Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

by

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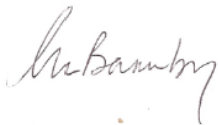Tel: 012 361 6347   alexabarnby@gmail.com

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To whom it may concern

This is to certify that I, Alexa Kirsten Barnby, a language practitioner accredited by the South African Translators' Institute, have edited the dissertation for the degree of Masters of Education by Thobejane Faith Leah, titled "Exploring second language acquisition among township learners".

The onus is, however, on the author to make the changes and address the comments.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband:

KGAMAKA MICHAEL THOBEJANE

who has supported me throughout my studies

and

my lovely children

Mbali, Nanazana and Bophelo

who have made me stronger, better and more content than I could have ever imagined.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the challenges that second language (L2) speakers of English face when learning English as a first additional language (FAL), and as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT). The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) indicates that learners in the Intermediate Phase must use the English language at a high level of competence. Although not all learners are competent in English and most are not native speakers, they are nevertheless required to learn all subjects through this medium. The reason for this is that English is perceived to be the instrument of upward economic mobility and a gateway to a better education; a perception that became entrenched in South Africa after the demise of the apartheid system.

The participants comprised three purposively selected English Second Language (ESL) teachers from a primary school in Gauteng. This study followed a qualitative research approach located within the interpretive paradigm and applied an intrinsic case study design. Data were collected using classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis of learners' written work samples. Data were analysed using thematic analysis.

The findings indicate that learners experienced a number of challenges in reading and creative writing and demonstrated a weak understanding of text written in English. This lack of adequate language skills could be one of the contributory factors to the high failure rate and drop out of learners in the early years of schooling, as well as at the matric and tertiary levels. Teachers emphasised the significance of early introduction to English FAL in Grade 1, as this might give learners the advantage of having acquired the prerequisite language skills and to perform well when they reach Grade 4. It is also deemed imperative that teachers be provided with assistance from appropriate stakeholders to expand their knowledge of L2 teaching.

Keywords: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, English First Additional Language, language acquisition, language of learning and teaching (LoLT), mother tongue, second language speakers; township school

List of Abbreviations

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ANA	Annual National Assessments
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BICS	Basic International Communication Skills
CA	Communicative approach
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
CC	Communicative competence
CI	Comprehensible input
CS	Code switching
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EFAL	English First Additional Language
ELL	English language learners
EMS	Economic Management Sciences
ESL	English Second Language
FAL	First Additional Language
FL	First Language
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
GPLMS	Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategy
HL	Home language
IH	Input hypothesis
IP	Intermediate Phase
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LAD	Language Acquisition Device
LIEP	Language-in-Education Policy
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
LSM	Learner support material
LSTM	Learning and teaching support material
NCS	National Curriculum Statement

NEEDU	National Education Evaluation and Development Unit
PIRLS	Progress in International Literacy Study
PTD	Primary Teachers Diploma
Q2	Quintile 2
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring
SGB	School governing body
SLA	Second language acquisition
SPTD	Senior Primary Teachers Diploma
TBA	Text-based approach
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation
ZAD	Zone of actual development
ZPD	Zone of proximal development

Table of contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Following the first democratic elections of 1994, cultural diversity was recognised, which led to the adoption and recognition of 11 official languages in South Africa, as conceived in the Language in Education Policy (LIEP) Department of Basic Education (DBE 1997). Accordingly, nine indigenous African languages were recognised, including Afrikaans and English, resulting in the sanctioning of 11 official languages by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (1996:4). The intention was to promote the status of African languages and to recognise language diversity by using them as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) (DBE 2002), in order to promote multilingualism by giving each language the accreditation that it deserves (De Jager 2012; Broom 2004). This creates a special situation where second language (L2) learners of English face a variety of challenges. This study, therefore, explores the challenges that L2 speakers face when learning (a) the First Additional Language (FAL) as a subject and (b) using English as their LoLT. I will present the two as intertwined in this study since the learning of English as a subject and the learning of English as LoLT, are, in my opinion, inevitably linked. Thus, the learning of English FAL and the learning of English as LoLT go hand in hand. One of the biggest challenges is that learners struggle to learn the English language because they are L2 speakers. This problem is complicated by the reality that English is used at school as the LoLT for subjects other than English. These two issues cause the academic development of learners to be fraught with difficulties.

After Mandarin Chinese and Spanish, English is the third most widely spoken language in the world by number of native speakers (Crystal 2012). In addition, English is the most widely used language for conducting business and is also the most widely used language in social media, science and technology, and education (Crystal 2012). It is therefore important to learn English in order to fit into the global community (Bhaskar & Soundiraraj 2013; Crystal 2012; Saville-Troike 2012).

In South Africa, language has always been a critical tool for the politics of control. Historically, the education system in South Africa was unequal (Ebersöhn 2012; Mampane 2011) resulting in so called advantaged and disadvantaged schools. This

is a legacy that continues to this day. At that time, the use of English and Afrikaans was dominant and created an unequal relationship between blacks and whites. In addition, the Bantu Education system deprived many black learners in township schools of quality education (Ebersöhn 2012; Mampane 2011; Van Schalkwyk 2008). Black township schools were isolated by race and were systematically under-funded and under-resourced (Huchzermer 2011).

Today, more than 20 years after the demise of apartheid, the progress of black learners is still typically very unsatisfactory, contrasting negatively with that of their white counterparts (Spaull 2011; Howie 2017). Learners still suffer the consequences of the historical imbalances today as learning a language is a complicated task. Learners experience language-related problems in reading and writing. Therefore, teaching English to South African L2 learners remains problematic (Howie 2012; Hoadley 2010). Even so, learners are expected to use English effectively to succeed academically. L2 learners are still struggling to master English adequately. Although English is widely used as the language of communication and has become the lingua franca in most countries in Africa (Department of Basic Education 2010), learners still find it very difficult to conceptualise in English. In South African township schools, this situation is particularly complex, because learners need to understand the language of instruction in order to understand what needs to be learnt in all their other subjects. Because learning a content subject in the L2 requires mastery of that language, learners need to be proficient in English and the failure to master English may have a negative impact on the English L2 learners' use of the LoLT.

During my 15 years of teaching, I have discovered that L2 learners from townships where languages other than English are spoken (Setati 2010; Spaull 2012) face various challenges in learning both inside and outside the classroom. For example, learners very often attend schools with a scarcity of resources and are required to learn in an environment that is noisy and unpleasant. This generates problematic conditions for learning a new language, as learners generally experience difficulties when switching from mother tongue instruction to English in Grade 4, which is the entry level to the Intermediate Phase (IP). In view of this situation, the use of English as the LoLT to learn the content subjects has become a serious problem in township schools.

The IP is crucial because two things happen in this phase. Firstly, learners in Grade 4 write formal exams for the first time, and secondly, they learn various content subjects through the medium of English, which is now the LoLT. That is the reason why an intermediate teacher should be specialised and proficient in English which, in reality, is not the case. In this regard, the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) envisages that the standard of learners in the IP "must be such that learners can use their additional language at a high level of proficiency to prepare them for further or higher education or the world of work" (DBE 2011:12). In contrast, however, learners are performing at a very low level of proficiency. It is important to note here that this situation is also recognised as a problem internationally. We see it in studies like the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (United States Agency for International Development [USAID] 2011–2013), the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (DBE 2013) and the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) (USAID 2013), where the low literacy levels have been highlighted. Learners are promoted to higher grades without being proficient in the L2 and eventually are admitted to universities without the requisite English competencies. Added to that is the fact that many teachers are not appropriately trained to teach English and are themselves L2 speakers of English. Therefore, the lack of modelling of good English by teachers perpetuates to the problem.

As a complicating factor, the LiEP gives schools the choice as to which LoLT to use from Grade 3 onwards (DBE 1997). Thus, it is up to school governing bodies (SGBs) to decide on the medium of instruction for their school, based on parental preference. However, most SGBs select English as their LoLT and not the learners' mother tongue (Setati 2010), even in cases where the majority of learners are L2 English speakers. This is especially true in township schools, where parents want their children to learn in English because they believe it to be the gateway to success (Bhaskar & Soundiraraj 2013). SGBs and parents have linked the choice of English as medium of instruction to what they perceive as being the best for their children and to providing them with the high-quality education they were denied for so many years (Coetzee-Van Rooy & Verhoef 2012; Maile 2004). The major reason for this preference is that English is associated with economic privilege, and thus they perceive competence in English as enhancing access to job opportunities. It is from the backgrounded narrated above

that this study seeks to explore the language challenges experienced by South African learners in L2.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

English language learning is very important in a multilingual country like South Africa. It is the dominant LoLT in the IP (Grades 4–6), yet only 9,6% of the population are first-language speakers of English (Statistics South Africa 2012) and around 80% of learners are ESL speakers (Manditereza 2014; Howie, Van Staden, Tshele, Dowse & Zimmerman 2011). Both Van Schalkwyk (2008) and Jordaan and Seligmann (2011) claim that learners from non-English backgrounds face difficulties in learning an L2, which affects their performance academically. The lack of language and literacy skills has been pointed out as one of the contributory factors to the high failure and dropout rate of learners in the early years of schooling and at matric level (Van Schalkwyk 2008). This lack of skills also results in many township learners finding themselves unemployed or unable to enter tertiary institutions. Moreover, many of those who do pass obtain poor results in English and in other subjects (Van Schalkwyk 2008).

In general, learners in the IP across all provinces are performing better in subjects taken in English as first language (L1) than in subjects taken in English FAL and English L2 learners' performance remains below 50% (DBE ANA Diagnostic report 2014). In other words, there is a strong correlation between the matriculation pass rate and the use of mother tongue as a LoLT. In general, most learners who write exams in their mother tongue pass and most of those who write exams in ESL fail (DBE ANA Diagnostic report 2014). This problem has been further highlighted by a number of studies and tests such as the Annual National Assessments (which are the standardised national assessments for languages and mathematics, the PIRLS, the NEEDU and SACMEQ. These reports indicate a large gap between the performances of learners whose LoLT is similar to their home language (HL) and those for whom the LoLT differs (ANA; PIRLS; NEEDU; SACMEQ).

All the reports above indicate the recurring problematical situation which arises due to the lack of sufficient language skills. A worrisome discovery is that learners still lack the foundational reading and writing skills (Howie 2011). On the other hand, SACMEQ 2 and 3 studies indicate learners' problems in reading and writing. They also highlighted an unsatisfactory low level of competence in reading tests undertaken in

2000 and 2007 (DBE 2010). SACMEQ aims at promoting the development of quality education in sub-Saharan Africa by supplying the figures to monitor the quality of education. The studies (ANA, PIRLS, NEEDU and SACMEQ) mentioned here present their findings based on their assessment of learners' competence rather than that of teachers. Motshekga (2014) points out that the ANA pass rate for Grade 6 English L1 across all provinces was above 50% in 2014. However, learner performance in English FAL remains below 50%, which falls short of the Department of Basic Education's target for 2014. Figure 1.2 provides the 2014 ANA findings for the average performance in Grades 4, 5, 6 and 9, in subjects written in English FAL at the national level. The ANA was written by all grades, from 1 to 7, in all public schools. The assessment tests learners' knowledge and skills in literacy competence.
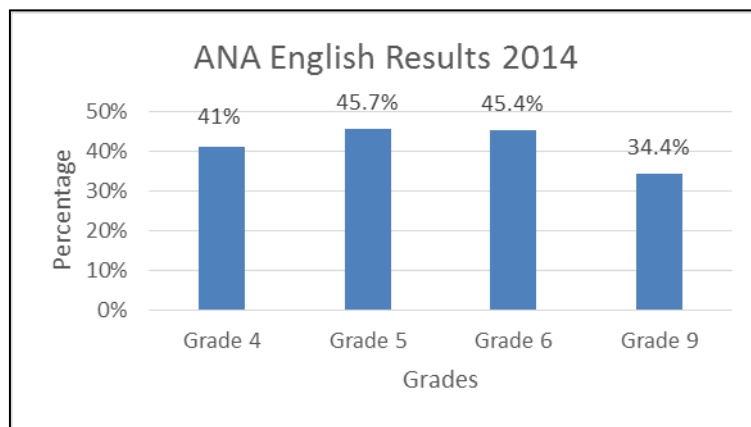
Figure 1.1: 2014 ANA English findings

If one looks at the patterns emerging from the diagnostic information of past cycles of ANA, it would seem that learners in the IP find it difficult to answer questions correctly. This includes answering questions that need sequencing and writing essays that need argumentation, logical order and evaluation (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). This is supported by Coetzee-Van Rooy (2011), who states that ESL learners fail English assessments such as the ANA because they are unable to answer in-depth questions or write essays that require sequencing, argumentation, coherence and cohesion of text in English.

The PIRLS survey reveals the underachievement of South African primary school learners when compared to the literacy levels of children worldwide. Grades 4 and 5 learners attained very low scores among the 40 countries that participated, coming

almost last (PIRLS). This means that the South African learner performance was below the international benchmark (PIRLS). In brief, the problem of language as a barrier to learning in South Africa has not been dealt with even though attempts have been made. It is for the above reasons that I was motivated to conduct this study (ANA Diagnostic report 2014).

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

As the reviewed literature shows, the challenges that township learners face are numerous. In his work, Jordaan (2011) highlights that learners' ability to use English remains problematic as they continue to produce poor results in primary school and as they progress to higher grades. In the South African context, Bloch (2009) found that problems were exacerbated by an underperforming education system and under-skilled teachers. Studies in relation to PIRLS, NEEDU, SACMEQ and ANA have also found that learners in township schools read and write at a far lower level than the required standard. This view is supported by Pretorius (2012) who states that L2 learners reach Grade 6 lacking the reading skills that are supposed to be well developed in Grade 3. From the reviewed literature, Phajane and Mokhele (2013:463) in their work emphasise that "teachers are not trained to teach reading and writing" in L2. Their view is based on the reality that learners still experience language difficulty which affects their academic performance (Phajane and Mokhele 2013). Although, there can be other factors that contribute to learners' learning of the English language. The current study bridges therefore this gap by exploring the challenges that ESL learners face when learning English as a subject and as the LoLT. The intention is to address the problem of learners struggling to learn English as L2, as well as not mastering their other subjects because they have to learn them through English.

In the following sections, I briefly discuss the key terminology, the context of the study, and the research questions. I conclude the chapter with the outline of the study.

1.4   KEY TERMINOLOGY

1.4.1   Second language acquisition
Second language learning refers to a language which is not the mother tongue, but a second language which is used for definite communicative functions in the community, such as the LoLT (CAPS 2012). An activity which would not normally be associated

with acquisition is, for example, driving a car, which is an ordinary event that would not normally evoke a fear reaction in most people. However, if a person were to encounter vigorous negative emotions while driving he might have a panic attack, and thus might learn to link driving to the panic response. In this way, a fear reaction is built. Such an experience might also occur when learning and developing proficiency in an additional language. This language is also referred to as a second language (Ellis 2013).

1.4.2   Challenges in the school and home environment

In this study challenges refer to stimulating situations that test a person's ability and success (Cambridge advanced learners' dictionary & thesaurus 2013). L2 speakers of English face challenges when using English as the LoLT both at school and in higher education. One of the challenges is that generally the learners' home environment does not provide effective support for language acquisition, as learners' linguistic environment plays a crucial role in their literacy skills development. Studies conducted by Spaull (2012) and Huchzermer (2011) indicate that L2 Learners have little exposure to English outside of school. It is rarely spoken as most parents have never been to school. English is used only inside the classroom, which means that exposure to English is through the teacher only. Huchzermer (2011) states that language is the greatest set of skills that humans could strive to learn. However, mastering a language is not an easy task, especially if it is not one's first language. This situation is seen in South Africa particularly in township schools.

1.4.3   Code-switching

Code switching (CS) in this study refers to alternating from language to another within a conversation (DBE 2011). CS occurs as a person moves between two or more languages. Studies conducted by Setati (2010) show that there is a significant mixing of African languages in class by teachers during English lessons. De Wet (2002) maintains that the use of CS has been ascribed to attempts by teachers to scaffold learning as well as teachers' own lack of skills and knowledge. CS implementation is essential in classrooms where English is being learnt as a subject and being used as the LoLT. In these classrooms teachers use CS to assist learners to understand concepts. However, this practice may occur as unpremeditated or unplanned. Brock-Utne and Skahum (2010) argue that CS may impact negatively on learners' full acquisition of the language. They further argue that language challenges are not only

experienced by learners, but some teachers too. It is accordingly noted that these challenges are generally experienced by teachers teaching in township schools.

1.4.4 South African township schools

Township schools are public schools that are built in a ghetto or inner-city area designated for Africans by the former apartheid government of South Africa. According to Huchzermer (2011), during the apartheid era, black South African schools were segregated by race and were systematically under-funded and under-resourced. Many English L2 learners emanate from these townships where languages other than English are spoken (Setati 2010; Whiteman 2007; Spaull 2012). Children born in communities where distinct cultural linguistic traditions are maintained, such as Francophone communities, often have a first language that is not English (Setati 2010; Whiteman 2007; Spaull 2012). Figure 1.1 provides a photograph of Alexandra Township.

Figure 2.1: Alexandra Township

Source; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandra,Gauteng

1.4.5 Curriculum

One of the most important issues in education is that in order for children to learn, they ought to understand the LoLT. The curriculum comprises the educational content and lessons taught in a school (Chisholm 2005). It refers to the skills and knowledge learners are supposed to acquire, as well as the lesson units and workbooks, and also

the tests and other methods used to evaluate student learning (DBE 2011). Shulman (1986) asserts that the curriculum is one of the fundamental aspects that shape what should be taught in schools. However, L2 learners enter the classroom with varying levels of proficiency in the English language. For those who have little or no proficiency, even following simple classroom routines and instructions can be a challenge (Setati 2010).

1.4.6   Non-native English learners

Non-native English learners refers to those who come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds and who typically require specialised or modified instruction in both the English language and in their academic courses. These learners are from communities where languages other than English or varieties of standard classroom English are spoken. For example, many children in South African communities speak a first language other than English such as Sepedi, isiZulu, or other indigenous languages (Haralambos 2014). According to Setati (2010) ESL learners adjust differently to their new classroom environment depending on their own background or life experiences. Those who were born in other countries, such as Canada for example, often have had exposure to the culture, but for other ESL learners from countries such as Zimbabwe and Mozambique, where most of the children originate from a different background (non-English background), it can be very new and often overwhelming.

1.5   CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at one primary school in Alexandra Township which is situated in Johannesburg East in the Gauteng province. Township schools are public schools that are built in a ghetto or inner-city area designated for Africans by the past apartheid government of South Africa (Spaull 2012; Setati 2010; Whiteman 2007).

The school in this study is situated in such a township and is surrounded by many shacks and clustered houses which make it unsafe, as can be seen from the photo (cf. figure 1.1; cf. figure 3.1). It is important to note the physical layout of the school as the school structure informed the classroom features. The school is overcrowded with 1746 learners and 54 staff members. It was originally well-built in 1942 but has since deteriorated and 14 mobile classes have been added. Classes range in size from 45 to 55 learners per class. In this township school there is usually a lack of basic

amenities, infrastructure and learning resources (Setati 2010). There is no library and, as a result, learners are not exposed to the books or newspapers which would assist them to increase their English vocabulary (Heugh 2011; Setati 2010).

The learner and teacher population in this school is entirely Xitsonga with the exception of a few Venda-speaking teachers and learners. The school is classified as Quintile 2 (Q2) (Government Gazette 2004). Q2 is a no-fee school based on the income and unemployment rate prevailing in the community living within the school area to ensure that education is affordable to all children (Government Gazette 2004). Learners in this school come from disadvantaged homes where the home language differs from the LoLT (Mertens 2014). Learners also come from families affected by poverty, where parents have little or no education themselves (Jordaan & Seligmann 2011). Teachers also do not have adequate knowledge and skills to teach English as L2 (Heugh 2011). Issue such as underperforming aggravate the problem as the pass rate of learners is low (Jordaan and Seligmann 2011; Van Schalkwyk 2008). This situation results in many township learners and parents not having proper jobs or being unemployed because of lack of literacy skills and proper qualifications that are needed for job purposes. Therefore, there is a lot of poverty, high rate of unemployment and crime in this township (Ebersöhn 2014; Spaull 2012; Setati 2010).

1.6   RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

As an English teacher, I have become aware that when learners switch over to using English as LoLT in Grade 4, which is the entry level to the IP, they start to experience challenges as they learn more subjects in English. Learners in this phase of primary schooling are at a crucial developmental stage where they become exposed to the realities of life. At this stage, learners do not yet have the Linguistic skills or the vocabulary in English to allow them to perform academically in the other subjects taught through the LoLT. This results in a number of challenges in regard to reading and creative writing. In addition, learners demonstrate a weak understanding of text written in English. Coetzee-Van Rooy (2011) claims in this regard that learners have particular difficulty with technical aspects such as parts of speech, complex tenses and creative writing. As a result, they progress to higher grades without the required Linguistic skills for L2 learning.

My perception of the learners' inability to use English is that learners cannot be held liable for their inadequate level of proficiency, as they are not allocated enough time to learn in an effective manner, or to acquire the Linguistic skills that are needed to use the language at a high proficiency level. Therefore, it seems unfair and ignorant to expect learners to master the new language in the IP. It is as if the New Education Policy (1996) actually results in the LoLT becoming a barrier to learning as the learners commence with English in the higher grades (Coetzee-Van Rooy 2011). The best way for learners to learn the language seems to be in the early years of schooling. Vygotsky (1978:86) supports this view when he states, "learners can master any language from three years of age because they learn the language naturally and they are born with the ability for intellectual development". Therefore, early intervention would give learners the support and confidence they need as they progress to higher grades. It is for the above reasons that I was motivated to conduct this study. The study was based on the following research questions:

1.7   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main question guiding this study is:

What are the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition?

The following sub-questions were formulated to assist in answering the main question:

- What are the challenges faced by L2 English speakers when learning English?
- How does the teaching of English as a second language enhance the use of English as LoLT?
- To what extend would lack of English understanding influence learner achievement in various subjects?

Research objective

The objective of the study was to explore the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition.

Research aims

The aims of this study are as follows:

- To determine which learning theories have been formulated in the area of second language acquisition and what their inferences are for this study.
- To investigate the challenges that second-language English speakers face when they use English as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).
- To identify the problems that affect the academic performance of second-language English speakers.

1.8 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The statements below reflect hunches and views regarding the context of this study.

- Based on teachers' experiential perception, the social backgrounds of learners do not enable them to communicate adequately in English.
- In accordance with Krashen's (2016) input hypothesis, learners can master the language they are exposed to. This means that their cognitive development emerges from what they have mastered.
- Intervention programmes such as the GPLMS and the Foundation for Learning Campaign designed by the DBE do not seem to be enough to support effective teaching and learning of English as FAL in the classroom.
- In the CAPS, there is more focus on grammar than on oral work, which means that learners may know the language but may not be able to speak or communicate in it.
- The introduction of English to second language learners late in the upper grades (Grade 4) of primary school might contribute to learners' inability to master English FAL as a subject and as the LoLT.
- It would seem that, learners lack exposure to communication with native English speaker counterparts.
- Learners' errors in using English may be traced back to their teachers' limited English proficiency.

The summary below provides the research methodology applied in the study, which is discussed in detail in chapter 3 (cf. section 3).

1.9   SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1   Paradigmatic approach

The present study is located in the interpretivist tradition. I embraced interpretivism as I wanted to gain an understanding of the participants and the subjective world of the human experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). The implementation of the interpretivist approach is based on the epistemology and ontology of multiple realities and subjective knowledge construction (Creswell 2013; Nieuwenhuis 2007).

1.9.2   Research approach

Because I am working from the interpretivist point of view I work with a qualitative approach. Creswell and Poth (2017) describe a qualitative approach as an approach where the researcher forms claims about knowledge which are built primarily on constructivist perspectives. Qualitative approaches furthermore apply strategies of inquiry like narratives, phenomenology, ethnography or case studies. This study employed qualitative research as its research approach, because I wanted to explore the challenges that ESL learners faced when learning English as a subject and as the LoLT. The purpose was to present a variety of views to form and interpret data (Lichtman 2013; Nieuwenhuis 2016).

1.9.3   Research design

The study uses an intrinsic case study which was adopted to report, analyse and interpret a particular phenomenon (Yin 2014). The goal was to link participants' practices to the challenges learners are faced with in the classroom.

1.9.4   Selection of participants

The participants in this research were purposively selected and consisted of three teachers, teaching English FAL, Mathematics and Natural Sciences in Grades 4–6, with a teacher–learner ratio of approximately 1:55. The three teachers are ESL speakers and have extensive teaching experience, having taught for more than 15 years in township schools. The school is categorised as Quintile 2 (Q2) (cf. 3.4.1).

1.9.5 Data collection methods

This study used classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis (Creswell 2013). As such, samples of learners' work were analysed in terms of the types of activities and tasks prescribed in the curriculum. These methods were employed as I believed they would answer my research questions.

1.9.6 Documentation

I observed the Grades 4–6 teachers during their lesson presentations in the English FAL classroom, using an observation schedule to note important information. A researcher's reflection section gave me the opportunity to reflect on what I had observed. I video recorded all classroom activities and proceedings and these recordings served as back-up and evidence of what had transpired in the classroom. Subsequently the teachers answered questions and expressed their views during interviews, where interview protocols were used to note comprehensive details. The interviews and the observed lessons were transcribed verbatim and analysed. I used a variety of consumer electronic devices, namely, compact disks, a USB and an external hard drive to store audio and visual data and made certain that they were password protected.

1.9.7 Data analysis and interpretation

Data were analysed qualitatively by means of thematic and content analysis and then interpreted to find answers to the research question and sub-questions that were raised in this study. The data are represented in figures, tables and pictures to enhance the narrative explanation.

1.9.8 Ethical considerations

Prior to data collection, I took into consideration the following critical issues pertaining to ethics and protection of the rights of participants: The ethical integrity of the study was maintained by obtaining letters of consent, permission to be interviewed and observed, protection from harm, maintenance of privacy, no coercion and confidentiality. For audit trail purposes, audiotapes were kept secure and all the data will be password protected and kept by my supervisor for 15 years (Salkind 2011).

1.10   OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

In chapter 1, I provided the context of the study and explained the problem statement. The chapter included the rationale for conducting this research, and also outlined the research questions. A summary of the research design for the study was also provided.

Chapter 2 explores the literature on the challenges relating to L2 learning by second language speakers of English. In addition, the conceptual framework of the study is explained.

The research paradigm and the methodology of the research are discussed in chapter 3. I explain the data collection and analysis strategies and outline how I ensured the trustworthiness of the study. The ethical considerations for the study are also provided.

Chapter 4 presents the data and discusses and interprets the major findings of the study.

In chapter 5, I present the conclusions and limitations of the study and make several recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the literature relevant to L2 acquisition among township learners. The chapter begins with a description of Second language acquisition (SLA). This chapter further highlights the challenges faced by L2 speakers of English in the classroom and the difficulties they face later which affect their academic performance (Grosser & Nel 2013; Pretorius 2012). Different theories will be discussed to explain why children acquire language in different ways. In conclusion, the chapter provides the conceptual framework for this study. The study draws on the works of Vygotsky (1978), who views language as a social concept which can be developed through social interactions, and Krashen (2016), who describes various ways of learning an L2 as indicated in the previous chapter.

2.2   SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

SLA generally refers to the acquisition of an L2 by somebody who has already acquired an L1 (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams 2007). The significance of the current research is that it investigates challenges that relate to SLA issues. SLA studies have developed from systematic linguistics, productive linguistics and cognitive psychology and constructivism (Nel & Swanepoel 2010). Many theories have been formulated specifically to explain SLA and, thus, a fundamental knowledge of SLA theories is exceptionally beneficial for teachers as it offers insights into the manner in which learners acquire an L2 (Nel & Swanepoel 2010). Therefore, theories on SLA offer teachers ways in which to provide suitable instruction in reading and writing to learners (De Jager 2012). As a result, I will discuss three theories which place value on the role of interaction in SLA, namely, the behaviourist, the innatist and the social interactionist theories. I consider these theories important as they explain the reason why and how learners acquire a new language in various ways (De Jager 2012).

2.2.1   Behaviourist theory

In terms of behaviourist theory (Skinner 1953), language is the acquisition of words and sounds that have been adequately supported and also the acquisition of language is similar to any form of cognitive behaviour (Brown 2000; Skinner 1953). DeJager (2012) describes behaviourist theory as a development of the crucial learning theory

established by Skinner (1953), which highlights stimulus–response as the essential learning element. In the behaviourist's view, feedback and stimuli are scrutinised while a learner's internal processing is often ignored (Ellis 2013). Learners internalise and imitate language forms and patterns that are modelled by the people who speak to them (Ellis 2013). Behaviourists claim that language acquisition comes naturally (Skinner 1953). This implies that young people are exposed to information about language through the interactions they have with teachers, the people around them at home and people they meet on the street, as well as in the conversations they have with their peers (Ellis 2013; Skinner 1953). Through these interactions, input is received and output is made in their natural surroundings and this helps learners to perfect their linguistic ability (Brown 2000; 2007; Skinner 1953). This indicates that what learners hear they will imitate and this will later develop into certain habits through practice. Behaviourists consider language to be another form of human behaviour (Ellis 2013; Skinner 1953). It is a form of oral behaviour that focuses on people, thus language is acquired by children through the practice of certain behaviours and the imitation of others (Ellis 2013. Therefore, errors should be corrected immediately to avoid learners developing bad habits that would be difficult to change later (Conrad 2001), however, Fromkin et al (2007) differ from the behaviourist point of view. The behaviourist view of language development is linked to my study as it encapsulates a broad variety of SLA strategies, going beyond these strategies to examine their impact, which is vital (Fromkin et al 2007). Therefore, ESL teachers ought to familiarise themselves with behaviourist theory.

2.2.2 Innatist theory

Chomsky (1968) supports innatist theory and claims that all humans have a special mental mechanism, an innate framework known as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which enables them to learn a language easily and naturally. This implies that language development follows the same pattern as biological development (De Jager 2012). Both children and adults, whether English is their mother tongue or not, are gifted with the same human capacities (Krashen 2016). The capacity to learn a language integrates natural and external elements, thus making it a comprehensive process that allows language acquisition to take place (Turuk 2008; Chomsky 1968). Furthermore, Chomsky (1968) accounts for his theory by maintaining that language is

a set of governed rules and not habits. With the use of the LAD, these rules are processed by the mind (Chomsky 1968).

