

5 Research design and methodology

5.1 *Background to the research project*

5.1.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the empirical portion of the research which aims to investigate the practical issues identified as the core problem areas for investigation in this study.

The investigation was conducted in two stages. The first phase of the study involved a survey to explore the perspectives and actions of publishers and legal deposit libraries with regard to legal deposit, to determine how these factors could influence successfully implementing legal deposit in South Africa. Publishers and libraries, as was shown in the previous chapter, are the two main role players in the legal deposit system of a country. Publishers must feel convinced of the need for and importance of legal deposit if they are to willingly submit their publications as required by legislation. Legal depositories, having been designated to preserve the published heritage of a nation, have to have effective systems in place to be able to efficiently manage and execute their functions, and the people working with legal deposit have to be knowledgeable, skilled and dedicated to the cause.

The second phase of the study followed on the first. This part of the project consisted of a number of feasibility studies conducted with the aim of investigating means of obtaining figures that reflect the state of compliance with legal deposit in South Africa. Although this formed only a small segment of the overall research, it fulfilled the need for obtaining

actual compliance data that would supplement the information produced by the surveys.

The chapter commences with background information about the general research approaches and the methods that were applied. This is followed by in-depth expositions of the instruments used for the implementation of each phase of the study, the sampling procedures applied and the processes followed for data collection and analysis. Any research regarded as meaningful has approaches and methods the quality of which are measured against reputable standards. With this in mind, an assessment/evaluation of the methods used for the two phases in the investigation, is also provided.

5.1.2 Research philosophy

The context in which we do research determines where we want to go with our research and what we want to achieve. As in everyday life, there are different worldviews and philosophies that influence our priorities and decisions concerning our research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002: 3; Neuman, 2006: 80). It is therefore important that a researcher is clear about the paradigm issues that guide and inform his/her research approach, as they are reflected in the methodologies applied in the research and help place the research into a broader context. (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002: 42; Guba & Lincoln, 1998: 195). Two of the most commonly used philosophical approaches in social science research are positivism and the interpretive approach.

Positivism is the oldest and the most widely used of these two approaches (Neuman, 2006: 81). There are many versions of positivism, but the central idea in this philosophy is that the social world can be explained

scientifically according to law and logic, that its features should be measured through objective methods and not subjectively through reflection, sensation or intuition (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002: 28; Neuman, 2006: 81). The latter, smaller, part of this research project, which focuses mainly on statistical measurements, follows the positivist tradition.

The main concern in the project, however, is with the interpretive approach. The interpretive tradition adopts a practical approach, and seeks to understand what meaning and significance the social world has for the people living in it (Neuman, 2006: 88; Procter, 1993: 7). There are several varieties of interpretive social science, one of which is the phenomenological (Neuman, 2006: 88). Phase one, the primary component of this project, follows a phenomenological approach. The researcher concentrates on discovering phenomena as they are consciously experienced and describes them as openly and with as much honesty as possible (Philosophies of social research, 2006). The main aim of phenomenological research, as is illustrated in the first phase of this study, is to interpret the interpretations that people have already made of their lives (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 5) and finding common themes to illustrate the meanings of these phenomena without any preconceived suppositions and notions (Philosophies of social research, 2006; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 16).

5.2 Research methodology

5.2.1 Research approaches

Although both quantitative and qualitative research can be concerned with the individual's point of view (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998: 10),

qualitative research emphasises the individual, is sensitive to context and uses a wide range of interpretive practices to get a better understanding of the subject or the person involved in an investigation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 4; Neuman, 2006: 151). Studying events independently of the understanding of the people involved in the research would not have been relevant for the first phase of this project where discovering the perceptions and feelings of the individual role players formed the core of the investigation. A qualitative research approach employing many elements of descriptive research provided descriptions of the mechanisms and relationships involved in the process of legal deposit and rendered fairly accurate profiles of the groups and phenomena investigated (Neuman, 2006: 35). Some elements of an explanatory research nature, which provided knowledge about processes underlying the behaviour of the participants in the study, were also present, allowing different issues or topics to be linked (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 17; Neuman, 2006: 35). This interpretive use of a combination of research approaches is not unusual in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 5; Padgett, 2004: 297). In this study, this approach was expected to provide an opportunity for open-mindedness, and for taking advantage of the serendipitous discovery of new issues (Padgett, 2004: 297), which would help in gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomena to be studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 5).

In the second phase of the study a conceptual shift took place, moving away from a focus on the role players in legal deposit, to quantitative measurements and data concerning the products of legal deposit, the publications. This part of the investigation clearly indicated an exploratory research approach. Exploratory research is valuable when investigating an area on which little information is available, for gathering quantitative data that is not bound to specific theories, and when a researcher plans to study new areas of or test new methods for application

(Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 30; Neuman, 2006: 34), as was anticipated for this study. Although the results of exploratory research by themselves are not normally useful for decision-making, it was foreseen that they would serve as a means of determining the feasibility of proceeding with some of the areas of research undertaken in this project, and provide a sense of direction for possible future applications (Neumann, 2006: 33).

5.2.2 Research methods

In many research projects, it may be advantageous to use multiple methods to address a research problem (Brewer & Hunter, 1989: 82). This conventional multi-method approach generally generates multiple data sets of the same problem which can then be cross-validated (Baker, 1994: 284). In this study, such outcomes were not the primary reason for using more than one research procedure. The project comprises two definite phases of research and a multi-method approach was used to address the different questions posed in the two sections of the investigation (Brannen, 2005: 177). Each phase has a specific aim and addresses different concerns, and the methods used vary accordingly. Phase one of the investigation, which made up the greater part of the project, uses survey research in the form of qualitative interviewing to examine the subjective feelings and opinions of publishers and legal deposit institutions about legal deposit. In phase two feasibility studies, using secondary analyses of existing data, were undertaken to obtain information on the number of books delivered as legal deposit by publishers. The following sections expand upon the practical implementation of these two phases of the research project.

5.3 *Conducting phase one*

5.3.1 Introduction

The aim of the first part of the project was to investigate the attitudes, opinions and behaviours of both publishers and legal deposit libraries in South Africa that could affect the delivery of legal deposit material and the effective implementation of legal deposit legislation. In order to do this, information had to be obtained from representatives of the book-publishing sector and from the legal deposit libraries. Survey research was identified as the most fitting way in which to accomplish these goals.

5.3.2 Survey research

Survey research is a method of gathering data from a selected group of people, in their natural environment, for a specific purpose (ASA, 2005; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 139). It is acknowledged as an outstanding method of gathering information from a sample of individuals with the aim of learning about and understanding their ideas, knowledge, feelings, opinions, attitudes and self-reported behaviour (Fontana & Frey, 2005: 698; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 140; Neumann, 2006: 43).

