to detect subtle cues that hinted at underlying structures or relationships. This intuitive approach proved particularly valuable in uncovering hidden patterns that might have been overlooked had I been overly focused on preconceived notions or theoretical frameworks. In some instances, seemingly random or insignificant data points revealed themselves to be part of a larger code once I allowed myself to step back and view the data from a more holistic perspective. This process of inductive reasoning, where insights are drawn from specific observations to broader generalisations, played a crucial role in my ability to decipher the hidden messages embedded within the data Roth (2017).

In essence, reading the data without a critical eye allowed me to approach the material with a sense of curiosity and openness, enabling me to identify patterns and codes that might have been overlooked had I been confined by preconceived notions or theoretical frameworks. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) cited in De Wet (2018), this inductive approach, coupled with a willingness to embrace the unexpected, proved invaluable in uncovering the hidden messages embedded within the data.

Stage 2: Define the analysis unit

Before messages can be coded, they must be broken down into units. During content analysis, the unit of analysis is the smallest piece of text that needs to be put into a group. Differences in how units are defined can affect coding decisions and make it difficult to compare results from different studies (De Wever, Schellens, Valcke & Van Keer, 2006). Therefore, deciding on the coding unit is one of the most basic and important decisions one has to make (Weber, 1990). I read the book again, but with my primary research question in mind. In order to begin the coding process, I took as many notes as possible. According to Creswell (2013), there is no maximum number of codes that can be used initially as long as they are all relevant to the data context. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) as cited by De Wet (2018), many codes may be assigned to the same piece of data and ambiguous descriptions should be avoided. During this assignment, I discovered so many codes that I was unable to match these codes with their proper descriptions.

Stage 3: Create categories and a coding system

By utilising related studies or theories, categories and a coding scheme can be derived from the data. Both inductive and deductive methods can be used to create coding systems. In

investigations where no theories exist, categories must be derived inductively from the data. Inductive content analysis is ideal for studies that seek to generate theory, as opposed to those that seek to describe a particular occurrence or validate an existing theory (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). In this research, both inductive and deductive coding applies as the checklist is used deductively and inductively based on the textbook. Thus, I worked from the examples in the book and not from the theory.

In qualitative content analysis, the categories cannot overlap without contradicting the rules of statistical procedures according to Weber (1990) as cited in Zhang and Wildemuth (2009). According to Weber (1990) as referenced by Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), to maintain coding uniformity, particularly when numerous coders are engaged, one should create a coding manual which typically includes category names, explanations or criteria for assigning codes, and examples. Certain coding books include a field for collecting notes as the coding process progresses. Using the continuous comparative method, the coding manual develops and is supplemented by interpretive notes during the data analysis process.

Zhang & Wildemuth (2009) assert that this dynamic approach ensures that the coding process remains fluid and adaptable, allowing for the incorporation of emerging insights and refinements as the analysis progresses. As new data is analysed, the coding manual serves as a reference point, guiding the identification and categorization of relevant concepts and themes. However, Weber (1990) cited by Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) points out that it is not intended to be a rigid set of rules, but rather a living document that evolves alongside the analysis. Interpretive notes play a crucial role in this iterative process, capturing the researcher's evolving understanding of the data and the relationships between different codes. These notes serve as a repository of insights, documenting the reasoning behind coding decisions and providing a valuable record of the analytical journey.

Stage 4: Code all the text and assess coding consistency

When there is enough consistency, the coding rules can be used on the entire collection of texts. During the coding process, I needed to check the code many times so I don't "slip into your own sense of what the codes mean" (Schilling, 2006). Since coding continues as more data is collected, it is likely that new themes and ideas will need to be added to the coding manual. After coding the entire set of data, I needed to ensure that my codes were all the same. According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), it is one of the essential tasks during this step. Furthermore, it is not safe to assume that all of the text has been coded the same way,

even if a sample was coded in a consistent and reliable sense (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Human coders can become tired which may lead to mistakes as the coding continues (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

Stage 5: Make conclusions based on coded data

The purpose of this stage is to ensure that the themes are supported adequately by examples collected from the text (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and that the themes selected are relevant and adequate for the data (Creswell, 2013). This step entails making sense of the identified themes or categories, as well as their properties. I drew conclusions and presented my representations of meanings based on the information. Exploring the properties and aspects of categories, recognising relationships between categories, uncovering patterns, and comparing categories to the full range of data may be among the research activities (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). Patton (2002) believes that this is a critical step in the analysis process, and its success is almost entirely dependent on the researcher's reasoning abilities.

Stage 6: Report your methods and findings

Patton (2002) states that a researcher must monitor and report his/her analytical methodologies and processes as completely and truthfully as possible for the study to be reproducible. Patton (2002) further emphasises that, in the case of qualitative content analysis, one should report coding choices and practices as well as the methodologies employed to ensure the reliability of the study. Instead of producing counts and statistical significance, qualitative content analysis discovers patterns, themes, and categories relevant to a social reality.

It is difficult to present study findings from qualitative content analysis. Although it is usual practice to utilise representative quotations to substantiate conclusions (Schilling, 2006), one may want to include additional data and display alternatives, such as matrices, graphs, charts, and conceptual networks. Finally, the manner and extent of reporting are determined by the specific study objectives (Patton, 2002).

This is the final stage of the study and it is a continuous and iterative procedure (Maree 2010). Data analysis brings order and importance to the information acquired which assists the analyst in composing and making sense of the data gathered in order to answer the research question (De Vos, Delpont, Fouche & Strydom, 2011). When information has been obtained, it must be organised into themes in order to be analysed and to gain a better

understanding of what has been gathered. Data analysis is the process of organising data and classifying the organised data into themes, classifications, and basic descriptive units (Patton, 2014).

As stated earlier, a textbook is one of the most important references and resources for learners' learning in any educational system as it is used for the formal study of a subject. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse these resources. This is done through content analysis in order to gain a better understanding of the opportunities to learn provided by isiNdebele Home Language textbooks. Qualitative content analysis is the process of categorising verbal or behavioural data for the purpose of classification, summarisation, and tabulation (Prasad, 2008). It should be performed at two levels: descriptive and interpretive.

I adopted the data analysis stages of Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) as outlined in the above section. Before assigning a score based on the specified checklist, I meticulously reviewed the assigned textbooks. As I studied the book, I made notes and realised that the procedure would be too time consuming. Consequently, I decided to collect notes using the checklist criteria. Secondly, I repeated the examination of the data, line by line, in order to familiarise myself with the data. Lastly, I searched the data for similarities between the two books, grouped them together, and generated color-coded codes. Similar code meanings were sorted into categories which then were divided into themes (Creswell, 2013). The significance of textbooks to the teaching and learning process, as well as isiNdebele as one of the official languages, was described in a manner that made it easy for readers to comprehend. As I recorded all the information from the textbooks, I searched for themes that arose from the data and categorised them according to the research questions.

By carefully examining the content and organisation of the textbooks, I was able to uncover recurring themes that shed light on the overall approach and effectiveness of each textbook. In essence, the process of thematic analysis allowed me to uncover the hidden patterns and underlying meanings within the data, providing valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the two EFL textbooks under investigation.

By categorizing these themes according to the research questions, I was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of how each textbook addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by EFL learners. This analysis provided a foundation for drawing informed conclusions about the effectiveness of each textbook and making recommendation for their future use in EFL instruction (Creswell & Poth, 2016)

3.8 Quality criteria

3.8.1 Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is employed as validity is used in quantitative research. In this section, I explained how my research rigour was strengthened. Credibility, conformability, triangulation, and transferability are all aspects of trustworthiness (Patton, 2014).

3.8.1.1 Credibility

Bengtsson (2016) defines credibility as the level of trust that may be placed in the validity of the study findings. It analyses whether the research findings contain reliable information generated from the original data. In this study, I sufficiently motivated all of my research decisions.

3.8.1.2 Transferability

According to Twycross and Shields (2005), transferability refers to the degree to which the findings of qualitative research can be extrapolated to various contexts and participants. The comprehensive depiction provided by the researcher enhances the ability of a prospective reader to assess the transferability. As stated in the first chapter, I am confident that conducting my study in a different location, such as Daveyton in Gauteng, would yield similar findings. This is because isiNdebele is taught in this area as well, and it shares similarities with the community under investigation as individuals are exposed to more than one language.

3.8.1.3 Confirmability

According to Bengtsson (2016), conformability can be defined as the degree to which other researchers can confirm a research study's findings. The primary objective of this study was to establish the verifiable origin of the data and interpretations to ensure that they were not subjective constructs of the researcher's mind. Hence, if another researcher replicates the study, employing identical research methodology, literature review, and reference materials, it is plausible that the researcher's findings would align with the original conclusion.

3.8.1.4 Dependability

Qualitative research favours dependability over reliability according to Nieuwenhuis (2015) and relies on credibility in the majority of cases (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). If the proper approaches have been used to establish credibility as described by Lincoln and Guba (1994) and the possibility of change is not disregarded, it is not necessary to address dependability directly (Maree, 2016). The parameters of my research were established during the literature review and adjustments were made throughout the data collection process. This demonstrates the research's applicability to the actual world which is a valuable technique applicable to case studies (Yin, 2009).

Maree (2016) asserts that qualitative research is inherently context-bound and focuses on understanding the unique experiences and perspectives of individuals or groups. This emphasis on context and subjectivity means that it is not always possible to replicate the same findings under different conditions or with different participants, as is often the goal of quantitative research. Moreover, Yin (2009) adds that qualitative research often involves a deep and nuanced understanding of the data, which can be difficult to codify or standardise. This means that there may be some variation in how different researchers interpret the same data, even if they are using the same analytical methods. This variation is not necessarily a sign of weakness, but rather a reflection of the richness and complexity of the data.

Despite these limitations, qualitative research can still be highly dependable, as long as researchers are transparent about their methods, findings, and limitations. Dependability in qualitative research means that the research can be trusted to produce credible and meaningful results, even if those results are not generalizable to other contexts or populations (Lincoln and Guba 1994).

3.9 Ethical considerations

The field of research ethics pertains to the ethical obligations of researchers towards maintaining honesty and demonstrating respect towards all individuals who participate in their research endeavours. In every research project, it is imperative to prioritise confidentiality, anonymity, and respect. According to the study conducted by Fleming and Zegwaard (2018), it is imperative for researchers to seek permission to access the research area in order to gather data, while also prioritising the prevention of any potential injury to the participants. This study concentrates on textbooks rather than human subjects. As a result,

ethical approval was sought exclusively for the utilisation of publicly available published materials. Prior to commencing this research, ethical clearance was obtained from the Research and Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria.

In addition to obtaining ethical clearance, the researcher also took meticulous care to respect the intellectual property rights of the textbook publishers. This involved obtaining permission to use copyrighted materials and ensuring that all sources were properly cited. The researcher also adhered to fair use guidelines, ensuring that the use of copyrighted materials was limited to educational purposes and did not infringe upon the publishers' rights.

By carefully considering ethical considerations and obtaining the necessary approvals, the researcher ensured that the study was conducted with integrity and respect for all parties involved. This commitment to ethical research practices is crucial for maintaining the credibility and value of the study's findings (Fleming and Zegwaard 2018).

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research strategy and methodologies employed are outlined in detail and the decisions regarding data gathering methods and analytic approaches are justified. The data is discussed, examples are provided, and the findings are interpreted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the methodology, paradigm, and approach of the study, as well as the data collection techniques, were described. In this chapter, the conclusions drawn from the generated data are presented. The data are presented in accordance with the analytical technique described in the previous chapter. Firstly, I present the evaluation checklist for the sampled textbooks (adapted from Afshin, Reza, and Mohammad, 2011) as the first level of analysis. Secondly, I report on the content analysis according to my secondary research questions pertaining to the requirements of the CAPS document, the authenticity of the material, and the nature of the questioning in the two textbooks.

Using a qualitative research methodology, this study examined the learning opportunities provided by isiNdebele Home Language textbooks. The process of data analysis is the essential component of any research study, since it provides meaning and structure to the large amounts of data collected for the study (De Vos, 2005). Patton (1990) describes data analysis as the process of giving order to data and organising it into patterns, categories, and fundamental descriptive units. According to De Vos et al. (2011), data analysis entails recounting and interpreting collected data. The approach of data analysis I employed for this study is qualitative content analysis.

Data are presented using illustrative quotes. Quotes are “raw data” and should be compiled and analysed, and not merely listed. There should be an explanation of how the quotes were chosen and how they are labelled. Analysis of the data for the current study was guided by an interpretive paradigm to analyse the two textbooks against the EFL textbook evaluation. In analysing and interpreting the textbooks, I tried to be aware of my own biases while considering that I am a teacher. Continuous self-reflection and reflexivity on the analytical process and the obligation to consciously observe my own processes assisted the illumination of data.

As stated in the previous chapter, the checklist approach was chosen for this study even though only one person conducted the evaluation. The criteria were graded on a scale of 1 to 10 in the score column's blank area. The textbook received a score of 1 to 2 (poor) if the information requested by the question was absent. The textbook received a score of 3 to 4 (moderate) if some of the information required by the question was provided. A score of 5 to

6 (adequate) was granted if the information required was provided but it was insufficient to support the learners' learning. A score of 7 to 8 (meritorious) was granted if the information required was available but not properly in place. The textbook receives a score of 9 to 10 (outstanding) if it contained all the information required by the question and was sufficient to assist teaching and learning. A space was provided for the evaluator's comments as well.