The second theory is innatist theory. The innativists believe that a child is born with ideas and knowledge of language structures (Krashen 2016). Krashen's (2016) theory of SLA suggests that teachers should add to their classroom activities with outside activities. Stimulating activities include debates, reading aloud and dramatic performances (Krashen 2016). Krashen (2016) maintains that socialising with peers could expose learners to the language usage of English counterparts. He believes that the use of media such as television, radio and the internet to watch or listen to English speakers' accents could enhance learners' English skills (Krashen 2016). Language learning via auditory input could be imposed by applying different learning styles (Krashen 2016). This is supported by Saville-Troike (2012) who affirms that human beings are born with a natural potential or innate ability to learn language. Accordingly, natural acquisition may occur when the learner is exposed to the L2 through communication with native speakers for several hours per day (Saville-Troike 2012).

2.2.3   Social interactionist theory

Social interactionist theory views language acquisition as the product of complex interactions between learners' internal mechanisms and their lingual environment (Nel & Swanepoel 2010). The interactionist view holds that mothers play a critical role in modifying language to foster the child's innate capacity for language acquisition (Reynolds 2009; Brown 2000).

Vygotsky's (1978) social-cultural theory is applied by interactionists to define the role of interaction in SLA (Lightbrown 1999). This theory is then used to hypothesise that interactions between learners and more advanced speakers of a language help learners gain proficiency in their L2 (De Jager 2012). Children learn their native language by communicating and through maximum exposure to the language in their environment. Hence, the SL learner can learn the language in varying contexts. These contexts can either be instructional or natural (De Jager 2012). In instructional settings the learner is exposed to the L2 in the classroom, where exposure to the language only happens a few hours a week and may only happen through classroom activities (De Jager 2012).

As indicated above, this study supports behaviourist, innatist and the social interactionist theories. These theories are valuable, as I believe that they will provide guidance on how L2 learners from township schools acquire a language. In addition to understanding how learners acquire their L2, there are certain approaches adopted by the CAPS for English to assist learners with acquisition of the target language, which I will discuss next.

2.3   APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE TEACHING

The approaches to language teaching that are prescribed in the CAPS are the text-based, process-based and communicative approaches (DBE 2011). One of the main focuses is the production and constant use of texts (DBE 2011). For the context of this study, I will discuss the text-based and the communicative approaches as they have been recognised a helpful for communicating effectively in FAL teaching in South African schools (Richards & Rodgers 2014). Furthermore, these approaches provide guidance on the teaching strategies to use for reading and writing. However, the process-based approach is also significant as its focus is on the skills and process of writing a text (DBE 2011).

2.3.1   Text-based approach

The text-based approach can be referred to as a genre approach which is prescribed in the CAPS for language teaching and the development of learners' communicative competence (DBE 2011). Collerson (1998) defines genre as a "kind of writing or type of text". This approach includes reading, listening to, viewing and analysing texts with the aim of understanding how they are built and the effect they have (Collerson 1998). As most learners are unable to read, write or communicate efficiently in English in Grade 3, Wessels (2016) suggests that English FAL should be taught in the Foundation Phase because this could reduce the challenges faced by learners in Grade 4. This approach to teaching empowers learners to become capable, assertive and analytical readers, writers and viewers of texts (Wessels 2016; Jansen 2013). Through critical interaction, learners develop the ability to evaluate texts (Wessels 2016; Jansen 2013). In terms of this approach, the teacher's role is that of an authoritative guide who scaffolds or supports learners as they move towards their potential level of performance (Heyland 2003). A great deal of simulation and support is also required in the FAL classroom. During scaffolding, learners are provided with

models and discuss and analyse language structures (Heyland 2003). Considering that scaffolding is essential for reading and writing, it is very important in learning an L2 and it is apparent that ESL learners would require extensive scaffolding. Visual aids are used to teach concepts and to make them understandable and remembered in a meaningful way to learners (Brown & Broemmel 2011). Teaching concepts in English with concrete aids, for example things that learners can feel, touch and see, is imperative (Brown & Broemmel 2011). This includes the use of devices like smart boards. L2 teachers can provide an appropriate assistance and support to simplify things for learners. The significance of scaffolding in this study is linked to Krashen's comprehensible input (Krashen 2016; Brown & Broemmel 2011).

2.3.2 The communicative approach

The communicative approach is based on the perception that successful language learning comes through having to communicate actual meaning (Richards & Rodgers 2014; DBE 2011). Therefore, when learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language (DBE 2011).

This implies that the communicative approach is centred on the communicative functions that learners have to be aware of (Brown 1995). Brown (1995) emphasises that this approach stresses the way in which certain grammatical structures may be applied to convey these functions effectively. Accordingly, L2 textbooks are developed within this framework. Richards and Rodgers (2014) hold that the goal of language teaching should not only focus on grammar but also on communicative competence. Richards and Rodgers (2014) further explain that teachers' activities should permit learners to participate in communication and include them in the negotiating process involved in sharing information, collaborating and interacting. The communicative approach is valuable for pair work or group work that necessitates the sharing or exchange of knowledge among learners (Richards & Rodgers 2014). For this study, learner-centred activities are a strategy for learning a language. ESL learners are required to engage actively in communication in order to acquire a L2. In addition, they should receive practical feedback and participate in activities that are learner centred and obviously practical (DBE 2011).

Key elements of communicative language teaching, as described by Richards (2014), include the following:

- Tasks that include natural communication enhance learning.
- Language should be utilised for conveying tasks that are meaningful.
- Language should be significant to the learner.

However, because the communicative approach advocates for collaborative learning, the challenge when it comes to township schools is that English interaction is minimal (Evans & Cleghorn 2010). Teachers and learners are unable to communicate effectively in English, as learners lack the Linguistic skills that are needed to communicate adequately in English and many teachers are not particularly competent in the English language (Makoe & Mckinney 2014; De Jager & Evans 2013). Because of this, the mother tongue is frequently used during lessons even though exams are written in English. Moreover, the classroom activities are not designed in a way that promotes communicative competence (Ebersöhn 2014; Spaull 2012; Setati 2010). These issues are exacerbated by the reality that L2 learners usually come from homes where English language is not spoken or encouraged (Makoe & Mckinney 2014). Thus, learners' acquisition of English depends on their teachers (Ebersöhn 2014; Spaull 2012; Setati 2010).

2.4 CHALLENGES FACED BY ESL LEARNERS IN THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH

Research has offered valuable insights into the reasons for the low English language proficiency of ESL learners. These include insufficient teaching curricula, absence of teaching in the early stages, teachers' limited English proficiency, code-switching and lack of motivation and skills (Ebersöhn 2014; De Jager & Evans 2013; Phajane & Mokhele 2013; Trudell 2012).

When children develop or acquire a language they typically achieve fluency in their first language. However, when learning an SL, they will never able to achieve fluency as native speakers do, even if they can speak it (Makoe & Mckinney 2014). Accordingly, it becomes difficult when learners have to think in one language and communicate in another. This is the case with most South African learners. Researchers have attempted to explain to the reasons for these limitations (Makoe &

Mckinney 2014; Pretorius 2012). Some explanations include the age at the time of acquisition, learning styles, individual factors, the language environment, the standard of language exposure, and cross-linguistic impacts (Brown 2000).

The lack of language and literacy skills creates a major problem because learners need to be adequately prepared to be able to learn the English language and to learn other subjects through English (Pretorius 2012; Jordaan 2011). Owing to this situation, learners continue to produce low results in primary and high school, and they even enter tertiary institutions without the required academic proficiency in English, which affects their academic performance (Pretorius 2012; Jordaan 2011).

There are specific challenges that learners face in the classroom during the teaching and learning of content subjects. Gacheche (2010) asserts that many L2 learners struggle to read effectively in the English language, because they tend to spend so much time on trying to understand each word as they read. Thus, when leaners are exposed to an additional language for the first time they often remain silent and speak little during lessons as they focus on understanding the new language Gacheche (2010). Accordingly, it would seem that learners do not have the requisite Linguistic skills or vocabulary to allow them to learn a wide range of school subjects in the second language in Grade 4 (Heugh 2011). Gacheche (2010) contends that many learners have to learn various subject content in English while they are still busy learning the language. Many ESL learners lack the basics of English, as they don't speak it at home and are only exposed to English at school by teachers who are English SL speakers (Ebersöhn 2014; Spaul 2012). As a result, learners experience the challenge of learning a new language and of using it as a LoLT (Ebersöhn 2014; Spaul 2012). Moreover, many learners do not have external support. This dual task of language learning is huge for many learners and delays them in their studies (Heugh 2011).

2.4.1 Inadequate curriculum coverage

Among the challenges indicated above are learners' inability to read English, to write clear grammatical sentences and to communicate with their teachers and peers in English (Richards & Rodgers 2014). The crucial issue to note is that learners need to be competent in English in order to learn in all subjects, given the fact that the curriculum is reckoned to basically shape what is supposed to be taught in schools (DoE 2008b). However, little time is devoted to teaching English as L2.

It is important to note here that the South African government has emphasised that many children cannot read or write in either their L1 or the L2 (Phajane & Mokhele 2013). While Trudell (2012) emphasises that the curriculum should incorporate reading requirements, I have realised that generally only a reading guide is included in the language subject. Nonetheless, competence in the L2 is not the same as the acquisition of skills in reading and writing (Trudell 2012). Consequently, it may help if the curriculum allocated sufficient time for reading. The main reason for this is that reading forms the foundation of all Linguistic skills, especially writing. The potential to write depends on the potential to read (Phajane & Mokhele 2013). As a result, what is written can give meaning if it can be read (Phajane & Mokhele 2013. As such, I am of the view that reading and writing are intertwined. While it is laudable that time is allocated to the four Linguistic skills in the CAPS, learners who are learning English as L1 are allocated 10 hours per week, and hence it would seem that the curriculum favours English L1 learners over English L2 learners. Accordingly, L2 learners need adequate time for acquiring a new language (Pretorius 2012). This would subsequently reinforce literacy development in the classroom (Pretorius 2012).

The question now arises as to why the time allocation for L1 and L2 learners differs, as both learners are using English as LoLT? The next section highlights the impact that is experienced as a result of English not being taught in the early years.

2.4.2 Absence of teaching in the early stages

Learning to read and write in the early years is critical, as these are the most elementary skills a child can acquire (De Vos & Van der Merwe 2014; Bloch 2012). Moreover, an absence of fundamental skills can result in learners failing or dropping out of school (Setati 2010; Van Schalkwyk 2008). Besides, several research studies have highlighted that South African learners in Grade 4 cannot read and write at that level (Hammer & Knowles 2014; Grosser & Nel 2013). See for example, the discussion on the ANA, PIRLS, NEEDU and the findings of various studies (cf. 1.2), which shows that learners are introduced to L2 late in the Foundation Phase (Wessels 2016). The shocking findings of such studies reveal the low literacy levels of many South African learners in Grade 4 and upwards (Heugh 2011; Lemmer & Manyike 2010). As both groups of learners have not acquired basic reading and writing skills in Grade 1-3 (De Vos & Van der Merve 2014).

Nonetheless, the curriculum emphasises the introduction of the mother tongue in the Foundation Phase (Grades 1-3). This is supported by Horne and Heinemann (2009) who claim that learners should master reading in the L1 before the L2. Such learners will read faster in L2 because of the reading skills acquired in L1 (Horne & Heinemann 2009). Prinsloo and Heugh (2013) argue that the introduction of the FAL in Grade 3 will be too late for learners in Grade 4 to master English. Jansen (2013) hopes that learners should be taught English from the first day of school rather than increase the problem of poor instruction in the mother tongue in the Foundation Phase (FP) and then exposing them to the trauma of switch to English later on Jansen (2013). It is apparent in most township schools that learners struggle to learn English as LoLT in Grade 4. I am of the view that, ideally, learners should acquire reading and writing skills in LoLT in their early years (Wessels 2016). This means that learners will develop reading and writing skills as early as Grade 1 (Wessels 2016). It is obvious that every child is born with linguistic competence (Fengu 2017). This implies that a child can become bilingual (speaking two languages) or multilingual (speaking three or more languages) (Fengu 2017). As such, this natural linguistic ability often occurs between the age of 0 and 9. During this period, fundamental speech skills are developed (Fengu 2017). Numerous studies have found that literacy in the LoLT in Grade 1 is fundamental to succeeding academically (Wessels 2016; Trudell, Dowd, Pipe & Bloch 2012). Jansen (2013) embraces this view that a learner who learns an L2 early will become more confident in the higher grades than one who learns late. Moreover, in South Africa most ESL teachers are not proficient in English (Nel, Nel & Hugo 2016; Mertens 2014). This contributes to the perpetuation of English language errors among the learners (Hugo & Nieman 2010). Thus, where a teacher is an L2 speaker of the LoLT, issues arise that can influence the success of the learning environment (De Jager & Evans 2013). These issues include the effective use of the four Linguistic skills (Dippenaar & Peyper 2011) and teachers' limited English proficiency.

2.4.3 Teachers' limited English proficiency

This paragraph reveals some of the aspects that inhibit the quality of education in many South African schools. Nel and Swanepoel (2010) point out that teaching in English is problematic for ESL teachers in most township and rural schools in South Africa. Proof of poor oral proficiency was discovered in, among others, incorrect pronunciation, problematical use of concord and tenses, clumsy idiomatic

expressions, exact translations from the mother tongue and inaccurate word order (De Jager & Evans 2013). Evans and Cleghorn (2014) maintain that the lack of adequately proficient teachers to teach through the medium of English has been cited as one of the major barriers to effective learning. Against this background, I concur that where an L2 is utilised as an LoLT by teachers who are L2 speakers there are issues that are of greatest importance to an effective learning environment (Morrison 2015; Mertens 2014; Heugh 2011). Among these issues are the ability to apply the four Linguistic skills, language use and culture, and knowledge insight of L2 learning (Dippenaar & Peyper 2011).

There is much research that shows that inexact communication on the part of teachers may be the source of misunderstanding in the classroom (De Jager & Evans 2013; Trudell 2012; Hugo & Nieman 2010). The research findings have shown that misinterpretation primarily emerges from the teachers' deficient oral proficiency and insufficient articulation achievements patterns, implying a scarcity of pragmatic awareness (De Jager & Evans 2013; Hugo & Nieman 2010).

My study is based on language challenges and barriers as they emanate from both grammar and pronunciation (Hammer & Knowles 2014). A distinction is made between grammar and pronunciation which are both significant for language acquisition. Grammar has to do with the structure of the language while pronunciation has to do with the oral usage or the articulation of the language (Richards & Rodgers 2014; Gilakjani 2012). The teaching of grammar and pronunciation should be combined to attain mastery of the four Linguistic skills, namely, listening, reading, speaking and writing, and mastery of language acquisition (Gilakjani 2012). The grammar of a language refers to issues such as what occurs to words when they turn into a plural (Hammer & Knowles 2014). Gilakjani (2012) states that grammar is the study and exercise of the rules by which words change their forms and are joined into sentences. This includes two simple elements, namely, the grammar rules and the study and practice of the rules (Richards & Rodgers 2014). The rules of grammar refer to how words change such as from present to past tense, for example 'move' to 'moved' and how they form sentences (Gilakjani 2012). The knowledge of grammar also informs us what to do if, for example, we add the phrase 'not enough' to a sentence: 'There are apples on the shelf' 'There are not enough apples on the shelf' (Richards &

Rodgers 2014). Thus, grammar refers to the way in which words change and combine to make sentences (Richards & Rodgers 2014). The implication of this is that the focal point of language teaching should not only be on grammar but also on the ability to communicate ideas (Richards & Rodgers 2014), meaning that the activities designed for learners should encourage communication and pronunciation, as this will assist in improving language fluency. This is essential because when learners learn the language they start by hearing it. If they cannot hear it properly it affects the way they understand the grammar rules.

The teaching of grammar has always been controversial, particularly under the influence of the communicative approach (Richards & Rodgers 2014, Hammer & Knowles 2014; Trudell 2012). Teachers face three problems in teaching grammar. These include the discussion of function versus form, the differences and similarities between learners' own language and the second language, and several exception problems, although most languages experience these (Richards & Rodgers 2014). It is therefore of the utmost important that when teachers teach grammar, they also teach learners how to communicate in English (Richards & Rodgers 2014).

Hammer and Knowles (2014) maintain that it is essential to teach grammar because a lack of understanding of grammar leads to difficulties in communicating effectively in English. Therefore, teachers must teach the grammar of the language for the purpose of language use. Since the majority of lesson planning is generally devoted to grammar and vocabulary, there would seem to be insufficient or no time assigned to pronunciation, including phonetics (Heugh 2011). According to Gilakjani (2012), pronunciation activities help learners to produce various sounds and sound features with confidence and, very importantly, assist learners to improve their speaking. Consequently, lesson plans should include activities that assist teachers to integrate phonetic activities into English classes. The purpose of using phonetic signs is to assist learners to remember the sounds easily (Nel, Nel & Hugo 2016).

In contrast to grammar rules, pronunciation cannot be easily inculcated in a learner's mind (Nel et al 2016); on the contrary, it would seem to need to be assimilated (Nel et al 2016). Heugh (2016) points out that the use of a variety of language learning strategies can be useful for teaching pronunciation, and may also assist in improving

learners' grammatical understanding. In this way, grammar and pronunciation are related, a fact that is relevant into this study.

A concerning issue is that some teachers, owing to insufficient language proficiency and a lack of understanding of word meaning, find it difficult to understand texts (Trudell 2012). These problems result in learners from Grade 4 onward learning incorrect forms of pronunciation in English, which results in poor spelling and in not knowing the meaning of words (Evans & Cleghorn 2014; Trudell 2012). On this note, Hugo and Nieman (2010) reinforce that many factors that contribute to learners' low English acquisition may be traced back to their teachers' limited English proficiency. Teachers' lack of English fluency and proficiency may thus lead to learners' incompetent use of the language. While the words 'fluency' and 'proficiency' are often regarded as synonyms, in reality there is a distinction between the two. For example, it is possible to be fluent without being very proficient, just as it is possible to be very proficient without being fluent (Merriam Webster 2018). For the purpose of this study, fluency, whether in reading or in language, means the ability to communicate the message accurately by using the correct words and without pausing while speaking (Merriam Webster 2018). In other words, fluency is the flow of speech, whereas proficiency is the ability to understand the language and to communicate effectively and efficiently (Merriam Webster 2018; Pretorius 2012). As such, proficiency is the skill that non-native speakers will learn in order to acquire fluency. Thus, it is impossible to attain fluency without engaging in dialogue with a fluent speaker of the language.

Furthermore, Probyn (2010) claims that teachers are often caught between the conflicting goals of teaching content and teaching an additional language. The question then arises as to whether some South African teachers' inability to use and speak English as the LoLT does not imply that they have not attained Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), or is it the attitude of the learners and teachers towards English as a foreign language? Experts such as Cummins (1981) reveals that when considering the problems related to second language acquisition, including English L2, a distinction should be made between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Communicative Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS applies to familiarity with a language that results in having colloquial

fluency. While CALP refers to the understanding and expression of concepts and ideas by learners in oral and written communication to succeed in school. Cummins (1981) points out that if learners do not have CALP in either their L1 or in a new language, they may be at a special academic disadvantage. CALP is needed to "develop and operate in the skills of literacy and the language for problem solving" (Cummins 1979:78). This means that is crucial for academic progress (Grosser & Nel 2013). Learners need support and time to become competent in academic areas. They take up to two years to develop BICS, but up to seven years to develop CALP (Cummis 2014; Cummins 1979). Cummins asserts that the challenge for language teachers is to develop learners' ability to write in abstract ways as part of their developing CALP.

Moreover, when teachers are not adequately in command of the LoLT, they battle to increase their learners' BICS, and to improve the learners' cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Evans & Cleghorn 2010). It was apparent in the study by Evans & Cleghorn (2010) that teachers' English was generally sufficiently initiated to interact socially at basic conversational level, what was problematic was the teachers' ability to express themselves clearly and logically in a formal instructive context. Most of the teachers required more advanced English language proficiency and the expertise to assist learners to master the language (Evans & Cleghorn 2012). As Cummins first postulated in 1979 (Cummis 2003), if a teacher's basic fluency in the communicatory language is not sufficient to take learners beyond BICS to the CALP required to verbally convey what they have understood, both the teacher and learners will battle to interpret the content successfully.

Vygotsky's (1978) theory holds that teachers as adults should assist learners in achieving a level of English proficiency that the learners would be unable to develop on their own. In the absence of the necessary level of English proficiency, the teacher perpetuates the patterns of poor English. This conception is reinforced by Nel and Muller (2010) who posit that teachers' limited English proficiency negatively affects their learners' development of English as a LoLT. When the teacher is not adequately in command of the LoLT, interaction between teacher and learner is hindered. Very importantly, when the teacher is not adequately instructed in the basic pedagogical practice of qualified teaching, interaction becomes problematic. This notion is supported by Evans and Cleghorn (2010) who state that teachers are unable to

develop their learners' basic communicative skills if they themselves lack the requisite English proficiency.

The South African Department of Education (2008) and Trudell (2012) point out that teachers' have to have knowledge of English as a LoLT in order to teach all subject content. I support this view that ESL teachers should have appropriate knowledge to teach learners to become competent in reading and writing, as the lack thereof is the source of negative effects on the cognitive development when learning ESL (Trudell 2012; Hugo and Nieman 2010). During my teaching experience I have noticed that teachers often do not speak English well, they also lack interest in reading and writing English. It is obvious that lack of practice in reading and writing might limit one's chances of competence. For example, if reading and writing is part of a teacher's daily activity, such good practice may be transferred to their learners.

Researchers in the Alternative Educative Education Study project in South Africa have noted that teachers have been unsuccessfully taught to teach reading and writing in the L1 and the L2 (Phajane & Mokhele 2013; Trudell 2012). This essentially means that incorrect communication on the part of the teachers may result in misunderstanding on the part of the learners. However, Nel (2010) argues that learners and teachers, particularly learners in developing countries, who were presented with formal English teaching, still lack English proficiency; they cannot use the language, either in the written or the spoken form. Hugo and Nieman (2010) emphasise that training and support to improve the pedagogical strategies of teachers will boost their confidence in teaching English. I believe that this will improve effective teaching and learning in the classroom and I agree that most ESL teachers lack the methods or approaches required to teach an L2 (Phajane & Mokhele 2013). Inadequate and improper training in the theory of L2 teaching has been cited as a problem (Hugo & Nieman 2010). Furthermore, the link between teacher proficiency and the academic success of the learner is discussed by Uys (2006). Uys comments that effective teacher training in English as the LoLT is a key factor in enhancing the academic literacy level of learners in South Africa.

The above issues indicate that teachers lack the pedagogical content knowledge to teach English language (Phajane & Mokhele 2013). I posit that teachers have to be proficient in English in order to teach other subjects if they are to promote learners'

understanding (Hugo & Nieman 2010). Furthermore, Myburg, Poggenpol and Van Rensberg (2004) point out that if learners have an understanding of the concepts that the teacher is teaching, effective learning can take place. It is noted that teachers codeswitch to the mother tongue as a way of helping learners understand concepts and to promote a mutual understanding between teachers and learners. Although L2 English teachers cannot be blamed for the learner's low acquisition of English language, my observation as a teacher, teaching in a township school, is that English as LoLT is not used to the fullest in the classroom. There is the constant use of code-switching during lessons.

2.4.4   Code-switching (CS)

Teachers usually switch to the learners' main language to teach the content subject and continue teaching using the vernacular; however, learners are expected to answer tests and other forms of assessment in English. It is then that the cognitive development of SL learners will be negatively affected. Setati (2010) comments that CS brings very little understanding of the content subject and at the same time does not seem to provide proficiency in using the language, especially in language teaching where the goal is proficient language use. Based on this, I believe that CS produces a gap between learners' understanding and use of the English language, and the content language. Espinosa (2010) adds that if CS is overused, learners may not learn the new language.

If one considers that only 9% of South Africans use English as L1, Lehohla (2012), it can be deduced that the majority of teachers who teach through English as LoLT are ESL speakers themselves. Research suggests that the way in which ESL teachers learnt to speak English, and the way in which they teach learners using English as their L2, is a problem that has not been addressed in our education system (Lehohla 2012).

Cummins (2006) and Ball (2011) are of the view that the mother tongue helps learners to acquire English. Although I too am of the opinion that CS is good if it is used for clarifying concepts and not for simplifying concepts. Cummins further promotes the theory that two languages have common proficiency between them that is usually not visible. After learners learn a language they transfer the skills, ideas and concepts

from that language to the L2 that they learn. As such, motivation would play an important role for learners to acquire an L2.

2.4.5   Lack of motivation and skills

A great deal of research has revealed that there is a motivation gap in L2 learning (Saville-Troike 2012; Setati 2010; Cook 2008; Ellis 2000). Many learners are not performing better because they lack motivational push from the parents and teachers (Setati 2010; Cook 2008). Learners who are not competent in English usually come from a background which doesn't motivate them to learn a new language (Saville-Troike 2012). Therefore, learners lack motivational push to learn English from parents (Saville-Troike 2012). Moreover, some of them come from homes where parents are illiterate (Saville-Troike 2012; Setati 2010; Cook 2008; Ellis 2000). Hence, they only learn English at school from the teachers (Setati 2010). Based on the views above, it seems as if the English-speaking learner has more opportunities than a non-English speaker learner (Saville-Troike 2012; Setati 2010; Cook 2008; Ellis 2000). For example, there are more articles and books at home to read in English to motivate learners to learn the language (Setati 2010). Therefore, advanced English learners get a better job or perform better academically (Bhaskar & Soundiraraj 2013).

This is important given that Cook (2008) holds that the main determinant of L2 achievement is motivation. Ellis (2000) further postulates that if learners are motivated they will develop a positive attitude towards learning an L2. I maintain that motivation to learn an L2 includes the attitudes and emotional states that influence the level of effort put into learning an L2 (Ellis 2000). This is supported by Vygotsky's (1978) theory, which states that as a language occurs naturally, the social interaction between learners' environment and culture supports them to master a new language. Thus, a person's ethno-linguistic culture plays a major role in shaping the level of interaction with and access to the language used by the ruling group (Gacheche 2010). Therefore, this creates a barrier to L2 acquisition. This means that it is important for all South African learners in society, particularly in township schools, to be competent in English (Gacheche 2010). Inadequate exposure to English in the wider community might influence learners' limited acquisition of English especially in township schools (Gacheche 2010).

Therefore, in the following section, learners' socioeconomic status and its influence on the acquisition of English will be discussed.

2.5   THE EFFECT OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON LEARNERS' ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH

A number of researchers have confirmed a correlation between socioeconomic status (SES), learners' literacy and academic achievement (Ebersöhn 2014; Spaull 2012; O'Neill 2011; Fleisch 2008). Their findings show that ESL speakers who are struggling to acquire English often come from low-SES households (Whiteman 2007; Spaull 2012). UNESCO (2010) reveals that most inhabitants of low-income countries are employed in the informal sector. Children from these households are not exposed to the English language; a situation that impedes them in using the LoLT confidently at school.

Many English FAL learners are from township schools where there are no libraries; as a result, learners are not exposed to books or newspapers that can help them to increase their English vocabulary (Spaull 2012; Setati 2010). The paucity of necessary resources further inhibits English acquisition in L2 learners. In view of the fact that such learners also come from families affected by poverty and with parents who have little or no education themselves, it is understandable that such parents are battling to help their children at home (Spaull 2012; Setati 2010). As a result, learners lack a culture of reading and the motivational push to learn from their community and families. Ebersöhn (2014) and Howie (2008) maintain that English mastery has emerged as a predictor of wealth and social status in South African society. In other words, in South African schools, proficiency in English has a strong influence of the endless imbalances in learner outcomes. Learners should receive equal opportunity for education (DBE, National Education Blueprint 2013–2025) if the human capital required to be globally competitive is to be developed and learners are to be able to communicate well and effectively in the English language. I support Ebersöhn (2014) and Howie (2008), who argue that middle-class families that have the financial means are able to take their children to schools where their children learn English as L1 taught by native English teachers. I therefore do not blame parents who believe that the mother tongue will never put bread on the table.

Parents want their children to be competent in English for job purposes. However, Orman (2008) reveals that parents in working-class families can't afford to enrol their children in such schools, which means that learners' lack the opportunity to attain competence in the English language. Additionally, Fishman (1997) argues that learner ability in English is associated with social equality, like SES. Hence, a school system that uses English as the LoLT is geared for children from privileged homes, while children from under-privileged homes attend schools where the home language differs from the LoLT. Fishman's (1997) remarks were included in the PIRLS study, which highlighted the underachievement of South African primary school learners. Some researchers have linked specific socioenvironmental problems directly with the curriculum (Ebersöhn 2014; Vakalisa 2000; Henning 1998). This suggests that SES has an effect on learner accomplishment in relation to the curriculum (Ebersöhn 2014).

2.6 CURRICULUM

Phajane and Mokhele (2013) assert that one of the main purposes of the curriculum is to outline what should be taught in schools. However, teachers are generally not well acquainted with the various methods of teaching in the L2 (Phajane & Mokhele 2013). Since the new dispensation in South Africa, the ever-changing school curriculum has in fact merely resulted in its repackaging which might have contributed to learners' low acquisition of English (DoE 2010b).