5.3.2.1 *Choice of the survey instrument*

The term “survey” refers to both interviews and written questionnaires, and data collection can be administered by mail, telephone or in-person (ASA, 2005; Fontana & Frey, 2005: 698; Trochim, 2006). Not one of these methods is regarded as the “best” or “better” method as each has its strengths and weaknesses. Choosing and developing the survey instrument depends on what the research problem is, and what research

questions need to be addressed in the research (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 4; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 141). However, a number of elements make face-to-face interviewing a suitable method for specific research needs (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 46; Trochim, 2006):

- Response bias is usually low as the rate of cooperation is basically equal for all types of respondents.
- High response rates are likely; one of the reasons may be that advance contact can be made which to an extent 'legitimises' the interview.
- The data is collected personally by an interviewer, which gives more control over the response situation.
- Rapport is better and the quality of responses is generally regarded as very good because the respondents get to see the person they are talking to and the study can be explained in person.
- Questions can be more complex as interviewer and respondent are in the same location and face-to-face methods, allowing for a more relaxed atmosphere and tempo of questioning, are better for open-ended questions.
- It is a flexible method, visual presentations are possible, and both interviewers and interviewees have the opportunity to consult records.

The main disadvantages of using the method of face-to-face interviewing are the expense involved, usually because of travelling costs, and the amount of time needed to collect data. In addition, respondents often feel

hesitant to report personal types of behaviour, do not have time to formulate their answers, and may under certain circumstances be likely to provide answers that they regard as desired by the interviewer (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 46-47; Trochim, 2006).

Taking into consideration the positive attributes as well as the disadvantages and problems that could be encountered, face-to-face interviews with representatives of both the publishers and of the legal deposit institutions were regarded as the most feasible choice of survey for this study, in which fairly complex information (ASA, 2005) was to be collected. These personal interviews form the core of the research project and provide in-depth insight into the various important aspects of the research problem.

5.3.2.2 Defining the population

For the purposes of this study, the survey population was defined as the larger group or pool of cases about which information is to be obtained (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 113; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 143; Neumann, 2006: 224).

Two main groups made up the population targeted for the face-to-face interviews in the present project namely publishers and legal deposit institutions. Commercial publishers were chosen to represent publishers because as visible commercial organisations they would most probably be depositors of legal deposit material and would not only have knowledge of and be active within the legal deposit arena, but would as a result also be the ones with definitive opinions regarding the issues surrounding the subject.

All five of the legal deposit libraries were included in the survey. Despite the fact that they all form part of one legal deposit system, they are situated in different parts of the country, have different additional library responsibilities and (could) have different ideas and ways of approaching legal deposit in their diverse organisations.

5.3.2.3 *The sampling process*

Sampling is the process of systematically selecting the group of people or cases to be included in your research project and is a very important factor in survey research (Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 143; Trochim, 2006). A sample represents the population and is more manageable to work with than the whole population or pool of cases (Neumann, 2006: 219).

i. Constructing a sampling frame

A sampling frame is a list or a resource that contains and closely matches the elements of your defined population (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 116; Neuman, 2006: 225). It is, however, often difficult to get accurate listings of the theoretical population to be investigated, and in such cases the attainable list, i.e. the list of the accessible population from which a sample can be drawn, constitutes the sampling frame (Trochim, 2006). Obtaining a listing of the whole spectrum of the theoretical population for this study, namely all commercial publishers in South Africa, was not possible as such a comprehensive list/database does not exist.

As mentioned above, PASA is the official body representing the publishing industry in South Africa. Although not all commercial publishers are members of PASA, the publishers' directory compiled by PASA was identified as an attainable list of the accessible population, and therefore a suitable sampling frame for the purposes of this project. The publishers' directory is updated regularly and contains addresses of

publishers, contact details, publishing categories and the various imprints that are used by the publishers. Other valuable information such as number of titles published per year, size of staff etc. is also provided (PASA, 2002).

ii. Type of sampling employed

Two types of sampling methods exist, namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is the most frequently used method and involves the random selection of elements where each element has an equal probability of being selected. In non-probability sampling, elements are chosen arbitrarily with no way of estimating the probability of an element being included in the sample (Trochim, 2006). In cases where it may not be feasible to do random sampling, non-probability sampling is used (Neuman, 2006: 220; Trochim, 2006).

For this study, purposive sampling was used to accomplish the blanket selection of publishers for the survey. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling that is used for special situations (Fink, 1995: 17; Neuman, 2006: 222). When purposive sampling is implemented, the researcher has a specific purpose and often a specific predefined group in mind (Trochim, 2006). The researcher also often uses his/her knowledge or expertise about the group to select subjects to represent the population (Berg, 1998: 229). As the sampling frame, namely the PASA list, also contains other categories of member apart from publishers, such as consultants, importers and distributors, it was necessary to exclude these groups as populations for study. Purposive sampling was the obvious choice of sampling method, as the aim of the project was to identify a particular pre-determined type of publisher, namely commercial publishers as members of PASA, for in-depth investigation.

Quota sampling is another type of non-probability sampling used in this part of the project. In quota sampling, the population being studied is divided into subgroups or categories. An estimate is then made as to how many in each subgroup/category will be surveyed (Neuman, 2006: 221). PASA codes publishers according to turnover band structure indicating the size of publishers, on which PASA membership fees are based (Galloway *et al.*, 2005: 10). In 2002 when this particular study was initiated, about 10% of the publishers were classified as large publishers, 6% as medium-sized publishers, and the remaining 84% as small publishers (PASA, 2002). As the PASA list was used as the sampling frame, it was a logical decision to also use these categories of large, medium and small publishers for the sampling for the survey. A total of 20 publishers were interviewed. Of this sample the larger publishers represented 15% of the total, medium publishers 10%, and smaller publishers 75%.¹⁰ Satisfactory quota sampling procedures require that the sample be drawn to reflect the proportions of the overall population as accurately as possible (Fink, 1995: 19; Neuman, 2006: 221). From the numbers in this sample, it can be seen that the percentages do not fully reflect the proportions provided by PASA in 2002. Due to unforeseen last-minute cancellations of interviews especially by smaller publishers, this was unavoidable. However, in spite of these relatively small discrepancies, the percentages of the three population categories satisfyingly reflect the proportions of the original PASA population groupings as closely as was practically possible.

The ideal would have been to interview representatives of publishers in various diverse areas of South Africa. However, practical questions such as time, budget and other similar constraints (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 116)

¹⁰ The information on the coding of publishers according to their annual net turnover is not freely available and was provided by Dr Galloway, head of Publishing Studies at the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, on a confidential basis. Unfortunately therefore, a list of names of publishers that were interviewed cannot be supplied as an appendix to this study.

meant that only publishers located in the same cities as the five legal deposit institutions were selected for the survey. In this way the interviews with representatives of the two target population groups could be scheduled to coincide. No sampling was involved with regard to the legal deposit libraries, as all five libraries were automatically included in the survey.