4.2 Textbook evaluation checklist

Table 4.1: Evaluation of *Via-Afrika*

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		
<p>This checklist is designed for evaluating isiNdebele Home Language textbooks used in the KwaMhlanga South West circuit</p> <p>Name of evaluator: Busisiwe Pretty Jiane</p> <p>Title of the textbook: <i>Via-Afrika IsiNdebele ilimi Lekhaya</i></p> <p>Publisher: ViaAfrika Publishers</p>		
Criteria for evaluation	Score	Comments
<p><i>A. Textbook visuals:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the textbook available locally? 2. Is it affordable? 3. Is the physical appearance intriguing and appealing? 4. Is the design simple and well organised? 5. Are the headings properly utilised? 6. Is the weight, size, and title appropriate? 	$\frac{10}{10}$ $\frac{8}{10}$ $\frac{5}{10}$ $\frac{5}{10}$ $\frac{5}{10}$ $\frac{5}{10}$	<p>The textbook is cost-effective and available in bookstores. This book is attractive. Simple and organised. Weight is suitable for Grade 9 learners. The chosen title for this book lacks appropriateness since it fails to provide substantial information regarding the content within the textbook. Instead, it merely consists of the publisher's name and a generic indication that it is a home language textbook.</p>

<p><i>B. Skills</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the skills outlined in the textbook relevant to the curriculum? 2. Is the textbook adequate in terms of guiding students as they learn these skills? 3. Do the skills presented in the textbook cover a wide range of cognitive skills that will be challenging for students to learn? 4. Is the textbook's balance of skill development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing appropriate for the learners and learning situation? 5. Is enough emphasis placed on skill integration? 	<p>$\frac{10}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p>	<p>Language learning skills are not outlined perfectly because they are used as objectives. To ensure learners know what to expect at the end of each chapter, an appropriate textbook should state clearly the learning objectives for each chapter. In order to prevent confusion, the objectives and the skills should not be in conflict. They also should be clearly stated. For instance, it should be clear which of the four language acquisition skills each activity targets.</p>
<p><i>C. Exercises and activities</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do the activities and exercises in the textbook help students develop their language skills? 2. Is there a good balance of controlled and uncontrolled exercises? 3. Is the format of the exercises and activities varied enough to keep learners motivated and challenged? 4. Are there activities for interacting with others and developing communication strategies? 	<p>$\frac{7}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{8}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{8}{10}$</p>	<p>The provided information is deemed to be adequate and pertinent. There is a discernible balance between uncontrolled and regulated activities. The book does not provide a summary or definitions for newly introduced vocabulary.</p>

<p>5. Are new structures introduced in a systematic and meaningful manner?</p> <p>6. Is the definition of new vocabulary provided in context?</p> <p>7. Is there enough work on individual sound recognition and production for pronunciation practice?</p> <p>8. Is a summary of new and revised grammar available?</p>	<p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{2}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{3}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p>	
<p><i>D. Pedagogic analysis</i></p> <p>1. Is the textbook methodologically consistent with current global language learning theories such as constructivism theory and practices?</p> <p>2. Are there a sufficient number of formal learner achievement tests in the textbook?</p> <p>3. Is the book allowing students to use isiNdebele outside of the classroom?</p> <p>4. Is the book challenging enough for learners?</p> <p>5. Are there mechanisms in place to provide learners with regular feedback?</p> <p>6. Is new material reviewed and reused throughout the book?</p> <p>7. Is the book sufficiently aligned with the school's curriculum?</p> <p>8. Is the time frame specified adequate?</p>	<p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{10}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{5}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{10}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{2}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p>	<p>Insufficient in its capacity to facilitate effective learning for the learners. Time frame is not clearly indicated.</p> <p>Formal learners' achievement tests are available. There are established systems in place to ensure that learners receive consistent feedback. These mechanisms include a teacher's guide that assists teachers in providing appropriate feedback to learners on every activity.</p>

<p><i>E. Appropriacy</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the materials, instructions, language focus, and activities appropriate for the learners as a whole? 2. Will the textbook meet the learners' long-term and short-term objectives? 3. Is the material relevant to assist the learners in reaching their objectives? 4. Is the material conducive to interactive learning? 5. Is the material appropriate from a sociocultural perspective? 6. Are the input levels for vocabulary and comprehension well-graded? 7. Is the content age-appropriate? 8. Is the material applicable in real life? 	<p>$\frac{7}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{5}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{2}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{5}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{7}{10}$</p>	<p>Instructions are clear and readable. No marks are provided for the informal assessment; marks are available exclusively for the formal assessment.</p>
<p><i>F. Supplementary materials</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a teacher's book available, and does it provide useful and comprehensive guidance, as well as alternative activities? 	<p>$\frac{10}{10}$</p>	<p>The textbook includes a teacher's guide, but unfortunately, the learners' workbook is not accessible. Consequently, learners are required to do their exercises and assignments in their classwork books when utilising this textbook.</p>

<i>G. General impression</i>		
1. Is there a clear set of goals and instructions?	$\frac{7}{10}$	Although the instructions are clear, there are not enough enjoyable activities displayed. Also writing skills are taught much more than any of the other skills.
2. Is there a reasonable balance and range of skills and activities?	$\frac{8}{10}$	
3. Does it engage learners in enjoyable activities or evoke their interest?	$\frac{4}{10}$	
4. Is there a wide range of communicative activities available?	$\frac{6}{10}$	
5. Is it encouraging the use of the information/opinion gap?	$\frac{2}{10}$	
6. Is the book encouraging readers to take responsibility for their own learning?	$\frac{6}{10}$	

Table 4.2: Evaluation of *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		
This checklist is designed for evaluating isiNdebele Home Language textbooks used in the KwaMhlanga South West circuit		
Name of evaluator: Busisiwe Pretty Jiane		
Title of the textbook: <i>Nasi-ke Isikhethu</i>		
Publisher: Maskew Miller Longman		
Criteria for evaluation	Score	Comments

<p><i>A. Practical consideration</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the textbook available locally? 2. Is it affordable? 3. Is the physical appearance intriguing and appealing? 4. Is the design simple and well organised? 5. Are the headings properly utilised? 6. Is the weight, size, and title appropriate? 	<p>$\frac{10}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{8}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{3}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p>	<p>The textbook is readily accessible within the local area and is priced at an affordable rate. However, the physical appearance of the textbook is not captivating. The book exhibits a lack of organisation and fails to effectively utilise headings. The chosen title of this textbook can be considered to be appropriate since it provides a brief indication of the book's content. "<i>Nasi-Ke Isikhethe</i>", which translates to "right here is the authentic Ndebele language", effectively conveys the focus of the book.</p>
<p><i>B. Skills</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the skills outlined in the textbook relevant to the curriculum? 2. Is the textbook adequate in terms of guiding students as they learn these skills? 3. Do the skills presented in the textbook cover a wide range of cognitive skills that are challenging for learners to learn? 	<p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p>	<p>All of the skills exhibit a reasonable level of proficiency. However, certain skills, such as language structure and conventions, are not situated appropriately.</p>

<p>4. Is the textbook's balance of skill development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing appropriate for the learners and learning situation?</p> <p>5. Is enough emphasis placed on skill integration?</p>	<p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p>	
<p><i>C. Exercises and activities</i></p> <p>1. Do the activities and exercises in the textbook help learners develop their language skills?</p> <p>2. Is there a good balance of controlled and uncontrolled exercises?</p> <p>3. Is the format of the exercises and activities varied enough to keep learners motivated and challenged?</p> <p>4. Are there activities for interacting with others and developing communication strategies?</p> <p>5. Are new structures introduced in a systematic and meaningful manner?</p> <p>6. Is the definition of new vocabulary provided in context?</p> <p>7. Is there enough work on individual sound recognition and production for pronunciation practice?</p> <p>8. Is a summary of new and revised grammar available?</p>	<p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{5}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{8}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p>	<p>The textbook displays an imbalance between controlled and uncontrolled exercises due to the absence of a controlled test. The definition of new vocabulary is often found within the textboxes.</p>
<p><i>D. Pedagogic analysis</i></p> <p>1. Is the textbook methodologically consistent</p>		<p>There is no specific time</p>

with current global language learning theories and practices?	$\frac{1}{10}$	frame and no sufficient learner achievement test in the textbook (no formative assessment).
2. Is there a sufficient number of formal learner achievement tests in the textbook?	$\frac{1}{10}$	
3. Is the book allowing students to use isiNdebele outside of the classroom?	$\frac{5}{10}$	
4. Is the book challenging enough for learners?	$\frac{4}{10}$	
5. Are there mechanisms in place to provide learners with regular feedback?	$\frac{8}{10}$	
6. Is new material reviewed and reused throughout the book?	$\frac{5}{10}$	
7. Is the book sufficiently aligned with the school's curriculum?	$\frac{4}{10}$	
8. Is the time frame specified adequate?	$\frac{6}{10}$	

<p><i>E. Appropriacy</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the materials, instructions, language focus, and activities appropriate for the learners as a whole? 2. Is the material relevant to assist the learner's in reaching their learner's objectives? 3. Is the material conducive to interactive learning? 4. Is the material appropriate from a sociocultural perspective? 5. Are the input levels for vocabulary and comprehension well graded? 6. Is the content age-appropriate? 7. Is the material applicable in real life? 	<p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{5}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{3}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{1}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p>	<p>There are no grades for the activities. The textbook is classified only in weeks and terms. The vocabulary and comprehension levels in the textbook are not evaluated properly.</p>
<p><i>F. Supplementary materials</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a teacher's book available, and does it provide useful and comprehensive guidance, as well as alternative activities? 	<p>$\frac{10}{10}$</p>	<p>A teacher's guide is available.</p>
<p><i>G. General impression</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a clear set of goals and instructions? 2. Is there a reasonable balance and range of skills and activities? 3. Does it engage learners in enjoyable activities or evoke their interest? 4. Is there a wide range of communicative 	<p>$\frac{2}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{6}{10}$</p> <p>$\frac{4}{10}$</p>	<p>Instructions are set appropriately and communication activities are available.</p>

activities available?		
5. Is it encouraging the use of the information/opinion gap?	$\frac{4}{10}$	
6. Is the book encouraging readers to take responsibility for their own learning?	$\frac{6}{10}$	

4.3 Authenticity of the material

In order to address the authenticity of the sampled textbooks, general evaluations of both textbooks were provided. Thereafter, I discussed the real-life representations in both textbooks through visual aspects.

4.3.1 *Via-Afrika*

The content, guidelines, linguistic emphasis, and activities were suitable for all learners. The fact that the *Via-Afrika* textbook contained activities that encourage learners to work in pairs or groups demonstrated that the book fosters interactive learning. On page 8, learners were requested to work as a group to answer questions related to advertisements. The instructions stated that they should also appoint a group leader to present to the class what they have discussed in their groups. This book's content is relevant because the material corresponded to the information in the curriculum document, and it was designed after the current CAPS document was implemented. This book's content is relevant and useful for learning since learners can easily relate to it as it reflects their real-life experiences. Interactive learning is one of the most effective learning strategies because learners learn more effectively from their peers than from their teachers. Practising interactive learning can result in positive outcomes and enhanced learning, although it may not be suitable for all learners.

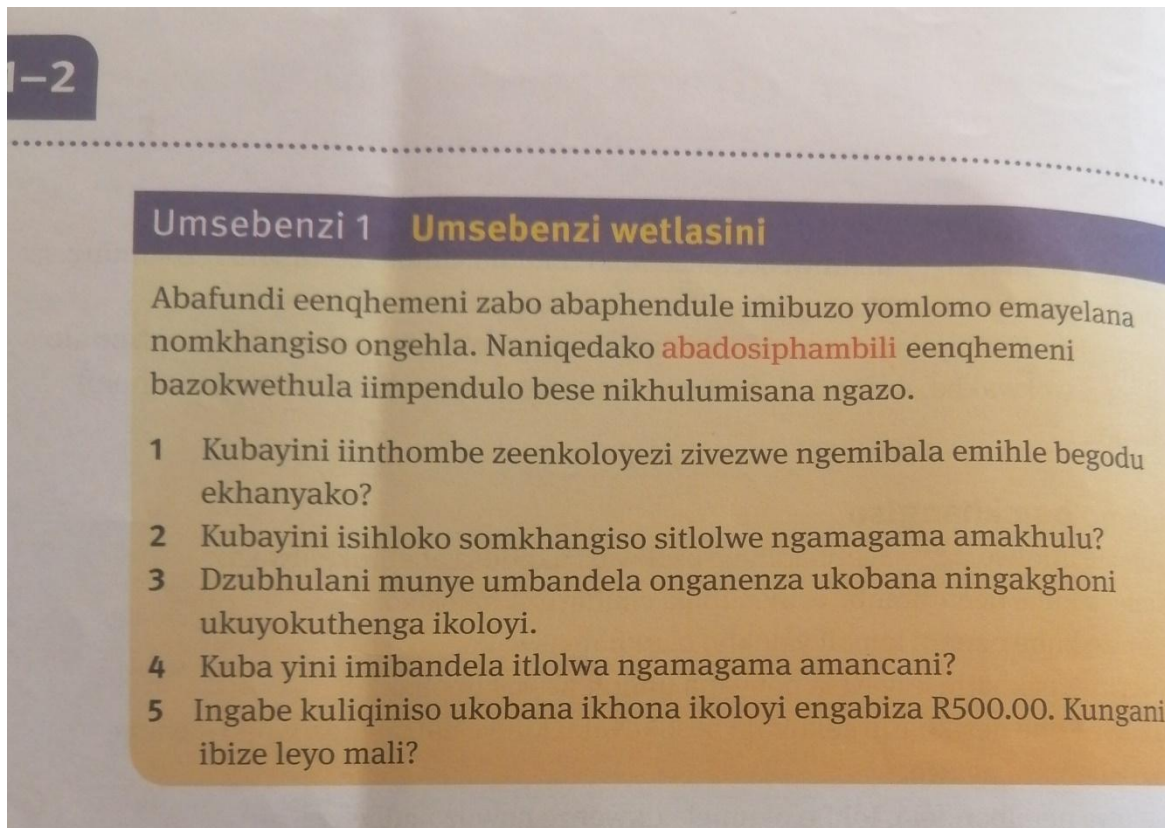


Figure 4.1: Group activity (*Via-Afrika:8*)

4.3.2 *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu*

The cover of the book *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* is not showing much to attract the learners; it just shows the beautiful orange plant. The book does not have enough activities for learners to work in groups or pairs. The textbook is methodologically aligned with contemporary global language learning theory and practice since the headers relate to current global issues such as crime, drugs, and the environment. This increases the book's effectiveness and makes it very useful for raising awareness of global issues.

4.3.3 Textbook visuals

4.3.3.1 *Via-Afrika*

The cover of the textbook *Via-Afrika* is attractive and colourful; it can attract learners, especially in Grade 9, because it shows pictures of different things that are interesting to the youth. For instance, it shows a teenage boy wearing headphones holding a radio, something that looks like a studio, Moses Mabhida Stadium, rural houses, beautiful mountains, and flats in the city. The majority of the visual material is photographs and there are also many

cartoons. There are a limited number of illustrations and advertisements. The majority of the letters are in black Arial font size 12 with line spacing of 1.5. Only the learners' activities and the headers indicating the week are white and the footer indicating the term and week is green. Headings and subheadings are bolded. There are no defects in the font size for the topic and exercises. The spaces between words, lines, paragraphs, and sentences are standard. In addition, the quality and colour of the ink used is good and clearly visible. The textbook *Via-Afrika* provides many exercises and examples that are relevant to learners' daily lives. For example, on page 11, the activity involves reading and viewing an advertisement. The advertisement appears to be from the prominent radio station Ikwekwezi FM, and promotes furniture offered by a well-known furniture shop in KwaMhlanga named Railway Furnitures.