The CAPS stipulate that learners should learn individually, in pairs or in groups, depending on the type of lessons. However, this is not the case in most South African township schools which have a teacher–learner ratio of approximately 1:55. This is supported by Bantwini (2011) and Nasvaria (2011) when they say that overcrowding in township schools hinders teachers' implementation of the curriculum. I posit that this also prevents the identification of individual problems in learners, especially learners who are not able to write and read. Furthermore, teachers are unable to check learner progress at individual pacing. While some learners learn a language faster than others, most take time, require practice, and learn through repetition. Because of lack of individual attention, some learners end up falling behind and failing to meet the necessary requirements needed to progress to the next grades (Bantwini 2011). Nevertheless, the CAPS assume that learners will have reached a standard competence in English by Grade 3 (DBE 2011). By the time learners reach the IP, they

should "be able to experiment with language to build meaning from word and sentence levels to whole texts, and see how a text and its content are related" (DBE 2011:12). This is not only the case in South Africa. A study conducted by Kambuga (2013) in Tanzanian primary schools, where classes range from 50 to 120 learners, indicates that large classes of learners make it impossible for teachers to pursue teaching that is adjusted to the learner's level of cognitive development. Bantwini (2011) explored the gaps between policy and implementation in the curriculum and discovered poor standards in many schools. In the school where this study was conducted, teachers expressed their feelings towards the CAPS. What I found interesting was that none of the teachers indicated positive support for the curriculum. Instead, teachers have indicated that the CAPS contain numerous formal assessment tasks that are impossible for them to complete. Therefore, they have to rush to finish them as required by the policy. This emerges in a context where teachers are already battling to cope with the large numbers of learners and most learners are struggling to pass. Moreover, facilitators have been prohibited from visiting classrooms by both teachers and their unions, who feel that the procedure is alarming and oppressive and is not assisting teachers. For example, the CAPS policy expects teachers to write out lesson plans and keep them in a file and subject advisors from the District are supposed to visit schools to check the teachers' files and learners' books. However, most teachers feel that CAPS is a burden as it overloads them with more administration. These are some of the reasons that teachers state for their negative view of the CAPS (Bantwini 2011).

2.7   CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework for this study is drawn from the works of Vygotsky (1978) and Krashen (1985). Vygotsky (1978) regards language as a social concept since it is developed through social interactions. He explains that engagement in social experiences supports children's knowledge acquisition. Vygotsky's theory (1978) emphasises that learners' culture can affect or shape their cognitive development. A child's cognitive development occurs in terms of what learners have already mastered and what they can do. Learners are supported when proficient speakers of a language use methods that include linguistic simplification, repetition and modelling. This support enables learners to function within their zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky 1962). Vygotsky (1978) introduced the ZPD as part of a general analysis of

child development and learning (Chaiklin 2003). Vygotsky postulates that social interaction allows learners to build new knowledge from their own experiences, by moving from what they already know (actual development) to new knowledge (potential development). Vygotsky describes the ZPD as the area between what learners can do independently and what they need to do with assistance. This theory places value on the role of interaction in language which is crucial to effective learning. This is vital for teachers to establish classroom motivation strategies, and also to recognise the effort made by learners. It is a known truth that motivation is fundamentally related to successful learning (Ellis 2000).

This study is further based on Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis (IH) theory. Krashen's (1985) theory has had a significant influence on L2 teaching practice and later theories. Krashen (1985) developed a group of five SLA hypotheses, also known as the monitor model. The five hypothesis model comprises the following hypothesis levels: acquisition-learning; monitor; natural order; input; and affective filter (Krashen 1985). Of the five hypotheses, Krashen (2016) identifies the monitor hypothesis as being involved in learning and not in acquisition. In other words, the monitor is employed for L2 speakers who have not yet mastered the language. Comprehensible input (C1) refers to the language that learners are exposed to and the hypothesis put emphasis on the C1. The input hypothesis proposes that when a learner's comprehension of language input has progressed moderately more than their present level that is when they progress in their knowledge of the language. Krashen (1985) refers to this level of input as "i +1, where "I" represents the learners' inter language and "+1" represents the next language acquisition stage.

Vygotsky's (1978) and Krashen's (1985) theories play a pivotal role in providing insight into the learning of a L2, which is the problem in this study. According to these theories the perfect way of acquiring a language is through natural communication. Furthermore, these theories believe that a child needs important interaction and association with native speakers (Vygotsky 1978; Krashen 1985). This implies that L2 learners require diverse opportunities to interact naturally with English-speaking learners to acquire the language (Vygotsky 1978; Krashen 1985). The main emphasis from both theories is that learners need to be provided with support through the use of linguistic simplification methods, repetition and modelling. These theories of SLA fit

well with this study as they provide an appropriate guide for acquiring an L2 particularly in township schools. Figure 2.1 presents the conceptual framework underpinning the study formulated from the literature review that guided this study.

Learners require instructional processes and support from teachers that suit their level of development. The teacher's input is not the only component that generates the possibility for SLA. Based on Vygotsky's ZPD, learners' potential to develop a language also depends on the assistance of parents and the community. Peer interaction also plays a crucial role in promoting effective learning. Language ability entails a gradual development of competence in a language, which occurs particularly when the speaker uses it in natural communicative situations (Hugo 2016; Yule 1999).
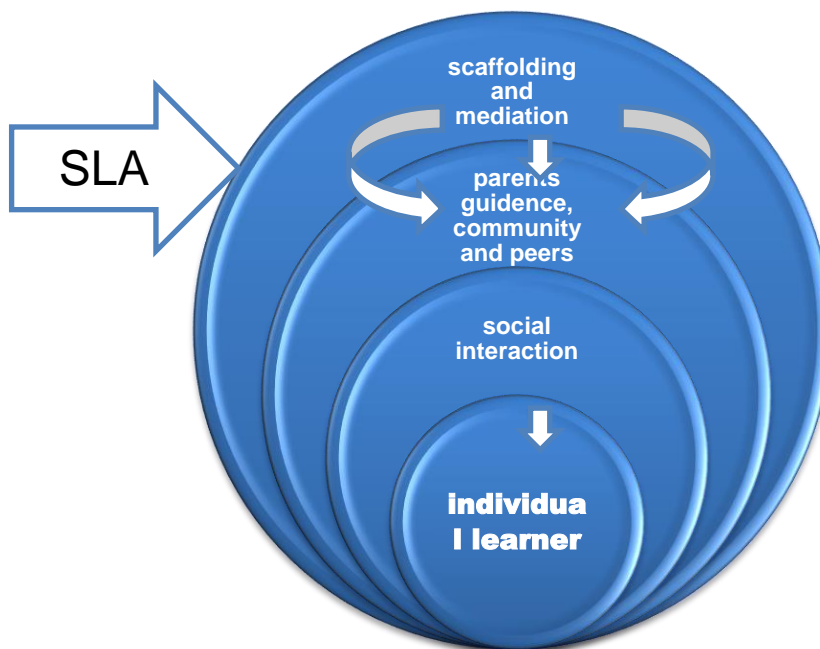
Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study guided me in making sense of the literature and also provided a framework against which to map my data. Scaffolding interlinked with Krashen's comprehensible input (CI). I understand this to mean that scaffolding is of the greatest important when learning to read and write. In brief, it serves as a fundamental directive for reading and writing. Scaffolding holds advantages for both L1 and L2 learners and, for L2 learners who read and write at the lowest grade level, more scaffolding will be required than for learners who are reading and writing above

that grade level. Furthermore, instead of additional scaffolding teachers should offer necessary support (Brown & Broemmel 2011). In terms of Vygotsky's ZPD, a child's development is supported by adults or more capable peers (Lantolf & Thorne 2007). An adult or a skilful person mediates between the learner and the problem experienced. In this regard, the ZPD is regarded as being similar to scaffolding, which enhances performance.

Furthermore, this is similar to Krashen's conception of I + 1. In scaffolding the objective is to fix the problem to assist the child to flourish. Accordingly, the objective is attained via a different procedure (Lantolf & Thorne 2007). Based on Krashen's input hypothesis, the learners' social backgrounds do not expose them to communicate adequately in English. As learners can acquire languages they are exposed to, their cognitive development emerges from what they have mastered. Learners' errors in mastering English may be traced back to their teachers' limited English proficiency.

Krashen's (2016) five hypotheses are important for this study because they will help me to explain the challenges that L2 speakers face when they have to use the LoLT. Consequently, Krashen's (2016) input hypothesis provides in-depth insight into L2 acquisition. However, views differ on the way in which an additional language can be best taught; factors that influence the ease with which a new language is acquired are still unknown. Different theorists have given various strategies concerning L2 acquisition, which is at the centre of enquiry in this study. Krashen (2016), who is a specialist in the field of linguistics has regularly been criticised as researchers have identified difficulties in what is called "operationalisation of the model". This implies that there is no individual way of affirming the origin of the knowledge acquired or learnt by a learner as a basis for use. Moreover, it is impractical to confirm the contrast between learning and acquisition (Saville-Troike 2012). Possibly the most pivotal difficulty in Krashen's (2016) input hypothesis is that L2 success must be based on input alone. To address this challenge, when including Vygotsky to Krashen's theory teachers ought, in their mediation use prepared sentences and vocabulary they know their learners will grasp. Furthermore, they should construct new vocabulary and language structures a little above the level of the learners' subject knowledge for improvement and progress purposes. This will assist learners to understand the LoLT and to be able to use it with confidence.

Krashen's and Vygotsky's theories state that learners can acquire the L2 if their social background exposes them to English communication with native speakers. However, the L2 learners in this study are from township schools where English is rarely spoken. Similarly, their environment does not expose them to English or to any form of English interaction. The reality is that English exposure is crucial for language acquisition, as according to Krashen's theory, the L2 must be comprehensible. Krashen's theory is especially noteworthy among other theories and has made a profoundly valuable contribution to the English L2 classroom. Also, it has formed the basis for significant viewpoints in current research on SLA. Having in-depth knowledge of Krashen's theory can assist teachers in generating suitable teaching strategies and evaluations that guide learners to L2 development. As such, the English LoLT classroom will establish adequate language practice that can promote effective SLA.

2.8   CONCLUSION

This chapter explored key literature on the acquisition of English second language learning. Furthermore, it highlighted the challenges faced by L2 speakers of English when acquiring English as a FAL and as the LoLT. Common challenges in regard to English acquisition include inadequate curriculum coverage; absence of teaching in the early stages; teachers' limited English proficiency; code-switching; and lack of motivation and skills to learn a language (cf. 1.4). The reviewed literature also focused on approaches to language teaching and explored the way learners acquire a L2. This chapter has presented various opinions by different experts on how SL is acquired. Factors that may impede learners' progress towards becoming competent and fluent in English language were also discussed. Vygotsky's theory of the ZPD in L2 acquisition and Krashen's (2016) input hypothesis were also considered to provide the framework by which I understand the English language acquisition process. The following chapter presents the different methods used in this study to collect data.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2, I provided an overview of the literature on the challenges that L2 speakers of English experience in acquiring English as LoLT. I also provided a conceptual framework that underpinned the study. Bearing in mind that this study explore the challenges that L2 learners experience in township schools, the main focus of this chapter is to present the research paradigm, methodology and design that I followed. Data collection methods and data analysis procedures are also discussed. The ethical considerations I adhered to were guided by what shapes suitable moral behaviour. Thus, I honoured ethical considerations to become a good researcher. The research questions, objective and aims of the study are as follows:

The main research question guiding this study is:

What are the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition?

Sub-questions

- What are the challenges faced by L2 English speakers when learning English?
- How does the teaching of English as a second language enhance the use of English as LoLT?
- To what extend would lack of English understanding influence learner achievement in various subjects?

Research objective

The objective of the study was to explore the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition.

Research aims

The aims of this study are as follows:

- To determine which learning theories have been formulated in the area of second language acquisition and what their inferences are for this study.
- To investigate the challenges that second-language English speakers face when they use English as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).
- To identify the problems that affect the academic performance of second-language English speakers.

3.2   PARADIGMATIC ORIENTATION

A paradigm is described by Creswell (2013) as the beliefs and actions that guide a field of the study. Moreover, Goduka (2012:126) reveals a paradigm as "the entire constellation of beliefs, values and techniques shared by members of a research community". Creswell (2013) defines a paradigm as a set of thoughts formulating a worldview that directs the investigation. Thus, paradigms have come to be regarded as similar to the nature of the research by way of their "core ontological and epistemological presumptions emerging from a distinct worldview" (Sefotho 2014:3). As a result, paradigms are "central to the crafting of research studies" (Sefotho 2014:4). A paradigm framework is made up of ontology (associates the reality of nature and its features, in this study the reality is how EFAL is taught in the classroom), epistemology (the researcher builds more knowledge from the views of participants), rhetoric (the language used in a research), axiology (the role values play in the research) and methodology (the methods applied in the process) (Creswell 2013). The basis of this study was to explore the challenges that ESL learners face when using English as the LoLT at school. An interpretive paradigm endeavours to understand phenomena through the meanings attributed to the situation through people's experiences and perceptions. In other words, an interpretive paradigm relies on the participants' views of the situation being studied (Mertens 2014). An interpretivist paradigm was used to gather information in order to seek answers concerning the worldview of the participants (Cohen et al. 2011).

The interpretivist approach applied in this study is understood based on its ontology and epistemology. Ontology is the reality of the nature of social beings (Scotland 2012). Moreover, it is "the theory and nature of existence of what there is, why and how" (De Jager 2012:9). An ontological understanding points to reality as intersubjective and is constructed on understandings and meanings developed on the social and observational levels (Mertens 2014).

In terms of ontology, reality cannot exist in a single form but in multiple realities (Mertens 2014). This means that reality is seen through and becomes relevant in an individual's eyes within a particular case (Pizam & Mansfeld 2009). Thus, in this study reality can be referred as the expression of what happens in the classroom by individual teachers (Goduka 2012). Epistemology allows for the most advantageous ways to study humankind and social reality (Battacharjea 2012). As a result, I wanted to obtain an understanding of the saturation through the participant's point of view (Scotland 2012; Nieuwenhuis 2011). Furthermore, the teachers' realities are based on their individual practices in the classroom (Henning, Rensburg & Smith 2011).

I opted for an interpretivist paradigm as I sought to explore the experiences of participants in their EFAL classroom. Thus, as a researcher my duty was to listen and observe the participants' side of the story, as well as to listen to the experience they had acquired in their English classroom. In terms of this paradigm, FAL teachers are in a position to clarify their practices and ascribe meaning to them (Mertens 2014). Interpretivism provided me with an epistemological lens with which to capture the meanings that participants ascribe to their world (Lichtman 2013; Nieuwenhuis 2011; Creswell 2013). The study focuses on the understanding of each individual's practical experience, which fits well with the chosen paradigm (Cohen et al. 2011). Interpretivism looks for reasons why, rather than people's descriptions (Mertens 2014). It also captures the participants' lives in order to interpret the meaning rather than to make generalisations (Neuman 2000). My understanding of this is that various experiences of the participants should be looked at in order to understand a phenomenon.

I favoured interpretivism as it allows for close interaction with participants. This could, however, have disadvantages as researchers could become emotionally involved and thus biased in their views (Myers 2008). To overcome this limitation and prevent

myself from becoming attached to the participants emotionally, I focused on research matters only. Interpretivists assign multiple generally formulated realities to participants (Mack 2010). As such I carried out this study from the point of view that knowledge is formed in multiple realities (Mack 2010). Accordingly, participants were required to give their own opinions and feelings regarding ESL teaching in the classroom (Nieuwenhuis 2012).

3.3   RESEARCH DESIGN

3.3.1   Qualitative approach

A qualitative research approach within an interpretivist paradigm was deemed important for this study, as it allows for the behaviour of the individuals to be observed. This means that a qualitative researcher depends on the participants' views of the situation being studied (Mertens 2014). The fundamental strength of qualitative research is its potential to come closer to the reality. To come closer to reality, I gained insight about the participants' real situations. Therefore, I attempted to understand ESL teachers' knowledge through their practices in the English classroom. I did this by talking with the participants about their experiences, perspectives and their social situations (Losifides 2011). Thus, a qualitative investigation exposed me to the learners' and teachers' natural environment. A qualitative design encompasses procedures of inquiry such as phenomenology, narratives, ethnographies, and case studies (Creswell 2013). Creswell (2013) maintains qualitative practice is valuable for collecting data to obtain background information. However, the disadvantage of a qualitative strategy is that it is time consuming and costly (Theron & Malindi 2012; Stake 2005). Despite this, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. An additional benefit of qualitative research is the participants' freedom to respond, considering the context and reasons (Losifides 2011). As such, I sought to enhance my knowledge of the way English L2 is acquired in the classroom.

3.3.2   Case study

A case study is an in-depth inquiry of a single unit (Stake 2005). Case studies may be either single or multiple (Yin 2014; Creswell 2007). Multiple case studies allow for analysing data within each setting and also across various settings, which differs from single case studies (Yin 2014; Creswell 2007). The researcher uses multiple cases to gain insight into the differences and the similarities among the cases (Baxter & Jack

2008; Stake 1995). Multiple case studies can be used to indicate contradictory findings or to specify similar findings in the study (Yin 2003). Moreover, it has been shown that the experiences formulated from a multiple case study are considered strong and good (Baxter & Jack 2008). The greatest advantageous of multiple case studies is that they provide a broader investigation of the research questions (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007). The disadvantage of multiple case studies, on the other hand, is that they can be very expensive and time consuming to apply (Baxter & Jack 2008).

In contrast, single case studies take the form of exceptional cases that are uncommon. Also, single case studies are relevant for cases that are extreme and rare as they provide knowledge of the phenomenon (Yin 2014). In addition, a single case study is suitable for studying a single thing or a single group (Yin 2003). However, when the study includes more than a single case this will require multiple case studies. To enhance my understanding of the challenges faced by L2 learners in the classroom, I employed a single case study because I was exploring a specific single case. Furthermore, my choice of a single case study was influenced by the need to have an insight on teachers' experiences and beliefs regarding English teaching. Single case studies create a high-quality theory as they provide additional theory when exploring a specific case (Yin 2003). Accordingly, a single case study helped me to gain a deeper understanding of the L2 acquisition problem in a township school. Other benefits include the fact that single case studies are rich and can fully describe the essence of phenomenon (Yin 2014). For this reason, the researcher can query old theoretical relationships and investigate new ones. Importantly, the essence of a phenomenon can be discussed by single case studies. This provides the researcher with an opportunity to look at sub units that are positioned inside a larger case (Yin 2003). Therefore, single case studies rely upon how many new details the cases unearth and how much is known. I applied a single case study as single case studies are not as expensive and time consuming a multiple case studies. Furthermore, a single case study provided me with an in-depth-knowledge of the question I am exploring in this study.

The following types of case study can also be distinguished, namely, intrinsic and instrumental case study (Yin 2014). Yin (2014) states that an intrinsic case study endeavours to explain and analyse a specific phenomenon. On the other hand, an

instrumental case study is employed for descriptive motives and to obtain insights into a phenomenon. This study draws on an intrinsic case study to report, analyse and interpret a particular phenomenon (Yin 2014; 2003). As such, specific cases may transpire that justify the authenticity of the study. The objective is to relate the case being studied to the challenges learners are dealing with in the classroom and not to master a broad social issue (Morrison 2011).

Intrinsic case study is generally undertaken to study a specific phenomenon (Yin 2009). Thus, the research should explain the phenomenon's specificity, which classifies it as being different from all others. In contrast, an instrumental case study uses an intrinsic case (where some may be more exceptional than others) to obtain deeper knowledge of the phenomenon. Intrinsic case studies can be expanded into instrumental case studies through an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Yin 2009; Stake 2005).

Case studies are valuable for data gathering, offering substantial depth of knowledge and analysis (Lichtman 2010; McMillan 2008; Denzin & Lincoln 2005). During the investigation process I utilised a variety of advantageous data collection mechanisms (Yin 2014; Creswell 2013). These methods included non-participant observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Using these methods, I collected vast amounts of information over a substantive period of time (Yin 2014; Creswell 2013). The participants shared their experiences and practices in teaching English to L2 learners, which gave a more in-depth understanding of the situation (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba 2011). According to Lincoln et al (2011) researchers gain an in-depth knowledge engaging with the participants which assist in understanding the findings (Lincoln et al 2011). For this reason and to gain broad insight, I involved myself in the broader experiential life of the participants (Cohen et al. 2011). My task as a qualitative researcher in this investigation was to understand, describe and interpret the information obtained from the case study (Yin 2014).

3.3.3 Strengths and limitations of intrinsic case studies

I opted to employ an intrinsic case study as I wanted to obtain rich data from participants and case studies have been shown to provide rich and holistic findings on phenomena. A case study allowed me to gain thick, rich interpretations of the phenomenon under study. Despite this advantage, some limitations may occur: case

studies have been criticised for their single unit usage, as it is difficult to generalise findings in case studies (Creswell 2013). In addition, Cohen et al. (2011) believe that case studies are liable to display observer bias, so they cannot be generalised. I used a case study because of its strength in allowing me prolonged visits to the sites. Nevertheless, some researchers may lack the money or time needed to commit to such an undertaking. Generally, case study is useful when there is a need to obtain a deeper knowledge of the phenomenon under study. Hence, it allowed me the opportunity to obtain in-depth and rich data from the participants (Theron & Malindi 2012).

Furthermore, colloquial language is also used in case studies (Yin 2009). Case studies verify the outcomes of findings (Morrison 2011; Yin 2009). Outcomes are more valuable than those from a huge lime scale data. These special features might carry the key to mastering the situation. In addition, case studies expose participants to challenging real-life situations. Participants may find them helpful and they add value to the situations they discuss (Creswell 2013). Case study is the ultimate method for answering research questions, with its strengths dominating its limitations.

Maree (2010:2) refers to the following possible advantages of a case study. Firstly, a case study promotes an understanding of a specific case by providing an in-depth description of that case. Secondly, it can be utilised to investigate a general problem. Thirdly, it can be used to create conceptual insights, or in examining the existing theory relevant to the case. Fourthly, case studies also shed some light on other, similar cases by providing general information. Lastly, case studies can be employed for the purposes of teaching, to enlighten broad academic and contextual facts.

3.4 SAMPLING

Sampling is the procedure used to select a section of the population for the research. Sampling is divided into two types, namely, non-probability and probability sampling. The researcher using non-probability sampling basically focuses on a small-scale sample. The difference is that in probability sampling all people have an opportunity to be selected. Moreover, the findings are more accurate. However, in non-probability sampling, it is not known which individuals are more representative of the population. Qualitative research is positioned on purpose-driven sampling and non-probability sampling strategies. The purpose of sampling is to acquire the richest source of

information to respond to the research questions (Babbie 2010). Non-probability sampling is a technique in which the samples are assembled in a procedure that does not warrant that all the human beings have the same chances of being chosen. This was the technique used for this study. Additionally, non-probability sampling assures that participants are chosen based on the subjective decision of the researcher as opposed to probability sampling. Thus, non-probability sampling is developed on the basis of "theoretical saturation" and "analytical generalisation" (McMillan & Schumacher 1997:443). Non-probability strategies are valuable for purely qualitative research. Purposive sampling is a "strategy to select individuals that are knowledgeable about the phenomenon of interest" (MacMillan & Schumacher 1997:443). As my aim was to understand complex societal phenomena (Small 2009), purposive sampling was used to select participants who were able to participate and consequently answer the research question (Patton 2014; Merriam 2009; Nieuwenhuis 2007).

The participating school was selected using the following criteria:

- The school is classified as underperforming; which implies that the academic performance of its learners as measured by the National Department of Education results on literacy and numeracy is below required standards. This is stated in the South African Government News or on the website annually.
- English is taught as an additional language.
- English is introduced as the LoLT from Grade 4.
- The participants went through the Bantu education system before 1994; they are all qualified teachers.

The three participants were chosen in order to explore the appropriate use of English and the interaction between them and learners when using English as the LoLT, as they are both L2 speakers of English.

3.4.1 The research sites

The study took place in a school in Alexandra Township, which is situated in Johannesburg East in the Gauteng province. In this school there is a general shortage of basic facilities and infrastructure. It is important to note the physical layout of the

school as the school structure informed the classroom features. The school is surrounded by many shacks and clustered houses which make it unsafe, as can be seen from the photo (cf. figure 3.1). The school is also overcrowded with 1746 learners and 54 staff members. It was well-built in 1942 and 14 mobile classes have been added. Classes range in size from 45 to 55 learners per class. The learner and teacher population in this school is entirely Xitsonga with the exception of a few Venda-speaking teachers and learners. The classrooms are cleaned by the learners every day. There is electricity in all classes.

The school is classified as Quintile 2 (Q2). Q2 is a no-fee school based on the income and unemployment rate prevailing in the community living within the school area to ensure that education is affordable to all children. Q2 schools receive more government grants than do Q3, 4 and 5 schools (Government Gazette 2004). Learners in this school come from disadvantaged homes where the home language differs from the LoLT. Learners also come from families affected by poverty, where parents have little or no education themselves. Figure 3.1 provides a photograph of the school in Alexandra township.

Figure 3.1: Picture of Alexandra Township showing school

Source: https://csg.dla.gov.za

3.4.2 Biographical information

Prior to visiting the school, I contacted the principal telephonically to ask for an appointment and to explain the purpose of the visit. The following day, I visited the school to explain the purpose of the research to the school principal and his deputy. I presented the letters of request to grant me permission to conduct this study. At the same time, I explained all the details regarding participation. The next step was to meet the teachers who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. I read the consent forms which the participants who agreed to take part in the study then signed. The distribution and signing of the learners and participants' consent forms was completed before data collection commenced. Finally, I requested teachers' timetables in order to schedule data collection.

Table 2.1 presents the participants' gender, age, teaching experience and qualifications.

Table 2.1: Biographical information of participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Teaching experience	Qualifications
T1	Male	41–50	16 years	SPTD
T2	Female	58–60	26 years	PTD ACE
T3	Female	51–60	26 years	SPTD ACE BEd Honours

Key:

T1– Teacher 1   SPTD – Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma

T2– Teacher 2   PTD – Primary Teachers' Diploma

T3– Teacher 3   ACE – Advanced Certificate in Education

                             BEd – Bachelor of Education

Biographical information was provided by the participants during the preliminary interviews, by filling in a biographical checklist with their details. The three participants who volunteered to participate in this study are ESL speakers who have had limited opportunities to use English as they were educated in their mother tongue (Xitsonga). In addition, two of the participants are members of School Management Team (SMT) (T1 and T2) as described below.

3.4.3   Description of participants
Teacher 1 (T1)

T1 is an EFAL and Economics and Management Sciences (EMS) teacher for Grades 6 and 7. He is also the Head of Department (HOD) in the IP. After he matriculated he wanted to study law. However, he could not afford to go to university due to financial constraints. He then settled for teaching as he was living next to a College of Education. He enrolled at the College and attained a Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma (SPTD) in Education. He was subsequently appointed to a school in Gauteng as an English Language teacher where he had been for 16 years at the time of the study. As the HOD, he is part of the school management team for languages. The reason why he opted for teaching is because to him teaching is a very important career. However, he claims that some teachers do not take it seriously as they believe that they get low salaries which lower the image of the teaching profession. Therefore, they feel do not valued by the government. He feels that these negative issues around teaching have a negative impact on learners who do not want to study teaching because of what they hear from their teachers, as well as the lifestyle they perceive when they view teachers. Despite these comments, T1 still regards teaching as a good profession which he would recommend to learners.

From this conversation and because of his 16 years' experience as an English teacher, I was eager to gain more information from T1. I was also very interested in knowing how learners' incompetence in English affects them academically.

Teacher 2 (T2)

T2 is a Mathematics and Sepedi teacher in Grade 6 and also the Deputy Principal. After completing her matric, she wanted to be a nurse, but her application was unsuccessful. She then decided to pursue a teaching career and enrolled at a College of Education in 1987. She completed her Primary Teachers' Diploma (PTD) in 1999. On completion, she battled to get a teaching post, but eventually got one in Gauteng province and started teaching in 1990. During the interviews she noted that she has a great deal of work on her plate as she is teaching two subjects and is a manager at the same time. However, she was excited as she had been appointed to a new post and she still has a passion for teaching. She mentioned that she always integrates

English during her mathematics lessons because she considers the mastery of English essential for learners to understand their content subjects. I am also of her opinion that all teachers must be language teachers. She said that as a manager she emphasises language teaching across the curriculum. In other words, English language teaching should not be a burden for English language teachers only but should be taught in all the different subjects. She seemed very motivated to integrate English in all subjects as she believed it might improve learners' low competence in L2.

Teacher 3 (T3)

T3 teaches Natural Sciences and Technology and Life Skills in Grades 5 and 6. She mentioned that after matriculating she was not certain of the course she wanted to do and opted for teaching as a last resort, although teaching was never her passion. Her decision to teach was influenced by a teacher whom she admired as a role model when she was at school. In 1986 she decided to enrol at Soweto College of Education for a Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma (SPTD). After completing the diploma, she battled to find work. Up until she got a teaching post in 1990. T3 has been teaching the IP for 26 years for her entire teaching career. While teaching, she also furthered her studies and obtained her Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). She continued studying for her Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd Hons) at the University of the Witwatersrand. I asked her whether her qualifications had had an effect on the way she teaches Natural Sciences in the classroom. She mentioned that although she had not specialised in Natural Sciences, her experience has modelled the way she teaches in the classroom. When I asked her how she feels about teaching today, she explained that she does not regard teaching as a good profession. Teaching is problematic today. She mentioned that the teaching profession has lost value, as the law doesn't protect teachers. Learners disrespect teachers and just do as they like, knowing that they are protected by the law. It would seem that learners have more rights than teachers.

T3's intention is to retire in June 2018 as she is turning 60. Her husband died last year which has also affected her a great deal. In addition, although she enjoys teaching Natural Sciences and Life skills, her learners keep on failing tests and exams especially in the Natural Sciences. She cited the LoLT (English) as a factor

contributing to the low performance of learners at school. She finds that learners are unable to understand concepts in English and find it difficult to write sentences or paragraphs in English. She said learners have to master English in order for them to understand other subjects.

The bibliographic details confirmed participants' teaching profession. All these teachers attended a College of Education, which certified them as qualified teachers. In addition, the teacher's biographical particulars provide information important for education research. I believe that the data collected will be helpful in answering the research questions in this study.

Information pertaining to the teachers' qualifications indicated that the three teachers (one male and two females) had extensive teaching experience. The two female teachers similar in age and had the same amount of teaching experience. On the other hand, the male teacher had taught EFAL for 16 years. These teachers were selected in order to investigate the appropriate use of English in the classroom. Moreover, I wanted to observe the way the teachers and learners interacted in the L2.