5.3.3 Collection of data

Qualitative research may involve the use of a variety of data collection methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005: 3) and each of these has its own special concerns and procedures. For the purposes of this part of the project, qualitative semi-structured interviewing was identified as the most fitting method for collecting data from both the publishers and the libraries.

5.3.3.1 *Qualitative interviewing*

Qualitative interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which the 'hows' and 'whats' of people and their lives can be studied (Fontana & Frey, 2005: 698). It also manifests specific characteristics that make it an extremely versatile approach to doing research (Berg, 1998: 63-64; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 6, 17) for example:

- Qualitative interviewing requires intense listening and a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people are saying.
- Interviewers are interested in the understanding, knowledge and insight of the respondents.
- Qualitative interviewing provides maximum opportunity for good communication between the researcher and the respondent.

- Qualitative interviewing provides an effective method for understanding or learning how the participants come to attach certain meanings to phenomena and events.

All these features made qualitative interviewing an excellent choice of method for data collection for this particular project in which the subjective feelings and opinions of publishers and legal deposit institutions had to be determined.

Structured interviews in which respondents are asked set questions generally allow little room for variation of responses, whereas unstructured interviews follow an informal course and do not impose any pre-categorisation of questions that may limit the field of inquiry (Fontana & Frey, 2005: 702, 706). Semi-structured face-to-face interviews (see Appendices C and D) that allow for elements of both structured and unstructured interviewing were considered to be the most appropriate to use in this study for the following reasons:

- The accepted expectation that interviewees are more likely to express their viewpoints in a relatively openly designed interview situation than in a formal standardised type interview or questionnaire (Flick, 1998: 76; Patton, 2002: 21), was ideal for this specific situation where the “real” opinions and feelings of the participants were required.
- Although predetermined questions and topics are implemented and asked in a systematic and consistent order, semi-structured interview schedules allow interviewees the freedom to digress (Berg, 1998: 61), which was useful as it was anticipated that

participants would introduce their own issues during the interviews.

- Another valuable feature of semi-structured interviewing is that no attempt is made to anticipate replies in advance because a wide range of answers are acceptable and likely, and interviewees are expected to probe beyond the standard answers to standardised questions (Berg, 1998: 62).

5.3.3.2 *Constructing the survey instrument*

Constructing the survey instrument can be a time-consuming process (Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 142), but is a very important exercise as it facilitates the collection of credible data in a systematic and thoughtful way (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 42). A carefully constructed instrument keeps the interview focused on the research topic, plans what is going to be asked, who is going to be asked and why, and collects the information by means of standardised procedures from all participants in more or less the same manner (ASA, 2005; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 42). In preparing the design of the instrument, several principles are applicable and were followed for this study:

i. *Question types and question sequence*

The researcher must first of all determine what questions are to be asked, in what form, and in what order (Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 140; Czaja & Blair, 1996: 24). Broad categories that are relevant to the study may be outlined and a set of questions relevant to each of the categories developed. A prerequisite in designing the survey instrument is that it must adequately cover the area of information sought; and it must also be appropriate for the survey population (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 24).

For the interviews with representatives of the various publishers (see Appendix C), the initial part of the interview schedule consisted of a set of general questions regarding the interviewee's role in the organisation with regard to legal deposit, knowledge of the legal deposit system, knowledge of the system by other workers in the organisation, and the procedures in place for delivering material. This was followed by questions concerning the interviewees' opinions on issues covered by legal deposit legislation and issues identified in the literature that are of concern to publishers in the practical implementation of legal deposit in the country. Questions on issues surrounding the enforcement of legislation such as general communication with libraries, problems experienced, and opinion on penalties and other enforcement measures contained in the Act were also included in this section. No specific questions were set for the final part of the interview, but comprised open-ended questions so as to elicit responses from the publishers about the tracing of non-compliant publishers and the enforcement of compliance. The purpose of this open-ended section was to determine the responses of the interviewees without predetermining their point of view through prior selection or demarcation of questions (Patton, 2002: 21).

Pre-testing of the questionnaires was not appropriate for this study. The aim of pre-testing is generally to get feedback on individual questionnaire items, to intercept possible problems with terminology, and to get an indication of how respondents may answer some of the questions (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 23). This was not required in this study as the set of pre-conceived questions was merely a methodological aid (Flick, 1998: 83). Each topical area was introduced by the interviewer with an open-ended question that allowed spontaneous expression by the respondents in answering the questions, as well as further in-depth probing by the interviewer where necessary.

ii. *Flexibility*

The instrument has to be made flexible enough so that ideas can be actively solicited from the participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 43).

In the interviews with the publishers, this flexibility was aimed at throughout the interview process as described above. Flexibility was also achieved specifically in the final round of open-ended questions in which the participants were asked their opinion as to how “untraceable” (private, smaller) publishers could be traced, and then given the opportunity to add anything else relevant to legal deposit and its implementation that may not have been covered during the interview.

iii. *Knowledge of topic*

One of the most important assumptions underlying semi-structured interviewing, is that the participant has a complete stock of knowledge about the topic under study and that this can be expressed spontaneously by their answering open-ended questions (Flick, 1998: 83).

Most of the persons with whom the interviews were conducted were specifically involved with legal deposit in their organisations. The open-ended questioning format allowed interviewees to mention any problems, suggestions, or opinions with regard to legal deposit that they could draw from their specific knowledge and experiences of the subject.

Schedules were also designed for the interviews with representatives of the five legal deposit libraries (see Appendix D). The format and content of these interviews was much the same as those conducted with the publishers. Similar basic issues concerning the legal deposit system and legislation were covered. Other issues important for and pertaining specifically to the libraries were added where necessary. The same general open-ended format was followed, and the specific open-ended section

introduced into the publishers' interview schedule also concluded the interviews with the legal deposit institutions.

5.3.3.3 *Administering the survey instrument*

i. *Setting up a meeting*

In preparation for the interview, the researcher must find a member of the group, "an insider" (Fontana & Frey, 2005: 707) who is both knowledgeable about the topic and willing to participate. This has to be handled with caution as initial contact impressions often influence potential participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 108).

The Managing Directors of the targeted publishers and the Directors of the five legal deposit libraries were contacted personally by telephone in order to get their consent to conduct the interviews and, where necessary, to obtain the names of the most suitable and knowledgeable persons with whom the interviews should be held. Most of the telephone calls were followed-up by e-mails to confirm the date, time and place of meeting. Some of the contacts wanted an outline of questions to be asked, but the researcher explained that a detailed questionnaire could not be given beforehand, as the idea was that interviews were to be relatively unstructured and spontaneous. However, the underlying aims and goals of the study were explained to the prospective interviewees. To alleviate possible discomfort that publishers could feel, it was stressed that this was purely an exploratory exercise, that the information would not be used as "evidence" in compliance issues, and that the researcher was not interested in anything that was seen as confidential organisational/business information.

ii. *Scheduling appointments*

The general recommendation for scheduling interviews is to try not to make the interviewing schedule too tight as the quality of interviews will be better if they are spaced comfortably with time in-between to think and rest (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 109).