The textbook appears to contain an adequate number of photographs. According to Sering and Khan (2022), the utilisation of photographs as visual representations in educational textbooks holds significant implications for the facilitation of teaching and learning processes, as they make situations more realistic for learners. For instance, on pages 49-50, learners are expected to read the short story about an accident on one of the busy roads in South Africa. The visual representation supporting the text is clear and relevant, and it provides the learners with the visual context to make the short story more realistic.

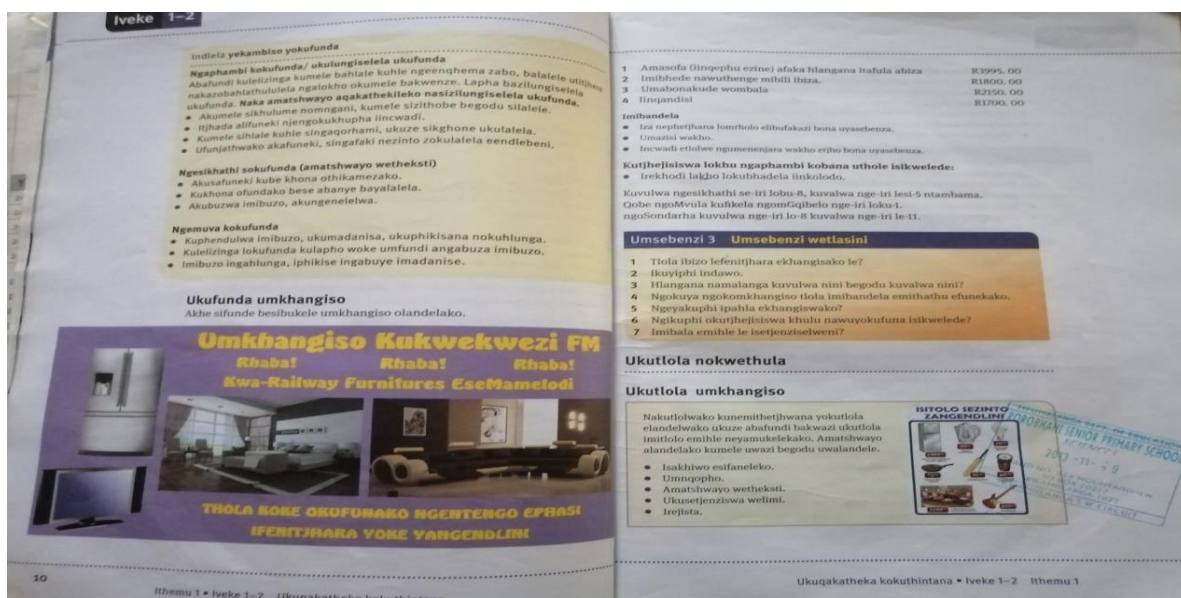


Figure 4.2: Advertisement (*Via-Afrika* textbook: 11)

All of the photographs featured in this textbook, including the one in figure 4.2 above, are age-appropriate and printed in vibrant full colour. Therefore, this visual representation might enhance the learning experience. Learners are able to relate the activity on page 11 (Figure

4.2) to their daily lives because the familiar furniture store and radio station are used. Firstly, learners are able to determine which furniture is advertised, where the store is located, and the store's hours of operation. Learners are enabled to be well-versed on the prerequisites for acquiring a particular kind of furniture or simply comparing the prices of furniture.

One of the articles, Education Bureau (2018) as mentioned in my literature review, states clearly that the textbook should be well organised with a readable font, and no unnecessary blank spaces or irrelevant information that could confuse the learners, in order to provide effective learning opportunities. The graphics, drawings, and tables should be reader-friendly and easy to understand (Education Bureau, 2018). The book appears to be well organised based on the positive balance between text and visual representations, it is not too “wordy”, it is easy to read, and the colour is used sparingly enough to prevent it from being too “busy”.

4.3.3.2 *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*

The textbook consists of 229 pages, but only 47 pages present illustrative material. All of the photographs and cartoons are printed in black and white. The titles and subtitles are bolded. The font type is Arial and the size is 12 with 1.5 line spacing. However, there is a spacing error on page 84 where the word *ne enqhema* should be written as *neenqhema*. The instructions are available only in isiNdebele. This book does not contain a glossary, but it does contain text boxes in which each new term is explained briefly. These text boxes are effective as they catch the eye. However, on page 3, the textbook misleads the learners by instructing them to refer to the cartoon above, when there is no cartoon on that page. Even though the headings and subheadings are bold and visible, there is a significant amount of information without headings or subheadings.

It appears that *Nasi-ke Isikhethu* contains more exercises that relate to the learners' daily lives, as on pages 30 and 31 where there is an introduction to the topic of "Zokuvakatjha" (travelling and tourism) and a photograph is available to support the title. On page 31, learners are advised to listen to the dialogue between a radio listener and the host of the show which discusses the signing of travel contracts. However, there are no clear instructions on who should read the dialogue. It is stated merely that a dialogue is a conversation between two people and that it is similar to drama. The picture below shows the dialogue between the radio host and the radio listener as well as the picture supporting the topic.

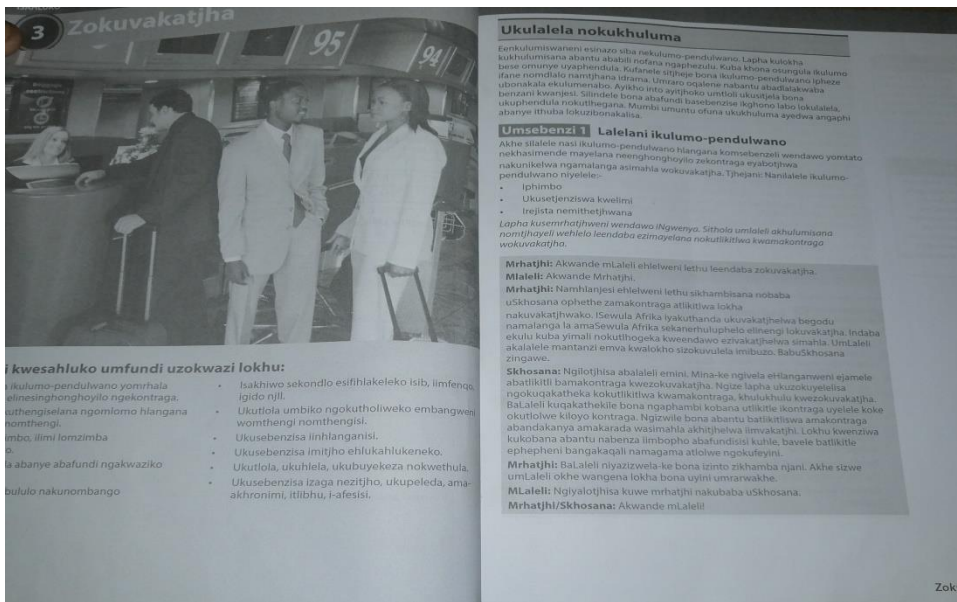


Figure 4.3: Picture of dialogue between people (*Nasi-ke Isikhethu:31*)

The printing, size, and fonts used in this textbook are appealing and easy to read. The design is simple but not well organised. This book would be of high calibre on the condition that it includes more photographs, illustrations, and advertisements to accommodate all teaching strategies. Pictologics teaching promotes effective teaching and learning according to Sring and Khan (2022). Hence, learners would prefer to see pictures that enable them to learn effectively. Photographs, cartoons, and drawings printed in black and white can demotivate learners and create a lack of interest in this book. For instance, from page 5 to 9, there are no photographs, drawings, cartoons, or other illustrations. The learners are expected to learn how to make their own advertisements without the appropriate examples.

According to Johansson (2003), textbooks are frequently the only resource available to learners during a lesson, and they are an essential resource for teachers as well. Therefore, it is important that the textbooks used for learning purposes are interesting and attractive to make learning more enjoyable. Rahmawati (2018:9) refers to the textbook as “one of many kinds of instructional materials used in learning. Textbooks are usually succinctly written, tightly organised, and greatly condensed”. She further states that textbooks can serve as motivational tools that stimulate language learning. Although this book is well written and not carefully edited, it lacks the colour that attracts learners and motivates them to be more interested in learning. The textbook has a dull appearance and contains unstimulating and uninteresting visual representations which can be attributed to its apparent compilation from duplicated versions of the original textbooks.

4.4 Language learning skills as stated by the CAPS document

According to Riet (2013), selecting and implementing LTSM that allows learners to gain the necessary skills and knowledge as outlined in the curriculum is crucial to ensure high-quality education. It is crucial to choose a textbook that enables learners to perform better in the tasks outlined in the curriculum. The home language curriculum is structured around the following skills:

- Listening and speaking – learners need this skill to communicate, convey meaning, and participate in extensive conversations and dialogues.
- Reading and viewing – learners gain knowledge and enjoy reading a wide variety of literary texts once they have mastered this skill. Learners develop into self-motivated readers who actively participate in all stages of the reading process (from preparing to read to reflecting on what they've read).
- Writing and presenting – this skill enables learners to develop and communicate coherent thoughts and ideas through writing and presentation skills. Learners acquire the ability to use proper grammar and spelling in well-structured texts, language structure and convention, and improved grammatical and lexical competence which improve learners' conversation and writing skills. Engaging with language structures correctly and appropriately is a skill that can be honed with practice. Home Language learners are expected to read, write, and expand their vocabularies in order to fully grasp the language being taught. Grade 9 learners should be able to write paragraphs ranging from 200 to 250 words in length, read and comprehend texts averaging 200 to 250 words, and amass a vocabulary of 2 500 words or more (Riet, 2013). Since textbooks are a primary resource, especially for under-resourced schools such as those involved in the study, they should be designed in a way that is beneficial to the teachers and learners who rely on them (Rahmawati, 2018).

4.4.1 *Via-Afrika*

As per the CAPS document, learners should practice four skills in a two-week cycle: listening and speaking (*ukulalela nokukhuluma*), reading and viewing (*ukufunda nokubukela*), writing

and presenting (ukutlola nokwethula), and language structures and convention (Izakhiwo nemithetjhwana yeLimi).

Each chapter of the book is introduced by listing the skills addressed in that chapter. The four skills are listed as objectives for learning. However, there are no clear objectives stating what the learners should achieve. The textbook lacks the specific learning objectives of other language textbooks such as *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*. Typically, language textbooks are organised to mention the learning objectives explicitly at the beginning of each chapter. For example, “by the end of this chapter, learners should be able to:” *Via-Afrika isiNdebele ilimi lekhaya* merely demonstrates the four language skills that should be taught in a two-week cycle according to the CAPS document. This book is irrelevant to the learning objectives of learners as it does not state the learning objectives to be attained by the end of each chapter. Therefore, it is unclear what each chapter intends to accomplish. The picture below illustrates how each chapter of this textbook is introduced.

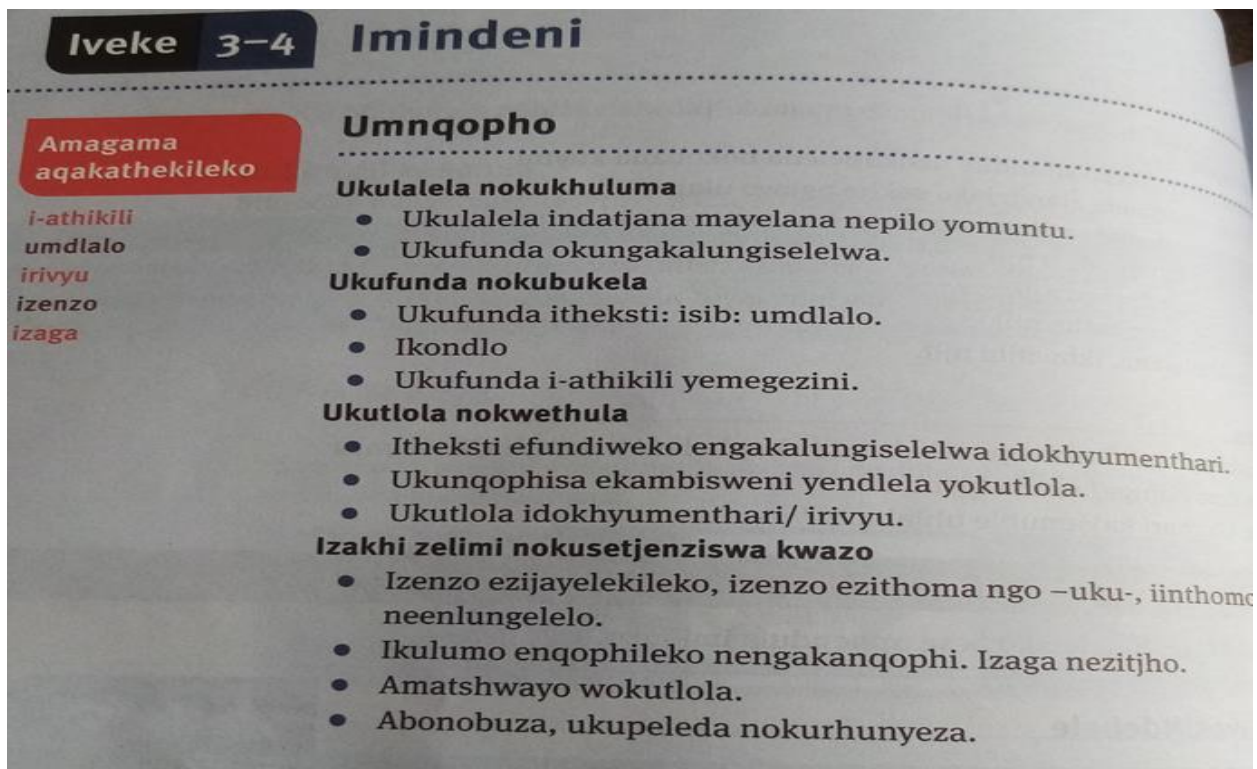


Figure 4.4: Picture of the introduction of a chapter in the *Via-Afrika* textbook

The skills listed in the introduction are explained briefly e.g. listening and speaking skills, referred to as "Ukulalela nokukhuluma" in this context, are fundamental abilities required across all academic disciplines. In every subject, learners are expected to possess the capacity

for active listening which enables them to acquire knowledge effectively. Additionally, the ability to articulate one's thoughts verbally is equally crucial as it allows learners to provide verbal evidence of their comprehension and engagement with the content that is being taught. Learners collect and organise information, build knowledge, create solutions, and express ideas and opinions through effective listening and speaking. The CAPS (2011:13) further states that learners with critical listening skills can identify values and attitudes integrated in texts and challenge unfair and manipulative language. Furthermore, it is imperative that instructional materials, particularly textbooks designed for the purpose of acquiring a specific language, effectively incorporate these skills in order to afford learners enhanced opportunities for language acquisition.