3.5   DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Figure 3.2 displays the data collection process followed in the study. It portrays the different data collection instruments used in each step of the qualitative study
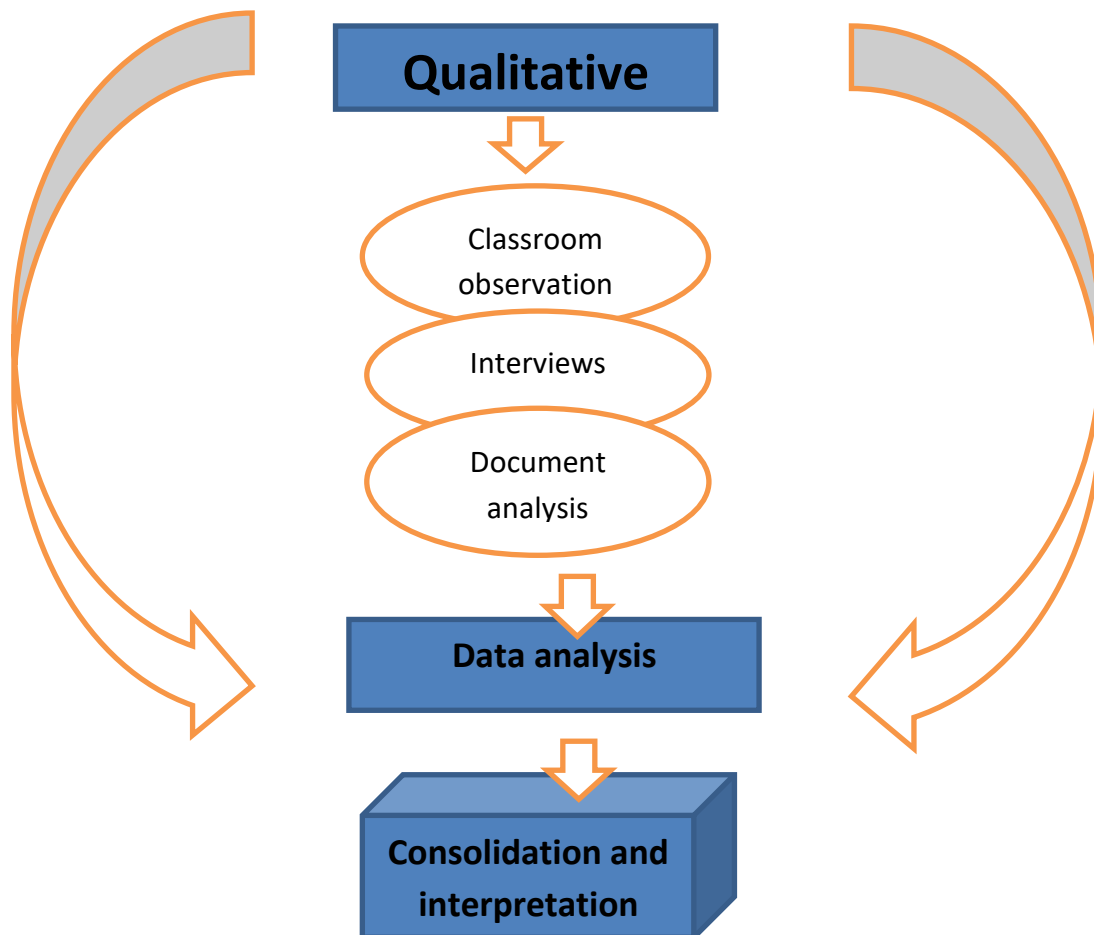
Figure 3.2: Data collection process

I employed three data collection tools, namely, observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis (Creswell 2013). I applied these multiple tools as I endeavoured to obtain accurate data that is trustworthy and honest (Myers 2008). As such, I applied triangulation as a tool for gathering the in-depth data required. The use of multiple methods in this study was intended to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings and to reduce the bias and limitations that may arise from a single method of data collection. In addition, triangulation is a powerful means to reinforce trustworthiness in interpretive research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). Furthermore, it results in a more consistent and experiential picture of reality.

3.5.1   Non-participant classroom observation

Classroom observations are qualitative, aiming for in-depth understanding of a problem (Patton 2014). Non-participant observation was employed as the key data collection method for this study. Maree (2007:83) clarifies that "observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and

occurrences without certainly questioning or communicating with them. Observation is an everyday activity whereby we use our senses and our intuition to gather bites of data".

I opted for non-participant classroom observation apart despite being conscious of its limitations. One of the limitations was my presence in the classroom, which could have impacted on the classroom activities and participants' behaviour (Patton 2014). To overcome this challenge, as participants might behave negatively in the presence of the researcher and the camera (Wragg 2012), I avoided contact or interaction with the learners.

I opted for non-participant observation as I did not want to interfere in the classroom activities (Salkind 2011). Therefore, my objective was to observe the direct behaviour of teachers and learners in the EFAL classroom (Wragg 2012), particularly how they interact in English as LoLT. Non-participant classroom observation allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the language challenges (Patton 2014). In addition, I had an opportunity to build rapport with the teachers. My focus was to gain an understanding of the study setting (Creswell 2014). Observation permitted the natural activity of the surroundings to proceed without disturbances (Salkind 2011). I kept my questions for after the lessons so as not to disturb the natural flow of the lesson.

Salkind (2011) explains that, during observation, the participants' behaviour can be recorded throughout using intermittent or continuous recording. I used an observation schedule to record notes of the behaviour and activities of individuals (Creswell 2013). The observation schedule was useful for recording facts and jotting down reflective notes regarding my observations (cf. addendum J). For this purpose, I included a reflection column where I recorded my perceptions and feelings regarding what I had observed.

I observed a total of ten lessons in EFAL, Mathematics and Natural Science Grades 4 to 6. The lessons took approximately 30 minutes each.

Table 3.1: Observation schedule

Lesson	Subject	Date	Observation time	Duration/ minutes	Number of	
					lessons observed	interviews conducted
1	Maths	12 April 2016	08:00–08:30	30	1	
2	English FAL	13 April 2016	12:15–12:45	30	1	
3	NS/TECH	13 April 2016	09:30–10:00	30	1	
4	English FAL	14 April 2016	08:00–8:30	30	1	3
5	Maths	15 April 2016	08:00–8:30	30	1	
6	NS/TECH	18 April 2016	08:30–9:00	30	1	2
7	English FAL	04 May 2016	12:45–13:15	30	1	
8	Maths	05 May 2016	12:15–12:45	30	1	2
9	NS/TECH	06 May 2016	13:15–13:45	30	1	
10	English FAL	06 June 2016	13:45–14:15	30	1	

The school utilises a timetable based on a five-day cycle in which every period is 30 minutes long, as displayed in table 3.1. The timetable is drawn according to the curriculum as indicated in the CAPS policy (Department of Basic Education 2011a). English FAL in the Intermediate phase is allocated 5 hours per week, Natural Sciences and Technology 3, 5 hours and Mathematics is allocated 6 hours. Table 3.1 also outlines lesson observations and interviews times and duration. The number of lessons observed and the number of interviews conducted are also depicted in the table.

3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews in qualitative studies are conducted to investigate deeper into the subject under discussion that participants think about (Yin 2014). Rule (2011) states that interviews are a two-way conversation for gaining insight from the participants. If used properly, interviews are a beneficial source of facts. According to Henning (2012), interviewing is the most admired method in qualitative investigation as it allows one-to-one talks between the participants and the researcher. It is also serves as a sort of guided conversation. The purpose of interviews is to view the world through the

participants' eyes (Gilson & Depoy 2008). This implies that I attempted to understand the real story behind the participants' experiences, in order to obtain in-depth information pertaining to what I was investigating. Nieuwenhuis (2007) states three main types of interviews, namely, structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and open-ended interviews.

I employed semi-structured interviews in this study. Semi-structured interviews were used as the intention of my study was to obtain the participants' experiences regarding English language use in the classroom. Also, because this study was paradigmatically situated in interpretivism (Mertens 2014), semi-structured interviews were chosen to collect data as they allowed participants the freedom to express their own thoughts (Creswell 2013) and to give their own point of view and interpretation of their situation. In support of the above statement, Denscombe (2010) asserts that data are built on emotions or experience rather than direct fact-based matters. Thus, interviews were conducted while taking cognisance of potential bias.

Through semi-structured interviews, knowledge about the behaviour, beliefs and thoughts of participants was acquired. Semi-structured interviews assisted me in terms of the different approaches used by teachers with ESL, as I was able to gain insight into the pedagogies used by participants in the English classroom. In addition, Borg (2013) affirms that in attempting to discover participants' beliefs and pedagogies they should be encouraged to talk. From that perspective, I used interviews to obtain facts from the participants about how they teach L2 and the reasons why they teach in that way. I conducted all the interviews personally, interviewing three participants who had experience and knowledge of teaching English as LoLT (cf. 3.4.3). Firstly, I conducted three interviews with T1 who is a member of the SMT at the school, secondly, I conducted two interviews with T3 who is not the member of SMT, and thirdly, I conducted two interviews with T2 who is also the SMT member. The interviews with the SMT members provided thick and rich input to the study on their experiences. In total, I conducted seven interviews each lasting 30 minutes (cf. table 3.1). T3's interviews were held in the staffroom, while the interviews with T1 and T2 were conducted in their offices. The participants selected an interview venue that they deemed was comfortable for having a face-to-face conversation with me. Prepared questions adapted from the research questions were used as a framework. I

conducted all interviews in English after the teachers' lessons and during their free periods. The first interview with individual participant was preliminary, during which I explained the entire data collection process. I convinced the participants of their own value and the importance of the research and encouraged the participants to be frank when answering questions. I explained my focus, which was to explore the challenges learners faced with in the EFAL classroom. In the second and third interviews the participants' activities and actions I had observed in the classroom were discussed (cf. Addendum L). At the same time I focused on participants' scheme of work. I also created an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their teaching practices and give reasons for these practices (cf. addendum M). Moreover, I asked the participants to identify the teaching knowledge gaps that they experienced in teaching English L2 and the methods they employed to minimise the gaps. To ensure a full understanding of what participants had expressed, I asked follow-up questions.

Interviews were audio-recorded, video-recorded and later transcribed into text. By spending more time in the field, I was able to earn the participants' trust thus obtaining information that I would not have been able to collect without this trust. Insight into the observed lessons conducted by the participants was acquired as well as their reasons for selecting those activities.

3.5.3   Limitations of semi-structured interviews

Although I used semi-structured interviews as one of the research methods, I was conscious of their limitations. For example, interviews can be biased and participants' honesty or dishonesty can affect the findings. Thus, to overcome this limitation, I listened attentively to the teachers' views and ensured a meticulous method of note taking. In addition, while semi-structured interviews are often used in research projects to obtain in-depth information directly from participants (Yin 2014), they do take time and require participants to answer fixed questions. However, they provide clarification and permit the probing of answers.

3.5.4   Documentation of data

I documented the information from my data instruments through field notes and video recording. I used the video-recorded interviews to reflect on the teachers' views and practices. To allow the participants to voice their experiences, semi-structured questions were used to in the interviews. These allowed the teachers to respond freely

without limitations. After every interview, I read participants' responses as a means of conformity.

3.5.5 Field notes

Babbie (2007:310) claims that "immediately after an interview the researcher must sit and jot down notes rather than depending on the memory". In accordance with Babbie (2007) and Mayan (2001), I recorded descriptive field notes of observations and experiences I made as a reflection of what emerged in the classroom. Therefore, I recorded detailed notes on what I observed and I jotted down all interviews questions which served as a guide in the interviewing process. In addition, I documented the data from the semi-structured interviews using the interview schedule, which I employed primarily to explain the study. Diverging from the main topic onto unrelated aspects was avoided as far as possible. Immediately after the observations I read through my notes together with what Mayan (2001:104) calls "notes on notes". Additionally, the field notes allowed me to record my thoughts when reflecting on what I observed (Mayan 2001). Therefore, these in-depth field notes helped me to make sense of the data (Creswell 2013; Merriam & Tisdell 2016). Through observing I acquired much information on definite classroom teaching practices. The interaction of participants was understood and captured in their setting to explore the English language learning challenges (Patton 2014).

The use of field notes benefited the study as they contained a detailed account of the participants and their actions. In addition, photographs helped me to describe the classroom setting. As such, they added value to my investigation as they served as an aid to meaning of the phenomenon. As such, I enhanced the accuracy of the field notes by recording the interviews.

3.5.6 Audio recording

For the purpose of this study, I used the audio recording to document the interviews. I audio recorded all the participants during the interview process. All the participants signed the consent forms as a way of giving their permission to be audio recorded (cf. addendum B). I thus recorded the participants' voices when discussing their teaching knowledge as it related to teaching the L2 learners (Mertens 2014; Silverman 2011). To maintain accuracy, I transcribed all the interviews into text. The use of audio recording was deemed most suitable as I was able to gain in-depth insight of the data

(Wahyuni 2012). Recording the participants in this way added value by supporting credibility, trustworthiness, transferability and confirmability in this study (Marshall & Rossman 2010; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Subsequently, field notes also allowed me to record the participants' views, as well as to express my opinion and reflections based on the practical realities of teaching and learning English in the classroom. I consequently employed various collection methods to develop my competence to weigh the findings of the study accurately (Lincoln 2011). I also enhanced the accuracy of the field notes by video recording the classroom observations.

3.5.7 Video recording

In order to conserve the activities and actions I observed in the English classroom, I gathered data by observing and video recording participants in their EFAL classroom. A video camera with a tripod was used to minimise distractions. The video recorder was beneficial for this study as it allowed me to reflect back on my observations. It also assisted in understanding the communicative reality and what transpired in the classroom. After every video recording I checked whether all the facts were in order and were logical so that each particular video was associated with a particular person. I then saved the recordings onto disk. Teachers supported the use of a video recorder as it contributed towards fairness (Yin 2014).

3.5.8 Document analysis

Creswell (2013) posits that methods of data collection include the perusal of public and private documents (e.g. official reports, personal diaries, or letters). Documents have value for exposing the words and language of participants in their absence. For that reason, they are more effective than other research methods. Furthermore, they are easily accessible and less costly. Data gathered from learners' activities allowed me to obtain a deep understanding of what I was researching, thus their activities were captured on a form and analysed. As indicated in the previous chapters, my focus was not only on English FAL, but on subjects that are taught through the medium of English. The selection of learners' activities was based on their overall classroom achievements; accordingly, I collected a sample of learners' activities after each observed lesson. Learners' written work was analysed in terms of the type of activity and tasks stipulated in the curriculum. In addition, learners' activities supplied critical information regarding English usage. Another document analysis method proposed by

Creswell (2013) is in the form of photographs. Therefore, I took photographs of the classroom and the teaching aids used during lessons (cf. figure 4.1).

Table 3.2: ANA English and Mathematics findings 2012–2014

Year		English (FAL)			Mathematics		
		4	**5**	**6**	**4**	**5**	**6**
2012	Total written	169	166	159	163	164	159
	Total passed	17	13	37	0	3	0
	Total failed	152	153	122	163	161	159
	Pass%	10	8	23	0	2	0
2013	Total written	169	167	159	163	159	159
	Total passed	17	13	37	17	0	0
	Total failed	152	154	122	146	159	159
	Pass%	10	8	23	10	0	0
2014	Total written	230	207	180	228	195	179
	Total passed	94	126	87	22	86	52
	Total failed	136	81	93	206	109	127
	Pass%	41	61	48	10	44	29

The table header "Subject and grade" spans the subject/grade columns.

Document analysis as a secondary data collection method added value to this study as it aided classroom observation. Through document analysis of the collected documents on the ANA results, findings pertaining to Grades 4–6 English FAL, Mathematics and ANA were also collected and were supported by the ANA Diagnostic Report 2013–2014 which is distributed to schools by the Department of Basic Education. These documents assisted in answering my research questions regarding learners' performance in subjects written in English as LoLT in comparison to subjects written in English as HL. Table 3.2 presents the ANA English and Mathematics findings 2012–2014.
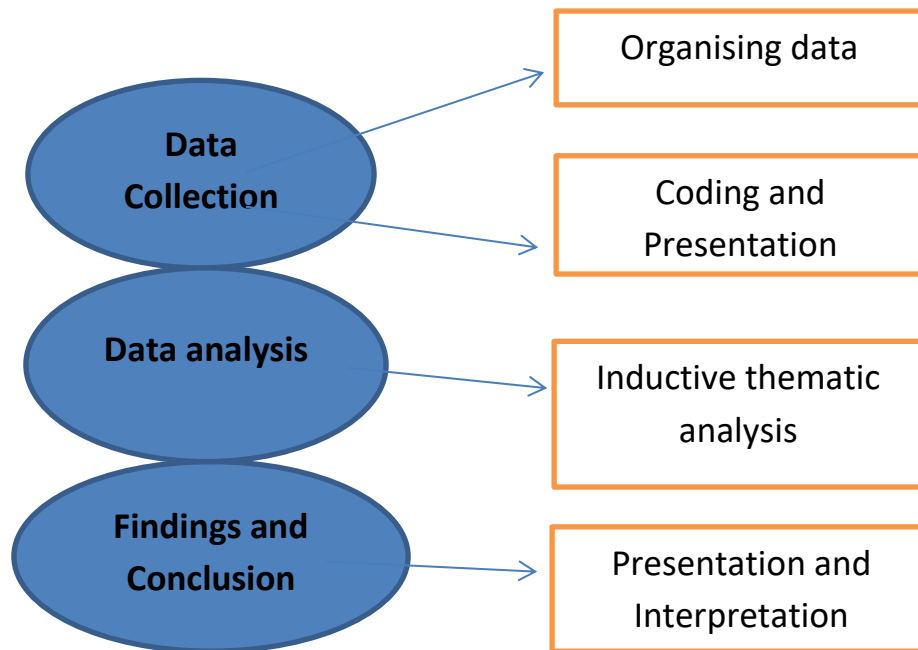
Figure 3.3: The final research procedures

The statistics relating to the ANAs is done annually after learners' examinations are completed. This was done in order to verify the interventions designed to assist learners who are learning through the LoLT. Therefore, I was interested in finding out about the way teachers provide feedback to learners. Ellis (2008) postulates that learners who make errors in English must be corrected. This implies that teachers need to correct learners' errors when they try to use English. The collected documents served as a true reflection of what is happening in the classroom. Moreover, the evidence from the learners' activities also confirmed participants' views as far as the learning of ESL is concerned. For example, learners' activities showed grammatical errors made by learners when writing a composition, using tenses and everything about the language. Additionally, samples of learners' work added value as they showed their vocabulary development, their writing and their use of grammar. To ensure verification, I analysed a journal with field notes of what I observed as discussed in this chapter (cf. 3.5.5). All documents cited above were collected and analysed to obtain invaluable answers to the research questions. Figure 3.3 illustrates the layout of the data collection, data analysis and findings of the study.

3.6   ORGANISING DATA

The collected data were ordered in sets, namely, observations, field notes, interviews and documents. De Jager (2012) claims that the first step in organising data is to classify the data by moving written and spoken words to typed files. Following Riessman's (2011) recommendations, after reading the data they were labelled, including interesting and key details highlighting any similarities. The labels were derived from data attained and could be relabelled if they were deemed unsuitable. Each participant was identified with a pseudonym and linked to their data (Maree 2010). I transcribed and coded the data with the aim of summarising and interpreting them (McMillan 2008). The coded data from the interviews were then examined with the intention of identifying themes (Maree 2010). Immediately after sorting and typing the data I read and reviewed them, saved them in a different file and printed a hard copy (Maree 2010). It is important to listen to recorded interviews many times (Maree 2010) and this assisted me to understand data. This process is known as "memoing". Memoing can be regarded as a thoughtful daily record whereby the researcher records the ideas and understandings gained from the research process and provides data to be analysed. Memoing enabled me to recognise patterns in the data (Cohen et al. 2011; Maree 2010).

3.7   DATA ANALYSIS

In qualitative data analysis keys provided by participants are identified. This consists of jotting down of notes, and markings (Riessman 2011). I used inductive thematic analysis as it is the best basic method for generating codes and themes, identifying recurring themes in the raw data (Braun & Clarke 2006; McMillan & Schumacher 2006). The data were analysed to obtain insight into the phenomenon I was studying.

I employed three data collection methods in this study – classroom observations, interviews and documents. Firstly, I analysed the data obtained from my field notes and observation schedule (Patton 2014; Riessman 2011). In addition, I transcribed the video recorded interviews verbatim (Creswell 2009). My intention was to understand participants' views regarding ESL teaching. Secondly, I organised raw data into categories, singling out patterns in the categories. All categories were split into subcategories (Creswell 2009; Nieuwenhuis 2007). Thirdly, I identified and clarified the categories. Reading through the data enabled me to code the data for

interpretation. Every two to three lines were coded in order to identify key words (Heading & Traynor 2005). Data and the codes were checked twice for consistency (Boyatzis 1998). Fourthly, I established similarities after discovering the recurrence of similar patterns in the data (McMillan & Schumacher 2006). I achieved this by comparing data from different data collection methods. Also, I checked for contradictory and harmful information that disturbed the pattern. Finally, I consolidated and interpreted the derived patterns and themes (Creswell 2009).

Themes were interpreted to find conclusions as well as to emphasise the importance of the study and make recommendations for further research. To check the accuracy of the findings, I went back to the participants for member checking. All three participants confirmed that the themes I had generated were a true reflection of what they shared. Table 3.3 summarises the data collection methods employed in the study. These methods were used as I believed they were best suited to answer my research question. I believe that the table will provide more insight.

Table 3.3: Summary of data collection methods

Data collection method	Research question answered
Classroom observations	How does the teaching of English as a second language enhance the use of English as the LoLT?
Semi-structured interviews	What are the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition?
Document analysis	What are the challenges faced by L2 English speakers when learning English?

3.8   TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness applies to the basic principle of morals in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton 2014). Data from observations, interviews and document analysis were analysed to maintain the trustworthiness of the study. Trustworthiness can be achieved by establishing credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Babbie & Mouton 2014; Lincoln et al 2011).

Credibility refers to the quality of the findings emerging from the data; as such I linked the findings of the study with reality in order to establish the truth of the research

study's findings (Silverman 2011; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Credibility was attained by obtaining the research findings that are rich and in-depth. I also ensured transferability by providing substantial information on the context of the study findings. The case study design enabled the participants to present their own experiences (Yin 2014; Merriam 2009). Thus, I regard case study as important in ensuring credibility as it allowed for prolonged research in the field. By spending more time in the field, I was able to understand and interpret the teachers' knowledge and experiences regarding L2 teaching (Nieuwenhuis 2016). In addition, this case study gives readers insight into ESL teachers' knowledge. On the other hand, dependability is not easily achievable in qualitative studies. Hence, the data collected were scrutinised over time to ensure accuracy and consistency (Creswell 2013). For this reason, I attained confirmability by taking measures to reveal accurate findings emerging from the data.

In my attempt to comply with trustworthiness, I also considered it worthwhile to ensure dependability in this study. Dependability is the measure of the stability of data over time (Rossman 2011). Dependability enabled me to verify the raw data collected. The dependability of data is evaluated by including an inquiry audit and stepwise replication. For this study, I used an audit trail as an approach to strengthening dependability (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that dependable study should be consistent and accurate. Therefore, I documented my field notes during classroom observations and interviews. These field notes were later transcribed in an attempt to confirm the findings. Furthermore, dependability may be enhanced by means of triangulation by applying alternative methods of data-gathering (Houghton, Casey & Murphy 2013).

3.8.1 Crystallisation

Crystallisation is another approach to add to credibility. To avoid bias it uses multiple views to examine the findings (Nieuwenhuis 2014). A relationship with the participants was built as I spent more time in the field because I aimed at obtaining thick and rich data and to have a deeper understanding of the participants' worldview (Creswell 2013; Theron & Malindi 2012). As such, I found myself fully involved in the research process (Nieuwenhuis 2016). Using crystallisation, I was interested in obtaining the new insight that could add value to this study. As such, I scrutinised what had emerged from the data to obtain answers to the research questions in this study. This assisted

me to make recommendations for further research. Nevertheless, I was mindful of any form of bias.

In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985) define member checking as important for ensuring credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) further state that member checking should happen throughout the research process when data is presented or conveyed to the informant to verify it for trustworthiness. Therefore, I requested participants to verify the authenticity of my findings and interpretations; thus member checking assisted me to confirm my observations. In addition, participants watched the video recorded lesson and explained what they had done or said during the lesson (more details will be discussed in chapter 4).

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are the standards or norms that distinguish between right and wrong behaviour (Resnik 2011; Creswell 2013). In research ethical considerations are critical. It is vital that as a researcher, I adhere to the ethical considerations of the University. Accordingly, the guidelines of the university were followed during the research (Creswell 2013). To maintain the ethical integrity of the study, I applied for ethical clearance from the ethics research committee of the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria; this was subsequently granted.

Prior to data collection, the District Director of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) granted permission to carry out research in the school selected. I therefore complied with the core ethics; that is, to ensure confidentiality of the findings of the study and to protect the participants' identity (Maree 2007). This involves obtaining permission to be interviewed, having consent letters signed and the destruction of rewritable compact disks (Maree 2007). Ethical guidelines involve policies concerning informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, privacy and voluntary participation (McMillan & Schumacher 2006). Additionally, I submitted letters of request to the school and the teachers involved. I also gave learners a letter for their parents or guardian to sign granting permission for learners to be video recorded, as the learners were minors. All the participants were informed of their rights in terms of voluntary participation and confidentiality (Salkind 2006). The following sections discuss critical issues related to the protection of the rights of participants in the field (Salkind 2006).

3.9.1 Protection from harm

As a researcher, I was cognisant of the fact that I must not disclose information that could harm the participants (Giordano, O'Reilly, Taylor & Dogra 2007). Thus, every attempt was made to reduce the risks to the participants. This was done by complying with the ethical behaviour stipulated in the informed consent forms.

In addition, I protected the participants from any psychological or physical harm that could happen as a result of participating in this study (De Vos 2005). Although the participants freely volunteered to participate, I knew that they might sometimes feel uncomfortable sharing their experience. As such, if participants are worried, depressed or guilty this can result in psychological harm (Neuman 2011). For this reason and because participation in the study could be more than could be handled by the individual, I minimised the risks of psychological problems. I also made the participants aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

3.9.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality refers to the protection of entrusted information (Henning 2011). A trust relationship between researcher and participants is essential in promoting confidentiality (Henning 2011) and to ensure the integrity of the research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), researchers have a responsibility to secure participants' confidences and to protect the data from being read in public. Thus, confidentiality was maintained by making a great effort to safeguard the privacy and identity of participants. As a researcher, I protected information disclosed by participants and did not use it inappropriately.

Confidentiality between me and the participants was established. The main aim of the research was presented to the participants. The matter of participants' confidentiality and anonymity was clarified when requesting their participation (Henning 2011; Shank 2006). Participants' names were not stated thus they remained anonymous throughout the study through the use of pseudonyms, namely, Teachers 1, 2 and 3. Confidentiality is sustained when any information about the participant is treated confidentially (Henning 2011).

Prior to video recording I trained the assistant to observe ethical principles and followed a number of ethical procedures to adhere to ethical issues: Firstly, the

assistant was given a letter of request to assist with video recording (cf. addenda E). The letter contained detailed information on ethical considerations including protecting the participants' rights and privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Also, I made the assistant aware that he could withdraw from videoing any time. The assistant acknowledged the ethical regulations by signing the consent form. He video recorded all classroom observations activities and I kept the video camera after every recording. The assistant was aware that all the information recorded would be used only by me for research purposes. Making use of an assistant enabled me to focus on the observations and make of field notes without disruption. The assistant is a general worker, a parent at the school, Xitsonga speaking and was known by many teachers at the school which made working with him comfortable for all. Teachers were welcoming and communicated with him in Xitsonga, their mother tongue. He clarified some of the concepts used by teachers in Xitsonga as it is not my home language. I always communicated with participants in English. During classroom observations, technical problems with connecting the video camera to the tripod were experienced. Therefore, another video camera was used.

3.10   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I described the methodology used in gathering data for this study. My intention was to give explain the approach I followed, from undertaking the research, to the real data collection. The chapter explored the choice of research design, data collection mechanisms and sampling techniques. I also presented the selection of the research site and the participants of the study. The way the data were collected and analysed was also addressed, as was the ethical process complied in this study. Measures undertaken to ensure trustworthiness were provided. In chapter 4, the analysis and interpretation of the data are presented.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3, I described the research design and methodology selected for the study. I explained the selected research paradigm, and the methods of data collection and data analysis. In this chapter, I provide the description of three participants and the findings obtained from the data collected from classroom observations, interviews and document analysis. I will also present the findings by first describing the categories, and then the sub-themes that were formed based on the categories, and lastly, the themes that emerged. These presentations are interspersed with comments from my field notes.

The findings and interpretations of the data are presented in the form of narratives, figures and tables. The interpretation of the findings is based on the following research questions:

The main research question:

What are the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition?

The following sub-questions were formulated to assist in answering the main question:

- What are the challenges faced by L2 English speakers when learning English?
- How does the teaching of English as a second language enhance the use of English as LoLT?
- To what extend would lack of English understanding influence learner achievement in various subjects?

Research objective

The objective of the study was to explore the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition.

Research aims

The aims of this study are as follows:

- To determine which learning theories have been formulated in the area of second language acquisition and what their inferences are for this study.
- To investigate the challenges that second-language English speakers face when they use English as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT).
- To identify the problems that affect the academic performance of second-language English speakers.

One of the goals of this study was to explore second language learning of learners in different subjects. My focus was to observe language use during interaction between participants and learners during lessons. I also explored the strategies used by participants to enhance learners' learning of the LoLT. Participants were observed while teaching lessons and they shared their views regarding ESL teaching during interviews.

4.2   PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

The participants in this study consisted of three ESL teachers who had extensive teaching experience. It was important to understand their autobiographical journey as described in details in chapter 3 (cf. 3.4.3). In this study, I identified them, using letters and numbers, as T1 for Teacher 1, T2 for Teacher 2 and T3 for Teacher 3.

T1

T1 is a 41-year-old man and has been a teacher for sixteen years. He is also a member of the school management team and is HOD of the IP. He loves to participate in debate and public speaking. He is also a soccer coach and loves soccer, having played soccer at school. His passion has always been to be a teacher as he views teaching as an important career. During the classroom observation his love for teaching was apparent and I admired his honest and genuine approach. He sought to involve all the learners during his lesson.

T2

T2 is an experienced 58-year-old deputy principal and teaches Mathematics and Sepedi. Teaching was not her first choice of career. After completing her matric, she dreamt of being a nurse but when her nursing application was turned down, she applied successfully to become a teacher (cf. 3.4.3). She subsequently developed a love of teaching and is a good motivator. I loved her unique style and her ability to identify learners who required extra help in class. She always welcomed me to her classroom with a smile.