As the researcher had only a limited number of days to spend in each distant city, the scheduling of appointments had to be fitted into the time available, taking into consideration where the publishers and the libraries were situated. The aim was to fit in four sessions per day, but in some cases only three interviews per day could be handled if travelling was involved. Interviews in the Pretoria and Johannesburg areas were easier to plan to fit into the researcher's teaching schedule at the university.

iii. *Length of interviews*

Interviewing is regarded as a difficult and very time-consuming data-gathering technique (Berg, 1998: 71; Fontana & Frey, 2005: 697) and the length of individual interviews is relative depending on the basic research question (Berg, 1998: 73).

Interviews with both the publishers and the legal deposit libraries were initially planned to last a maximum of one and a half hours. In many cases, however, the interviews lasted longer than planned as many interviewees had much to contribute especially during the open-ended section. Interviews in the libraries all went over the allotted time mostly because there were a number of people present for the interviews who availed themselves of the opportunity for open discussion.

iv. *Conducting the interviews*

Interviews, unlike written surveys, can be extremely rewarding and interesting situations for both the interviewer and the subject (Fontana & Frey, 2005: 698).

The researcher was given a very cordial reception by all the publishers. At most of the companies the managing director, owner, or senior person responsible for legal deposit, was present at the meeting. At four of the publishing houses, the person(s) responsible for legal deposit in the organisation accompanied the managing director. All the interviewees were extremely co-operative in providing information.

Excepting for the Library of Parliament where only one person was interviewed, the head of the section under which legal deposit resorted, and several other persons responsible for and/or working with legal deposit were present at the interviews in the four other legal deposit libraries. The participants from the libraries were all particularly eager to share their information.

5.3.3.4 *Data analysis*

The main purpose of data analysis in qualitative research is to organise the information so as to present a narrative that explains the meanings, feelings, opinions and so forth that underlie the behaviour of the participants in the study (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 229). The data in this study was documented in the form of tape-recorded accounts of the interviews that were later transcribed by an independent person. Although there is no right or wrong approach to data analysis in qualitative research (Poggenpoel, 1998: 337), general guidelines as found in the literature, particularly regarding coding procedures were followed as far as possible for analysing the data.

For the initial set of questions, formal coding approaches for analysing the data were not planned, as the interview schedule provided for questions covering predetermined themes and issues. The overall flexibility of the interview schedule, however, resulted in participants' answers sometimes deviating from the planned order of the questions and also in additional issues being discussed. This meant that, where necessary, responses had to be grouped together so that coincidental concepts and themes that emerged from the conversations could be examined.

With the open-ended questions, however, coding principles were used to organise the responses into categories that identified and brought together corresponding themes (Berg, 1998: 233; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 238). The transcribed interviews were read paragraph by paragraph and word by word, the themes and categories were marked as they appeared, and after a code for each paragraph had been provided, the themes were grouped together. Thematic coding was developed for "comparative studies in which groups that are studied are derived from the research question and thus defined *a priori*" (Flick, 1998: 187). This research project complies fully with this requirement and thematic coding was therefore deemed highly suitable for analysing the results of the open-ended questions that were asked of the publishers and legal deposit institutions.

5.3.4 Evaluation of research approach and methods of the qualitative study

In any set of data resulting from a research project, errors will occur (Litwin, 1995: 5). However, if research is to be meaningful such errors must be minimized so that the data provides an accurate reflection of the truth (Trochim, 2006). Truth, and thus the quality of the research

undertaken, can be measured or evaluated in various ways, depending on the type of research and the approaches used.

5.3.4.1 Issues surrounding reliability and validity

The two prevailing foci in the evaluation of research are the concepts of reliability and validity. Reliability has to do with the quality of measurement, with how consistent the measurements are or how reproducible the set of results are (Litwin, 1995: 27; Trochim, 2006). Validity concerns methodological soundness or appropriateness, and refers to whether the concepts being investigated are actually the ones being measured or tested; it thus serves as a framework for assessing the quality of research conclusions (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 87; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 186; Trochim, 2006).

The “language of validity and reliability” (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002: 53) was originally developed for use in quantitative research that is largely based on the assumption of objectivity. These concepts are thus often not suited for qualitative research. Qualitative research firstly does not strive for broad generalisation of results (i.e. reliability of results), but takes the view that findings relate to the individual context of a specific research situation. Similarly, the validity and objectivity of data is not a core issue, as qualitative research often aims at understanding how research participants subjectively experience their world. Reliability and validity in qualitative research are therefore not necessarily bound by specific tools or methods, but pertain to the data or the conclusions reached by using the tools and methods in a particular context for that particular purpose (Maxwell, 1992: 284).

In spite of these basic presumptions, reliability and validity are still issues of much discussion within the qualitative research domain, with various alternative criteria for evaluating the quality of research and the results obtained having been proposed (ACHRN, 2004; Flick, 1998: 222-238; Patton, 2002; Poggenpoel, 1998: 348-350; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 85-90; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 143-146; Trochim, 2006). The underlying principle, however, is that although these general criteria do address important, basic issues in qualitative research, they must be used to assess procedures and results in an appropriate manner suited to the individual research project, as each qualitative study is unique in its own way (Flick, 1998: 133; Patton, 2002: 433).

The nature of this specific study with the publishers and libraries, which aimed at getting as wide a scope as possible of information on the interpretations, experiences and actions of the participants regarding the topic under investigation, dictated that the following criteria be taken into account to ensure the quality of the research that was undertaken.

- *Credibility and confirmability*

These criteria correspond broadly to the criteria of internal validity and objectivity in quantitative research (Trochim, 2006). They refer to the degree to which the researcher demonstrates that the results and conclusions are believable from the perspective of the research participants, and the degree to which the results can be confirmed or corroborated by others. This plausibility or “truth value” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) of research findings is seen as the most important criterion for the assessment of qualitative research (Patton, 2002: 93; Poggenpoel, 1998: 349).

Various strategies can be applied to enhance the credibility and confirmability of results. In this study credibility was enhanced by

investigating the topic of interest from the point of view of the participants (Trochim, 2006). The whole process of surveying the publishers and libraries intended to get their individual views and insights into the problem, and the interviews were taped and transcribed word-for-word. In the process of analysing the data these ideas and responses were not judged and therefore nothing, as far as was practically and humanly possible, was edited or left out.

Although the individual participants did not examine the analysed data, the results were provided as a report-back to the Legal Deposit Committee as the body that requested the investigation and provided the funding for conducting the interviews, and on which both groups of participants are represented. The “worth” of a research endeavour is often judged by the assessment of such bodies (Poggenpoel, 1998: 348). The credibility of the results was thus further confirmed by the Committee’s unconditional acceptance of and subsequent actions taken in response to the feedback report (see chapter 8, section 8.1.2).