4.4.1.1 Writing and presenting

Writing and presenting is defined by the CAPS document (2011:35) as a strong communicative tool that enables learners to construct and communicate thoughts and ideas in a coherent manner. Frequent writing practice in a range of circumstances, tasks, and subjects allows learners to communicate both functionally and creatively. Through *language structure and convention* (Izakhiwo nemithetho yokusetjenziswa kwelimi) learners discover how language is used and create a shared language for discussing language (a metalanguage) in order to critically evaluate their texts (CAPS 2011:13).

The *Via-Afrika* textbook allows learners the opportunity to examine and write diaries, documentaries, and minutes of a meeting as well as the opportunity to revise an advertisement. For instance, on page 75, *Via-Afrika* shows a full definition of a diary and gives an example. The textbook begins with a thorough explanation of the writing process and explains the importance of each written genre with examples. Learners can examine the conventions and format of that particular convention of writing text. It also presents learners with the opportunity to create their own version of such a text. For instance, on pages 26 and 27, learners are given an example of an informal letter and then the opportunity to write their own.

Iyini idayari?

Idayari yincwajana etlolkako etjengisa izehlakalo ezithileko ngomuntu ngamunye. Idayari yenzelwa ukobana ukwazi ukuzikhumbuza izinto eziqakathekile mayelana nepilwakho. Begodu ukghona ukutlola izehlakalo ezenzekako ebuphilweni bakho. Yenzelwe ukobana utlole lokho okwenzekako ungakulibali. Idayari ingatlololwa phambili ukuveza izinto ozozenza ngamalanga azako nanyana ungatlolola lokho esele kwenzekile. Idayari iba nesakhiwo, ilanga, isikhathi, indawo, bese wena utlola isenzeko lesobokobana senzeke nini, bekusikhathi bani nendawo yesehlakalo nalokho okwehlileko. Ibuye isize lokha nakunemihlangano ukghona ukutlola lokho ebegade nikhuluma ngakho ukuze ungakukhohlwa.



Isibonelo sedayari yerhwebo

Ilanga	Isehlakalo	Isikhathi
06 KuMhlanja 2012	ngiya ePitori ngiyokuthenga isitoko	06H00-14h00
07 KuMhlanja 2012	ngiya emhlanganweni kwaMhlanga	07H00-13h00
08 KuMhlanja 2012	ngiyokuhlolisa iinzuzo yesitolo	07H00-10h00
09 KuMhlanja 2012	ngingezelela indawo yokupaka isitoko	09H00-12h00
10 KuMhlanja 2012	ngiya emhlanganweni wezamarhwebo eWitbank	08H00-12h00

Figure 4.5: definition of a diary and example (Via-Afrika: 75)

4.4.1.2 Listening and speaking

Listening is overlooked often whereas speaking receives little attention in the sample of texts. Some listening activities are neglected as the textbook focuses on only two activities: dialogues and interviews as speaking activities. In each chapter, dialogues or interviews are used repetitively. Learners are expected to repeat dialogues continuously, for instance on pages 46, 120, and 186. Instead of including other activities such as presenting, reporting the news, giving directions verbally, vote of thanks, and acting as shown in the CAPS document, the textbooks mainly focus on one genre type which is a dialogue. Even though acting is mentioned in the fourth term in the textbook, learners are not given an opportunity to practise it. Moreover, there is a limited number of activities for listening and learners are given less opportunities to express their listening skills. The textbook begins each chapter by outlining the skills that are covered in that chapter to remind the teachers and learners that they need to practise those skills. The skills provided in the textbook do not address many cognitive listening and speaking skills. As depicted below, the textbook clearly shows the structure of an informal letter, the steps to write it, and what it should look like.

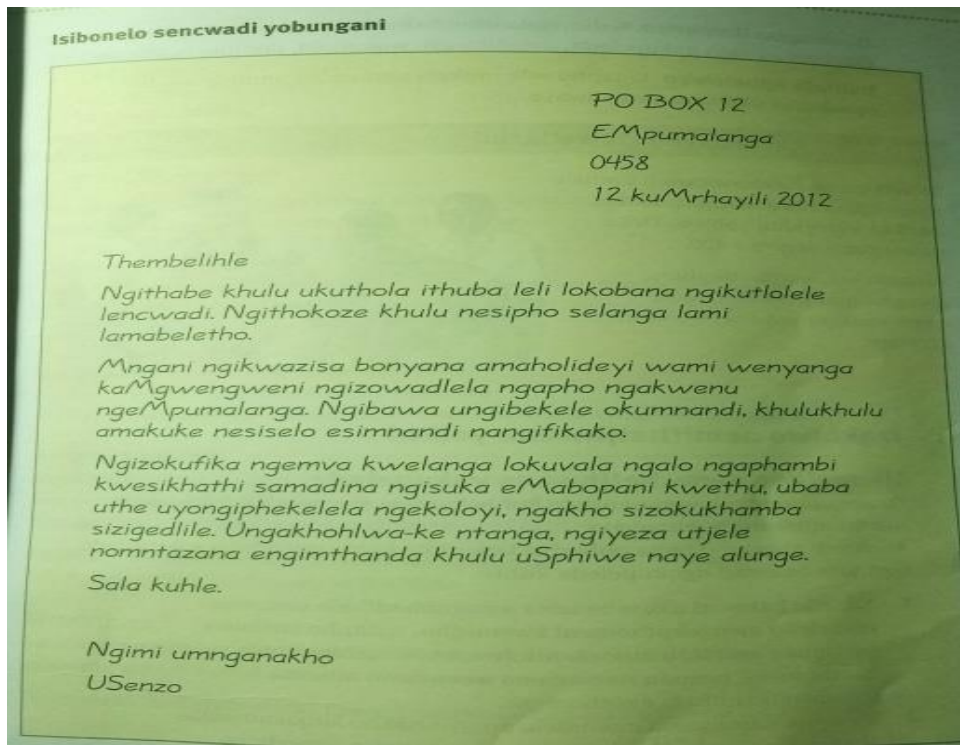


Figure 4.6: Example of an informal letter (Via-Afrika textbook: 27)

4.4.1.3 Reading and viewing

According to Turbill (2002), effective reading is based on a variety of techniques and resources that assist learners. When learners participate in reading and writing activities, they develop skills to crack the text's code, comprehend the text's meaning, and communicate effectively. Text decoders play a significant role in the process of interpreting textual information. They are responsible for deciphering and comprehending the meaning within texts. On the other hand, text participants actively engage with texts in a functional manner by using them for various purposes. Lastly, text users engage in the critical study and modification of texts by employing analytical skills to assess the content and make the alterations necessary. Deciphering the code of language means being able to recognise and use the basic parts and structure of written discourse. This includes the alphabet, phonetic parts of words, orthography, and the rules and patterns that govern sentence structure and text composition. The textbook presents an effective example of this skill on page 72 as it presents a section of the drama, accompanied by a picture linked to the drama, and the questions related to the drama.

According to the CAPS document (2011:13), proficient reading and viewing abilities play a crucial role in achieving academic success across several subjects. Learners acquire the

ability to comprehend and analyse many forms of written and visual materials effectively, both literary and non-literary. However, this competency is not reflected well in the textbooks. *Via-Afrika* does not show many activities where learners have to analyse cartoons and pictures; this is denying learners an opportunity to gain more insight on the skills of analysing pictures or cartoons. This book comprises lots of activities where learners have to read short stories, poems, and drama.

Text decoder exercises assist readers in understanding print concepts and enhancing their phonics and vocabulary abilities. Individuals engage in reading short passages of text that contain a wider range of sentence structures. They decode the text by applying letter-sound associations, identifying common words, and understanding the use of basic punctuation within the text. They are able to comprehend that texts can be organised in a variety of ways and can identify figures of speech used to determine the parameters, places, and events or to convey informational content (Turbill, 2022).

Via-Afrika successfully presents the reading strategies and reading process as it introduces the reading and viewing section by explaining reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and intensive reading. The book provides reading extracts from the following topics: technology, culture and human rights, environmental health, and economy. However, only a few extracts are relevant to the main topic. For instance, the first term introduces technology as a topic, creating the expectation that it would be explored, but none of the extracts or passages discusses technology.

The textbook presents texts such as advertisements, novels, contracts, short stories, newspaper articles, drama, and folklore. However, the visual material such as cartoons, posters, and pictures supporting newspaper articles is not sufficient. There is no activity based on analysing or viewing the illustration and answering the questions. The available reading activities mostly consist of question-and-answer formats, which can range from basic scanning questions to more complex prompts that require opinions and arguments. Although the reading materials span a variety of topics and content, the materials and activities tend to be repetitive. For instance, the novel appears several times in the textbook. According to its definition of the novel, a novel is a book that narrates a long story and includes many pages that are divided by chapters (Jiane, Mampokoro, Masilela & Mthombeni, 2013). The extracts provided in the textbook are not relevant as they seem to be extracts from different books or different novels. The novel appears on pages 133, 156, 181, 188, and 195 as illustrated in

Figure 4.7 below. The headings for these novels are different. This shows that they are not the same; the heading of the novel on page 133 is *Indakamizwa netja*, and the heading on page 156 is *Ifundo iqakathekile*. All the headings in this novel are different.

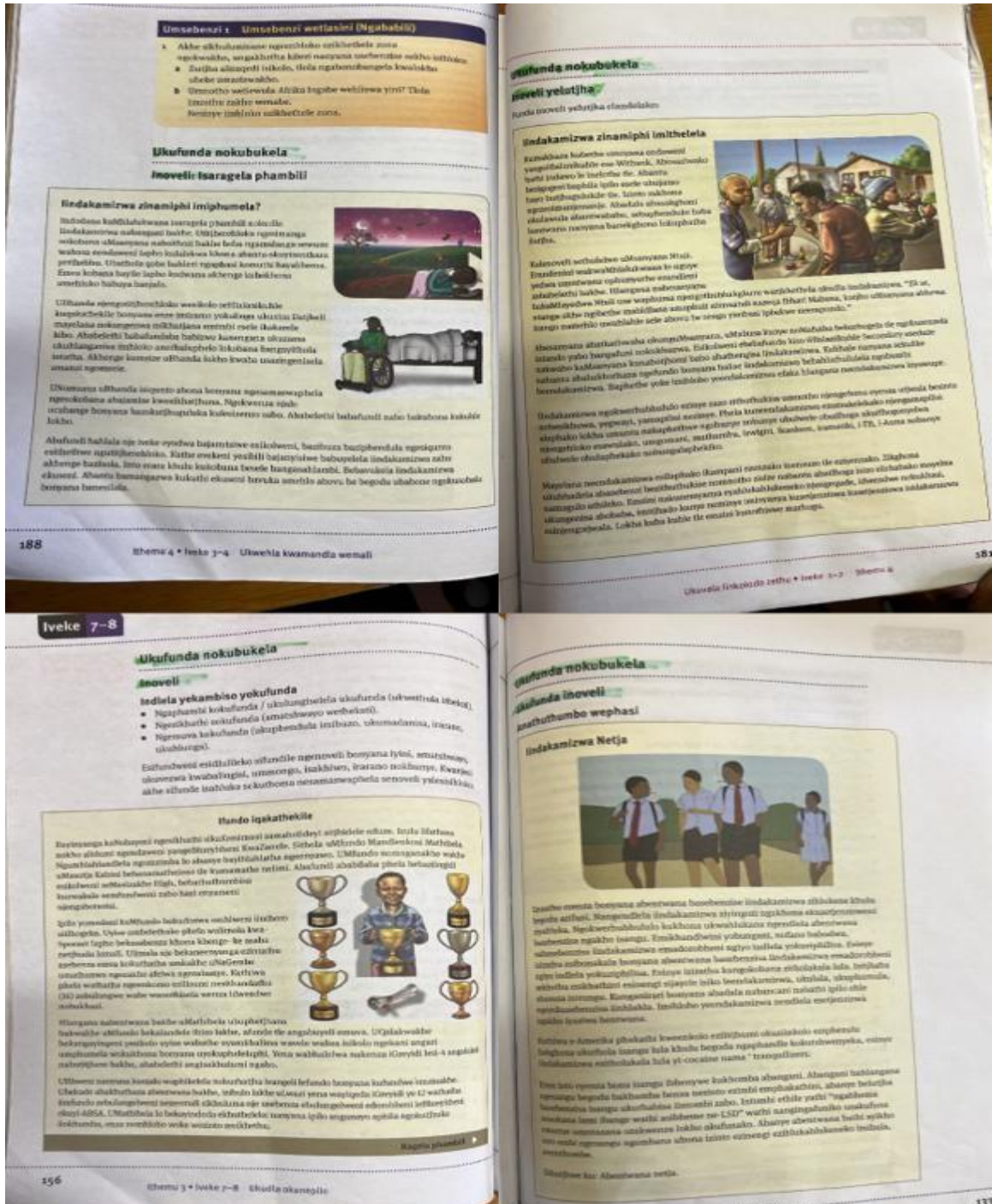


Figure 4.7: Different extracts of the novels featured (Via-Afrika: 133,156, 181 & 188)

The topic that introduces the second term is *culture and human rights*. The drama selected for this topic is relevant as it addresses the issues of paying lobola and arranged marriage (Jiane et al., 2013:72-73). The title of this drama is *Ihliziyo idla la ithandakhona* which is a Ndebele idiom that simply means that anyone has the right to love or to choose whoever his/her heart loves; no one should choose for someone else; even parents have no right to do so. This drama is relevant as it addresses issues related to arranged marriage and the fact that this type of marriage used to work in the past. After reading the drama, learners are given an opportunity to answer related questions. Moreover, the correct order of questioning is followed: the questions range from low order to high order as the first question asks learners to give the name of the main character and the last question requires learners to explain the meaning of the idiom used as the title of the drama.

The lesson continues on page 83, the reading book is recommended, and learners are directed to the page where they can continue to read the drama. Even the way this topic is introduced to learners stands out as it allows the learners to reflect on previous chapters which taught the structure of the drama in detail. The textbook successfully explains the reading strategies and process, but it lacks activities. The isiNdebele CAPS document (Grade 7-9) stipulates that “*Amakghono wokufunda nokubukela athuthukiswe kuhle amgogodlha wepumelelo yokufunda kiyo yoke ikharikhyulamu*”, which implies that the ability to read and comprehend effectively is crucial for succeeding in all subjects and areas of study.