T3

T3 explained that she took up a teaching career because of her admiration for a previous teacher who was her role model. In particular she loves teaching the younger learners and has taught in the IP for her entire 26-year career. She explained that she especially enjoys teaching the Natural Sciences. During her lessons she used interesting methods and teaching resources that worked amazingly to encourage mass participation by learners by stimulating their ability to think critically (cf. figure 4.1). The learners' excitement during her lessons was tangible. She is a wonderful teacher and very kind.

4.3   OBSERVATIONS

The classroom observations of the three participants' lessons revealed that L2 learners experience massive challenges when they learn through English as the LoLT at school.

As claimed by Pretorius (2012), learners reach Grade 6 without the requisite English Linguistic skills to enable them to achieve academically. Learners made more grammatical errors when they used English. However, they are expected to have the requisite English Linguistic skills in the IP phase as they were exposed to English in the foundation phase (Pretorius 2012). This led to high-frequency use of CS in most of the lessons especially during question and answer sessions. This was done because learners were unable to engage in classroom discussion in the LoLT and were therefore allowed to as and answer questions in the vernacular. Although,

teachers claimed that CS was used to clarify concepts, it seemed as if it was used to simplify concepts.

It became apparent that learners answered more questions when permitted to use their home language. They were able to understand the concepts better when their teachers use CS. Although, it was pointed out that CS brings very little understanding of the content subject (Setati 2012; Espinosa 2010). Moreover, it does not provide proficiency in language use (Setati 2012).

4.4   INTERVIEWS

It was evident from the interviews that L2 learners are battling to cope with English as the LoLT. If learners were able to master the English language, it would assist them to learn effectively (Spaull 2012; Setati 2010). The findings show that teachers were not adequately equipped to teach a L2 and, in addition, they lack knowledge of teaching English as a subject (Ebersöhn 2014; De Jager & Evans 2013; Phajane & Mokhele 2013; Trudell 2012).

Based on the findings, this situation has resulted in numerous problems in relation to teaching and learning and contributes to the poor performance of learners in different subjects (Grosser & Nel 2013). The huge problem is that if learners are unable to master English they will automatically fail the various subjects that are taught through the LoLT (Makoe & McKinney 2014). As such, learners in this position are faced with the double challenge of learning English as the LoLT and as the subject (Makoe & McKinney 2014).

During interviews, teachers claimed that most learners do not do their homework. In addition, learners lack support from their parents in terms of assisting them or even just checking that they have done their homework (Spaull 2012; Setati 2010). This means that the teachers end up helping them with their homework during contact time. From what was stated by the participants during the interviews, learners struggle to perform academically in their content subjects (Grosser & Nel 2013).

4.5   DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The learners' school-based results and the ANA results were scrutinised. The diagnostic investigation of the languages of Grade 4–6 ANA showed that learners

experience challenges in comprehension, language structure and writing (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). In Mathematics, learners are unable to read relevant mathematics operations and constructing sentences (ANA Diagnostic report 2014).

An analysis of learners' scripts indicated their inability to understand and interpret a text in the story. Poor story writing and lack of vocabulary to understand questions was also discovered (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). Thus, it appeared that incompetence in summary and story writing led to the high failure rate of learners (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). Many learners are failing the ANAs because they do not understand the questions which are written in English (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). The findings indicated learners' inability to use various figures of speech and lack of vocabulary to understand their meaning. It was noted earlier on that learners who performed remarkably better are those who wrote ANA in HL rather than in EFAL (Motshekga & ANA Diagnostic report 2014). In other words, learners lack a strong foundation of English as FAL to learn different subjects. According to the findings, learners' poor performance in ANA could be a result of an inadequate introduction to English in the Foundation Phase (Wessels 2016). Adding to this problem, EFAL is allocated fewer periods in this phase – three hours a week, while the HL is allocated eight hours which perpetuates the problem.

The findings revealed the overall decline in results in subjects written in EFAL across all provinces as is evidenced in the ANA results (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). The assessment tests point to learners' lack of understanding of the concepts assessed, such as graphs and an inability to understand place value (ANA Diagnostic report 2014). Moreover, learners failed to complete number patterns and to count in intervals. In addition, during interviews participants related learners' errors when solving word problems to poor communication skills. From the participants' perspectives learners lack understanding of the language used in mathematics.

Thus, the findings in this study confirmed that learners lack adequate Linguistic skills to become competent in the LoLT. On that note, it was also found that activities given to learners in their work books were limited to communicative competence. The findings indicated that learners were unable to understand questions or to answer questions in English. This implies that learners lack communicative competence to express themselves freely. Therefore, the learners' chances of mastering the

language appeared slim. However, teachers taught according to the knowledge they have, their focus was more on grammar rules and language structure when writing (Heugh 2011). In addition, learners' sample of work (cf. figure 4.3) displayed spelling and grammatical errors made by learners when writing (Heugh 2011). Despite that, learners' activities were formulated with regard to a text-based approach. In accordance with the findings, a text-based approach was not consistently implemented. Based on these findings, learners' errors contributed to their poor performance at primary level as well as in the higher grades (Richards and Rodgers 2014; DBE 2011). Thus, a lack of knowledge of teaching approaches for teaching SL learners contributes to the challenges learners are experiencing in learning to read and write in L2 (Richards and Rodgers 2014).

4.6 CATEGORIES IDENTIFIED FROM THE DATA

4.6.1 Category 1: Learners' low academic achievement

Given that learners have just commenced with the usage of English as LoLT in Grade 4, their incompetence in English as a subject is evident. This infers that if learners lack English competence they may fall behind and run the risk of failing. Teachers 1 and 2 commented as follows:

> More of the subjects are conducted in English. If learners lack the English competence they fall behind. Automatically they fail. One other thing is that our learners come from a background which does not encourage them to learn English. Most of the parents are illiterate; there is no one to assist learners to become competent in English. For the homework, I always try to assist such learners to write after school before going home. The other advantage is that there are homework assistants who assist such learners (T1, interview 11 [Addendum M]).
>
> Sometimes it is difficult to keep learners at school for the homework due to some duties they carry after school. Some learners fetch their siblings at various schools (T2, interview 8 [Addendum M])

4.6.2 Category 2: Learners' limited English proficiency

Participants mentioned learners' limited English proficiency, as shown in the following:

The main challenge is that learners are unable to read, write and participate in the LoLT. I usually encourage learner interaction by providing them with opportunities to talk and engage them in classroom discussion and argumentation in the form of a dialogue (T1, interview 2 [Addendum M]).

Yes, mostly I experience communication problems in class as our school caters for learners from a country like Mozambique and from Limpopo province. Such learners do not have basic skills of English. English learning and teaching becomes difficult in the classroom (T1, interview 1 [Addendum M]).

When teachers were asked how they stimulate English communication in class, T2 said:

I prefer to use HL when I introduce the lesson. This means that I use CS to clarify mathematical concepts (T2, interview 4 [Addendum M]).

4.6.3   Category 3: Barriers to effective language learning

T3 cited overcrowding and socioeconomic status (SES) as reasons that prevented learners from achieving academically:

Overcrowding is one of the obstacles that hinder us from giving learners individual attention. Moreover, we are unable to give learners who are battling to read and write attention (T3, interview 7 [Addendum M]).

According to T3 teaching a large class is not an easy task as teachers are unable to attend to learners' needs individually. It is also difficult for them to recognise learners' names. (Field notes 06 May 2016)

A number of researchers indicate a link between SES and learners' academic performance (Spaull 2012; O'Neill 2011; Fleish 2008). These researchers claim that learners' low proficiency in English is determined by the environment they come from. I observed that the lack of resources in the township school limited learners' vocabulary and had an impact on their English competence. T3 highlighted that

Several children who are from literate families are likely to perform well academically. I mean that their English competence is far better than those who are from illiterate families (T2, interview 7 [Addendum M]).

T2 emphasised that learners' social backgrounds have an impact on learners' academic achievement. This was noted by all the teachers as they maintained that they witnessed that on a daily basis.

4.6.4 Category 4: Teachers' low proficiency in English

This category addresses ESL teachers' own inadequacies in teaching English as a subject and their inability to enhance learner competence in English. During the interviews I commented in my observation notes on the views of the teachers regarding SL teaching.

Participants confessed that they have gained more experience in teaching other subjects, which had occurred as a result of their years in the profession and from their teacher training. This includes the mastery of teaching as a career. However, they lack the pedagogical content skills for teaching English as L2 (Field notes 06 May 2016*).*

I believe this to mean that teachers need pedagogical skills that can assist them when teaching learners to perform well in English and subsequently the LoLT. It is important for them to understand how English should be taught, since English competence is vital in terms of the LoLT and for communication worldwide. Participants were asked if the way they were taught English at school differed from the way they teach it today. T1 responded as follows:

There is vast difference. The actual language of communication was mother tongue. English was used for writing (T1, interview 13 [Addendum M]).

Participants confessed that they lack knowledge of teaching English FAL. It is clear from the interviews that ESL teachers lack teaching strategies and approaches to teaching the English language. Their own inadequacies in English meant that there is no room for learners to master English.

4.6.5 Category 5: Teachers' experience in teaching English

During the interviews it was noted that T3 encouraged learners to use English in her lessons.

> *T3 used thought-provoking questioning methods. She mentioned that during her lessons learners were not spoon fed. They discovered answers on their own as she believes in the self-discovery method* (Field notes 13 April 2016).

T3 explained how she varies her teaching methods to enhance learning.

4.6.6 Category 6: Time management

Time was not effectively managed as the participants implemented lesson plans according to the periods allocated in the CAPS documents, where, as the participants indicated, the time allocated for English FAL is very limited. Therefore, they always had to teach faster than was comfortable for the learners to complete the daily activities allocated for the day. Additionally, teachers had to meet the target for completing formal assessment tasks for each term. Subsequently, they found it difficult to attain the day's prescribed goal within the time allocated.

4.6.7 Category 7: Learner support and establishing a conducive atmosphere

I asked the participants if they created opportunities for learners to feel free to answer questions in the classroom. Teacher 2 explained how he encourages learners to participate freely in discussions in the classroom:

> Yes, that is what I always do. I give learners activities to discuss in pairs or groups as I have done in the place value lesson. Remember I even encouraged learners to go to the front and work out the answers on the board. Sometimes I ask learners to explain their answers (T2, interview 3 [Addendum M]).

T3 highlighted that in her Natural Sciences lessons she always uses teaching aids to enhance learning. The use of teaching aids also creates a conducive teaching and learning atmosphere for learners.

Natural Sciences lessons are commonly experiments therefore require collaborative interaction (T3, interview 12 [Addendum]).

Figure 4.1: Display of metal and non-metal objects inT3's classroom

T3 used innovative ideas to improve social interaction in her lessons and, in the lesson observed, all learners participated actively in identifying the properties of metal and non-metal. This approach guided learners and allowed them to communicate effectively in English, as well as developing their ability to think critically. She commented that:

> I select topics that stimulate classroom discussion. However, learners turn to make a loud noise which is annoying sometimes. At times they do presentations in front of their peers and engage them in a dialogue (T3, interview 5 [Addendum M]).

In addition, T3 created an opportunity to teach writing skills in her Natural Sciences lesson. She instructed learners to write metal and non-metal objects on the board. Learners took turns to write the correct spelling of "**plastic plate**" and "**window frame**". Although this is a commendable effort in improving English skills, some errors were noticed, as shown in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.2: Presentation of learners' writing on the board

T3 assisted learners to write the correct spelling words on the board. Finally, learners wrote a spelling test on the properties of metal and non-metal.
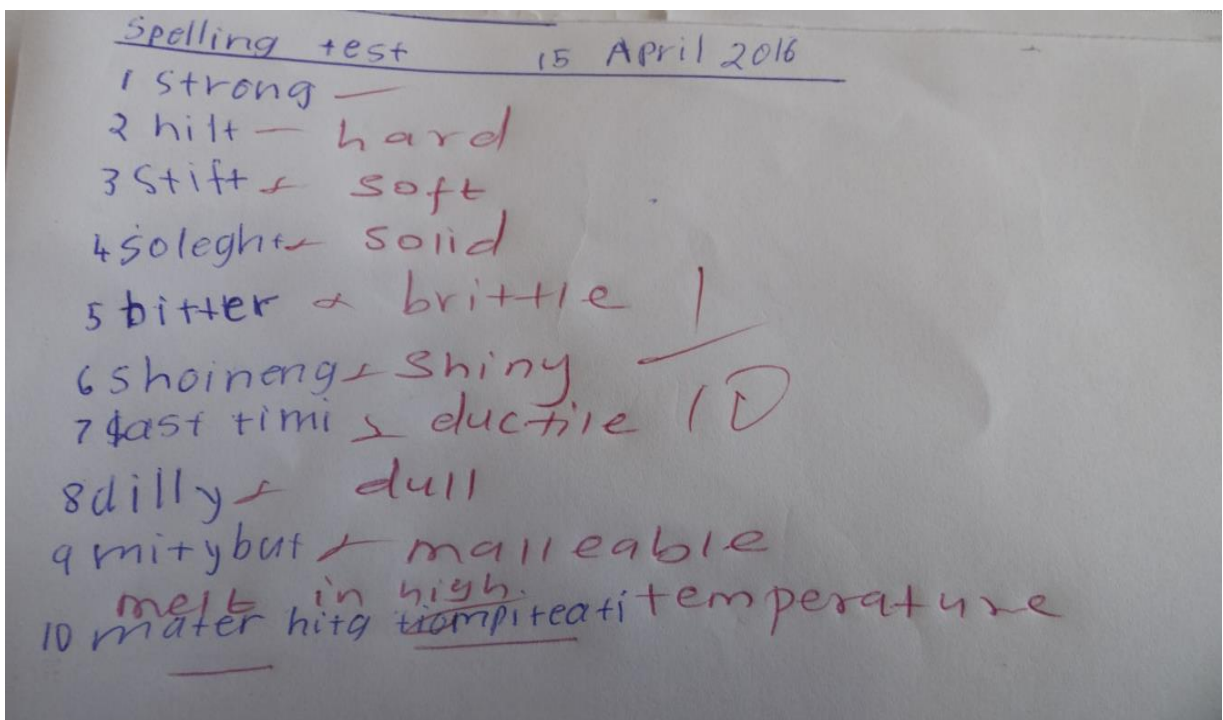
Figure 4.3: Samples of learner's spelling test in T3's classroom

T3 emphasised writing in her class. She stated that she gave learners writing activities to improve their writing skills. I noted with interest that she integrated English with Natural Sciences. The samples shown above indicate that she has marked both the spelling tests. The two learners got most of the words wrong and the other learner got all of them wrong. The texts above confirmed learners' problems in writing in all subjects (ANA Diagnostic report 2014).

T3's strategy promoted English communication in the classroom. Learners were encouraged to write their presentations in groups.

4.6.8   Category 8: Motivation and encouragement

Teachers' created a positive classroom environment which guided and motivated learners to learn the language. Therefore, they came up with different approaches which they were convinced would enhance language learning. T1 revealed that he gives support especially to learners who are struggling with their subjects. In addition, T2 encouraged learners to excel by setting higher goals for them. T3 highlighted that she always motivated her learners by praising them for giving answers. Participants shared their motivational strategies as follows:

> I gave feedback to learners and a chance to improve. This was useful especially for struggling learners. In addition, they stayed motivated to correct where they went wrong. It also opens a room of improvement for them. I created a positive environment of extra classes. I also included lessons in games so that they don't have tension. As a result, learners became free during learning activities. Adding fun activities made learning more interesting especially for struggling learners (T1, interview 16 [Addendum M]).
>
> I made sure that learners knew my objectives and expectations. By so doing, learners were always motivated to learn. I also made it clear what learners had do and accomplish. I accelerated learners by setting higher goals especially for those who excel. Such learners turn to achieve higher than expected (T2, interview 11 [Addendum M]).
>
> I rewarded my learners with sticker charts and by putting stickers in their books, where they've done well. This encouraged my learners to even work harder than before. They always aimed to achieve higher (T3, interview 9 [Addendum M]).

T1 indicated that he took into consideration the abilities and different needs of learners. This created a conducive environment for learning. He mentioned the following:

> I mixed up my lessons in order to ensure that I met the different abilities of my learners. I know that they have different abilities. By so doing I kept them motivated to work more. I also assigned them different classroom duties. This was a good way of promoting team work. It gave learners a sense of belonging and an opportunity to take turns in leadership roles. Gradually, they developed self-confidence and felt important and valued (T1, interview, line 17 [Addendum M]).

T2 indicated that in her class all learners are motivated to work and even compete and share good practice. She explained that she used positive competition to motivate learners to work even harder and to excel. Learners did group work related to presentations or projects. This allowed all the learners to showcase their talents or abilities. Furthermore, T3 created a safe environment for learners to learn, free of unruly behaviour:

> I have created an environment where everyone feels free to answer questions. Learners were challenged and kept engaged. My learners knew that there was always a room for improvement. When they were wrong, they became motivated to argue and to know the correct answers (T3, interview 10 [Addendum M]).

4.6.9   Category 9: Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum

The participants shared their insights into the curriculum. They explained that they have acquired more knowledge of GPLMS than CAPS, although the participants use the CAPS document and they teach according to what is expected by the curriculum. However, they seemed dissatisfied with the CAPS curriculum

Participants indicated a limited knowledge of the strategies that the CAPS documents demand. During the interviews two participants indicated their concerns regarding the ever-changing curriculum and stated their anxiety about the CAPS, but their satisfaction with the GPLMS:

I have undergone GPLMS training for quite a long time. The lesson plans were easy to implement. Unlike CAPS which require us to write our own lesson plans. The lesson plans were used in adherence to learner's workbooks by the Department of basic education provision. We were told that the GPLMS is CAPS compliance. However, we are now told to stop using GPLMS but to start implementing CAPS. This situation it is so confusing, the GPLMS was easy to follow we were supplied with more teaching aids. This created effective teaching and learning of English literacy. In contrast, in CAPS we are required to create our own learning support material. This includes posters and flash cards. Anyway, I am implementing CAPS but I still use GPLMS as a strategy (T1, interview 7 [Addendum M]).

I had a very good experience of GPLMS than CAPS. The lesson plans were more understandable. With CAPS I am required to make my own lesson plans that are not good enough (T2, interview 9 [Addendum M]).

4.6.10 Category 10: The gaps between actual language teaching and the curriculum

In the EFAL lessons observed, each lesson was allocated an activity, with more activities being based on writing than on oral work. Because they focused on writing and not on speech, language acquisition was not promoted. Added to that is the fact that teachers didn't have enough time because they were pressurised to complete the schedule. These are not optimal conditions for promoting language proficiency. Also, this leads to minimal time for correcting learners' errors. T1 stated the following:

As mentioned in the previous lesson, normally when I teach I engage learners in discussions and dialogue. However, I'm always pressurised by time. Each activity is allocated time in the CAPS curriculum. Moreover, I need to finish 8 to 10 formal assessment task each term (T1, interview 9 [Addendum M]).

4.6.11 Category 11: Teaching activities

The teachers' task was to engage learners in learning activities that resulted in achieving of learning outcomes. During the classroom observations, activities given to learners were deemed to be meaningful. Furthermore, they enabled learners to think critically and prepared them for problem solving. Learners' activities incorporated

grammar, and samples of writing such as factual accounts and composition. Other activities included vocabulary development and reading.

T1 read a story to learners in his lesson 2 and asked them questions afterwards. Learners were able to answer correctly, although some struggled to pronounce words properly. Many of them showed good listening skills as they were able to recall what was read. He then gave learners the task of writing a story individually in the past tense. Learners wrote a story although some were unable to. When I asked him if that was the only method he used to teach writing, he mentioned that

> It depends on the type of writing given to learners. If it is story writing or a letter, I always tell learners to write a draft before. So that it can be edited before writing the final draft. However, because of time, sometimes I'm unable to edit their draft and let them edit at home (T1, interview 4 [Addendum M]).
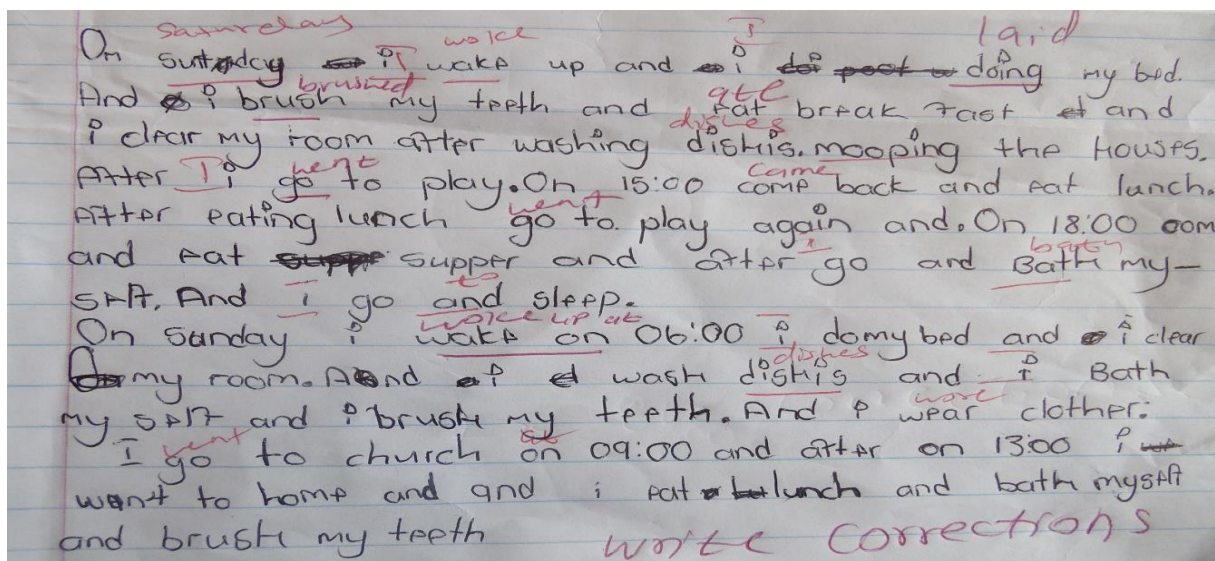
Figure 4.4: T1's corrected learner task for past tense

During the interviews, participants mentioned that learners experience problems in both written and spoken language. Moreover, there is not enough time for teachers to correct their errors. Although participants should be commended for trying to incorporate tasks that could develop English proficiency among their learners, these tasks did not produce the required results.

4.6.12 Category 12: Teaching resources

The most common learning and teaching support materials (LTSMs) used in all participants' lessons were the chalkboard and learners' exercise books. The chalkboard was generally used as a teaching instrument and learners' writing was done mostly in their exercise books. T1 and T2 enhanced learning by making use of pictures during lessons, while T3 used real objects as teaching aids (cf. figure 4.1). The Department of Basic Education workbooks were used in the ten lessons observed, more especially in English and Mathematics lessons. The Platinum textbook series was commonly used in the three subjects observed as they are CAPS compliant. A few GPLMS readers were displayed in one class:

> By making use of pictures and corresponding words learners were able to think critically in order to find answers (T1, interview 3 [Addendum M]).
>
> I used teaching aids to make learning interesting and to enhance successful learning. Throughout my teaching experience, I have realised that learners become excited and involved when you use them (T3, interview 2 [Addendum M]).

> *During interviews both T1 and T2 stated similarly that the workbooks are very useful, as they consist of more informal activities for learners to practise in the classroom and at home. Interestingly, learners can use the books on their own* (Field notes 14 April 2016).

In T1's lessons I observed that the Department of Basic Education books were used together with other readers, such as *The robbers*, *Gorilla Mountain*, *Billy' truck* and many others. The readers were said to be provided by the GPLMS. Teacher 1 mentioned the following:

> I found the GPLMS readers useful as they cater for the good, average and for learners who are battling to read. Learners do group reading which is reading aloud and individual reading. Sometimes I allow them to read in pairs. During formal assessment I assess learners 'reading with them (T1, interview 15 [Addendum M]).

4.6.13 Category 13: Teaching method

T1's lesson was structured and planned around the use of the question and answer method. However, specific learners who were fluent in English answered the questions, while the others were silent. There were also few opportunities for discussing answers so as to create a dialogue in the classroom. Additionally, it was evident in this lesson that learners who are not fluent in English are always shy to answer questions. However, T1 employed teaching methods which created activities that allow learners to work in pairs and in groups. The purpose was to engage all learners in the lesson and to enhance their understanding. As such, learners helped each other and shared ideas. I recorded the following in my notebook.

T1 employed textbook and narrative methods as a strategy for teaching various subjects. Participant did a lot of talking while learners' duties were that of observer in the process of learning (Field notes: 13 April 2016).

The categories discussed in the previous section were grouped together in terms of similarities. These groupings formed sub-themes, which are discussed in the next section.

4.6.14 Sub-themes identified from the data

4.6.14.1   English as LoLT

There are specific challenges that learners face in the classroom during the teaching and learning of content subjects. Evidence from the classroom observations affirms that L2 learners struggle to perform well in English as a subject and, as a consequence, also in other content subjects. In addition, they lack interest in reading and writing in the LoLT. This is similar to the challenges highlighted by Coetzee-Van Rooy (2011), namely, that learners are unable to write clear grammatical structures and interpret English texts. The sample in figure 4.5 indicates the errors made by learners when writing a spelling test.
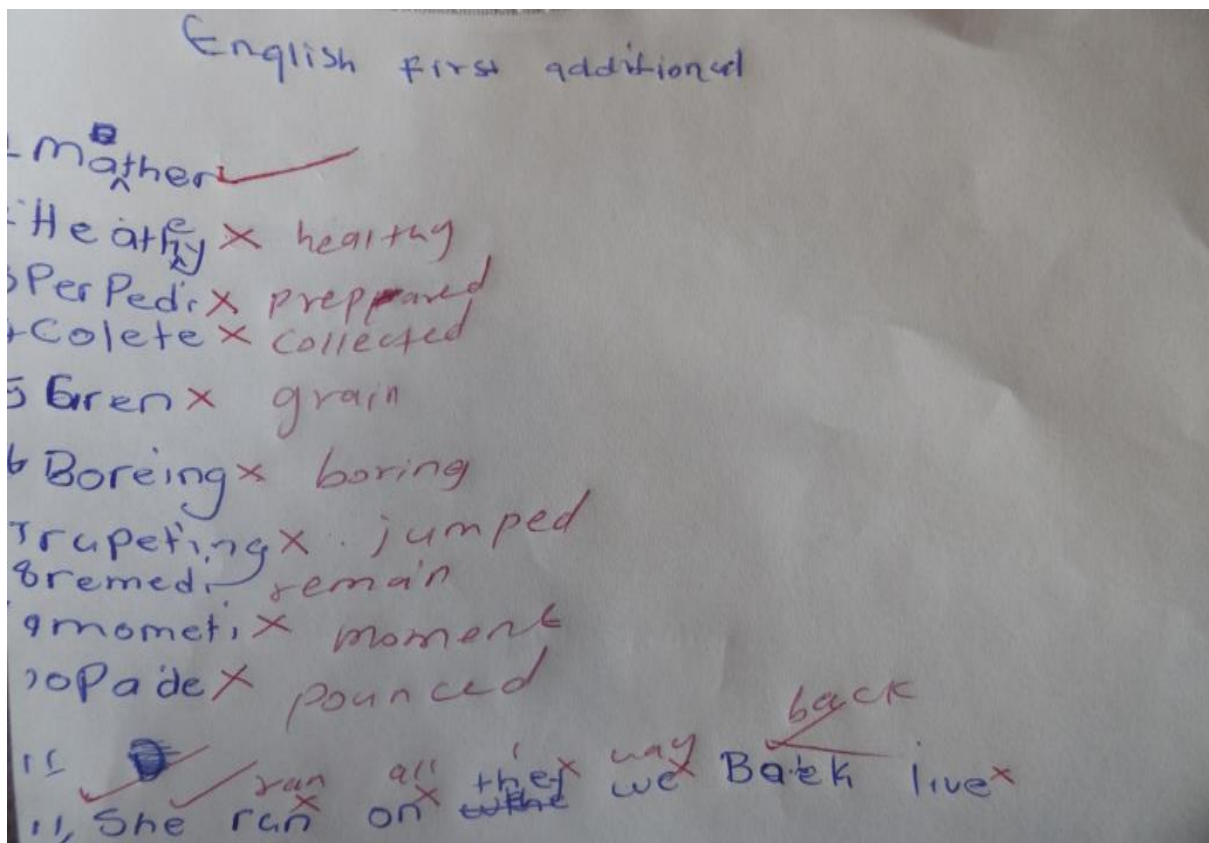
Figure 4.5: Example of a learner's spelling test script inT1's class

T1 corrected learners' spelling tests and ordered learners to do the corrections. He hoped that learners would learn the correct spelling and improve as a result. He believed that when learners have writing skills, they will be able to write correct sentences. T1 further indicated that learners made more errors when writing essays and short stories. The learner's composition in figure 4.5 displays the common errors made by learners when writing or narrating a story in the past tense.