As a final means of assuring the credibility and confirmability of methods and results, the terms/principles according to which the results were interpreted were checked (Flick, 1998: 232; Trochim, 2006) personally e.g. with knowledgeable persons such as the study leaders of the researcher, and others experienced in the field under study such as the head of the Publishing Section at the Department of Information Science. In addition, the appropriateness of the terms of reference used for interpretation was fairly obvious as they were taken from the subject literature and specifically also from official legal deposit legislation documents.

- *Consistency and dependability of data.*

Here the quantitative criterion of reliability is reformulated to check the dependability of procedures and data (Flick, 1998: 224; Trochim, 2006).

Emphasis is placed on detailing each step in the research process that may have influenced decisions taken about the research process to account for changing contexts within which the research occurs, and to examine any responses of participants that appear to be inconsistent (Patton, 2002: 93; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 87; Trochim, 2006).

The nature of a doctoral study such as this automatically necessitates the detailed discussion and exposition (as was done in the first part of this chapter) of the methods employed in conducting the research, providing the motivation for the choice of data collection and recording techniques, and fully explaining the contexts of the research and the procedures for analysis and synthesis of results, all of which constitute the expected “auditing trail” (Flick, 1998: 232; Patton, 2002: 93) to ensure consistency and dependability of data.

As the aim of the project was to obtain as wide as possible a scope of views of the participants in the survey, any “inconsistencies” in the responses would not be a problem. However, apart from the pre-determined topics covered during the interviews, the concepts and themes that emerged from the open-ended questions from the various participants and settings were carefully organised according to themes and documented, and this measure arguably attests to consistency across the cases in the project.

- *Transferability*

Transferability relates to the quantitative criterion of external validity, which implies the degree to which research results can be generalised to other participants, situations, times and places (Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 187; Trochim, 2006). The criterion of transferability attempts to determine whether the researcher has provided sufficient information about the context and assumptions underlying the research to allow the reader to

assess the potential transferability of the findings to other similar settings. Thus transferability is not synonymous with generalisation. Transferability concerns the applicability or the fittingness (Poggenpoel, 1998: 349) of qualitative research findings to other contexts and settings, rather than to the number of times that the study is or can be replicated (Trochim, 2006).

Transferability assumes an analysis of the domains in which the results may be applied (Flick, 1998: 233). Findings can, for example, be transferred (generalised) in cases where improvements to existing programmes are feasible or changed policy decisions suggested from the patterns observed or lessons learned from the investigation (Patton, 2002: 93). These conditions were applicable for this particular study. The project was undertaken with the aim not only of investigating the current state of legal deposit in the country, but also of attempting to provide suggestions for the successful future management of the system. This latter aim naturally implies that the results will be transferred/applied to other situations that may arise within the legal deposit domain in the future.

The investigation involving the publishers was aimed specifically at small, medium and large commercial publishers. This choice was based on the assumption that commercial publishers would be knowledgeable about and active in the legal deposit arena, with definitive views on the topic under investigation as described fully in section 5.3.1.3 of the current chapter. The potential transferability of the results obtained to other publishers in similar contexts and situations can therefore be regarded as relatively high. The question of transferability of results in the case of the libraries for the purposes of this part of the study did not need consideration, as all five of the legal deposit libraries were included in the survey.

- *Transparency*

Transparency aims primarily at allowing the reader to see the basic processes of data collection, keeping records of all the procedures throughout the investigation, and providing for access to interviews, transcripts and so forth (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 86).

The data collection and analysis methods are described in sections 5.3.2.3 and 5.3.2.4 of this chapter, which provide a clear view of the processes that were followed. Also examples of the interview schedules are attached as appendices to this manuscript. All the interviews were taped and subsequently transcribed by an independent professional transcriber, and copies of both the taped interviews and transcribed records have been kept.

5.3.4.2 Other issues pertaining to quality of methods and research results

The preceding discussion addresses the core issues involved in ensuring the quality of the research results. Other issues, however, also need to be taken into account to confirm the quality of this research study and the conclusions drawn from the results.

- *Errors in sampling*

An important aspect in survey research is reducing errors in sampling so as to deviate as little as possible from the population parameters (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 172; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 145). With non-probability sampling, as used in this research project, it is not always easy to know whether the population has been represented adequately (Trochim, 2006). The population for this study, i.e. commercial publishers, was selected according to the categories defined in the sampling frame, namely small, medium and large publishers. The population characteristics were

therefore well represented. In addition, the initial selection of publishers for interviewing reflected the population ratio between the different categories of publishers as represented in the sampling frame.

Sample size was not a determining issue. The size of a sample in surveys depends on the research design, the kind of data analysis used, how accurate the sample has to be, and various other factors pertaining to the specific project (Czaja & Blair, 1996: 126; Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 145; Neuman, 2006: 241.242). Apart from the fact that the sample size in this study was determined by geographical location, travel costs and time factors, purposive sampling was used with the aim of obtaining theoretically significant, not statistically significant, units for research (Brewer & Hunter, 1989: 114; Patton, 2002: 242).

- *Researcher bias*

A researcher can potentially bring bias into a study for example by influencing participants in some way or another, selecting data that best supports the theory/hypothesis, using statistical techniques that best show the particular results predicted, or bringing personal perspectives into the analysis and interpretation of data (Flick, 1998: 226; Graziano & Raulin, 2002: 195; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 145; Patton, 2002: 93). A scrupulous application of the criteria discussed above to ensure the quality of the methods applied in conducting a research project and analysing its results, would inevitably also contribute to solving or minimizing the potential problem of bias.

Minimizing bias can, for instance, be achieved by increasing the credibility of the investigation. Apart from the methods discussed above, another way of ensuring that participants perceive the research as credible is to be open and honest with the participants and to clarify all aspects of the research topic with them before the interview commences (Flick, 1998:

128). In this study the underlying goals of the study were explained when the meetings were set up (see section 5.3.3.3(i)), and also discussed at the start of and during the interviews (see Appendices C & D).

In the question of bias, impartiality (Patton, 2002: 93) or “neutrality” (Poggenpoel, 1998: 350) is perhaps the most relevant concept in this investigation. Impartiality is critical if a researcher is serious in proving that the findings of the research reflect the ideas of the participants and their situation and not the motivations and perspectives of the researcher. Impartiality is proven *inter alia* by providing a solid description of the research methods and procedures applied, to verify the thoroughness of the investigation and the confirmability of the data that has been collected (as discussed in the previous section), which in turn maximises accuracy and minimizes bias (Patton, 2002: 93). Impartiality and the minimizing of bias were also confirmed in this study by the tape-recording of interviews and the use of an independent person to transcribe the taped interviews.