4.4.1.4 Language structure and convention

This skill is addressed accurately in the sampled textbook as the CAPS document (2011) stipulates that the three other language skills (listening and speaking, reading and viewing, and writing and presenting) should be taught and learned alongside language structures and conventions. However, on page 15 there is no link between learners' prior knowledge and the new knowledge. The *Via-Afrika* textbook states that learners already learnt the nouns in the previous unit whereas the previous unit only addresses the verb tenses. The book repeats topics such as pronouns, verbs, acronyms, and spelling patterns but lacks theory and examples or activities on proverbs and idioms. According to the CAPS document (2011), there are more than 15 components listed under language structures and conventions that should be covered over the course of a certain amount of time.

These language components should be completed within the time frame specified. Pronouns, adjectives, determiners, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, interjections, idiophones, conjunctions,

vocabulary development, clauses, phrases, sentences, passive voice, nouns, punctuation, parts of words, and reported speech are included in the list (CAPS, 2011:49-53). The time allotted for teaching and learning language structures and conventions in the senior phase is one hour per two-week cycle according to the CAPS (2011). Additionally, while teaching the other three skills, certain aspects of this skill should be incorporated within the time frame.

The textbook does exceptionally well in teaching and presenting all the other writing texts mentioned, even though some types of writing such as magazine articles, constitutions, policies, and reviews are not included in the sampled textbook. Furthermore, in term four, the book further teaches the learners to write and present texts such as an application letter, email, and obituary. In addition, the textbook allows learners to revise other texts.

Learners are supposed to be assessed on their ability to analyse the cartoons in one of their assessment tasks. However, the textbook does not provide any exercise as an example or as a class or home activity. Moreover, the CAPS document highlights that, at the end of the curriculum, learners should be able to observe, assess, and analyse art forms, processes, and products. This indicates a lack of focus on the viewing aspect of reading and viewing. The textbook effectively repeats the structure of the novel, which is beneficial for Grade 9 learners especially. Nevertheless, the manner in which the information is provided is inadequate for comprehension and readability. This is attributed mostly to the lack of consistency in recommending specific novels and the absence of a systematic approach to elucidating their content for the benefit of learners' understanding.

The textbook provides a few examples from different novels (certain parts, but not the whole novel). This might mislead learners because the textbook does not provide a clear picture of a novel. According to the CAPS document (2011:13), proficient reading and viewing abilities play a crucial role in achieving learning outcomes across various academic subjects. Learners acquire the ability to effectively comprehend and analyse many forms of written and visual materials, both literary and non-literary. However, this competency is not reflected well in the textbooks. Therefore, learners should be exposed to one novel when they are still in the learning stages and then be introduced to other novels after they have gained a thorough understanding of the novel and its structure. This will assist them further in differentiating the prose genres.

According to the CAPS document (2011:11), language skills (listening, writing, reading, and speaking) are essential for successful learning across the curriculum as well as the ability to

participate in society and the workplace. This assertion requires CAPS-compliant textbooks to fulfil the mandates of the document while also supplying learners with the required knowledge. Learners acquire knowledge and understanding by reading and viewing a wide range of literary and non-literary texts, including visual texts, as well as comprehension of how genre and register reflect the purpose, audience, and context of texts from textbooks that provide the necessary opportunities to maximise their learning potential. The ability of learners to comprehend and interpret written and visual content is determined by their knowledge of language structures, conventions, their own life experiences, and rules according to (Hambali, Kumar, Hashim, Maniam, Mehat, Cheema, Mustapha, Adenan, Stanslas & Hamid, 2021). Even though the textbook is not clear regarding the main objectives of each chapter, the textbook successfully manages to provide the learners with the opportunity to learn skills such as writing, listening, visual literacy, comprehension, and presenting. The textbook's examples for this skill are relevant and helpful to learners.

4.4.2 Nasi-ke Isikhethu Ilimi Lekhaya

This textbook introduces each chapter by outlining the learning objectives to be achieved at the end of each chapter, which demonstrates that the authors are aware that learners should acquire knowledge after each chapter. The organisational structure exhibits deficiencies in its arrangement of headers and subheadings, as well as the presentation of knowledge and abilities. Furthermore, the book contains scattered content which results in a lack of coherence that may pose challenges for teachers and learners. Since the book is intended for teaching and learning, it should be structured in a way that makes it easy to read and comprehend, rather than in a way that is confusing for learners. The skills are not easily accessible because they are not separated as required. This demonstrates that the book does not provide opportunities to learn as it may be difficult for learners to use the book on their own. As per the CAPS document, learners should be given the opportunity to access these skills in a two-week cycle interchangeably, but this book does not allow it since the presentation of these skills is not structured well.

According to the curriculum, these skills consist of the capacity to receive and comprehend the communication of others, which is known as listening and reading comprehension. The second set of skills is the ability to produce isiNdebele that is easily understood which means an individual's proficiency in speaking and writing. Reading the language course outline reveals that the ability to produce, receive, and interact are central components of the

language as a subject (Markström, 2019). The learning objectives are listed in the book's introduction to each chapter. Learning objectives state what learners should have learned by the end of the chapter. The book is divided into chapters and each chapter includes all four learning skills. Despite the book's lack of organisation, it effectively addresses language-based tasks related to all three skills. There is a sufficient summary of new and revised grammar available in this book. The book lacks sufficient content pertaining to the recognition and production of specific sounds, which hinders its effectiveness in facilitating pronunciation practice and impairs learners' language skill enhancement.

This textbook enables learners to use isiNdebele outside of the classroom because it includes tasks that could challenge learners when they are not in the classroom. For instance, on pages 33–34, the Nasi-Ke Isikhethu is challenging learners to learn more about contracts. This information could assist the learners in applying the knowledge they learned in the classroom outside the classroom, as contracts are not necessarily filled in the classroom but are more relevant outside the classroom. The new information is evaluated and integrated into the book. The book does not provide enough formal tasks. This can be discouraging and unproductive for learners as they cannot use the textbook to study for exams. There are mechanisms in place to give learners regular feedback as the book contains a teachers' guide with answers so they can provide feedback as they work through the topics. This helps learners to obtain timely feedback and rapidly correct their errors to learn further. Even though the textbook does not include all of the curriculum's topics, it is properly aligned with the curriculum. This could increase the learners' ability to perform better in their formal assessments. The time frame is not adequately specified. Consequently, learners are unable to monitor their progress and know when to prepare for tests, which could negatively impact their academic performance.

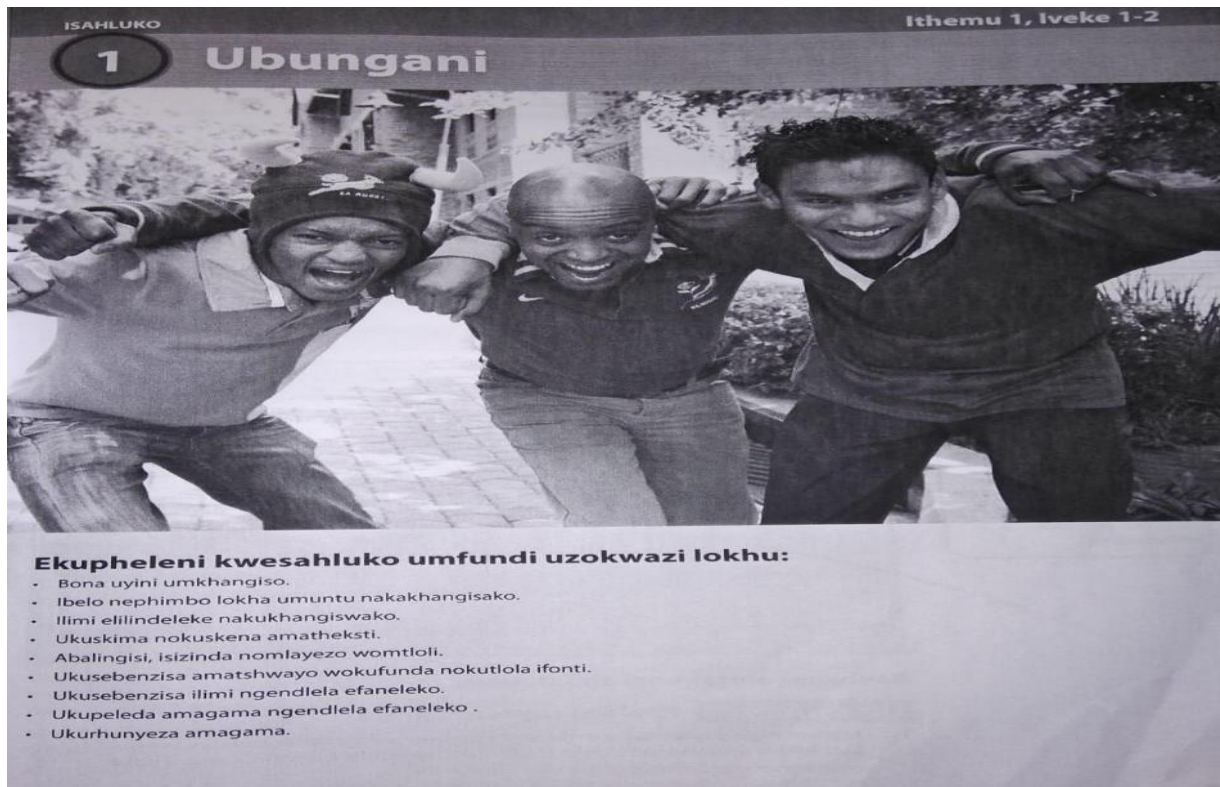


Figure 4.8: An introduction to Chapter 1 of the *Nasi-ke isikhethu* textbook

4.4.2.1 Listening and speaking

The book presents the information for other skills under the heading of a different skill. For instance, on page 18, the book demonstrates punctuation signs and how to use them in writing under the topic of speaking and listening, which should rather be under reading and viewing. *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* has neglected listening and speaking, with even less emphasis placed on listening. Listening and speaking are thus neglected; with even less emphasis placed on listening whilst the topic/heading is that of listening and speaking. The majority of the activities structured under listening and speaking should be covered in the reading and viewing sections. On pages 16 to 17, for instance, learners are directed to read the extract and answer the questions. Although the book discusses various types of listening and speaking activities, including dialogue, debate, interviews, newspaper article reports, forum/panel discussion, informal discussion/conversation, acting, and advertisement; listening comprehension receives less attention as there is only one example of a listening exercise on page 178. Few activities involve informal discussion and reporting to the class as a whole, e.g., on page 4 in Activity 3. In Chapter 2, Pages 16 to 17, the "What Learners Need to Do" section serves as a model for how students should approach reading and viewing tasks.

4.4.2.2 Reading and Viewing

The book contains the following text types: drama, short story, poem, novel, folklore, cartoons, contracts, news article, and visual texts. Reading and viewing is presented well in the first chapter of the book. Poems, on the other hand, do not have authors and on certain pages, such as pages 90, 200, and 201, there is text in brackets indicating that an author's name should be prevalent, but it is not provided. The author's name is important because some educators use it as a level 1 question where they ask the learners to give the name of the author.

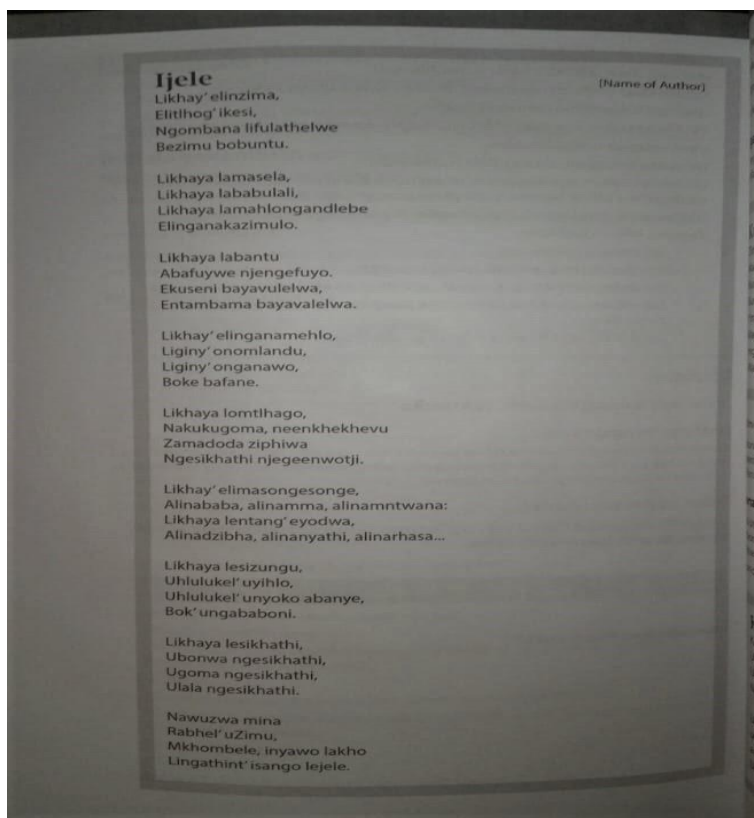


Figure 4.9: A poem in the *Nasi-ke isikhethu* textbook

The poem *Ndlela Yakwa Mloto* is repeated on pages 75 and 107. However, the structure of the poem on page 75 does not appear to be identical to the one on page 107. The poem titled *Ndlela Yakwa Mloto* is repeated and the structure appears to be different on pages 75 and 107. On page 75, the poem's lines are numbered from 1 to 14, whereas the poem's lines are not numbered on page 106. The novel is defined as a short story, and there is no indication of where learners can find the novel that they should read; only the reference to the short story is provided in the CAPS document (2011).

4.4.2.3 Writing and presenting

The book's failure to effectively demonstrate the skills in question can be attributed to the lack of precise definitions for the writing texts, including the poster as outlined on page 9 and visually presented on page 13. Moreover, there are certain tasks that are known to require learners' creation of their own cartoons. This kind of proficiency should be shown in textbooks as Markström (2019) states that learners who struggle with writing may face long-term consequences. This is because applications for companies and universities require written materials, such as cover letters and personal statements, which are crucial to the hiring process. Writing is also a talent needed for future success. Many in the education field view learners' development of written literacy as a skill required for learning rather than one that must be learned. Strong writing abilities are not just valued in English classes but are associated with improved academic achievement in a wide range of other subject areas, including Science and Maths (Markström, 2019).

4.4.2.4 Language structure and convention

The book attempts to highlight language structure and convention in relation to the other three skills. However, the structure is not organised well and the headings do not correspond to the content. On page 29, learners are taught only pronouns and adjectives, and the rest of the page is empty with no activity related to the topic which appears on other pages.