Learners' errors include spelling problems and writing incorrect sentences. T1 circled and underlined incorrect words and wrote the correct ones above the errors. However, there are more errors that needed to be corrected. The errors shown in figure 4.5 indicate that learners' inadequacy in English writing may delay them from achieving academically in their studies. A number of researchers have reported a decline in the matric pass rate in township schools and it could be because of the low levels of English proficiency, as learners continue to produce poor results in exams written in ESL (Pretorius 2012; Van Schalkwyk 2008; Ash 2007). When I asked teachers how they encourage reading in their classes, T1 mentioned that:

I create time for extra reading with the learners after school. Sometimes I borrow them books to read at home (T1, interview 12 [Addendum M).
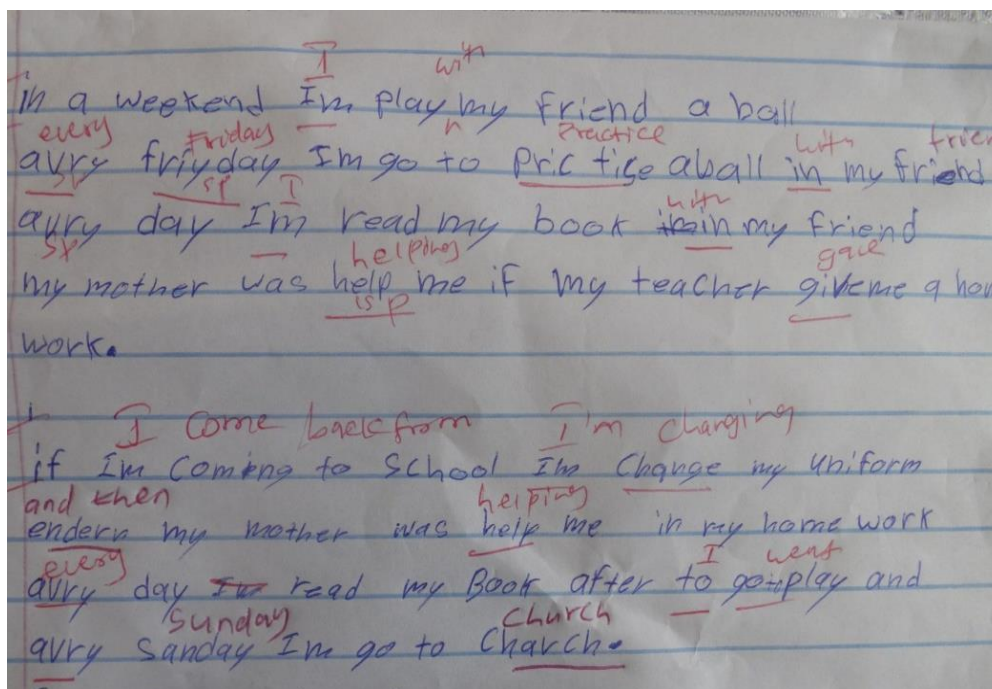
Figure 4.6: Illustration of learner's marked script for story writing

4.6.14.2   Sub-theme 2: Challenges in acquiring LoLT

The challenges in acquiring LoLT emerged as a sub-theme in this study. The findings revealed that L2 speakers of English face many challenges when learning English. Since they also learn various content subjects through the medium of English, not only is their proficiency in English at stake, but also their overall academic performance. The participants in this study stated that L2 learners experience problems in both written and spoken language and lack both the Linguistic skills and vocabulary required to learn various subjects.

4.6.14.3   Sub-theme 3: Teacher-learner communication

Participants at all times tried to engage learners in discussions. However, learners were not confident enough to explain their ideas. They only spoke when the teacher gave them the opportunity to respond or when ordered to repeat after the teacher. In all the lessons observed, learners merely answered in one word, such as 'yes' or in a phrase, such as 'yes mam' or 'yes teacher'. Sometimes they would just remain silent

when it was their turn to talk. According to teachers this forced them to revert to mixing in African languages (CS) during English lessons.

4.6.14.4   Sub-theme 4: Teachers' use of English in the classroom

The common use of the mother tongue by the teachers was noted during all the lessons, even though English is the official LoLT in the classroom. The teachers stated that they used CS to elevate learners' understanding of the L2. However, too much CS can hinder the learning of the new language (Espinosa 2010), meaning that CS may be useful for clarifying concepts rather than simplifying. Thus, CS brings a slightly improved understanding of the content subject (Setati 2010). It is apparent in the ten lessons observed that English is not used to the fullest during teaching and learning. There was no emphasis of L2 practice, nor was communicative competence initiated. The frequent use of CS in all the lessons was noted and use was common to all teachers. Additionally, learners were unable to give answers in full sentences using English. T1 disclosed that they always code switch in the classroom, even though they know that it is discouraged in the curriculum. In this regard, various researchers highlight that CS leads to little understanding of the content subject. Moreover, if it is overused, learners may not master the new language (Setati & Espinosa 2010). Participants indicated that they use code switching for the following reasons:

> Yes, but infrequently, I use mother tongue to explain concepts during lessons. At times you could precede teaching in English and you realise after that learners never understood you. That's when I code switch to their mother tongue. There is vast difference on how I was taught English at school in compared to how I teach today. The actual language of communication was mother tongue. English was used for writing (T1, interview 5 [Addendum M]).
> I use English, however sometimes I use Xitsonga. Learners understand better in home language. Mostly when I am teaching Natural Sciences I use English. The main reason is to support learners to get used to English questions as exams are conducted in English (T3, interview 3 [Addendum M]).
> Yes, I use Xitsonga to simplify concepts. Especially for the weak learners, I always introduce the lesson in English then repeat it in Xitsonga to make learners understand (T3, interview 4 [Addendum M]).

Thus, in accordance with what was mentioned by the participants, there are certain reasons which prompted them to use mother tongue during English lessons. For example, participants confirmed that learners are unable to understand the language of instruction. Therefore, the only way to make them understand is to code switch to their mother tongue. T2 said openly that she uses CS as a strategy to enhance learners' understanding especially when she teaches word problems in mathematics. However, T3 uses English to promote communication in the classroom because it is the official language of assessment. Other reasons mentioned by the participants include:

T3 mentioned that she integrates English with Mathematics during her lessons. However, when she realised that learners do not understand after introducing the lesson, she explains in Xitsonga. Especially word problems, which is a difficult part to teach in Mathematics. She stated that learners understand better when she explains in Xitsonga rather than in English (Field notes: 5 May 2016).

Furthermore, T1 mentioned that although CS is used because learners are unable to communicate fluently in English, he spends more time speaking English with the learners. However, he has to clarify concepts for the learners, otherwise no teaching or learner–teacher interaction would take place in the classroom. Although participants provided their reasons for CS, they said they are caught between the use of the two languages. The question arises as to whether CS is allowed or not? T1 mentioned that:

> The Department of Education officials often discourage codeswitching when they come to our school. They cited reasons like high failure rate of learners during ANA exams and in matric level. As the contributing factor that hinders learners' process of learning the English language (T1, interview 6 [Addendum M]).

I noticed more CS in T2's and T3's lessons than in T1's EFAL lessons. In T1's lessons, I observed that English was often used by the participant. Even still, most learners were shy to give answers. T1 mentioned that learners could not express themselves completely in English. Therefore, they chose to be silent instead of answering

questions. When they were unable to finish their statements, T1 made them finish in English. At some point he asked other learners to assist them. When giving answers in their mother tongue, the participant responded in English and he seemed to maintain English usage in his lessons. Nevertheless, he still had to apply CS when learners were not responding. Learners had to try hard to speak in English. English was used more in his lessons compared to the other subjects.

T2 embraced learner participation and allowed them to speak freely when working with numbers. Most learners expressed themselves in English when giving answers. Those who were not got stuck and she permitted them to continue in their home language. Learners were engaged in discussions, especially during experiments. Many of them gave answers in their mother tongue and only used English when they could. Only a few learners were fluent in English.

T3 indicated that she concentrated more of the participation of all learners during her lessons rather than the language used. CS was used more often in her lessons than in those of T1 and T2. After switching to mother tongue, she reinforced in English.

The frequent use of mother tongue was apparent throughout almost all lessons observed. As mentioned in the literature review, the LoLT is not used as much as it should be in the classroom. Setati (2010) reveals the integration of African languages during English lessons.

4.6.14.5   Sub-theme 5: Classroom Management

Classroom management involves creating positive behaviour and finding ways to correct disorderly behaviour. The participants emphasised that classroom management was an important part of effective teaching. The three teachers observed established order in the classroom which promoted the smooth running of lessons. Although there was overcrowding in the classroom, there were no disruptions noted during observations. Learners were engaged in the different learning activities. A teacher who has good classroom management promotes a good learning environment that supports the activities in the classroom (British Council 2007).

T1 mentioned that classroom management is one of the core duties of teachers. He indicated that if the class is not managed and there are no systems in place to control learners, teaching and learning would not take place:

I set classroom rules and stick to them. Most importantly, I become consistent so that learners follow the rules. I have learned that if the classroom is not managed effectively teaching and learning won't take place (T1, interview 13 [Addendum M]).

4.6.14.6 Sub-theme 6: Pedagogical knowledge

Teachers' limited pedagogical knowledge in relation to English teaching has been pointed out as a thorny issue in this study. The limitation has been related back to the problems encountered by L2 learners when acquiring English, as many L2 teachers were not adequately trained to teach English (Van Schalkwyk 2008). This means teachers lack knowledge and understanding to teach English adequately. Learners are supposed to use the LoLT at the high level of proficiency anticipated by the curriculum. This issue perpetuates the grammatical errors made by L2 learners in the classroom.

4.6.14.7 Sub-theme 7: Curriculum knowledge

The school in this study uses lesson plans for all subjects that are CAPS compliant, which helps with regulating teaching and learning in the school. Learners use various textbooks and workbooks provided by the Department of Basic Education. However, participants indicated little understanding of the curriculum or how EFAL as a subject should be taught. Their major concern was that learners still continue to underperform in all subjects. Their underperformance might be an indication of lack of English skills. As such, learners need English skills to perform well academically in all these subjects. T1 indicated the following concerns:

The main challenge is that learners are unable to read, write and participate in the LoLT. Although I believe that learners are gifted differently; some learners understand quickly and are able to answer questions correctly while others can't. If you reckon well in the story "At the stadium" I used different questions to assess learners. Few questions were in the higher order and most questions were in the lower order (T1, interview 2 [Addendum M]).

4.7 THEMES EMERGING FROM THE DATA

4.7.1 Theme 1: Learning English as L2

The learning of English is related to the learning theories underpinning this study, which were discussed in chapter 2. Acquiring English as L2 as a theme emanated from the following sub-themes: English as LoLT and challenges in learning the LoLT. These sub-themes included three categories, namely, learners' low academic achievement, learners' limited English proficiency and barriers to effective language learning. In this study, learners were not able to use the LoLT competently to be able to learn other subjects. The inadequate use of language creates a huge problem as the learners are supposed to be ready to learn proficiently in the language and to learn other subjects in English.

4.7.2 Theme 2: Teaching English as a L2

The participants claimed that they had knowledge of how to teach English in the curriculum. Teaching English as L2 as a theme included two sub-themes, namely, teacher–learner communication, teachers' use of English in the classroom and classroom management. These sub-themes were formed by the following categories: teachers' low proficiency in English, teachers' experience in teaching English, time management, learner support and establishing a conducive atmosphere, and motivation and encouragement.

Additionally, teachers have acquired knowledge which determines how to implement the curriculum. This includes the use of workbooks and documents prepared by the Department of Basic Education. During the interviews, I asked participants if the CAPS have a particular programme to assist English L2 learners. Participants stated the following:

> Partly, time is very limited for correcting learners' errors in the CAPS. There are more tasks for learners to complete according to the stipulated time. Even if I preferred to assist the learners. I have to follow the lesson plans. However, the lesson plans are good and the curriculum it is easy to follow (T1, interview 8 [Addendum M]).
> Teaching is fast. No time to drill answers, weak learners struggle to catch up than the strong ones (T2, interview 6 [Addendum M]).

The participants confirmed that more teaching was done for the examination and less for acquiring language as LoLT. For example, during my third observation of T1, learners were given the task of summarising a story. T1 encouraged them to write this in their own words. The task was corrected but time was limited so learners could not read their own sentences. This means there is always a lack of time for teachers to correct learners' grammatical errors. I noted what T1 had indicated in my field notes.

Learners are battling to learn English as they started learning it in Grade 4. The allocation of time in the curriculum is not enough for assisting EFAL learners. (Field notes 14 April 2016).

4.7.3   Theme 3: Teacher–learner interaction

Theme 3 contained two sub-themes, namely, pedagogical knowledge and the curriculum. Under these sub-themes, the following categories were discussed: teachers' knowledge of the curriculum, the gaps between actual language teaching and the curriculum, teaching activities, teaching resources and teaching methods.

In the previous chapter, I mentioned that the three participants speak the same mother tongue (Xitsonga), as do their learners, with the exception of a few learners who speak Tshivenda and also from Mozambique. In a multilingual class where a variety of languages are spoken there are contextual problems that need to be looked at. During lesson observations it was apparent that participants codeswitched to Xitsonga frequently as it is their mother tongue, even though there were a few Tshivenda speaking learners in class. This means that these Tshivenda speaking learners did not receive the same support as the rest of the learners in the class. As such, it was clear that the teachers (participants) talked more during lessons while learners were passive. Only a few of learners participated freely, making it difficult for the teacher to assist the learners who remained silent.

In the sections below, the categories, sub-themes and themes that emerged from the classroom observations, interviews and documents were discussed. An overview of the categories, sub-themes and themes is provided in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Categories, sub-themes and themes

Categories	Sub-themes	Themes
Learners' low academic achievement	English as LoLT	Learning English as L2
	Challenges in learning LoLT	
Learners' limited English proficiency		
Barriers to effective language learning		
Teachers' low proficiency in English	Teacher–learner communication	Teaching English as L2
Teachers' experience in teaching English	Teachers' use of English in the classroom.	
Time management	Classroom management	
Learner support and establishing a conducive		
atmosphere		
Motivation and encouragement		
Teachers' knowledge of the curriculum	Pedagogical knowledge	Teacher–learner interaction
	Curriculum knowledge	
The gaps between actual language teaching and the curriculum		
Teaching activities		
Teaching resources		
Teaching methods		

4.8   SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

During the observation process I noted that learners were unable to respond to simple questions. Furthermore, they showed a lack of confidence in responding to questions. Common challenges experienced by learners were poor skills in reading and writing and inaccurate use of vocabulary. Thus, the participants had to clarify concepts by using mother tongue. The worst scenario is that English is not used as the LoLT but it is taught as a subject, as the actual LoLT in the IP phase is the mother tongue. Whatever the case, learners are expected to write their examinations in English. This

could mean that English is not taught fully in this phase. Again, it is an indication that learners have not yet grasped English reading and writing skills by Grade 4. This situation means that little progress has been made in reading and writing. As such, no impact has been achieved from learning a new language. If English FAL were emphasised in the Foundation Phase, this would have a huge impact when learners reach Grade 4, as learners would then acquire basic reading and writing skills during this phase.

Learners cannot grasp concepts, for example, "how", "why", "discuss", "mention". The average Grade 4 learner is not able to name the letters or sounds. Learners' inability to read simple narrative was also identified as a major challenge. Given that learners have insufficient skills in writing they were unable to build words as they cannot recall the single sounds and, thus, they were unable to write simple English sentences (cf. figure 4.6) despite the fact that learners learn how to form words in Grade 1.

From the interviews, it is evident that L2 speakers of English face challenges when acquiring English. Classroom interaction between teachers and learners is conducted mainly in the home language. Participants divulged that they prefer to use Xitsonga when they clarify concepts even though there were several Tshivenda speaking learners in the class. The participants observed were Xitsonga speaking, and none were Tshivenda speaking. Setati (2010) points out the inclusion of African languages during English lessons because learners cannot communicate fluently in English and thus cannot learn actively or communicate competently in English. This is in line Heugh's (2011) finding that L2 learners lack language expertise and vocabulary to learn various school subjects. As such, they cannot communicate fluently in English (Borg 2009). The findings of this study indicate that there no attempt is being made to apply a communicative approach to developing communicative skills. Learners are free to communicate their ideas in their mother tongue as the teachers revealed that learners were encouraged to answer in Xitsonga. There was some evidence of communicative application in oral activities, but not in grammar activities and the teacher's use of the language seemed to be determined by the language competence of the learners. The critical reason for using English is that it is the LoLT for various subjects at school. According to the CAPS, learners in the IP and onward must be able to use English at a high proficiency level in preparation for the future and the world of

work, and because English proficiency is important for global communication. The participants, however, declared that their learners did not yet have the prerequisite Linguistic skills to perform academically. This is in line with what Webb (2008) claims, emphasising the need for teachers to engage in teaching approaches like CS during lessons.

The participants confirmed that learners are unable to understand the language of instruction. My perception is that if they perform well in English, they will do well in other subjects. This implies that they will then not experience problems in reading and writing other subjects. The participants gave reasons for using CS in their lessons. T2 mentioned that learners understand better when they explain in Xitsonga rather than in English. T2 mentioned that most of the time learners do not understand word problems. Therefore, she explains in Xitsonga to assist learners to understand better. The participants also revealed that learners make errors because they have an insufficient understanding of the language used for learning the subject content. Therefore, their HL is used to reinforce concepts. The problem is most encountered when learners change to English as LoLT in Grade 4. In this grade, most subjects are learnt through English and it is believed that they will have acquired reading and writing competence during this transition (Fleish 2008). However, learners are not yet competent to perform well in English, or in the other subjects where English is used as LoLT (Pretorius 2013). The section below presents the research questions and summary of research findings.

Main research question

What are the challenges that face township learners in second language acquisition?

Answer

When acquiring English as the LoLT, English L2 learners are confronted with a variety of challenges, which arise as a result of several factors. For example, learners lack Linguistic skills as well as the English vocabulary to allow them to perform academically in various subjects, in turn resulting in a number of challenges in regard to reading and creative writing (Coetzee-Van Rooy 2011). In addition, learners

demonstrate a weak understanding of text written in English which affects their achievement in reading and writing (Grosser & Nel 2013; Howie 2011).

As mentioned above and in this study's findings, learners have low literacy skills. The inadequacy of language and literacy skills has been found to be a huge problem as learners ought to be adequately prepared to learn English and to learn the various subjects in English. According to the teachers, the problem is exacerbated by the fact that learners learn their subjects in English, a language which they have not yet mastered sufficiently. It was evident in this study that learners are faced with a challenge of learning a L2 and reading simultaneously. Furthermore, learners lack additional support and motivation to learn the new language at home. Since it has been established that learners do not have the basic of English, what perpetuates the problem is that learners are not exposed to English at home and only speak English at school with their teachers. As a result, this is a huge double task for many learners and hinders them in their studies (Shariki 1997). This leads to learners having to repeat the year or dropping out of school, and those who remain in school produce poor results.

The inadequate use of English as the LoLT creates difficulties for L2 learners when attempting to master their content subjects. The interpretation of the findings cite the incompetence of learners when using English. When English is used as the LOLT they struggle because they are L2 speakers, especially when learning various subject content in English that they have not yet mastered (Grosser & Nel 2013). This is the complicated situation that learners have to deal with in schools.

Sub question1

What are the challenges faced by L2 English speakers when learning English?

Answer

Lack of Linguistic skills and English vocabulary was indicated by teachers as a major cause of challenges in reading, creative writing, speech and understanding of text. Furthermore, the inadequate subject knowledge of teachers added the problem. In chapter 1 (cf. 1.2) the fact that learners lack Linguistic skills that are needed to master

English was discussed. This lack results in a huge problem as learners are supposed to be prepared adequately to learn other subjects in English. Common reasons for learners' low proficiency identified by this study include teachers' inadequate English proficiency, insufficient teaching curricular, lack of teaching in the early phase, code switching and absence of motivation and skills (cf. 1.4) (Ebersöhn 2014; De Jager & Evans 2013; Phajane & Mokhele 2013; Trudell 2012). L2 teachers revealed that the big challenge is that L2 learners battle to read adequately as they tend to concentrate more on understanding every word as they read. In that case, learners fail to see the greater picture. It was noted during observations that learners remained silent instead of communicating as they focused on understanding the language. They seemed to be anxious about speaking the language and therefore during lessons they kept quiet or spoke little. The main point raised by the teachers was that learners lack the four Linguistic skills to cope with the language use and to learn all their content subjects. Attempts have been made to find the causes of these limitations. Additionally, the challenges mentioned above have been linked to cross-linguistic effects, the standard of language learners are exposed to, learning pedagogies and a limited language environment (Brown 2000). As such, teachers should consider using a text-based approach during teaching. Such an approach would be useful for scaffolding learners for the higher grades. Data in this study showed inadequate use of a text-based approach in learners' activities. The purpose of this could be teachers' lack of knowledge and insight into the text-based approach, as prescribed in the CAPS document for language teaching. This lack resulted in unproductive teaching practice for learners' communicative competence in English (Richards & Rodgers 2014).

Sub question 2

How does the teaching of English as a second language enhance the use of English as a LoLT?

Answer

Increasing English language learners' classroom interactions may enhance the effective use of English. To enhance language proficiency, L2 learners of English require room to collaborate and socialise academically. It is noted from the findings that teachers created effective opportunities for learners to participate in discussions

in the classroom. Apart from classroom discussions, learners were motivated to contribute their answers and opinions. However, learners who were fluent in English dominated the discussions, while those were not fluent remained silent. During the observations, I noted that the teachers tried to give all learners opportunities to communicate but many remained silent during interactions. However, there are many reasons why L2 learners of English may battle to respond properly to teachers' questions. It was obvious that not all questions were understood clearly by learners. Although teachers were aware of that, learners were afraid to tell the teachers to rephrase or clarify instructions**.**

Sub question 3

To what extend would lack of English understanding influence learner achievement in various subjects?

Answer

The lack of in-depth understanding of English led to learners failing their assessment tasks in various subjects. Misunderstanding of questions was discovered in this study as the main reason for the high failure rate of learners in various exams. Thus, the lack of English understanding was the reason that instructions were misunderstood. For example, learners failed to give correct answers on several occasions. They often committed errors when constructing sentences. Teachers tried hard to give learners activities that would engage them in discussions and these tended to be learner centred rather than teachers fronted. Nevertheless, in many instances learners would answer questions in unison and learners would only answer individually if the teacher ordered them to respond. Apart from that, learners appeared free to talk when they repeat after the teacher. The reason for this behaviour is linked to learners' incompetent use of English language. All participants recognised lack of competence in English as limiting effective teaching and learning. T1 for example, described that he prefers to give his Grade 4 learners very little written work because they struggle with writing, which means they do not complete the work on time. Participants indicated that learners are from households and environment where they are not exposed to English. Learners are only exposed to English at school. Participants stated that this resulted in learners' performing poorly in all subjects written in English.

Data from the three participants revealed that they are pressured by the curriculum to drill concepts and provide feedback to learners. However, they have to push their learners' pace so that activities are completed on time. The findings in this study validate several studies administered in South African primary schools (PIRLS, NEEDU, ANA). NEEDU in its national report, for instance cited that learners in the Foundation Phase do little writing; thus, when learners come into Grade 4 they have a poor foundation. Moreover, they fall behind grade average. The problem continues up until they write matric where they fail in massive numbers (Navsaria 2011).

Learners' scripts showed that they have difficulty in rewriting sentences in different tenses. Furthermore, the inability to punctuate sentences and to follow spelling rules was identified. Learners' lack of interest in reading texts written in English was also problematic. As a result, learners were not able to understand questions or respond to text such as that in a comprehension exercise, making it difficult for them to interpret and summarise a story.

ANA findings were poor in Mathematics and English FAL. For example, ANA pass rate for Grade 4-6 in 2012–2013 was below 30%. However, there were improvements in 2014 in some grades (South African Department of Basic Education ANA Diagnostic report 2014:9 & 51).

Figure 4.7 provides the statistics related to the results for school-based English (FAL), Mathematics and Natural Sciences and Technology Grades 4–6.
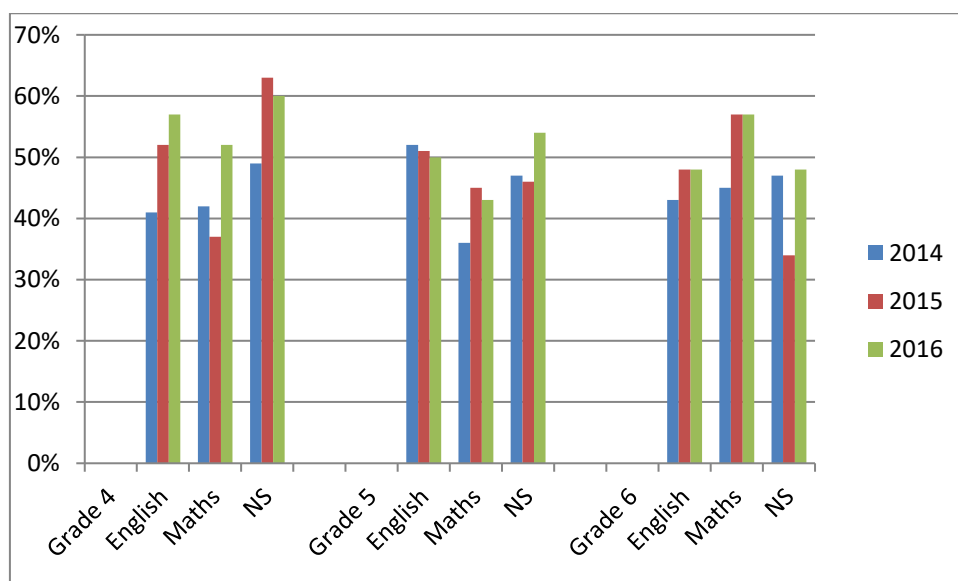
Figure 4.7: Learner Annual School-based Assessments 2014–2016

Figure 4.7 presents the results of the ANAs. This assessment is completed annually by learners in all subjects. The results for the schools are collected and sent to the District, where they are collated in order to be analysed and compared them with results from other Districts. These results are subsequently compared to those of other provinces. Finally, the collated results are sent to the DBE National for rating school performance. There they are firstly checked to ascertain whether learners failed because the questions were too difficult and to identify the gaps in the curriculum. Secondly, they look at the difficulty of the questions by analysing question by question. As indicated earlier, the school-based results are collected to validate learners' overall performance.

Table 3.2 indicates an improvement in learners' results to an average of 52% in 2014. There is a correlation between the results in figure 4.7 and table 3.2. From this analysis, it is evident that learner performance in this school has improved compared to previous years. The challenges revealed by the ANA diagnostic report and the ANAs themselves are experienced mainly by ESL learners in township schools. Subsequently, the lack of competence in these exams has led to the high failure rate of learners in South Africa.

The purpose of analysing both assessments was to explore the challenges L2 learners face in this school, as well as to address the problem of underperformance as identified by the Gauteng Department of Education.

4.9   DISCUSSION

It is important to note that, as indicated earlier, all the participants were ESL language speakers. Also, they have extensive experience teaching in a township school. It is clear from the findings that all the teachers' lessons were CAPS compliant and the lesson plans were designed in line with the curriculum. However, participants classified their training in CAPS as minimal with regard to acquiring adequate knowledge of teaching English as they are L2 speakers themselves. Added to this, studies conducted by Jordaan (2011) and Setati (2010) indicate that many South African teachers lack knowledge of teaching English as a subject. Generally, the issues raised by the participants clearly indicate their dissatisfaction with several details of the CAPS. In addition, they are frustrated by the ever-changing curriculum.

The participants confirmed that the use of English to teach various subjects remains a great challenge for L2 learners. Moreover, learners are struggling to master English as the LoLT. If learners were able to master the language it would have positive effect on their other subjects. The participants were concerned that if learners lack English competence they fall behind, thus the automatically fail. This is supported by Phajane and Mokhelele (2013), and Van Schalkwyk (2008), who advocate that the lack of language and literacy skills has been indicated as one of the contributing factors to the high failure rate of learners. All the participants reported that learners experience reading and writing problems in their different subjects which compounds the problem. In contrast, the CAPS declare that learners in the IP must use the English language at a high level of proficiency. In addition to the workbooks provided by the Department of Basic Education, which are commonly used by all teachers, the most used LTSM by all teachers were the chalkboard and the exercise books in which learners write their daily activities.

Participants and learners interacted in English during lessons, even though there was frequent use of CS. During the interviews participants gave similar reasons for applying CS in their lessons, indicating that it is used as a means of clarifying concepts. Nevertheless, Espinosa (2010) emphasises that the overuse of CS may hinder learners' progress in learning a new language. If so, CS may be effective if it is used to enhance learners' understanding and not merely to simplify concepts.

Furthermore, a greater concern for the participants is the large numbers of learners in their classes. They indicated that this problem impedes the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom. It also makes giving extra lessons to individual learners very difficult.

Other challenges that the participants raised were the teaching of phonics and the pronunciation of English words. Participants linked this problem to the manner in which they were taught English by their ESL teachers. The participants stated that mastering an L2 is a difficult task, hence they also struggle with correct English pronunciation. This is supported by Huchzemer (2011), who states that language is the greatest set of skills that has to be learnt, especially if it is not our first language. For this purpose, teachers believe that learners should be introduced to English as early as Grade 1. It

is apparent from numerous studies that learning a new language in the early years is fundamental as speech skills build during this period (Fengu 2017).

The classroom observations revealed that participants used different teaching methods during their lessons. In T1's lessons more follow-up questions were conducted in order to engage learners. This method was beneficial as it also helped learners to develop critical thinking. Also, the method led learners to find the correct answers. Although T2 used the question-and-answer method, she preferred learners to work independently in the form of classroom presentations. Answers were demonstrated to enhance learners' understanding. On the other hand, T3's lessons were dominated by group discussions as a way of involving leaners in the lesson. Her lessons were mostly learner-centred rather than teacher-fronted. Despite the fact that CS was used by all teachers, CS was used less in T1's lessons than in T2's lessons, while CS was extensively used in T3's lessons. This suggests that CS in T2's lessons was used averagely.

Accordingly, learners responded differently during lessons according to the teaching methods employed by teachers. During the interviews, the participants noted that their teaching styles are unique and perpetuated by their teaching experience. However, as was mentioned earlier the teachers followed the CAPS lesson plans. T3 alternatively used additional resources to meet learners' learning needs and to assist learners to overcome the various challenges they encounter in the classroom. T1 indicated that CAPS is too challenging as it has too many assessment tasks in a language, which is frustrating. There are many assessment tasks that teachers are expected to assess learners with. T1's considered that large numbers of assessment tasks are time consuming. Therefore, CAPS emphasises assessment rather than practical teaching. Subsequently, T1 was worried that there is limited time to respond to the errors made by learners in the CAPS as they are always rushing to finish the assessment tasks. He believes that corrections can assist learners to improve where they require input. In addition, Ellis (2008) postulates that L2 learners must be corrected promptly when they make errors. Thus, teachers need to comment on the learners' errors and provide guidance. This was not the case with T1 and T2, however, as they had a sufficient time to correct learners' errors as they did not have as many formal tasks in their subjects.

4.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter comprehensively presented the data analysis and discussed the findings relevant to the research questions. The data provided by the three participants were collected by means of classroom observations, interviews and document analysis. The data from observations and interviews were presented and interpreted in tables and figures. These methods reaffirmed the real practices of teachers, and the curriculum implementation based on the teachers' experiences.