The impartiality of the researcher was further attested to by the fact that there was no specific reason for consciously or unconsciously constructing a biased version of her experiences (Flick, 1998: 226). Nothing had to be “proven”, as the researcher entered into the project without any hypotheses to test, or any preconceived ideas regarding the issues at hand or the outcomes of the study. No expectations or guidelines were specified for the project which was purely an investigative research project to explore and thus gain understanding of the phenomena surrounding legal deposit as experienced by its central role players.

- *The question of triangulation*

The strength of triangulation in qualitative research lies mainly in the area of data analysis as it adds credibility to and confidence in any conclusions drawn (Patton, 2002: 556). Various kinds of triangulation can be used, the

central idea of them all being the combining of different methods, theories and so forth to study the same phenomenon, with the aim of testing for consistency of results (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 95; Patton, 2002: 556).

The methodology of this study was grounded in accepted standards from the very beginning and this ensuring of the quality of the methods and the results as detailed in the above sections dispensed with any need for triangulation. Not all methods are appropriate for all research situations. Even though this was an investigative project, the verification, validation, consistency and credibility issues that are addressed by means of triangulation (Patton, 2002: 556), were thoroughly accounted for by other means, as explained in section 5.3.4. For the purposes of this particular qualitative investigation, triangulation was regarded merely as an alternative to validation (Flick, 1998: 230) and thus considered superfluous.

5.4 Implementing phase two

5.4.1 Introduction

The core aim of the second phase of the research project was to obtain information about the level of compliance with legal deposit in South Africa. As such an investigation had not been done before in South Africa, various methods and options had to be examined, to choose those best suited to achieving this goal. For this type of exploration into an area not previously investigated, where initial ideas need to be further developed (Struwig & Stead, 2001: 7), conducting pilot or feasibility studies were considered to be appropriate.

5.4.2 Pilot/feasibility studies

The term 'pilot study' usually refers to a mini version of a full-scale research project. For the purposes of this study the research that was conducted was applied more in the sense of 'feasibility studies' as pilot studies are also sometimes referred to (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The aim of such a feasibility study is to formally try out and evaluate the use of proposed methods and techniques to see how well they perform and whether they present a viable concept for implementation (Fink, 1995: 17; Matson, 2000: 3; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The aim of this part of the study was to obtain figures that reflect the number of books received as legal deposit. Within this context various means of obtaining this goal had to be explored, with the additional aim of possibly applying the results of these "tests" to various situations in the future. For these purposes, the following advantages of conducting feasibility studies were decisive:

- Feasibility studies fulfil a wide range of functions and are useful and valid for many kinds of projects (Matson, 2000: 2; Patton, 2002: 240; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Such studies therefore provide an opportunity to test a variety of techniques to ascertain which of them are most applicable, and provide the best results.
- The results of the studies thus provide valuable insight for researchers and/or managers considering the implementation of similar projects, and possible problems and difficulties that may arise can be predicted (Litwin, 1995: 60; Patton, 2002: 240; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).
- Feasibility studies are a method of evaluating a project's potential for success and cost-effectiveness. This allows future researchers and/or implementers of projects the time and opportunity to make

changes before actually using the methods or implementing similar projects (Litwin, 1995: 60; Patton, 2002: 240; Matson, 2000: 3).

One major disadvantage of feasibility studies is that because they are exploratory, the results only suggest possibilities to consider, and cannot be used as definitive evidence that the implementation of similar projects is advisable or would be successful (Matson, 2000:3; Patton, 2002: 240; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 7). This limitation was, however, not a critical factor in this specific project as the feasibility studies undertaken were never intended to prove that the specific ventures could be successfully duplicated, but rather to provide guidance and/or suggestions for future projects only.

5.4.2.1 Defining the elements included in the study

The nature and purpose of the study required that the overarching feasibility study incorporate several different components. Because only a small total of elements were to be included for this project, they had to be appropriate for this particular study and had to provide the needed information. Information garnered from the literature and from the researcher's own background knowledge motivated the inclusion of the following data elements in the research sample:

- ISBN lists obtained from the National Library.

ISBNs are unique identifiers of particular titles and editions of books. Blocks of ISBNs are allocated by the International ISBN agency to specific regions or countries and administered by individual national agencies. The National Library of South Africa, Pretoria Campus, is the national centre responsible for the allocation of ISBNs to South African publishers.

- Book reviews in South African daily newspapers.

All the major South African newspapers are available on microfilm archived at the Pretoria Campus of the National Library of South Africa. Microfilming of the leading Afrikaans and English newspapers started in 1946 (Farrant, 2003). This service is still in operation and currently covers newspapers in most of the language groups of South Africa.

- Publications in South African libraries as listed on Sabinet Online's SACat database.

Sabinet Online provides a wide range of products and services to libraries and other institutions and companies in southern Africa. SACat, one of its products, is a national database of most of the library stock in southern Africa (Sabinet Online, 2006).

i. Choice of sampling units

The above-mentioned broad elements are the sampling frames from which the following specific units used in the study were selected:

- From the ISBN category, lists of ISBNs with the 0-620 prefix were used. These are special lists of numbers for once-off publishers or first-time publishers who have not yet established themselves in the publishing business and have not yet received their own unique ISBN identifiers.
- Two major daily newspapers were selected for the study. Both newspapers contain a weekly book review section.
 - o *Beeld* is an Afrikaans daily, printed six days a week and distributed in five provinces. It has an average daily readership of 364 000 and is owned by Media24. *Media24* is a leading print media concern in SA and a major publisher of newspapers (Naspers, 2006).

- *Cape Argus* is an English afternoon daily aimed at middle- to upper class readers in Cape Town with an average daily readership of 407 000 and is owned by Independent Newspapers. *Independent News and Media (SA) (INMSA)* is the leading newspaper group in South Africa and also owns and publishes various free/community newspapers (INM, 2006).

- From the SACat database lists of books in the collections of the ten institutions that form the membership of the Gauteng and Environs Library Consortium (GAELIC) were selected. GAELIC is the largest and most successful academic library consortium in South Africa (FOTIM, 2006). The vast collection of diverse and wide-ranging records present in the collections of the member libraries made this an ideal choice for use in the project.

ii. *Time frame*

Publications published in 2001 were used to determine whether they had been received as legal deposit. 2001 was chosen as publication year rather than a more recent year because of the backlog experienced in the compilation of the South African National Bibliography (SANB) by the National Library. At the time that this phase of the study commenced (in 2006), the SANB was complete up to 2002 with a possibility that some 2003 publications could be included (Battison, 2006). It was therefore reasonable to assume that books published in 2001 and sent as legal deposit would be recorded in the SANB by the end of 2002.

Smaller publishers do not always manage to publish their books in the same year of obtaining the ISBN. To cover this eventuality, the 620 ISBN lists for 2000 were used as well as those for 2001.

iii. Control database

The actual SANB published online by the National Library was not the resource of choice against which publications were checked. Due to its user-friendly search facilities, the Publishing Trends Database (PTD), which contains all publications recorded in the SANB, was used instead. The PTD is an enumerative bibliography originally created by the Publishing Studies section at the Department of Information Science, University of Pretoria, to address the need for quantitative data on book publishing in South African (Galloway, 2004: 115). As a result of a unique arrangement with the National Library, the Department receives information of publications concurrently with them being recorded in the SANB. The PTD thus consists of all publications received as legal deposit, is updated regularly, and can be applied for a variety of research purposes (Galloway, 2004: 115) as in the case of this particular study.