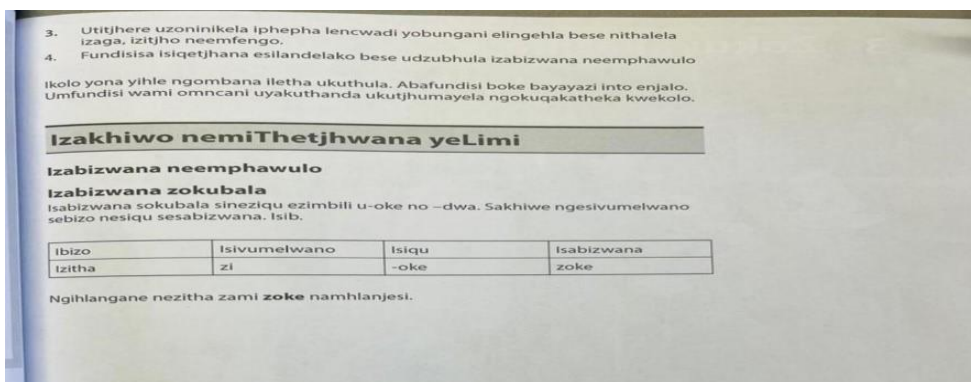


Figure 4.10: Activity (*Nasi-ke isikhethu textbook: 29*)

In order to facilitate a natural and logical language acquisition process, carefully choosing language structures and conventions from the “Language Structures and Conventions” domain present in the focus text type is advisable. These selected items should reflect the natural occurrence of language and be arranged in a manner that facilitates the gradual

development of language skills. According to the CAPS document (2011), informal assessment is characterised as an ongoing appraisal of learners' progress on a daily basis. This is achieved through several methods, such as observations, talks, real-world examples, informal classroom interactions, and learner-teacher conferences. Pausing during a lesson to watch learners or to discuss their learning progress with them can be considered as informal evaluation. As per the CAPS document (2011), formal assessment offers teachers a methodical evaluation of learners' development in a grade and subject. Examples of formal assessments include but are not limited to tests, examinations, assignments, practical tasks, projects, oral presentations, storytelling and imitation acts, acting, essays, oral presentations, and written tasks.

4.5 Cognitive levels of questioning

According to the CAPS document (2011); all assessment tasks that comprise an annual formal assessment programme are referred to as formal assessments. The teacher grades and formally registers formal assessment tasks for progression objectives. The purpose of moderating all formal assessment tasks is to ensure quality and adhere to appropriate standards. It is important that these tasks cover a range of language skills in order to effectively evaluate essential abilities over the course of the semester or year. In order to assess learners formally, it is important for teachers to first assess these elements in an informal manner and provide feedback. The methods used for assessment should also be suitable for the age and level of the learners. The activities should incorporate the content of the subject and include multiple tasks that aim to achieve the goals of the subject. They should demonstrate the knowledge and skills gained throughout the course and follow the curriculum guidelines for each grade level to determine the specific activities and skills needed for each part of the formal assessment activity. For example, if students in Grade 9, Term 1, are given the assignment of composing a poem, they should be instructed to "construct rhyming sentences of equal length" since that is what they would have been taught. If an informative piece is assigned in the first term, students are expected to write using the appropriate framework or structure. Likewise, in the areas of listening and speaking, learners would not be expected to showcase their mastery.

Teachers facilitate the development of both lower-level and higher-level abilities in learners by employing questioning techniques. Additionally, they encourage learners to engage with the material by drawing upon their existing knowledge and experiences (Khorsand, 2009).

According to Khorsand (2009), it is best to classify questions using Bloom's taxonomy. From the most basic activity to the most complicated activity, there are six main groups in this classification. The lower levels consist of knowledge, comprehension, and application, while the higher levels include analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

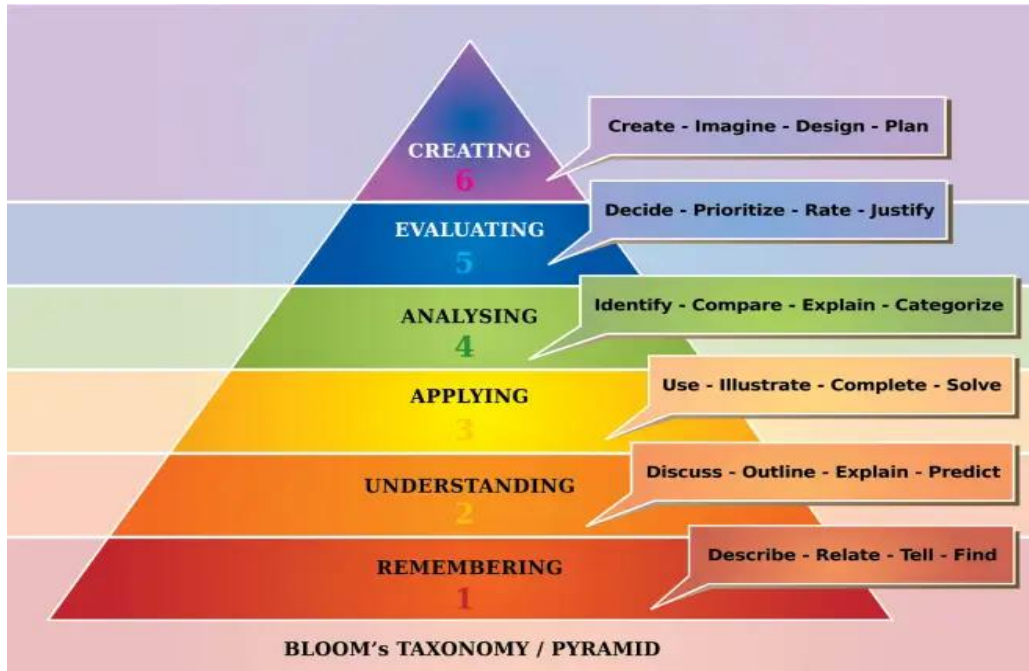


Figure 4.11: The cognitive levels of question according to Bloom's Taxonomy

4.5.1.1 *Via-Afrika*

The textbook includes a suitable number of formal learner's achievement tests, such as formal learner's achievement at the end of each term. The book includes an example of a formal learner's achievement test, as recommended by the CAPS guidelines. This book enables learners to use isiNdebele outside of the classroom because there are tasks that students can reflect on outside of the classroom. The book is challenging enough for learners as well, particularly those in Grade 9. This book provides both a teacher's guide and a reading book. As a result, with the assistance of the teacher, learners receive easy access to feedback.

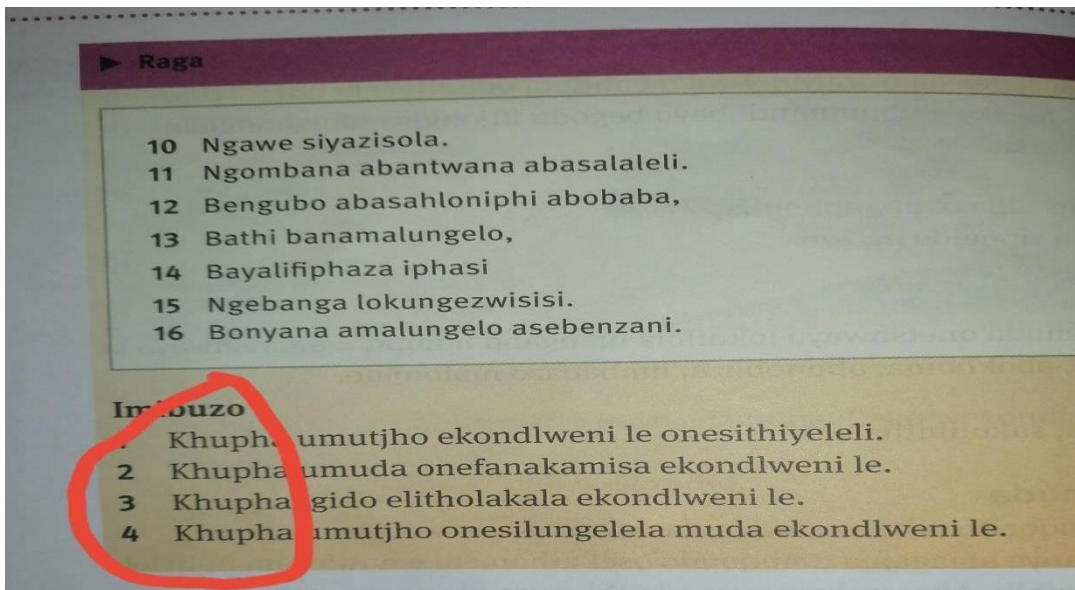


Figure 4.12: Examples of questions set for learners (*Via-Afrika: 42*)

The questions in this activity address only one cognitive level, which is level one “knowledge questions”. Hence, all the questions are related to the information explicitly stated in the poem (CAPS, 2011). For example, “khupha umutjho ekondlweni onesithiyeleleli” Identify the line in the poem that has caesura. All the questions require the learners to identify or name an element. On page 51, the majority of questions in Activity 4 are structured in such a way that below-average learners might struggle unless they are presented with a leading question and allowed to choose the correct answer, such as "Umndeni wakwaBongwe bewuregile/bewutlhaga" was the Bongwe family rich/poor.

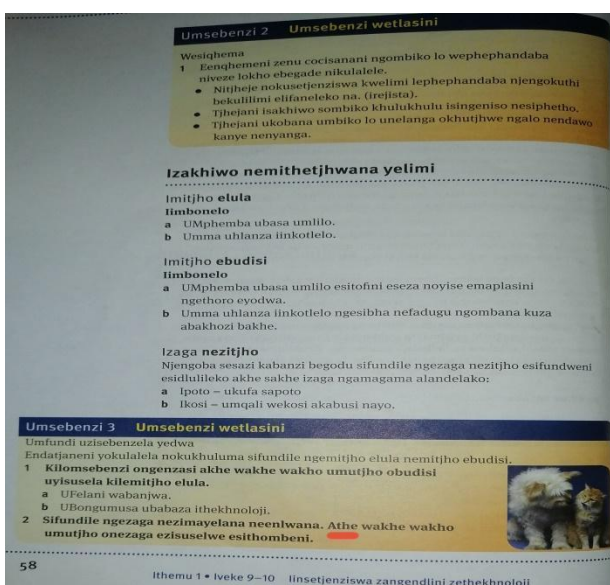


Figure 4.13: Photograph of cat and dog (*Via-Afrika* textbook: 58)

The Activity 2 questions on page 58 contain only higher-order questions. Even though learners are required to work in groups, below-average learners will be unable to engage in this activity. In this exercise, learners are expected to assess the language employed in the newspaper report and examine the structure of a newspaper report critically. Even in Activity 3 on the same page, learners are required to work individually and build complicated sentences based on the simple sentences provided as well as their own proverbs based on the picture of a cat and a dog (Figure 4.13). Most of the questions compiled do not accommodate learners with a language barrier. For instance, Question 2 states: Sifundile ngezaga nezimayelana neenlwana. Akhe wakhe wakho umutjho onezaga ezisuselwa esithombeni (In the past, we have learned about proverbs, even those involving animals. Construct your own sentence that includes a proverb by looking at the picture above). On the very same question, a typing error is evident: “athe” is used instead of “akhe”.

4.5.2 *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*

This book is pertinent to the learning objectives of the learners since it clearly explains the objectives at the beginning of each chapter. This allows learners to know what is expected of them and what they will have accomplished by the end of each chapter. The book that offers learners the learning objectives is highly engaging, allows learners to know the type of knowledge they will acquire by attempting that particular chapter, and increases learners' chances of learning.

This book's level of questioning, as evidenced by the exercises on pages 6, 27, 78, and 109, is suitable for all types of learners, including below-average, average, and above-average learners. It contains low-order, high-order, and intermediate-order questions so all cognitive levels are addressed. Therefore, all learners have a good chance of answering the questions correctly. On page 78, Exercise 1 instructs learners to create sentences based on the given idioms to demonstrate their understanding of those idioms.

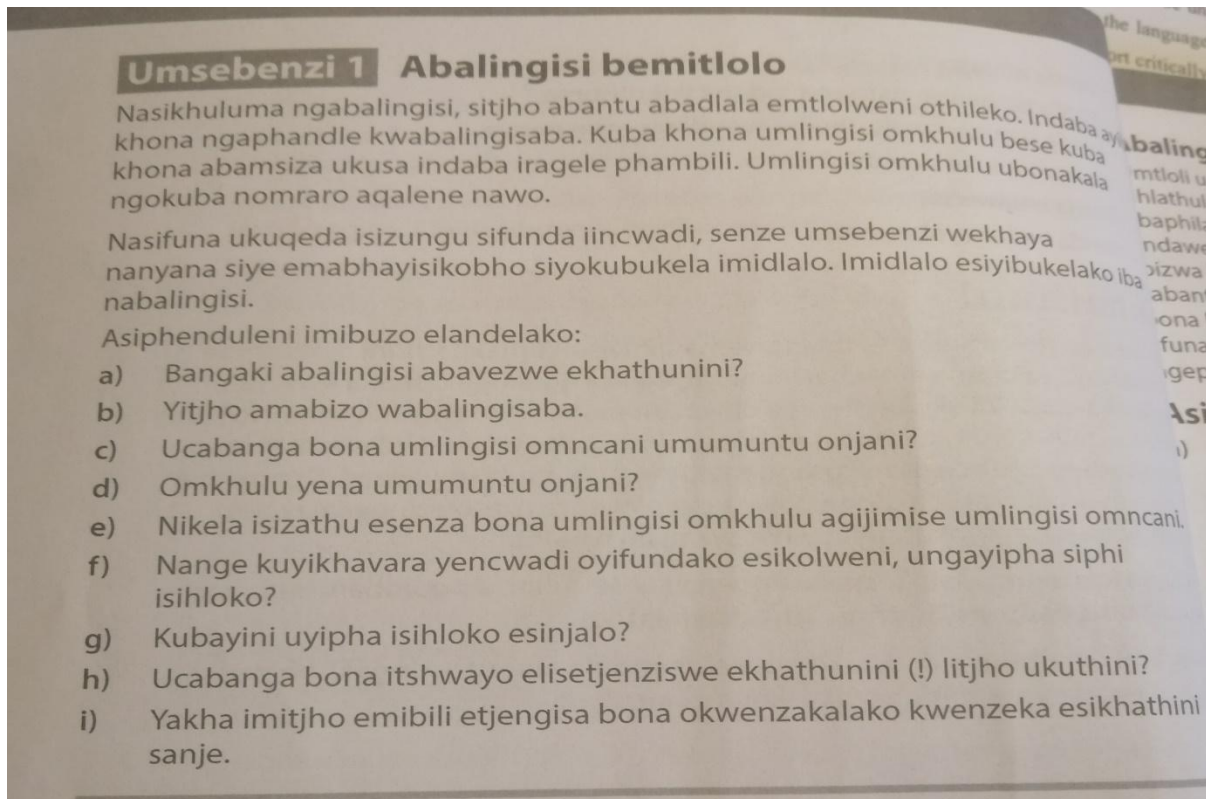


Figure 4.14: Activity displaying the cognitive levels (*Nasi-Ke Isikhethu: 6*)

The questions on page 6 are simple and straightforward by necessitating a single-word response for each. Learners are required to provide the cartoon's heading based on what they observe in the picture. Every learner may answer this question correctly. There are several higher-level questions that can be attempted only by middle and above-average learners, such as "explain the reason why the punctuation mark was used in the cartoon". On page 27, learners are asked to write a friendly letter to their friends, but there is no example of a friendly letter as the formal letter appears on the following page. This may lead to learners copying the structure of the formal letter and using it as a friendly letter.