For the purpose of this study, three themes emerged, and these were discussed in this chapter (cf. table 4.1). Those themes were: acquiring of English as LoLT, teaching English L2 and teacher–learner interaction. These findings revealed the challenges that hamper learners' progress in the acquisition of English as L2. The major challenges identified were inadequate curriculum coverage, absence of teaching in the early years, teachers' limited English proficiency and lack of motivation and skills. The findings have shown that the majority of the L2 learners perform poorly in reading and writing assessments. Subsequently, it is highlighted in this study that participants had limited knowledge of teaching English as L2. This lack exacerbated the problem. In addition, it also perpetuated the language errors made by learners. Moreover, the findings affirmed that teacher–learner interaction was often conducted in the vernacular and not in English. The reason for CS to the vernacular was to explain concepts and to enhance learners' understanding. These findings make a valuable contribution to the consolidation of solid conclusions to the study.

The upcoming chapter presents an in-depth synopsis of second language acquisition, as well as discussing the problems that affect second language learners' use of English which is important for this study. Several recommendations for further research are also made.

CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, I discussed the findings of the study. The interpretation of the findings was based on the literature review on which the study was constructed. In consolidating the interpretation of the findings, I followed the research design and methodology proposed for this study.

In this chapter, I conclude by providing an overview of the study and a synopsis of the key findings as they relate to the literature on ESL teaching. I then explain the significance of the research and certain implications of the study. Lastly, I make several recommendations for further research.

5.2   OVERVIEW OF STUDY

In chapter I, I indicated the lack of adequate English Linguistic skills as one of the contributory factors to the high failure rate and drop out of learners. The aim of the study was to explore challenges faced by second language speakers when learning English as the LoLT. Language as a barrier to learning remains problematic for many South African L2 learners, however attempts have been made to address this problem (Manditereza 2014; Van Staden et al. 2011).

In chapter 2 I reported that learning English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) continues to be problematic in South African schools (cf. 2.4). The literature review reveals a huge imbalance between the achievement of learners whose LoLT is the same as their HL and those for whom the LoLT differs. Generally speaking, learners perform well in subjects taught in English as First Language than in subjects taught in English as a First Additional Language (FAL) (ANA 2014). As such, the implications are that teachers should support learners to become proficient academically. Also, teachers should increase learners' competence levels in English (Heining-Boynton 2010). Bearing in mind that many ESL learners are taught English by teachers who are ESL speakers themselves, studies by Setati (2010) and Trudell (2012) have shown that teachers' language errors will be transferred to their learners. This implies that the manner in which teachers are taught to speak and teach English as L2 remains problematic. Nevertheless, the problem has not been addressed in the

South African education system (Bantwini 2011). Teachers who lack knowledge of English teaching as an L2 also exacerbate the problem (Setati 2010).

In chapter 3, I presented a detailed explanation of the research design and methodology pertaining to the study and explored the significance of using an interpretivist paradigm to underpin the study. An interpretivist paradigm enabled me to interpret and assign meaning to data given by the participants. Additional information gathered was useful for formulating recommendations for future research.

The biographical details of participants were significant in terms of confirming the participants' career and experience in the teaching profession. Therefore, I presented the participants' age, teaching experience and qualifications in chapter 3 (cf. Table 2). Having a full history of participants and their qualifications was beneficial for the trustworthiness of the study. I also gained insight pertaining to matters introduced by participants in relation to their position. It was interesting to find out that all three participants had taught English for many years. Hence, I knew that their extensive experience in English teaching would help me answer the research questions posed in this study. In addition, participants were L2 speakers of English and their L1 is Xitsonga. For this reason, participants were aware of the challenges that L2 learners experience daily when learning English.

The main objective was to explore the challenges L2 learners are faced with when learning content in various subjects. As such, I observed the interaction between the teachers and learners when using English. Moreover, interviews gave me the opportunity to listen to the participants' voices and their own interpretation of their situation. Therefore, I gained a comprehensive knowledge of English language teaching directly from the teachers.

Inferences of ineffective use of English were drawn from the findings of the study. As such, the findings revealed the specific challenges that learners were faced with in the classroom. Most challenges were experienced in English reading and writing. Moreover, learners were not able to communicate fluently in English, even though English is the LoLT for various subjects at school. It is important that learners learn the English language as it is the language of communication worldwide and learners need English to succeed academically. In addition, it is valuable to learn English in

order to be competent in the global community. The challenges experienced by learners in learning English occur mainly when they switch over to English as the LoLT in Grade 4. The findings in this study point to learners' inadequate language use in Grade 4 up into higher grades. Furthermore, this inadequate language use was indicated as the cause of the high failure rate of learners generally at school. Essentially, English LoLT learners battle to perform well in English as a subject and in other subjects that are conducted in English (Heugh 2013) and one of the main challenges is the lack of English Linguistic skills or vocabulary for learning the content subjects. The problem is also perpetuated by teachers who are inadequately trained to teach L2 (Heugh 2013). So, in my opinion, one can perceive a need for the modelling of good teaching practices. The problems discussed here make it difficult for learners to cope with their academic work.

The data were grouped into thirteen categories (cf. Table 4.1). These categories were related to the literature and the language learning theories examined in the study. Teachers' and learners' activities and conformity to the curriculum were associated with the text-based approach which is a genre recommended in the CAPS.

5.3   SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS WITH REGARD TO THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The following sections summarise the link between the study findings and the literature review: firstly, the study findings that are linked to the SLA theories; and secondly, the synopsis of the study and school factors with regard to the CAPS and the teachers' implementation. The significance and limitations of the study are also presented. This discussion will ultimately lead to recommendations for further studies.

The study's conceptual framework was drawn from the literature review on the exploration of challenges faced by learners from non-native English backgrounds. I envisaged that the L2 teachers use their teaching methods in conjunction with the conceptual framework for this study. The recommendations and guidelines stated above are important and helpful in the context of South Africa, where the LoLT is English. Teachers claimed that their teaching knowledge is informed by the curriculum and that when they were in the classroom they implemented the departmental curriculum. The focus was on teaching learners to obtain good results at the end of

the day. The reading and writing challenges of learners in English were experienced in all subjects.

However, it is important for L2 teachers to provide guidance during teaching and learning of English, as L2 learners need to be encouraged and motivated to learn a L2. This is supported by Vygotsky (1978), who describes the ZPD as what learners can do independently and what they need to do with assistance. Since L2 teachers have limited subject knowledge in English they were not able to teach as well in the L2 as they expected.

My personal view is that teachers must be knowledgeable if they are to convey knowledge to others. Therefore, teaching of English as LoLT was not implemented according to Krashen's (2016) input hypothesis, which stipulates that learners need an instructional process and support from teachers that fits their level of progress. This means that L2 learners require scaffolding. From the findings it was evident the learners' social backgrounds had never exposed them to L2 learning. Consequently, if learners are not exposed to English communication they will never master the language.

It was discovered in this study that L2 learners are from non-native English backgrounds, which does not support children's learning. Accordingly, the learner's culture can affect or shape their learning development (Vygotsky 1978). Another important aspect raised by the teachers was the problem of English pronunciation of words and phonics. Teachers linked pronunciation of words and phonics with culture. In other words, they believed that L2 learners' incorrect pronunciation and phonics occurred because of the way they were taught by their L2 teachers. This implies that the way teachers speak English is transferred to learners. Hence, pronunciation problems are linked English L2 teachers. Generally, the teachers' opinions emphasised that learners always lag behind because of the learning environment they find themselves in. This suggests that when competent speakers of a language use good linguistic methods and repetition, learners are supplied with good models, as well as with support. The conceptual framework served as a guide to support L2 learning. This support enabled learners to function inside their ZPD (Vygotsky 1962). If L2 learners were provided with this support, it would have a huge effect on the teaching and learning of English.

5.4 SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The consolidation of the findings from the classroom observations indicated that ESL teachers do not have the pedagogical skills or content knowledge for teaching in English as the LoLT. The reason cited by participants was that the way they were taught English influences their teaching practice. Also, the lack of language practice in the classroom added the problem as English was not used to its full extent. The inadequate English usage during teaching and learning was a result of the dominance of African languages (Setati 2010). Frequent mixing of African languages with English during lessons was noticed. During interviews teachers confirmed that the use Xitsonga was an attempt to scaffold learning by simplifying concepts. According to studies conducted by Setati (2010), CS leads to a very limited understanding of the content subject. Subsequently, it denies learners the opportunity to learn a language fully. Each section of data was analysed fully following the steps of data analysis and was finally interpreted and consolidated to answer the research questions. All additional issues raised were taken into consideration as they added value as recommendations for future research (Creswell 2009). In sum, teachers were caught in the dilemma of teaching a language they are not adequately trained to teach. This situation resulted in the use of frequent CS in class. The reason for using CS as indicated by the teachers was for them and the learners to have a common understanding during lessons. It emerged from the interviews that teachers used CS to clarify concepts. This appears to be the dominant method when teaching using English as the LoLT, particularly in township schools.

5.5 SCHOOL FACTORS WITH REGARD TO THE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

From the findings, it was evident that teachers taught according to the curriculum, in this case the CAPS curriculum. Moreover, teachers' lessons are planned according to the CAPS document, making all lessons were CAPS compliant. Although, L2 teachers mentioned that they had undergone training in the CAPS, it appeared that they did not have the know-how for remediating learners' errors. According to their viewpoints, the use of the CAPS curriculum limits the amount of time available to do corrections, and the more formal assessment tasks in the CAPS prevent them from giving struggling learners expanded opportunities. For this reason, it became apparent that teachers

had to move quickly to cover formal assessment. As such, weak learners always struggle to catch up with the stronger ones. I believe this to mean that more time is used for assessment tasks than for practical teaching. Hence, L2 learners of English experience many challenges when they try to learn the language.

In contrast, participants felt that the CAPS document provides clear recommendations on how to teach the four Linguistic skills and on how to assess them. However, they declared that they also use the GPLMS as a strategy. According to the participants', they would use GPLMS interchangeably with CAPS if it were possible. I am also of this view – as a language teacher I am aware of teachers' frustrations regarding the amount of administration work, let alone the many assessment tasks, that have to be done every term.

Teaching many formal assessment tasks was one of the challenges the participants cited when using CAPS. Among other challenges, writing of lesson plans and creating of teaching aids were indicated as a challenge by teachers. The reason for this is that with the GPLMS, lesson plans were prepared for teachers and the teachers' task was merely to implement. It also appeared that there were no teaching aids or resources displayed in the classrooms for learners. According to the teachers, the only teaching material (posters, vocabulary words) they had in their cupboards was that provided by the GPLMS; thus, they favoured the GPLMS. Looking at these challenges it is obvious that there was no time for improving the LOLT. Hence, L2 learners continue to perform at a low level.

5.6   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study aimed at investigating the challenges faced by L2 speakers in learning in the LoLT (cf.1.1). The significance of the study is based on the fact that learners do not demonstrate Linguistic skills in English, given that they are required to be able to use the English language at a high level of proficiency (DBE 2011). This is perceived in the fact that being proficient in English will allow them to perform at a higher level academically in all subjects offered through the LoLT (Coetzee-Van Rooy 2011). However, the findings gave me an insight into the challenges that learners are faced within the English LoLT classroom. English L2 learners experience unique challenges in reading and writing in English, as limited vocabulary and difficulty in processing and understanding information remain a challenge. Among the challenges identified were

the limited time allowed for learning English as LoLT from the Foundation Phase to higher grades. The teachers emphasised the need for more English teaching periods as early as Grade 1, in the belief that full teaching of English will prepare learners to become competent by Grade 4 (Wessel 2014). I believe that, had this happened, learners would have developed reading and writing skills by this phase.

In this study I was interested in finding out how teachers' knowledge and pedagogies influenced English acquisition. It was evident that teachers provided appropriate assistance to enhance L2 learning. Teachers used activities which established scaffolding integrated to Krashen's (2016) comprehensive input. Also, learners lots of scaffolding occurred in reading and writing activities which was worthwhile. However, learning activities did not expose learners to communicative competence. Thus, it is imperative for teachers to learn that teaching an L2 does not only mean to develop the competence in grammar but also for learners to speak the language well. This implies that classroom activities should expose learners to communicative practice such as collaboration and interaction (Richards & Rodgers 2014). Brown and Broemmel (2011) contend that teachers must provide worthwhile support rather than extra scaffolding.

In this study, the implications of the incompetence were that insufficient communicative competence would be the main reason for the challenges in L2 learning. The communicative approach to teaching language ideology is that in the classroom language should be taught in its purest form. As such, learners would be exposed to English as spoken by a native speaker. However, this did not happen in various lessons observed. There was no link to original examples. In some cases, this insufficient use also related to the communicative competence of teachers as L2 speakers.

My observation pointed to teachers' inability to teach appropriate competence in English. The main reason for this apparently lies in the fact that teachers had not received training to teach English as they are L2 speakers. Additionally, the Department of Basic Education workshops they attended were intended to acquaint teachers with CAPS and not practice. I believe that without subject content knowledge and pedagogical skills, English will not be taught effectively. Moreover, teachers declared that they tend to do more drill exercises as they teach for the purpose of examinations. This led me to fully understand how and why teachers taught EFAL the

way they did. The findings of the study are important for promoting further improvement in L2 teaching. As such, teachers, professional development bodies and teacher training institutions need to put emphasis on the subject content knowledge that has to be mastered in EFAL teaching.

Nevertheless, I found that the teachers had developed a positive conducive environment which encouraged learners to participate freely when answering questions. The findings of this study indicated that teachers encouraged classroom interaction with learners by asking them lower-order questions. The common method of teaching used by teachers was the question-and-answer method, where the learners frequently answered in unison and only answered individually if they were called upon by name. It was apparent that learners were familiar with this form of interaction. Teachers administered their classes well during lessons, with no interruptions by learners occurring. However, no resources available in the classrooms, which is evidence of the shortage of resources in the school, as mentioned above. Nevertheless, this suggested that teachers created an ideal teaching environment for L2 learning.

5.6.1   Limitations of the study

During the study I identified several limitations of the methodology employed (cf. 3.5). This sample for this study was limited to three participants. The participants had limited opportunities to use English as they are first language speakers of Xitsonga. Moreover, they were educated in Xitsonga. As a result, they perpetuated the errors they make in English in their learners. The study furthermore was conducted in one school based in Gauteng province in a township school. Another limitation was the fact that teachers have limited training in CAPS unlike in the GPLMS. Moreover, teachers seemed to favour the GPLMS because they had undergone GPLMS training for substantial period (one to two years).

Another limitation is that it was unavoidable that my presence in the classroom influenced learners' and teachers' behaviours (Patton 2014). Nevertheless, I endeavoured to minimise contact or any interaction with participants (Wragg 2012) but knowing how my presence may have impacted on the reliability of data is probably not possible.

Finally, I had difficulty in grasping all the information conveyed when learners interacted with their teachers in Xitsonga, as the teachers often code switched to the mother tongue. As mentioned (cf. table 2.1) the teachers were all first language speaker of Xitsonga, thus CS happened in every lesson.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The findings of the study indicate the need to conduct further research in English as the LoLT. Therefore, in this section I make a number of recommendations for schools, policy developers, the Department of Basic Education and parents.

5.7.1 Recommendations for schools

The study's findings indicate that teachers lack pedagogical skills to teach English as a subject. Therefore, the findings of the study advocate that schools should require in-service training for teachers so that they may be well equipped with approaches to teaching reading and writing to L2 learners. The training should place an emphasis on teachers attaining CALP and BICS (Cummins 2006), as explained in the study. It was also indicated (cf. 2.6) that L2 learners are not exposed to resources that might increase L2 learning. As such, it is vital that township schools have school libraries. Those that do, should consider purchasing more library resources including reading books and teachers should encourage learners to use the library every day. This would ensure the maximum utilisation of the school library. Furthermore, there should be a reading corner in all classes where voluntarily reading is encouraged. Moreover, schools should include a Drop Everything and Read period (DEAR) in their timetables. In inculcating this habit, learners will be motivated to read and to love reading. Further, reading competitions could encourage learners to develop an interest in reading as suggested in this study. Based on the findings of this study, I recommend the use of teaching aids during lessons as these stimulate learners' creative thinking. In addition, there is a need to display vocabulary and posters in the classroom to encourage reading.

According to the findings, it is critical that English as the LoLT be used during the teaching of all subjects. This means that every teacher should be a language teacher. English should be emphasised in all areas in the school. The curriculum should emphasise that each teacher becomes a language teacher so that when a particular subject is taught, language problems encountered by learners are also addressed.

This will necessitate that teachers are trained in the pedagogy of teaching English as a L2. The teachers also voiced their frustrations about having to complete so many assessment tasks. The findings may imply that the number of formal assessments should be reduced. This will allow teachers more time for actual teaching and for learners to develop a deep understanding of what they are taught.

Furthermore, Interaction in English should be encouraged among teachers and learners for English fluency. This is imperative for language practice and may lead to English mastery. If this were to happen, there would be effective teaching and learning in the classroom as emphasised by CAPS.

The study findings reveal that CS was used frequently during lessons. As a result, this study proposes that CS should be used for enhancing learners' understanding not for simplifying concepts. Otherwise, if it is overused it will reduce learners' chances of learning a new language. Finally, I recommend that schools have remedial timetables. Accordingly, remedial timetable should be used to remediate learners who experience difficulties in reading and writing. Early detection of inadequacy in reading and writing warrants early intervention strategies. The use thereof will address many of the challenges that learners face in learning English.

5.7.2 Recommendations for the Department of Basic Education English Co-ordinators

Although the CAPS curriculum is implemented in schools, the Department of Basic Education should develop programmes to improve literacy in underperforming schools in South Africa. The programmes should be implemented starting in the Foundation Phase up to the higher grades. Following this recommendation, it is critical that authorities develop language policies that emphasise the use of English as LoLT in all subjects. The CAPS document should be amended to allocate more periods for English learning as the subject. After careful investigation with the teachers, it is recommended that more time should be spent on strengthening the learning of L2, since teachers indicated that English as L2 is allocated fewer periods than English as L1. For this reason, the learning of English as the LoLT in the Foundation Phase warrants additional attention. For example, teaching reading and writing will require a few lessons for learners to develop literacy. This suggests that it is of the greatest importance that more time is devoted to assisting learners in Grade 3 because this

would lay a solid foundation and could lead to learners coping better with English in Grade 4. Hence, it is critical that as much time as possible is allocated to English FAL in the Foundation Phase as a whole (Wessels 2014). It can be concluded that a significant difference may be noticed if LoLT is taught fully.

5.7.3   Recommendations for SGB

The findings of this study noted the significance for all parents to enrol their children in Grade R for early literacy skills development. Parents need to be conscientised regarding the importance of early mental stimulation for cognitive development. Also, mental stimulation is good for promoting good language learning. In this study, a lack of exposure to English has been cited as one of the effects of inadequate Linguistic skills. Thus, the findings suggest that parents should also develop a positive attitude in their children towards reading. This can be attained by exposing their children to reading resources at home, as having reading books, magazines and newspapers in the home will encourage reading. Additionally, parents should motivate their children to go to the library so that they can borrow books. If possible, parents who can read can accompany them and read together. While listening to their children reading, reading errors can be rectified during the reading process. Children will emulate good practice in reading and will learn to read independently. Enhancing the reading and writing environment for second language learning is essential for all learners, as English communication plays a pivotal role in learners becoming fluent in English.

It is evident from the findings of this study that learners cannot communicate in English with their teachers. Therefore, teachers are compelled to switch over to the mother tongue. To overcome this challenge, it is recommended that more English practice and communication should take place at school between teachers and learners. In addition the use of CS by teachers during lessons should be limited to allow English learning to take place. It is therefore suggested that parents keep in close communication with their children's teachers to track their children's progress in reading and writing. Moreover, if there are areas of concern they will be able to assist their children at home. The focal point here is that if children are able to read and write in English, they will achieve academically.

This study recommends that the education dispensation and pedagogical practices be revisited in order for learning and teaching of L2 to improve in South Africa. For the

purpose of this study, further investigation of the challenges faced by L2 English speakers when learning English is suggested.

5.8   CONCLUSION

This study explored the lack of language and literacy skills as one of the contributory factors in the high failure rate and drop out among South African school learners. The findings of the research revealed the need to review and amend the language policy and align the curriculum to the needs of the nation. In other words, in this country each and every province must have its own curriculum according to its needs. The findings revealed a gap between L2 teaching and the curriculum. Both the CAPS methodology and the pressure to cover the Annual Teaching Programmes (ATPs) encourage rote learning. It was evident during the interviews that teachers rush to cover and complete the ATPs. Moreover, there is no consolidation or recap and learners' understanding is not considered. Learners do not have a room to apply creative thinking or problem-solving techniques. Thus, teaching and learning are seen as rigid interventions geared towards reproducing information. In that sense, learners do not understand the learning and integration process. Hence, an integration method is needed. On the other hand, I commend the Department of Basic Education for introducing workbooks and for the fact that they have been allocated to all learners. In addition, the workbooks are colourful and have activities which cater for learners with different abilities. However, the challenge is that there is no time allocated to use these workbooks and therefore they are not used maximally by either the learners or the teachers.

To conclude, in a bilingual context like South Africa, a logical language teaching approach is vital (Richards & Theodores 2014). Subsequently, it is crucial to evaluate and investigate the implementation of different approaches for English LoLT teaching in township schools.

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ADDENDUM A: GDE approval letter

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	26April 2017
Validity of Research Approval:	06 February 2017 – 29 September 2017 2017/87
Name of Researcher:	Thobejane L.F
Address of Researcher:	P O Box 1014
	Bramley
	2018
Telephone Number:	082 705 7746
Email address:	fthobejane@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Exploring second language acquisition among township learners
Number and type of schools:	One Primary School
District's/HO	Johannesburg East

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

26/04/2017

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management
7ᵗʰ Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

ADDENDUM B: Letter to principal

Department of Humanities Education

The School Principal and Staff

Bovet Primary School

P.O Box 49

Bergvlei

2012

Dear Sir

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY ENTITLED "CHALLENGES FACED BY TOWNSHIP LEARNERS IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION"

I am a registered MEd student at Pretoria University. I am currently doing research in Education Humanities as part of my studies. I would like to request your permission to collect data in your school for at least five visits in the first quarter of the school year. My research topic is: **Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition.**

The purpose of my study is to investigate the reasons why non-native speakers of English experience challenges in learning English as a First additional language (FAL) and as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in township schools despite the initiatives like the Annual National assessment, Foundation for learning and the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement by the Department of Basic Education.

The study employs a qualitative research design which involves classroom observation of teachers and interviews. Teachers will be requested to take part in **semi structured interview** before the recording of their lessons which will probably last about an hour. The interviews will be transcribed and participants who wish to review these transcripts before

they are included in the study are welcome to do so. It might also be necessary for a **follow up interview** to clarity or expand on certain aspects which I may have identified. I will also ask permission to analyse school findings specifically ANAs, and some of learners' written work and make copies where necessary.

All information gathered during the video recordings will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purpose of the research. Participants are not required to provide their names or contact details and will remain anonymous throughout the study by choosing a pseudonym. Invitation letters will be delivered to selected schools indicating the approval of voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity.

If participants are willing to participate in this study, they will sign the informed consent forms accompanying the invitation letters as a declaration of their consent and that they participate in this project willingly and that they understand that they may withdraw from the research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not obligate them to participate in follow up individuals interviews, however should they decide to participate in the follow-up interviews their participation will still be voluntary and they may withdraw at any time. You will also have the opportunity to review the findings prior to publication and be able to provide advice on the accuracy of the information.

Participation in this study will be much appreciated and the findings of the study will provide insight and more information regarding the possible solutions to the challenges faced by non-native English learners in using English as a FAL and as a LoLT.

Please be assured of my ethical conduct at all times. If you require further information, please contact me or my supervisor.

Attached please find the informed consent form to be signed by the participant.

Yours Faithfully,

_____

L.F Thobejane (Researcher)Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

Contact No: 0827057746+27 12 420 5527 (office)

+27 83 554 2088 (mobile)
lizette.dejager@up.ac.za

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I---have read the information contained in the invitation to participate and I would like to voluntarily participate in this research study. I am aware of what is expected of me and that I have the right to withdraw at any time should I so wish, without having to provide a reason.

By signing this form, I give consent to the recording of any discussions relevant to this study and to the video recording of the lesson that I will present. I acknowledge that I am participating of my own free will and have not in any way been forced, manipulated into taking part.

Participant's signature:--Date:-----------------------------

School Principal's signature:---Date:-----------------------------

Researcher's signature:--Date:-----------------------------

ADDENDUM C: Letter to parents

Department of Humanities Education

P O Box 1014

Bramley

2018

Dear Parent

I am a registered MEd student at Pretoria University. I am currently doing research in Education Humanities as part of my studies. Your child is invited to participate in a study entitled: **Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition.**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the reasons why non-native speakers of English experience challenges in learning English as a First additional language and as the language of learning and teaching in township schools despite the initiatives like the Annual National assessment, Foundation for learning and the implementation of the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement by the Department of Basic Education.

Your child's participation in this study is completely voluntary. In addition to your permission, your child will also be asked if he or she would like to take part in the study. Only those children who have parental permission and who want to participate will do so, and any child may stop taking part at any time. You are free to withdraw your permission for your child's participation at any time and for any reason without penalty. This decision will have no effect on your future relationship with the school or your child's status.

The information that is obtained during this research study will be kept strictly confidential and will not become a part of your child's school record.

Any sharing of the publication of the research findings will not identify any of the participants by me. The study will be enjoyable to the children and will help them to learn more.

Please note that I am also sending a letter of assent to your child and I ask for his/her signatures in your presence.

You are requested to sign the informed consent as part of compliance with the ethical requirements of my research study.

Yours Faithfully

_____

L. F Thobejane
Contact No: 0727057746

_____

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

+27 12 420 5527 (office)
+27 12 420 5637 (fax)
+27 83 554 2088 (mobile)
lizette.dejager@up.ac.za

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I---have read the information contained in the invitation to participate and I voluntarily grant permission for my child to take part in this research study. I am aware that he/she has the right to withdraw from taking part any time without having to provide a reason.

By signing this form, I give consent to the video recording of the lesson that my child will be present. I acknowledge that my child is participating of my own free will and have not in any way been forced, manipulated into taking part.

Parent's signature:--Date:-----------------------------

Researcher's signature:--Date:-----------------------------

ADDENDUM D: Letter to learners

Department of Humanities Education

Dear Learner

LETTER OF ASSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECTON: CHALLENGES FACED BY TOWNSHIP LEARNERS IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION.

I am doing a study on the above topic at the University of Pretoria. Your principal has given me a permission to do this study in your school. I would like to invite you to be a very special part of my study as your parents/guardian/caregivers have already agreed that you can be part of this study if you want to. I am doing this study so that I can find ways that your teachers can use to help learners to know English better and to use English as a language of learning and teaching in the classroom. This will help you and many other learners of your age in different schools.

This letter is to explain to you what I would like you to do. There may be some words you do not know in this letter. You may ask me or any other adult to explain any of these words that you do not know or understand. You may take this letter home to think about my invitation and talk to your parents about this before you decide if you want to be in this study.

This is what will happen: I shall be visiting your class during the First Additional language period. I shall be observing your teacher as she teaches you. You may appear in the video and your written work might be photocopied.

I will write a report on the study but I will not use your name in the report or say anything that will let other people know who you are.

I shall keep the tapes and the copied work safely in a private place. You do not be part of this study if you don't want to take part and no one will blame or criticise you. When I am finished with my study, I shall return to your school to give a short talk about some of the helpful and interesting information I found out in my study. I shall invite you to come and listen to my talk.

If you decide to be part of my study, you will be asked to sign the form on the next page. If you have any other question about this study, you can call me at 0827057746, or you can ask me when I visit your school next time, or you can have your parent or another adult call me. Do not sign the form until you have all your questions answered and understand what I would like you to do.

Thank you.

Yours Faithfully

_____

L. F Thobejane
Contact No: 0727057746

_____

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

+27 12 420 5527 (office)
+27 12 420 5637 (fax)
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lizette.dejager@up.ac.za

ADDENDUM E: Letter to assistant

Department of Humanities Education

P O Box 1014

Bramley

2018

Dear Research Assistant

REQUEST FOR VIDEOTAPE ASSISTANCE DURING CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

I am a registered MEd student at Pretoria University. I am currently doing research in Education Humanities as part of my studies. I have been granted permission to conduct the study entitled **"CHALLENGES FACED BY TOWNSHIP LEARNERS IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION"**. The purpose of the study is to investigate the reasons why second language speakers of English experience challenges in learning English as a First additional language and as the language of learning and teaching despite the initiatives by the Department of Basic Education.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw your permission as an assistant at any time and for any reason without penalty. The information that is recorded during this research study will be kept strictly confidential only used by me as researcher.

Please note that I am also sending a letter of assent. You are requested to sign the informed consent as part of compliance with the ethical requirements of my research study. The disks will be destroyed once the transcriptions are checked for accuracy.

You are requested to sign the informed consent as part of compliance with the ethical requirements of my research study.

Yours Faithfully

_____

L. F Thobejane
Contact No: 0727057746

_____

Dr L.J. De Jager (Supervisor)

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+27 83 554 2088 (mobile)
lizette.dejager@up.ac.za

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

I---have read the information contained in the invitation and I voluntarily grant permission to assist with video recording. I am aware that I have the right to withdraw from taking part any time without having to provide a reason.

By signing this form, I give consent to assist with video recording of the lessons. I acknowledge that I am participating at my own free will and have not in any way been forced, manipulated into taking part.

Assistant's signature:--Date:-----------------------------

Researcher's signature:--Date:-----------------------------

ADDENDUM F: Semi structured interview 1

Department of Humanities Education

Semi structured interview protocol

Interview 1

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

Interviewer: F.L. Thobejane

Participant:

Venue:

Duration: 30 to 35 minutes

1. Do you find any difficulties when teaching English as a First additional language in the classroom?
2. What are the challenges faced by learners in acquiring English as a subject and as a language of learning and teaching?

ADDENDUM G: Semi structured interview 2

Department Humanities Education

Individual interview protocol

Interview 2

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

Interviewer: F.L Thobejane

Participant:

Venue:

Duration: 30 to 35 minutes

1. What are the factors that influence learners' inability to acquire English?
2. Does the curriculum (CAPS) assist learners who are struggling to learn English as a First Additional language and as a language of learning and teaching?