5.4.2.2 Sampling procedures

A sampling strategy must be carefully considered and selected to fit the purpose of the study and the resources available (Patton, 2002: 242). For this phase of the study non-probability sampling¹¹ was considered the most appropriate choice. Although non-probability sampling is not as frequently used as probability/random sampling, it is often the only suitable form of sampling for a specific study (Baker, 1994: 161; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 111). Non-probability sampling is regarded as an appropriate method to use in exploratory research (Fink, 1995: 17; Neuman, 2006: 222) and can thus effectively be applied in projects such as the present one, that attempts to explore undeveloped applications or ideas.

¹¹ See also section 5.3.2.3(ii) of this chapter for a discussion on non-probability sampling.

Samples for the feasibility study were selected using a combination of purposive and judgement sampling, which are both forms of non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling concentrates on selecting elements for research that fulfil a specific purpose, and judgement sampling involves specialists or experts that are experienced in the subject matter and have particular knowledge of the subject to select the sample. The combination of these two approaches, using expert judgement to select cases with a specific purpose in mind (Neuman, 2006: 222), presents the opportunity of selecting samples of information-rich participants (Struwig & Stead, 2001: 122), samples of elements that are deemed likely to offer answers to the questions asked in the study (Baker, 1994: 163; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 111), and samples that show characteristics that the researcher is interested in (Baker, 1994: 163; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 111) as is demonstrated below.

ISBNs uniquely identify specific titles and editions of books. The national library is very often the institution responsible for the administration and allocation of ISBNs in a country, as well as being the main legal depository. In such cases it is therefore a logical decision to use ISBNs for the monitoring the delivery of publications as legal deposit (Lor, 1997). The 620 ISBN lists administered by the NLSA were specifically chosen to be used in this study for the following reasons:

- The researcher formerly worked at the National Library, and is knowledgeable about the ISBN system and also had access to the person responsible for the section in the library.
- Using these lists provided the opportunity of obtaining legal deposit compliance figures from a broad range of publishers instead of targeting a small number of individual publishers with their own block of numbers.

- The lists represent smaller or private publishers who are shown in the literature to be most likely to experience problems in complying with legal deposit.

As the data for two years, 2000 and 2001, were used, some indication of the scope of compliance by smaller publishers in South Africa could be obtained.

For the newspaper book reviews, including a major black language newspaper as well as the English and Afrikaans papers used in the study would have been ideal. This, however, was not possible as such a 2001 newspaper with a weekly book review could not be traced. The two newspapers that were selected for the study are based in major cities in the country and have large daily readership figures. This inevitably means that the reviews provide information on a broad spectrum of recent/new publications, covering fiction and non-fiction, for adults and for children, in both Afrikaans and English. As was the case with the ISBNs, accessing the microfilm copies of the newspapers was a practical and logical action as the researcher was familiar with the relevant procedures in the reference section at the National Library.

Using a national/regional databases is another acknowledged means of checking for compliance with legal deposit (Chapman, 1997; Voorbij & Douwma, 1997) and as a former information specialist in an academic library, the researcher is familiar with the products offered by Sabinet Online. The SACat database, and specifically the collections of libraries belonging to the GAELIC consortium were chosen as a sampling unit, because this bibliographic resource represents the collections of all Gauteng Province's major academic libraries, an area not covered by either the ISBN lists or the newspaper book reviews.

5.4.3 Collection and analysis of data

Data collection in exploratory research depends on the type of data needed and is often accomplished, for example, by studying secondary sources (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 25; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 7). Studying and analysing secondary sources involves using existing data collected by someone else, or collected for a different research project (Baker, 1994: 260; Heaton, 1998; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 40). This is a generally accepted mode of inquiry often applied in quantitative studies (Heaton, 1998) and a common and acceptable way of gathering large sets of data in an economical and time-saving manner (Baker, 1994: 260; Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 25; Procter, 1993: 256, 257). This form of data collection and analysis was therefore considered ideal for this particular phase of the present study.

Existing documentary sources in the form of ISBN lists, titles of books appearing in book reviews and lists of books in South African academic libraries were accessed. As this was a feasibility study and not a full-blown research project, in-depth secondary analysis of the sources was not aimed at. Sources were simply used to check the records they contained against records of books received as legal deposit so that figures reflecting the level of compliance with legal deposit could be tentatively calculated.

5.4.3.1 *Using ISBN lists*

Photocopies of the lists of all the 620 prefixed ISBNs given to publishers in 2000 and 2001 were obtained from the head of the ISBN section at the National Library. Each individual number was checked against the Publishing Trends Database (PTD). The number of items received as legal deposit, i.e. that appear on the database, were calculated as a percentage

of the total number of ISBNs on the lists. The 2000 and 2001 lists were checked and considered as separate entities.

5.4.3.2 *Using book reviews*

The rolls of microfilm of the 2001 editions of both the selected newspapers were perused in the reference section of the National Library in Pretoria. Copies were made of the weekly book review pages. All these pages were subsequently scanned for books with South African imprints. In cases where the researcher may have been unsure whether a publisher or an imprint was South African or not, help was obtained from the head of the publishing section at the Department, or the PASA publishers' directory was consulted. The titles of the identified books were then checked against the PTD for legal deposit. The number of titles received, i.e. that appear on the database was calculated as a percentage of the total number of titles checked.

5.4.3.3 *Using SACat Database on Sabinet Online*

The Advanced Search option on the online SACat database was used to search for monographs (i.e. books) published in 2001 and available in the various libraries identified for use in the study. Printouts of the lists of books were made. These, as with the book reviews above, were scanned for books with South African imprints. All government publications/books were excluded as this category of publications fell outside of scope of the investigation. The titles of the identified publications were then checked against the PTD and the number of titles received, i.e. that appear on the database was calculated as a percentage of the total number of titles checked.

5.4.4 Evaluation of research methods and techniques used for the second phase of the study

The feasibility study conducted in this phase of the research project was exploratory, using various methods for obtaining data that reflect the levels of compliance with legal deposit. Although reliability in the sense of generalising data/results is not at issue in feasibility studies (Matson, 2000: 3; Patton, 2002: 240; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 7), the validity, i.e. the appropriateness of the methods used in the study (Graziano & Raulin, 2000: 186; Litwin, 1995: 33; Trochim, 2006), and some other factors affecting the quality of results, still needed to be examined.

- *Sampling*

The sampling methods and the choice of sample used in any study determines what the evaluator will have something to say about and is therefore an important factor that will impact on the validity of methods used and subsequently the results obtained (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001: 5; Patton, 2002: 240).