Regarding formal assessment, the book offers only the semi-annual examination which can be found on pages 113 to 119. The book lacks a good balance between formal and informal assessments. In my experience from 8 years of teaching below-average learners, these learners do not know the structure of any letter; they cannot write the content, even if you teach them. Idioms can be challenging for all types of learners because they are often misunderstood. Take the idiom "Ukudobha phasi" for example; most learners mistakenly will interpret it as meaning "to pick up something that was thrown down by a person", even though it refers to the concept of poverty. According to Bloom's taxonomy, there are very

few low-order questions that require learners' knowledge; the majority of questions are difficult to evaluate and appreciate critically. They only accommodate above-average learners who do not constitute the majority of the class. Learners of average and below-average ability will be left behind. This discourages learners from noting their home or school activities. Most ordinary and below-average learners do not prefer discussion questions that require them to express their views (Levin, Libman & Amiad, 1980).

According to Mahajan and Singh (2017), learning outcomes can be used to assist in the creation of assessments and evaluations, to plan assessments in a clear and understandable way, and to change a course's direction midstream. When learners are responsible for achieving particular learning outcomes, they are more likely to conduct independent research and come to class prepared. Analysing the learning outcomes can help to establish whether the unit was successful. The marking system used while developing test questions is heavily influenced by learning outcomes.

4.6 Exercises and activities

The textbook *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* was evaluated based on eight questions about exercises and activities (see Table 4.2) according to the textbook evaluation criteria used for this study. Riet (2013) states that teachers rely on the curriculum work plan, as stated in the CAPS policy, for direction in planning and presenting their teaching in the classroom. This plan specifies the content to be taught per grade, the level at which the learners should acquire it, as well as the order and pace at which it should be presented. As a result, textbooks should help teachers prepare, assign assignments, and assess learners.

4.6.1 *Via-Afrika*

Via-Afrika isolates language tasks from the other skills and presents them in their own section. Activities and exercises are unrelated to any text previously read by the learners. The book shows an excellent balance between formal and informal assessment. Although it does not display other tasks such as oral presentations or written assignments, the book provides formal assessments for each term, such as the Term 1 formal assessment on pages 66 to 67 and a half-yearly examination on pages 116 to 117 that is part of the formal assessment for the second term. Pages 174 to 175 provide Term 3 formal assessments and on pages 212 to 218 final tests comprising the final assessment for the fourth term are provided.

Isolating the language structure and convention topic from other topics can cause confusion and lead learners to believe that language structure and convention are separate concepts. Ideally, linking it to other topics can bring clarity to learners and make them aware that language structure and convention should be featured in every text as stated in the CAPS document. The book provides examples of formal assessment per term, which is an excellent way for learners to prepare and understand what is expected of them when being assessed. This can lead to beneficial outcomes as both teachers and learners know what to expect in terms of formal assessment.

The CAPS document (2011) states that the material used by learners should construct activities for the two-week cycle that are meaningful to learners and relevant to the texts they are studying. As learners move from seventh to ninth grade, more activities of this type should be implemented. As they are interconnected, all language skills and structures should be incorporated into instruction and taught contextually. However, formal training in language structures and conventions is assigned a specific amount of time.

4.6.2 *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*

The exercises in the book are of high quality and certainly challenge and excite learners to keep them interested in their schoolwork. However, the layout of some of the activities could lead to misunderstanding and demotivate both learners and teachers, particularly inexperienced teachers. The book allows learners to work independently most of the time, which is beneficial because it develops independence; nevertheless, a lack of pair and group work may cause learners to struggle with connecting or interacting with one another.

There is a decent description of improved grammar, but not enough of newly introduced grammar as the majority of the book's content is repetitive. Revision is beneficial to language learning, but learners need to be exposed to new material in order to advance their language learning skills. According to the CAPS (2011), content from the 'Language Structures and Conventions' column will automatically be given attention while engaging with the texts and during the time allotted for listening, speaking, reading, and presenting as it is related to the types of texts required for those skills. Furthermore, learners will utilise and read texts written in the simple past tense naturally when telling a tale, for example. However, it is also vital to construct activities that emphasise specific language patterns in context.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the results and instructions for analysing the data generated by each methodology. The significance of the key results was explained along with the degree to which the research questions are addressed. The data was obtained using the textbook evaluation checklist presented in Chapter 3 and additional findings are discussed by using the checklist to answer the research questions. However, it was discovered that the two Grade 9 textbooks used in the KwaMhlanga South West circuit do not provide equitable learning opportunities. In the next chapter, I discuss the findings and recommendations of this research.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

In Chapter 1, I provided an overview of the literature and the intended research process. In Chapter 2, I give insight into the literature pertinent to my research. Chapter 3 discusses my interpretivist research strategy, including the methodological paradigm, study design, data collection methods, data analysis, quality standards, and ethical considerations. This chapter combines the theoretical literature from Chapter 2 with the empirical findings from Chapter 4. The themes that emerged from the data obtained using the EFL textbook evaluation checklist guided my presentation of the findings. The themes emerged from the collected data after my evaluation while taking notes. This study's primary objective was to evaluate the learning opportunities provided by contemporary isiNdebele textbooks.

I shall elaborate on the limitations, recommendations, and my own qualitative interpretation of the findings. The study's direction and focus were determined by the following research question: How do isiNdebele Home Language textbooks provide learning opportunities as envisioned in the official CAPS curriculum?

Three subordinate questions were posed in order to address the main question. These questions guided my research:

1. How do the sampled textbooks facilitate the language learning skills as stated in the CAPS document?
2. How do the textbooks make real-life situations relatable to its given examples?
3. To what extent are the questions in the textbooks adhering to the cognitive levels required by CAPS document?

The following table was taken from the study of De Wet (2018) and adapted to meet my study's needs. It serves as a summary of the study's findings, tabulated according to themes, and it details recommendations for each textbook analysed.

Table 5.1: Summary of findings and recommendations

	Findings	Evaluation from a literary perspective	Recommendations
Structure and layout of the units	<i>Nasi-Ke isikhethu</i> has a few line spacing errors, it also appears dull and lacks colour. The structure and layout of both textbooks (<i>Nasi-ke isikhethu</i> & <i>Via Afrika</i>), however, are clear and easily navigable.	When considering the acquisition of isiNdebele as a native language, it is crucial to carefully choose content that is intentional and clear in order to minimise any potential confusion. and ambiguity.	The content of the textbooks should be proofread to avoid errors and there should be learning outcomes outlined before the units, as that would be beneficial to learners.
Indication of levels of questioning	Both books concentrate on higher-level questions but make no reference to levels. <i>Via-Afrika</i> only shows levels on the formative assessments.	In both formal and informal assessments, learners should be aware continually of the level they are working at.	The textbooks should prioritise levels, with questions beginning at the lowest levels and scaffolding up to higher tiers.
Learning objectives	In the <i>Via-Afrika</i> series, learning objectives are not always stated clearly. Every unit in the <i>Nasi-ke isikhethu</i> textbook starts with the unit's learning objectives.	When dealing with home language speakers, stating learning objectives at the start of each unit is sufficient; however, when instructing a second language	Instead of listing the learning objectives at the outset of each unit, they should be dispersed throughout the unit.

		<p>speaker, it might be more useful to declare the learning objectives at the start of each exercise.</p>	
Visual aids	<p><i>Nasi-Ke Isikhethu</i> has fewer images and illustrations than <i>Via-Afrika</i>. However, the visual aids of <i>Via-Afrika</i> are not always pertinent to the subject matter or appropriate for the instructional context.</p>	<p>The use of visual aids should not lose the context of the intended message to be received by learners. They should facilitate the comprehension of the material.</p>	<p><i>Nasi-Ke isikhethu</i> should incorporate more visual aids. <i>Via-Afrika</i> should incorporate more effective and specific visuals such as identifiable photographs/ detailed figures.</p>

5.2. How do isiNdebele textbooks provide opportunities to learn as envisioned in the CAPS curriculum?

The CAPS document senior phase Grade 7 to 9 on page 6 outlines how much time should be allocated to IsiNdebele Home Language lessons. The following table details how much time should be allocated to lessons.

Table 5.2: Instructional time in the Senior Phase

ISINDEBELE ILIMI LEKHAYA AMAGREYIDI 7- 9	
1.4.3 IsiGaba esiPhakamileko	
(a) Isikhathi sokufundisa esiGabeni-esiPhakamileko sitjengisiwe ngenzasi:	
ISIFUNDO	AMA-IRI
ILimi leKhaya	5
ILimi lokuThoma lokwEngeza	4
IimBalo	4, 5
ISayensi yeMvelo	3
ISayensi yokuHlalisana	3
ITheknoloji	2
ISayensi yezomNotho nokuPhatha	2
UkuziJayeza zePilo	2
UbuKghwari namaSiko	2
INANI	27, 5

According to Riet (2013), the CAPS document encourages teachers to organise their lessons in accordance with the aforementioned teaching plan, which allocates five hours per week to home language lessons. Teachers should ensure that each phase and grade is indeed fully represented. Also, the sequence of lessons should assist learners to acquire skills and they knowledge that they should according to the pacing as reflected and described in the teaching plan above.

The pace and order of the lessons also reduce teachers' ad hoc instruction and their haphazard presentation of the subject matter. Although the policy does not specify a specific order in which the topics should be taught, it should be noted that a reading lesson should come before a discussion session and that a listening and speaking lesson should build on a reading lesson. As the CAPS document (2011:8) asserts, “it is through language that cultural diversity and social relations are expressed and constructed, and it is through language that such constructions can be altered, broadened and refined”.

According to the Mestry and Ndhlovu (2014) teachers have a responsibility to ensure that learning material is chosen, organised, and progressed in a way that is considerate of the learners' and the subject's various demands. The CAPS curriculum intends to produce learners who can: determine problems, use critical and creative thinking to solve them, and make decisions; work well both independently and in teams; plan and manage their time and activities responsibly and effectively; collect, analyse, organise, and critically evaluate

information; communicate effectively using visual, symbolic, and/or language skills in various modes; and use technology effectively. The *Via-Afrika* textbook was successful in this regard. For instance, it is evident in Figure 2, 3, and 7, respectively, in the fourth chapter where the textbook considers the aforementioned intentions of the CAPS document. However, *Nasi-ke isikhethu* failed to provide the learners with the knowledge required by the CAPS document as stated above. For instance, figure 4.9 is a poem which is repeated, but shows different structures, and on page 75 the lines of the poem are numbered but on page 107 they are not numbered, but on page 107, they are not numbered, and on both pages, the author's name is not written.

The table below illustrates how each book presents learning opportunities and what the CAPS document says about learners' prior knowledge in relation to their new knowledge, as well as language learning skills and activities that relate to the learners real-life situations.

Table 5.3: Learning opportunities presented by each textbook, *Nasi-ke isikhethu* & *Via-Afrika*

	Via-Afrika	Nasi-ke Isikhethu	CAPS document
Learners' prior knowledge vs. new knowledge	Shows no link between learners' prior knowledge and the new knowledge. Hence, each topic is focused on knowledge and new concepts.	The textbook demonstrates how prior knowledge of the learners is related to the new knowledge, yet the subheadings and headers are arranged poorly.	According to the CAPS, linking new information with prior knowledge will help learners to understand the concepts better.
Language learning skills	This book effectively presents writing and presenting, as it provides comprehensive definitions of each	The book's demonstration of reading and viewing abilities is insufficient as it fails to offer a precise delineation of the novel. Language structure and	It is stated that each of the four learning skills should be covered within a two-week cycle. Additionally, language structure and

	writing genre and examples. Language structure and conventions are treated separately.	conventions are featured successfully across all the other learning skills.	conventions should be incorporated into all four language skills.
Real-life situations	The visual appearance of the book successfully makes learners' learning experiences more applicable to their daily lives. For instance, there are activities that are about teenagers and substance abuse, with the aid of pictures. The images provided are contemporary and pertinent for learners in Grade 9.	Even though the book needs to improve on visuals, this book contains more exercises that promote learning through the learners' real-life experiences.	The CAPS strives to ensure that learners acquire knowledge and skills and use them in ways that are relevant to their own lives. In this way, the curriculum fosters knowledge while taking global imperatives into consideration.

5.2.1 Evaluation

By navigating my way through the textbooks and evaluating the visuals, I discovered that the two books are distinct in terms of visuals displayed. *Via-Afrika* contains numerous photographs and cartoons, whereas *Nasi-ke Isikhethu* contains fewer images and seems wordier. In addition, *Nasi-ke Isikhethu* is printed in black and white and the illustrations are dreary and unattractive. Chen (2017) suggests that visual representation can influence the learning process. Furthermore, illustrations in textbooks might improve learners' imaginative abilities because they frequently are viewed before the text. Atem and Gelişli (2022) further

state that pictures in textbooks can improve learners' creative thinking. Atem and Gelişli (2022) also confirm that, among the factors that determine the quality of textbooks, colour is particularly significant in primary school textbooks.