ADDENDUM H: Semi structured interview 3

Department of Humanities Education

Individual interview protocol
Interview 3

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition
Interviewer: F.L Thobejane

Participant:

Venue:

Duration: 30 to 35 minutes

1. During the last two class observations, I have realised that only few learners were participating in the lesson. What learning strategies do you use to help learners who are struggling to acquire English or who do not have confidence in English?
2. How do you do to make sure that learners do understand your English lesson?

ADDENDUM I: Semi structured interview 4

Department of Humanities Education

Individual interview protocol

Interview 4

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

Interviewer: F.L Thobejane

Participant:

Venue:

Duration: 30 to 35 minutes

1. How does English as a First Additional Language and as a Language of learning and teaching affect learners' academic achievement?

2. May you tell me, what knowledge do you think you should have in order to teach English effectively as a second language?

ADDENDUM J: Classroom observation

Department of Humanities Education

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

Participant_____ Observation number _____

Date _____

Venue	
Time	
Participant	
Researcher' role	
Descriptive Notes (During the observation)	
Reflection	

ADDENDUM K: Document analysis

Faculty of Education
Fakulteit Opvoedkunde
Lefapha la Thuto

VAN PRETORIA
OF PRETORIA
YA PRETORIA

Department of Humanities Education

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

Participant_____   Date

_____

Document analysis Descriptive Notes	Notes Reflective Notes

ADDENDUM L: Classroom observation form

Department of Humanities Education

Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition

School: A   Date:--------------------------Duration:----------------

Aspect	Observation Notes	Reflection
1.Teacher's knowledge of the curriculum		
2. Teaching methodology		
3.Teacher's language use and competence		
4. Learner engagement		

5.Learner activities	154	
6.Learner behaviour		
7.Learners' understanding		
8.Reaction and participation of learners		
9.Teaching and learning resources		
10.Teacher's feedback		

ADDENDUM M: Teachers' interview transcripts

Department of Humanities Education

Title: Challenges faced by township learners in second language acquisition.

T1 Interviews and teacher responses
1   Do you find any difficulties teaching English in the classroom? Yes, mostly I experience communication problems in class as our school caters for learners from Mozambique and other provinces. Such learners do not have basic skills of English. English Learning and teaching becomes difficult in the classroom.
2   What are the challenges faced by learners in English? Especially because these learners are Second language speakers of English. The main challenge is that Learners are unable to read, write and participate in the Language of learning and teaching. I usually encourage learner-interaction by providing them with opportunities to talk and engage them in classroom discussion and argumentation in the form of a dialogue. Although, I believe that learners are gifted differently; some learners understand quickly and are able to answer questions correctly while others can't. If you reckon well in the story **"**At the stadium**"** I used different questions to assess learners. Few questions were in the higher order and most questions were in the lower order**.**
3   Let us reflect on your lesson about "News from the sea" Before you read the story with the learners you asked questions orally. E.g. "Look at the cover of the book, what do you think the story is all about?" which was interesting. "Why did you do it that way?" By making use of pictures and corresponding words learners will think critically about finding the answers.

4	**Still on the same lesson, do you use only that method to teach learners writing?**

It depends on the type of writing given to learners. If it is story writing or a letter, I always tell learners to write a draft before. So that it can be edited before writing the final draft. However, because of time, sometimes I'm unable to edit their draft and let them edit.

5	**Do you sometimes use mother tongue when teaching complex things? Furthermore, the way you teach English FAL, is it the manner you were taught at school?**

Yes, but infrequently, I use mother tongue to explain concepts during lessons. At times you could proceed teaching in English and you realise after that learners never understood you. That's when I code switch to their mother tongue.

There is vast difference on how I was taught English at school in compared to how I teach today. The actual language of communication was mother tongue. English was used for writing.

6	**Is it allowed to codeswitch to the learner's mother tongue, especially during English period?**

The Department of Education officials often discourage codeswitching when they come to our school. They cited reasons like high failure rate of learners during ANA exams and in matric level. As the contributing factor that hinders learners' process of learning the English language. Although it is not clear whether it is allowed or not.

7	**Please share with me your knowledge about CAPS and your implementation thereof.**

I have undergone GPLMS training for quite a long time. The lesson plans were easy to implement. Unlike CAPS which require us to write our own lesson plans. The lesson plans were used in adherence to learners' workbooks by the Department of basic education provision.

We were told that the GPLMS is CAPS compliance. However, we are now told to stop using GPLMS but to start implementing CAPS. This situation it is so confusing, the GPLMS was easy to follow and we were supplied with more teaching aids. This created effective teaching and learning of English literacy. In contrast, in CAPS we are required to create our own learning support material. This includes posters and flash cards. Anyway, I am implementing CAPS but I still use GPLMS as a strategy.

8	**Does the curriculum (CAPS) assist learners who are struggling to acquire English?**

Partly, time is very limited for correcting learners' errors in the CAPS. There are more tasks for learners to complete according to the stipulated time. Even though I preferred to assist the learners. I have to follow the lesson plans. However, the lesson plans are good and the curriculum is easy to follow.

9	**As an English teacher, do you engage learners in discussions during lessons?**

As mentioned in the previous lesson, normally when I teach I engage learners in discussions and dialogue. However, I'm always pressurised by time. Each activity is allocated time in the CAPS curriculum. Moreover, I need to finish 8 to 10 formal assessment task for each term

10 **During the last two class observations, I have realised that only learners who were good in English participated, Can you tell me the reason why other learners were not participating?**
Learners lack vocabulary to form sentences. Those who are not proficient in English decide not to participate.

11 **How does English as the LoLT affects learners' academic work?**
More of the subjects are conducted in English. If learners lack the English competence they fall behind. Automatically they fail. One other thing is that our learners come from a background which does not encourage them to learn English. Most of the parents are illiterate; there is no one to assist learners to become competent in English. For the homework, I always try to assist such learners to write after school before going home. The other advantage is that there are homework assistants who assist such learners

12 **Previously you stated that most learners struggle to read. How do you encourage reading in your class?**
I create time for extra reading with the learners after school. Sometimes I borrow them books to read at home.

13 **Do you think there is a difference between the way you teach English and how you were taught?**
There is vast difference. The actual language of communication was mother tongue. English was used for writing.

14 **How do you manage teaching and learning in the classroom?**
I set classroom rules and stick to them. Most importantly, I become consistent so that learners follow the rules. I have learned that If the classroom is not managed effectively teaching and learning won't take place.

15 **Which text books do you regard good for reading in the classroom?**
I found the GPLMS readers useful as they cater for the good, average and for learners who are battling to read. Learners do group reading which is reading aloud and individual reading. Sometimes I allow them to read in pairs. During formal assessment I assess learners 'reading with them.

16 **How do you correct learners' errors and what do you do to avoid discouraging them from giving answers?**
I give feedback to learners and a chance to improve. This was useful especially for struggling learners. In addition, they stayed motivated to correct where they went wrong. It also opens a room of improvement for them. I created a positive environment of extra classes. Also included lessons for games so that they don't develop tension. As a result learners became free during activities. Adding fun during activities made learning more interesting especially for struggling learners.

17	**How do you cater for learners with different abilities?**

I mixed up my lessons in order to ensure that I met the different abilities of my learners. I know that they have different abilities. By so doing I kept them motivated to work more. I also assigned them different classroom duties. This was a good way of promoting team work. It gave learners a sense of belonging and an opportunity to take turns in leadership roles. Gradually, they developed self-confidence and felt important and valued.

18	**Please tell me about your teaching career, the reason why you wanted to be a teacher? And how do you value a teaching profession?**

Teaching is a very important career but teachers don't take it seriously. As they believe that they get low salaries which lower the profession of teaching. Teachers feel not valued by the government as they earn less. This impact negatively on pupils. Finally, they don't want to study teaching because of what they hear from their teachers. Moreover, the lifestyle they perceive when they view teachers. Despite all those, I still regard teaching as a good profession which I will recommend for learners.

T 2 Interviews and interviews

1	**Do you think English contributes to the high failure rate of learners in Maths?**

Yes, the cause might be the changing of mother tongue to English in Grade 4.

2	**What are the main challenges learners are experiencing in Maths?**

Learners do not understand the meaning of concepts.

3	**Do you encourage communication in English during mathematics lessons?**

Yes, that is what I always do. I give learners activities to discuss in pairs or groups as I have done in the place value lesson. Remember I even encouraged learners to go to the front and work out the answers on the board. Sometimes I ask learners to explain their answers.

4	**I have realised that during your mathematics lessons, the LoLT is English. Do you sometimes code switch to mother tongue?**

I prefer to use HL when I introduce the lesson. I code-switch to clarify mathematical concepts.

5	**In your previous lesson you asked learners to read the place value of the numbers. What was the main aim of doing that? Do you think reading is crucial in mathematics class?**

Reading is important so that learners can recognise the numbers. Learners should be able to comprehend text.

Also in real world they will be able read them.

6	**Does the curriculum (CAPS) assist learners who are struggling to learn mathematics?**

Teaching is fast. No time to drill answers week learners struggle to catch up than the strong ones.

7	**Is the learners' lack of English competence related to their background?**

Most of the children who are from literate families are likely to perform well academically. And their English competence is far better than those who are from illiterate families

8	**Do you create opportunities for learners to do their homework if it is not done at home?**

Sometimes it is difficult to keep learners at school for the homework due to some duties they carry after school. Some learners fetch their siblings at school.

9	**What challenges do you encounter regarding the curriculum implementation?**

I had a very good experience of GPLMS than of CAPS. The learners' tasks were more understandable. With CAPS I am required to make my own lesson plans that are not good enough.

10	**How can English language learning be improved in the classroom?**

All teachers must be language teachers. As a manager I emphasise language teaching across the curriculum. English teaching shouldn't be a burden to English language teachers. In our different subjects we must teach English. This will help improve spelling, use of English grammar and respond to the questions in English

11	**How do you motivate your learners to work in the classroom?**

I made sure that learners knew my objectives and expectations. By so doing, learners were always motivated to learn. I also made it clear what learners had do and accomplish. I accelerated learners by setting higher goals especially for those who excel. Such learners turn to achieve higher than expected.

T3 Interviews and teacher's responses

1	**The way you introduced your lesson was so unique, why did you do it that way?**

I wanted learners to discover answers on their own. More especially, to have the new vocabulary.

2   In the Previous lesson, Learners were shown various teaching resources. How is that useful?
I used teaching aids to make learning interesting and to enhance successful learning. Throughout my teaching experience, I have realised that learners become excited and involved when you use them.
3   Which language do you use the most to teach?
I use English, but sometimes I use Xitsonga. Because learners understand better in home language. Mostly when I am teaching Natural sciences I use English. The reason being that I want to support my learners to get used to English questions as exams are conducted in English.
4   So you only use mother tongue when teaching complex things?
Yes, I use Xitsonga to simplify concepts. Especially for the weak learners. I always introduce the lesson in English then repeat in Xitsonga to make learners understand.
5   How do you stimulate English communication in your class?
I select topics that stimulate classroom discussion. However, learners turn to make a loud noise which is annoying sometimes. At times they do presentations in front of their peers and engage them in a dialogue
6   Do you think reading is important in your class?
Yes, if learners know how to read, learning will take place.
7   What is the impact of overcrowded classes according to your experience?
Overcrowding is one of the obstacles that hindered teachers from giving learners individual attention. Moreover, we were unable to give learners who were battling to read and write attention.
8   Do you submit lesson plans based on the curriculum?
Yes, we follow the lesson plans and assessment tasks that are in line with the curriculum. The lesson plans serves as a guideline specifying what to teach as prescribed in the CAPS document (DBE 2011a).
9   How do you motivate learners who excelled or who did well in your class?
I rewarded my learners with stickers in their books, where they've done well. This encouraged them to even work harder than before. They always aimed to achieve higher.

10 **I have realised that there is always mass participation in your class. How do you encourage that?**

I have created an environment where everyone feels free to answer questions. Learners were challenged and kept engaged. My learners knew that there was always a room for improvement. When they are wrong , they become motivated to argue and to know the correct answers.

11 **It was very interesting to see how you engaged learners in your lessons. You have been a teacher for quite a long time now, how do you feel about teaching as a profession today?**

I don't regard teaching as a good profession today. I view teaching as a problematic profession. Teaching has lost value; the law doesn't protect us teachers. Learners disrespect teachers they just do as they wish knowing that they are protected by the law.

12 **Your Natural Science lesson about matter and material was so interesting; all learners were engaging in self-discovery method, what did you do it that way?**

Natural Sciences lessons are commonly experiments therefore require collaborative interaction. Peer interaction is very important for that matter hence learners worked in pairs and in groups to come up with solutions.

ADDENDUM N: Overview of lessons

Overview of T1's Lesson 1 Duration: 40 minutes Topic: Pronouns LTSM: Chalkboard		
Conformity to curriculum The school utilises learning and teaching materials provided by GPLMS. The teacher followed the Grade 4 lesson plans prescribed for term 1 which is compliant to CAPS.		
Teacher's activities	**Learners' activities**	**Classroom environment and reflection**
Reads a story to learners and asks them to summarise it in three sentences Writes a sentence from the story on the board and asks learners to replace the underlined words with pronouns. e.g. The referee blows the referee's whistle. Pronounce the word "referee" and asks learners to say after him. Explains that pronouns are used to avoid repetition of words in sentences. e.g. "referee, referee" stated in the sentence above. Writes the following pronouns on the board: I, you, he, she, is, We, they Asks learners to read them	Listen attentively to the teacher reading a story. Most learners lack confidence of summarising the story in English. It seems difficult for the learners to summarise in three sentences. They only give one sentence. Put the correct pronouns in sentences. One learner tried and only got one answer correct. Struggle to identify the word "referee". Listens quietly to the teacher Read pronouns written on the board	The lesson went smoothly without any disruptive behaviour by students. However, the teacher was supposed to revise the nouns with learners, and then introduce the concept of pronouns. Give examples and practice examples. (This will assist learners to experience successful identification of pronouns). Teacher and learner interaction is fulfilled. Even though, there is a minimal participation of learners who lack confidence of answering question in English. Learners who are confident in English dominate during class discussions.
Asks learners to write the pronouns of underlined words individually in their grammar books. Walks around the classroom amongst learners Urges learners to give their answers	Write in their grammar books individually Read their answers. However, most learners seem to have reading problem.	

Overview of T1's Lesson 2
Duration: 45 minutes
Topic: Comprehension story
LSM: DBE books and exercise books

Conformity to curriculum
The lesson was well presented by virtue of the GPLMS lesson plan which is also CAPS compliance.

Teacher's activities	Learners' activities	Classroom environment and reflection
Shows learners a picture depicted on the book cover. Asks learners to tell what they think the story is about. Reads a story to the learners Continue to read and pauses to ask learners question so as to have their focus and to clarifies aspects of the story. Questions were also asked to check if learners understand. Asks learners to identify difficult words. After explains meaning of new words as the story progresses. Tackles the words one by one and give the meaning. Introduces learners to group reading Instructs learners to summarise a story in 6 sentences They must put sentences in sequence. Emphasises the activity in isitsonga " Tsongahata xitori xa wena hi mintila ya ntsevu, hileswiswi humeleleke eka xitori lexi".	Pay attention to the teacher and look at the picture. Start analysing the picture One learner answers without confidence Learners who are fluent in English are free to answer. Those who are not fluent struggle to construct sentences. They mention the following words: Collapse, Poles, Aching Listen attentively to the teacher. Some learners write the meanings down. Seem not to understand the teacher Start the discussion and complete the activity. Some groups struggle to summarise the story and remain quite. Start working together and try to come up with sentences. Finished groups take their books to the teacher for marking.	Learners were taken through the steps of understanding a story. They were engaged through questions. And seemed to be enjoying the story. Despite the fact that not all difficult words were treated. No words printing on the walls to enhance reading. Codeswitching was not frequently used. Only used once to clarify the activity.

Overview of T1 Lesson 3		
Duration: 40 minutes		
Topic: Tenses:		
LSTM: Chalkboard		
Conformity to curriculum The teacher continues with the GPLMS lesson plans which are CAPS compliance.		
Teacher activity	**Learners 'activities**	**classroom environment and reflection**
Asks learners to tell how they spent their weekend. Tells learners to draft down their information. Urges learners to read their sentences to their peers Points at two learners to read their sentences. Selects learners to report. Gives other learners a chance of reading their sentences. Points at the learner and explains that she is the last to report.	Give different answers One learner answers "My weekend start on Saturday. Instead of "My weekend started on Saturday. One learner answers "I enjoy my weekend. Instead of I enjoyed my weekend. Take out their exercise books and start writing. The first two learners use correct tenses in their sentences. A learner answers "I go to church on weekend". Instead of "I went to church on weekend". A learner answers "I wash the dishes" Instead of "I washed the dishes". A learner answers "I wake up early". Instead of "I woke up early". A learner answered "I play soccer on Saturday". Instead of "I played soccer on Saturday".	The teacher continues with the GPLMS lesson plans. Which are CAPS compliance During the lesson I could pick up that most learners have a problem of using tenses. Sentence construction is also a problem to most learners. Learners struggle to change sentences from present to a past tense. There is no time to correct the error made by learners. As the teacher rushes to another activity.

Overview of T1's Lesson 4 **Duration:40 minutes** **Topic: Reading** **LTSM: blackboard**		
Conformity to curriculum The lesson plan used is CAPS compliance designed under GPLMS.		
Teacher's activities	**Learners' activities**	**Classroom environment and reflection**
Tells learners to take out their Department of Basic Education (DBE) books and open on page 112. Asks learners to explain the difference between a city and a village. Asks if Alexandra is a city or a village. Instructs learners to tell what they see in the story. Urges learners to read in unison. While reading they must pronounce words correctly. Tells learners to identify difficult words in the story. Write the explanations of the words identified by learners. Asks learners if they are ready to write the spelling test. She code switch to isiTsonga tsala "Mita tsala xikambelwana xa mbitanelo. Mitsala marito ya nwina leswi yanga ta vitanerisiwa xiswona". (You are going to write a spelling test. Instructs them to write 1-10 in their books. Calls out the following words, making a clear pronunciation: **Mother, Healthy, Prepared, Collected, Grain, Boring, Jumped. Remain, Moment, Pounced** After calls out the following dictation sentence: **She ran all the way back to her village.**	Open their DBE books on page 112. One learner answers "Alexandra is a city. Explain what they see in the story. Listen attentively to the story Enjoy reading in unison helping each other with the correct pronunciation. Those who struggle in reading, pause listen to others and join in reading. Check for difficult words and make noise at the same time. Identify few difficult words from the story. Some write down while the teacher is talking. Answer in unison "yes we are ready". Start writing spelling test in their test books. Write the dictation sentence.	The teacher prepared learners of what they should expect in the lesson. Learners seem to be having a problem in reading, spelling and oral. Many words have spelling errors. E.g. **Colcted**. Instead of collected. **Bownsed** Instead of pounced.

Overview of T2's Lesson 1 **Duration:40 minutes** **Topic: Multiplication** **LTSM: Chalkboard, workbooks**		
Conformity to curriculum **The lesson plans are CAPS compliance.**		
Teacher's activities	**Learners' activities**	**Classroom environment and reflection**
Instructs learners to take out their classwork books. Explains that learners will learn about multiplication and writes it on the board. Further explains that multiplication will be done using expanded notation and breaking of numbers. Writes a sum on the board and instructs learners to work it out. Asks learner's questions Realises that learners struggle with multiplication and expanded notation. Helps learners by leading them to the right answer. Writes another sum on the board. Asks learners to come and work out the sum on the board. Points out at the learner who raised her hand to go and write the correct answer. Congratulates the learner by asking the class to give her a round of applause.	Listen to the teacher quietly. Listen to the teacher and start giving their answers. Unable to complete their answers in English, while some struggle to get the correct answer. Take turns to work on the sum. However, they don't get it right. Applaud the learner who got the correct answer. Goes to the board and work with the sum, unfortunately, he couldn't get it correct. Works out the sum and get it right. However, she is unable to explain in English how she got to the correct answer. Listen to the teacher, whilst others copy what is written on the board.	The teacher managed the class well. She encouraged mass participation of learners. Especially for those who didn't want to take part in the lesson. She instilled confidence in them. Even though, they struggled to get the sum correct. The teacher must consider giving the learners the multiplication tables with answers. Code switching was used frequently, seemingly to clarify concepts. Learners used the DBE books for expanded opportunity**.**

Overview of T2's Lesson 2 Duration: 40 minutes Topic: Mental Mathematics LSM: Text books & exercise books		
Conformity to curriculum The lesson plans used were CAPS compliance as part of GPLMS.		
Teacher 's activity	**Learners' activities**	**Classroom environment and reflection**
Explains that learners are going to do Mental Maths. Asks learners to do mental of three. Gives learners a task of practicing multiplication at home. Tells learners that they are going to do "even numbers". Asks learners to tell what even numbers are. Explains that even numbers are multiple of 2. That is any number that can be divided by 2. Instructs learners to read even numbers up to 30. Teaches learners about ascending and descending order. She says "Ascending order is when we arrange numbers from the smallest to the largest". Whereas, "Descending order is when we arrange numbers from the biggest to the smallest". She Code switch to XiTsonga "Ascending order hiloko I sungula kuhlanga ka nomboro leyi ntsongo ku ya a hehla". "Descending order hiloko u sungula ku hlaya ka nomoro leyi kulu ku fika leyi tsongo". Asks learners to say after her Writes examples on the board. **1021, 1024, 1027, 1030, 1033, 1036** Asks the question "**What number comes after the other**" Writes an example of descending order **2150, 2146, 2142, 2138, 2134, 2130.**	Become quiet as the teacher introduces the lesson Do mathematics mental of three in unison. Not all learners are able to multiply the numbers. Sit quietly without answering the question One learner answers "numbers like 2". Answer in unison **"10. 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30".** Seem to understand when the teacher codeswitch to isiTsonga. Reads the numbers as the teacher writes. Learners say after the teacher in unison "Ascending order hiloko I sungula kuhlanga ka nomboro leyi ntsongo ku ya a hehla". "Descending order hiloko u sungula ku hlaya ka nomoro leyi kulu ku fika leyi tsongo". (Ascending order is when we arrange numbers from the smallest to the largest". Whereas, "Descending order is when we arrange numbers from the biggest to the smallest"). One learner answers how the 1033 comes after 1030. One learner keep quiet and not give the answer Remains quiet looking at the teacher Take out their classwork books and copy the homework.	Code switching was often used when explaining concepts. Learners were involved but seemed to depend more on mother tongue instruction.

Overview of T 2's Lesson 3 **Duration: 40 minutes** **Subject: Mathematics** **Topic: Place value** **LSM: Text books and chalkboard**		
Conformity to curriculum GPLMS Lesson plans are followed.		
Teacher's activity	**Learners' activity**	**Classroom environment and reflection**
Writes the following numbers on the board:**1259724** Tells learners to read them Asks learners to write the place value of 5 and other numbers. Instructs learners to open page 99 of their DBE books. Asks learners to write the place value of the bold digit in each number. a. **3**765, 659**9**8, 43**2**239 Urges learners to read the instruction. Walks around checking on the learners. Realises that some learners had written the wrong answers. Writes numbers in sentences and asks learners to read. Corrects errors with the learners on the board. Asks learners to write the correct sentence	Sit quietly trying to read what is written on the board. Unable to read correctly. Struggle to come up with the answer and remain quite. Take out their DBE books and open page 99. Listen to the teacher' instruction Two learners chosen are unable to read. The third learner reads correctly. Write individually in their DBE books. Make following errors as they read: "Three thousand rands seven hundred and sixty five. Six thousand five hundred and ninety eight Four three thousands two hundred and thirty nine". Answer questions asked. Do the corrections in their exercise books.	There is integration of English in the Mathematics lesson. Learners read and make sentences. Thus, most learners have reading and writing problem.

Overview of T3's lesson 1
Duration: 45 minutes
Topic: Matter and Material
LSM: Chalk board, Metal and non-metal objects

Conformity to curriculum
The lesson plans are CAPS compliance provided by the GPLMS. The methodologies and learning activities are well planned for the teachers and learners. CAPS lesson plans were followed. The teacher used the lesson plan book as a guideline.

Teacher's activities	Learners' activities	Classroom environment and reflection
Asks if learners know the meaning of matter and material? Codeswitched to Xitsonga "Ma tiva ti nhlamuselo ta matter na material"? As learners were quite not responding. Encourages learners to tell what matter and material are made of also in Xitsonga. Writes the incorrect spelling of insimbi wrong on the board. She thanks the learner who helped her because she doesn't speak Xitsonga. Instructs learners to identify other examples of metals in class. Asks learners to write them on the board Instructs one learner to go and rectify the spelling. Continues to ask learners to identify metals. Explains again what metal is in XiTsonga to make to enhance the understanding of the learner. Explains thoroughly the meaning of non-metal in isiTsonga: "**Xilo xo mfumala nsimbi".** (Element or substance that is not a metal). And explains again in English. Asks learners to point at non-metal objects in class. Congratulates the learner and asks him to write "plastic plate" on the board. Encourages more learners to correct the spelling on the board.	Concentrate to the teacher's question and remain quite. Begin to raise their hands in order to answer the question. First two learners give the wrong answers. Become actively involved when they answer in their mother tongue. Answer: Matter is made from **insimbi (steel). The learner mix English and Xitsonga.** One learner helps the teacher with the correct spelling of steel in isiTsonga, "insimbi" They mention markers, steel cup, steel rulers, windows and door frames. One learner writes the wrong spelling "wondow" instead of window. The other one writes "fram" instead of frame. The learner writes "wondow frame". Writes it correctly "window frame". One learner answers "ice cream". The learner answers "steel cupboard". Becomes quite not answering the question. Again become actively involved, answer in unison using isiTsonga: " eswi swingariku ti metal aswi endliwanga hi nsimbhi".(Element that is not a metal). One learner points a "plastic plate" They unable to write correct spelling: Learner 1 "Plastik Plate", Learner 2 "Plasik plate" Learner 3 "Plastik plat", Learner 4 "Plastic" Learner 5 "Plastic plait", Learner 6 answeres "Plastic plate Arrange metal and non-metal object in groups.	The teacher seemed to have a comprehensive experience of the subject. She presented two activities in one lesson. Of which learners were able to follow. Moreover, It could have been good for the teacher to Present learners with the mix of mental and non-mental objects. Learners could circle the non-mental objects and expose them to the correct spelling of the words. Teaching aids used created a conducive environment for learning. All learners were engaged in the lesson. Even wanted to give answers without been selected. As they wanted to touch metal and non-metal objects. The teacher was exceptionally tolerant with the learners. She managed the lesson well. Code switching was applied often as usual.

Overview of T3's lesson 2		
Duration:45 minutes		
Topic: Properties of metals & non-metals		
LSM: Chalk board and objects		

Conformity to curriculum
The lesson taught is depicted in the GPLMS Lesson plan. It is according to the requirements of CAPS.

Teacher's activities	Learner's activities	Classroom environment and reflection
Writes the topic "properties of metal and non-metal" on the board. Explains metal in isiTsonga "Metal yi endliwe hi nsimbhi". (Metal is made of steel). "Leswi swingariku ti metal aswi endliwanga hi nsimbhi swikombiso, pulasitiki kumbe aluminiyamu". (Nonmetals are not made of steel, e.g plastic or aluminium). Writes the following properties on the board:	Listen attentively as the teacher introduces the lesson.	There is an integration of English in the lesson. Reading and pronunciation is noted in most learners. The teacher adhered to the time allocated for the lesson. Therefore, there is no time for corrective teaching. Especially for learners struggling to read.
Properties of metal **Shiny, Stony, Hard, Malleable** **Ductile** **Melting in high temperature** **Good conductor of heat** / **Properties of non-metal** **Dull, Brittle, Soft** **Not good conductor of heat**	Read louder in unison Some learners unable to pronouns some words. Take out their exercise books and write spelling test.	
Emphasises spelling test in XiTsonga "xikambelwana xa mbitanelo". Calls out words from 1-10. **1.Strong, Hard, soft, solid, brittle, shiny, ductile, dull, malleable** **Dictation sentence: Melt in high temperature**		

Overview of T3's lesson 3
Duration: 45 minutes
Topic: Metal (good conductor of heat)
LSM: Blackboard, Wires, plastic bowls

Conformity to curriculum
The lesson plans were CAPS compliance. Obtained from the GPLMS specified material.

Teacher's activities	Learners' activities	Classroom environment and reflection
Tells learners that they are going to work in groups. She gives one learner a plastic dish and a wire. Asks learners to mention the names of those objects. Encourages the learner to use his mother tongue. Asks learners to touch the wire and explains how it feels like. Puts the wire inside the hot water for learners to experiment. Takes out the wire and asks learners to feel it. Encourages learners to tell how the wire feels. Reminds the learners that they are allowed to use their mother tongue. Conclude the lesson by explaining the whole experimentation in IsiTsonga. This is how she explains. "Pene na nsimbi swi hambanile ngopfu nsimbi loko yi hisa ya pfumela ku ntswa a yizi n'woki". Pene loko yi hisiwa ya n' wokahikuva non-metal". (A pen is different from a metal because a pen melt and the metal cannot melt when burnt)	Sit properly in their groups The learner answers "plastic dish" The learner wants to say "wire" but he doesn't know the name. The learner answers in Xitsonga"nsimbhi". Want to give answers but they are not comfortable to explain in English. A learner answers mixing English and Xitsonga "the wire is titimeling". Instead of "the wire feels cold". One learner in a group answers "the wire feels cold" Take turns to feel the wire Mumble to each other and keep quite. One learner from one group answers "Now the wire feels hot". Freely explain what they have discovered in their mother tongue. Answer in unison "Metal takes longer to catch heat".	The lesson was well managed, despite the fact that learners did many activities. Teaching aids generated a visual and interactive experience for the learners. As learners were actively involved, they are likely to understand the topic more. Learners know the answers, however, they are unable to explain in English. Some decide to keep quite. Learners discuss answers in mother tongue. However, they are expected to report in English. Learners depend on mother tongue when answering. Wrong pronunciation and incorrect use of tenses is noted. Especially when they use English.