One of the main drawbacks of purposive and judgment sampling is the bias that may result from the researcher or expert's beliefs and choices, and the sample could thus be unrepresentative (Baker, 1994: 260; Cjaza & Blair, 1996: 172). On the other hand, in an exploratory project where data is obtained purposively from specific sources, the personal background of the researcher acts positively as a sensitizer and filter (Fink, 1995: 26; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 2002: 61). As the researcher in this project was previously employed at the National Library and worked as a subject specialist in an academic library, she had the experience and knowledge to choose the best sampling elements to include in the study. Although the data cannot be generalised for application in other projects

(Matson, 2000:3; Patton, 2002: 240; Struwig & Stead, 2001: 7), this insight into the purpose of the research does provide internal validity to the project (Trochim, 2006).

- *Volume of data*

Analysing data obtained from secondary sources can end up in the volume of available data overwhelming the researcher (Baker, 1994: 260). In the present study, this was experienced only in the case of using Sabinet Online where the collections of the majority of public, academic and other libraries in southern Africa are represented. Selectivity was therefore exercised and records from academic libraries that formed part of the GAELIC Consortium only were used, which reduced the volume of data considerably.

- *Conceptualisation of data*

One of the main challenges in analysing secondary sources lies in conceptualising the data to fit the research question (Proctor, 1993: 263). The quality of the data obtained is an important factor in this regard. Conceptualisation will depend on the original purpose for collecting the data, the intended audience, and the coverage of the data (Baker, 1994: 260; Proctor, 1993: 257). To address this problem, and effectively re-create and analyse the data, it is best to employ an experienced and specialised researcher (Baker, 1994: 260; Heaton, 1998; Proctor, 1993: 257). In this particular study, the researcher had the needed knowledge and experience with the data elements used in the project and the context in which the data was originally collected. Where it was deemed necessary, persons knowledgeable in a specific area, for example, the head of the Publishing Studies section at the Department, and the various heads of sections at the National Library, were consulted.

5.4.5 Other attempts at obtaining compliance figures

The feasibility study discussed in the preceding section represents this study's "formal" inquiry into compliance with legal deposit. Other approaches and methods to obtain compliance figures were also considered, but with less success. It is not customary in a research study to document unsuccessful and/or unused research endeavours in the final report, but because this second phase of the project was purely exploratory, a short review of these unsuccessful or partly successful research efforts is also useful. The results of these attempts could be of value for future researchers and/or legal deposit practitioners as examples of methods to avoid in future to prevent similar mistakes as well as providing information on methods that could perhaps be adapted and used more successfully.

5.4.5.1 Obtaining lists of publications from individual publishers and printers to check for legal deposit compliance

Letters were sent to 94 publishers listed in the PASA publishers' directory asking for a list of their publications published in 2000. Similar letters were sent to 112 printers whose names were obtained from the membership list of PIFSA (Print Industries Federation of South Africa). Follow-up letters were sent after two months to all the publishers and printers from whom responses had not been received.

Of the 94 publishers that were contacted, 24 responses were received but of these only 18 provided their lists of publications, i.e. 19% of the total. Of the six that responded without sending a list, five apologised saying said that they had not published anything in 2000. The one other publisher was not interested in providing the information.

Of the 112 printers who were contacted, 42 letters or phone call responses were received. However, lists of publications were provided by only nine of the printers, representing approximately 8% of the total, all of which were printers of newspapers. No lists were received from book printers. The main reason for this, provided in the responses received from the book printers, was the question of client confidentiality; they felt that they print on behalf of publishers and therefore could not divulge any information. Staff, time, and resources were other reasons given for not sending lists. Also some of the respondents were actually bookbinders and printers of stationery and so forth rather than printers of books.

The decision was thus made not to proceed with this method, as the response rate was too low to provide meaningful results. The lists that were provided came mostly from larger publishers and this, in addition to the low response rate, would not have provided a true representation of the publishing sector in South Africa.

5.4.5.2 Obtaining lists of publications in a specific category of publication to check compliance with legal deposit

This effort involved obtaining lists of publications from publishers in the Garden Route area of South Africa. The Garden Route, running along the south-western coast of the country, is an important tourist destination and the assumption was that books and other similar publications with information for tourists would be abundantly available. The seven larger towns that are central destinations on the Route were targeted. E-mails were sent to the librarian of the town library (where a library existed), to the information officer at the tourist information centre (every town had one listed), and to the manager at the local or area municipal offices. A total of 16 e-mails were sent. Only eight of the e-mails went through successfully and of the remaining eight that were presumably received by

the relevant persons, only one response was received. With this low response rate this project was also deemed not viable for the research project and no follow-up was undertaken.

5.4.5.3 Obtaining information in a specific category of publications from research done by previous researchers

Incidental compliance statistics were obtained from a research project investigating the production patterns of Afrikaans youth and children's literature (Snyman & Venter, 2004). To establish the total number of titles published within a certain time period, and identify all the publishers of Afrikaans youth prose, records of these particular publications were identified using Dewey classification numbers and extracted from the PTD. It was assumed that the PTD, representing the SANB (South African National Bibliography), would fully reflect all titles published in this category in South Africa (as discussed in section 5.4.2.1(iii) of this chapter). However, Snyman and Venter who are both knowledgeable in the field, found the results of this initial round of data collection were not a true reflection of what they knew was actually available. Missing publishers were subsequently traced and lists of their publications added to the PTD list. These lists were obtained essentially through the personal contact that one of the researchers had with the specific (missing) publishers. This discovered incompleteness of records led the researchers to assume that not all publishers deliver their publications for legal deposit as is required, and to calculate compliance percentages for all the publishers who publish books in this category. Compliance figures for 2000 and 2001 for ten publishers with a total of 106 records were obtained. As this method of acquiring compliance figures did not correspond with the general approach followed with the other exercises, and required the intervention of external role players outside the legal deposit arena, it was

decided not to use the method and results of the study for this research project.

5.5 *Summary*

This chapter described the empirical research project conducted to address the central research question identified for this investigation. To understand what the publishers and libraries think about and how they act upon the issues surrounding legal deposit and its practical implementation, in-depth surveys in the form of semi-structured interviews were conducted. Supplementing this phase of the investigation, a feasibility study was subsequently conducted to obtain figures reflecting the percentage of items received as legal deposit over a specific time period. Mention was also made of unsuccessful attempts at obtaining compliance figures.

A detailed exposition of the methodologies and procedures followed in conducting the two phases of research was provided and most significantly, these approaches and methods were evaluated according to accepted criteria to confirm the quality of the methods and of the results ensuing from analysis of the data.

All of this provided the foundation for the analysis of the data. This is covered in the next chapter (Chapter 6). The information contained in these two chapters (Chapters 5 and 6) is the basis for the final assessment of the investigation was performed and recommendations for the future.