Via-Afrika starts each unit with a caption and a very colourful picture. Nevertheless, the introduction to each new unit is frequently unrelated to and inappropriate for the subject matter presented. In addition, the book does not describe the learning objectives for learners. In advanced classes, the learning objective may not serve as the primary guide for learners (Wen-Cheng, Chien-Hung & Chung-Chieh, 2011). However, in undeveloped classrooms where language obstacles frequently restrict academic development, the learning outcomes are substantially more important (Swanepoel, 2010; Wen-Cheng, 2010; Rezat, 2010). Even if the photographs and subtitles in *Nasi-ke Isikhethu* are dreary and unattractive, they are related to the unit's subject matter. The textbook lacks photographs and illustrations, and it appears to be poorly proofread as some pages contain spacing errors. Although the headings and subheadings are bolded and apparent, the book contains much data that is without headings or subheadings, which results in a disorganised appearance. According to Mahmood (2009), textbooks should complement and correspond to the objectives and elements of the curriculum. The objectives, content, learning objectives, and assessment of the curriculum should be reflected in good textbooks.

Numerous activities and examples that are applicable to learners' daily lives are provided in the textbook *Via-Afrika*. Excellent textbooks should encourage outside-of-classroom learning. Textbooks should be dynamic, offer lessons that excite learners' interests, and involve their minds actively in the learning process (Mahmood, 2009). This textbook's level of questioning is not appropriate for all types of learners. The questions in the activities are too challenging for learners who are below average. Although certain exercises need learners to interact in groups, below-average learners will not be able to participate in this activity because of the level of complexity as shown on page 51, Activity 4. The activity does not allow below-average learners to participate because many questions are structured in a high-order manner and there are no leading questions from which learners can select the correct answer from the two provided.

The type of activities utilised should be suitable for the learner's age and developmental stage. These activities should be developed to encompass the subject's content and contain a range of tasks aimed at achieving the goals of the subject (CAPS document, 2011).

5.2.2. Recommendations

The layout of the textbook *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* makes navigation difficult because the information is not well organised but rather scattered. In addition, the fact that the textbook instructs learners to refer to the cartoon on page 3 despite the fact that there is no cartoon on that page demonstrates that the book is disorganised and the information is scattered throughout. If the topics are regrouped so all units follow each other coherently, learners will be more comfortable in using this textbook on their own, without the guidance and assistance of the teacher.

Vygotsky's social constructivism theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process. In this context, regrouping topics in a coherent manner in a textbook can enhance the learners' ability to make sense of the material independently. By organizing the information in a way that builds on their prior knowledge and understanding, learners can scaffold their own learning and gradually develop a deeper understanding of the content. This aligns with Vygotsky's belief that learners can gradually internalize new knowledge and skills through social interactions and guidance, eventually becoming more independent in their learning (Hay, 2015).

This would make the textbook a more valuable resource at home when the teacher is not there to help. Additionally, *Via-Afrika* is well structured but delivers less relevant information based on the captions at the beginning of each study unit. Redesigning the captions and pictures to match the content will improve the book and make it more useful for learners, particularly Grade 9 learners. Learners can organise information with the help of outlines, headings with signals, pointer words, structured illustrations, and text structures that make sense (Sulaiman & Fadzil, 2013).

Even though *Via-Afrika* provides samples of how question papers are set, there is room for improvement. The questions in the examples must be revisited in order to alter the grades per question because they are no longer relevant to the CAPS document. In addition, the *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* textbook lacks adequate information for exam preparation; examples of how question papers are set must be included so teachers can refer to them and learners can know what to expect on their exam. As textbooks are still one of the most commonly used learning support materials (Swanepoel, 2010), they should be designed in a way that will assist learners to prepare for their examination (Rahmawati, 2018).

Both textbooks should be developed so all types of learners have an equal opportunity to participate in class and homework activities. Both textbooks portray that below-average learners will not be able to participate in the majority of activities because they are too difficult. This should be corrected because these learners will lose confidence and lose interest in other activities as well, which will create problems for teachers. If these learners do not want to participate, they will disrupt the class (Mapepa & Magano, 2018)

Crawford (2003) suggests that levels be created and applied consistently across all textbooks. To facilitate and ensure advancement, questions should be scaffolded according to the levels and sorted from low to high. The effectiveness of the textbook is increased and becomes a more valuable resource, not only in the classroom but also at home, when levels and learning objectives are merged.

5.3. How do the sampled textbooks facilitate the language learning skills as stated by the CAPS document?

According to the CAPS document (2011), learners should practise the following four skills over the course of two weeks: reading and viewing, listening and speaking, language structure and convention, and writing and presenting. Additionally, it is crucial that textbooks used specifically for teaching and learning of a particular language effectively address these skills to give students more opportunities to learn.

To ensure high-quality education, it is essential, according to Riet (2013), to choose and execute LTSM that enables learners to acquire the necessary

skills and information as described in the curriculum.

5.3.1 Evaluation

Reading and viewing

Reading and viewing are mentioned by the CAPS document (2011) as the most important skills for all kinds of learning and for full participation in society and the workplace. Moreover, the ability to read and comprehend a variety of literary and non-literary texts, including visual texts, is developed in learners. The aim, audience, and context of texts are reflected in genre and register (CAPS document, 2011). The textbook *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* fails to give learners opportunities to learn, or rather to explore, the skill of reading and viewing because it conflates the definitions of two genres by referring to a novel as a short story. This

could cause misconceptions and could make it difficult for learners to distinguish between the two genres. Some of the reading and viewing genres, including drama, visual texts, cartoons, and poetry, are highlighted in the textbook. Additionally, the textbook does an outstanding task of demonstrating and covering practically all of the genres in the first chapter. The CAPS document (2011) further stipulates that language structures assist learners to grasp how texts are structured, and learners' comprehension of language structures, conventions, and their personal life events impact their comprehension and interpretation of written and visual information. Learners must use pre-reading techniques like skimming and scanning text features, book sections, and the organisation of paragraphs and texts, and learn how these techniques contribute to meaning. It is important to help learners learn language by having them read a range of books. However, by the time learners reach this stage of their learning, many of these tasks should require little individual emphasis because they have already been a part of their progress through earlier stages (CAPS document, 2011).

Listening and speaking

According to the CAPS document (2011), listening and speaking are the most important ways to learn in every subject. Learners can collect and organise information, build knowledge, solve problems, and share ideas and views by using effective listening and speaking skills. According to the CAPS document (2011), listening and speaking are the most important parts of learning for everyone. Speaking activities in each chapter use the same genre of dialogues or interviews. Moreover, I have noted that both textbooks miss some listening activities or give less emphasis to them. The sections for viewing and reading should encompass the vast majority of the tasks organised under listening and speaking. Furthermore, the CAPS document (2011) also highlights that critical listening skills assist learners in determining what values and attitudes are being shown in a text and questioning biased or deceptive language. All of these skills in oral conversation are taught by using language structures in an appropriate manner. In addition, the acquisition of language structure should facilitate effective communication and correspond to the effective uses of language in various social contexts, such as articulating feelings and ideas, introducing others, and providing directions and instructions (CAPS document, 2011).

Writing and presenting

According to the CAPS document (2011), learners can build and express thoughts and concepts coherently through writing and presenting. Learners who frequently write across a

range of situations, tasks, and topic areas are better equipped to communicate both effectively and artistically. Additionally, the goal is to create capable and adaptable writers who use their abilities to create and convey suitable textual, visual, and multimedia writings for a range of objectives. Learners will be able to create coherent and cohesive texts if they are familiar with language structures and conventions. Due to the unclear descriptions of the written texts, particularly the poster which is described on page 9 and shown on pages 12 to 13, *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* is unable to exhibit these talents. There are additional exercises that are considered to encourage learners to create their own cartoons. The *Via-Afrika* textbook successfully demonstrates these skills because it begins with an in-depth description of the writing process, equips learners with the significance of each written genre, and shows examples so learners are able to observe the conventions and format of that specific type of writing text. It also gives learners the ability to construct their own version of a text.

Language structure and conventions

As previously stated, the CAPS document recommends that learners have access to the four language learning skills every two weeks in order to promote effective language learning. The CAPS document also states that language structure and convention should be taught together with the other three skills. The textbook titled *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* attempts to combine this skill with the other three. However, the structure or manner in which it is done is inadequate. The headings are misleading for learners because they do not correspond to the content as they should. For example, on page 18, learners are supposed to acquire punctuation signs and how to utilise them when writing under the heading of speaking and listening. Although the textbook's structure for teaching language acquisition skills is not effectively structured, the book covers all three competencies as indicated in the CAPS document.

The textbook *Via-Afrika* shows no link between learners' previous knowledge and the new knowledge that learners should acquire. This particular gap may cause misunderstanding and deprive learners of the opportunity to learn. The book claims that learners learned nouns in the prior unit, despite the fact that the preceding unit primarily addressed verb tenses. *Via-Afrika* separates language exercises from the other skills and gives them their own section. Language structure and convention should be used in every text as stated in the CAPS document. However, if the topic is isolated from other topics, it can cause confusion and

cause learners to believe that they are two distinct concepts. On the other hand, if the skill is linked to other skills, it can help learners to understand it better.

5.3.2. Recommendations

With regards to language learning techniques, both textbooks require reorganisation. Therefore, it appears that much of the CAPS document's standards were disregarded when these books were created. Since IsiNdebele is still underdeveloped and is the least spoken language in South Africa, as I have already indicated, textbooks also should contribute to the development of the language. A textbook that prevents learners from acquiring this language could lower the language's status (Benavot, 2011). Additionally, to inspire learners to be more creative, more oral activities need to be provided (Riet, 2013).

5.4 How do the sampled textbooks make real-life situations relatable to its given examples?

The second secondary research question states: How does the textbook make real life situations relatable to its given examples? According to Theall (2004), when educators relate course material to real-world scenarios, they acknowledge the potential of prior experience to enhance learning and instruct learners to make connections between new information and their own life experiences.

The *Via-Afrika* textbook is the most pertinent one to display instances that learners may relate to because of its vivid nature and abundance of visuals. When learners can connect the lesson to their everyday experiences, they learn more successfully. Instead of sticking to the topic exclusively and forbidding learners from thinking outside of the box, the book uses numerous examples that learners can relate to. The book provides an excellent illustration of an advertisement which learners can relate to easily because it is for a well-known retailer in a prominent location. *Nasi-ke Isikhethu* appears to contain more exercises that relate to the learners' daily lives. For example, the textbook has a picture of people travelling in a train (the Gautrain) and the title that introduces the unit says "*Zokuvakatjha*" which means "travel and tourism". This is something that the learners are exposed to on a daily basis. If they do not do it with their parents, it is something they see on their televisions almost every day. The table below outlines the differences noted between the two textbooks, *Via-Afrika* and *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*.

Table 5.4: Differences between *Via Afrika* textbook and *Nasi-ke isikhethu* textbook

The differences noted between the two textbooks <i>Via Afrika</i> and <i>Nasi-ke Isikhethu</i>	
Via-Afrika IsiNdebele iLimi lekhaya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No link between learners' previous knowledge and the new knowledge that learners should acquire. ● The book claims that learners learned nouns in the previous unit, despite the fact that the preceding unit primarily addresses verb tenses. ● It separates language exercises from the other skills and gives them their own section. ● Pertinent to display instances that learners may relate to because of its vivid nature and abundance of visuals.
Nasi-Ke Isikhethu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It attempts to combine all language learning skills in all lessons. ● The headings are misleading for learners because they do not correspond to the content as they should. ● The book covers all three competencies as indicated in the CAPS document. ● Contains more exercises that relate to the learners' daily lives.

5.4.1 Evaluation

Both textbooks display a disparity. Some activities only display high-order questions, while others only display an intermediate-order question, which prevents below-average learners from participating. Other activities do not appear to be more difficult for learners who are above average. This could result in learners losing interest in those activities. Below-average students may be less motivated and refuse to participate in activities for which they know they will not receive high grades.

Nasi-Ke Isikhethu does not promote learner interaction because it contains fewer activities that require learners to interact with one another and the majority of its activities require learners to work independently. This book lacks a balance between formal and informal activities, and learners are only exposed to one type of formal assessment, which leaves them unprepared for the other varieties. For instance, the textbook only shows a June examination sample (papers 1 to 4) on pages 113 to 119; subsequent terms' assessments, including the final exam example, are not shown. This book contains an adequate summary of newly introduced and improved grammar. The book's tasks are of a good calibre and definitely can challenge and thrill learners to keep them engaged in their academic work. The structured format of several of the exercises could cause misunderstandings and demotivate both learners and teachers, especially inexperienced or new teachers. The book does not devote enough time to practising individual sound generation and recognition, which hinders language competency development. In addition, there is a solid discussion of improved grammar but not enough of developed and standardised grammar. Learners benefit from revision but they also need to be exposed to new information to enhance their abilities.

5.4.2. Recommendations

Both textbooks appear to provide examples that pertain to learners' real-life situations. However, *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* should improve its visuals so learners can recognise and quickly relate the content to their everyday lives. The examples and exercises in the textbook can be modified to be more pertinent to the comprehension of the learners' reality without altering the curriculum content.

5.5. General recommendations

Both textbooks need to be updated and redesigned to accommodate learners of various cognitive abilities and to accommodate different types of learners. To make advancement conceivable and attainable, questions should be scaffolded according to the levels and sorted from low to high. The usefulness of the textbook is increased when levels and learning objectives are merged to make it a more valuable resource in the classroom and at home (Crawford, 2003; Johansson, 2006). Constant reminders of what is required when instructions are provided may be helpful, not only for completing the current exercises but also for exam preparation. Ideally, the textbooks should be appropriate for use at home even if there is no teacher present. Since there are no exercises in this book that are appropriate for pair or group work, *Nasi-Ke Isikhethu* should modify the exercises for each chapter. This book's flaw is

that the test questions for the final exam are not attached. It is ideal for the writers to include the examples of all formal assessments and the questions should provide both multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions in the concrete review portions of the form.

On the basis of the study's findings, there are some recommendations that can be made. Firstly, teachers can use the results of the study as evidence that there are aspects of the "Primary IsiNdebele Textbook" that could be improved. Secondly, the next edition of the book could be improved by the authors. Finally, future researchers could perform a similar study on other IsiNdebele textbooks.

5.6 Conclusion

This study was conducted by analysing and evaluating two Grade 9 Home Language textbooks: *Via-Afrika* and *Nasi-ke Isikhethu*. Its main objective was to evaluate the educational opportunities offered by textbooks for isiNdebele Home Language in Grade 9. The study was motivated by the realisation that, since the majority of learners in the village where I currently teach have been exposed to a variety of languages, they struggle with isiNdebele as their first language. As a result, they need learning resources that will support them and textbooks are readily available to them.

I am confident that this dissertation will contribute to the corpus of knowledge on mother tongue textbooks and isiNdebele education. In addition, I believe it will pave the way for future research on textbooks of other African languages. I hope it also will assist teachers in selecting relevant textbooks for their learners and contribute to the development of isiNdebele as one of South Africa's eleven official languages.

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